

Fire and Water

**A 1-Round Low/Mid-Rank Adventure for Heroes of
Rokugan: Spirit of Bushido
Month of the Sun, 1138 (Spring)**

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Sometimes, there just isn't a right choice.

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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-Mid Rank adventure, and thus can involve parties of widely varying capabilities. The

encounters have been optimized for a party of average Rank Two.

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

Low End Party (most/all characters Rank One):

The Goju have Agility 3 and have each taken 20 Wounds (filling their +3 Wound Level). They roll 5k2 for damage with their claws.

The Greater Kappa and Kenjiro no Oni have Water 3.

The GM may selectively reduce Skill TNs by 5 at his/her discretion.

High End Party (most/all characters Rank Three):

The Goju have Void 4 and 4 Shadow Ranks, which increases their attack bonus in shadowy areas to +2k2, as well as reducing all their damage from non-crystal, non-magic sources by half.

Dedication

It is sometimes said that life imitates art, and this module serves as a particularly painful example of that truism. *Fire and Water* was conceived and developed in January 2011, and included an earthquake and tsunami as one way to demonstrate the elemental power of Water. The Fortunes are fickle, however. On March 11, 2011, the Tohoku earthquake struck off the coast of Japan, creating a tsunami and nuclear disaster that claimed the lives of thousands of people and forever altered the lives of hundreds of thousands more. Measured against such devastation, words mean little. Nevertheless, this module is dedicated to all those, living and dead, who suffered in that terrible catastrophe. May the Kami watch over them, and bring them peace.

Adventure Summary and Background

During the Clan War, a number of things changed for Rokugan. One of the changes that had perhaps the longest-lasting repercussions, despite being little-heralded at the time, was a more active stance of the various Elemental Oracles with regards to the struggle between the Empire and the Shadowlands. The four Dark Oracles gathered together and combined their powers to create the Elemental Terrors, five of the most

powerful and corrupt oni ever to walk Ningen-do. Fearing for the elemental balance of the mortal realm, the Oracles of Light responded by calling together two of the most talented crafters of nemuranai in the Empire at the time. The Oracles guided Asako Shingon and Iuchi Yogosha through the process of creating the Treasures of the Five Elements, and the two artificers sacrificed their lives to bring them into being. The Katana of Fire, the Yari of Air, the Gunsen of Water, the Armor of Earth and the Mempo of the Void; powerful nemuranai given to mortal heroes to turn the tide against the Elemental Terrors and maintain the balance of the kami in Ningen-do.

Among these heroes was Daidoji Tsumerai, one of the most skilled and talented masters of yarijutsu the Empire has ever seen. Though only barely past his gempukku when he was given the Yari of Air, Tsumerai quickly proved himself phenomenally capable with the weapon, and earned himself a heroes' place during the final battle at Otosan Uchi against the forces of Fu Leng. After the Clan War was over, Tsumerai again served with distinction during the War Against the Darkness, and helped to broker peace between the two factions of the Crane Civil War. Since then, Tsumerai has worked to rebuild his family and Clan, training a new generation of Daidoji samurai in the techniques he has developed for the spear.

Throughout his possession of the Yari, he has been aware of a faint connection between it and the other Treasures of the Elements; when he concentrates, he can sense the direction in which the other Treasures lie, as well as having an extremely vague sense of their distance. He has never taken advantage of this knowledge, content to assume that other heroes serve the Empire with their Treasures as he has served with his, but, about a week before this adventure begins, all that changed.

Suddenly, and almost simultaneously, his "awareness" of the Mempo of the Void and the Armor of Earth faded out, as though the Treasures had simply disappeared. Though his sense of the Treasures had at times strengthened or weakened due to factors beyond his ken, never had they disappeared entirely – two at once seemed potentially quite dire. Seeking answers, Tsumerai requested a favor from an ally in the Imperial families and arranged for permission to seek out the monks of the Cherry Blossom Lake Temple, whose library was said to have a number of resources on the Oracles and the Elemental Treasures. Shortly after he arrived, however, the answers came to him – in the form of Goju assassins, sent to kill him and claim his Yari for their own.

The threat to the Elemental Treasures has not gone unnoticed by the Celestial Heavens, and the Elemental Dragons take action to aid Rokugan once more. This time, their chosen agents are the PCs, who receive a dream vision that sends them to Tsumeraï's aid. Once the PCs arrive and save Tsumeraï, the Daidoji asks them to help him recover and protect the remaining Elemental Treasures, but doing so is easier said than done – it is only through the Yari's powers that Tsumeraï can locate the other Treasures, and it can only be used to find one at a time. The PCs must choose which Treasure to save, and while they will hopefully be successful in doing so (and in recovering one of the two stolen Treasures), the other one, along with the last Treasure, will be lost to the sinister plots of the Goju.

Important Advantages and Traits

Before play begins, the GM should examine the character sheet for each PC in order to determine the character's strongest elemental alignment. Consider the following traits, in order; if a PC has a tie for multiple traits, look to the next "tier" for a tiebreaker. If a trait has a built-in elemental association (such as an elemental Ring), that is the element to assign the character; otherwise, the relevant element is included in parentheses after the trait:

- Ishiken-do (Void), Touch of the Void
- Chosen by the Oracles, Elemental Blessing, Friendly Kami, Friend of the Elements, Elemental Imbalance
- Shugenja School Affinity or School Techniques based on specific Element
- Highest Ring
- Etiquette, Courtier or Temptation Skill 4+ Ranks (Air), Lore or Weapon Skill 4+ Ranks (Fire), Athletics, Battle or Investigation Skill 4+ Ranks (Water), Defense or Intimidation Skill 4+ Ranks (Earth), Meditation or Tea Ceremony 4+ Ranks (Void)

If consideration of all of the above elements does not seem to point to a particular element, or the GM feels strongly that the character has a particular elemental association that is not represented well by the result of these considerations, the GM should assign the character an elemental association that he or she feels best suits the character based on his or her own judgment.

Finally, characters with Oath of Fealty: Shosuro Atsumori will be in particular focus if the PCs should decide to pursue the Katana of Fire.

Introduction

As the adventure begins, the PCs are asleep in their beds. Hand out the Dragon Dreams from Appendix Two to the players associated with each element. (If playing in a home campaign or other circumstance where time is not a factor, the GM is encouraged to roleplay through the dream and the meeting with each PC's daimyo, making use of the daimyo descriptions for PCs with Oath of Fealty to further personalize the discussion.)

As they have been specifically asked for information, the PCs should mention their dreams to their daimyo. Confirm that each PC plans to do so. If one does not, the daimyo's shugenja will commune with the local kami and identify the PC as somehow connected to the portentous earthquake. The daimyo will then repeat the question specifically for the PC. If that PC then chooses not to speak, he or she is out of the adventure.

Assuming he or she does tell the story of his or her dream, the daimyo will agree that the PC is obligated to follow the commands of the Dragon. A **Lore: Geography** or **Lore: Theology / Intelligence** roll, TN 10, recognizes the lake in the dream as the Lake of Cherry Blossom Snow, on the border between the Scorpion, Hare and Crab provinces. (If the PC does not make the roll, the daimyo will recognize it from his or her description.) The lake is the site of the largest celebration of the annual Cherry Blossom Festival, scheduled to begin in just over a month. The daimyo provides the PC with travel papers to the lake and wherever after the Heavens seem to guide the character, and commands them to depart for the lake at once. (If a PC suggests that the dream indicates that he or she should arrive for the festival, rather than leaving immediately, the daimyo agrees that this might be the case, but it is better to arrive early and await the proper time than delay and miss whatever might be happening.)

If the PC does not have a lord (i.e., is a ronin), then of course the scene with the daimyo does not occur. Instead, he or she finds the village or inn where he or she is staying to be in a near panic over the earthquake. A traveling monk, a retired Clan shugenja, speaks to the peasants, trying to reassure them. "I have spoken to the kami!" the monk says, "and they have told me that someone here has knowledge that can protect the Empire from the disfavor of the Heavens! Please, if you know anything, come forward!" If the PC does not speak up, the shugenja spies him or her in the crowd and shouts, "You, samurai-sama! It is you of whom the kami spoke! Please, share your wisdom!" If the PC

tells the story of the dream, the peasants seem awestruck, while the monk nods thoughtfully. The same **Lore: Geography** or **Lore: Theology** roll as above is needed to identify the lake in the dream, but the monk will recognize it if the PC does not. "Indeed, the kami spoke truly," the monk says. "If you will, samurai-sama, I can provide you with funds for your journey, and a pilgrim's writ for travel to the shrine. Go, please, and save us from whatever fate awaits!" The monk will give the PC 2 koku and papers identifying him or her as a pilgrim on his or her way to the Monastery of the Cherry Blossoms, assuming the PC agrees to go. If he or she does not agree, or refuses to speak of their dream, his or her part of the adventure is over.

Once the PCs depart for the shrine, it takes several days' travel to reach it. Samurai who begin closer to the shrine find that the disruption of the earthquake slows their progress, while those further away make good time. While they travel, the PCs may make **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** rolls to hear rumors of events around the Empire. The base TN is 10, which allows them to hear the following rumor:

- Just before the earthquake, a thief apparently broke into Shiro sano Ken Hayai and stole the Mempo of the Void from Kitsu Motso, the Lion Clan Champion. The thief escaped the castle on horseback, riding with what seemed inhuman speed. The Lion claim that only Unicorn steeds possess such speed, and they must be responsible for the theft.

For every 5 points by which their rolls beat the TN, they hear one additional rumor, chosen at random from the following list:

- The Crab Clan has reported shortages in its iron mine production. This is somewhat surprisingly across multiple mines simultaneously, leading to speculation that the Crab are somehow trying to avoid keeping their promise of weapons for the Phoenix this spring.
- The Scorpion are reportedly moving troops toward their eastern border, an act that might signal military action against either the Crane or the Lion. Unusually, the reports suggest that the troops are mustering at Shiro Yogo before being deployed.
- The Oracles of Light have not been seen in the Empire since the death of Kaede, almost a year ago. No sign of a new Oracle of the Void has been found, and the remaining Oracles have seemingly withdrawn from Ningen-do.

Prayers to the kami for explanations have gone unanswered.

- Mirumoto troops have begun moving onto Dragon Heart Plain, traditionally a Phoenix Clan protectorate, although there are no Phoenix troops guarding it currently. The Dragon claim to prosecuting an ancient claim to the territory, but it remains to be seen how the Phoenix will respond.
- Ide Gokun has replaced Ide Tadaji as Ide Daimyo, now that Tadaji has been named the new Imperial Advisor. Though it is likely Tadaji's new responsibilities will fully occupy him, a family daimyo would normally keep his position after such a promotion, and rumors suggest some kind of divide has grown up between Tadaji and Moto Gaheris, the Unicorn Khan.

Regardless, as night closes on the fifth day after the earthquake, the PCs find themselves sharing the road to the Monastery of the Cherry Blossoms.

Part One: Shadows Beneath the Sakura

As the PCs approach the monastery, read or paraphrase the following:

The vastness of the Lake of Cherry Blossom Snows glitters in the sunset, red and gold shimmers flickering over the water. The trees that line the lake and give it its name have not yet begun to bloom, but already tiny green buds line the branches, and the air is thick with the rich smells of spring. The road that approaches the Monastery of the Cherry Blossoms is little used, save for during the weeks of the festival itself, and it would seem that no pilgrims have chosen to arrive so early; your group is the only one visible along the path. Up ahead, the low buildings of the monastery stand atop a rise overlooking the lake, but the gates hang ominously open in the still evening air, and no monk comes out to greet you as you arrive.

Give the PCs a moment to ready themselves, then continue.

Stepping into the monastery grounds, you see a massacre. Bloody corpses that were once peaceful monks lie on all sides, their bodies and clothes shredded, as though by some frenzied animal. At first, there are no signs of life, but after a brief moment, a shout sounds from behind a building on the far side of the compound.

As you race toward it, you come across a bizarre scene: a lone bushi, in the armor and colors of the Crane Clan, faces off against several shadowy figures. Blood trickles down his face and stains his kimono. The warrior appears to be unarmed, but he curls his hands and moves as though he were holding a long staff or spear. Where he swings, wounds appear on his attackers, and they circle him warily, clearly afraid of whatever power he possesses. The Crane's enemies look largely human, but the shadows on their bodies crawl unnaturally, and their hands end in impossibly long, spindly claws. Each wears a simple black kimono and sandals, and the darkness itself seems to cling to their faces, as though it were a mask.

A **Lore: Shadowlands** or **Lore: History / Intelligence** roll, TN 30, or **Lore: Lying Darkness / Intelligence** roll, TN 15, identifies the creatures as Goju, minions of the Lying Darkness. Though the corrupted souls whose identities had been completely lost to the Shadow were redeemed and joined the Lion Clan when Hitomi, Lady Moon, named the Darkness "Akodo," those who had fallen far enough to the Shadow to join it but who still retained enough sense of self-awareness to call themselves "Goju" were instead cut adrift from their patron and fell instead to the Shadowlands. A **Lore: Heraldry / Intelligence** roll, TN 15, identifies the tattoos on the bushi's wrists as the mons of the Daidoji family and the Daidoji Iron Warrior School, while making a TN 30 identifies the man himself as Daidoji Tsumerai, a yarijutsu sensei of the Crane and a hero of both the Clan War and the War Against the Darkness.

There are a number of Goju assassins equal to one less than the number of combat-capable PCs (bushi and combat-oriented shugenja). Tsumerai is badly wounded, and assumes the Full Defense stance as long as it seems the PCs are able to handle the Goju. If any PC falls, however, he leaps back into the fray, striking to finish off wounded Goju as quickly as possible. As the Goju take wounds, they do not bleed, but instead thick shadows boil out of their wounds, and they scream soundlessly in pain. The Goju never make any noise, regardless of the provocation. The area is initially dark enough to grant the Goju their additional attack dice, though the actions of PCs could change this (anyone who recognizes the Goju for what they are will also know that they draw power from darkness).

Goju Assassins

Air 4	Earth 2	Fire 2	Water 3	Void 3
		Agility 4		
Honor 0.1		Status -	Glory 0.0	
		10.0		
Armor TN: 25		Reduction: 0		

Attack: 6k4+5 (claws) **Damage:** 5k3 (claws)

Initiative: 5k4

Shadow Rank: 3; **Taint Rank:** Lost (rank 5)

Powers/Weaknesses: *Lost:* Cannot spend Void Points or call Raises, adds 5 to total of all rolls using a physical Trait

Above the Elements: All elemental magic targeting it suffers a +10 TN penalty, but maho targeting it gains a Free Raise

Master of Shadows: Gains +5k0 to Stealth rolls

Uncanny Speed: Gains Swift 2

Shadow Walk: can take a Simple Action to step into a shadow large enough to contain it and emerge from another within 100 ft.; cannot pass through a solid object this way

Shadowsight: Can see in shadows or dim light as easily as daylight, and gains 3 Free Raises on Contested Investigation rolls made to perceive characters using Stealth to hide in shadows

Shadowblend: Gains 3 Free Raises when using Stealth to conceal itself, and may move at full speed without penalty while using Stealth; also, gains +2k1 to attack rolls made in shadowy areas or dim lighting

Wounds: 13: +0; 20: +3; 27: +5; 34: +10; 41: +15; 48: +20; 55: Down; 62: Dead

Once the battle is done, Tsumerai thanks the PCs profusely for their aid. "I am Daidoji Tsumerai, sensei of the Iron Crane Dojo," he tells them, bowing. "I came here in search of answers to a question, but it would seem that the answer found me instead. Without your help, I am certain that these things would have accomplished their objectives, the least of which involved my death." Tsumerai fought many Goju during the War Against the Shadow, and knows precisely what they are; he will explain their basic nature to any PC who asks.

"I would not have expected to see any pilgrims at the monastery so early," Tsumerai continues. "I almost suspect the intervention of the Fortunes in the timing of your arrival!" Assuming the PCs tell him about their dreams, Tsumerai looks shocked, then thoughtful. Regardless, once introductions are completed, he nods once to himself, as though coming to a decision, and addresses the PCs again.

"My friends, I think I should explain a few things, and once I have done so, I would like to make a request of you. You see, for many years now, I have been privileged to be the bearer of a nemuranai called the 'Yari of Air.'" He gestures with his left hand, which still seems to be holding something, although there still looks to be nothing actually there. He moves as though spinning something, then shoves downward, and a clod of dirt explodes into the air, as

though something large and pointed just penetrated the earth with a great force. “I know you cannot see it, but I assure you, it is there. I found it next to my bedside during the Clan War one morning – I still don’t know how it got there – and it has been mine ever since.

“As you might imagine, I did some research about the yari after I found it. It was here, at this monastery, that I learned its name, and also that it is one of a set, called the Treasures of the Five Elements. They were created by the Oracles of Light during the Clan War, to help the Empire against the forces of Fu Leng. One, the Katana of Fire, I know was carried by Shiba Tsukune until just after she became Phoenix Clan Champion; what happened to it afterward I do not know. Two more, the Mempo of the Void and the Armor of Earth, are – or, rather, were in the hands of Kitsu Motso, the Champion of the Lion, and Utaku Xieng-Chi, the daimyo of the Utaku family. I never learned the identity of the samurai chosen to bear the last Treasure, the Gunsen of Water.

“During the time I have carried the Yari of Air, I have always had a vague awareness of the general presence of the other Treasures. It’s not much, really: an approximate direction and an extremely diffuse sense of distance. If I’d had to put it into words, I would never have been able to do better than ‘somewhere in that direction, a long way off.’ Last week, though, something happened. On the same night, within hours of each other, I stopped being able to sense the Mempo of the Void and the Armor of Earth. That has never happened before, and it made me very uneasy. I don’t know what could happen to make a nemuranai as powerful as these are just disappear. They might have been destroyed, but I don’t know what would be capable of such a feat. If they still exist, they must have been hidden somehow. And since it happened so quickly, to two of them at the same time... well. I returned to this monastery, in hopes of learning more... and these Goju attacked me.

“It seems all too likely that they are attempting to find and claim all the Elemental Treasures. The power of Nothing might well be able to hide or unmake the nemuranai, even ones as powerful as these. If the servants of the Shadow seek the Treasures, they must be stopped. I think I must seek out the remaining Treasures, hopefully before the Goju find them. I dare not risk it alone, however. Samurai, will you aid me in this task?”

The PCs are free to ask any questions they like and Tsumeraï will answer to the best of his ability, but he knows little more than he has already said. In

particular, the only answer he has to questions about the current location of the Katana and the Gunsen is that the former is “somewhere to the north” and the latter is “south and east, a long ways off.” Both are likely several days’ travel away at least, but he cannot be more specific about either one.

Assuming the PCs agree to aid Tsumeraï, the next and most pressing question involves deciding which Treasure the PCs will pursue. Tsumeraï has no way to send one group off in one direction while he seeks in another, as he (correctly) believes he will only be able to pinpoint the location of the nemuranai once he is within a few hundred yards of it, perhaps less. Thus, the group only has the resources to seek one of the two remaining Treasures: the Katana of Fire or the Gunsen of Water. The PCs must choose one or the other, and hope to have time to seek the other once the first is saved.

Once the decision is made, Tsumeraï recommends resting at the monastery, as well as building a pyre and holding a simple funeral for the dead monks. He prays quietly, eyes closed, while the flames consume the bodies, and offers an appreciative nod to any monk or shugenja characters who assist him in performing the proper rites. If the PCs suggest setting watches, he eagerly agrees, but the night passes without incident, and the following morning, the group makes ready to depart.

If the PCs have chosen to seek the Katana of Fire, proceed to Part Two. If they choose to seek the Gunsen of Water, proceed instead to Part Four.

Part Two: The Heat of the Night

The group departs the monastery just before dawn the following morning, and by midday, they have made substantial progress returning to the main road that follows the River of Gold. A patrol of Usagi bushi meets the party as they reach the river, and Tsumeraï is quick to inform them of the slaughter at the Monastery of the Cherry Blossoms. The Hare look alarmed, particularly at the mention of Goju, and while two riders quickly depart the patrol and begin riding hard for a nearby duty post, the patrol leader produces a crystal pendant and quickly and professionally tests the entire party for a reaction to it. Any complaints are met with a polite, “Your pardon, samurai-san, but this testing occurs under the Emperor’s law; crystal testing is mandatory in any circumstance where the minions of the Lying Darkness might be found.” A **Lore: Law /**

Intelligence roll, TN 15, confirms that Toturi I did issue such a decree just after the Battle of Oblivion's Gate, and the law has never been rescinded. The patrol leader proceeds to test his entire squad as well, while his second-in-command produces a pendant of her own and tests him. Satisfied, they allow the party to pass on. If anyone in the group requests a crystal pendant of their own, the Hare shakes his head, replying regretfully, "We have only these two, and our duty does not allow us to go without the pair. We must always have a back-up with us."

The road that travels alongside the River of Gold is one of the most frequently traveled in the Empire, serving hundreds of merchants and peasant travelers every day. Bandits and river pirates frequent the area as well, and most of the other traffic the PCs encounter is escorted by Clan samurai or ronin guards, and Hare and Scorpion patrols stop samurai and peasant alike at regular intervals. Shortly before noon on the second day after leaving the monastery, the group arrives at the ferry which leads to Zakyo Toshi, an Imperial holding near the border of the Scorpion lands; here they must take ship up the river, as the Yari continues to lead Tsumeraï northward.

It takes little time for the PCs to find a ship headed north; within a few hours, they have boarded the *Blessings of Komoku*, a wide-bodied trading vessel captained by a short, swarthy Daidoji woman named Tishiko. Tishiko is loud, extremely lewd, and swears more fiercely than any of the other sailors under her command, but does not hesitate to offer Tsumeraï and his entourage free passage, and Tsumeraï seems to regard her with bemused resignation.

Tishiko's rowers are skilled and dedicated, and one by one, the towns and cities on the riverbank slide past; although Tishiko puts in at Shutai, Ginasutra, and Shosuro Toshi, Tsumeraï continues to insist the Yari indicates north. "We're getting closer," he says, his eyes on the horizon.

Finally, two days after boarding the *Blessings of Komoku* and four days after leaving the Monastery of the Cherry Blossoms, the trading vessel approaches the docks at the southern end of Ryoko Owari Toshi. The infamous city, called the City of Lies by many, is filled with raucous noise and brilliant colors; it quickly becomes clear that a festival is underway, as brightly painted kites and dragon dancers swirl past. The city is having a festival to celebrate the benevolence of Inari, the Fortune of Rice, whose traveling shrine has brought substantial prosperity to the city in the last several months. The shrine is being prepared to move on, and the peasants and samurai of the city alike have chosen

to offer their thanks to the Fortune for his blessings in honor of its departure. "Here," says Tsumeraï suddenly, straightening and clutching his invisible spear to him. "We depart here." Tishiko merely looks at him sideways, shrugging, "It's a good place for it," before turning and shouting orders to her crew to make the gangplank ready.

The City of Lies is a riot of color and noise as you make your way down the gangplank onto the docks. Peasants and samurai alike swirl past you, many carrying sake cups or small bowls of rice as offerings to Inari, the Fortune of Rice. As the sun sets and you push through the crowds in search of an inn, the sky over Ryoko Owari is suddenly lit with brilliantly-colored flame, as the first fireworks of the night rain blue and orange-colored sparks down into the River of Gold.

Have all the PCs make **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** rolls. Any who make a TN 20 see the following scene (if none of them do, Tsumeraï notices and points it out to the group):

In the shadows of an alley behind one of the dockside warehouses, a lone figure in a finely-made scarlet and black kimono leaps out of an upper-story window and lands lightly on the packed-dirt street beneath – a twenty-foot drop made as if it were stepping off a set of stairs. He is tall and handsome, with a sharp chin and cheekbones and a mask shaped like a set of raven's wings, and he glances furtively around as he lands. Even as he locks eyes with you, a bloom of fire bursts from the window he just left. With a guilty start, the arsonist turns and races away up the alley at almost impossible speed, and flames begin to spread across the roof of the warehouse.

Because of the paper and wood construction of most Rokugani building, arson is a deadly threat not just to single buildings but entire cities. Accordingly, it is a capital crime, and it is the duty of every samurai to apprehend such a criminal. Even as the arsonist turns to flee, Tsumeraï shouts, "After him, samurai-sans!" and rushes off in pursuit. Any PC who chooses to simply ignore this heinous crime loses a number of Honor points equal to their Honor Rank for failing in this important part of their duty.

If any PC suggests fighting the fire rather than pursuing the criminal, they see that nearby peasants have already begun forming a bucket brigade, bringing water from the nearby river. Moreover, several hulking thugs, each of whom wears an armband marked with a stylized flame, begin pushing through the crowd toward the building as well; a character who makes a **Lore:**

Underworld or Lore: Scorpion / Intelligence roll, TN 20, recognizes these men as members of one of the local firefighter gangs, the Strong Arm Firemen. (Shosuro characters receive a Free Raise on this roll; characters with Oath of Fealty: Shosuro Atsumori know this automatically.) Though theoretically there to fight fires, many, though certainly not all, of these gangs are actually criminal organizations that engage in protection rackets, making threats against businesses that do not pay their “protection fees.” Typically, these threats involve the possibility of “accidental” fires, which the gangs will refuse to fight without proper payments, and the Strong Arm Firemen are known to be one of the most corrupt. However, the gangs do have the legal remit to fight fires; as soon as the Firemen show up, the rest of the peasants leave them to it, and even the city guards who eventually show up merely work to evacuate the locals from the area. Moreover, law enforcement – i.e., the capturing of criminals – is the province of samurai, while fighting fires is generally considered manual labor suited to peasants.

If a PC decides to insist on helping to fight the fires, he/she should be allowed to do so. The display of Compassion offsets the lack of Duty, meaning that such a PC suffers no Honor loss or gain. However, the PC will not be able to participate in the pursuit of the criminal, and will suffer a loss of 3 points of Glory for doing “peasants’ work” in public, especially since it is also in the company of known criminals (the firefighter gang). Their fight against the fire is also largely doomed – the arsonist set several fires in nearby warehouses, and a stiff breeze causes the flames to spread quite rapidly. Even extraordinary efforts, such as multiple castings of Extinguish, can only save small, specific locations or buildings. (The GM can allow the PC to stipulate a particular building such as a shrine or peasant home that his/her efforts manage to keep safe, if desired.) The problem is made worse when one of the warehouses turns out to be storing fireworks, and explodes in a ball of flame that flattens most of the surrounding city block. It will be almost morning before the fire is under control, and large sections of the city will suffer large-scale devastation as a result. Such PCs will eventually encounter Shosuro Jima, one of Bayushi Kimetiko’s yoriki, helping to evacuate the peasants. Jima will direct the PC to Kimetiko’s office to offer their testimony, where the PC will meet up with the rest of the group (see below).

Chasing the Arsonist

The fleeing samurai is not, in fact, a samurai at all – it is a Goju lieutenant, one of the most powerful Goju currently assigned to the task of claiming the Elemental

Treasures. It has used its shapeshifting abilities to take on the form of Shosuro Mikane, the second son of Shosuro Atsumori, daimyo of the Ryoko Province. A **Lore: Heraldry / Intelligence** roll, TN 40, identifies him outright, as can any character with Oath of Fealty: Shosuro Atsumori. The Goju set the fire to indulge its taste for destruction, but also hopes to delay the PCs though the chaos the fire will cause and by setting up the PCs to become caught up in the politics of Ryoko Owari, allowing it to claim the Katana of Fire without further complications.

The fleeing samurai runs down the alley and darts into the celebrating crowds that fill the street at the far end. Though many peasants try to scramble out of the way of a hurrying samurai, the man’s ability to slip between the celebrants seems uncanny.

Pushing through the crowd requires an **Athletics / Agility** roll, TN 20. Characters may call Raises in order to try to gain on the arsonist as he flees.

Glancing over his shoulder, the arsonist sees that you are still following him, and veers sharply toward the edge of the street, where several food and trinket vendors have set up carts to cater to the passersby. Ducking between them, the samurai pushes the two nearest over with surprising strength, sending food, boiling water, and small pendants flying toward you.

The random assault affects only the two characters with the highest total from the previous Athletics roll. Those two characters must make a **Defense / Agility** roll, TN 20, or suffer 1k1 Wounds from the hot water and small copper netsuke. The rest of the pursuers need only make **Athletics (Running) / Agility** rolls, TN 20, to keep up. As before, Raises may be called to try to gain ground.

Leaving the cries of the angered cart-sellers behind, the arsonist leaps up to the top of a nearby low wall. He runs along the wall without pause until he reaches the point where the roof of the finely-appointed inn within hangs over it; at the same breakneck speed, he hurls himself upward, grabbing the roof edge and pulling himself onto it in a single smooth motion.

This time, following the arsonist requires an **Athletics (Climbing) / Agility** roll, TN 25. Failing the roll by more than 10 causes the PC to fall, taking 1k1 Wounds from the drop. More Raises can again bring the PCs closer to the arsonist as he flees. Alternatively, a PC who does not climb onto the roof can try to follow through the streets below; this substitutes **Athletics / Agility** rolls (no relevant Emphasis) for the rolls listed

for the remainder of the chase, and raises their TNs by 5.

The sloping tiled roof is awkward for running, but the fleeing samurai shows no sign of noticing that fact as he races toward the gap on the far side that separates the inn from its nearest neighbor, a tea house. The space is easily fifteen feet, but he jumps across it as easily as though he were stepping over a puddle.

Following the arsonist across the gap requires an **Athletics (Jumping) / Agility** roll, TN 20; if the PC fails this roll, he or she can make a raw **Reflexes** roll, TN 15, to catch themselves on the edge of the far roof, where an **Athletics (Climbing) / Strength** roll, TN 10, will allow them to scramble up. Failing the Reflexes roll or the Athletics (Climbing) check mean the PC falls to the street below, suffering 1k1 Wounds and having to follow the figure from beneath. Raises on the initial Athletics (Jumping) roll can bring the PC closer to the arsonist, but Raises on the other rolls have no effect.

Catching the arsonist before he reaches his final destination requires a total of 10 successful Raises made over the course of the various pursuit rolls. This total is reduced by 1 for every Rank of the pursuer's Water Ring, plus an additional 1 for every Rank of the Fleet Advantage. (If a PC has Techniques or other abilities that add to their effective Water Ring for the purposes of movement, those abilities likewise reduce the number of needed Raises – conversely, characters whose Water Rings are penalized for movement, through effects such as Small or Lame, use their effective Water Ring including the penalties to calculate the necessary Raises.) If a PC wishes to use magic to either aid the pursuers or hinder the arsonist, he or she is free to do so. As the Goju has the Above the Elements Shadowlands Power, all elemental magic targeting it has its TN increased by +10. Assuming such spells are successful, a spell that slows or hinders the Goju reduces the necessary number of Raises for all pursuers by the Mastery Level of the spell, while a spell that aids or speeds up one of the PCs should reduce the necessary number of Raises by the spell's Mastery Level for that PC only. For instance, if a PC successfully casts Grasp of Earth on the Goju, you can assume that it makes the necessary Strength roll to break free, but the delay reduces the number of Raises needed to catch it by 2 (the spell's Mastery Level) for all the pursuing characters.

If at least one PC catches up to the Goju before it reaches the estate of Shosuro Atsumori, it is forced to turn and fight – see Part Three for its stats. Any PC that caught up to it faces the Goju for one round before the rest of the party can be assumed to arrive. Assuming

the PCs succeed in slaying the Goju, it will not be present for the final confrontation at the cave of the Oracle of Fire, which will make that encounter much, much easier. If no PC catches the Goju, however, it manages to achieve its goal:

The next series of roofs are close enough together that the fleeing arsonist does not need to even slow down as he crosses between them. Nor do you, as you continue your pursuit. Finally, a large gap appears ahead, one stretching out for several hundred feet in the darkness. In the flashes of light from the continual fireworks and waving lanterns, you can make out a fine samurai's residence in the midst of a walled estate, shadowy trees and dimly-lit paths marking out what must be well-tended gardens. The samurai jumps off of the roof and into the shadows beneath the wall; visible only as a swiftly moving dim shape, he disappears into the residence through a side door.

While chasing a fleeing criminal across a rooftop is one thing, entering into the residence of a wealthy samurai without permission is something else again, and law-abiding samurai would be wise at this point to pause and consider. This is particularly true for any character who recognizes the residence: it belongs to Shosuro Atsumori, the governor of the province, and any character who makes a **Lore: Heraldry / Intelligence** roll, TN 20, can recognize this fact. (Again, Shosuro characters gain a Free Raise on this roll, and characters with Oath of Fealty: Shosuro Atsumori know it automatically.) Legally (and a **Lore: Law / Intelligence** roll, TN 10, is enough to know this), the proper next step is to locate a Scorpion magistrate and provide testimony. However, characters with low Honor or those caught up in the heat of the moment might well choose to bull their way in without waiting – this will cost the PC(s) involved two pips of Honor, or four pips of Honor if the PC is Honor 6 or higher, as well as two pips of Glory. For other consequences, see “Barging in Without Kimetiko,” below.

Characters who do wish to stay within the law, however, should turn their attentions to finding a Scorpion magistrate. (Note: if not all of the PCs leave to find the magistrate, they will not see the Goju lieutenant depart. Once it has entered the house, it uses the darkness to activate its Shadowstep ability, exiting a block away and disappearing out of the city.)

Note: If any of the PCs should fall substantially behind during the pursuit, through exceptionally poor dice rolls, for instance, or Disadvantages such as Lame, such PCs will have little difficulty following the trail of their more agile counterparts. The pursuit of the arsonist

through the city and across the rooftops has drawn the attention of several peasants and samurai passersby, and pointing fingers will quickly set the PCs on the proper path.

Meeting Bayushi Kimetiko

Locating a magistrate in a city the size of Ryoko Owari Toshi is not normally a difficult prospect, but the chaos of the festival and the spreading fires near the docks make it much more challenging. The tumult of voices and clanging of distant alarm bells make even shouted conversations problematic, and many of the Shosuro guardsmen who normally patrol the streets have rushed to help evacuate the residential areas threatened by the flames. Rumors spreading through the crowded streets also suggest that some of the firefighting gangs have begun to battle one another instead of the flames, as the fire spreads from one gang's territory into others.

Nevertheless, determined efforts by the PCs eventually gain a name and a location: Bayushi Kimetiko, a Clan magistrate stationed in Ryoko Owari Toshi, whose office is only a few blocks from Atsumori's estate. Kimetiko's office is a simple, one-room affair, sandwiched in between a noodle shop and a weaver's storefront, on the edge of the Merchant's Quarter. Though she normally has two yoriki who work with her, she has sent them out into the festival, at first to enjoy it and then to help keep order as the fires spread, so she is alone when the PCs first meet her.

Bayushi Kimetiko is a startlingly beautiful woman, tall and graceful with her hair in a careful bun. Her eyes are sharp, but her nose, mouth and chin are concealed by a porcelain mask painted like a doll's face, with a crystalline blue teardrop seeming to fall from her right eye. As you enter, she steps away from the window where she had been staring out at the city and raises an eyebrow. "Good evening, samurai-sans," she says slowly, offering a bow. Her voice echoes slightly behind the mask. "I am Bayushi Kimetiko, magistrate of the Scorpion Clan. To what do I owe the honor of such a... diverse... group of guests?"

Kimetiko is a junshin – an honorable Scorpion. She is genuinely interested in upholding the law and seeing injustice punished, and prefers doing her duty to enjoying the blandishments that the City of Lies has to offer. This makes her entirely willing to pursue evidence such as that the PCs have to offer wherever it may lead her, but it also means that she has few allies in Ryoko Owari, and a confrontation with the city's governor is only likely to make things worse.

The PCs may tell their story in whatever fashion they like – Kimetiko listens silently, waiting until the group is finished to ask her questions. (If the PCs have not already realized it, she is able to identify the estate where the arsonist fled as belonging to Shosuro Atsumori; likewise, if the PCs describe the arsonist's raven-wing mask, she recognizes it as being the traditional mask worn by Shosuro Mikane.) Once it is clear that the PCs have testimony relating to the possible culprit behind the arsons, however, the magistrate wastes no time. *"I thank you for providing me with this information, samurai-sans,"* she says briskly. *"It is clear that we must learn what darkness hides within the walls of Atsumori-sama's estate at once. My yoriki went out to join the festival some hours ago, and by now I trust they have turned their efforts toward helping those threatened by the fires. With your consent, I would like to deputize you in their place as I go to investigate this matter."*

Some PCs, especially given the known powers of the Goju, may have doubts that the arsonist is in fact who or what it appeared to be. If they express these doubts, Kimetiko nods carefully. *"Of course, samurai-san,"* she replies. *"I never prejudge any case until I have all the facts before me."*

Confronting Mikane

With the PCs and Tsumerai in tow, the magistrate makes her way quickly and determinedly back to Atsumori's estate. The estate is still dark and nearly silent, as the Governor is hosting a festival party on Teardrop Island, the famous red-lantern district in the middle of the river. The house servants have also left to enjoy the festival, leaving the estate to Mikane and a pair of bored guardsmen at the front gate.

Kimetiko bows respectfully to the guards as the group approaches; the guards, looking bemused by the magistrate's entourage, return the bow. "Greetings, samurai-sans," Kimetiko says politely. "I am Bayushi Kimetiko, as you will no doubt recall from my visit here last week. First, can you tell me whether anyone has entered or left this estate in the last hour?"

The guards exchange glances, but one replies, "Of course, honored magistrate. No one has entered or left since before nightfall."

Kimetiko nods. "My thanks. Now, I must require you to permit me and my yoriki entrance to these grounds immediately. These samurai have provided testimony that an arsonist has taken refuge within the estate."

On the authority granted to me by Bayushi Yojiro, Champion of the Scorpion, I command you to let us pass at once."

The guards look stricken at the accusation, and one opens his mouth as though to demur, but nothing comes out. Kimetiko steps deliberately forward, and the two guards step aside, but even as the group passes through the gate, one of the guards goes running down the street, in the direction of the river. Kimetiko glances at him over her shoulder as she makes her way up the darkened path to the residence itself. "On his way to tell Atsumori, no doubt," she murmurs. "It will take him some time to find a ferry to reach Teardrop Island, but we nevertheless must hurry. We need to have some answers before the governor arrives."

Kimetiko pauses for only a moment at the door to the house before sliding it aside to reveal a darkened interior lit only by the flickers of fireworks and lanterns from the street. The shadows dance along the walls and across the floor, and Kimetiko eases her katana in its saya as she steps inside. "Daidoji-san," she says quietly, "we know there are other doors into this house. Would you be so kind as to make certain no one uses them to leave?" Tsumerai – and any PC who chooses to go with him – circle around to the back of the house, while Kimetiko waits patiently in the darkness of the front room. After giving the others time to prepare themselves, she calls out in a ringing tone, "Attention all residents of this house! I am Bayushi Kimetiko, magistrate of the Scorpion! Present yourselves at once!"

After only a few moments, a lantern light appears at the top of the nearby stairs, and Shosuro Mikane makes his way down to face the group. The lantern he carries is of gaijin make, heavy and fashioned from glass; he is otherwise identical to how the arsonist appeared while the PCs were chasing him, down to the same kimono and raven-wing mask. At this range, it is easy to see his blue-gray eyes, the heritage of his Crane mother's bloodline.

"What is the meaning of this?" Mikane demands, blinking heavily. "How dare you invade my home in this fashion?" Mikane's voice is slightly unsteady, as though he has been running hard, but he is a trained bushi, and there is steel in his tone.

"Mikane-san," Kimetiko answers carefully, "I have testimony that places an arsonist within these walls. Are you the only person here tonight? Your servants, your father and his aides, they are all gone?"

Mikane presses his lips together, still blinking. "I... I... uh, yes," he says, seeming to have trouble gathering his thoughts. "Yes, that's right. I'm... I'm the only one here."

Kimetiko turns to the PCs. *"This is Shosuro Mikane, second son of Shosuro Atsumori. Is this the man you saw?" she asks.*

Honorable PCs will have no choice but to answer in the affirmative. Dishonorable PCs may choose to lie, but must overcome Kimetiko's **Investigation (Interrogation) / Perception** with their own **Deceit (Lying) / Awareness**. If they fail to do so, Kimetiko's eyes narrow dangerously, and she says, *"I warn you, samurai, that assisting a criminal in the commission of a capital crime can carry the same penalty. Do not test me, or force me to send for the eta to ask the question more... directly."*

Regardless, once the accusation has been made, if only by implication, Mikane interrupts, still blinking furiously. *"I... I... we need to go upstairs. I... I can't... think... down here." Another firework goes off outside, briefly lighting the room in a lurid red, and his hand trembles on the lantern.*

Kimetiko frowns, and she places her hand on the hilt of her katana. *"What is upstairs, Mikane-san?" she asks warily.*

"Nothing! Just... too many windows... here..." Mikane says, still blinking.

At this point, PCs may make a **Medicine (Disease) / Intelligence** roll, TN 25, to diagnose the source of Mikane's discomfort: he is epileptic, of a variety that is triggered by flashing or swiftly changing lights. Epilepsy is much more common among the Crane than the general population, and Mikane inherited the disability from his mother. The blinking, stutters, heavy breathing and inability to concentrate Mikane displays are actually preliminary indicators of an oncoming seizure, brought on by the fireworks and lanterns flashing through the windows outside. (Even the glass lantern is connected to Mikane's disease – the heavy lantern produces a steadier flame than traditional Rokugani lanterns.) Atsumori has kept knowledge of Mikane's disease carefully hidden, for fear of revealing a weakness in his family, but the stress of the current situation has brought it to the point of exposure.

If a PC recognizes the symptoms for what they are, it should immediately be clear that Mikane could not have led the PCs on the kind of chase the arsonist did, surrounded by the festival on all sides as they were. If

confronted, Mikane will admit to his disease, and Kimetiko will conclude that an imposter, probably a Goju under the circumstances, attempted to frame Mikane for the arson. Mikane, shamed, flees upstairs to a second-floor room without windows, where he waits out nights like tonight, and Kimetiko settles in to wait for Atsumori's arrival.

On the other hand, if no PC recognizes the symptoms (or if a PC who recognizes the symptoms chooses to remain silent about them), Kimetiko will shake her head firmly. ***"No, Mikane-san. The testimony of these samurai is more than sufficient. You will accompany me to my office, sign your confession and prepare for seppuku according to the law."***

"You can't... can't... can't take me!" Mikane shouts, closing his eyes. He opens them again, blinking furiously, then drops his hand to his blade. ***"I am innocent!"*** There is sweat on his brow, and he looks around the room quickly, as though searching for a way out, but he makes no attempt to run.

Kimetiko frowns sternly. ***"You would defend your innocence with your blade, Mikane-san?"*** she asks him slowly, and Mikane nods. ***"Very well,"*** she says. ***"Will you defend your testimony?"*** the magistrate asks the PCs.

If one of the PCs agrees to duel Mikane, the duel occurs immediately – Kimetiko has no interest in allowing Atsumori to interfere to protect his son. In the gardens behind the house, lit by lanterns brought by the remaining guardsman, the two duelists face off. Mikane must make a Willpower roll, TN 15, when the duel begins, or lose automatically because he has a seizure, causing him to freeze up. Otherwise, the duel proceeds normally. As this is a capital crime, the duel is to the death. If the PC wins the duel, he or she gains +1 point of Glory.

If no PC agrees to the duel, Kimetiko will do so instead. In this case, Mikane does not have a seizure, but Kimetiko cuts him down regardless.

Shosuro Mikane

Air 3	Earth 3	Fire 3	Water 2	Void 3
Awareness 4		Agility 4		
Honor 2.3		Status 3.5		Glory 3.0
Initiative: 6k4		Attack: 8k3 (katana, Complex)		
Armor TN: 20 (no armor)		Damage: 6k2		
Reduction: 0				

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

School/Rank: Bayushi Bushi 2

Way of the Scorpion: Adds +5 to Armor TN against opponents with lower Initiative; adds +1k1 to Initiative rolls.

Pincers and Tail: Can Feint with one Raise rather than two.

Skills: Athletics 2, Courtier (Manipulation) 2, Defense 3, Etiquette (Conversation) 2, Iaijutsu 4, Investigation 2, Kenjutsu (Katana) 5, Kyujutsu 2, Lore: Law 2, Lore: Scorpion 2, Sincerity (Deceit) 3

Mastery Abilities: May ready a sword as a Free Action; adds +1k0 to damage with swords

Advantages/Disadvantages: Quick, Epileptic

If Mikane wins the duel, he almost immediately has a seizure; he freezes up, staring blankly ahead, with only his jaw moving, a slow grinding of his teeth. The guard rushes forward, demanding to know what has happened, but at this point, any character who can make a TN 15 **Medicine (Disease) / Intelligence** roll recognizes the disease for what it is. After a few moments, he seems to come out of it, blinking suddenly and looking around. The realization that his secret has been exposed hits him visibly, and he wordlessly retreats inside the house, to the second-floor room with no windows that he stays in on nights like these.

Otherwise, Kimetiko congratulates the winner (if appropriate) and says a brief prayer for Mikane, before directing the guardsman to summon eta for the body. She settles in to wait for Atsumori's arrival.

Answering Atsumori

Atsumori finally shows up about an hour after the PCs concluded their confrontation with Mikane. Shosuro Atsumori is a heavyset man, but much of his bulk is muscle, not fat. He and Mikane share little in common physically, save for the shape of their eyes and chin, but Atsumori cares deeply for his son, and news of a threat to Mikane's well-being brings the Governor of Ryoko Province home in a rush.

What transpires depends primarily on what occurred between the PCs, Kimetiko and Mikane of course. If the PCs revealed Mikane's illness and Kimetiko concluded that Atsumori's family had been the target of an attempted frame-up, the Governor's attitude is one of grave seriousness. ***"I regret that your duty took you so deep into my private affairs,"*** he tells Kimetiko and the PCs. ***"Nevertheless, I am grateful that you uncovered this plot against me. My gratitude thus allows me to overlook the methods you used, as long***

as no additional indiscretions test that gratitude further.” While Atsumori is well aware of Kimetiko’s status as a junshin and thus has no fear that she will either expose Mikane’s illness or attempt to blackmail him for it, he has no similar assurances about the PCs. He therefore directs most of his attention to them. (If they are confused, a PC who rolls **Courtier** / **Awareness**, TN 10, picks up on Atsumori’s subtext.) Any PC who roleplays a meaningful attempt to reassure Atsumori may roll **Sincerity (Honesty)** / **Awareness**, TN 20, to convince him – doing so earns him as an Ally (Influence 2, Devotion 1). PCs of a less-generous nature, on the other hand, may well threaten him with blackmail. Atsumori is worth 5 points as a Blackmail target, but any PC who takes this route also gains him as a Sworn Enemy. Needless to say, any PC with Oath of Fealty: Shosuro Atsumori that chooses the blackmail option has made an extremely dangerous choice.

If, on the other hand, Mikane dueled a PC or Kimetiko, Atsumori’s rage is palpable. *“You have broken into my home. You have assaulted my son. You may hide behind your position and your friends, Bayushi, but know this: you will never again know peace in this city. Crawl back to Yojiro now, while you still can, and beg him to send you somewhere far enough way that you might somehow escape my wrath.”* A PC who wishes can attempt to assuage Atsumori by convincing him that dueling Mikane truly was required by justice; this is no easy task, however, particularly if Mikane did not survive his duel. A **Sincerity (Honesty)** or **Deceit**, as appropriate) / **Awareness** roll, will calm Atsumori somewhat. The TN is 30 if Mikane is alive, or 45 if he is dead. If Atsumori’s wrath is not calmed, all the PCs gain Atsumori as a Sworn Enemy; additionally, any PC with Oath of Fealty: Shosuro Atsumori loses that advantage and will be offered the options of either committing seppuku or becoming ronin. Kimetiko escorts the surviving PCs out of the house with all due haste.

Barging in Without Kimetiko

Should the PCs decide not to wait for legal justification to pursue the arsonist, they find themselves in an extremely difficult position. By the time they enter the Governor’s estate, the Goju has already used Shadowstep to escape, leaving Mikane and his two guards alone in the house. Mikane is reading in an upstairs room without windows; the guards are lackadaisically watching the front gate. Without a magistrate, the PCs will find it impossible to enter the estate with the guards’ permission; entering by stealth will require a **Stealth (Sneaking)** / **Agility** roll, TN 20, for all members of the party. (Honor losses from using

a Low Skill are separate from the Honor loss mentioned above for not following legal channels.) Tsumerai will not accompany the PCs in such a task, and will argue strenuously in favor of seeking out a magistrate.

Assuming they find their way inside, the PCs will easily be able to locate Mikane in his rooms, and he does resemble the arsonist they saw, down to the smallest detail. Mikane responds to the intrusion as one might expect, reaching for his blade and calling for his guards. He will not submit to arrest, and he and his guards do their best to kill the samurai who have invaded their home. (The guards arrive on the second round of the combat.) No amount of apology or fast talk can avoid this fight. Even if the PCs are victorious, however, they have committed murder – while Tsumerai will not betray them, it becomes vitally important to leave the city immediately, and all PCs involved gain Dark Secret: Murdered Shosuro Mikane. Any PC who does not flee is forced to commit seppuku by Atsumori or Kimetiko once they arrive on the scene.

Shosuro Guards

Air 3	Earth 3	Fire 3	Water 3	Void 2
Honor 2.5		Status 1.5	Glory 2.5	
Initiative: 6k4		Attack: 7k3 (katana, Complex)		
Armor TN: 25		Damage: 7k2 (katana)		
Reduction: 3				
Wounds: 15 (+0), 21 (+3), 27 (+5), 33 (+10), 39 (+15), 45 (+20), 51 (Down, +40), 57 (Dead)				
School/Rank: Bayushi Bushi 2				
<i>Way of the Scorpion:</i> Adds +5 to Armor TN against opponents with lower Initiative; adds +1k1 to Initiative rolls.				
<i>Pincers and Tail:</i> Can Feint with one Raise rather than two.				
Skills: Athletics 2, Courtier (Manipulation) 2, Defense 2, Etiquette 3, Iaijutsu 3, Investigation 2, Kenjutsu (Katana) 4, Kyujutsu 2, Lore: Law 1, Lore: Scorpion 1, Sincerity 2				
Mastery Abilities: May ready a katana as a Free Action; adds +1k0 to damage with swords				
Advantages/Disadvantages: n/a				

Part Three: Burning Steel

Once Mikane has been confronted, the PCs are able to retire for the night. As it happens, allying with Kimetiko has an additional benefit: she is willing to host them as her guests, sparing the PCs the difficulty of trying to find an inn with rooms available during the festival. Kimetiko’s residence is not substantial, but

she is a gracious host, offering what hospitality she can provide without hesitation.

By the following morning, a dark haze hangs over the city, and much of the Warehouse Quarter is in flames. Firefighting gangs have battled the fires and each other all night, and it seems likely that many more exhausting hours or even days might be ahead before the blazes have been completely dealt with. Kimetiko receives reports throughout breakfast from couriers about damage done and lives lost, and though she is unwilling to speak of specifics, her expression tells the grim story all too well. While they eat, however, she does pass along one report that seems less relevant to her position: *“Hmm. Interesting. According to this letter, someone or something stole the Armor of Earth from Shiro Utaku. Xieng-Chi has apparently described it as an oni and accused the Lion of harboring the maho tsukai responsible for the theft. That should prove... disruptive.”* Kimetiko has a sour twist to her mouth as she reads, but Tsumerai exchanges a worried look with the PCs. If they ask, however, she has no additional information.

Tsumerai encourages a swift departure once breakfast is done. As the PCs leave Kimetiko’s home, they encounter the magistrate’s two yoriki returning from their long night’s efforts – the two men are covered in soot and wear their exhaustion plain on their faces. Many of the city’s other inhabitants look similar, and a thin layer of ash seems to somehow cover everything.

By noon, however, the PCs have left Ryoko Owari Toshi behind them, following the lead of the Yari once more. By now, Tsumerai can feel that the Katana of Fire is fairly close, and he sets a hard pace, one that takes the group northwest, into the mountains.

It is late afternoon when you reach the foothills of the Spine of the World Mountains, the mighty range that splits Rokugan almost perfectly in half. You are many miles from Beiden Pass, the one easy way through the range, but it becomes steadily clearer that your destination lies not beyond the mountains, but somewhere within them. After a long hour’s trek up toward the peaks, Tsumerai suddenly stiffens and points up and to the left. “It’s there,” he says, gesturing with the invisible weapon he still carries.

The mountain in question is thickly covered with grasses and low shrubs, but Tsumerai leads the group unhesitatingly to what looks like a staircase hidden within the greenery. The stairs are set into the living stone of the mountain itself, and though at first it appears as though they have been carved, an **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** roll, TN 20,

reveals that there are no actual marks of tools on them – it is as though the stairs simply appeared on the rock, or were melted into them.

A character who succeeds on a **Lore: History** or **Lore: Scorpion / Intelligence** roll, TN 25, recognizes this particular mountain. (Three Ranks in Lore: Oracles or a similar specific Skill will grant the following information as well.) Almost two decades previously, it was the site of one of the most unusual events in recent history, and one of the most shameful for the Scorpion. The Oracle of Fire came to this mountain, melting stairs and a cave into the side of it, when he had decided to choose his successor as the Oracle. His choice was an eta of the Scorpion, however, and the Scorpion were so offended by that decision that they attempted to murder the Oracle with a magical weapon that would have transferred the Oracle’s power to a Scorpion samurai instead. Their plans were thwarted by a mixed group of Clan samurai, but not before the Oracle’s rage had severely damaged Shiro no Shosuro and much of the surrounding countryside.

The stairs wind their way up the mountainside, cutting back and forth across the steep slope. The effort of climbing so many stairs is wearying, but Tsumerai’s pace never flags. Soon, a distant glitter near the mountain’s peak catches your eye, the flickering flame of a bonfire or raging forge. Even as you see it, though, several shadowy shapes pass before it and seem to disappear into the mountain itself.

Another few moments of hurried climbing brings the PCs to the small ledge outside what was once the Oracle’s cavern. It is long but narrow, only offering room for a single samurai to walk safely along it, and ends at the cave’s broad entrance. Unfortunately, that entrance is now covered by a sheet of mystic flame, a barrier left behind by the Oracle to protect the holy site.

The entrance to the cave is tantalizingly close, but between you and your goal is a shimmering wall of flame, a searing barrier that completely covers the cave entrance. Within its flickering red and yellow glow you can make out what look like kanji, white-hot and dancing in the heat, but still legible:

“It was my flame that consumed Doji Tanaka, Akodo Godaigo, and Asahina Mifune.”

It is a riddle, and solving it is the key to getting past the fiery barrier. The answer is “Passion,” and speaking the answer as a PC attempts to pass the barrier will allow him or her to avoid taking any damage from the heat. If none of the PCs are able to solve the riddle outright, allow them a **Lore: History / Intelligence** roll

to recognize the names (they gain the information for all TNs that their roll exceeds):

- TN 15: Doji Tanaka was Champion of the Crane Clan just prior to the first rise of Iuchiban. Tanaka was given the Bloodsword called Passion, and it drove him to confess his love for a 13 year old geisha before the Imperial Court, and then hurl himself into the sea.
- TN 20: Akodo Godaigo was the lover of Matsu Hitomi, who had betrayed a sworn oath to avoid having to assault a stronghold under Godaigo's command. After Hitomi killed the general to whom she was sworn with her bare hands, Godaigo set out to bring her to justice. As she died, Hitomi's fury at Godaigo's betrayal lead her to curse him to undeath, a curse under which he is said to still linger.
- TN 25: Asahina Mifune was a Crane lord who built Kyuden no Kin, one of the richest and most wealthy castles in Rokugan's history, in order to woo his beloved, a samurai-ko of the Dragon. Once they were married, however, the castle's wealth drew the attention of a bandit gang, who killed Mifune's wife in an attempt to gain access to Mifune's fortune. In his grief, Mifune cast a spell that drew his castle out of Ningen-do forever, leaving only rumors of hauntings around the site.

Passing through the barrier without speaking the riddle's answer deals 3k3 Wounds of fire damage. Protective efforts such as wrapping ones head and limbs in wet cloth can reduce the damage to 3k2 (or less, depending on how clever the players are). In some cases, PCs might even find a way to bypass the barrier entirely, such as through the use of a spell like Embrace of Kenro-Ji-Jin. As this is fundamentally a test of wits and cleverness, such efforts are to be encouraged (though it is unlikely an entire table of PCs would be able to bypass the barrier in such fashion anyway).

Once the PCs pass the first barrier, they find a short passage, perhaps twenty feet long, that curves gently to the left. At the far end is another fiery barrier; this one too has a riddle on it:

"I am the dusty shadow of a hunger sated, but spread on the earth I bring new life."

This time, the answer is "Ashes," and again, speaking the solution as the character steps through the barrier prevents any damage; otherwise, the PC takes 3k3 Wounds as before. A successful **Lore: Nature** or **Craft: Farming / Intelligence** roll at TN 20 (or having

two Ranks in the Craft: Farming Skill), allows a PC to figure out the answer, if the PCs cannot come up with the solution on their own.

The Katana in the Mountain

Once through the entrance passage and past the second barrier, the PCs are treated to an astonishing sight:

The cave is a wide hemisphere, about forty feet across and twenty feet high, with shining black walls made of volcanic obsidian. In the center of the room, two tall pillars of flame, fed by no fuel and producing no smoke, send bright light flashing around the space. Between them, a katana is buried several inches deep into the raw stone, fire flickering along its blade and a small pool of glowing red rock around it.

While these things would normally draw the eye and the awe of any samurai who looked on them, now they are just the backdrop to an extraordinary confrontation. Just in front of the pillars of flame, a swarm of black-clad Goju circle what looks like a ten-foot-tall bushi in full armor, but composed of nothing but solid fire. The Goju leap toward the fiery samurai, attacking with shadowy weapons, and the samurai strikes back with its blade and bursts of hurled flame. With every strike that lands, the burning figure roars in what sounds like pain and fury, its light dimming and its heat fading.

The burning samurai is a bound kami, instantly recognizable as such to any shugenja, and to any other character that succeeds on a **Lore: Theology** or **Spellcraft / Intelligence** roll, TN 10. The kami was placed here by the Oracle as a guardian, much like the barriers, but now the Goju are attempting to unmake it so that they can claim the Katana of Fire for themselves. The pain of the Nothing's touch has driven the kami mad, and it now lashes out at friend and foe alike, throwing balls of fire indiscriminately throughout the chamber.

There is one Goju Assassin for every combat-capable PC, plus the Goju Lieutenant (unless the Lieutenant was destroyed in Ryoko Owari). In addition, three more Goju face off against Daidoji Tsumerai, and another three continue their assault on the fire kami in the center of the chamber.

During the Reactions Stage of each Combat Turn during this battle, the fire kami hurls its flame at two randomly determined targets, one each from among the PCs and their opponents. These attacks never miss and deal 4k2 Wounds of fire damage, but the kami never

targets the same character twice in a row. Due to the bright light from the pillars of fire, none of the Goju's abilities that involve shadows or dim lighting work here.

Goju Assassins

Air 4	Earth 2	Fire 2	Water 3	Void 3
		Agility 4		
Honor 0.1		Status - 10.0	Glory 0.0	

Armor TN: 25

Reduction: 0

Attack: 6k4+5 (claws)

Damage: 5k3 (claws)

Initiative: 5k4

Shadow Rank: 3; **Taint Rank:** Lost (rank 5)

Powers/Weaknesses: *Lost:* Cannot spend Void Points or call Raises, adds 5 to the total of all rolls using a physical Trait

Above the Elements: All elemental magic targeting it suffers a +10 TN penalty, but maho targeting it gains a Free Raise

Master of Shadows: Gains +5k0 to Stealth rolls

Uncanny Speed: Gains Swift 2

Shadow Walk: can take a Simple Action to step into a shadow large enough to contain it and emerge from another within 100 ft.; cannot pass through a solid object this way

Shadowsight: Can see in shadows or dim light as easily as daylight, and gains 3 Free Raises on Contested Investigation rolls made to perceive characters using Stealth to hide in shadows

Shadowblend: Gains 3 Free Raises when using Stealth to conceal itself, and may move at full speed without penalty while using Stealth; also, gains +2k1 to attack rolls made in shadowy areas or dim lighting

Wounds: 13: +0; 20: +3; 27: +5; 34: +10; 41: +15; 48: +20; 55: Down; 62: Dead

Goju Lieutenant

Air 4	Earth 3	Fire 2	Water 3	Void 5
		Agility 4		
Honor 0.1		Status - 10.0	Glory 0.0	

Armor TN: 25

Reduction: 0

Attack: 8k4+5 (claws)

Damage: 6k3 (claws)

Initiative: 6k4

Shadow Rank: 5; **Taint Rank:** Lost (rank 5)

Powers/Weaknesses: *Lost:* Cannot spend Void Points or call Raises, adds 5 to the total of all rolls using a physical Trait

Above the Elements: All elemental magic targeting it suffers a +10 TN penalty, but maho targeting it gains a Free Raise

Master of Shadows: Gains +5k0 to Stealth rolls

Uncanny Speed: Gains Swift 2

Shadow Walk: can take a Free Action to step into a shadow large enough to contain it and emerge from

another within 500 ft.; cannot pass through a solid object this way

Shadowsight: Can see in complete darkness as easily as daylight, and gains 3 Free Raises on Contested Investigation rolls made to perceive characters using Stealth to hide in shadows

Shadowblend: Gains 3 Free Raises when using Stealth to conceal itself, and may move at full speed without penalty while using Stealth; while wrapped in shadows, has no physical existence, preventing any attacks but also all damage not from a crystal weapon or effect specifically targeting the Lying Darkness; also, gains +2k2 to attack rolls made in shadowy areas or dim lighting

Shadowshape: As a Complex Action, may take on the shape and appearance of any person studied for at least one full Round; can only be discovered by deliberate study and a Perception Roll, TN 10

Wounds: 18: +0; 27: +3; 36: +5; 45: +10; 54: +15; 63: +20; 72: Down; 81: Dead

If the PCs manage to defeat their opponents, you can assume that Tsumeraï and the bound kami manage to defeat their foes as well, though Tsumeraï is severely wounded. Once the Goju are gone, the kami calms down, ceasing its attacks and merely watching the PCs warily. As the last of the Goju boils away into shadows and nothing, it leaves behind a massive set of armor, seemingly somehow carried within the Goju's body. The armor is heavy and misshapen, and looks as though it were carved out of rock rather than forged or woven together. It is the Armor of Earth, stolen from Shiro Utaku by these same Goju, and rightfully the property of Utaku Xieng-Chi.

Even as the PCs reach for the Armor, the air ripples with new heat, and suddenly, there is someone else in the chamber:

In a burst of light and flame, a man appears in the center of the room, next to where the Katana of Fire is buried in the stone. He is tall and slim with a slightly arrogant twist to his lips, and he wears a kimono of brilliant reds and yellows, as though fire itself were seared into the silk. A dim glow seems to flicker behind his eyes as he looks around the room. "I greet you, samurai," he says calmly, and his voice echoes oddly off the walls. "I am Norikazu, Oracle of Fire."

After the PCs respond in whatever manner they choose, Norikazu continues, *"You have done us a great service, although it is likely few will ever know of it. Sadly, you have not done all that was needful – but then, that was never going to be the case. You have done some, however, and you have my gratitude."*

It is likely that the PCs will want to ask questions of the Oracle; that is, after all, what Oracles are known for. If they do so, however, Norikazu looks pained. *“My sister’s death was... unexpected. The universe is now like a panicked horse, running where it wills, and no one can say what path it will take. I have no answers for you, samurai – all I can offer is my prayers that our course will change before we leap off the precipice.”*

If at least one PC dreamt of the Fire Dragon at the beginning of the adventure, Norikazu goes on, *“I can, however, offer one thing before I go.”* The Oracle reaches out and draws forth the Katana of Fire from the stone. *“You have done much for me, and I will repay that debt as best I can. One day, when you have need of the Fire, I will send this blade to you. Its destiny, like that of all of us, is clouded to me now, but I can arrange that much.”* Any PC who is “attuned” to the element of Fire receives the Oracle of Fire’s Promise cert.

With that, Norikazu takes the Katana and bows once more. There is another burst of heat and light, and he and the blade are gone, leaving the PCs and Tsumerai alone in the chamber with the Armor of Earth and the bound kami, still watching them carefully. As they collect the pieces of the Armor, Tsumerai’s eyes go wide, and he looks southward with a desperate expression. *“The Gunsen of Water,”* he says. *“It’s gone too. We’ve lost it and the Mempo of Void.”*

Proceed to the Conclusion.

Part Four: Tides of Battle

The group departs the monastery just before dawn the following morning, and by midday, they have made substantial progress returning to the main road that follows the River of Gold. A patrol of Usagi bushi meets the party as they reach the river, and Tsumerai is quick to inform them of the slaughter at the Monastery of the Cherry Blossoms. The Hare look alarmed, particularly at the mention of Goju, and while two riders quickly depart the patrol and begin riding hard for a nearby duty post, the patrol leader produces a crystal pendant and quickly and professionally tests the entire party for a reaction to it. Any complaints are met with a polite, “Your pardon, samurai-san, but this testing occurs under the Emperor’s law; crystal testing is mandatory in any circumstance where the minions of the Lying Darkness might be found.” A **Lore: Law / Intelligence** roll, TN 15, confirms that Toturi I did issue such a decree just after the Battle of Oblivion’s Gate, and the law has never been rescinded. The patrol

leader proceeds to test his entire squad as well, while his second-in-command produces a pendant of her own and tests him. Satisfied, they allow the party to pass on. If anyone in the group requests a crystal pendant of their own, the Hare shakes his head, replying regretfully, “We have only these two, and our duty does not allow us to go without the pair. We must always have a back-up with us.”

The Yari of Air leads the group south, along the River of Gold, through the territories of the Hare and Fox Clans, over the next two days. The skies slowly cloud over as they go, and soon a steady rain is falling, turning the road into thick mud and swelling the small creeks that feed the River of Gold as the group passes by. The river trade is both profitable and tempting for bandits, so despite the rain, traffic along the road is heavy – and heavily guarded. Many of the merchants are headed south from the Scorpion and Unicorn lands toward the bustling markets of the Yasuki and Daidoji in the south, but travelers to and from nearly every part of the Empire can be found along the river.

As the PCs leave Kyuden Kitsune Toshi on the morning of the third day after departing the Monastery of the Cherry Blossom, they begin to notice a new kind of traveler heading north along the river: peasants with sorrowful expressions and battered clothes, whole families with what seem like a lifetime’s worth of possessions on their backs, all drenched to the skin and covered in mud. Several times one group or another is stopped and turned back by samurai patrols, and with a TN 10 **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll, the PCs can use these discussions to find out what has driven these people out of their homes:

- A few hours after the earthquake that followed the PCs’ dream, a tsunami swept across the southern portion of the Empire, battering Kenkai Hanto, the Peninsula of Hardened Waters, that separates Earthquake Fish Bay from the Sea of Amaterasu. (If any PCs have an Oath of Fealty to an Asahina or Yasuki daimyo or to Daidoji Nayoko, the tsunami hit just hours after they left.) Homes across the peninsula were destroyed, farms and fields were flooded, and many hundreds of lives were lost. Those who survived have begun to rebuild, but many have fled for other, hopefully safer lands, ones not so exposed to the wrath of the Fortunes.

If the PCs make a TN 20 on the Courtier roll, they also hear this disturbing report, which should only add fuel to their drive to search for the Elemental Treasures:

- Someone or something stole the Armor of Earth from Shiro Utaku. Utaku Xieng-Chi, the daimyo of the Utaku family, described the thief as an oni and has publically accused the Lion of harboring the maho tsukai responsible for the theft.

Without papers or permission from their daimyo, however, many of the refugees are being forced back; even so, as the PCs continue their journey south, the flow of refugees increases steadily. Many beg the passing merchant caravans for food, clothing or a few zeni, but it is clear that the scope of the devastation would quickly outstrip any single samurai's compassionate generosity. As they travel, the PCs begin hear rumors from the refugees of bandits, looters, and even armies of samurai moving through the devastated peninsula, adding more pressure to the heimin's drive to flee.

The main road turns inland, toward the lands of the Sparrow Clan, but the Yari continues to point south, along the River of Gold, so the PCs are forced to trudge along peasant tracks through the steady rain. Many of the merchants who were traveling with them have turned aside, unwilling to seek out markets that have likely been damaged or closed by the tsunami; for the most part, the PCs are only sharing the "roads," if they can be called that, with the fleeing refugees.

Troubled Waters

As they pass south, the PCs are moving along the western bank of the river, on the opposite shore from the Crane provinces. Not long after leaving Kyuden Kitsune Toshi, the PCs spot what looks like a large contingent of samurai marching across the fields on the other side of the river. The samurai unit, several hundred bushi strong, wears the powder-blue armor of the Crane Clan, and the back banners of the officers mark them as Doji and Daidoji family troops. They are making slow progress across the rice paddies, but are clearly also heading south. Tsumeraï studies the unit carefully, but offers no comment and makes no indication that he wishes to change the group's course. The far bank has no clear paths at all, which is why the Crane army is making such slow progress; if asked, Tsumeraï insists that time is of the essence, so the PCs should stay on the western shore.

Over the next two days, the PCs see several more Crane units moving south, all under the command of Doji or Daidoji officers. By the time the party reaches Higashiyama Mura on the northern border of the Crab lands, they have seen many hundreds – a **Battle /**

Perception roll, TN 20, estimates around 2700 – of Crane bushi headed toward the peninsula.

Higashiyama Mura is a bustling trade center, more a small city than the village it is named, and normally sees far more merchant traffic than military interest. When the PCs arrive, however, the city has a tense, heavy air, and the Hida guards at the city gate are extremely thorough when they examine the PCs' traveling papers – especially Daidoji Tsumeraï's. The Crane samurai waits patiently while the guard captain studies his permits.

"Why would a man as important as Miya Rintaro be interested in someone like you?" the guard captain growls finally.

"With all due respect, Hida-san, the interests of the Imperial families are not yours," Tsumeraï says, bowing and taking his papers back. Any other Crane PCs receive similar treatment – patience is all that is required to get through the gates, but a short-tempered Crane might well earn a nonlethal duel if he or she doesn't maintain control of his or her temper.

At last, the Hida grunts and scowls, but allows the PCs to pass. Moving through the muddy lanes of Higashiyama Mura, the PCs see hordes of refugees filling the streets and alleyways, and substantial numbers of Hida samurai forcing their way through the crowds with identical thunderous expressions. *"Finding an inn will be impossible,"* Tsumeraï murmurs. *"We should move on and be prepared to camp on the road tonight."*

It is still just midmorning, so the PCs have little reason to stay. As they travel south from the city, they see a new sight along the River of Gold:

On the far side of the rain-spattered river, a large trading kobune has dropped anchor in a small cove, and two smaller vessels, both flying the mon of the Daidoji, are positioned alongside it. On the deck of the larger vessel, two Crane samurai can be seen arguing with the kobune's captain, while several more watch carefully from the smaller boats below. One of these latter spots your group and signals to his captain; a few moments later, the Crane boat has approached to within a few feet of the shore. "Ho, cousin!" calls out the captain to Tsumeraï.

"Ho, Daidoji-san!" Tsumeraï replies carefully. "To what do I owe this honor?"

"I am Daidoji Jowo, chui to Daidoji Areki and captain of the Falcon's Cry. I came to find out if you were in

need of any assistance.” Jowo is blocky and broad shouldered, with a dour expression and gravelly tone.

“I...” Tsumerai looks around at you before continuing, “I do not, no. My thanks.”

Jowo looks over the rest of the group with interest, greeting them politely and seeming to try to take their measure. If they ask Jowo any questions, he answers in a carefully neutral tone. As with many Cranes, he chooses his words carefully, with as much attention to the political implications as anything else. Some of the answers he offers to questions the PCs might ask:

- Do you intend to come ashore? *“My orders do not allow me to step on this side of the river at this time.”*
- What brings you to this area? / What is the nature of your mission here? *“You have heard about the tsunami, I trust? We are here to protect the peasants and restore order to the area, in the Emperor’s name. I have been given orders to prevent any ships from using this time of confusion for smuggling. It is the duty of every samurai to protect the Emperor’s peace and defend his laws, no matter what.”*
- What do you know of conditions further south? *“The wrath of the Fortunes, poured out over the land. I hear tales of hundreds dead in some provinces, entire villages wiped out. Black Crane Palace and the Asahina Temples still stand, but the walls around both have fallen in some places. This is why we are headed south; for the protection of the Empire’s citizens during these troubled times.”*
- Under whose command is your mission? *“Daidoji Areki is my commanding officer, but Daidoji Uji-dono himself gave the order for this operation.”*

Once the PCs have asked any questions they wish, Tsumerai bows to Jowo and says smoothly, “We should not keep you from your duty further.” Bowing in kind, Jowo signals his men to push back out into the river, and the boat moves quickly back across the water to the Crane shore.

After meeting Jowo, Tsumerai sinks into a thoughtful silence; he politely brushes off any attempts to engage him in conversation for the rest of the day.

Guests of Yasuki Wosame

As Lord Yakamo makes his way toward the western horizon and the PCs begin to look for a place to make camp, a group of Crab samurai appear on the road ahead. Their hands rest on the hilts of their swords and tetsubo, but their leader signals a halt several yards away from the PCs and bows perfunctorily.

“I require your traveling papers, samurai-sans,” the gunso says flatly. As at Higashiyama Mura, Tsumerai and any Crane PCs suffer additional scrutiny as they hand over their documents.

Once the gunso finishes examining them, he stares meaningfully at Tsumerai (and any other Cranes) as he says, “Welcome to the lands of the Crab, samurai-sans. I am Hida Tansuke, gunso of the Fourth Crab Legion. I regret to inform you that there are reports of bandits and other... undesirables... in the area.” He lets the words – and their implication – hang in the air for a moment before continuing. “Fortunately for you, if you continue along this road for perhaps twenty minutes, you will find the camp of Yasuki Wosame-sama, taisei of the Fourth Legion. You will no doubt appreciate the chance to stay in her camp as her guests. Ichiro-san” and he gestures at one of his men, “will accompany you to make sure you do not become... lost.” With a smile that is completely devoid of friendliness, Tansuke returns your papers and gestures for you to move along.

Under the circumstances, attempting to ignore Tansuke’s “invitation” would constitute an act of war (foreign samurai in territory they have not been given permission to enter), so the PCs have little choice but to accept the Crab’s “hospitality.” Tsumerai seems to be visibly grinding his teeth, but even so shows no hesitation in heading out along the path toward the Crab encampment.

The camp is right where the Crab gunso said it would be, a few minutes further along the road. It is a large encampment, covering nearly half a mile square, on both sides of a rain-swollen creek that feeds into the River of Gold. Tents aligned in military precision fill the space within a well-built wooden palisade, and the shouting of orders and the ring of steel carry through the air. A pair of temporary bridges cross the creek, and a single, larger tent occupies an open space along the near bank.

It is to the larger tent that Hida Ichiro guides the PCs. He stops in front of the tent, gives the PCs a curt, “Wait here,” then speaks quietly with the guards in front of the tent’s entrance for a few moments. The guards eye the PCs warily, but one nods and steps inside after a moment, while Ichiro heads into the camp without

another word. Tsumerai exchanges glances with the PCs, but after a moment, the guard returns and bows. *“Samurai-sans, if you would enter, you have an interview with Yasuki Wosame-sama.”*

Wosame’s tent is about fifteen feet across, with a single writing desk, weapon stand, and tatami mat inside. The only concessions to comfort are a handful of cushions scattered across the hard dirt floor (the tent was seemingly erected before the rains began). Wosame herself is above-average height for a Rokugani woman; her strong shoulders and jaw hint at more than a touch of Hida blood in her. Though her family is mostly composed of traders, she is a trained and skilled warrior, one who earned her position through proven ability. As a result, she is strongly suspicious of any Crane samurai and his traveling companions who just “happening” to wander into her camp.

“I am Yasuki Wosame,” the taisa says, bowing slightly. She gestures to another man seated on a cushion by the tent wall, a swarthy Crab with a hawk-like stare and a vicious scar along one cheek. “This is my second-in-command, Toritaka Shoseki. Samurai, your papers have already been checked and so your names are known to me. However, what I need to know now is what you are doing here.”

Wosame first directs the question to any Crabs in the group, trusting in Clan loyalty to guarantee honesty. Afterward, she asks the rest of the PCs, one at a time, what their business is. She attempts to assess each PC’s Honor Rank (her **Lore: Bushido / Awareness** pool is 7k4), asking the highest Honor PCs before the lower Honor ones; she always asks any Crane last, however. Throughout the questioning, Shoseki continues his silent vigil, listening without comment to the PCs’ words.

The PCs may give Wosame any answer they like – lying should cost the PC Honor as usual, but Wosame seemingly accepts any story the PCs might offer, as long as the stories match. Conflicting tales should cost the PCs – all the PCs, regardless of whether they told the truth or not – one point of Glory. The truth, however, impresses her; if the PCs all tell the same story about being chosen by the Elemental Dragons to fight Goju and save the Elemental Treasures, she nods seriously and says, *“Your mission is important, samurai-sans. I will arrange for an escort for you so you suffer no further delays,”* an offer she genuinely means.

Unfortunately, she will not have the opportunity to make good on her offer.

The Drowned Taisa

The Crab provide the PCs with a “guest tent;” if the PCs did not impress Wosame, the tent is guarded by a pair of Yasuki bushi. Regardless, Tsumerai is sufficiently paranoid, thanks to his surroundings, that he suggests watches, two people each watch, to guard against “misunderstandings” with the group’s Crab hosts.

Despite his misgivings, however, the night passes uneventfully – which is to say, that the trouble does not begin until shortly after sunrise the next morning. Even as the PCs ready themselves for the new day, a Crab soldier – it is in fact Hida Tansuke, the Hida gunso the PCs met on the road the day before – muscled his way into their tent, a shocking breach of protocol matched only by the hard-faced expression the Hida wears.

“Your boldness in simply returning to your tent is most impressive, Daidoji,” Tansuke snaps to Tsumerai. “Unfortunately for you, we found the remains of your handiwork before you had a chance to depart.” Tansuke looks murderous, even as Tsumerai looks deeply confused. “Daidoji Tsumerai, you are under arrest for the murder of Yasuki Wosame. You will come with me now.”

Normally, arresting a samurai requires an Order of Appearance from a magistrate, but within the bounds of a military camp like this one, arrests can be made without such legal niceties. Conviction and sentencing still requires a magistrate’s intervention, but when military units are involved, these things are often handled in an “expedited” fashion. (If any PC questions the matter, a **Lore: Law / Intelligence** roll, TN 15, clarifies the situation.)

With a stunned look, Tsumerai allows himself to be led out, though he still tightly grips his invisible yari. The PCs will be perfectly aware that Tsumerai had no chance to murder anyone during the night, thanks to the watches they set for themselves – at no point was he alone for more than two or three minutes. (He did have to use the privy once, but he went escorted by a guard.) Should they wish to protest Tsumerai’s innocence, Tansuke eyes them with disgust, as he believes they are defending a murderer, but all he says is, *“You may present your petition to Shoseki-dono. One of the guards will escort you.”* Once the PCs have collected their gear, they are taken to meet with Toritaka Shoseki.

Despite the confusion of a taisa’s death and his new position, Shoseki sees the PCs immediately. Their guards do not leave them this time, and in fact two

more, including Hida Tansuke, join them. All four of the large Crab bushi stand along the walls, watching the PCs warily as they have their interview.

The tent is much as it was the day before – the only differences seem to be the weapon stand, now empty, and the addition of a small chest at the end of the table. Shoseki eyes the PCs with the same hawk-like stare he used on them the day before; for a long moment, the tent is silent except for the sounds of the rain outside.

“You have come to offer testimony as to the innocence of Daidoji Tsumerai,” Shoseki says at last. His tone is neutral, giving little hint of his opinion of such an action.

The PCs are free now to say whatever they wish. Assuming they make some claims as to Tsumerai’s innocence – particularly ones involving a knowledge of his whereabouts throughout the night – Shoseki eyes them narrowly. ***“I do not question your words or your honors, samurai-sans. However, three guards near the western edge of the camp saw the Daidoji with Wosame-sama last night near midnight. It is on the basis of their testimony that the Daidoji has been arrested.”***

In truth, the testimony facing Tsumerai is weak enough that it would be unlikely an honest magistrate would agree to torture him for a confession; the testimony of the guards would be offset by the testimony of the PCs, and there is no real additional evidence or testimony to weigh against him. Waiting for a magistrate, however, would take time, time the PCs do not have if they are to meet their goal of reaching the Gunsen of Water before the Goju. Something else must be done.

If the PCs argue further, or make any suggestions that could be construed as beginning an investigation (such as, “Can we speak to the guards?”), Shoseki will raise a hand. ***“If you wish, I will allow you to attempt to prove the Daidoji innocent of this crime, so as to expedite your departure.”*** If there are no Crab PCs in the group, he adds, ***“However, I must insist that you allow Hida Tansuke-san to accompany you as you go about your search. For the sake of... security.”*** Tansuke’s eyes widen in surprise, but he seems willing – even eager – to keep an eye on the PCs as they go.

If the PCs suggest a duel to resolve the matter, Shoseki shakes his head. ***“I have no interest in such a thing at this time, samurai-san. If you wish to present your request to the magistrate when he arrives, you may do so then. Until then, however, the Daidoji stays where he is, unless you can provide additional testimony to persuade me otherwise.”***

Assuming the PCs agree to investigate the death, Shoseki shares with them the following information:

- Wosame was found underneath one of the two bridges over the creek in the center of the camp. Her body was discovered by a guard as he replaced another guardsman on duty. The body has been taken away for preparation by the camp’s eta.
- The last time anyone seems to have seen Wosame was shortly before midnight, when she was sighted by three guards near the camp’s western edge, along with Daidoji Tsumerai.
- According to the guards who found her, Wosame appeared to have been strangled to death.

Investigating the Murder

The PCs are given leave to move freely around the camp as they make their inquiries, but there are only a few places of actual interest to them. (Any attempts to wander into areas of military significance that are not connected to the murder investigation are derailed by Tansuke, who rather forcefully suggests heading in a different direction.) The most likely courses of action for the PCs are:

- Speak with the guards who saw Wosame and Tsumerai together
- Speak with the guards who found the body
- Examine the body
- Examine the area where the body was found
- Examine the area where Wosame was last seen

Each of these options is addressed below.

Speaking with the Guards

Finding the guards who provided the testimony that is holding Tsumerai is not difficult. All three are sober and serious bushi, and all tell the same story: shortly before midnight, Wosame was walking the camp’s perimeter, as she often did before retiring. About half way between the watch posts of two of the guards (the third was standing on the nearest bridge over the creek, and so had a higher angle but was further away), Wosame turned, looking out into the forest to the west, where a man in Crane armor was visible, waving vigorously to Wosame. She followed him into the forest and did not return. One of the guards saw Tsumerai when he entered the camp the day before and gave his name – all three have since visited him in the

stockade and are positive it was him they saw beckoning to Wosame. None of them are lying.

The guards who found the body are also easy to find, and again their stories match: about an hour before dawn, as their shift change occurred, one of the two men noticed a body in the creek, caught on the short pilings that support the small bridge over it. The bridge is a simple set of logs lashed together and supported by pilings driven into the creek bed – it would normally be several feet above the water level, but the recent rains have raised the waters to just below the bottom of the logs. The two guards used spears to pull the body out of the water by its clothing, and then called for help once they saw who it was. They saw bruising around her neck, and believe she was strangled and then dumped in the creek. Again, they are telling the truth.

Examining the Body

As the PCs have been told, Wosame's body has already been taken by the camp's eta for burial preparation. As it has only been a short time since she was found, however, the PCs have the opportunity to gain some information from the corpse before it is readied for the funeral pyre.

The eta section of the camp is in the furthest northwest corner, downwind of the prevailing breezes from the rest of the camp and with a large section of bare grass separating it from the tents of the samurai and peasant servants. A simple canvas awning keeps the rain off of a cleared work area in the center of the eta's camp, and Wosame's body has been laid on a table beneath it.

The eta workers are used to the presence of soldiers and the aftermath of death, and are less desperately fawning than many samurai might be used to for members of their caste. Nevertheless, they are extremely respectful and helpful as the PCs go about their investigation, performing any unclean acts of physical examination the PCs might require.

Wosame's body is pale and oddly bloated, but otherwise generally intact. Large bruises are clearly visible around her neck to even the most cursory examination, which was what led the guards who found her to the belief that she had been strangled. (This is, in fact, mostly the case.) There are other, smaller wounds on her body in several places, marks where ragged chunks of flesh appear to have been torn away, but there are no other obvious clues.

With a **Medicine / Perception** or **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** roll, the PCs can gain some additional information:

- TN 15: With the help of the eta, the PCs discover that there is water in Wosame's lungs, indicating that she was drowned rather than strangled outright.
- TN 20: A small number of the wounds on Wosame's body appear to be from spears, consistent with the guards' story of how they retrieved the body from the creek. All the rest, however, look to be bite marks, perhaps from a fish. None seem to have bled, which suggests they happened after death.
- TN 25: The bite marks are actually more consistent with a large turtle.

A **Lore: Nature** or **Hunting / Intelligence** roll, TN 20, suggests that the damage is too extensive to be the result of chance feeding by fish or other water-life in the creek; such a swiftly-moving creek would have few large animals to begin eating the body so quickly after death. The amount of damage would only fit with something beginning to eat her almost immediately after she died.

Examining the Area

The PCs will quickly determine that there is little to learn from the area where Wosame's body was found: the bridge is a main passage across the camp, and there are far too many tracks in the area to make sense of any of them. The swiftly moving current of the creek suggests that Wosame's body was likely carried by the waters from somewhere upstream, to the west, but there is little else to learn there.

Studying the area where Wosame herself was last seen hold more potential, however. The palisade surrounding the camp opens up to allow the creek to pass through it, and it was there that the guards saw Tsumerai beckoning to Wosame and where she disappeared into the night. A TN 20 **Hunting (Tracking) / Perception** roll reveals that there are only a few tracks through the rain-soaked mud along the creek there, and only one set leading along the creek bank away from the camp. Making a TN 25 on the Hunting roll confirms that only one person walked this path last night, beginning from the point where Wosame was last seen; "Tsumerai" seems not to have left any tracks at all.

The tracks lead away from the camp, into the trees to the west.

Up the Creek

If the PCs do not find the tracks along the creek, a basic knowledge of hydrology (assisted, if need be, by a **Lore: Nature / Intelligence** roll, TN 10) points out that the swiftly moving waters of the creek must have brought Wosame's body back into the camp from someplace further upstream. Regardless, the PCs should shortly find themselves (along with their Crab "advisor," if appropriate) heading west along the creek into the woods.

Less than a hundred yards from the camp, just within the first rows of trees, the PCs encounter a stunning sight:

Just ahead, perhaps ten paces away in the bushes that cling to the creek's edge, Daidoji Tsumerai crouches warily, looking back toward the camp with a worried expression. His eyes fall on your group, and he half-stands, waving silently for you to approach.

Though the illusion is nearly perfect, it is not truly Tsumerai who stands before them, but a mystical deception created by the true murderer of Yasuki Wosame, a greater kappa that has recently arrived in the area. It too is a refugee from the tsunami that swept through the areas to the south, having been forced out of its preferred grotto just north of Yasuki Yashiki; having fled from the chaos, it has resettled here, planning to prey on the Crab bushi encamped nearby, as well as perhaps some of the peasant and merchant traffic moving along the nearby river road. Currently, it is hiding under the water just at the creek's edge.

If the PCs have Hida Tansuke with them, the Crab bushi rushes forward, bellowing, **"Daidoji Tsumerai! Surrender yourself at once and return to the camp!"** Unless the PCs intervene, Tansuke approaches close enough to "Tsumerai" to trigger the fight with the kappa, below.

Otherwise, the PCs may respond however they wish. If they try to call out to Tsumerai or speak to him without approaching, he makes frantic shushing motions, as though worried about noise – this is a cover for the kappa's inability to make illusory sounds along with its illusory images. Wary PCs may have already begun to suspect there is something not right about the situation; if they challenge it in some fashion, the kappa maintains the illusion for as long as possible, making Tsumerai seem angry or offended by implications that he is not who he seems to be. Regardless, Tsumerai continues to try to draw the PCs closer to the creek.

Eventually, if they continue to refuse to approach, the illusion changes:

Suddenly, Tsumerai's eyes widen in shock, and he is somehow jerked off his feet, as though something has grabbed ahold of his ankles and pulled. A slimy tentacle wraps around his throat, cutting off any screams. Scrabbling in the dirt but unable to find purchase, Tsumerai is pulled backward into the water, his eyes full of desperate panic as he looks toward you for help.

Should the PCs continue to stay out of range, the kappa gives up on them – the illusion of Tsumerai is drawn under the water and disappears, and nothing more is seen of them. The PCs can return to camp and find Tsumerai is right where they left him, still under guard, clearly not having been drowned – questioning him and his guards (who think the inquiries are quite strange) confirms he has not gone anywhere since being placed in the stockade. If the PCs kept Tansuke from approaching, his testimony confirms that something that appeared to be Tsumerai was near the creek, but Tsumerai's presence in the stockade confirms that it was not the same man; this exonerates the Crane, freeing him. If there is a Crab PC, they may offer the same testimony. (Note that, in either case, the PCs have chosen to leave a threat to the Crab camp unaddressed, a decision that will cost them 1 XP at the module's end.)

If, on the other hand, any member of the group approaches the illusion, that character must roll **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** against the kappa's **Stealth (Ambush) / Agility** – the kappa receives a Free Raise on this roll because it is concealed under the water. If the PC loses this roll, the kappa is able to leap from the water and make a single grapple attack before regular combat begins. (If multiple PCs approach the creek, the kappa must overcome all of their Investigation rolls in order to gain this free attack.)

In a burst of water and fury, a large creature, nearly the size and shape of a man, hurls itself out of the creek. It is squat and humpbacked, looking like nothing so much as a bizarre mixture of human and turtle, with a sharp beak, scaly shell and beady eyes. A tiny ridged protrusion on its head, like a small bowl, holds a small amount of water.

Greater Kappa

Air 3	Earth 3	Fire 3	Water 4
Armor TN: 25		Reduction: 15	
Attack: 6k3 (claws, Simple), 6k3 (grapple, Complex)		Damage: 4k2 (claws), 4k2 (grapple)	
Initiative: 5k3			
Skills: Athletics (Swimming) 5, Jiu-jitsu (Grappling) 3, Stealth (Ambush) 3			

Powers/Weaknesses: *Aquatic:* Can swim in water at the same speed it moves on land, can breathe air or water equally, and never needs to make Athletics checks to swim.

Spirit: Takes only half damage from most weapons; elemental magic, as well as weapons made of jade, crystal or obsidian, damage it fully. (Apply this effect after applying its Reduction.)

Trickery: Can create illusions similar to the spell Mists of Illusion three times a day. Unlike the spell, the greater kappa's illusions can move if the kappa maintains Concentration.

Water of Life: If the water in a kappa's head bowl is spilled, the greater kappa loses all Reduction and all of its Traits and Rings are reduced to 1 (this leaves it with 6 Wounds per Wound Rank). This effect lasts until the greater kappa can immerse itself in water for one full day.

Wounds: 18: +5; 36: +10; 54: +15; 72: Dead

The greater kappa attempts to grapple opponents and drag them under the water; the creek is normally fairly deep at this point, and the rains have swollen it even further – it is more than 10 feet deep at this point. If the kappa begins its Turn in control of a grapple with a single character and maintains control of the grapple for that Turn, it can drag its victim up to its Water x 5 feet as a Free Action. If that is far enough to reach the creek, the kappa pulls the character under water. Once a character has been pulled under water, he or she can hold her breath for 1 Round per Rank of Stamina; if still immersed at that point, he or she begins drowning. Drowning characters take 2k2 Wounds per Round of immersion and are considered helpless (among other effects, this means that PC can no longer contest the kappa's grapple). If the character breaks free of the grapple while in the water, he or she can surface as a Free Action, and need only make a TN 10 **Athletics (Climbing or Swimming) / Strength** roll to scramble out of the water on their next turn. (This is a Complex Action; by Raising three times, the PC can make it a Simple Action.) Unfortunately, if Tansuke is the target of the kappa's attacks, he automatically loses all contested rolls to gain control of the grapple, and must hope to PCs are willing to save him.

Characters under water gain a +5 bonus to their Armor TNs; piercing or thrusting weapons such as arrows or spears ignore this bonus.

A **Lore: Spirits / Intelligence** roll, TN 15, allows a character to recognize the kappa for what it is; making a TN 20 on the roll is enough for the character to know specifically about the kappa's weakness from having the water from its head-bowl spilled. Any effect that renders the kappa prone, including Throwing it from

grapple (while on land) or performing a Knockdown maneuver, spills the water from its head-bowl. As the water is mystically connected to the kappa's own ki, it cannot be targeted separately from the kappa by magical effects.

Once the kappa is defeated, the PCs can return with testimony (and, if they wish, its head) explaining what befell Yasuki Wosame. Hida Tansuke, if he survived, offers an unbiased account of what occurred – if the PCs saved his life, he does not hesitate to acknowledge the fact or to offer his sincere gratitude for their efforts. Toritaka Shoseki studies the PCs with his hawk-like stare for some time before nodding briefly. ***“Very well. I am convinced. You have done the Crab a service by seeing justice done against our taisa's killer. The Crab do not forget such things. You may take your Daidoji companion and depart, with my thanks.”*** If Wosame offered the party an escort to the edges of Crab territory, Shoseki honors that pledge; if the PCs saved his life, Tansuke volunteers to be part of the escort detail. Tsumerai, once freed, is not completely gracious to his former captors, but his courtesy holds up well enough, and he does offer his heartfelt thanks to the PCs for their efforts on his behalf. Regardless, by nightfall, the PCs are well on their way south, once again following the lead of the Yari of Air.

Part Five: Endless Depths

The following morning, the rains finally end, and by midafternoon, the PCs have reached the mouth of the River of Gold, where it empties into Earthquake Fish Bay. On the opposite shore, the PCs can see some signs of the devastation wrought by the tsunami, visible even at a distance – dimly glimpsed piles of broken timber that were once houses, the half-crumbled walls of Yasuki Yashiki, and small groups of people dressed in white, holding funerals for their dead. Eventually, however, the widening mouth of the bay carries such scenes out of view, and the eastern horizon becomes nothing but a seemingly endless expanse of blue-green water.

Near sunset, the PCs reach the mouth of the bay, where the famous tidal landbridge opens and seals the bay's waters from the Umi Amaterasu twice each day. At high tide, the landbridge is covered by more than twenty feet of water, allowing passage for even the deepest-keeled vessels to enter the bay, while at high tide, dozens of yards of open ground stretch from the Hida provinces across to the tip of Kenkai Hanto. To the south, the great Carpenter Wall can be seen, marking the end of the Crab protectorate of the Empire, but Tsumerai's gaze is not toward the Shadowlands, but

instead out toward the waters to the east, where the low-ebb tide has just reversed itself and started to roll in.

“It’s out there somewhere,” he says, pointing east, over the crashing rollers making their slow march back over the landbridge. *“I think it might be on the landbridge itself, but we’ll need to try to cross the bridge just before low tide; that means waiting for morning.”* His gaze turns toward a nearby structure, just to the side of the well-worn path that leads across the landbridge. It is clearly a shrine of some kind, albeit a very simple one; it is plain and unadorned, and contains only a small table on which rests an ancient and battered kabuto. The helmet is marked with the mon of the Crane, and bits of powder-blue paint still cling to the kabuto’s weathered and rusted surface in places.

“This is the shrine to Daidoji Masashigi,” Tsumerai whispers, approaching it. “He was the Daidoji daimyo in the years just before the Kaiu Wall was built. It is said that one day, as he hunted on Kenkai Hanto, he looked across the landbridge and saw the forces of the Crab about to be defeated by a massive demon, Kenjiro no Oni. With just twenty samurai, Masashigi charged across the landbridge and attacked the Shadowlands forces, engaging Kenjiro no Oni in personal combat and allowing the Crab to withdraw, saving the life of the Crab Champion’s son. Masashigi held the oni and its forces on the landbridge even as the tide rolled in; as the waters swept over them both, neither samurai nor oni ever emerged. Only this helmet washed ashore a few days later, and the Crab built this shrine to honor Masashigi’s sacrifice.” Tsumerai looks up at you, his eyes shining in the last light of the sun. “I would like to make camp here tonight, if you are willing.”

Assuming the PCs do not object, Tsumerai quickly helps make camp, and then goes to spend some time in prayer at Masashigi’s shrine. If the PCs acquired a Crab escort from Toritaka Shoseki, the Crab samurai join him, and as the evening wears on, sake and storytelling appear around the campfire, as the Crab and Crane bushi swap stories of their ancestors’ bravery. Just before they retire, if Hida Tansuke is with the group, he offers a last toast to Tsumerai. “One day soon, Iron Crane, we will see each other across a battlefield. On that day, I will be honored to face you.” There is a long pause, as the Hida and Daidoji stare at one another, before each lifts their cup and drains it. In silence, the rest of the Crab drift toward their bedrolls, and drop off to sleep.

The next low tide is just after dawn, and so the PCs awaken in the grey light of the pre-dawn and prepare themselves. If they have a Crab escort, the escort remains behind – the landbridge is not Crab territory, and so their mandate ends here. As soon as the waters have exposed the sandy center of the bridge, Tsumerai leads the PCs out across it, staying tight to the southern edge, the rollers sending white froth around their feet as they go.

The sun rises over the bay to the east as the PCs travel, and the Yari continues to lead them across the bridge and out toward the sea. Finally, as the distant shore comes into view again for the first time and the tide reaches its lowest ebb, Tsumerai points ahead, south and east, toward a low rise, no more than 10 feet higher than the surrounding rocks but several dozen yards wide. In the side of the hill is the mouth of a sea cave, heavily shadowed by the rising sun beyond it. “There!” Tsumerai cries. “Within the cave! I can feel it!” He bursts into a run, scrambling over the sand and rocks in a furious rush.

As the PCs hurry toward the cave, they find themselves in a race against the oncoming tide, which has already begun to come in. Every roll of waves across the slippery ground is higher than the one before, and the rocks around the cave entrance create a dangerous riptide as well. The PCs must move quickly to safely reach the cave entrance.

Rushing toward the cave entrance, the PCs must first make an **Athletics (Running) / Strength** roll, TN 20. Raises on this roll will reduce the difficulty of the next rolls. The ground is slippery and littered with sharp rocks and hidden tide pools, making the area Difficult terrain – if a PC has a Technique or other special ability allowing him or her to move more easily through such terrain, that PC receives a Free Raise on the Athletics roll.

About a hundred yards away from the cave, the PCs meet the incoming tide, adding swirling waters to the mix of rocks and seaweed they were already trying to cross. This requires a second **Athletics (Running) / Strength** roll, this time at TN 25; every successful Raise on the previous roll reduces this TN by 5. Again, characters with easier movement abilities gain a Free Raise on this roll, and successful Raises will reduce the difficulty of the next roll.

The water rises steadily as the PCs get closer to the cave, and by twenty yards away, it is nearly chest deep. Moving quickly at this point requires a TN 15 **Raw Strength** roll, -5 for every successful Raise on the previous roll. Characters who failed just one of the

previous two rolls must instead make a TN 20 roll, as the water is even higher by the time they get to that point. Characters who fail this roll as well as characters who failed both of the previous rolls do not reach the cave entrance before it is covered by the tide and are forced to swim for it. (Tsumerai does not have to swim for it unless all the PCs do as well. If he is swimming with them, however, he will do his best to save any drowning PCs.)

Inside the cave entrance is a short passage, which first dips down for a short stretch before climbing back up again. The passage is thirty feet long; swimming characters can move their Water Ring x 3 feet as a Simple Action, or can make an **Athletics (Swimming) / Strength** roll as a Complex Action, TN 20, to move their Water x 10 feet. Failing this roll means the character makes no progress, while failing by 15 or more means that the character also takes 1k1 Wounds from the slashing rocks, and is now at risk of drowning. He or she must reach air in the next (Stamina Rank) Rounds or become helpless in the water, unable to take actions and taking 2k2 Wounds every round until rescued or dead. Also, if any character makes it into the hill's inner chamber without having to swim, combat begins the same round anyone who has to swim starts swimming; such characters should roll initiative and mark their progress round by round.

Inside the Cave

The sea cave opens up into an uneven chamber, broadly oval-shaped, roughly 45 feet across at its longest point and about 7 feet high. Stalactites and stalagmites litter the area, and brilliant crystals cover the walls and ceiling. The shape of the cave's entrance passage traps an air bubble within it, and the air is refreshed with each new low tide, so the PCs have no difficulty breathing. It is also lit, not by any natural or human-made source, but by a yellow-white glow emanating from one of the cave's two permanent inhabitants: the spirit of Daidoji Masashigi.

As you climb up out of the waters, you are surprised to see light ahead. All around, the cramped cave walls close in on you, but the space widens out as you move along, until a large chamber is revealed. On one side, nearest you, a sparkling column of water, running from floor to ceiling and clearly magical in nature, contains a mysterious creature, a strange figure that looks like a mix of jellyfish and crab, but it is larger than a full-grown man and its eyes, mounted on long waving stalks, hold a dangerous intelligence. At its feet, a black-clad Goju holds a knife to one arm, and blood spills over its skin to spatter on the cave floor;

the blood moves with an unsettling purpose, collecting in rivulets that stream over the rocks and into the column of water, where it mingles with the pale creature inside. A slow red flush seems to spread through the thing as the blood continues to flow. A handful of other Goju hover over the tsukai protectively, and they turn to face you as you enter.

On the far side of the chamber you see the source of the cavern's light: a glowing, translucent figure, dressed in resplendent armor and carrying a razor-sharp yari, both in the light blue and white of the Crane. The spirit samurai battles what seems like half a dozen more Goju that surround it like baiting wolves, and each of their attacks seems to dim the spirit's light and cause it to fade just a little more.

"Masashigi-sama!" Tsumerai cries, running forward, but the spirit shakes its head.

"No! The oni!" it shouts back. "Stop the tsukai!"

In addition to the kneeling tsukai, the Goju in the chamber equal the number of bushi and combat-effective shugenja in the party plus 5. Of these, Masashigi and Tsumerai together are battling six at the chamber's far end, while the remaining Goju – totaling one less than the number of combatant PCs, plus the tsukai – face off against the player characters.

All of the Goju but the tsukai immediately move to melee range, attempting to buy time for the tsukai to complete its ritual and free Kenjiro no Oni. The tsukai has linked what passes for its life energies to the oni, strengthening it while weakening the Goju instead. Each round, on its turn, the Goju tsukai loses one Rank of Earth – this does not reduce its number of Wounds, but affects any other rolls or abilities involving Earth. It can and does still cast spells, however. At the end of its third turn, its Earth drops to 0 and the tsukai dies; this sacrifice strengthens the oni enough to allow it to break free of its prison, at which point it enters the battle. In the meantime, the tsukai casts Blood and Darkness on the first Round of combat, then uses Curse of Weakness on any shugenja or Disrupt the Limb on particularly effective bushi.

The light in the cave is initially adequate to prevent the Goju from gaining their attack bonus from Shadowblend, but once the tsukai casts Blood and Darkness, those abilities kick in. Fortunately for the PCs, other than the tsukai the Goju can see in the supernatural darkness no better than can the PCs, and so much of their advantage is negated. (For tables of average Rank Three, the Goju assassins have Shadow Rank 4, which does allow them to see in full darkness

as though it were dim light, and so they gain the full benefits of their enhanced attacks.) The area of darkness does not extend the full length of the cave, so the area nearest where Masashigi and Tsumerai remains lit by Masashigi's light. Otherwise, the PCs suffer the effects of blindness while in the area of darkness: -1k1 to all melee attacks, -3k3 to all ranged attacks, base Armor TN (before bonuses from worn armor) of Reflexes Trait + 5, -2 Water for the purposes of movement and any Simple Move action requires an **Athletics / Agility** roll, TN 20, or the character is knocked Prone.

Finding the silent Goju in the supernatural darkness is no easy feat. While the PCs can battle any opponent with whom they are already in melee with no more difficulty than what is listed above, finding a more distant foe (such as after their current opponent has fallen) requires a **Raw Perception** roll, TN 25. As the Goju make no sound, this action relies on faint sensations of moving air and other, less-defined senses; as a result, a character that spends a Void Point on the Perception roll may also add his or her Void Rank to the total of the roll. Additionally, a character with the Zanshin Emphasis of Meditation may substitute a **Meditation (Zanshin) / Perception** roll for the Raw Perception roll if he or she so desires (such a character still gets the bonus if he or she spends a Void Point as well).

Goju Assassins

Air 4	Earth 2	Fire 2	Water 3	Void 3
		Agility 4		
Honor 0.1		Status - 10.0		Glory 0.0

Armor TN: 25 **Reduction:** 0
Attack: 6k4+5 (claws) **Damage:** 5k3 (claws)
Initiative: 5k4

Shadow Rank: 3; **Taint Rank:** Lost (rank 5)

Powers/Weaknesses: *Lost:* Cannot spend Void Points or call Raises, adds 5 to the total of all rolls using a physical Trait

Above the Elements: All elemental magic targeting it suffers a +10 TN penalty, but maho targeting it gains a Free Raise

Master of Shadows: Gains +5k0 to Stealth rolls

Uncanny Speed: Gains Swift 2

Shadow Walk: can take a Simple Action to step into a shadow large enough to contain it and emerge from another within 100 ft.; cannot pass through a solid object this way

Shadowsight: Can see in shadows or dim light as easily as daylight, and gains 3 Free Raises on Contested Investigation rolls made to perceive characters using Stealth to hide in shadows

Shadowblend: Gains 3 Free Raises when using Stealth to conceal itself, and may move at full speed without penalty while using Stealth; also, gains +2k1 to attack rolls made in shadowy areas or dim lighting

Wounds: 13: +0; 20: +3; 27: +5; 34: +10; 41: +15; 48: +20; 55: Down; 62: Dead

Goju Tsukai

Air 4	Earth 3	Fire 2	Water 3	Void 3
		Agility 4		
Honor 0.1		Status - 10.0		Glory 0.0

Armor TN: 25

Reduction: 0

Attack: 8k4+5 (claws)

Damage: 6k3 (claws)

Initiative: 6k4

Shadow Rank: 3; **Taint Rank:** Lost (rank 5)

Powers/Weaknesses: *Lost:* Cannot spend Void Points or call Raises, adds 5 to the total of all rolls using a physical Trait.

Maho: The Goju tsukai casts maho as a Rank One maho tsukai, with an Affinity for maho spells. It knows the following spells: Blood and Darkness, Curse of the Unblinking Eye, Curse of Weakness, Disrupt the Limb, and Sinful Dreams.

Above the Elements: All elemental magic targeting it suffers a +10 TN penalty, but maho targeting it gains a Free Raise.

Uncanny Speed: Gains Swift 2.

Shadow Walk: can take a Simple Action to step into a shadow large enough to contain it and emerge from another within 100 ft.; cannot pass through a solid object this way.

Shadowsight: Can see in shadows or dim light as easily as daylight, and gains 3 Free Raises on Contested Investigation rolls made to perceive characters using Stealth to hide in shadows.

Shadowblend: Gains 3 Free Raises when using Stealth to conceal itself, and may move at full speed without penalty while using Stealth; also, gains +2k1 to attack rolls made in shadowy areas or dim lighting.

Wounds: 18: +0; 27: +3; 36: +5; 45: +10; 54: +15; 63: +20; 72: Down; 81: Dead

Assuming the tsukai has not been killed by the end of its third action, Kenjiro no Oni breaks free of the magically created column of water holding it. If the PCs cannot see in the dark, all they hear is the sound of water suddenly spilling across the ground. If they can see it, the water column suddenly collapses in on itself, spilling over the cavern floor as though poured from an overturned barrel; on a forest of spindly legs, the oni scuttles forward, reaching out with its tentacles to slash at its enemies. (It should roll initiative at this time, taking its first action on the following Round.) Behind it, the water on the floor pools together, collapsing

inward until it takes on the form of a shimmering blue-green fan: the Gunsen of Water.

Kenjiro no Oni

Air 3	Earth 3	Fire 1	Water 4
		Agility 4	Strength 6
Honor 0.1	Status -10.0	Glory 0.0	

Armor TN: 20

Reduction: 10

Attack: 6k4 (tentacle, Simple)

Damage: 6k2 (tentacles, plus poison)

Initiative: 6k1

Powers/Weaknesses: *Multiple Attacks:* As a Complex Action, can make up to (Water Ring) tentacle attacks on separate opponents.

Spirit: Takes only half damage from most weapons; elemental magic, as well as weapons made of jade, crystal or obsidian, damage it fully. (Apply this effect after applying its Reduction.)

Tentacles: Can reach up to 15 feet away with its tentacle attacks.

Poison: Injects a paralytic poison; if it wins a Contested Earth Roll against the target, the target is Dazed (-3k0 to all actions, can only assume the Defense or Full Defense Stances, can make Earth Roll, TN 20, to overcome in Reactions Stage, TN is -5 for every previous roll).

Vision of Fu Leng: Can see perfectly in any kind of darkness.

Wounds: 15: +5; 30: +10; 45: +15; 60: Dead

As the oni is not supernaturally silent, attacking it in the dark requires no special considerations. On the other hand, if the PCs have no shugenja with them and the oni breaks free, Masashigi calls out, "Hold strong, samurai! Your ancestors guide you!" A feeling of warmth washes over the PCs, and they gain the ability to spend a Void Point to deal full damage to the oni on a single melee attack (as though using a jade weapon – this does not overcome its Reduction); this only works once, but the point need not be spent until after the PC has made his or her attack roll (but before he or she rolls damage).

Once the oni and the Goju are dead, the tsukai's darkness slowly fades, and light returns to the entirety of the cavern. If the PCs were successful in their battle against the tsukai and the oni, you can assume Masashigi and Tsumerai were successful as well, although Tsumerai appears badly wounded. As the darkness retreats, the Gunsen of Water, lying on the cavern floor, becomes visible. Nearby, where the body of the Goju tsukai should have been, a dark mask, its edges oozing slightly as though it were made of a viscous oil, also lies on the ground. This is the Mempo of the Void.

"One of my Clansmen brought the Gunsen here," Masashigi whispers, looking at it. "When I first battled the oni, I used Kotoku, the ancestral yari of the Daidoji, to pin it to the rocks within this cavern. Even after I died, I remained here to make certain the oni did not escape. Five years ago, another Daidoji – I do not know his name – brought the Gunsen and used it to somehow bind the oni, leaving it and taking the yari back to my family." Tsumerai looks surprised, and though Masashigi does not seem to notice, it is clear that he has heard nothing of this. "I could not kill the oni, but you have at last completed the task I began so long ago. Thank you, samurai."

Even as you reach for the Gunsen, however, the waters of the sea passage begin to roil and churn, and abruptly they surge upward, a long tendril of water extending out into the chamber. Within, a woman swims – or rather a figure that looks like a woman from the waist up but that has an eel's tail and fins instead of legs. She is unselfconsciously nude, her skin and hair a deep purple-blue, and her eyes are fathomless black orbs. The water tendril turns to point upward and she rises partway out of it, leaning back as though sitting against a rock. Her hair continues to drift through the air, as though pushed by underwater currents.

"I greet you, most honored samurai," she murmurs, and her voice echoes oddly throughout the chamber. "I... am the emissary of the Dragon of Water in this realm. What you call... an Oracle."

Once the PCs respond in whatever fashion they like, the Oracle continues. *"You have done much, and I thank you. You... have not done all, but then... you never were going to. We will all bear the price of that... but those currents carry us whether we wish it or no. Still, allow me to repay you for your... struggles on our behalf."* She lifts a hand languidly, and all the Wounds the PCs and Tsumerai have suffered are immediately healed.

If the PCs wish to ask questions of her, as Oracles are known for their ability to answer truthfully any question asked of them, the Oracle looks pained and does not reply immediately. *"I... cannot speak of these things," she sighs sadly. "The ship of fate lies shattered on the rocks, and we are all swept away by the tide. My eyes mirror things that will never be, now that our sister is lost to us. Swim, little samurai, or drown with your destiny."*

If any PC dreamt of the Water Dragon at the beginning of the adventure, however, she continues, *"I will promise you this, my little samurai. You must be*

patient, enduring, and strong, just as every wave washes away at the shore, and so the sea reshapes the land. If you are relentless as you reshape the future, know that the power of Water will come to you at a time you need it.” She picks up the Gunsen and looks it over. “You will see this again, though briefly. This, I will promise.”

If the PCs managed to prevent the oni from escaping, a similar scene occurs, but rather than simply taking the reformed Gunsen, the Oracle reaches out her hand, and the water column holding the oni collapses in on itself, becoming a silk fan with an image of Kenjiro no Oni wrapped within the coils of the Water Dragon on it. The Oracle smiles slightly as she looks the image over, then folds the fan up.

Regardless, once she has reclaimed the Gunsen, the Oracle sinks back down into the tendril of water, which withdraws back to the cave passage once more. Even as she does so, though, Tsumerai’s eyes go wide in shock. *“The Katana of Fire,”* he says. *“It’s gone. We have lost it, and the Armor of Earth.”*

Conclusion

Once the PCs have recovered either the Armor of Earth or the Mempo of the Void the adventure is essentially complete. Assuming they choose to return the recovered Elemental Treasure to its rightful owner (Utaku Xieng-Chi or Kitsuo Motso, respectively), their daimyo are granted favors by the grateful Utaku daimyo or Lion Champion, and those daimyo pass the rewards along to the PCs, earning each PC +3 points of Status and +2 points of Glory (Unicorn PCs gain an additional point of Status and Glory each if Xieng-Chi receives the Armor of Earth; conversely, Lion PCs gain an additional +1 Status and +1 Glory if the Mempo is returned to Motso). They also gain Daidoji Tsumerai as an ally, with Influence 1 and Devotion 4.

If, on the other hand, the PCs all decide to try to keep the Treasure for themselves, they will have to choose one character who can carry it. All PCs involved lose a Rank of Honor; the PC who winds up with the Treasure loses an additional Rank. Unfortunately for them, the Elemental Treasure then quietly disappears a few nights later, lost to the knowledge of Ningen-do – at least, for now. They also gain Daidoji Tsumerai as a Sworn Enemy.

If the PCs pursued the Katana of Fire, as they return to their daimyo they hear reports of a tsunami that struck the southern coast of Rokugan shortly after the earthquake that accompanied their dream of the

Elemental Dragons. Although central Rokugan was prevented from any real threat by the high cliffs that mark that portion of the coast, Golden Sun Bay and Otsan Uchi were also threatened; to protect the Emperor, however, Isawa Tomo, the Master of Water, led a group of Seppun and Isawa water shugenja in a protective ritual that kept the waves from harming the capital.

If the PCs pursued the Gunsen of Water, as they return to their daimyo, they hear reports of a great fire that burned a substantial fraction of Ryoko Owari during a festival to Inari. Ironically, while heavy rains flooded much of southern Rokugan, the north remained completely dry, allowing the flames to spread quickly. The loss of life and property is said to be substantial.

Either way, rumors also speak of rising tensions between the Lion and the Unicorn, as each accuses the other of having stolen sacred items, and while one side is mollified by the return of those items, the other insists that means that they are the true victims, and clearly all the previous protests from their enemies were simply an attempt to deceive the Empire about who is truly guilty.

And across the Empire, fearful peasants and superstitious samurai study the portents of darkness and wonder what they mean for the future....

The End

Rewards for Completing the Adventure

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

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

Experience Points

Surviving the adventure:	1XP
Good roleplaying:	+1XP
Saving the Katana of Fire or the Gunsen of Water from the Goju:	+1XP
Killing the Goju Lieutenant before it reached Atsumori’s home <i>or</i> killing or exonerating Shosuro Mikane <i>or</i> killing	

the Greater Kappa: +1XP

Total Possible Experience: 4XP

Honor

Characters who invaded Shosuro Mikane's home without the permission of a magistrate lose Honor as detailed in that section. Characters who try to keep the Armor of Earth or the Mempo of the Void lose one Rank of Honor, or two Ranks for the specific character who carries the Treasure.

Glory

Assuming the PCs return the Elemental Treasure to the rightful owner, they receive 2 points of Glory (3 points for Unicorns or Lions, as appropriate).

Defeating Shosuro Mikane in a duel earns the PC +1 Glory.

Other Awards/Penalties

Assuming the PCs return the Elemental Treasure to the rightful owner, they receive 3 points of Status (4 points for Unicorns or Lions, as appropriate), as well as Daidoji Tsumerai as an Ally (Devotion 4, Influence 1).

Characters who persuade Shosuro Atsumori they will keep his secret about Mikane's health gain him as an Ally (Devotion 1, Influence 2).

On the other hand, characters who blackmail Atsumori gain the Blackmail Advantage, worth 5 points, but also gain Sworn Enemy: Shosuro Atsumori.

Characters who killed the Greater Kappa and managed to impress Toritaka Shoseki enough to provide an escort gain a Minor Favor with the Crab Clan.

If the PCs tried to keep the recovered Elemental Treasure, they gain Sworn Enemy: Daidoji Tsumerai.

Module Tracking Sheets

Make note of the following items on each PC's mod cert:

- Which Element was the PC associated with?
- Which path (Fire or Water) did the PC pursue?
- Which of the following NPCs did the PC meet? By the time the module ended, did the NPC have a favorable or unfavorable impression of the PC?:

- Bayushi Kimetiko
- Toritaka Shoseki
- Hida Tansuke

- If the PC duelled Mikane, make note of that as well.

GM Reporting

Make sure to include the following information when reporting the module:

- Which Path did the PCs follow?
- Did the PCs return the recovered Elemental Treasure to Motso or Xieng-Chi, as appropriate?

If it was Fire:

- Was Mikane exonerated, killed, or never encountered at all?
- If a PC attempted to fight the fire and went to special effort to protect a particular location, detail that here.

If it was Water:

- Did the PCs kill the kappa?

GM must report this information BEFORE 9/3/2011 for it to have storyline effect

Appendix #1: NPCs

Daidoji Tsumerai

Daidoji Tsumerai is a hero without a hero's tale, but he has at last come to grips with that fact. Chosen by the Oracle of Air to be the bearer of the Yari of Air, Tsumerai spent much of the Clan War trying to be the hero his destiny seemed to demand of him. Astonishingly gifted at yarijutsu, Tsumerai nevertheless could not seem to find the key moment of extraordinary accomplishment that would, in his mind, justify the Oracle's choice. While he fought bravely and well against the Shadowlands on the Day of Thunder, many other worthy samurai fought just as bravely, and his unique gifts – nemuranai and otherwise – seemed to make little impact on the course of that fateful day, or any of the others leading up to it.

Eventually, however, he grew to see the value of small victories as well as larger ones and stopped working so hard to “earn” his place as the Yari's owner. Ironically, it was this wisdom that allowed him to be one of the strongest voices for peace during the Crane Clan civil war, and he was instrumental in bringing Daidoji Uji and Doji Kuwannon together at last. He still has not realized that this may in fact have been the heroic moment for which he long searched.

Now, Tsumerai is content to share his wisdom and unique yari techniques with other Daidoji, hoping one day to find in one of his students the great hero he still thinks he will never be.

Tsumerai has a youthful-seeming face, with sharp eyes and handsome features. Where once a smug smirk hung on his lips in his younger days, a more settled calm has overtaken him, and he is rarely without an easy smile.

Air 5	Earth 3	Fire 2	Water 3	Void 2
		Agility 3		
Honor 6.7	Status 2.5		Glory 4.3	
Initiative: 8k5		Attack: 10k7 (in Attack Stance, Yari of Air, Simple)		
Armor TN: 40 (Heavy Armor)		Damage: 6k4 (Yari of Air)		
Reduction: 5				
Wounds: 17 (+0), 25 (+3), 33 (+5), 41 (+10), 49 (+15), 56 (+20), 64 (Down, +40), 72 (Dead)				
School/Rank: Daidoji Iron Warrior 3				
<i>The Force of Honor:</i> Adds +1k0 to all attack rolls in Attack Stance, adds (Honor Rank -4) to Wounds at each Wound Level.				

The Shield of Faith: Benefits of Guard Maneuver last for an additional round; Armor TN when guarding is not reduced and guarded ally gets a total of +15 TN.

Strike Beneath the Veil: Can make melee attacks as Simple Actions.

Skills: Athletics 3, Battle 2, Defense 3, Etiquette 1, Iaijutsu 2, Investigation 2, Kenjutsu (Katana) 2, Kyujutsu 1, Lore: Crane 2, Lore: Elemental Treasures 2, Spears (Yari) 8, Stealth 2.

Mastery Abilities: Unimpeded by Moderate terrain and Difficult terrain only reduced Water by 1; need not reroll Defense when maintaining Full Defense; reduces opponent's Reduction by 3 on first Round of combat; +5 feet to maximum range of thrown spears; can ready a spear as a Free Action.

Kata: Iron Forest

Advantages/Disadvantages: Chosen by the Oracles (Air), Great Potential (Spears), Social Position (Sensei at Iron Crane Dojo)

The Yari of Air: The Yari of Air is one of the Five Treasures of the Elements, and is currently carried by Daidoji Tsumerai. It is a DR 3k4 yari, and it is so light and easy to move that it grants its wielder a number of Free Raises equal to his Air Ring; these Free Raises can only be used for the Extra Attack Maneuver. While it is held, the air kami around its wielder protect him as best they can, increasing his Armor TN by +10 against ranged attacks (not including siege weapons or similarly oversized projectiles). Invisible to everyone but its owner, although shugenja who Commune with Air can sense the presence of a powerful nemuranai, to Tsumerai it appears as an exquisitely crafted yari, whose mirror-polished point is inlaid with faint tracings of blowing clouds.

Bayushi Kimetiko

Bayushi Kimetiko is a woman in a difficult position: she is charged with upholding the law in a city that has no interest in the law whatsoever. What's worse, she is junshin, and her dedication to honor renders her an outcast among most of her Clan, depriving her of authority at the times she needs it most. Only two things have helped her maintain her position thus far: first, she is a close and trusted friend of Bayushi Yojiro, the Scorpion Clan Champion and a junshin himself, who understands her position and relies on her more than most, and second, she is extremely good at her job.

As a result, she and Ryoko Owari have come to terms with one another, in a sense. She focuses her efforts on lawbreakers whose activities threaten the entire city and

the well-being of its people, and the more circumspect outlaws keep their indiscretions carefully contained, allowing her to honorably avoid them – for now. It is not an arrangement she is completely happy with, but it is measurably improving the lot of Ryoko Owari's citizens, so she bears it as best she can.

Kimetiko was born a Shosuro, but married into the Bayushi family through Yojiro's influence. Her husband died during the Burning Sands Exile, and since that time, she has not sought another. Even Yojiro does not know why.

Air 4	Earth 3	Fire 3	Water 2	Void 3
Awareness		Intelligence	Perception	
5		4	4	
Honor 5.7		Status 4.5		Glory 3.2

Initiative: 8k5 **Attack:** 7k3 (katana)
Armor TN: 30 (Light Armor) **Damage:** 6k2 (katana)
Reduction: 3
Wounds: 15 (+0), 21 (+3), 27 (+5), 33 (+10), 39 (+15), 45 (+20), 51 (Down, +40), 57 (Dead)
School/Rank: Bayushi Bushi 3

Way of the Scorpion: Adds +5 to Armor TN against opponents with lower Initiative; adds +1k1 to Initiative rolls.

Pincers and Tail: Can Feint with one Raise rather than two.

Strike at the Tail: Chooses an opponent when chooses her Stance each Turn; if strikes that opponent, opponent is Fatigued; Fatigued opponent can make Earth Roll, TN 25, during Reactions Stage to overcome penalty, otherwise effect ends during second Reactions Stage.

Skills: Courtier (Manipulation) 3, Defense 3, Etiquette 3, Hunting (Tracking) 2, Iaijutsu 4, Investigation (Interrogation, Notice, Search) 5, Kenjutsu 4, Lore: Law 4, Lore: Underworld 3, Sincerity (Honesty) 3, Stealth 2.

Mastery Abilities: need not reroll Defense when maintaining Full Defense; may ready a katana as a Free Action; can reroll an Investigation (Search) roll once without an increase to the TN; gains +5 to the total of any Contested Investigation roll; adds +1k0 to the damage of any sword.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Ally (Bayushi Yojiro), Balance, Junshin, True Love (Bayushi Yojiro)

Appendix #2: Dragon Dreams

A Dream of Air

You first become aware of the wind, roaring through your ears, and the sense of impossibly fast movement. Opening your eyes, you see all of Rokugan, spread out before you like a general's war map, the ground unimaginably far below and nothing but the open night air to your left and right. Looking up, you realize that you are not flying, but being carried, hurtling through the sky in one of the massive claws of an Elemental Dragon.

The Air Dragon roils above you, its cloudy form looking like nothing so much as a thunderstorm in a serpent's shape. Lightning shoots through it, flickering blue-white against the night sky, and its eyes are sparks in the dark grey mists.

Looking back down, you see that the ground is closer now, as you approach a large lake, its surface covered in snow-white cherry blossom petals. On the far shore there is a small monastery, lit only by a single blue-white light. Peering closer, you see the light is a glowing spear, held in the hands of an indistinct samurai. All around the warrior, vague shadows, human-like figures with grasping claws, grow closer, and the samurai readies himself for battle. As he lowers his spear to face his shadowy enemies, the massive head of the Elemental Dragon looms into your view, and you find yourself almost swallowed up in its eyes. "GO TO HIM," booms the Dragon's voice. "PROTECT MY SERVANT. PROTECT THE EMPIRE."

With the words still pounding through your mind, you jerk awake. The pounding still seems to continue for a moment, and you realize that the ground itself is shaking – there is an earthquake!

The tremor is mercifully short, and you and your belongings suffer no damage from it. Within a few moments, however, you are summoned to a meeting of your daimyo's retainers, to discuss the earthquake and its significance. Your daimyo reports that the earthquake does not appear to have caused any serious damage; however, "Earthquakes generally represent the disfavor of the Celestial Heavens," the daimyo says, "or serve as warnings of dire events to come. Does anyone have any insights they wish to offer on this matter?"

A Dream of Earth

You first become aware of the wind, roaring through your ears, and the sense of impossibly fast movement. Opening your eyes, you see all of Rokugan, spread out before you like a general's war map, the ground unimaginably far below and nothing but the open night air to your left and right. Looking up, you realize that you are not flying, but being carried, hurtling through the sky in one of the massive claws of an Elemental Dragon.

The Earth Dragon looms around you, a serpent-shaped statue the size of a mountain, somehow seeming motionless while the world rushes past it. Its gem-like eyes glitter in the starlight, and each massive talon gleams like polished steel.

Looking back down, you see that the ground is closer now, as you approach a large lake, its surface covered in snow-white cherry blossom petals. On the far shore there is a small monastery, lit only by a single blue-white light. Peering closer, you see the light is a glowing spear, held in the hands of an indistinct samurai. All around the warrior, vague shadows, human-like figures with grasping claws, grow closer, and the samurai readies himself for battle. As he lowers his spear to face his shadowy enemies, the massive head of the Elemental Dragon looms into your view, and you find yourself almost swallowed up in its eyes. "GO TO HIM," booms the Dragon's voice. "PROTECT MY SERVANT. PROTECT THE EMPIRE."

With the words still pounding through your mind, you jerk awake. The pounding still seems to continue for a moment, and you realize that the ground itself is shaking – there is an earthquake!

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A Dream of Fire

You first become aware of the wind, roaring through your ears, and the sense of impossibly fast movement. Opening your eyes, you see all of Rokugan, spread out before you like a general's war map, the ground unimaginably far below and nothing but the open night air to your left and right. Looking up, you realize that you are not flying, but being carried, hurtling through the sky in one of the massive claws of an Elemental Dragon.

The Fire Dragon burns the air with its passage, and the raw, primal heat washes over you. Its scales shimmer like the air above a bonfire, and behind it, a gleaming trail like a falling star marks its path.

Looking back down, you see that the ground is closer now, as you approach a large lake, its surface covered in snow-white cherry blossom petals. On the far shore there is a small monastery, lit only by a single blue-white light. Peering closer, you see the light is a glowing spear, held in the hands of an indistinct samurai. All around the warrior, vague shadows, human-like figures with grasping claws, grow closer, and the samurai readies himself for battle. As he lowers his spear to face his shadowy enemies, the massive head of the Elemental Dragon looms into your view, and you find yourself almost swallowed up in its eyes. "GO TO HIM," booms the Dragon's voice. "PROTECT MY SERVANT. PROTECT THE EMPIRE."

With the words still pounding through your mind, you jerk awake. The pounding still seems to continue for a moment, and you realize that the ground itself is shaking – there is an earthquake!

The tremor is mercifully short, and you and your belongings suffer no damage from it. Within a few moments, however, you are summoned to a meeting of your daimyo's retainers, to discuss the earthquake and its significance. Your daimyo reports that the earthquake does not appear to have caused any serious damage; however, "Earthquakes generally represent the disfavor of the Celestial Heavens," the daimyo says, "or serve as warnings of dire events to come. Does anyone have any insights they wish to offer on this matter?"

A Dream of the Void

You first become aware of the wind, roaring through your ears, and the sense of impossibly fast movement. Opening your eyes, you see all of Rokugan, spread out before you like a general's war map, the ground unimaginably far below and nothing but the open night air to your left and right. Looking up, you realize that you are not flying, but being carried, hurtling through the sky in one of the massive claws of an Elemental Dragon.

The Void Dragon is a darker black against the night sky, its star-filled form almost invisible as it moves through the air. Around and behind it, you almost sense other serpent-like shapes in the darkness, but the shadows and starlight swallow them up as you try to see.

Looking back down, you see that the ground is closer now, as you approach a large lake, its surface covered in snow-white cherry blossom petals. On the far shore there is a small monastery, lit only by a single blue-white light. Peering closer, you see the light is a glowing spear, held in the hands of an indistinct samurai. All around the warrior, vague shadows, human-like figures with grasping claws, grow closer, and the samurai readies himself for battle. As he lowers his spear to face his shadowy enemies, the massive head of the Elemental Dragon looms into your view, and you find yourself almost swallowed up in its eyes. "GO TO HIM," booms the Dragon's voice. "PROTECT MY SERVANT. PROTECT THE EMPIRE."

With the words still pounding through your mind, you jerk awake. The pounding still seems to continue for a moment, and you realize that the ground itself is shaking – there is an earthquake!

The tremor is mercifully short, and you and your belongings suffer no damage from it. Within a few moments, however, you are summoned to a meeting of your daimyo's retainers, to discuss the earthquake and its significance. Your daimyo reports that the earthquake does not appear to have caused any serious damage; however, "Earthquakes generally represent the disfavor of the Celestial Heavens," the daimyo says, "or serve as warnings of dire events to come. Does anyone have any insights they wish to offer on this matter?"

A Dream of Water

You first become aware of the wind, roaring through your ears, and the sense of impossibly fast movement. Opening your eyes, you see all of Rokugan, spread out before you like a general's war map, the ground unimaginably far below and nothing but the open night air to your left and right. Looking up, you realize that you are not flying, but being carried, hurtling through the sky in one of the massive claws of an Elemental Dragon.

The Water Dragon rushes and flows, the movement of its head and limbs sending crashing waves and frothing whitecaps along its body. Its eyes are spinning whirlpools, and drops fall from its tail like rain.

Looking back down, you see that the ground is closer now, as you approach a large lake, its surface covered in snow-white cherry blossom petals. On the far shore there is a small monastery, lit only by a single blue-white light. Peering closer, you see the light is a glowing spear, held in the hands of an indistinct samurai. All around the warrior, vague shadows, human-like figures with grasping claws, grow closer, and the samurai readies himself for battle. As he lowers his spear to face his shadowy enemies, the massive head of the Elemental Dragon looms into your view, and you find yourself almost swallowed up in its eyes. "GO TO HIM," booms the Dragon's voice. "PROTECT MY SERVANT. PROTECT THE EMPIRE."

With the words still pounding through your mind, you jerk awake. The pounding still seems to continue for a moment, and you realize that the ground itself is shaking – there is an earthquake!

The tremor is mercifully short, and you and your belongings suffer no damage from it. Within a few moments, however, you are summoned to a meeting of your daimyo's retainers, to discuss the earthquake and its significance. Your daimyo reports that the earthquake does not appear to have caused any serious damage; however, "Earthquakes generally represent the disfavor of the Celestial Heavens," the daimyo says, "or serve as warnings of dire events to come. Does anyone have any insights they wish to offer on this matter?"