

All That Will Be Lost

**A One-Round Low/Mid-Rank Adventure for Heroes of
Rokugan: Spirit of Bushido
Month of Akodo, 1139 (Early Summer)**

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A single missing monk could hold the destiny of the Empire in his hands.

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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 damage of the grenades should be 3k3 at worst, with the TNs to reduce the damage reduced by -10 each. The Tsuko's Heart Lieutenant is replaced with a Tsuko's Heart Ronin if the PCs get ambushed.

The TNs for various Skill rolls may be reduced by -5 at the GM's discretion.

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

There are two Tsuko's Heart Lieutenants (increasing the total number of combatants by 1) during the ambush, and there is also one in the safehouse raid as well.

Adventure Summary and Background

Though he is certainly the most well-known, Toturi was not the only former Emperor to return through Oblivion's Gate five years ago. A handful of others also answered the call during Rokugan's time of need, and fought bravely for their beloved homeland one last time. Most of these former Emperors recognized that their time had passed, and either committed seppuku to return to Tengoku once more or retired, hoping to spend their second lives in quiet contemplation, away from the politics and power plays that had marked their first existences in Ningen-do.

Unfortunately, the former Emperors who did not abandon Ningen-do represent an existential threat to certain active political powers. Especially since Toturi's death last summer, these forces need to make sure that no other possible claimant to the Hantei throne reappears, and have begun taking steps to make sure this cannot happen.

One of the retired Hantei emperors is the monk Korosheki, who was once Hantei XXII. Shortly after the death of Toturi Kaede, the Oracle of Void, Korosheki helped a small group of samurai build a shrine to the Oracle (now the Fortune of Noble Sacrifice), but the small act of piety became something much more when a ronin-led group of bandits attempted to assassinate him. (See the module

"Personal Sacrifice" for more information.) Although the bandits failed in their attempt, one of the samurai working with him, Akodo Moretsu, recognized the former Emperor, as she too was a returned spirit, and had visited the court of Hantei XXII several times in her previous life. Once the shrine was completed, Korosheki and Moretsu joined forces to investigate the attempted assassination more thoroughly. Their search uncovered something shocking: the returned Emperors were apparently being murdered.

Now, Korosheki himself has disappeared, and Moretsu must turn to other allies to learn the truth behind the attacks. The trail seems to lead to Toshi no Meiyo Gisei, the City of Honor's Sacrifice, on the border between the Lion and Unicorn Clans. As fate or ill chance would have it, Toshi no Meiyo Gisei was taken last summer by the Unicorn armies, and Kitsuo Motso, the Lion Clan Champion, has begun a campaign to reclaim it. As Moretsu must attend to her duties, it is up to the PCs to locate the last remaining retired Hantei, a man calling himself Hitoshirenu, somewhere in a Toshi no Meiyo Gisei torn apart by war – all before another hired assassin finds him first.

Character Notes

Check the PCs' character sheets for the following:

- A cert for the module "Personal Sacrifice" or the interactive "Harvest Festival." In particular, PCs who protected Korosheki from being killed during "Personal Sacrifice" should have Ally: Akodo Moretsu, but any PC who played either the module or the interactive should have met Moretsu.
- A cert for the module "Emperor's Favor."
- Characters who are returned spirits will find several NPCs react differently toward them at various points during this adventure (noted below).

Introduction

The adventure begins with the PCs performing their ordinary duties for their lords. Regardless of where they are, they receive a letter from Akodo Moretsu, whom the PCs might know from either the module "Personal Sacrifice" or the "Harvest Festival" interactive. The letter is Player Handout #1.

If a PC wishes to seek out information about Akodo Moretsu, they may make a **Lore: Heraldry / Intelligence**, **Lore: Lion / Intelligence** or **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll, TN 20. On a success, they

learn that Moretsu is a returned spirit with a reputation for honor and forthrightness, though the latter trait is complicated somewhat by her rather stunning lack of social graces. If the PC manages to make a TN 30, they further learn that Moretsu has been involved in establishing an Imperial census of all the known returned spirits, under the auspices of the Miya family.

Assuming the PCs wish to come to Moretsu's aid as she has requested, they must make appropriate travel arrangements. Nadoka Ogami Mura, a small village about a day's travel south of Toshi no Meiyo Gisei and the Unicorn border, is not open to general travel at the moment (as the Lion are using the village for military purposes), and even PCs who might otherwise be traveling through the Lion lands do not automatically have permission to turn their steps toward Nadoka Ogami Mura. As such, while Lion characters can reach the village easily, special arrangements must be made for any non-Lion PCs. PCs with social positions (such as Emerald Magistrates or PCs with the Eyes of the Miya cert) that allow them to write their own travel papers are, of course, able to deal with the matter swiftly; others, however, must take additional steps.

Several avenues are available for non-Lion PCs who must gain special permission to Nadoka Ogami Mura. A straightforward request to the Lion authorities is perhaps the simplest; by making an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll, TN 20, the PC can gain permission through normal channels. Failing that, a PC can call upon personal connections to gain the appropriate permission. A Favor from the Lion Clan or any family thereof, as well as any Imperial favor, is enough to get permission (this uses up the favor, of course); two Favors from any other source are also enough to get permission. Similarly, the PC can reduce the Devotion of a Lion Clan or Imperial Ally with at least 1 Rank of Influence by 1 to gain permission; any other Ally can potentially work as well, but such Allies must either have 2 Ranks of Influence or their Devotion must be reduced by 2 instead. (If the PC has Moretsu herself as an Ally, she can of course be used for this purpose.) A PC with dishonorable contacts might also use **Forgery / Agility, Lore: Underworld / Awareness** or similar rolls to find (or create) the necessary paperwork; such options are at the GM's discretion, but should also require a TN 20 to be successful and carry the appropriate costs to their Honor. Finally, if all else fails, a PC can take a Minor Obligation to the Lion Clan in order to be given permission. If the PC is unwilling to take the Obligation and cannot or will not use any other means to gain access to Nadoka Ogami Mura, they receive one point of XP and are unable to continue with the adventure.

In addition to the above, ronin characters will have to spend 1 koku on travel expenses; however, Moretsu's letter to any such PCs will include a guarantee of coverage for those expenses and additional pay of 2 koku for their service.

Nadoka Ogami Mura was clearly once a fairly quiet and unassuming farming village, but that has recently changed. Now sleeping tents housing hundreds of soldiers cover the once-bountiful rice paddies, and new walls surround a rapidly-expanding military town. As you walk through the village streets, you have to step aside several times to avoid rapidly-moving Lion units on patrol or traveling between the many encampments on the nearby plain. It seems that the year since the Unicorn Clan took Toshi no Meiyo Gisei, just a day's travel north, has been rather eventful for this little town.

The Cloak of Hotei is a small two-story inn near the center of town; glancing at it, you note that the upper floor is of a different kind of wood and lacks all the signs of weathering that the first floor does, suggesting that it is a new addition. Heimin laborers work to expand the inn's ground floor even as you watch; it looks as though the new section will nearly double the current level's area. A Lion overseer watches the work with a sharp eye, and two more samurai in brown and gold stand watch at the inn's entrance. They study your papers carefully before gesturing for you to enter.

Inside, the hustle of the town is shut away, and only a single samurai occupies a seat at the inn's common room tables. Akodo Moretsu is a tall woman with an athletic build and a dark topknot that shows just the first hints of grey. The soft yellow glow of a returned spirit surrounds her, and it takes little time for most who meet her to guess the Realm from which she returned – she shows no emotion whatsoever as she stands to greet you, a reserve far beyond that of even most Lion samurai. “Honorable samurai,” she begins, “my deepest thanks for coming.” Her expression and tone betray no sign of her gratitude, or any other feeling for that matter. “I have something of the most vital importance to discuss with you, and very little time left to address it.”

Moretsu invites them to sit and have tea or a meal after their travels; the inn's staff is efficient and fastidious, but seems a little cowed by the status of their current guests. If they ask, Moretsu notes that she has commandeered the inn to act as her headquarters for the moment; most of her officers are staying there as well, and she expects that when the rest of the army arrives, her superiors will make the same arrangements for

themselves. (This is the reason for the inn's current expansion.) Though Moretsu is courteous and polite to those who wish to refresh themselves after their journey, she was quite serious about the time crunch, and moves on to business as soon as etiquette permits.

Moretsu dismisses the servants, and takes the unusual step of rising to see that they are entirely out of earshot before returning to her seat. You and she are all that remain in the room, and her stony expression somehow manages to become even more serious as she starts speaking. "Let me get straight to the point. This information is very sensitive, so I must ask you to be discreet, but I cannot risk further delays. Two years ago I worked on the construction of a small shrine to Kaede, our new Fortune of Noble Sacrifice, with a monk of the Thousand Fortunes named Korosheki." She nods at any PCs who were with her during the events of "Personal Sacrifice." "While we were working on the shrine, Korosheki was attacked by a ronin assassin and his hired peasant thugs. We fought them off. While many would have found it strange that a monk would be threatened in this fashion, I did not, because I recognized Korosheki from our previous lifetimes." She pauses, as though having to take extra effort to get the words out. "Korosheki was once Hantei XXII, Emperor of Rokugan.

"It seemed clear to me that the attack must have been launched by someone who knew about Korosheki's former life. Once we had completed our task with the shrine, I approached Korosheki and discussed the matter with him. He agreed, and together we began to investigate the situation. We quickly discovered that other Emperors, a small handful, had also returned – and that almost all of them had either disappeared, fallen victim to an accident of some kind or, as with Korosheki and Toturi-heika, been attacked by 'peasant bandits.' We came to believe that this was not coincidence – someone was trying to kill off the former Emperors, in a manner designed not to draw attention to the fact. Of the ones we had located, only two were still alive: Korosheki himself, and Hantei Okucheo. Okucheo-sama may have managed to protect himself almost by accident by remaining in such a public role; with the exception of Toturi-heika, the others had all chosen to retire, as Korosheki did, and their anonymity left them vulnerable to attack."

As she is speaking, Moretsu reaches into a pouch and withdraws from it a rolled-up scroll, which she taps lightly against the table as she continues. "We sent a warning to Okucheo-sama, and with his assistance we set up a census of all the returned spirits, in hopes of finding all the former Emperors. Eventually, we

learned that, in addition to Korosheki and Okucheo-sama, six other Emperors also returned through Oblivion's Gate: Hantei Bosai (the fourth Hantei), Hantei XIV, Hantei XXVII, Hantei XXX, Hantei XXXIII and Toturi I. Of those six, we found five, and all five were dead. The only one we have not found is Hantei XIV."

Moretsu sighs, and for the first time, a note of emotion enters her voice: concern. "And now," she goes on, "Korosheki has disappeared as well. He was tending a small shrine to Fukurokujin about a day's travel east of here, so we could meet to discuss our researches easily. We were supposed to meet a week ago; his message suggested he had found Hantei XIV at last. When I went to meet him, however, he did not arrive. I sought him out at his shrine, but with no success. He was gone, and there were signs of a struggle. I fear he is lost." She pauses, closing her eyes for a moment. When they open again, you can see something that might be a tear in one. She goes on, though, her voice still clear and calm. "While I was there, a peasant messenger arrived with a letter for Korosheki. I took and read it, and I have it here now."

She hands the letter to the PCs; it is reproduced as Player Handout #2. *"I questioned the peasant, and learned he was given the letter by a monk in Toshi no Meiyo Gisei, but he could tell me nothing more. And as you have no doubt already seen, the First Akodo Army is preparing to march on Toshi no Meiyo Gisei in mere days – we expect Motso-dono to arrive no later than the day after tomorrow to take command of the garrison. War is coming to Toshi no Meiyo Gisei, and I fear what might happen to this land once that occurs."*

Thanks to the letter she intercepted from the peasant messenger, Moretsu has two leads: the monk's name, Hitoshirenu, and "Tsuko's Heart," whatever that might mean. She assumes both are somehow connected to Toshi no Meiyo Gisei, but has nothing else to go on. With the army preparing to march on the city, she cannot investigate herself – and so, she needs the assistance of the PCs. She has little more to go on than what she has already said, but can share the following information with the PCs:

- She believes that "Hitoshirenu" is the current name of the man who was once Hantei XIV. Between the use of the word "Grandson" to address Korosheki and Korosheki's own message, she conjectures that Korosheki contacted Hitoshirenu before he disappeared, and she has intercepted the reply.

- She has no idea what “Tsuko’s Heart” might refer to, though she is aware that the Lion Champion during the Clan War was named Matsu Tsuko. She does not know if there is a connection between the two, however.
- She has no theories as to who might be killing the Emperors, but it seems to her that such an individual would be a serious threat to Rokugan and a heretic and traitor of the most abject sort. If pressed, she hesitates before admitting, with extremely careful phrasing, that she finds the timing of Motso’s attack on Meiyo Gisei awfully convenient for whoever is behind these murders – the message announcing that the assault of Meiyo Gisei would go forward arrived the very day she was supposed to meet Korosheki – and that she has never been able to make herself completely trust Motso. She refuses to go further, however.

If the PCs ask for suggestions on where to begin, Moretsu points out that one of the great Shrines to Bushido, specifically the Shrine to Honor, is located in Meiyo Gisei; the monks there might well have some information on Hitoshirenu. She has no recommendations about “Tsuko’s Heart,” but she does warn that Meiyo Gisei is known for its unsavory nature – the city is sometimes called the “Lion’s Ryoko Owari” – and that it likely has not improved under Unicorn stewardship for the last year. As such, she suggests that the PCs take extra care while they are in the city.

Part One: Honor’s Sacrifice

Toshi no Meiyo Gisei is roughly a day’s journey north of Nadoka Ogami Mura – while the PCs can remain in the village overnight and begin their travels the next morning, Moretsu encourages them to leave at once and camp on the road. Regardless, when they reach the city, they find a stream of travelers, merchants and pilgrims all jammed together on the roads outside the city walls.

Toshi no Meiyo Gisei is one of the great trade centers of the Empire, situated as it is between the Lion and Unicorn lands on roads linking to the Dragon, Scorpion and Phoenix, but right now that trade has been throttled. Peasant wagons, travelers on foot and samurai on shifting mounts all wait their eventual turns to enter the city through gates blocked by an entire squad of wary Shinjo guards. Unicorn troops

ride patrol circuits around the city perimeter and archers look down at you from the walls with keen gazes and bows half-drawn.

If there are no Lion PCs in the group, entering Toshi no Meiyo Gisei is simply a matter of patience; eventually the guards examine the group’s papers and send them inside, and their status as samurai earns them entry well before some of the waiting peasants and merchants, much to the latter groups’ vocal dismay. As they pass through the gates, some PCs may think to ask the guards if they know anything about Hitoshirenu or Tsuko’s Heart; on a successful **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll, TN 15, the officials confirm that a monk calling himself Hitoshirenu entered the city several weeks prior and has not left as far as they can tell from their paperwork (they have no more information, however), while asking about Tsuko’s Heart produces a series of uncomfortable glances and a recommendation to speak with the city’s magistrate, Shinjo Shirasu.

If, on the other hand, there is at least one Lion in the group, things are slightly trickier for that PC. The Unicorn and Lion have no official conflict at this point, and thus Lion PCs can theoretically enter the city – but the Unicorn are all too aware of the pending attack, and have no interest in making it easy for samurai who might be scouting for the enemy to come within the walls. As such, Lion PCs must travel a bureaucratic gauntlet similar to what the other PCs had to use to reach Nadoka Ogami Mura. Getting permission to enter the city for a Lion PC requires that PC to make an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll, TN 20, or call upon personal contacts via Favors or Allies. This works as for reaching Nadoka Ogami Mura, above, but the most effective Allies or Favors will be from the Imperial families or the Unicorn Clan. A PC without such access must accept an Obligation to the Unicorn Clan, find an alternative means of entering the city, or simply wait out the rest of the adventure outside the city (effectively ending their participation). If a PC chooses not to openly declare themselves as they enter, they may attempt **Stealth / Agility, Athletics (Climbing) / Agility, Forgery / Agility** or other similar rolls to do so – these rolls would also be TN 20, carry Honor losses for Low Skill use (even if they would not otherwise be considered a Low Skill) and will also provoke additional severe consequences if the PC is foolish enough to attempt a meeting with Shinjo Shirasu later on (see “The Law of the Wind,” below).

Once the PCs enter the city, they find a wary, heavily guarded populace, with Unicorn cavalry riding by every few minutes, forcing their ways through the densely-packed crowds with shouts and kicks at the peasants.

Most move out of the way sullenly, but a few scatter well ahead of the patrols, diving into alleyways and turning to face into doorways in hopes of not being spotted. These men and women sneak glances at the passing soldiers around food carts or the corners of buildings, returning to their business with wary, over-the-shoulder looks once the Unicorn have passed by.

A number of inns are to be found throughout Meiyō Gisei, and the PCs can find one to suit their preferences from high-class to rough-and-tumble as they choose. (It turns out there are quite a lot of the latter, in fact.) Most inns and tea houses in the city cater to the sizable merchant trade, but several have “private areas” featuring gambling, opium, prostitutes and other vices – these areas are typically accessible through a successful **Lore: Underworld / Awareness** roll, TN 15, though characters with reputations for either iniquity or draconian justice might find it easier or more difficult, at the GM’s discretion. Regardless, while the PCs are exploring Toshi no Meiyō Gisei, both etiquette and the local Unicorn laws demand that samurai carry their daishō but remain unarmored.

Rumors

Once the PCs have settled themselves in the city, they can have a chance to pick up a number of rumors about events both within and beyond the city. Any player searching for rumors can make 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. (Samurai with Oath of Fealty: Ikoma Yachi gain a Free Raise on this roll.) If a PC would prefer, they may substitute a **Lore: Underworld / Awareness** roll at the same TN; only the rumors marked with an asterisk (*) can be accessed this way, however. The rumors include:

- Tsuruchi, once head of the Wasp Clan and now leader of the Tsuruchi family of the Mantis, has officially announced his retirement to the Brotherhood after a shockingly-close brush with death during this year’s Winter Court at Kyuden Gotei. Some whispers speak of assassins and possible civil war within the Clan; regardless, most believe the returned spirit Gusai, now Yoritomo Gusai, will take Tsuruchi’s place as the head of the Mantis’ military activities.
- A ronin otokodate calling itself “Tsuko’s Heart” has moved into Toshi no Meiyō Gisei over the last six months; they’ve taken advantage of the disturbances caused by the Unicorn takeover of the city to muscle into

territory previously controlled by several other gangs, and they have not been shy about starting fights to do so.*

- Kitsu Motso has suffered a number of political setbacks within his own Clan in the last year, most notably involving his inability to gain support for the new Ikoma daimyo without having to call in an Imperial arbitrator. As the first Kitsu Champion of the Lion, some resistance from the Akodo and Matsu families might be expected, but much of the problem seems to come from the returned spirits within the Clan, who are unexpectedly uncomfortable with his leadership as well.
- Opium prices across the Empire have dropped, as suppliers in Ryoko Owari have flooded the market with cheap, highly-refined product after last year’s bumper crop. The Scorpion argue that this is a boon for healers around the Empire, but most of the rest of the Clans see it as a dangerous opening for organized criminal elements to expand operations into areas they couldn’t afford before.*
- While the Unicorn typically have a reputation for showing unusual compassion toward their peasants relative to the rest of the Empire, that hasn’t been the case in Toshi no Meiyō Gisei. The Unicorn love for law and order clashes with the way business is done in Meiyō Gisei, and the combination of restive peasants and Lion military pressure has kept the city under a strict martial crackdown for months.*
- News from the Capitol: Akodo Ginawa, daimyo of the Akodo family, has recently adopted a son and named the boy his heir. Ginawa has never married, and most expected Ginawa to hand off leadership of his family to one of his close aides or most promising generals; the adoption and heir declaration came as a surprise to nearly everyone, including those samurai closest to Ginawa. The Akodo daimyo took his son, named Kaneka, to Otosan Uchi last month to meet the Empress; the two children are said to have gotten along quite well, and Ginawa has promised to make the visits a regular occurrence.

In addition to Meiyō Seido (described below), there are a few other locations in Toshi no Meiyō Gisei that the PCs may wish to visit – these include the Firefly Plains Trading Grounds, the Temple District, and the governor’s residence.

The Passage of Time

For the purposes of tracking the passage of time during this module, each “scene” below should take roughly four to five hours – the party should be able to do two in a day and a third, if they wish, during the evening. Going beyond that risks Fatigue at the GM’s discretion, and some actions (such as visiting Moto Hideyo or Shinjo Shirasu) will simply be impossible.

The Firefly Plains Trading Grounds

Situated on the western edge of the city, just inside the city walls that face the rest of the Unicorn provinces, the Trading Grounds is one of the busiest marketplaces in the Empire. Covering almost an entire square mile, it is a warren of lean-tos, trading stalls and vending carts, separated by large cleared spaces into which new Unicorn trading caravans can insert themselves when they arrive to do business. The Unicorn guards are no less prevalent here than they are elsewhere, but they tend to stay on the perimeter, only entering in force in response to violence. As a result, the especially furtive aspect of illegal business elsewhere in the city is missing here, and carefully trained eyes can spot all sorts of semi-legal or completely illicit transactions occurring at any hour of the day or night.

PCs with the funds to do so may purchase nearly any good listed in the Core Rulebook at the given price. A number of gaijin goods are available, as well as a wide variety of cheap fakes, made by Rokugani peasants in hopes of finding buyers among the new Unicorn overlords; books, lanterns, furs, and more can be found – most cost about 1 koku – but 70% are actually locally-produced fakes, detectable as such with a **Lore: Burning Sands** or **Lore: Gaijin / Perception** roll, TN 20. (The only spyglasses available are fake, and they cost 10 koku. The glass is cheap, poorly cast, and will break within a few days.) It is also possible to buy some illegal items as well; “liquid Void” (opium refined for use as a recreational drug) can be found for 7 zeni per dose, and all of the poisons in the core book can be bought for a number of koku equal to their Craft DC. Buying either costs 2 points of Honor for every Honor Rank the PC possesses.

As many of the traders here are Unicorn, it is possible to openly bargain (this costs non-Unicorn 1 point of Glory for every three Ranks of Glory they possess, rounded up): a **Commerce / Awareness** roll, TN 20, lowers the price of any purchased good, legal or otherwise, by 5%, and the PC may attempt two Raises to increase the discount to 10%. Failing the bargaining roll increases the cost by 10% instead; all of these

modifiers are cumulative with the Rank 5 Mastery Ability of the Commerce Skill. PCs who do not attempt to bargain pay the listed price (modified by the Mastery Ability if appropriate).

The amount of traffic moving through the Trading Grounds allows a great deal of information to pass through it as well. If a PC deliberately visits the trading Grounds to hunt rumors or to seek out information about Tsuko’s Heart via the underworld, they gain a Free Raise on the relevant rolls; doing so, however, also gains the PCs one Ambush Point. (See Part Three: Heart’s Blood, below, for more information on Ambush Points.)

The Residence of Moto Hideyo

While presenting their papers at the city gates meets the legal requirement for making their presence known to the city governor, etiquette-minded PCs might wish to offer their respects to the local lord more directly. In recognition of his leadership role during the conflict with the Lion last summer, Moto Gaheris awarded the position of governor to Moto Hideyo, one of the most well-known and widely-respected commanders of the Moto White Guard. Now he resides in the same house the city’s previous governor claimed, a well-fortified estate on a bluff overlooking the river.

The governor’s residence occupies a commanding perch over the Drowned Merchant River, and the high walls and sturdy gates make the estate seem more like a fortress. At the heart of the city’s noble quarter, the governor’s manor shows all the marks of its Lion construction, but recent modifications – an onion-shaped dome atop two of the wall’s small watchtowers, a freshly-expanded stable, strange carvings on the ancestral shrine in the middle of the garden – indicate the recent change in ownership. The air outside the house is thick with the pungent smell of horses and cooking, spiced meats.

A small unit of Moto bushi watches the gate, and takes your chops when you present them. After a brief wait, you are lead inside the compound, but not into the house itself – instead, the guard escorts you to a cleared space on the far side of the main house, where an archery practice range has been assembled. There, a handful of Moto warriors look on as a large man with striking features, mounted atop a snow-white gaijin riding horse, delivers a lecture to a small number of young students, samurai who must be very near to their gempukku ceremonies. With a shout, the mounted warrior turns his horse – never touching the reins – and raises a bow, galloping down upon the

archery targets and full speed. Three arrows fly from his bow, each hitting a different target very near the center, before he gallops past them, and the students and watching bushi alike give a strange, ululating cry as applause. The warrior turns his horse again, and as he does so, notices you standing there. He lowers his bow, guiding his horse nearer to look down at you. “I am Moto Hideyo, commander of the White Guard and governor of Toshi no Meiyo Gisei. Who are you and what is your business here?” he asks sharply.

The PCs are free to answer however they like. Regardless of their answer, Hideyo listens almost absently, a small smile growing on his face as he glances between the PCs and his students. Once they finish, Hideyo’s face splits into a wide grin. *“My friends, I am pleased you have come to enjoy the hospitality of my city,” he says. “Perhaps you can do something for me, since you are here? A small favor, one the commander of the Khol will remember.”* The word “Khol” is not one most Rokugani samurai will recognize – it requires a TN 40 **Lore: Burning Sands / Intelligence** roll to identify it as a reference to an army designation from the Moto of the Burning Sands. Its use here is a clue to the kinds of changes Moto Chagatai, the Khan, is making to the Unicorn armies. *“You see these, my students? They are quite talented, some of the best of the Unicorn Clan has to offer, but they have so far only been able to practice their talents against wooden targets. Would you consent to aid me in a training session? We can discuss your business afterward.”*

The PCs may refuse if they wish; if anyone does so, Hideyo frowns in disappointment and dismisses the entire group, unwilling to talk further. If they accept, however, Hideyo claps his hands in delight and indicates the open ground near the archery targets. *“There! Stand there and ready yourselves. A traditional Lion formation, if you please.”* He winks broadly, particularly at any Lion present – if there are such, the grin takes on a predatory aspect. *“You need only make it difficult for my students to hit you, and do not worry – we will be using blunted arrows.”*

Again the PCs have the chance to change their minds; doing so now, however, not only results in their dismissal but also costs them 1 point of Glory. If they stick it out, allow each PC to attempt a **Battle / Perception** roll, TN 20 (Lion characters gain a Free Raise on this roll); on a success, the PC can direct the group into a proper formation. Once the PCs have arranged themselves, the students will ride past them, taking shots while the PCs try to dodge. There is one student per PC, and they make two passes – each PC must therefore roll **Defense / Reflexes**, TN 20, two

times. If the PCs have been arranged into the proper formation, they receive a Free Raise on this roll. On a failure, they have been struck by a blunted arrow. The arrows deal the usual 4k2 damage, but 10s do not explode, and Void may be spent to reduce the damage as usual. (Remember that the PCs are not armored, however.)

Once the lesson is done, Hideyo rides over, offering thanks and congratulations to those who performed well. He dismisses his students, then turns back to the PCs. *“You have shown the temper of your steel, samurai-sans, and aided my students. I will remember this. Now, tell me what you need.”* If the PCs answer with anything close to the truth, Hideyo confesses that he knows little of the monks who live in his city, other than that there are a lot of them at Meiyo Seido, but he does know something of Tsuko’s Heart. They are a ronin otokodate, composed entirely of returned spirits, who have clashed with several local gangs and with Hideyo’s own magistrates both in the last few months. One such conflict nearly resulted in a fire near the docks and left three Shinjo yoriki dead. *“If you seek Tsuko’s Heart, speak with Shinjo Shirasu. He is the Emerald Magistrate assigned to the city, after the ‘peace talks’ of last winter.”* Hideyo’s snort is eloquent as to his opinion of those talks. *“I know Tsuko’s Heart has been an increasing priority for him. He will know more. And tell him I sent you.”* With that, Hideyo dismisses the PCs but invites them to return again once their business is done.

Visiting Hideyo’s residence earns the PCs one Ambush Point.

The Temple District

The center of the temple district is Meiyo Gisei, described below, but the well-known shrine sits in the middle of several square blocks of temples large and small, places of worship for dozens of Fortunes and Kami. All of the major Fortunes and most of the better-known minor ones have temples in the area, along with shrines to all the founding Kami of the Empire, the Elemental Dragons and Lord Yakamo and Lady Hitomi. As Toshi no Meiyo Gisei is a pilgrim destination for faithful Rokugani from across Rokugan, monks and shugenja have arrived in great numbers to see to the spiritual needs of these devout travelers, and it is perhaps the only section of town where criminal elements have no real presence. (Even in the Noble’s Quarter there are criminals to be found – they just wear nicer kimono.) Along with the organized monks and shugenja of the great shrines, itinerant monks stand or sit at nearly every street corner in the district, an

offering bowl nearby and a peaceful expression on their faces.

If the PCs spend any real time just visiting the Temple District before they visit Meiyō Seido, they may make an **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** roll, TN 25, to note that a large number of the itinerant monks offering blessings in exchange for offerings left in their carved wooden bowls are returned spirits. Speaking with one of these monks earns a simple smile until the PC drops a coin into the monk's offering bowl; at that point, the monk murmurs a calm, "May the Fortunes and ancestors all around you bless your path." If the PC is a returned spirit, however, the monk goes on to say, "You have much to teach them, blessed one. Look to your time between lives for the markers that will guide your way; it is your place to lead the once-born on the road to our new dawn."

If any PC asks one of the returned spirit monks about Hitoshirenu, the monk denies all knowledge of such an individual; this is a lie, however, and if the player requests the roll, they can detect it as such with a TN 30 **Investigation (Interrogation) / Perception** roll. No amount of coercion will force the monk to admit his or her deceit, however, and any threat or attempt at intimidation will be met by the monk's cries for help to the nearby Shinjō guards, who will demand the PCs leave the monk alone, regardless of what the PCs might say. During the confrontation, the monk will slip away (using kiho if needed to do so); within minutes, all other returned spirit monks in the area will have also slipped away. Asking the monks about Hitoshirenu earns the PCs two Ambush Points, but otherwise, moving through the temple district does not accrue Ambush Points.

Part Two: To Find an Emperor

The two strongest leads the PCs have as to Hitoshirenu's location are Meiyō Seido, the Shrine of Honor, and the "Tsuko's Heart" ronin otokodate.

The Shrine of Honor

At the heart of the city's Temple District is Meiyō Seido, the Shrine of Honor, constructed in memory of a shamed and then redeemed Lion samurai-ko almost a thousand years ago. A TN 15 **Lore: History, Lore: Bushido** or **Lore: Lion / Intelligence** roll is enough to know the tale: a skilled and talented Lion warrior was exposed to the shame of the Empire when it was revealed that she had a lover who lived in the city that

is now known as Toshi no Meiyō Gisei. In response, hoping to cleanse the dishonor, the samurai-ko requested permission to perform seppuku. Despite – or perhaps because – of the glory the samurai-ko had already accrued, her disgraced lord gave her a wooden sword with which to perform the ceremony. It was the first time such an insult had been offered to a samurai asking to perform the Three Cuts, but the samurai-ko shocked her lord and her accusers both by using the wooden blade to undergo the ceremony without hesitation. In recognition of both her failure of bushido and her redemption, the Lion Clan changed the name of the city where her lover lived and built the Shrine of Honor at its heart, that the Lion would always remember the price of honor and the price of failing it.

The Shrine of Honor is a sprawling complex, large and imposing without being ostentatious. The towering torii arch that marks the shrine's entrance casts its shadow over dozens of pilgrims as they stream up the path toward the central pagoda and take their slower, more pensive steps back down again. The pagoda itself rises seven stories high, but contains only a single fifteen-foot-high statue of a faceless, anonymous samurai-ko, kneeling in a pose of prayer or penitence. A large number of monks, perhaps two dozen or more, move around the otherwise empty room, carrying baskets of smooth river stones. They speak quietly to each petitioner, usually for only a few minutes but sometimes rather longer, then hand the pilgrim a stone and gesture toward the statue. With a muttered prayer, each pilgrim throws the stone at the statue, and the temple air is filled with the continual clatter of stone on stone.

Once the PCs enter, a pair of monks approaches the party and offer respectful bows. Each carries a basket full of rocks taken from the Drowned Merchant River, but are otherwise dressed in simple robes and show no signs of rank. "*Greetings, noble samurai,*" says the older one, a sturdy-looking woman in her early 40s. "*I am Shuukaku, and this is my student Kwai. I have the blessed duty to serve as abbot at this shrine. Have you come to offer your prayers to the spirit of Honor?*"

If the PCs wish to partake in it, Shuukaku and Kwai will guide them through the ritual of cleansing at Meiyō Seido. This involves a period of meditation on the meaning of honor and how the character has both succeeded and failed at upholding their honor during their service to their lord. If the PC wishes, they may speak privately with one of the two monks to confess a particular failing of honor; the monk listens sympathetically, regardless of what transgression the PC mentions (both have heard quite a lot of dishonorable actions over their years of service), offers

words of encouragement and instruction, and whispers a short blessing over them. Once the PC has finished their contemplation, the monks hand them a stone, and the PC hurls it at the statue, symbolically punishing it for their failures while expunging the weakness from themselves. If they wish, the PC can then make an Honor Roll with a TN of (10 + 5x their current Honor Rank); success on the roll gains the character 3 points of Honor, but failure results in the loss of 1 point of Honor. Void Points cannot be spent on this roll, but confessing a failure of honor to the monks grants an additional +Xk1 to the roll, where X is half the amount of Honor points lost to the confessed action (rounded up, to a maximum of 3k1) – in this instance, however, succeeding on the roll also gives the PC the Idealistic Disadvantage for the remainder of the adventure. A PC who already has the Disadvantage suffers twice the usual effects (for a total of quadruple Honor loss).

Regardless of whether the PCs meditate on honor, however, they are likely to ask the monks about Hitoshirenu. Shuukaku frowns in thought before shaking her head regretfully. *“I do not know this monk you mention,”* she says at last. *“Many of my brothers and sisters of the Tao have entered the city in recent months – the unrest in the Empire has sent many searching for answers from whoever might be able to provide them. There are too many to keep track of, and most do not feel their Path leads through this temple. Theirs is another Way.”* After a moment’s thought, she adds, almost as an afterthought, *“Indeed, it seems as though most are teaching a doctrine that has caused much discussion among my brothers and sisters here: the idea that the spirits who returned through Oblivion’s Gate are more spiritually enlightened than those of us who were born to Ningen-do. I have noticed that most who teach this doctrine are themselves spirits, but one would indeed hope to find wisdom among the wise.”* Shuukaku goes on to note that the monks who live and teach at Meiyo Seido have come to no consensus about the validity of this approach – some argue that experience of the Spirit Realms would naturally enlighten any mind, while other point out that Shinsei suggested wisdom could be found in even the meanest things of the mortal Realm (in rice cakes, to be precise). Personally, Shuukaku is not persuaded by the idea, but admits it has challenged her meditations and inspired a number of enthralling debates among her Order. If the PCs ask, there are three returned spirits among the monks who study at Meiyo Seido; two seem opposed to the validity of the idea, while the third supports it, but none show any signs of wanting to leave the Shrine to Honor.

Unfortunately, Shuukaku has no information on where these monks might be, other than on random street

corners throughout the temple district. If they have established a monastery or other dormitory in the city, she does not know about it, though she suggests the city authorities might – Shinjo Shirasu, the city’s chief magistrate, would have the relevant records if they exist. She knows nothing of “Tsuko’s Heart.”

While this conversation is occurring, the PCs may make an **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** roll, TN 25, to spot a ronin surrounded by the glow of a returned spirit watching them from across the massive space of the shrine. He leaves as soon as he is spotted, ducking out through the nearby door and disappearing into the street outside. Whether they notice him or not, however, once he leaves he sends street urchins running to all the nearby monks of the Stones of Dawn Monastery, telling them to leave the area – when the PCs reach the streets outside, the returned spirit monks on the corners of the temple distract have all disappeared. As this is a man, it should be obvious that it is not the same ronin the PCs might have seen near Shinjo Shirasu’s residence.

Visiting Meiyo Seido earns the PCs three Ambush Points.

The Law of the Wind

If the PCs have met with Shuukaku or Moto Hideyo, or spoken to the guards at the city gate, they will have been directed to speak with the city’s Emerald Magistrate, Shinjo Shirasu. A simple **Lore: Law / Intelligence** roll, TN 10, would also suggest that the city’s magistrates might know something about a disruptive ronin otokodate, and any local will offer not only Shirasu’s name but also the location of his current residence.

A **Lore: Heraldry** or **Lore: Law / Intelligence** roll, TN 15, tells the PC that Shirasu is a well-known and well-respected Emerald Magistrate, with a reputation for being extremely honorable. During the early part of the War Against the Shadow, when the previous Emerald Champion, Kakita Toshimoko, had killed himself and Toturi I had gone missing and so could not appoint a successor or host the traditional tournament, the Emerald Magistrates found themselves without formal leadership during a time of great chaos. Shirasu was the man who stepped into the breach, taking up an unofficial role as Emerald Champion until such time as the position could be filled more formally. When Toturi returned and appointed Kakita Toshiken as his new Emerald Champion, Shirasu stepped unhesitatingly aside, returning to his previous duties without complaint. A **Courtier (Gossip) / Intelligence** roll, TN 20, allows a PC to recall that Shirasu was given this

position as a result of the armistice agreement between the Lion and the Unicorn negotiated last fall – as a theoretically neutral observer, he is supposed to be “overseeing” the transition of power on behalf of the Empress, but as a practical matter, that role is basically a rubberstamp for whatever Moto Hideyo wants to do.

When the PCs go to visit him, they find that Shirasu lives in a relatively large estate, with several smaller outbuildings surrounding the main house. It is only a few blocks from the governor’s residence, deep within the Noble’s Quarter of the city, and like most of the other fine houses owned by the city’s new Unicorn elite, it was the home of a ranking Lion samurai until the conquest.

The guards at Shirasu’s gate study your papers almost as carefully as did the ones at the city walls, and their wary eyes watch you after you present your chops and wait for permission to enter the estate. Once word returns that Shirasu will meet you, a stern-faced guard escorts you up a path flanked by very simple, unassuming gardens. Inside, the large house’s many rooms are almost completely devoid of decoration, with most rooms holding only tables, simple cushions, and row on row of scroll racks. Samurai in kimono of purple and white, often accented by some unusual gaijin design, work busily in these rooms, reading or writing reports, performing research, or undertaking one of the many other tasks of an Emerald Magistrate’s yoriki. The opulence of the rooms’ construction seems deeply at odds with their current barrenness, and you cannot help wondering if this is a sign of Shirasu’s attitude in general or an indication of how little time he has spent – or plans to spend – in Toshi no Meiyō Gisei.

The amount of time the PCs have to wait depends on whether they have seen Hideyo yet or not – if they have and mentioned he sent them, Shirasu sees them almost immediately; if not, they have to wait perhaps an hour, during which they have almost nothing to do in the barren house. Servants bring simple tea, but otherwise the PCs are left to entertain themselves while the time passes.

When he does arrive, Shirasu is extremely formal. He is of middling height, perhaps thirty-two or thirty-three years old, and not especially handsome, particularly to those unused to the slightly exotic cast of Unicorns with a strong blood tie to the gaijin of the Burning Sands. The two drooping mustaches on either side of a mouth that is just slightly too wide and too protruding do nothing to enhance his appearance, and the addition of a small squint gives him the look of a comic peasant fool in a kabuki play. Nevertheless, his demeanor is serious

and reserved, perhaps moreso for his unassuming looks. *“Welcome, samurai, to my home. I am Shirasu of the house of Shinjo, magistrate in service to the Emerald Champion Toshiken of the house of Kakita, and servant of the Empress Tsudao, may her reign last a thousand years. Please honor me with your names.”* The PCs must make **Etiquette / Awareness** rolls, TN 15, to match Shirasu’s formality appropriately – if half or more of the table fails this roll, Shirasu will not provide them with his sanction (unless they have Hideyo’s recommendation, which trumps Shirasu’s misgivings), and only PCs who succeed have the chance to apply to serve as his yoriki after the mod ends. All PCs who are present must make the roll; however, a skilled courtier can introduce them, preventing the need to speak and making the task easier – however, etiquette is more than just words, and the PCs must still be able to handle themselves appropriately. If a PC wishes to introduce another character, the PC can declare a Raise on their own roll to grant the introduced character a Free Raise. (They can only make use of this Raise if they have the skill, however.) This Raise can only be granted once to each PC, but the introducing character may Raise multiple times to aid multiple characters.

Regardless, once they are introduced, Shirasu asks their business. Assuming the PCs ask about Tsuko’s Heart, Shirasu frowns and begins to explain, *“That name has been a troublesome one for me since I first heard it over the winter, just weeks after I accepted this post. According to my reports, Tsuko’s Heart is an organization of ronin, all of whom are returned spirits. While I know none of the names of its members, I can make some assumptions about its goals on the basis of its actions. Tsuko’s Heart has been active in two roles since appearing in Toshi no Meiyō Gisei: they have been playing the vigilante in trying to break the strangleholds held by various organized gangs over the neighborhoods of this city, and they have been actively protecting the fortunes of other returned spirits, members of Clans or otherwise, acting as ‘volunteer’ yojimbo – typically without even asking. In addition, my yoriki, many of whom have recently had the opportunity to gain firsthand knowledge of Lion fighting styles, tell me that all the ronin of Tsuko’s Heart they have encountered show the marks of training by the Akodo or Matsu schools. That, in combination with the group’s name, which might be a reference to Matsu Tsuko, the hero of the Clan War, leads me to believe that Tsuko’s Heart is a group of former Lion, attempting to ‘cleanse’ the city of its dishonorable elements in accordance with some larger ideal or purpose.*

“Under some circumstances, this could be a goal I would support, but the methods used by Tsuko’s Heart are as dangerous as the criminals they seem to oppose. They brawl in the streets, risking bystanders and law-abiding citizens without a care for the consequences, and are perfectly willing to attack my yoriki should they try to interfere.” Shirasu looks extremely grave as he adds, “Three of my men died last month stopping a fire that began during one of these battles. Without their sacrifice, the city might have burned to the ground that night, but their deaths are on the hands of Tsuko’s Heart, and I will see them punished for it.”

Shirasu knows little more than this, however. If the PCs ask, he can tell them:

- Tsuko’s Heart likely has a base in the warehouses near the docks, since that is where most of their appearances have been, but he has no idea where at this point.
- Tsuko’s Heart has between a dozen and two dozen members, he believes, all skilled warriors.
- Some members of his staff have suggested that Tsuko’s Heart might be an advance force of Lion saboteurs, stirring up trouble in the city either in revenge for the loss of Toshi no Meiyo Gisei to the Unicorn, in preparation for another assault on it, or both – others argue, however, that Motso has a reputation for having a problem with the returned spirits in his clan, and so Tsuko’s Heart would be more likely to be a group of renegade Lion acting on their own agenda than one serving Motso’s purposes.

If the PCs seem sincere in their desire to find Tsuko’s Heart, even if they don’t actually say anything about wanting to take the organization down, they might be able to gain status as temporary yoriki to Shirasu. To do so, they must have either impressed him with their etiquette in meeting him or have Hideyo’s recommendation; if they meet either requirement, Shirasu offers to take them on as temporary assistants, granting them investigative rights and the legal ability to wear armor within the city. If they have both, he not only offers to take them on as yoriki but also sends two of his men with them (which will help later in the battle against the otokodate) – he might also do this if the GM thinks the table needs some additional combat power. If they have neither, though, the information he has offered is the only help he will give. The yoriki are named Shinjo Mitarai and Shinjo Yoshiki, and their stats are given in Appendix #1.

If a character actively seeks out yoriki status after the table was unable to acquire it otherwise, Shirasu will attempt to assess their Honor Rank (the TN is 30, and his **Lore: Bushido / Awareness** pool is 9k4); if he determines they have at least Honor 5, he will then ask a few questions to determine the petitioners honor and knowledge of the law. The PC may make a **Lore: Law** or **Lore: Bushido / Intelligence** roll, TN 30, to impress him enough to gain his sanction – such characters will also be allowed to request to serve as his yoriki on a more long-term basis after the module ends as well. Otherwise, he offers a polite but firm no.

If the PCs ask about Hitoshirenu, he has never heard the name; if asked about monks buying buildings in the city, he promises to have one of his yoriki research the matter and contact the PCs the following day. This is a dead end, however, as the monks do not legally own the building where they are currently based.

He then dismisses them. As they leave, they can make an **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** roll, TN 25, to spot a ronin surrounded by the glow of a returned spirit watching them from atop a roof across the street. She turns and disappears into the street on the far side as soon as she is noticed; as this is a woman, it should be obvious that it is not the man the PCs might have seen at Meiyo Seido.

Visiting Shinjo Shirasu earns the PCs three Ambush Points.

Into the Underworld

If the PCs really want to seek out information about a ronin group, particularly one that has been making trouble for both the law and for criminal groups, the abundant underworld of Toshi no Meiyo Gisei represents their best opportunity to do so. A PC who wishes to make contact with the criminal elements in the city can make a **Lore: Underworld / Awareness** roll to do so – characters with Infamy gain a Free Raise on this roll and are treated as skilled even if they have no ranks in Lore: Underworld. Treat this as a rumor roll, as listed in the Rumors section above (the possible rumors that can be learned are marked in that section – the rumor about Tsuko’s Heart is always the first thing they learn); in addition, any PC who achieves a TN 20 on the roll learns that one group in particular, a criminal gang called the Red-Handed Hawks, has been clashing with Tsuko’s Heart over the last few weeks, and their leader, a man named Hakujou, has been reaching out to other groups in hopes of finding allies against the ronin otokodate. As a reminder, Lore: Underworld is a Low Skill, and characters who make use of it should suffer a

small Honor loss – 1 point for every two Ranks of Honor they possess, rounded up – each time they roll it.

Attempting to track down more information about Tsuko's Heart directly gets the PCs little beyond that – they can learn that Tsuko's Heart operates mostly in the docks district, and get some idea of their numbers (perhaps 20 in all), but nothing more. However, the rumors say that Hakujuu has some information he's hoping to use against the group if he can find someone to back up his plans.

If the PCs wish to pursue this lead, the next step is to arrange a meeting with Hakujuu. Doing so requires another, separate **Lore: Underworld / Awareness** roll, TN 20 – again, having Infamy grants a Free Raise and the PC is treated as having the skill for the purposes of rerolling 10s, Raises and so on. If the roll succeeds, Hakujuu sends word through a street messenger girl to meet him at a restaurant on the edge of the docks district, a dingy noodle shop the Bowl of Smiles.

The Bowl of Smiles is cramped, dark and unpleasant, but it seems to have a lot of customers, mostly rough-looking peasants and a few surly ronin. At a table in the back, Hakujuu sits with a pair of lieutenants – a nasty-faced man with a broken nose and only three teeth and a smiling geisha, who idly carves the kanji for “blood” into the table with a tanto while the conversation goes on. Hakujuu himself is a tall man, graying at the temples, with sharp eyes and an air of fearlessness. It is not feigned, at least where the PCs are concerned. A **Battle / Perception** roll, TN 20, notes that nearly everyone in the room is armed, and they are all watching the PCs and Hakujuu with extreme, if disguised, intent.

Hakujuu smiles broadly, offering the PCs seats on cushions across the table from him – their backs are to the rest of the restaurant – and pushes forward bowls of steaming noodles. (If the PCs try them, they are actually quite good – the shop's popularity isn't completely reliant on its role as Hakujuu's headquarters.) *“Welcome, noble samurai, to my humble restaurant. I am Hakujuu, and I am honored indeed by your willingness to grace our establishment with your worth.”* Hakujuu's smile is almost a sneer, and his words contain the barest traces of mockery, but his bow is as deeply formal as one might ask for. *“Please, eat if you like, or if you prefer, we can move directly to the business that concerns us both.”*

Once they agree to talk, regardless whether they eat first or not, Hakujuu comes straight to the point, his words still laced with an edge of mockery but mostly sincere: *“You and I, we have a problem in common.*

You are looking for Tsuko's Heart, yes? I happen to know where to find them. However, these ronin... they are disruptive, to myself and to many other hardworking businessmen like me.” He smiles more broadly, clearly savoring the irony. *“They have even caused the deaths of three samurai, yoriki to our new Emerald Magistrate, Shinjo Shirasu-sama. They are a problem for everyone, you see. A problem that I would like to see solved.”* He leans forward, placing his hands on the table. *“I am hoping we might work together to solve it.”*

Hakujuu's approach to the next part of the conversation depends on how the PCs react to him. He is confident, thanks to the roomful of underlings he has at his instant command, but he is genuine in hoping he can persuade the PCs to ally with him for the purposes of taking out Tsuko's Heart. To that end, Hakujuu will admit that he has information as to the location of a Tsuko's Heart safehouse; he hopes the PCs will assist him on a raid on the warehouse in question, that “together we can see these ruffians removed from the face of Toshi no Meiyo Gisei forever.” Hakujuu is willing to be somewhat forthcoming about his conflict with Tsuko's Heart – the warehouse that was damaged last month by a fire, the fire that killed Shirasu's three yoriki, was his, and his “business interests” have been severely curtailed in several neighborhoods due to Tsuko's Heart's interference.

If the PCs make demands or put stipulations on their assistance, Hakujuu will agree, as long as the following remains true: himself, his gang and his current criminal operations are not compromised; he is not required to deal with Shirasu or any other authority figure in the city; and the PCs agree to fight alongside his men in the raid. In particular, if the PCs demand that some or all of the ronin of Tsuko's Heart be taken alive for questioning, Hakujuu will agree to have his men do their best, but he will not order them to risk their own lives to save the lives of the ronin. He is perfectly willing to let the PCs search the safehouse before his men do anything, and is even – though only after some pushing – willing to agree not to expand his operations back into the territory that Tsuko's Heart has already pushed them out of; he doesn't mean to keep this promise beyond however long it takes to get the PCs out of town, but he'll behave until after the adventure is over. If any PC objects to planning an assault on a random safehouse solely on the work of Hakujuu's information, he points out the PCs can surveil the location before the raid begins to satisfy themselves that it is what he has promised it to be; if the PCs seem wary of the entire project, Hakujuu points out that these are wanted criminals, responsible for the deaths of duly-sworn yoriki, and that as samurai they have a duty to

act to bring them to justice. If the PCs were made Shirasu's yoriki and did not come straight to the Bowl of Smiles afterward, Hakujou has already heard that about their new status and uses it as a lever: "this is your duty to the magistrate, is it not, samas?"

If the PCs attempt to threaten him or his organization, Hakujou's lieutenants signal the rest of the men in the restaurant, who stand up almost to a man and produce weapons. Hakujou himself, however, remains smiling and almost-pleasant, suggesting that compromise and alliance will certainly help all involved better than unfortunate confrontation. If the PCs actually attack him or anyone else in the room, Hakujou will have them killed without hesitation – their bodies are dumped in the river, and life in Meiyo Gisei goes on without a hiccup.

If the PCs wish to seek outside help or turn over Hakujou's information to the authorities, particularly Shirasu, Hakujou does not prevent them, though he does leave the Bowl of Smiles immediately afterward so as to prevent any arrest. However, he is perfectly willing to not risk his own men on a raid if the PCs and Shirasu's yoriki will do it for him. His preference, though, is that the Red-Handed Hawks be involved in taking down Tsuko's Heart, in order to both gain the boost to their reputation such an act would provide and also to have first opportunity at any resources the ronin might leave behind. If, however, the PCs agree to help the Red-Handed Hawks rather than going to the magistrate, Hakujou insists that they remain at the Bowl of Smiles until it is time to head out to begin the raid. If the PCs are not all present, Hakujou sends a runner to summon those who are not – this requirement is non-negotiable, however, and if the PCs do not agree, Hakujou refuses to share his information and curtly dismisses them. (The reason for this, as clever players might realize, is that Hakujou believes the PCs might "leave to get their allies" and instead visit the magistrate, potentially exposing his organization to arrests or attack by Shirasu's troops.)

Meeting with Hakujou earns the PCs three Ambush Points, but unless the PCs meet with him and then turn down his offer, it's not likely to matter much.

Part Three: Heart's Blood

Eventually, one of two things will happen to the party: either they will launch a raid on a Tsuko's Heart safehouse, either with the help of the Red-Handed Hawks or Shirasu's yoriki, or Tsuko's Heart will ambush them, attempting to kill what they perceive as a possible threat to their charges, the monks of the Stones

of Dawn Monastery. To determine which of these two events occurs, tally the total number of Ambush Points the PCs have accumulated. If the total is at least 6 before they launch their raid on the Tsuko's Heart safehouse, Tsuko's Heart will instead attack them. In addition to all of the above-listed ways to accumulate Ambush Points, the PCs receive 3 Ambush Points every night they spend in Toshino Meiyo Gisei after the first.

The Ambush

If the PCs do not find Tsuko's Heart quickly, Tsuko's Heart will find them instead. The ambush can occur at any one of a wide variety of locations, depending on the PCs' actions – it will occur at the soonest available time after the PCs reach 6 Ambush Points, unless they are actively on their way to attack the Tsuko's Heart safehouse. An "available time" is a moment when all the PCs are together, and there are no magistrates immediately present – it will likely occur while they are traveling between locations in the city, but might also occur while they are having a meal, or are asleep at their chosen inn. Tsuko's Heart does not have much concern for possible bystander casualties, and plan their ambush without worry about what might happen to innocents nearby.

When the ambush begins, have the PCs roll **Investigation (Notice) / Perception**, TN 25, to realize that the attack is coming before it happens. (If any characters are asleep, perhaps because the ambush occurs at their inn, they suffer a -2k2 penalty to this roll, to a minimum of 1k1.) On a success, the PC realizes the attack is about to occur and rolls initiative normally. Anyone who fails suffers a -20 penalty to their initiative on the first round of combat (later rounds are unaffected), and cannot declare the Full Attack or Full Defense stances.

The ambush itself begins when the Tsuko's Heart ronin rush in wherever the PCs are, attempting to circle them as much as possible. They enter through doors, crash through windows, or leap out of alleyways in front and behind the group. On the first Round of combat, the leader of the attackers hurls a small grey, metal sphere, about the size of a fist, into the midst of the PCs. The sphere has a lit fuse, like that of a firework, attached to it, and even as it lands among the PCs, the sparking light disappears into the sphere. An instant later, the very world seems to explode into light and force, hammering the PCs with heat and fragments of shattered metal. All PCs within 10 feet of the sphere must make a **Defense / Reflexes** roll, TN 40, or suffer 4k4 Wounds; being in Full Defense reduces the TN to 20. On a success, the character only suffers 1k1

Wounds. (If the PCs manage to beat the leader in initiative and attack him, they must either reduce him to the Down Wound Level or actually use a Disarm or Called Shot Maneuver to prevent him from the throwing the grenade – the Called Shot must deal at least 12 Wounds to force him to drop the bomb. In this instance, however, the enemies will instead need to try to avoid the damage.)

Afterward, the rest of the combat proceeds as normal. There are a number of attackers, including the leader, equal to the number of combat-capable PCs. They fight to the death. It is worth noting that all members of Tsuko's Heart (including, obviously, those the PCs will face) are returned spirits. If Shirasu assigned the PCs two of his yoriki, they are present as well, and assuming they survive the grenade, fight unhesitatingly at the PCs' side. The ronin make use of their Technique to gain a Free Raise unless faced with foes in Heavy Armor – they use these Free Raises for things *other* than damage, primarily Disarm against armed foes and Knockdown against shugenja or other unarmed foes, until put into at least the +10 Wound Level, when they begin to use it to simply aid their attack rolls. The leader will usually declare two Raises to Feint on every attack until reduced to the +10 Wound Level.

Tsuko's Heart Ronin

Air 2 Earth 2 Fire 2 Water 3 Void 2
Reflexes 3 Agility 3

Honor 2.5 Status 0.0 Infamy 1.0

Armor TN: 23 **Attack:** 6k3 (katana,
(ashigaru armor) Complex)
Reduction: 1 **Damage:** 7k2 (katana)

Initiative: 4k3

School/Rank: Akodo Bushi 1

Way of the Lion: Gain Free Raise on attack or ignore Armor TN bonus from armor; gain +1k0 to attacks on opponent who Raised against you last turn or on first attack of skirmish

Skills: Athletics 1, Battle (Mass Combat) 1, Defense 3, Iaijutsu 2, Intimidation 2, Kenjutsu (Katana) 3, Kyujutsu 2, Lore: Underworld 1, Stealth 1

Mastery Abilities: Gain +1k0 to damage with swords

Advantages/Disadvantages: Social Disadvantage (ronin), Cursed by Yomi

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

Tsuko's Heart Lieutenant

Air 4 Earth 2 Fire 3 Water 3 Void 3

Honor 2.5 Status 0.0 Infamy 2.0

Armor TN: 18 **Attack:** 10k4 (katana,
(ashigaru armor, in Full Complex, in Full
Attack) Attack)

Reduction: 1

Damage: 7k2+2
(katana)

Initiative: 6k4+5

School/Rank: Matsu Berserker 2

The Lion's Roar: adds (+Honor Rank) to total of all damage rolls; can move 5 feet farther as part of Move Action while in Full Attack Stance

Matsu's Fury: On entering Full Attack, can target opponent within 30 ft – if hits that target, target cannot move without making a Willpower roll against TN equal to damage dealt; effect ends regardless after second Reactions Stage, and cannot affect opponents immune to Fear

Skills: Athletics 3, Battle (Mass Combat) 5, Defense 3, Iaijutsu 3, Intimidation 2, Kenjutsu (Katana) 5, Kyujutsu 3, Lore: Underworld 2, Stealth 2

Mastery Abilities: Gain +1k0 to damage with swords, can draw swords as a Free Action, adds Battle Rank to total of initiative rolls

Advantages/Disadvantages: Social Disadvantage (ronin), Cursed by Yomi

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

Once the battle is over, assuming they survive, the PCs can examine their attackers for clues. If any of the attackers survived, they can be interrogated with an **Intimidation (Bullying) / Willpower** roll, TN 25, into giving up their information, or turned over to Shirasu's eta torturers – this will result in more information, but likely not until after the adventure is over, as events continue to move forward. Alternatively, careful examination of the ronin's belongings turns up an unusual piece of information: by making a TN 20 **Investigation (Search) / Perception** roll, the PCs can notice that all of the mens' kimono share a distinctive smell: woodsmoke, but without any other smells mixed in (as would be the case for, say, a smoker used to prepare fish). It is as if all their clothes have spent substantial time in a location that was recently and thoroughly on fire, a long enough time to saturate the fabric. If the PCs do not think of it on their own, they can make a pure **Intelligence** roll – the character with the highest result remembers that three of Shirasu's yoriki died in a fire in a warehouse near the docks, the only fire that has been mentioned in the city in some time. (If the PCs turn any survivors over to Shirasu's torturers, they notice the smell and Shirasu draws the same conclusion.) Questioning any of the locals with whom the PCs have made contact so far in the city tells them the location of that warehouse.

The Raid

In order to raid the safehouse of Tsuko's Heart, the PCs must know where it is, information they can only gain from Hakujuu. However, they may wish to proceed within the bounds of the law rather than aid a criminal gang in removing a rival. This means speaking with Hakujuu and then returning with Shirasu to make the case for the raid – this is not a simple task, because Shirasu is not ready and willing to accept the testimony of a peasant criminal leader. Persuading him to change his mind, at least to the extent of checking into the place, requires a **Sincerity / Awareness** roll, TN 30 – if they have checked it out themselves, the Honesty Emphasis applies and they gain a Free Raise. (If they lie about having checked it out themselves, they can use the Deceit Emphasis instead, but must not only meet the TN 30 but also beat Shirasu's **Investigation (Interrogation) / Perception** roll of 10k4, and he has the Emphasis. They do not get a Free Raise in this instance.)

Regardless of whether the PCs are accompanied by the Red-Handed Hawks or Shirasu's yoriki, the raid occurs in much the same fashion. According to Hakujuu's information, the safehouse is a samurai's residence, near the river, just outside the docks district. Once owned by a prominent Lion samurai, it has been unclaimed since the Unicorn took the city last year, and Tsuko's Heart has quietly moved in and claimed it for their own. Careful examination notices two sentries, both ronin samurai surrounded by the glow of returned spirits, on opposite corners of the building, watching for trouble (and attempting not to look as though they are doing so) – they lounge idly, leaning against the privacy wall that surrounds the house, but each keeps his daisho close to hand, and each has a small gong half-concealed in a nearby bush.

The house itself is three stories set amidst almost an acre of ground. It has a small garden and a shrine, but all of it was badly battered by the effects of the battle last summer – gaping holes mar the wall and the roof, and much of the house itself is blackened and broken. While this has served to keep most of the newly-prominent Unicorn samurai from showing much interest in it and thus served the purposes of Tsuko's Heart's desire for privacy, it does little to protect them against a direct attack like the one the PCs plan.

If the PCs simply rush the house without declaring themselves, they suffer a loss of Honor points equal to their current Honor Rank minus 4 (minimum zero), but automatically gain a surprise round over their opponents when combat actually begins, during which

the Tsuko's Heart ronin suffer a -20 penalty to their initiative (later rounds their initiative is normal) and cannot declare either Full Attack or Full Defense. If the PCs have allied with the Red-Handed Hawks, Hakujuu argues strongly for this plan, not willing to risk his men if it is not necessary; if the Red-Handed Hawks fight alongside the PCs, they deal with enough of the other ronin of Tsuko's Heart that the PCs themselves must only face a number of opponents equal to the number of combat-capable PCs plus 2. If, on the other hand, the PCs are fighting alongside Shirasu, he flatly refuses to attack without first openly confronting the ronin and demanding their surrender – he gives them a ten count to lay down their daisho, then orders the attack when they do not comply – but his presence and that of his larger number of yoriki means the PCs must only face a number of opponents equal to the number of combat-capable PCs. In either case, if Shirasu assigned two of his yoriki to accompany the PCs, they fight unhesitatingly and with great courage (and do not count toward determining the number of opponents).

It is worth noting that all members of Tsuko's Heart (including, obviously, those the PCs will face) are returned spirits. The ronin make use of their Technique to gain a Free Raise unless faced with foes in Heavy Armor – they use these Free Raises for things *other* than damage, primarily Disarm against armed foes and Knockdown against shugenja or other unarmed foes, until put into at least the +10 Wound Level, when they begin to use it to simply aid their attack rolls.

Tsuko's Heart Ronin

Air 2	Earth 2	Fire 2	Water 3	Void 2
Reflexes 3		Agility 3		

Honor 2.5

Status 0.0

Glory 1.0

Armor TN: 23
(ashigaru armor)

Attack: 6k3 (katana,
Complex)

Reduction: 1

Damage: 7k2 (katana)

Initiative: 4k3

School/Rank: Akodo Bushi 1

Way of the Lion: Gain Free Raise on attack or ignore Armor TN bonus from armor; gain +1k0 to attacks on opponent who Raised against you last turn or on first attack of skirmish

Skills: Athletics 1, Battle (Mass Combat) 1, Defense 3, Iaijutsu 2, Intimidation 2, Kenjutsu (Katana) 3, Kyujutsu 2, Lore: Underworld 1, Stealth 1

Mastery Abilities: Gain +1k0 to damage with swords

Advantages/Disadvantages: Social Disadvantage (ronin), Cursed by Yomi

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

The battle is further complicated by the presence of a noncombatant on the field: a young girl, no more than 8 or 9, who clutches a small furoshiki to her chest as the fight suddenly explodes around her. She is attempting to leave the house just as the PCs attack, and her route takes her right into their path (she is walking out the door as they charge in, for instance). If anyone in the fight is attacking a foe within 5 feet of her and their roll misses the target's Armor TN by more than 15, it will strike her instead, dealing standard damage for the attack type (excluding Techniques, Mastery Abilities and so on). A PC may declare one Raise to guarantee this cannot happen on a given attack; the Tsuko's Heart ronin do not do so, while Shirasu's yoriki always will. The girl has Earth 2. She is a messenger and is carrying a letter that may prove extremely helpful to the PCs if they can get it from her – she crouches helplessly in the middle of the fight, and will not try to run away until the fight is over. If the girl is badly wounded (reaches the Down Wound Level), the responsible PC loses 1 point of Honor if their Honor Rank is at least 4, or 2 points of Honor if their Honor Rank is at least 8; these losses are 1 point higher if she dies, and are tripled for a PC with Paragon of Compassion. (A PC with Failure of Compassion suffers the losses normally.)

Once the battle is concluded, the PCs can search the safehouse, but they find little of immediate value. It is a broken-down house inside as well as out, and its content are made up exclusively of a few personal belongings for each member of the gang, a few scrounged pieces of furniture, some food, tea and sake and a few papers that indicate some of the group's more recent areas of focus for their attacks on the local criminals (nothing that reveals anything about the monks and nothing that Shirasu and Hakujou both don't already know about). More important by far is the messenger girl (her name is Kazuyo, which she volunteers in a terrified squeak) and her bag; if asked, she immediately says the bag contains a letter, given to her a few minutes before by the leader of the men in the house. This leader is nowhere to be found when the battle concludes, but the letter is still in her bag – it can be found there by the PCs (or one of the yoriki, Shirasu himself or one of Hakujou's men, if need be) if the girl does not survive. This letter is reproduced as Player Handout #3. If still alive, Kazuyo tells the PCs where she was told to take the letter, a warehouse in the docks district (the same warehouse referenced by the letter, which Hakujou or Shirasu can confirm).

Part Four: The Gunpowder Plot

Regardless of how they come to the conclusion, the PCs should realize that the warehouse, once owned and used by Hakujou, in the docks area might be where they can at last find Hitoshirenu. As soon as they realize this, however, a rumbling roar sweeps across the city, and looking toward the city gates to the south, the PCs can see several columns of smoke wafting into the sky where the gates should be. Suddenly, another explosion, much closer by, rocks the earth, and the realization strikes everyone: gaijin pepper is being used against the city!

Even as the aftereffects of the explosion end, two more events occur in rapid succession. The first is a massive shout, as from hundreds, perhaps thousands of samurai roaring out a *banzai!* at the same moment. Anyone who has ever fought with or against a Lion army recognizes the sound as a devastating Matsu charge – apparently Motso and his army have arrived. The second strikes much closer, literally, for an arrow suddenly flashes in front of the PCs. If they are with Shirasu, it strikes him in the arm; if they are instead with Hakujou, it does the same to him. If neither is present, it either strikes one of Shirasu's yoriki (if they are there) or simply misses one of the PCs by bare inches. If they look where the arrow came from, they see a ronin, surrounded by the glow of a returned spirit, standing on a rooftop not far away, a bow still in her hand. If any PC made the roll to spot the ronin near Shinjo Shirasu's residence, they recognize her.

As soon as she is seen, the woman leaps down off the roof and begins racing up the street. With her Water 4, she is likely able to quickly outdistance the PCs, but she will occasionally slow down to fire her bow back at one of them, which should allow the PCs to roughly keep pace with her. It quickly becomes clear that she is heading toward the docks – and specifically, toward the warehouse that might hold Hitoshirenu.

This is a running battle, and should be handled in as chaotic a manner as the table can handle. The PCs are pursuing a foe likely faster than they are, but both she and they are challenged by the sudden war that has broken out as the Lion invade Toshi no Meiyo Gisei. (In case it matters, assume the initial distance between Moneko and the PCs is 100 feet, and never grows larger than that – if it would, Moneko turns and fires her bow instead.)

On the first and second rounds, there are no unusual effects, as the city is only just reacting to the invasion. The first signs and sounds of war appear, but remain far enough away not to interfere with the PCs or Moneko. However, on the third and later rounds of the combat, other events intrude on the chase.

Round Three: crowds swarm into the streets, making the area Moderate Terrain (all characters have their Water Ring reduced by 1 for the purposes of movement unless they have at least 3 Ranks in Athletics), and all characters have +5 Armor TN from the cover granted by the crowd. All around, shouts and screams fill the air, and burning arrows set fire to roofs and gardens.

Round Four: A building, already burning, suddenly collapses, sending a plume of burning debris into Moneko's path. She pauses, spending a Move Action to prepare herself, then forces herself to cross with another Move Action. This deals 2k2 Wounds to her that ignore her Reduction, and the terrain (20 feet wide) is considered Difficult Terrain. Characters who try to follow, on this round or a later one, face the same choice, but an **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** roll, TN 25, spots a path through that avoid the damage and the worst of the terrain, leaving it at Moderate.

Round Five: A hail of arrows from Lion archers falls across the group. Everyone, PC and Moneko alike, suffers 1k1 Wounds from the attack during the Reactions Stage.

Round Six: a Unicorn countercharge roars past, forcing Moneko to stop moving entirely and declare Full Defense to avoid being trampled. However, if any PC fires a ranged attack at her, whether mundane or magical, one of the Unicorn misinterprets it and fires back with his horsebow. The attack occurs during the Reactions Stage, and the horsebowman attacks 8k4 on his roll, dealing 5k2 damage.

Round Seven: Moneko reaches the monastery at the end of this Round.

If at any point one of the PCs gets within 30 feet of her, Moneko throws one of her grenades (she has a total of 5 on her). Lighting the grenade takes a Free Action, and throwing it is a Complex Action using her **Athletics / Reflexes** as the attack roll. Raises do not increase the damage, so she doesn't bother, and she only has to hit a TN 10 to get it within 10 feet of a PC. However, she suffers a -1k0 penalty for every 5 feet she has to throw the grenade, and the TN goes up by +10 if one of the PCs is currently in melee range with her. The grenades deal 4k4 damage to everything within 10 feet of the landing point, although a **Defense / Reflexes** roll, TN

30, reduces this to 1k1 Wounds. Being in Full Defense reduces the TN to 15. (The TNs to reduce the damage are reduced thanks to the cover provided by the crowds in the streets – in open terrain, the TNs are 40 and 20 respectively.)

When the PCs reach it, they find that the “monastery” is just a burnt-out shell of a warehouse, still clearly suffering the effects of the flames that engulfed it and nearly spread throughout the city just a month or so before. Inside, paper screens – set up as to be invisible from those outside – mark off small monk cells, and several small shrines have been erected to the Fortunes, kami and other well-known ancestors. The monks themselves number about a dozen or so, and are moving about uncertainly as the noise and shouting from the battle raging throughout the city echo through the warehouse district. If Moneko still has her grenades, she begins lobbing them into the warehouse as fast as she can throw them. The first one that lands inside sets the warehouse aflame once more, but she keeps throwing until she runs out of grenades, then tries to flee the area.

Assuming the PCs kill Moneko quickly, they can run into the warehouse in search of Hitoshirenu. If Moneko managed to throw at least one of her grenades, the monks inside are badly hurt by the explosion and fire both, and anyone entering the building takes 1k1 Wounds from fire and smoke (this ignores Reduction); each time a PC enters, however, they can grab a monk and get them out, and as long as all 12 are retrieved, Hitoshirenu survives.

Daidoji Moneko

Air 4	Earth 3	Fire 3 Agility 4	Water 4 Perception 5	Void 4
Honor 1.5	Status 3.0	Glory 4.5		
Armor TN: 30 (Light Armor)	Attack: 9k4 (katana, Simple) or 9k4 (yumi, Simple)			
Reduction: 3	Damage: 8k2 (katana) or 7k2 (yumi)			

Initiative: 8k4

School/Rank: Daidoji Scout 4

Surveying the Land: Gain +1k0 on Hunting and Stealth rolls; rural/improvised traps gain +1k1 damage

Scouring the Shadows: Gain +1k0 on attacks made against unaware targets

Weaken the Resistance: Ignores all Reduction from armor or Techniques (but not other sources) when attacking; gains +1k0 on damage instead if target has no Reduction from armor or Techniques

Strike and Move: Can attack with katana, wakizashi, yumi or knife as Simple Action; trap damage now increased by +2k1 instead

Skills: Athletics 4, Defense 5, Hunting (Traps) 5, Iaijutsu 4, Jiujutsu 2, Kenjutsu (Katana) 5, Kyujutsu (Yumi) 5, Stealth (Sneaking) 7

Mastery Abilities: +1k0 to damage with swords and can ready them as a Free Action; ignores movement penalties for Moderate Terrain and treat Difficult Terrain as Moderate

Advantages/Disadvantages: Silent, Cursed by Toshigoku

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

Conclusion

Once the battle is done and the monks have been rescued, those who are still conscious (about half) begin using their medical training and kiho to provide healing for one another and for the PCs as well, unless the PCs refuse the offer. All around, the sounds of battle grow and swell; it is clear that the city is in the midst of a pitched battle, but for the moment, the small street where the monastery sits is quiet.

If the PCs examine Moneko after the battle (PCs grappling her or otherwise extremely close to her might even notice this during the fight), they spot what first seem like tattoos on the inside of each of her wrists: these tattoos are of the Daidoji family mon, and are given to every Daidoji bushi on their gempukku. However, a closer look reveals that Moneko's "tattoos" have smudged, because they are not truly tattoos at all, but temporary marks made with henna or some other skin dye. The PCs thus cannot tell whether the assassin was a Daidoji who wanted the deniability of not having tattoos or a non-Daidoji who wanted to frame the Crane for the use of gaijin pepper and assassination. (Cunning characters might even note that there is a third option, that the woman might be a Crane who wanted others to think that she was not a Crane and was trying to frame the Crane – this option, of course, is the correct one.) Regardless, even if she somehow survives the battle, she refuses to talk even under torture, killing herself (or being killed by an agent of her master) as soon as possible. Given the invading Lion army, an extended interrogation isn't even really possible, so the PCs learn nothing from her.

If the PCs ask about Tsuko's Heart, the monks exchange glances, then one offers the following explanation: *"They came to us shortly after they arrived here last winter. They are a band of ronin, all of whom were once Lion and all of whom had, like us,*

returned to the Empire through Oblivion's Gate. They spoke of the rampant corruption in the city and their desire to see it cleaned up; they also said they agreed with our philosophies and wanted to protect us from the 'dishonorable breed of samurai' that resides in Toshi no Meiyo Gisei. We accepted, and they became our yojimbo and, more often than not, our students as well – many have come to study and pray with us here since we claimed this building after last month's fire. More than that, though, I cannot say... I do not know what drove them away from their Clan, other than that each said they did not trust Kitsu Motso's honor or intentions toward the Empire." The monks have no more information to offer the PCs about Tsuko's Heart, unless someone specifically asks for the name of the ronin who leads the group, in which case Hitoshirenu informs them that is a man calling himself "Arasou."

Of Hitoshirenu, however, the PCs can learn more. Though the rest of the monks attempt to deny any knowledge of the name, Hitoshirenu himself readily admits his identity. If the PCs give any reason to indicate why they are looking for him – showing him the letter he sent to Korosheki, mentioning Korosheki's or Moretsu's name, and so on – he also, with great circumspection, admits his *former* identity. He was, in fact, Hantei XIV. There is little to mark Hitoshirenu out from any other monk, but a hint of the old grandeur seems to hang on him as he confesses the man he used to be.

Hitoshirenu is calm and reserved, but he is saddened – though not surprised – if the PCs tell him of Korosheki's disappearance. (He will ask after his descendant, particularly if the PCs show him the letter.) *"He is dead, no doubt, and likely never to be found," the retired Emperor says grimly. "If he was killed by the one that I suspect, well... that one is nothing if not thorough."* Assuming the PCs ask, Hitoshirenu refuses to divulge his suspicions. *"No, samurai-sans, the risk is too great if I am wrong, and greater still if I am right. The time will soon come when I will know for sure, and once that happens, I will be certain to inform you."* Hitoshirenu does ask about Moretsu – he does not know her, but wishes more information about the samurai his descendant placed such trust in. (If, by some happenstance, the PCs should mention that Moretsu is working with Hantei Okucheo in the search for the other returned Emperors, an **Investigation (Interrogation)** / **Perception** roll, TN 30, catches a slight frown on Hitoshirenu's face before he can hide it.)

Regardless, once the PCs are satisfied – or have accepted that they will not be more satisfied than they

already are – Hitoshirenu asks for a quick escort out of the city for himself and his brothers, after which he departs for a new place of safety, one he will tell no one of so that he need not risk its discovery. If the PCs suggest taking him to Moretsu, Shirasu or another high-ranking samurai instead, Hitoshirenu points out that the battle currently underway in the city makes that infeasible and extremely dangerous – the only safe route currently available is toward the docks and out of the city, and the chaos of the battle makes it impossible to know where anyone really is at the moment. Under no circumstances will he offer more information; other attempts to learn more of his secrets or plans are outside the scope of the adventure, and players attempting them should contact the Campaign Admin staff.

Meanwhile, Kitsuo Motso and the First Akodo Army sweep into Toshi no Meiyo Gisei with incredible ease; Moto Hideyo and his forces abandon the city within hours of the initial assault. However, the victory is marred by the use of gaijin pepper on the city gates; while Motso claims that he attacked in the wake of the explosion because the Unicorn were clearly using the forbidden substance and it was his duty as the Empress' Right Hand to punish them, few seem to believe his version of the story, given how convenient it was for his attack. The Lion lose a great deal of face in the eyes of the rest of the Empire, and Motso in particular sees his reputation blackened almost everywhere. Rumors that the Crane might somehow have been involved do nothing save to further chill the weakening alliance between the Crane and the Unicorn in the courts.

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
Defeating Tsuko's Heart (whether in the ambush or at the safehouse):	+1XP

Rescuing Hitoshirenu: +1XP

Total Possible Experience: 4XP

Honor

PCs who participate in the ritual of Meiyo Seido gain or lose Honor as listed in that section. Using a Low Skill incurs the loss of 1 point of Honor for every two Ranks of Honor the PC possesses, rounded up, each time it is used.

Glory

If the PCs participated in Hideyo's training exercise, they gain 1 Glory point. If they refused after initially agreeing, however, they lose 1 Glory point.

PCs who defeat Tsuko's Heart gain 1 Glory point.

Other Awards/Penalties

If the PCs participated in Hideyo's training exercise, they gain him as an Ally with Influence 2 and Devotion 1.

If the PCs aided the Red-Handed Hawks in attacking the Tsuko's Heart safehouse, they may take Hakujuu as an Ally (1 Influence, 3 Devotion) if they wish; however, each time they call on Hakujuu's aid in future adventures, they lose Honor points equal to (their current Honor Rank minus 2).

Module Tracking Sheets

Characters who impressed Shirasu with their etiquette or their knowledge of bushido and the law (as described in "The Law of the Wind" above) gain his recommendation as a possible recruit into the Emerald Magistrates as a yoriki. This should be noted on the cert. If a player is interested in pursuing this relationship, the player should contact the Admin Team.

If the PC performed the ritual at Meiyo Seido, this should be noted on the cert along with whether the PC gained or lost Honor.

If the PC met Shinjo Shirasu, Hakujuu, or both, this should be noted on the cert.

GM Reporting

Did Hitoshirenu survive?

Did the PCs find Arasou's letter?

Did the Red-Handed Hawks attack Tsuko's Heart, did Shirasu's yoriki, or neither?

*GM must report this information BEFORE
(10/7/2012) for it to have storyline effect*

Appendix #1: NPCs

Shinjo Yoriki

Air 2 Earth 2 Fire 3 Water 2 Void 2
Reflexes 3 Perception 3

Honor 5.5 Status 3.5 Glory 1.5
Armor TN: 25 (Light Armor)
Attack: 6k3 (katana, Complex)
Reduction: 3
Damage: 6k2 (katana)

Initiative: 4k3

School/Rank: Shinjo Bushi 1

Way of the Ki-Rin: adds (+Horsemanship) to total of roll as well when spending Void to get +1k1 (School Skills marked with *)

Skills: Athletics* 1, Defense* 1, Horsemanship* 3, Investigation* (Search) 3, Kenjutsu* 3, Knives 1, Kyujutsu* 1, Lore: Law 1

Mastery Abilities: Can assume Full Attack while mounted, adds +1k0 to damage with swords

Advantages/Disadvantages: Social Position (yoriki) / Idealistic

Wounds: 10 (+0), 14 (+3), 18 (+5), 22 (+10), 26 (+15), 30 (+20), 34 (Down, +40), 38 (Dead)

Monks of the Stones of Dawn Monastery

Air 3 Earth 2 Fire 3 Water 2 Void 3
Awareness Willpower Perception

4 3 3
Honor 5.5 Status 2.0 Glory 2.0
Armor TN: 20 (unarmored)
Attack: 6k3 (unarmed, Complex)
Reduction: 0
Damage: 3k1 (unarmed)

Initiative: 5k3

School/Rank: Four Temples Monk 2

Soul of Civility: When spending Void to augment High or Social Skill Roll, adds +2k2 instead of +1k1

Kiho Known: Chi Protection (Water 4), Flame Fist (Fire 3), Riding the Clouds (Air 3), Touch the Void Dragon (Void 4), Way of the Willow (Air 5)

Skills: Courtier 3, Etiquette 3, Jiujutsu 3, Investigation 2, Lore: Theology (Shintao) 5, Medicine 2, Meditation 3, Sincerity 3, Stealth 1

Mastery Abilities: gains +1k0 on unarmed damage

Advantages/Disadvantages: Touched by Yomi (Lore: Theology)

Wounds: 10 (+0), 14 (+3), 18 (+5), 22 (+10), 26 (+15), 30 (+20), 34 (Down, +40), 38 (Dead)

As a rule, the Stones of Dawn monks will have Touch the Void Dragon (enhancing their Air) and Riding the Clouds active at any given time. If forced to flee a combative PC, they will use Riding the Clouds to leap 40 feet away before trying to flee into the crowds.

Appendix #2: Player Handouts

Player Handout #1

Honored samurai,

Let me begin by stating that this message is one of the utmost importance, and I ask that you take me at my word when I say that it addresses a matter that touches even Heaven itself. Though we do not know each other well, I assure you that I am not a woman given to exaggeration.

Unfortunately, the very importance of the matter demands that I must act with discretion. Time is of the essence, and I find that I cannot do all that is needful myself, particularly with events pressing down on me. And so I turn to you. Your reputation, and my own knowledge, both lead me to think that you are the samurai I need to help me. If you will trust that my need is sincere and the scope of the problem is great, I know you will come to me quickly. I am currently quartered at an inn called the Cloak of Hotei in the village of Nadoka Ogami Mura, in Gisei Province. I trust you will find me there at once.

Akodo Moretsu
Taisa, First Akodo Army

Player Handout #2

Grandson,

Your letter has reached me at a time of great troubles, and I cannot express the solace it brought. I am indeed the man you seek, and though I once thought that life long dead, it seems that my karma brings it around once more. Perhaps I should have taken the path of wakizashi and quick death as so many of our Seppun cousins did after their return, but I believed that perhaps I had an opportunity to reflect on an experience few others could know: our place in the Wheel of Life with the perspectives of both life and death to inform it. No doubt you saw a similar course ahead of you. Now, however, I fear that chance is gone – what I know demands that I move again in the world, no matter how much I may prefer a quiet withdrawal from it.

Forgive me that I am not clear, but I have grown accustomed to circumspection; an ill-timed act or a misplaced word can wreak great harm, as my own son learned better than most, and so I will not risk rash boldness. Nevertheless, I suspect I can answer a number of your questions, grandson. By the time you took your place upon the throne, too much had already been forgotten; I, however, still remember. As soon as the time is right, I will tell you what you need to know.

In the meantime, you are in danger, as perhaps you already realize. I have moved on from my beloved shrine, and have found a place of safety among other monks; though I do not necessarily share their beliefs, this sanctuary is perhaps uniquely suited to maintaining my anonymity. It also comes supplied with protective allies: should a messenger arrive from “Tsuko’s Heart,” you may be assured of their devotion to your security.

May the Fortunes watch over the Empire,
Hitoshirenu

Player Handout #3

Hitoshirenu-san,

I understand your concerns, and I realize that our methods are harsh. But we fight for a greater good, and I hope you can come to see that in time. Even now, you must realize that you are gaining some benefit from these “heartless terrors” you say we are inflicting. The monastery where you are living at this very moment was once a storehouse for criminal goods, taken from those who would profit from violating the law, at high cost to both ourselves and the Unicorn magistrates who died trying to defend it. But those men died protecting the lawless, and their actions were nothing more than we have come to expect from this city of villainy: dishonor profits while the followers of bushido are cast aside, trampled and forgotten.

Please remember, honored brother, that we are warriors surrounded on all sides by enemies. I do not even just mean that we who were once Lion now live in a city controlled by Unicorn; we are the ancestors who now walk the world of the living, and they resist our guidance and cast down our traditions when we stand up to fight for them. Our own Clan has turned away from us, lead by a disreputable fool who spits on the Celestial Order and sneers at every returned spirit he meets. Under such straits, we must hold to a tighter course than ever, and we cannot pause for consideration of our enemies’ pain each time we must act. Know this, then: we will protect you, as we protect all of the Stones of Dawn Monastery, and what we do in pursuit of that protection does not touch your honor. Let that satisfy you as best it can.

Yours in service,
Arasou