

Cold Hands, Stone Heart

**A One-Round Low/Mid-Rank Adventure for Heroes of
Rokugan: Spirit of Bushido
Month of Bayushi, 1138 (Early Fall)**

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Module Number SoB15
Release Date: 10/1/2011**

There is no greater wrath than that of a woman betrayed.

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

GM's Information

THIS SCENARIO SHOULD NOT BE RUN COLD!

Please read the scenario thoroughly before attempting to run it.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Glory and Honor Awards and Penalties

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

Reminder

This module is intended for entertainment purposes; this means that the goal is to provide an enjoyable playing experience for the players. The events of the module should be challenging, so as to ensure the players have a sense of accomplishment, but the mechanics presented here are, ultimately, guidelines. If adjustments are necessary to adapt to the specific group of players, it is suggested that care should be taken to ensure the player characters do have a reasonable chance of achieving their goals (or at least of achieving an entertaining failure). Remember that the GM has the final word at the table, and use that power with 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 TNs to resist Sakura's attacks begins at 10, and her Fear Rating is reduced to 3 (TN 20).

High End Party (most/all characters Rank Three): The PCs can gain up to two Ranks of Unluck by failing the rolls to resist the cold. Increase Sakura's Fear Rating to 5 (TN 30).

Adventure Summary and Background

The Itoshii Province of the Crane lands is one of the most bountiful and prosperous regions in Rokugan. This wealth is due largely to the fertile Doji Plains, which provide the Crane Clan with wealth in abundance, both from rice and silk works famed throughout the Empire. Doji Takuya, the daimyo of the Itoshii lands, is likewise known as one of the most sophisticated and elegant samurai of the Crane. With the able assistance of his wife, Doji Sumi (born Soshi Sumi), Takuya has built a reputation as a skilled courtier and the Itoshii province has regularly set the fashions for the entire Empire. Following the Clan War and the devastation of Kyuden Kakita, Takuya and Sumi have regularly hosted an "Autumn Moon Court" during the last month before Winter Court where fashion trends for the coming season are determined.

This year's Autumn Moon Court has been rescheduled and reorganized for several reasons, including the pregnancy of Doji Sumi. Since a high-ranking samurai lady is usually kept secluded during the last few months before the child's birth, she is left largely unable to participate in the actual court event as usual, and so the couple have decided to present a smaller function. The actual decisions usually determined at this court have already been made, but it still will provide emissaries from the Clans an opportunity to gain some face for themselves and their Clans before the winter season begins in earnest. The PCs will have been sent to

represent their Clans, with most of the more important samurai in the Empire dealing with more pressing matters.

Takuya's family is venerable and revered, and having held custody of the Itoshii Province in an unbroken line for over eight hundred years. Unfortunately, the family line also bears a curse that the PCs will find themselves dealing with: a *goryo* (the vengeful ghost of a noble who never received proper funeral rites) appears whenever a green-eyed child is born to the family to kill those who most love the descendant of her abuser. Sumi will bear the child during the festivities, and Takuya's son will be born with green eyes; the PCs must deal with the ghost before Takuya kills his son to put the vengeful spirit to sleep, or before the ghost kills them all.

Character Notes

Check the PCs' character sheets for the following:

- Dangerous Beauty Advantage.
- Gaijin Name, Haunted, Lost Love, or True Love Disadvantage.
- "Oath of Fealty" to Doji Takuya and Doji Sumi or Soshi Toshiro.
- Ally: Kyushu.
- Any "Ancestor" cert.

Introduction

The PCs have been sent by their lords to Kyuden Houjuku, deep in Crane lands, to participate in the famed Autumn Moon Court. (Ronin PCs have been hired by Tsi Tianlin as escort, with an agreement to provide maintenance for their gear in addition to 1 koku and a potential invitation to a Winter Court, depending on their performance.) This year's festivities have been delayed and greatly reduced in scale partially due to the terrible events earlier in the fall (see SoB14, "Emperor's Favor", for details). However, life must go on, and the Crane will proceed with their traditional duties as the trend-setters of the Empire.

The hosts of this event, Doji Takuya and Doji Sumi, are expecting the birth of their first child very soon (another reason that the Autumn Moon Court has been scaled back). The pair, whose marriage is said to be blessed by Benten, are known for their long-running courtly games, competing against each other by using the courts as "playing fields" with other courtiers as the pieces. It is expected that Sumi's pregnancy will severely curtail her involvement with the proceedings, however.

Gifts for the hosts are to be expected. While they are both known to be patrons of the arts (and other traditional Crane-related pursuits), a **Courtier (Gossip) / Intelligence** roll at a TN of 15 will inform any PC looking for more specific information that Takuya is a skilled horseman, but is especially fond of obscure sake; Sumi enjoys calligraphy and painting, as they relate to her favorite pastime: the game of letters. A **Lore: Crane / Intelligence** roll at TN 15 will inform the PC that traditional gifts for children among the Crane are small dolls (humans, cranes, crows, etc. note: owls are considered bad omens), mirrors, kites, and musical instruments (drums, bells, and flutes are the most popular). Clan samurai may have whatever gift they wish to bring provided by their Clan and brought in advance, assuming it's not too ambitious (no unique items or nemuranai like Doji's Tears, for example). Ronin must acquire gifts themselves. If they seem inclined to provide something inappropriate, an **Etiquette / Intelligence** roll (TN 10) will allow the PC to know that gaijin gifts are not appreciated here in the heart of Crane lands, no matter how fancy or expensive. Martial items (weapons and armor) are also considered inappropriate gifts.

If the PC chooses to bring a gift of sake for Lord Takuya, they should write down the name and a short description of it (flavor, potency, lore or amusing anecdotes about the brand) on their tracking sheet under "Player Notes", for use later in the module. Friendly Traveler or other famous brands are not considered "obscure", though they will still be appreciated. (This is an opportunity for the player to invent something new to add to the campaign, and a certain amount of creativity should be rewarded.)

PCs who have sworn fealty to Doji Takuya and Doji Sumi will be provided a set of beautiful kimono waiting for them to wear at the event, decorated with a variety of musical birds in trees upon a sky blue background. PCs sworn to Soshi Toshiro of the An'ei province will find kimono for them with the songbird theme as well, save that theirs are set on black nighttime and red sunset backgrounds. Both sets of PCs are present in the entourage of their Lords.

Crab PCs only:

If there are any Crab PCs, they are attending the Autumn Moon Court in the company of Yasuki Sawako, a courtier and merchant with a certain amount of expertise in the area of clothing and fashion. Sawako and the PCs have been sent to this Crane court to determine the Crane commitment to their aggression of the summer. This will most readily be accomplished in one of the opportunities to speak with the higher-Status Crane NPCs. (If there are no Crab PCs, it can be

assumed that there is no Crab representation at this event due to the recent conflict between the Clans.)

Dragon PCs only:

Mirumoto Uso, the Mirumoto family daimyo, wishes to congratulate Kakita Takezo on his appointment as head of the Kakita Dueling Academy. Any Dragon PC will be sent with a letter from Uso for Takezo bearing a message of goodwill and inviting the Crane to visit Iron Mountain dojo in the spring to attend the gempukku ceremony of some of the school's most promising students. How this message is received is largely up to the efforts of the PCs.

Scorpion PCs only:

Soshi Toshiro, daimyo of the An'ei Province and Sumi's father, is attending this year's Autumn Moon Court to observe the proceedings and judge the results of his daughter's marriage. Toshiro is widely known to be a loyal and ruthless samurai, and there have been whispers among the Clan that he is one of the most well-informed daimyo of the Scorpion. Scorpion PCs will be ordered by their lords to politely inquire into certain troubling rumors of internal conflict in the Scorpion Clan to discover what Toshiro knows about the situation. PCs who have sworn fealty to Toshiro himself will be briefed at the same time.

Arriving in Town

Though it lacks the artistic magnificence of Kyuden Kakita or the elegant splendor of Kyuden Doji, Kyuden Houjuku is a picture of prosperity and plenty. Low coastal mountains rise to the east of the small city, and situated as it is well away from any unfriendly borders, the walls are more formality than fortification. The provincial capitol of the Itoshii Province is surrounded by lush, bountiful fields and filled with artisans whose skills bring even more fortune to the region. The local silk works are famed through the Empire, and are the reason the Autumn Moon Court has become something of a tradition in recent years. No courtier wishes to attend court in last season's fashions, any more than a bushi would want to take their place on the battlefield clad in shoddy armor, and the Autumn Moon Court represents a chance for any samurai interested in making a good impression to learn what will be expected for them to be able to do so.

When the PCs arrive, a festival is in progress for the peasantry, as the harvest season has recently concluded and, as always, the province's rice and silk harvests were abundant. The streets are lined with ribbons and streamers, mostly prayers to Inari and the Frost Dragon, wandering musicians perform for the crowds, and the

large markets are doing brisk trade in everything from bolts of silk to spun sugar candies. Happy children fly kites on Kite Hill, just south of town – a nearby vendor, specializing in goblin and oni kites (“to scare away evil spirits!”), sells them from 3 zeni to 2 bu.

The PCs will have a day to compose themselves (or explore the city) before the official beginning of the Autumn Moon Court. Lodging is being provided at the Inn of the Golden Harvest: a fabulous, spacious inn used for visiting dignitaries and is notably a step higher in quality than most PCs are accustomed to. Perched on a hilltop, it boasts large verandas that overlook scenic fields and the gently rolling countryside. An older, smiling matron named Chiyo greets them at the door. The Golden Harvest serves nothing but the finest fish and teas – of note is the “Five Harmonies Blend,” which is produced locally and is ideally enjoyed watching the autumnal sunset from the western garden. A pouch of the tea may be had for 1 koku. Vassals of Doji Takuya and Doji Sumi will have been tasked with greeting the PC guests and showing them the parts of the city they wish to see.

The markets are busy, with merchants making arrangements to distribute the bounty of the harvest for the benefit of the Crane Clan. While martial equipment like armor or weapons is not easy to come by in the peaceful province, nearly any other basic item can be located. Clothing and accessories are prevalent, and generally of high quality. Songbird themes are particularly common, and a **Commerce / Awareness** roll at a TN of 20 will inform the character that this is likely to be a result of encouragement from the local lords and an indication of the themes of the event. Purchasing a songbird-themed kimono in the colors of any Clan is possible for 3 koku, and other items are available at the GM’s discretion. One of the busier shops is an umbrella vendor, selling decorative yet functional protection from the occasional icy rains that come over the mountains.

PCs who wish to make trade arrangements with local silk merchants may do so by succeeding on a **Commerce / Awareness** roll with a TN of 25. Unicorn PCs gain a Free Raise on this roll, but Crab, Mantis, or ronin characters must call one Raise in order to make the roll (making their effective TN 30). Koku can be spent to gain a bonus to the roll equal to the amount spent on a one-for-one basis, and Crane Clan Favors can be used to gain a Free Raise for every Favor spent. Success earns the character the “Trade Contract: Silk Merchant” cert.

The temple district boasts a sizable Temple to Inari, currently overflowing with thankful worshippers,

making it difficult to get into. There is also a large ancestor shrine dedicated to Doji-no-Kami and Doji Matsume, the Crane lord who built the castle and elevated the town to the provincial capital in 597. (A series of wall hangings depicts the transition during the reign of Hantei XVI, after the older estate was destroyed in a storm.) If PCs wish to offer prayers to their ancestors, the monks here have high-quality incense and a variety of other offerings available. If a PC wishes to appease an ancestor (especially if they have the Haunted Disadvantage), they may make a **Theology / Void** roll at a TN of 15. Track successes and any Raises made on this roll for later use in the module.

Announcements are posted through the city, and criers can be heard spreading the word of a performance by a local kabuki troupe. A large stage is set up in the central square, and at dusk, the play begins before an enthralled crowd. “*The Woeful Tale of Yotsuya*” is a seasonally appropriate work about the death of Yotsuya – betrayed and killed by her husband and his lover, she came back as an avenging ghost to haunt and torment them. **Lore: Ghosts / Intelligence** at a TN of 15 (another appropriate Skill, such as **Perform: Storytelling** or **Acting** may be attempted at a higher TN) tells the PC how *goryo* appear to avenge a wrong, such as their murder, because their body was not given proper burial rites, or because they were obsessed with some strong emotion at the time of their death (like revenge or jealousy). According to the stories, some *goryo* pursue their murderers until their death (like Yotsuya), some torment everyone the person loves, driving them to madness, and some have been known to attach themselves to items, such as the cursed kimono in the popular play “*Furisode*” (which is on the playbill for the following evening). The play itself is decent, and the actor portraying Yotsuya often goes out of her way to scare the children in the audience (and any PC with Phobia: Ghosts), much to the crowd’s amusement. She is dressed in the traditional portrayal of an angry ghost: long unkempt black hair, white and purple makeup, and a long white burial robe. After the play, the actors remain in costume and move throughout the festival, advertising for the next evening’s show. (Watching the play will help characters make the Lore: Ghosts check later in the module.)

Rumors

As a court event, gossip will freely circulate among the attendees. The following rumors are available with a **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll, TN 10; a successful roll learns one rumor at random, plus one extra rumor for every 5 points by which the roll beats the TN. (PCs with “Oath of Fealty: Doji Takuyu and

Doji Sumi” receive a Free Raise for this roll.) The rumors include:

- Asahina Katai, the lord’s hatamoto, has been trying to find spices and advice on how to use them. Apparently, Doji Sumi has been craving spicy food lately, but the chefs have not been able to meet her demands. Offers of recipes or ingredients will be appreciated.
- Soshi Toshiro, Doji Sumi’s father, is an influential provincial daimyo who has maintained a close relationship with his daughter despite the regular tension between their Clans. Some wonder about his motivations, as his reputation is more for ruthlessness than sentimentality.
- One of the guests present for the Autumn Moon Court is Kakita Takezo, the recently appointed head of the Kakita Dueling Academy. A returned spirit from the ninth century (around the time of the Unicorn return), he is known for encouraging his students to study more than just iaijutsu. A young boy of seven is traveling with him as a favored student (further investigation or rolling more than 30 will inform the PC that the boy is Kakita Toshiken’s adopted son Nori).
- Doji Sumi was a popular courtier of the Scorpion Clan’s courts before her political marriage. The match has exceeded both family’s expectations. (Scorpion PCs will know that she was thought of by many in the Clan as a junshin and it is thought that she was bartered away to the Crane in order to get some sort of use out of her.)
- One of Doji Takuya’s advisors is a monk by the name of Masu. He is actually Takuya’s retired father, who has remained involved in the administration of the province despite his retirement. There is no consensus if this is because he simply could not give up the power or because he genuinely wishes to offer the benefit of his experience to his son; either way, Takuya is definitely known to be his own man. Masu was an Imperial diplomat in his youth, often working with the Phoenix and Lion Clans and bringing much honor to all parties involved. He enjoys playing *go* in the southern garden when the weather is nice.
- Due to Doji Sumi’s pregnancy, the usual court activities have been restructured. Where typically Takuya and Sumi would each “sponsor” a specific theme or fashion that the members of the court would vie over, this year the styles have evidently already been agreed-upon. The local samurai are keeping it secret until revealed by their lord, however.

Part One: the Autumn Moon Court

At mid-day the next day, the PCs are escorted to the castle by a small honor guard (including any PCs sworn to Takuya and Sumi). The hatamoto, Asahina Katai, welcomes them and escorts them the main hall of the castle to introduce themselves to Takuya and present gifts. The chamber is enormous and lavishly decorated, with a large statue of Benteen on the eastern wall, and Takuya, clad in kimono with designs of starlings, larks, and finches, greets all of his guests with aplomb and dignity, making every effort to make them feel welcome. (He is a little less welcoming of Crab PCs or anyone with the “Gaijin Name” Disadvantage, though still quite polite and genial.)

Presenting Gifts

The giving of gifts is an important part of samurai culture. Inventive and thoughtful gifts for the lord, his wife, or their expected child give the PC 1 point of Glory. Not presenting a gift costs the PC 1 point of Glory and a point of Honor if their Honor is over 5.0. Gaijin items cause the character to lose 2 points of Glory and to gain 1 point of Infamy. Gifts of sake should be given wrapped and concealed, without announcing its name; Takuya wants to try to guess it later (when he greets the PCs, Katai will inform them that the lord will wish to make an event out of their generous gift).

The other guests will provide gifts as well, of course. Soshi Toshiro gives his son-in-law a bottle of sake with a knowing smirk and presents the couple with a series of golden screens that depict the Tournament of the Kami. Kakita Takezo’s gift is a mirror bound in a brass frame carved with a protective blessing, while his young student Nori gives a plush kenku doll given to him by his grandfather (PCs may roll **Courtier / Intelligence** at a TN of 30 to realize that grandfather was none other than Kakita Toshimoko). Tsi Tianlin presents a metalwork oriole that will play a simple lullaby when the head is pushed down (as the bird straightens, a series of small metal plates produce the tones in sequence), while the monk Kyushu gives his first set of prayer beads. If she is present, Yasuki Sawako gives a gift of seeds from the garden of Yasuki Otojiro, the Yasuki family daimyo (a somewhat ambiguous gift, as it could be taken as either a deliberate slight or a peaceful overture).

In honor of the impending birth of his first child, Takuya will present each PC with some thoughtful gift relevant to them (if nothing specific is noticeable on the

character sheet, he will present a beautiful obi with a pattern of songbirds in the PC's Clan colors). These gifts should be general items rather than weapons, though expensive and beautiful examples; books (for characters with specific Lore Skills), games (for characters with those Skills), or tsuba (for non-bushi characters with martial tendencies), for example. It should be noted that the giving of gifts is an important part of Rokugani society, and that refusing Lord Takuya's gift is considered *very* rude: the PC loses a rank of Glory and is ignored by everyone else in court for the rest of the module if he cannot somehow make amends. Insulting a lord in his own court is never a good idea, and this will effectively end the mod for the PC unless they can somehow recover (when the PC gets home, he will also lose half a rank of Status as his own lord berates him for his incompetence in needlessly antagonizing a powerful Crane lord, though Crab PCs may avoid this consequence if they can justify their actions).

For dinner, the PCs will be seated strictly by Status, though Crane and Scorpion PCs will be seated with their attending lord toward the head of the table. The food and entertainment is as sumptuous and exquisite as one would expect from such a popular lord of the Crane.

The Court of Doji Takuya

The Autumn Moon Court is scheduled to last for a week, with a variety of events and functions planned. There are opportunities for the PCs to use any High Skill (with the exception of Medicine, Meditation, or Spellcraft) to make a good impression on their hosts and the court. Debates or lectures on (socially-acceptable) Lore Skills, contests of Calligraphy or riddles (for Investigation), demonstrations of Tea Ceremony or various performances are all basic examples; the players should be encouraged to come up with ways to showcase their talents in an appropriate fashion. The only event that will utilize a Bugei Skill, however, is Tsi Tianlin's iaijutsu challenge (see below). In general, such events are easily handled with an appropriate roll (usually **Skill / Awareness**, though the GM may decide another Trait is appropriate) against a TN of 20. Success means that the PC has impressed the court and hosts, and will grant a point of Glory. Failure has no consequence unless the PC makes a point of being a poor loser (in which case any Glory loss is at the GM's discretion). Direct competition against the NPCs is possible; refer to their write-ups in the Appendix for their signature Skills. Again, gracious victory is rewarded, while causing a scene should be penalized. It can be assumed that Doji Takuya has a number of vassals present who are not named or given stats in this module (the GM is encouraged to determine

what is appropriate based on the Skill in question if a player wishes to compete with a "generic" vassal). Defeating a named NPC gains the PC an additional point of Glory.

Other effects on the court include:

- It is obvious that the fashion theme of the Autumn Moon Court has already been determined: songbirds abound in decorations and clothing. Jays, larks, orioles, finches, sparrows, starlings, and cardinals are everywhere. PCs with songbird-themed kimono will find the courts friendlier and more inviting: they receive one Free Raise to use on any single Social Skill Roll made at this court. Courtiers (or any PC with 3 ranks of Courtier or more) who dismiss the theme by not obtaining a songbird kimono lose Glory equal to their Ranks in the Courtier Skill for being egregiously out of style if they do not acquire one by the end of the court.
- PCs wearing armor to court gain a point of Infamy (per day) for crassly insulting the host, though this may be mitigated if the PC removes the armor and sincerely apologizes to Takuya: **Sincerity (Honesty)/ Awareness** with a TN of 20. They also will lose an amount of Honor equal to their Honor Rank for this breach of etiquette (though this loss is only incurred once, it will not be recovered by apologizing).
- Any PC with the "Gaijin Name" Disadvantage (and, notably, Tsi Tianlin) will be treated politely by both Takuya and Masu, but there will be a certain amount of hesitation for some reason that is essentially impossible to discover (neither man will discuss their family history at this point; they are somewhat in denial, but it still has an effect on their reactions). It will require such a character to succeed at two events in order to be invited to observe Takuya's ritual.

NPCs of Note

- **Doji Takuya:** A model Crane courtier, Takuya is the dashing handsome and popular provincial lord of the province. He is always seen wearing the latest fashions, and is not above flirting with pretty ladies, but there are very few rumors of indiscretion on his part. He is well-loved by his vassals and people, as he is generous with praise and rewards and seems to genuinely care for those under his authority.
- **Doji Sumi:** The young, strikingly beautiful, and very pregnant wife of Takuya, she possesses a

quick, joyous laugh and a disarming smile. Any mention of her husband causes her to glow with happiness. While always wearing the standard Crane blue, her kimono and fan have red accents. She is a skilled courtier in her own right, and with her help, Takuya's province has prospered.

- **Asahina Katai:** Takuya's hatamoto, he is a middle-aged man with a traditional topknot and a face lined with smile-wrinkles. Katai has a penchant for salty jokes, but only when in appropriate company.
- **Daidoji Jirako:** Captain of Takuya's guard, she is a no-nonsense samurai-ko. Assigned to this duty three years ago, she both wishes for greater challenges to her abilities and glad that the province is peaceful.
- **Kakita Takezo:** The newly appointed head at the Kakita Academy, he is travelling with a seven-year old boy named Nori. Takezo is an older man with a precise white topknot and the soft golden glow of a returned spirit. His kimono is cut in a traditional Kakita manner and he can always be found practicing iaijutsu with his ward before sunrise.
- **Masu:** One of Takuya's principal advisors, and the previous daimyo of the province. He enjoys playing go and moves with a bounce in his step like a young man despite his bald head and happy, toothless laugh.
- **Fushimi:** Doji Sumi's favorite handmaiden, she is a very pretty young woman who acts like a starry-eyed girl in her first court. She will flirt somewhat self-consciously with any reasonably attractive or suave male characters, both PC and NPC, though a certain amount of effort to establish a relationship going any further would be required (see the following section for guidelines on how to handle pursuing Fushimi).
- **Kyushu:** A wandering monk wearing gray robes, he is tall and lean, with deep-set black eyes and an intense air. (PCs that have played "*SOB06: Walk Through the Mountains*" may have him as an Ally.) A **Lore: Theology (Brotherhood) / Intelligence** roll TN 25 will let the PC recognize that he is of an obscure sect that venerated Onnotangu. A friend of Masu's, Kyushu is here by his invitation. He tries to avoid significant attention during the court, though if any PC can help him with his current project (learning to play the flute), they will either increase the Devotion he has as an Ally (to 2) or gain him as an Ally (with 1 Devotion and 1 Influence).
- **Soshi Toshiro:** Lord of the An'ei province and Sumi's father. A sharp-featured man that looks as if he were carved from a thin pillar of granite.

Considered ruthless, effective, and loyal, his province has prospered greatly under his guidance.

- **Tsi Tianlin:** A noted smith and artisan from the Tsi ronin family. Tianlin is a burly, bearded man with the calloused hands of a practiced smith, yet the work he does is known for its fine quality and attention to detail. When not at the forge, he busies himself with intricate miniature origami - usually orioles, his favorite songbird.
- **Yasuki Sawako:** Friendly Crab courtier and merchant, knowledgeable about fashion from a mercantile standpoint.

The Pregnant Woman's Demands

Any PC who provides a gift of spices to their hosts or speaks to the hatamoto regarding spicy food is welcomed graciously: Sumi has been craving spicy fried meat lately, which is one reason why Katai's staff has been having so much trouble. These PCs will be invited to a private meal with the daimyo's wife (though her pregnancy makes public appearances unseemly, such small gatherings are more acceptable). A recipe can be provided with an **Artisan: Cooking / Intelligence** roll of TN 20; Scorpion, Unicorn, Dragon and Lion get a free raise on the cooking roll due to their inland culinary traditions (usually chicken or pork; Unicorn recipes may also include beef, which she will not shy away from if they can provide it), and PCs that have "spices" in their travel pack gain an additional free raise. Encourage the PCs to describe the spices and the heat of the food they provide.

While not specifically peasant food, meat is simply not normal High Rokugani fare. Fushimi, Sumi's favorite handmaiden, is present to serve at the meal. She is a beautiful, dainty girl who give the impression of being new to her duties but hiding her nervousness as best she can. If a PC has "Large", "Dangerous Beauty", or "Benten's Blessing", Fushimi will be blushing furiously as Sumi compliments her abilities. Fushimi is receptive to romance from any PC, though attempting anything intimate will require a **Temptation (Seduction) / Awareness** roll at a TN of 20 (in addition to whatever else, success leads to an **Investigation / Awareness** roll at a TN of 40 to realize that they are actually being played by the 'shy young girl').

Doji Sumi is very pleasant company, even to Crab samurai, and she will go out of her way to be make the PCs feel welcome. Her personal cook will prepare the meal the PCs either suggest or provide the ingredients for, and she will share it eagerly. The PCs must make an **Etiquette / Stamina** roll to eat the spicy foods without breaking into a sweat (the TN determined by the player's description, though a minimum of 15 is suggested. If they fail, they will be teased by Sumi

along with Fushimi, whose face will look like it was soaked in a bucket. Succeeding or taking the teasing in good spirits will impress Sumi of the PC's character (assuming they make at least an attempt to be pleasant during the meal).

Toshiro's Poetry Challenge

One of the first events sponsored by the NPCs is a contest from Soshi Toshiro.

Soshi Toshiro holds his sake cup high for a toast. "Friends, if I may beg your indulgence for a moment, I have had a haiku running through my head all day and for the life of me cannot seem to recall the ending. Perhaps one of you could help me with this? It is:

*Temple bells die out.
The fragrant blossoms remain.
???*

An **Artisan: Poetry (Haiku) / Intelligence** roll of TN 20 will inform the PC that this is a haiku from the 9th century by the famous poet Matsu Munefusa. The original final line is "A perfect evening!", but should a PC wish to improvise, they may roll **Artisan: Poetry / Awareness** at a TN of 20 (they may earn a Free Raise for creative roleplaying). Successful improvisation gains the PC 1 point of Glory as Toshiro toasts their success, though failure costs the PC a point of Glory. Vassals of Toshiro gain an additional point of Glory as Toshiro praises their abilities. Note that providing the actual ending line is commended, but is not the point of the exercise – Toshiro is attempting to encourage creativity among the guests.

Toshiro and the Scorpion Divide (Scorpion PCs)

Following the poetry, Toshiro will invite any Scorpion PCs to a private meeting (explaining a need "to discuss Clan business" if any other ask). If there are multiple Scorpion PCs, he will meet with them all at this time. Once alone, he will have tea and rice crackers served, then dismiss the servants. Toshiro will engage in some small talk, then ensure that there are no eavesdroppers before moving to the main issue:

"You may have heard something of recent tensions within the Clan. Since our return from exile, our Champion has expressed concern with certain traditional methods the Scorpion have used to accomplish our goals – specifically, the Clan's reputation as being willing to betray any non-Scorpion in order to advance our aims. Though Yojiro-dono has issued no formal orders, he has made it clear that he feels we cannot afford to be thought of in this fashion among the Empire. There are those,

however, who believe that there is nothing the Scorpion should be unwilling to sacrifice. The conflict between these two schools of thought has started to become heated; there have been political attacks, arrests, and even deaths on both sides." He shakes his head and sighs. "An unfortunate business. I can see the validity of both arguments; Yojiro-dono is motivated by concern for the Clan's well-being, while the dissenting samurai are simply acting as many Scorpion have since the dawn of the Empire."

Toshiro has not picked a side in this conflict, though he has been courted by both. He is a dutiful vassal of Yojiro, and appreciates that the Scorpion Champion has not issued a direct order on the matter specifically to avoid turning it into a question of loyalty, but also understands that the Scorpion Clan has always held itself to a different set of standards than the rest of the Empire and sees why some Scorpion find Yojiro's "soft approach" hard to reconcile. He is, however, very well-informed, and has little reason at this point to try to manipulate the PCs. He can provide some more details about the conflict (though the names are not of significant interest to the PCs), including information about the fate of Bayushi Kimetiko, the Scorpion magistrate of Ryoko Owari Toshi. (see "SoB14: Emperor's Favor" for more details). Neither Toshiro nor the PCs will know what the PCs' own daimyo would prefer – to a certain degree, they are waiting on the PCs' advice to determine their own course of action.

Should one of the PCs wish to persuade Toshiro to support one side or the other, they may do so with a well-roleplayed, reasoned argument and a **Courtier / Awareness** roll at a TN of 40 (in the case of multiple arguments, the highest roll applies; Free Raises may be granted at the GM's discretion for particularly articulate debate). Toshiro does not take issue with such attempts, but will make it clear that he does not intend to take immediate action regardless of the PC's success or failure.

Tianlin's Iaijutsu Challenge

Whether due to his gruff demeanor, his status as a ronin, or something else, Tsi Tianlin will not be made particularly welcome in Takuya's court (the lord's hesitation is noted by his vassals, though most do not realize it is due to his gaijin name). On the third day, he will attempt to overcome this somewhat by suggesting an iaijutsu contest in recognition of the Crane's prowess with that art. Tianlin asks Takezo to judge and the burly smith will provide origami flowers for the PCs to strike so as to not draw blood and disturb the harmony of the house. (This will, incidentally, allow him to demonstrate his more courtly skill with

origami.) This event will take place in the garden, on a bridge over a resplendent koi pond amid the falling autumn leaves. All PCs who carry a katana will be expected to participate in this; anyone refraining will gain three points of Infamy for their perceived cowardice and impotence. Drawing blood loses the PC a point of Honor and four points of Glory. None of the NPCs will participate as they are either courtiers or involved in the contest (unless necessary).

There are two ways of handling this mechanically: if time appears to be a significant factor, the PCs may simply all roll a single Focus roll, with the victor being the character with the highest roll. If there are not too many participants or if time is not a problem, running a single-elimination tournament is entirely possible if the players are amenable. Daidoji Jirako will take part if there are an odd number of PCs to facilitate the matter. (She will not spend Void and should not defeat any actually skilled duelist.)

For ease of reference, the Iaijutsu Duel rules are:

- Iaijutsu Duels take three rounds, during which the participants are in the Center Stance (and therefore receive the bonus of +1k1+Void Ring to one roll made in the second and third rounds).
- **Assessment:** In the first round, the participants roll **Iaijutsu (Assessment) / Awareness** against a TN equal to their opponent's Insight Rank times 5, plus 10. (15 for Rank 1, 20 for Rank 2, etc.). Success lets them know one of the following pieces of information about their opponent, plus one for each Raise: Void, Reflexes, Iaijutsu Skill, Iaijutsu Emphases, current number of Void Points, and current Wound Level. If one character exceeds their opponent's total by 10 or more, they gain a bonus of +1k1 on their Focus roll. (Jirako: 5k2-5; Takezo: 10k7+5 with the Emphasis and 9s and 10s explode)
- **Focus:** In the second round, the participants roll Contested **Iaijutsu (Focus) / Void**; if one of the duelists beats the other's roll by 5 or more, they get the first strike. If neither beats the other's by at least 5, then the result is a "kharmic strike". (Jirako: 6k3-3; Takezo: 10k10+27 with the Emphasis if he wins the Assessment by 10+; 10k10+15 if not; he also wins if he beats the opponent by 3)
- **Strike:** In the third round, the character with the chance to make the first strike (or both, simultaneously, if there is a kharmic strike), rolls **Iaijutsu (Strike) / Reflexes** against their opponent's Armor TN. They receive a Free Raise to this roll for every additional 5 their

Focus Roll exceeded their opponent's. (Jirako: 6k3-3; Takezo: 10k10+10, with a Free Raise for every 3 points he exceeds the opponent's Focus roll)

As the characters are striking against origami flowers affixed to their clothing, they must call two Raises on the Strike; should armor be worn, it provides no bonus if these Raises are called.

Winning the iaijutsu competition means the PC has the honor of facing Kakita Takezo in a demonstration bout. This is essentially a roleplaying challenge for the PC, since they are most likely to lose. The player should be allowed the choice of whether to roll dice for the duel or not; Takezo will not spend Void and his basic dice pools are listed above. If the PC draws blood against Takezo (by striking after he does or by attacking regardless of the outcome) and does not immediately prostrate themselves and apologize, they will gain "Sworn Enemy: Kakita Family", five points of Infamy, and lose one point of Honor per Honor Rank they have. (Takezo will turn his back on the dishonorable PC). PCs who attempt to kill Takezo will suffer the same fate, after he cuts off their sword hand, and will be thrown in prison by the local magistrate for attempted murder. (The offending PC must then contact the Campaign Admin Staff to get his character back).

Though extremely unlikely, a PC who manages to defeat Takezo honorably gains "Ally: Kakita Takezo (1 Devotion, 3 Influence)", two Ranks of Glory, and an invitation to the Kakita Dueling Academy. If the PC is a Kakita Bushi, he gains a "Social Position: Assistant Sensei of the Kakita Dueling Academy" with the reminder that much will be expected of him from now on. (Again, contacting the Admin Staff for the details will be necessary.)

After the iaijutsu challenge, Takezo will take the opportunity to display some of the less martial training that Kakita duelists receive, and invite everyone to participate in a tea ceremony. He is polite and even cordial, in an exquisitely proper fashion, taking great pains to treat the lower-ranking samurai as worthy companions. Characters participating in the ceremony (modified as necessary to account for multiple participants) each regain two points of Void.

After the ritual, Takezo will speak with the PCs on a variety of subjects; small talk about their homes, past deeds, hopes for the future, etc. He will particularly pay attention to other returned spirits, and seek to discover how they are using their abilities to better the Empire. Even if there are no returned spirits present, he will speak about the importance of returned spirits

finding a place in the Empire, making note of the fact that relatively few spirits have been granted positions of significant authority despite their previous experiences. He will ask the PCs to advise their lords as to how returned spirits ought to be allowed to serve the Empire; though he does not tell the PCs what their opinion ought to be, he makes no secret of the fact that he thinks the returned spirits are being denied the chance to serve as they may.

Usō's Invitation to Takezo (Dragon PCs)

Delivering Mirumoto Usō's congratulations and invitation to Takezo is fairly straightforward, and the relaxed atmosphere following the tea ceremony will provide a good opportunity. The Crane sensei will be very polite, but his reaction will depend a great deal upon the character of the PC extending the invitation; while he understands the rivalry between the Kakita and Mirumoto has been primarily a cordial one, he does not know Mirumoto Usō and his judgment will be based on the messenger more than the message. A Dragon PC speaking with Takezo must make an **Etiquette / Awareness** roll at a TN of 20; the PC may add their Honor Rank to the total of this roll if they faced him honorably in the demonstration bout after Tianlin's Iaijutsu Challenge. This will allow them to make a good impression; failure means that Takezo will not consider accepting Usō's invitation, though he will remain politely distant to the Dragon.

Some Dragon PCs may wish to speak to Kakita Takezo about continuing the development of a set of kata which his predecessor had begun with Usō (The Thousand Years of Steel). This is more appropriately a matter resolved through the Admin Staff, but if the subject comes up, Takezo's reaction depends on the sort of impression they were able to make – positive if they impressed him, negative if not. This will need to be recorded on the PC's mod cert as well as the GM report form for the module.

Takuya's Drinking Challenge

Drinking with Takuya is a civilized affair, conducted on the evening of the third day at the moon viewing platform by the lake in the garden. Rather than a trial of endurance or resilience as might be expected in the Crab lands, the daimyo seeks to emphasize "quality over quantity". Specifically, the task is to identify obscure brands of sake and shochu by flavor (**Commerce / Perception** at a TN dependent on the brand) and praising the strengths of the brand. After the first taster makes their attempt at identification, Takuya will either confirm or deny their assertion by tasting the sample himself; then, the rest of the group will drink. (The Player Handout has these listed, so that

the page may be handed to the PC for them to properly roleplay their character's reactions.)

- **Mumblings of an Old Witch Hunter:** TN 15; Free Raise for Crab. A piquant green shochu, served warm, that is rumored to cause mild hallucinations on occasion. This is considered a good luck drink, especially for the Kuni, as it helps them spot evil spirits. (Each PC must make an Earth Roll at a TN of 15; add +5 to the TN if they are shugenja and an additional +5 if they have an Earth Affinity. Make a note as to who fails this roll, but the PCs do not start getting hallucinations. Yet.)
- **Suitengu's Laughter:** TN 20; Free Raise for Mantis. A fruity sake blend from the Spice Islands, it is traditionally bought for celebrations when sailors return home, and usually served in large glasses decorated with fruit slices and tiny parasols.
- **Mushin:** TN 25; Free Raise for Crane. A very potent shochu from the Asahina family, said to have helped Katsukichi, a monk of the 6th century, achieve enlightenment. It has an exceedingly mild flavor (some say no flavor at all).
- **Bayushi's Lament:** TN 30; Free Raise for Scorpion. A harsh, dry, rye shochu that would seem "rustic" if not for the incredibly complex undertones. This was the brand that Bayushi consoled himself with on the night that Shosuro left. This is a very important gift from Soshi Toshiro, as it is normally exclusive to the daimyo of the Scorpion Clan. (Takuya opened it to celebrate the birth of his child, which is an appropriate use.) Should a Scorpion Clan PC win this, they gain two points of Glory courtesy of Soshi Toshiro (and a point of Status if the PC is a vassal of Toshiro).

If PCs brought a bottle of sake from a local distillery in their province, the base TN for the PCs to guess it is 20; add 5-15 for creative and proper roleplaying (PCs from the presenter's Clan gain a Free Raise to guess the brand). Give the presenter's tracking sheet to whomever guessed it so that they may roleplay their description. Friendly Traveler Sake or other "known" brands are appreciated but easily guessed. Should the brand go un-guessed by Takuya (rolling 7k4) the PC gains a point of glory and "Favor: Crane Clan" for providing a suitable challenge. Any gaijin drink is ignored ("oh thank you, samurai-san, but we wish to save such a gift for suitably auspicious moment.")

Afterward, PCs must make an **Etiquette / Willpower** roll at TN 20 in order to not get too drunk. Remind the PCs that this occurs in Takuya's home, not at a geisha

house, so public drunkenness will result in Glory losses. Most of the NPCs are quite inebriated at this point but handling themselves admirably.

Lessons

PCs who speak to Nori will find him an energetic youth, excited to be brought to an official court but aware of the importance of maintaining face. Even at the tender age of seven, he has already proven himself a prodigy, and diligently trains with Takezo every day. If the PCs offer to take part in the training as either fellow student or instructor, Takezo will cautiously allow it. Nori will eagerly learn anything they can teach, but would like to learn a musical instrument if a PC can do so. (Similarly, Kyushu wishes to learn to play the flute. This may come up if the PCs begin teaching the boy or if they speak with him or Masu.) Such training is largely a roleplaying exercise, but if the player is willing to devote some effort, a note should be made of it on the character's mod sheet and the GM report sheet.

Part Two: The Curse Strikes

The Birth

Early in the evening of the fourth day, whispers begin to swirl through the castle of the impending birth. Anyone who impressed Takuya, Sumi, Masu, Toshiro, or Takezo at some point in the module is invited to join Takuya, his friends and family in a private chamber to prepare for the expecting father's traditional birth ritual: the scaring away of evil spirits. (This includes any PCs who won or sponsored a court event, but no other characters may join in this part of the festivities; Asahina Katai will lead them to the main hall for drinks and a somewhat less refined celebration.) This ritual involves parading through the halls outside the wife's chamber yelling, singing, banging drums, waving incense, ringing bells, throwing rice and peas, and in general causing such a racket that any evil spirits in the area are disturbed and flee. Any prayers or blessings from shugenja PCs are encouraged and welcomed, and attending PCs may roll whatever they feel is appropriate for the situation (Free Raises may be awarded for roleplaying; all rolls succeed regardless). The path of the procession involves the hallway, stairs, and a small courtyard garden. Above the garden, light can be seen peeking through the shutters of Sumi's room.

In the meantime, Asahina Katai breaks out the sake and starts a drinking contest (to the accompaniment of increasingly vulgar drinking songs) in the main chamber for the rest of the guests. He will gleefully

explain that the purpose is to lure any spirits away from the expecting family and to increase the volume of the racket that Takuya is creating in the adjacent wing (which can be heard distantly, especially outside in the garden). PCs present may make a **Lore: Crane (Daidoji) / Intelligence** roll at TN 15 to know that "spirit-baiting" is a longstanding Daidoji tradition; while a certain amount of rambunctiousness is encouraged, actual fighting is not (Katai's family is Daidoji on his father's side). Daidoji characters, of course, know this without the need for a roll. PCs who take part in the drinking must succeed at an **Earth** roll with a TN of 20 to avoid inebriation; failure will result in them losing one rolled die from all actions for the remainder of the evening.

For the players accompanying Takuya:

Well into the evening, the sharp cry of a baby is heard from Doji Sumi's room. The guests attending Takuya's ritual give a joyous cheer, and the young lord is mobbed with the hugs, back-slaps, and congratulations of his parents and friends – one of the few occasions in Rokugan where gratuitous physical contact is permitted and expected. There is no need for Face here; Takuya is beaming with the pride that only a father can know.

A door opens in the upstairs hallway, sliding quickly in its tracks, followed by the faint thumping of hurried feet. "Takuya-dono! Takuya-dono!" Fushimi announces as excitedly and loudly as her little voice can, "It's a boy, and he has the most beautiful green eyeeiii!!!"

Her words are cut off as she trips and tumbles roughly down the stairs, landing headfirst at the bottom, her delicate head bent at an unnatural angle and her large brown eyes staring blankly at you (whomever talked to her most, or a random PC).

To the casual observer, it appears as though the young handmaiden simply and tragically tripped on her kimono. A watching PC with training in unarmed combat (who has at least one Rank in the Jiujutsu Skill) may make a **Jiujutsu / Perception** roll at TN 20 (with a Free Raise if the PC failed the Earth roll involving Mumblings of an Old Witch Hunter) to determine that Fushimi was thrown down the steps. Rather than her feet suddenly stopping and causing her to lose her balance, her center of mass shifted suddenly as if she was shoved, but no one was there to do it.

Takuya races up the stairs, followed closely by a white-faced Masu. Toshiro commands the rest of the group to stay put, before moving up the stairs himself. After a long, tense moment, a stone-faced Toshiro

returns alone. “The child and Sumi-chan are fine. If you would please carry word to Katai-san and the guests of the successful birth of Lord Takuya’s new heir, Shinichi, it would be greatly appreciated; I must return to my daughter.”

Daidoji Jirako turns to you, her face inscrutable. “Let us not disturb the guests by mentioning this unfortunate tragedy. Takezo-sama and I will speak to the monks at the temple, to have them purify this place immediately. I trust that you can announce the good news and entertain the guests for the rest of the evening?”

Servants have covered the body, reassuring the PCs that eta have been summoned. Shugenja wishing to speak to the spirits need to call two Raises as they’ve mostly fled the scene in fright. A successful casting of Commune will inform the PC that the girl’s Fire was extinguished by “the cold one; the hateful one” before the spirit asks to leave, because “she scares us.”

PCs who examine the body may make a **Lore: Anatomy / Perception** roll at TN of 10 to determine that she died of a broken neck. Rolling a 25 on this roll, or making a separate **Investigation / Perception** roll at a TN of 25, will allow the PC to spot a pair of small bluish handprints on her neck. If a PC examining the body failed the Earth roll for the “Mumblings of an Old Witch Hunter”, they will notice two wisps of steam curl above the girl’s back for a few moments after her death. Her body is still warm, but the handprints are ice-cold (assuming a PC is willing to touch it – an eta has not arrived yet to carry the body away, and these handprints will start to fade by the time they arrive). The hem of her kimono is not torn.

Speaking to Katai requires a **Sincerity / Awareness** roll at a TN of 20. (The Honesty or Deceit Emphases may apply, depending on the way the PCs choose to present the information.) Should they succeed, Katai will loudly announce *“It’s a boy!”* and begin a new round of drinking. If they fail, he will begin to question them rather directly, which will likely get the rumor mill started. Katai is quite inebriated at this point, and will be essentially impossible to keep quiet or discrete. Unfortunately, he knows little that would be of assistance to the PCs, and any attempt on their part to garner his assistance in investigating the matter will simply bring it to the entire court’s attention.

The PCs may attempt to look into the matter immediately, though there are very few leads available to them. Either Jirako or Katai can grant them access to the province’s records, which will let them research the history of the family and the region. Unfortunately,

neither the captain of the guards nor the hatamoto know much themselves (Jirako has only held this duty for three years, and Katai has been in the province for a little less than a decade), and the more knowledgeable NPCs (Takuya and Masu) are not available this evening. The servants and Takuya’s other vassals cannot shed any light on the matter.

If the PCs attempt to discover any clues in the provincial records, they will have to spend a great deal of time (and thus will not recover Void for the night), as well as roll **Investigation / Intelligence** at a TN of 30. Success allows them to piece together a few birth records that show a somewhat higher instance of infant mortality in the daimyo’s family line – every two or three generations, the provincial daimyo has lost a daughter only a few hours or days after their birth. There are few records about them, but if the PC rolls 40 or higher, they can determine that several of these records have been edited over the generations.

The Next Morning

The PCs may or may not be hung over the next day, depending on if they participated in the drinking contest (they must make a **Stamina** roll at a TN of 20; the Quick Healer or Jurojin’s Blessing Advantages provide +2k0 to this roll; failure means that they must drop their highest die on all actions they perform for the day). Breakfast is very cheerful and happy, though rather quiet: many others, including Katai, have hangovers and are nursing strong tea. Takuya is not present, however, nor are Sumi or Masu: Katai insists they are with the monks, praying and performing the appropriate rituals. Rumor of complicated childbirth circulates if the PC failed the Sincerity roll the night before (or otherwise allowed word to reach the rest of the court). Asahina Katai continues to run court events, trying to give the impression that everything is how it should be. After breakfast, during a morning flower arrangement competition, any PCs who impressed Takuya, Sumi, Toshiro, Masu, or Takezo are brought by a servant to meet with a stern-faced Toshiro and disheveled Sumi, who is clearly quite upset and holding back tears.

Sumi takes a deep breath, composing herself as best she can despite her exhaustion and worry. “Thank you for coming, my friends. I must ask you for your assistance and discretion. You have proven yourselves honorable samurai, and as you have less social obligations than we do, you have the freedom to act upon this matter without compromising our other guests’ hospitality.” Sumi glances toward the door to the next room, and tears flood her red-rimmed eyes, but she continues with a bleak, firm voice. “Before dawn, while I was resting, my husband and son disappeared. I would ask you to find him and bring

them home safely. Do whatever it takes, but please bring my family back, please..."

The situation is highly problematic for Sumi, and, by extension, Takuya. She is asking for a major favor, and understands that this will place her in debt to the PCs (despite her father's advice). Refusal means the character will not participate in the rest of the module.

Sumi will provide what information and assistance she can, but her knowledge is very limited.

- She does not know where Takuya went, but he took his personal guard with him and there are horses missing from the stable.
- The child had the most striking green eyes, which is very peculiar for a newborn.
- The wife had nightmares last night, about being trapped in a stone room and tormented by an unknown figure. One of the handmaidens had a dream about suffocating; another had a nightmare about croaking frogs. They all agree that the dreams are bad omens.
- Masu may know where his son went, but he is not in his room.
- PCs wishing to look through Takuya's personal study for information must succeed at a **Courtier / Awareness** roll at a TN of 35 (vassals of Takuya & Sumi gain a Free Raise) to get permission. Anything they find there is strictly confidential, of course.
- PCs may take whomever they wish, if they are trustworthy. They are expected to keep absolutely quiet about this; officially the family is in seclusion, consulting with priests, diviners, and so forth.
- Travel papers and horses will be given, and the PCs have permission to wear armor.
- She has no knowledge of a ghost or curse.

Searching Lord Takuya's Study

Doji Takuya's study is a large room, ornately decorated, with doors that lead out to a balcony overlooking the garden. There is a tasteful ikebana display opposite the desk, sitting in a wall alcove shrine dedicated to Benten. Behind the desk is a large shelf filled with books, scrolls and a variety of small porcelain sculptures. Everything is spotlessly clean.

Searching Doji Takuya's study without permission requires a **Stealth (Sneaking) / Agility** roll TN 10; there is no guard positioned at the door, but there is a two-point Honor loss for doing so for all involved. (Failure indicates that the PC(s) attract attention to

themselves, but are able to escape before the guards arrive.)

An **Investigation (Search) / Perception** roll of TN 15 will find his personal journal on his bookcase, amid other books, documents, and papers that relate to a daimyo's work (administrative paperwork, trade contracts, correspondence with his superiors, etc.). The journal requires a **Calligraphy (Cipher) / Intelligence** roll at a TN of 20 to decipher (Crane characters with the Cipher Emphasis gain two Free Raises on this roll). For the most part, the journal is written in a very formal style, as though he were writing a memoir that he expected to be read. The last page simply states "*The family curse has struck. Kami forgive me.*" There is no other reference to a curse in the rest of the book.

Rolling a 25 or higher on the Search roll will allow the PC to find a false panel below the shrine to Benten: inside is a large stack of letters, half-burnt incense, dried flowers, and a graphically illustrated edition of "Benten's Sutra," a famous lovemaking manual. The subjects and phrasing of the letters are all innocuous, but a **Courtier / Awareness** roll of TN 20 will quickly inform the PC that though most are love letters from Sumi, many are addressed to Fushimi from men and women across the Empire. One of the letters is from someone identified as "Umeka-chan" and has small drawings in the margins of a kobune and fireworks. A **Lore: Heraldry / Intelligence** roll TN 20 (Mantis gain a Free Raise) will inform the PC that this may be Yoritomo Umeka, the spunky and popular lord of the Tokigogachu Province. (These letters are mostly souvenirs rather than blackmail, though it could easily be assumed otherwise.)

Speaking with Grandfather Masu

Masu can be found sitting silently at his favorite go table in the garden. The board is empty, and for the first time since the PCs arrived, Masu-sama looks *old*. He is shivering slightly, but does not seem to notice. Getting him to answer some questions is essentially a roleplaying exercise; while he wants to save his grandson, he is largely in despair. If the PCs manage to convince him that they are capable of dealing with the curse (though they need not know about it; he is more swayed by their willingness to put themselves at risk), he will tell them about the secret history of his family line:

"Long ago, when the gaijin came to the Empire, one of our ancestors had a prolonged affair with one of the barbarian ambassadors and was cursed by the Fortunes for her indiscretion. She bore a green-eyed daughter, whose eyes were the same color as her lover's. The girl was sent to a convent to hide the

shame of it, but every few generations afterwards, another green-eyed daughter would be born to the family line. All of these girls were hidden away in disgrace, never marrying, never having children of their own, yet the mark of shame continued.

“A hundred years or so after the gaijin were banished, one of our ancestors took compassion upon his green-eyed daughter. He kept her secluded in our ancestral estate, but she died of the plague at a young age. We do not know why, but any time a child with green eyes was born into the family since, the poor girl’s ghost would awaken and kill all those who loved or were loved by her father’s descendant. I was fortunate enough to be spared the curse, but Takuya-kun... no man can outrun his shadow.”

Masu will answer what questions he can, but his knowledge is limited to what he was told by his own father, and the need for secrecy has kept the family from learning a great deal; their bloodline has never had any affinity with the spirits, so shugenja assistance has been rare and confined only to those who were trusted implicitly by the family. The following answers represent what information he has at his disposal:

- What has the family done to appease her ghost? *“We have found no way to remove the curse or to appease the spirit, and believe me we tried everything. Nothing works: not spells, not prayers, not sending the child to a monastery, nothing. The only way we have found to mitigate this is to... kill... any green-eyed child as soon as possible to put the goryo to sleep, but... poor Fushimi, she was such a good girl... oh Fortunes protect us...”*
- Where did Takuya go? *“Takuya will have taken the child to the ruins of our ancestral estate, to forestall the curse. He will have gone to the topmost tower overlooking the sea, to cast the child into the waves.”*
- Does the ghost have a name? When did she first appear? *We do not know her name, but we know the goryo first appeared in 597.*
- Where is the ancestral estate? *“Go east, into the hills. It is a day’s hard ride along the Silkworm Road. When you reach the big statue of Benten, turn left. The ruins of the castle are an hour past that and overlook the sea. You must leave immediately if you wish to get there by nightfall, and I will pray for you all. Good luck.”*
- Who does the ghost kill? *“Any members of the direct bloodline are safe, but the ghost will slay anyone who loves the father of the*

green-eyed child. It does not have to be romantic love; a lord as popular as Takuya-kun does may watch as his best and brightest vassals are slain for no reason other than their devotion to him.”

- If there are no shugenja or monks at the table: *“If you must go, you should not face the goryo without a priest. Ask Kyushu-san to go, he is a loyal friend of mine. He will accompany you if you ask him.”*

Kyushu can be found in the common area, practicing his flute, and will indeed go with the PCs. He will don his black heavy armor, with the white face wrapping of a sohei, and follow the party with stoic equanimity.

The PCs may make a **Lore: Ghosts / Intelligence** roll at a TN of 15 (and gain a Free Raise if they watched the play before the court began) to know that goryo are the spirits of people who were not given appropriate funerary rites (typically samurai). They are not Tainted and cannot be driven away unless they wish to be. There is usually some condition that must be fulfilled for them to move on of their own volition, which is unique to each spirit. Often, this involves the destruction (but not necessarily the death) of the person that killed them. Goryo are immune to physical attacks, crystal, jade, magic, fire, and essentially anything the PCs can bring to bear against them; no one really knows why, though it has been rumored that certain prayers can drive the spirits away, though no one is universally effective.

If the PCs did not ask Masu for directions, they may ask the villagers for information (**Investigation / Awareness**, TN 20) or follow the tracks (**Hunting / Perception**, TN 25) to determine that a party of horsemen went through the village in the early hours of the morning at breakneck speed. The trail heads east up into the coastal mountains.

The trip must be made on horseback if the PCs wish to arrive on time; this requires a **Horsemanship / Agility** roll at TN 20. The countryside is scenic and lovely; the PCs will pass miles of silk plantations through beautiful autumn-colored hills, but the sun sets far too quickly and as they move closer to the coast, the reds and golds turn brown and barren. As the PCs near the castle, storm clouds gather on the horizon. The temperature and air pressure plummet, and the wind whips knives against their faces. Wolves howl in the distance, owls screech over head, and dead leaves swirl in their wake. Failure to make the Horsemanship roll means it has a cold, hard rain has started by the time the PCs arrive at the castle. They must make a roll to resist the effects of the cold (as detailed below).

If the PCs leave behind any members of their group who fail the roll, the ones that succeed arrive before it begins to rain (and therefore make one less roll to resist the cold). Those who fail ought to join the group after the first encounter with Takuya and Sakura's spirit, though the precise timing is at the discretion of the GM.

The Abandoned Castle

The castle itself is overgrown and long ruined, but the stone and wood walls are still in place. Wild forest, bare from winter's early grip, grows where once bloomed serene and beautiful gardens. Five horses are tied under the partial canopy of what once was a stable to the left of the main gate, long destroyed. The building looks surprisingly intact for being abandoned for 500 years – a testament to the construction methods of old, one might say. In the distance, unrelenting waves pound on stony cliffs. The remnants of a tall spire rise above the tall, imposing walls to the east. The only way to the tower appears to be through the castle and out along the wall itself. Harsh winds whistle in the hollows of the structure while the empty eye-sockets of the building's corpse stare outward, daring you to enter.

In the front garden, opposite the stables, sits a low well made of pitted gray rock, held down by a heavy stone cap and overgrown with moss. Closer inspection of the cap shows it is carved with a relief of kobune on the flowing ocean. Should the PCs attempt to investigate the well, they must roll **Athletics (Climbing) / Strength** at a TN of 30 to safely descend; failure results in a fall into the dry well, taking 1k1 plus an additional rolled and kept die for every 5 points they failed the TN by. There is a body at the bottom of the well, however, a **Lore: Anatomy** or **Medicine / Intelligence** roll at a TN of 10 will determine that it is that of an adult male (the servant that attempted to blackmail the lord, in fact).

The black maw of the front door gapes open, and large splinters of rotten wood lay scattered about a foyer that is being inexorably reclaimed by nature. The air is musty and stale, except for the lingering scent of a torch. Footsteps in the moss and dust go east, into the darkness. If the PCs do not have lanterns, they will need to make a **Hunting (Survival) / Intelligence** roll at TN 10 to fashion a torch. (Note, however, that failure on any Athletics roll while inside the castle will require a Reflexes roll at TN 20 to keep the building from catching fire. The wood, cobwebs, and dust inside are very flammable, regardless of the rain.) **Hunting (Tracking)** or **Investigation / Perception** rolls at TN

15 will allow the group to follow the trail through the gloom (TN penalty for darkness apply).

Any PC who is Haunted will hear their ancestor say "I do not like this place" or something similar as they enter. Haunted PCs who failed the **Earth** roll for Mumblings of an Old Kuni will find that they can see their ancestor spirits dimly, like reflections in a rippling pond.

This is the PCs' last chance to leave. Thunder rumbles outside, and if hasn't started to rain yet it does so now, heavily.

Part Three: Shadows in the Darkness

In the darkness of the third room that the PCs enter, the dead body of a man in Crane armor is lying face down in a pile of mildewed detritus; this was one of the house guard. A **Lore: Anatomy / Perception** roll at TN 10 will reveal that he was strangled: a vivid purple-black bruise rings his neck, his face is contorted in terror, and his body is ice cold. His blade is drawn but it has fallen to the ground, unbloodied. A **Hunting (Tracking)** or **Investigation / Perception** roll at TN 20 (darkness penalties apply) will show that the rest of the daimyo's group fled from the room. Another body, dressed and killed in a similar fashion as the first, is found in the hallway.

The footprints split up after this, but another **Hunting (Tracking) / Perception** roll at TN 15 will lead the PCs safely through shadowed halls, decrepit stairs, and dust-entombed chambers, following the only non-armored member of the previous group. Failure means the PCs are lost within the ruins, having followed the wrong footprints, which end in a flooded swamp of a garden being mercilessly drowned by the cold, driving rain. A **Hunting (Tracking) / Perception** roll of TN 10 will get the PCs back to the main door, having made an unintentional loop through the building, delaying them significantly. The storm has moved in, and they will need to make a roll to resist the cold (as noted below).

Cold Driving Rain

The autumn storm is only partially a natural phenomenon; the local spirits have been driven into a frenzy of fear by the awakened goryo and the result is a nearly freezing downpour. Characters out in the rain must make a roll to resist the cold unless they have some form of protection (the Blood of Osano-Wo Advantage or even simply a sturdy umbrella). They may choose to roll either **Stamina** or **Fire** against a TN

of 10; however, the TN increases by 5 every time they succeed. Failure gives the PC an effective rank of the Unluck Disadvantage, as they shiver uncontrollably from the cold. However, once failed, they do not need to make further rolls (unless it is a high-Rank table, in which case the TN resets and they can acquire up to two Ranks of Unluck). Hypothermia is a significant danger, but one that most PCs should be able to avoid with a little effort; PCs who are described as being clad in garb inappropriate for the weather may have their TNs increased, at the GM's discretion.

The Goryo Attacks

The goryo will attack the spirit of any haunting ancestors first, starting with any Doji (or other Crane). The actual roleplaying description will be determined by the description of the PC's ancestor, but will generally proceed along the lines of: ***"Who are you? Get away, demon! What are you doing- get your hands off me!"***

This will be a roleplaying challenge for the GM to convey the entire invisible scene to the PC. If the PC can see ancestors (as opposed to just hearing them), or PCs who failed the Earth roll for "Mumblings of an Old Witch Hunter", they will see a shadowy ripple of a slim, pretty young girl. She has long, unruly hair and a dirty white dress (but no feet), and her head hangs grotesquely to the side, with a deep purple-black ring around her neck and deeply bruised eyes. She grabs the ancestor violently and begins to strangle them. The look on her face is one of pure, unadulterated hatred. She cannot be attacked physically or with magic; the PC is forced to watch or listen helplessly (note that fire attacks will engulf the castle). PCs who see the goryo must make a roll to resist Fear 2 (TN 15).

The player may make a **Void** roll at a TN of 25 to help their ancestor. They gain a Free Raise if they successfully meditated at the ancestral shrine in the village, and an additional Free Raise for each Raise they called; this represents the strength of their ancestor's spirit fighting the goryo. A Void Point may be spent on behalf of the ancestor, but if the prayers to the ancestor were *not* made, two Void Points must be spent to gain the effect of one. Luck and Honor Rolls may *not* be used, but the PC may spend 2 experience points for a +1k1 bonus, and 2 experience points for a reroll (neither Luck nor personal honor can transfer to another entity, but Void and experience represent the strength of the soul of the PC and that can be shared through the ancestral bond).

Should the roll fail, the scene fades away from view and sound, with the ancestor falling silent; they will not be heard from again. Should the roll succeed, the goryo

will retreat into the shadows, and the ancestor will react according to their description (and thank the PC for their assistance if they spent a Void Point or experience). These conflicts are handled separately; ancestors cannot "gang up" on the goryo.

If no PC has the Haunted Disadvantage, the ghost will not directly attack yet, but PCs who can hear spirits and those who failed the Earth roll for "Mumblings of an Old Witch Hunter" will experience several eerie phenomena: they may feel ice-cold breezes, or hear something that sounds like a frog croaking; other players may be pushed while at the top of the stairs (**Jiu-jitsu** or **Defense / Reflexes** at TN 20 to avoid falling and taking 2k2 damage), or have their lanterns suddenly blown out, plunging the room in tomblike darkness.

As the PCs move through a room whose roof is damaged and exposed to the driving rain, they hear the distant scream of a baby. The doorway on the far side has collapsed, and beyond it are a set of stairs leading up to the castle's outer wall.

Confrontation with Lord Takuya

You exit into ripping winds and torrential rain, onto a parapet connected to the moldering exterior wall whose once-pristine battlements now stand crumbling and overgrown, beaten down by the inexorable march of time. The path atop the wall, where one time men could walk three-abreast, is now little more than a goat's mountain trail flanked by forty-foot drops on either side. Lightning illuminates the tower at the far end against a backdrop of a black wall of storm clouds.

The PCs must make a roll to resist the cold at this point. Running across the parapet requires an **Athletics (Running) / Agility** roll at TN 20 to avoid slipping on the wet stones; the PCs automatically succeed if they choose to walk, however, they will need to make two rolls to resist the cold. Failure means the PC falls to the ground, landing harshly on the rocks below for 3k3 damage. The PC must then make an **Athletics (Climbing) / Agility** roll TN 20 to climb up the wall; if they look around, can spot the door at the bottom of the tower.

Inside the tower, rickety wooden stairs spiral up toward the storm and down into darkness. The top of the tower is covered and sheltered by the storm, but part of the wall is missing, looking out over a gray, angry sea. Lord Takuya is standing there, holding his crying son tightly in his arms, shell-shocked, with tears streaming down his face.

The PCs have three basic options:

- Convince Lord Takuya to kill the child. Shinichi is a gorgeous baby boy with vivid jade green eyes (an obvious sign that the child is touched by the kami). Doing so requires a well-roleplayed argument and a **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** roll at TN 35. Anyone promoting this suffers a significant Honor loss (a full Rank, plus two points for every Rank they have). If anyone disagrees with this course of action, it will support Lord Takuya's doubts and raise the TN by 10. This effectively ends the module, as the goryo will return to her dormant state (skip to the Conclusion: Death of Shinichi).
- Kill Lord Takuya and return the baby to Sumi. Actively promoting this will cost the PC a Rank of Honor, plus one point per Rank of Honor they have. Takuya's Armor TN is 20 and his Earth is only 2, so he should pose little challenge to any combat-capable PCs. This will also drive the goryo back into her slumber, ending the module (skip to the Conclusion: Death of Takuya).
- Convince Lord Takuya not to kill the child. This is relatively simple, as it is his actual preference. (He has been stalling due to the conflict between what he wants and what he thinks he must do for the good of his family.) A simple plea for compassion and a promise to help put the spirit to rest, accompanied by a **Sincerity (Honesty) / Awareness** at TN 15, will get him to agree to go along with the PC's plans. Unfortunately, he does not know how to appease the ghost; the family has never been able to find her body. Once convinced, he will hold the baby closer, and the child's cry eventually starts to relax as it falls asleep.

If the PCs take more than a few minutes to decide on a course of action, the ghost will manifest in an attempt to convince them to follow through on her desire for the death of the child or the father. Otherwise, it will wait until after they persuade Takuya to spare the child. If an ancestor survived the goryo's attack prior, it will whisper to the PC: "*She's here...*" and retreat into silence.

Part Four: Death Comes For Us All

Blinding lightning crashes outside and the wind howls with unspeakable fury, driving nails of rain onto the room's stone floor from the crumbled wall facing the sea. Thunder hammers its way through the ruined castle, and the very walls creak and groan in response.

Through the sheets of rain, a slim, pale hand reaches over the wall to slap quietly down on the wet flagstones. It draws back toward the brink, the spindly fingers arching to gain purchase, but the delicate nails splinter and pull away from the skin as the fingertips force themselves into the minute crevasses of the weathered stone floor. Another hand reaches over the edge, pulling with it the head, then body, of a young girl. Long black razors of hair pool on the precipice as it slowly rises to stand approximately upright. Her head hangs precariously to the left, her eyes and throat are ringed with deep, purple-black bruises, and her sodden white robes fade into nothing where her feet should be. Venom-green eyes stare at you from behind the veil of wild hair, pouring forth a pure and unmitigated hatred that no mortal, spirit, nor oni has ever witnessed and lived. A sickening, croaking gurgle, precisely that of someone being strangled, hisses forth from the goryo; murder comes for you and all you hold dear.

Each PC must roll to resist **Fear 4** (Willpower against TN 25; the PC may add their Ranks in Honor to the total of the roll, but failure means that the PC will suffer a -4k0 penalty to all rolls while the ghost threatens them and failure by more than 15 will force them to flee in fright). Takuya cries out in fright and scrambles away from the horrible vision, clutching the baby as he tries to reach the door.

The ghost moves inexorably forward, toward whoever was talking to Takuya the most; if there is no single clear speaker, it will go towards Crane first (Doji or servants of Takuya by preference), then returned spirits, then any others. It will never directly harm Takuya... physically. Roll initiative; the goryo always goes last in the round, but it is likely necessary to track the last character to act for determining the goryo's target.

The goryo will stalk and murder the whole party unless they flee the tower; the only meaningful way to stop it is to find the body and perform the appropriate rituals. Attempting to negotiate or reason with the spirit is largely doomed to failure – unless the PCs make an appeal to its long-faded memories of compassion and love, there is very little they can say that will even get its attention, let alone sway it in any way. This is still a difficult task to say the least, requiring a **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** roll at TN 50. Should this succeed, it will attract the undivided attention of the goryo: the spirit will immediately attack the speaker as below, but when the PC reaches Fire 1, it will throw them down the stairs. They will tumble down the whole flight, taking 2k2 damage. It will fly after the PC in pursuit (at a terrifying speed), but disappear once it is

out of sight of the group and not immediately manifest again.

If the PCs try to make a stand against the goryo, a **Lore: Ghosts / Intelligence** roll of TN 15 (with a Free Raise for having watched the play) will point out to the PC that this is a very bad idea: goryo are functionally invulnerable. A reminder about the House Guard should work, or having Lord Takuya (or Kyushu or an ancestor) charge for the stairs and command the PCs to follow would likely get the point across; not fleeing from the goryo means the character is incapacitated or potentially dead from what essentially is box text, which is always best avoided. Battle-focused bushi PCs may have a problem with this: if so, have them roll **Battle / Intelligence** TN 10 to remember a passage from Sun Tao, the famous strategist: “To defeat a superior foe, confront them where they are weakest,” which is not here.

Attacking the ghost has no effect – weapons, jade, crystal, spells, and tattoos (even the Dragon tattoo) pass through it harmlessly. It can be touched with a **Jiujutsu (Grappling) / Agility** roll at TN 5, but its deathly-cold, clammy form creates an additional Fear 5 effect, even if the PC passed the first one, and they must roll **Fire** at a TN of 20 as the PC's life is extinguished by her ice-cold touch. Failure causes them to lose one Rank from their Fire Ring as below. Grappling the goryo does no damage and does not keep the goryo from moving, but it does transfer the murderous intent of the ghost to the last attacker – any other attack will be ignored as the goryo focuses solely on her target. (Note: attacking the goryo with fire will likely catch the building on fire, even in the rain. This will burn the tower down, but it is far enough to not harm the castle.)

The goryo attacks by simply grabbing the chosen victim by the throat and strangling them. Dodging its icy grip requires a **Jiujutsu / Reflexes** roll at TN 20; each successive dodge roll increases the TN by 5 until the PC flees completely or is caught. Escaping the goryo's grip requires a **Jiujutsu / Strength** roll at TN 20.

Once caught, the goryo will attempt to extinguish the PC's life-force: every round the spirit clutches their throat, the target must make a **Fire** roll at TN 20. Failure reduces the PC's Fire Ring by 1. When it reaches zero, the PC is reduced to the “Out” Wound Level and cannot act. The affected PC's Fire Ring is reduced for the rest of the module and they will feel numbingly cold.

Any PC touched by (or touching) the goryo will be flooded with the shattered memories of its life and

death. They may roll **Perception** at TN 15 to make sense of it:

a cold basement room, the stink of human filth, a locked door, a small window high on the wall, tearing at the door until fingers bleed, sadness, shame, rage, despair, hanging herself by a torn piece of her kimono in a final act of desperate defiance and the last breath of air escaping... falling... freezing darkness... seeing the corpse, hearing the door being bricked over; seeing the last fleeting lights as the window is sealed... unspeakable rage, numbing fear, poisonous regret, overwhelming desire for vengeance... murdering hundreds of innocents over the years... looking into the eyes of each and every victim, greedily watching their life's flame snuffed out...

Fleeing requires an **Athletics (Running) / Agility** roll at TN 15. However, the stairs collapse under the strain of the last person going down. PCs who fail this roll will fall, taking 3k3 damage as they land on broken shards of wood at the bottom of the tower. Takuya will blindly lead the way down the stairs to the ground floor. The baby is unhurt, but now screaming. The goryo, lit from behind by the storm outside, watches them from the top of the stairs (some fifty feet up), but disappears after a bright flash of lightning.

If a PC attempts to sacrifice themselves to give the rest of the group the opportunity to escape, they should gain some Honor (5 points if they have less than 5 Ranks of Honor, 3 points if they have less than 8 Ranks, and 1 point if they have 8 or more Ranks). They will be knocked to Out as above, and likely unable to participate in the rest of the module. If the tower or castle catches fire, the flames will kill them unless the rest of the group somehow manages to recover them.

The Forgotten Shrine

Takuya stands unsteadily at the base of the tower, absently trying to comfort the screaming infant in his arms. The storm rages out in the courtyard, but as the last pieces of the staircase clatter to the shattered stones, the winds abate somewhat and a faint light seems to shimmer through the rain.

Across the rear courtyard, hidden in the wild growth, the PCs will find a large ancestral shrine overlooking the raging sea. Crossing the courtyard through the driving rain requires another roll to resist the cold, but the shrine itself is surprisingly snug and sheltered from the weather. Inside is a statue of a kneeling O-Doji-kami playing a biwa while contemplating the falling snow that has been painted onto the inside of the

shrine's faded walls. A half-burnt candle glows softly at the altar, which will glow blue in the presence of spirits (including returned spirits). The shrine is as old and decrepit as the castle, but seems more intact, and fires would be safe if built carefully. There are enough dry sticks around to make a small fire in the pit, which will throw deep shadows throughout the shrine but relieve the shivers after a few minutes – any PCs who are suffering from the cold (temporary ranks of Unluck) may make a roll of either **Stamina** or **Fire** at TN 20 to recover if a fire is built.

As the PCs catch their breath, the light from the candle abruptly deepens to a dark blue (almost purple) light, and the croaking rattle of the goryo will echo over the sound of the storm. The spirit will charge out of the rain and slam to a stop against the empty air of the shrine's entrance. Any character with Lore: Theology will recognize that the shrine is still consecrated ground, and the goryo cannot enter (Kyushu will shakily point this out if he is present). After a few moments of scrabbling at the invisible barrier, the ghost will suddenly vanish. The candle-light brightens (either to a normal yellow if there are no returned spirits present, or to a brighter blue if there are).

An **Investigation (Search) / Perception** roll of TN 10 will allow the PC to notice a small drawer at the base of the statue, which contains a few more candles, flint and tinder, and some incense, though it is covered in dust and cobwebs.

A **Lore: Theology / Void** roll at TN 20 and a prayer to the Fortunes, specifically Osano-Wo (Fortune of Fire and Thunder) or Emma-O (Fortune of Death), will restore one Rank of Fire Ring to any PC afflicted by the goryo's touch. Moto-descended PCs may pray to the Lords of Death, but success merely means the PC feels a hot, dry wind on his face, carrying the spidery words *"We found you..."* This does not heal the PCs Fire Ring, but gives the PC "Marked by the Shi-Tien Yen-Wang" instead.

If the players wish, they may attempt to contact their ancestors here; any ancestors who successfully defended themselves from the ghost will come, those who did not succeed will not. Takuya will pray also, summoning Doji Ayame, the ancestor who originally sinned with the gaijin. She, and any other ancestors summoned here, are audible to all PC's. They are also visible to returned spirit PCs or those who failed the Earth Roll for "Mumblings of an Old Witch Hunter" (they will look as solid as the PCs themselves, yet are immaterial). Ayame appears as a beautiful middle-aged woman dressed in pristine white funerary robes and perfect makeup. Similarly, PC's ancestor spirits can be

seen by their characters, but not by the others. Should none of the PCs be able to see her, the first indication they will have of the ancestor's presence will be a gentle voice speaking from the darkness of the shrine.

"Greetings, samurai. Pray allow me to apologize for the actions of my poor descendant. Please, have you come to help put her... us... to rest?"

Doji Ayame was the daimyo of the Itoshii Province during the fifth century, and was responsible for bringing the Fortunes' curse upon her bloodline. She will not deny her actions, and will attempt to assist the PCs in whatever fashion she can. She will answer their questions to the best of her ability. Some possible lines of inquiry include:

- Why were you cursed? *"In life, I fell in love with a gaijin named Daniel, a noble soul cursed by fate to not be born a samurai. He died valiantly defending his lord, Garen Hawthorne, but even so I have since been denied my place on the kharmic wheel for my sin of desire, and can only rejoin it once the goryo is laid to rest. I cannot confront her because I too must hide from the poor girl's spirit because she attacks me on sight. I do not wish to speculate what would happen if she caught me."*
- What happened to the girl to make her come back as a goryo? *"The girl suffered greatly at the hands of her father, Doji Matsume, whose compassion turned to foul desire. He kept her hidden away in a secret basement chamber, but when a servant threatened to tell his wife and expose his damning secret, he killed the servant in fear and, in a moment of regret, bricked the girl into her room. She was nine years old. Her name was Sakura. In the darkness, starving to death, she despaired, and hung herself with a strip of her own kimono to escape. Any vengeance she may have tried to claim against her father as a goryo was precluded, as he was slain in Otosan Uchi. Unable to get her revenge, she lingered, punishing his descendants."*
- Who killed Doji Matsume? *"One known as Seppun Hotaro struck him down. I cannot say why."*
- How did the curse continue through your bloodline if the green-eyed children have been sent away? *"The curse of the Fortunes has followed my other children's descendants. I do not know how it can be broken, but it is far less important than stopping the vengeful spirit of one of its victims."*

- How can we lay her to rest? *“Find the hidden room, bring Sakura’s body to the shrine, and give it a proper funeral. Grant her the peace she was denied in life. Please hurry lest she find more victims.”*
- Where is the room? *“I am sorry, but I do not know; I do not leave the shrine, as she cannot enter it. I believe it would have been in the basements, however, as Matsume was trying to keep her hidden.”*
- Why does she kill those who love the green-eyed child’s father? *“Perhaps because she was denied any love herself. But she was just a child when she died, and she likely does not understand matters of the heart better than any other child would.”*
- My ancestor was attacked by the goryo. *“I will pray for (him/her), but I do not know what their fate might be.”*

Takuya will remain in the shrine and care for the baby, as he is well past the limits of his physical and mental endurance, but he will prepare the funeral arrangements as best he can. If the PCs will not or cannot continue, he will wait until dawn to strike out into the castle himself, leaving the child as comfortable as he can, and return a few hours later with the body to perform the funeral rites. This is not an ideal situation however, especially depending on who is available to keep the child safe (if no conscious person is there, the child will have died of exposure).

Finding the Room

As the PCs enter the ruined mansion through the driving rain (again requiring a roll to resist the cold), they must make their way to the basement. Ayame’s spirit can give them directions through the dust-laden, ruined building; there are creaking floors, fallen walls, debris and detritus everywhere. The darkness is a tangible thing, which must be pushed away by light. The entrance to the basement is a thin set of servant’s stairs, tucked away behind one of the many abandoned kitchens.

Searching through the basement requires an **Investigation (Search) / Perception** roll at TN 20; the Absolute Direction Advantage grants a Free Raise, but any penalties for darkness apply. Other options are possible to make locating the hidden room easier; Communing with the spirits requires additional Raises as the local kami are terrified of the goryo, but doing so successfully may grant Raises on the Search roll. The “By the Light of the Moon” spell will allow the PCs to find the room without any further rolls. The hallways and rooms that the PCs pass through are narrow, stuffy, and winding. Many of the rooms are store-rooms, with

empty shelves and broken crates, and some of the passages are blocked by fallen timber. As the PCs cross a four-way intersection, the goryo will be standing at the far end of the light’s reach of the right passage, assuming they have a light source. If the PCs have the candle from the shrine, it will glow a blue so dark that it seems to absorb light more than produce it.

The thin, strained wheeze of someone trying to scream but has run out of air grinds icy knives across your skin. The wintry whisper pushes deep into your flesh, and the gurgling sound plunges those knives into bone and marrow. The faint outline of a young girl stands silhouetted against the darkness, but no footsteps are heard as she tears away from the shadows. Her head is grotesquely askew and her eyes are murderous; a child’s cruel, dirty hands reach out to snuff your life.

The PCs must roll to resist a **Fear 4** effect (TN 25), even if the PC passed the earlier test. Directly attacking the goryo does no good (as should be obvious by now), so the PCs will need to draw it away from the characters who are searching for the body. The goryo will target a PC for death and go directly for them, ignoring all others. She starts with anyone who made the plea of Compassion in the tower, then servants of Takuya, then Doji, then Crane, then returned spirits, and so on. The goryo also passes through walls, floors, and obstacles as needed.

As before, attacking the ghost has no effect – weapons, jade, crystal, spells, and tattoos (even the Dragon tattoo) pass through it harmlessly. It can be touched with a **Jiujutsu (Grappling) / Agility** roll at TN 5, but its deathly-cold, clammy form creates an additional Fear 5 effect, even if the PC passed the first one, and they must roll **Fire** at a TN of 20 as the PCs life is extinguished by her ice-cold touch. Failure causes them to lose one Rank from their Fire Ring as below. Grappling the goryo does no damage and does not keep the goryo from moving, but it does transfer the murderous intent of the ghost to the last attacker – any other attack will be ignored as the goryo focuses solely on her target. (Note: attacking the goryo with fire will likely catch the building on fire, even in the rain. This will burn the castle to the ground, possibly placing any PCs incapacitated in it in danger.)

The goryo attacks by simply grabbing the chosen victim by the throat and strangling them. Dodging its icy grip requires a **Jiujutsu / Reflexes** roll at TN 20; each successive dodge roll increases the TN by 5 until the PC flees completely or is caught. Escaping the goryo’s grip requires a **Jiujutsu / Strength** roll at TN 20.

Once caught, the goryo will attempt to extinguish the PC's life-force: every round the spirit clutches their throat, the target must make a **Fire** roll at TN 20. Failure reduces the PC's Fire Ring by 1. When it reaches zero, the PC is reduced to the "Out" Wound Level and cannot act. The affected PC's Fire Ring is reduced for the rest of the module and they will feel numbingly cold.

The targeted PC can lead Sakura away by making an **Athletics (Running) / Stamina** roll at TN 15, with each successful roll increasing the TN by 5 until the PC is caught. Not having light will cause the PC to stumble and fall, failing the roll automatically. If the TN reaches 25, the PC will run through a room full of stinking, rotten corpses; a quick **Investigation / Perception** roll TN 15 will determine that they were ronin and peasants, likely bandits, and it appears that they were all strangled in their sleep; each corpse's face is distorted into an inhuman mask of terror.

Should the PC who made a successful plea for Compassion be caught by Sakura, she smiles and kisses them passionately as she strangles the life from them; filling their senses with the smell of her mildewed hair and the feel of her cold, dead lips.

Finding the bricked-up room involves one more **Investigation (Search) / Perception** roll at TN 30, with a Free Raise for every round the goryo is distracted by another PC. The room itself is expertly hidden, but succeeding at the roll means the PC spots the stone lintel set into the wall, directly above the doorway.

Breaking down the wall requires a **Strength** roll at TN 30. Alternately, a Heavy Weapon may be used (rolling **Heavy Weapons / Strength**) at TN 25. A dai tsuchi grants a Free Raise to this roll, as a large hammer is better suited to breaking through brick walls than a iron club.

Stale dust pours forth from the chamber's entry, swirling about in the heavy air. In the middle of the room, a small skeleton hangs precariously from a rafter by a tattered bit of cloth whose color has long been leeched away. The body, tiny and withered, is in remarkable condition for being 600 years old- the hair and skin are still mostly intact, but brittle, thin and dry. The expression on her face is clearly visible, even for one so long dead: hollow eye sockets accuse you of terrible, terrible deeds and promise unending torment.

The corpse will need to be carried out; this probably involves touching it, which will cause the character to lose five Ranks of Honor until they can be ritually

cleansed (even with that, they will lose one point of Honor permanently for every Rank of Honor they have). The PCs may think to crush the skull and bones, but this will have no effect, and incinerating the body in a way that would completely destroy it would catch the building on fire and trap the PCs.

Once the corpse is touched, Sakura will break off her attack to pursue the corpse-holder, howling with fury. The corpse-carrier will need to make two **Athletics (Running) / Agility** rolls (at TN 10, then TN 15) to exit the building. She will pursue them outside this time, where the rain punches down hard and fast while the mud makes running more difficult; two more **Athletics (Running) / Agility** rolls (at TN 15, then 20) will need to be made to reach the shrine safely. She will pursue them out of the building this time but cannot enter in the shrine. Should the corpse be dropped outside, Takuya will limp out (without the baby) to grab it and drag it into the shrine while Sakura croaks with rage, clawing at the frame of the shrine's doorway.

Once back to the shrine, the PCs must perform or help Kyushu perform a proper funeral ritual:

The funerary rites, a simple tradition that every priest and shugenja knows, echo through the small shrine, at times almost drowned out by the mad gurgling of the goryo. Each benediction, each wave of incense, each bow offered to the shrine, causes her form to become more transparent. When the body catches fire, the ghost of the poor girl begins slowly turning to dust; a ray of sunlight breaks through the clouds on the horizon, washing her soot away and scattering her spirit's ashes to the wind.

Doji Takuya, holding his infant son, sits, leaning against the statue of Doji, weeping openly. "Thank you, my friends" he says, smiling. "Thank you for everything."

Any PCs still inside the building will be recovered, and the bodies of the Doji guards (and the bandits in the basement, if found), will be tended to by the lord's eta. Takuya will return to the castle with the PCs, grateful beyond words for their intervention.

Conclusion

Success: Peace for Sakura

The trip back to the castle is uneventful, and the PCs are given a chance to get some sleep and recuperate (giving them a minimum Fire Ring of 1); they are expected to meet with Doji Takuya and his family an hour before dinner the next day, when the festivities

will be concluded and the child is presented before the court. At this meeting, Takuya, Sumi, Masu, and Toshiro will meet them in Takuya's personal study, all of whom look relieved. Shinichi, the infant, sleeps peacefully in his mother's arms. When the PCs are seated, every member of the family bows low before Sumi speaks:

"We cannot thank you enough for your help in this matter, my friends; you have lifted a great burden from our family and we are in your debt. If there is anything we can do to help you, please let us know. We must ask that you do not speak of this to anyone, however, as I am sure you understand. Shall we proceed to dinner, then?"

Shinichi squeaks slightly, turning his beautiful green eyes to the PCs. An **Investigation / Perception** roll, TN 20, will allow the PC to see a wide, full, silver moon reflected in his eyes for a brief moment before he goes back to sleep.

Dinner is a massive celebratory feast which makes the extravagances of the previous evenings pale by comparison, and the new parents are lavished with praise before Shinichi is handed off to a servant to go to bed.

PCs wounded by the goryo regain one Rank of their Fire Ring per each full night's sleep they obtain afterwards.

Each PC may choose one of the following allies:

- Doji Takuya & Doji Sumi: 1 Devotion/ 3 Influence; **or**,
- Soshi Toshiro: 1 Devotion/ 3 Influence

Vassals of either of these daimyo gain one additional Devotion point. Vassals of Doji Takuya & Doji Sumi gain two points of Status (unless they already had three Ranks of Status, in which case they gain only one point).

Ronin PCs are offered fealty to Doji Takuya and Doji Sumi. If they accept, they gain a Status Rank of 1.5, and may join a Crane School at their next opportunity (the player should contact the Campaign Admin staff with details). If the ronin refuses, he is instead given 10 koku and an invitation to return to the province at any time in the future.

PCs with an Honor less than 5.0 gain two points of Honor, unless they attempt to blackmail Takuya.

If an ancestor survived because the PC spent experience, the PC will have a dream where they and their haunting ancestor are performing some relevant activity together; the ancestor is pleased with the PCs effort. The PC gains the **"Favored by the Ancestors"** cert.

If a PC successfully made a plea of Compassion to Sakura, they are now haunted by a young girl who shows no sign of being a goryo- she dresses and acts like a demure Crane girl in all respects, except when it comes to anyone for whom the PC has "True Love", which blatantly reveals her violent nature (*"Why do you need her, (name)-kun, when I will love you forever!"*). The PC gains the "Haunted: Sakura" Disadvantage.

Mixed Success: Trapped in the Castle

If all the PCs are trapped in the castle and unable to retrieve the body, or cannot make it into the castle due to the goryo's weakening, Lord Takuya will wait until dawn before entering the castle. He will look for any PC still inside and drag them out to safety. This will take some time, however, giving the goryo more time to claim victims. He performs the funeral rites himself, although poorly, and the ashes of the body float to the castle, catching it on fire. Even damp, it burns magnificently. (If for some reason any of the PCs are not somewhere that Takuya can easily find them, they will die in the fire. Touch of Destiny, Great Destiny, or Dark Fate will allow the PC to survive, but they will gain the Disturbing Countenance Disadvantage from the horrible burns across their body. They can dig themselves out, eventually, and will be welcomed with reserve back at Kyuden Houjuku.)

Returning to the castle, the group will discover that the daimyo's household is in chaos: Doji Sumi was struck by a piece of debris blown in through her window during the storm. She died just before dawn. Takuya is stricken to the core, the pride he felt in bringing his family's curse to an end turning instantly to despair. If Takuya had to recover any PCs from the castle, then Asahina Katai was also found dead in his chambers (asphyxiated by his own vomit, though the servants of course will not speak of it in such blunt terms). The PCs will be asked to Takuya's chamber before dinner to meet with him alone:

"Thank you, my friends, for assisting me in dealing with this issue; your help was most valuable." Takuya says, his face stern and impassive. "If there is any way I can help you in the future, please let me know. I must ask that you remain quiet about this, of course."

The PCs will gain “Favor: Crane Clan” if they do not try to blackmail Takuya with the information, and PCs with an Honor less than 5.0 gain two points of Honor, unless they attempt to blackmail Takuya. Any PC who was recovered from the castle by Takuya gains “Minor Obligation: Doji Takuya”.

PCs who attempt to blackmail Takuya may do so, gaining the Blackmail Advantage (worth 5 points), but also gaining the “Sworn Enemy: Doji Takuya” Disadvantage (worth 4 points) and may not take Doji Takuya & Doji Sumi as an Ally.

Soshi Toshiro will depart the court abruptly, furious over his daughter’s death. He does not quite swear vengeance upon Takuya, though it is obvious that the Crane have the Scorpion daimyo’s enmity. Any PC with “Oath of Fealty: Doji Takuya” gains “Sworn Enemy: Soshi Toshiro”.

Death of Shinichi

If the infant is killed, the goryo will immediately fade away and return to a dormant slumber until the next time a green-eyed child is born to the family. Takuya, much subdued, will lead the PCs back to his home. The next day in court, Asahina Katai will stand to address the guests before breakfast:

“It grieves me greatly to inform you that Takuya-sama and Sumi-sama’s young son died in the night last night. Please have a safe journey home, and may the kami watch over you.”

The funeral is private and the PCs are sent home; again, Doji Takuya and Doji Sumi will entreat them not to speak of the matter.

Death of Takuya

If Takuya is killed, the goryo will immediately fade away and return to a dormant slumber until the next time a green-eyed child is born to the family (though Shinichi’s survival may change the expression of the curse, as the child had never been saved before). The PCs will need to return to the castle, presumably with the child.

There are two outcomes for the PCs following Doji Takuya’s death, both of which depend on them speaking to Doji Sumi and convincing her of Takuya’s intention to kill the child. The new daimyo will meet with the survivors in her study (formerly her husband’s) to find out what caused Takuya’s demise. The PCs may roll **Courtier / Awareness** at a TN of 20 to realize that she is devastated by the loss of her husband, and will need to be handled carefully.

If the PCs make no attempt to present their actions with care, they should make a **Lore: Law / Intelligence** roll (TN 15) to realize that they are about to confess to the murder of a high-ranking samurai. While their actions may have been justified in terms of trying to save the life of the child, Doji Sumi is the authority who will be responsible for their fate and if they do not have any concern for her feelings, they will find themselves facing the brutal realities of the Rokugani legal system first-hand.

In any case, the PCs should make a **Sincerity / Awareness** roll at a TN of 30. (Either the Honesty or Deceit Emphasis will apply, depending on how they choose to tell the story.) The TN is increased by 10 if any member of the group contradicts the speaker (for example, if compelled by the Can’t Lie Disadvantage). The speaker gains a Free Raise if they had dinner with Sumi at the start of court.

Failure means the samurai who actually slew Takuya will be arrested and hung the next morning. (A dozen Daidoji-trained bushi will deal with any criminals who choose to resist arrest; Daidoji Jirako or Kakita Takezo would eventually arrive if necessary.) Any non-Crab samurai who stood by and did nothing while he was killed are offered seppuku when they get home. They may choose instead to leave their Clan, becoming ronin and losing all Favors and Allies (with “Sworn Enemy: Crane Clan” if they ever reveal themselves). Though Scorpion PCs lose their Allies and Favors, they are allowed to adopt a new persona, with a new name and mask, and are given one “Favor: Scorpion Clan” for every Favor lost. Crab PCs lose all Crane Favors, and are chastised by their superiors, losing a full Rank of Status and two full Ranks of Glory, but are not punished further.

If Sumi is successfully convinced that Takuya’s death was necessary:

Doji Sumi deflates, holding back heavy, pained tears. Minutes pass. “Well,” she says, her voice strained, “It appears that my judgment of Doji Takuya was flawed, blinded by what I thought was love.” She sits up straight, her cold, black eyes distant. “Thank you for your help, my friends.”

She waves her hand, dismissing you. As you leave, there is a loud crash from the room; looking back, you see Doji Sumi standing over the shattered altar to Bente, breathing heavily. She looks at you, regains her composure, and turns away. Outside, dead leaves swirl in the late autumn air.

The PCs gain “Ally: Doji Sumi: 1 Devotion/ 3 Influence”.

If a player decides to try to blackmail Doji Takuya

Takuya takes any implied blackmail calmly, though he makes it clear that he believes the PC is making a mistake. *“I am saddened that you would choose such a route, when I am more than willing to help you of my own volition, but if this is how it must be, then so be it.”*

PCs who attempt to blackmail Takuya may do so, gaining the Blackmail Advantage (worth 5 points), but also gaining the “Sworn Enemy: Doji Takuya” Disadvantage (worth 4 points) and may not take Doji Takuya & Doji Sumi as an Ally.

PCs with “Oath of Fealty: Doji Takuya & Doji Sumi” are instead granted a chance for seppuku. Failure to accept their lord’s generosity in this matter will simply result in their execution.

Speaking of the Curse

Speaking of the curse after the fact means the PC loses any Allies or Crane Favors gained during this module and earns “Sworn Enemy: Doji Takuya” if Doji Takuya is not dead.

If an ancestor spirit was killed by the goryo

The night after the group returns to the castle, any PC who had an ancestor that could not fend off the goryo will have a dream of in which they earn the ancestor’s displeasure in some way. For example, a courtier may drop her tea, a bushi character could fumble his kata, and so on. The ancestor will viciously attack the PC in some way relevant to their character (knocking their teeth out with a fan, backhanding him onto the ground, etc.). When the PC looks back, the ancestor’s face is bone-pale, their eyes and neck ringed by dark purple and black, staring with pure, unmitigated hatred, before attacking relentlessly until the PC awakes.

The ancestor haunting the PC is now a goryo themselves, and this will happen every night. Give the PC the “Goryo Ancestor” cert.

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
Takuya or Shinichi Survives:	+1XP
Curse Lifted:	+1XP

Total Possible Experience: 4XP

Honor

Honor gains or losses are listed through the module.

Glory

Glory gains or losses are listed through the module. If the PC did not gain Glory in the module, they lose one point of Glory for inactivity.

Module Tracking Sheets

Did the PC make a trade agreement for silks with the Doji?

Did the PC succeed at any of the court events, or sponsor their own? Which event?

If the PC took part in Toshiro’s Poetry Challenge, did they write a new last line? List it here.

Is the PC Haunted by Sakura?

(Dragon PC only) Did the PC impress Kakita Takezo when delivering Uso’s invitation?

(Scorpion PC only) Does the PC wish to support Yojiro or the traditionalist Scorpion faction?

(Haunted PCs only) Did the PC’s ancestor resist Sakura’s attack?

(Moto PCs only) Was the PC marked by the Lords of Death?

GM Reporting

Was the curse broken? Did Takuya, and/or Shinichi survive?

Did Doji Sumi survive?

Did Asahina Katai survive?

Was any PC executed for Takuya's death?

Were any PCs Marked by the Lords of Death? Who?

Were any PCs haunted by Sakura? Who?

Did any of the PCs offer Takuya a new sake brand? List the name, province of origin, and description.

Did a Scorpion PC successfully sway Toshiro to support one side of the Scorpion conflict? Which side?

Did a PC defeat Kakita Takezo in a duel? Who?

Was Kakita Takezo impressed by a Dragon PC's invitation?

Meta-Question for Year Two of the Campaign:

Kakita Takezo brought up the subject of returned spirits seeking greater station once more, based on their abilities. This is a matter coming to the fore of the Empire throughout the year, and in each module that will report before GenCon 2012, the players will be given a chance to "vote" for their daimyo on the following question:

Do you want your PC's daimyo to support the Toturi Dynasty or the Hantei Dynasty?

This is not entirely an in-character question; the players are being given a chance to determine which daimyo support which side of the coming conflict. List the name of the daimyo and the side that each individual player chose for their answer in the reporting sheet. (More than one PC at a table sharing a daimyo each get their own, independent, vote.)

GM must report this information BEFORE (1/31/2012) for it to have storyline effect

Appendix: NPCs

Doji Takuya

Air 3 Earth 2 Fire 3 Water 2 Void 3
 Awareness Stamina 3 Perception
 5 3
 Honor 6.6 Status 6.0 Glory 4.5

School/Rank: Doji Courtier 4

Notable Skills: Artisan: Fashion 5, Calligraphy (Cipher) 4, Courtier (Manipulation) 5, Etiquette (Courtesy, Conversation) 6, Games: Go 4, Horsemanship 5, Investigation 3, Lore: Sake 5, Perform: Storytelling 3, Sincerity (Honesty) 5, Tea Ceremony 3

Advantages/Disadvantages: Allies, Benten's Blessing, Dangerous Beauty / Bad Fortune (Curse of the Fortunes), True Love (Doji Sumi)

Doji Sumi

Air 3 Earth 2 Fire 3 Water 2 Void 3
 Awareness Willpower Perception
 5 3 3
 Honor 5.2 Status 5.5 Glory 4.5

School/Rank: Bayushi Courtier 4

Notable Skills: Artisan: Fashion 5, Calligraphy 3, Courtier (Gossip, Manipulation) 6, Etiquette 5, Games: Letters 5, Investigation 3, Sincerity (Deceit) 5, Temptation 2

Advantages/Disadvantages: Allies, Benten's Blessing, Blackmail, Dangerous Beauty / True Love (Doji Takuya)

Kakita Takezo

Air 4 Earth 4 Fire 4 Water 3 Void 5
 Reflexes 5 Agility 5
 Honor 8.2 Status 5.0 Glory 5.0

Initiative: 10k6+16 **Attack:** 10k6 (katana, Simple)

Armor **TN:** 30 **Damage:** 8k2 (Kakita Blade, 9s explode)

School/Rank: Kakita Bushi 5/Kenshinzen 2

Notable Skills: Defense 5, Etiquette 3, Iaijutsu (Assessment, Focus) 8, Jiujutsu 5, Kenjutsu (Katana) 7, Kyujutsu 4, Sincerity 4, Spears 5, Tea Ceremony 7

Relevant Mastery Abilities: Free Raise on Focus Rolls, +2k2 to Focus if win Assessment by 10 or more; may ready a sword as a Free Action, gains +1k0 to damage with all swords, 9s explode on sword damage; Tea Ceremony recovers 2 Void

Advantages/Disadvantages: Kakita Blade (Otorite), Luck 1, Touch of Yomi (Iaijutsu) / Antisocial 1

Daidoji Jirako

Air 2 Earth 3 Fire 3 Water 3 Void 2
 Reflexes 3 Honor 6.8 Status 3.5 Glory 2.0

Initiative: 6k3 **Attack:** 8k3 (Katana, Complex)

Armor **TN:** 25 (light armor) **Damage:** 7k2

Reduction: 3 (light armor)

Wounds: 17 (+0), 25 (+3), 33 (+5), 41 (+10), 49 (+15), 57 (+20), 65 (Down, +40), 73 (Dead)

School/Rank: Daidoji Iron Warrior 3

Notable Skills: Battle 3, Defense 5, Iaijutsu 2, Investigation (Notice) 4, Kenjutsu (Katana) 5, Kyujutsu 2, Spears 3

Advantages/Disadvantages: Clear Thinker / Doubt: Iaijutsu

Other NPCs Notable Skills

For purposes of specific events, the other NPCs present have the following dice pools. Any other abilities are at the GM's discretion.

Asahina Katai: Games: Sadane 4 (8k4), Performance: Oratory 5 (9k4)

Soshi Toshiro: Artisan: Poetry 6 (10k4), Games: Shogi 3 (7k4)

Masu: Games: Go 5 (9k4)

Tsi Tianlin: Artisan: Origami 5 (9k4), Games: Kemari 2 (5k3)

Kyushu: Games: Go 4 (7k3)

Player Handout: Takuya's Drinking Game

- **Mumblings of an Old Witch Hunter-** A piquant, green shochu that is known to cause mild hallucinations on occasion. This is considered a good luck drink, especially for the Kuni, as it helps them spot evil spirits (according to the rumor). Served hot.
- **Suitengu's Laughter-** A fruity sake blend from the Spice Islands, it is traditionally bought for celebrations when sailors return home, and served in large glasses decorated with fruit slices and tiny parasols. Served cold.
- **Mushin-** A very potent shochu from the Asahina family, said to have helped Katsukichi, a monk from the 6th century, achieve enlightenment. It has an exceedingly mild flavor (some say no flavor at all). Served hot.
- **Bayushi's Lament-** It is a harsh, dry, rye shochu that would seem "rustic" if not for the incredibly complex undertones- this was the brand that Bayushi consoled himself with on the night that Shosuro left. This is a *very* important gift from Soshi Toshiro, as it is exclusive to the daimyo and champions of the Scorpion clan (Takuya opened it to celebrate the birth of his child, which is an appropriate use). Served cold.