

Winter Court: Kyuden Tonbo

**A One-Round Mid-Rank Adventure for
Heroes of Rokugan: Spirit of Bushido
Month of Hida through Ryoshun, 1140 (Winter)**

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The rewards one can gain at the Imperial Winter Court are great, but so are the risks...

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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 Mid Rank adventure. Unlike most adventures in *Heroes of Rokugan*, there are no modifications for low-end or high-end parties.

Adventure Summary and Background

Though not as violent as the Clan Wars or the War Against the Shadow, the last few years have been difficult for the Empire. The death of the Empress, the death of the Emperor, and the peasant uprisings have all left their mark on Rokugan. Samurai all across the Empire are attempting to take advantage of the chaotic political situation to increase their own power and influence. Foremost among these is the returned spirit Hantei Okucheo, who reigned as the sixteenth Hantei Emperor. Having declared himself Imperial Regent, with backing from members of every Great Clan but the Dragon, he has claimed a powerful position but lacks enough support to consider himself secure.

Dedicated to her protection and safety, Emerald Champion Kakita Toshiken brought the child Empress Toturi Tsudao to Kyuden Tonbo in the shadow of the Dragon mountains; Toshiken hopes for material support and military security from the Dragon while keeping the child Empress in a place where she can be accessible for the rest of Rokugan. It has taken most of a year, but the small Dragonfly castle has been refurbished and prepared to host a proper Imperial Court.

Toshiken's problems continue – no Clan Champions have come to his court, and no family daimyo either. None of the Clans have official representation at the Empress' Winter Court, and it is small consolation that there is no such delegates present at the Imperial Regent's court either. The future of the Empire may depend on the support the Emerald Champion can gain from those daimyo who have chosen to attend, but the Regent has sent a skilled and influential courtier to convince them to lend their influence to the Hantei's regime in Otosan Uchi. The PCs will be asked to assist one side or the other of this political conflict...

How to Run This Module

The structure of this adventure is extremely loose, and GMing it can be a challenge – those who have played or run SoB07, "Delicate Negotiations", will be familiar with most of the concepts. The events of the adventure take place over the winter months, but there is no strict

order, and the players are free to interact with the various characters in whatever order they choose. Moreover, the various tactics the PCs might employ to persuade the daimyo to their side can vary widely – the GM is encouraged to reward creativity, but to also keep in mind the rigid social strictures that permeate Rokugani culture. Losses of Glory, Honor and even Status are all possible, and players should be made aware of the heightened consequences of a misstep. Each of the daimyo are essentially their Clan's representatives to the Empress' Court, as they are the highest-Status characters present apart from those with Imperial responsibilities. Players who grossly violate the rules of etiquette, initiate violence or break the law should suffer immediate penalties, up to and including ejection from the adventure and loss of Clan status (i.e., being made ronin).

This adventure can be thought of as an "interactive in a box;" the nonlinear structure reflects the great potential the PCs have to affect the positions of several powerful or influential daimyo. It is entirely possible that there will be players who wish to persuade the daimyo who have not declared their allegiance to support the Imperial Regent rather than the Emerald Champion. It will be important to remind the players that their opposing positions are purely a matter of politics, and that the eyes of the Empire are upon them. Disputes should be resolved in a rational and suitably courteous manner, lest the extreme disapproval of the Imperial families fall upon the offending character. Any actual violence should be resolved in a socially-approved fashion, as will be demonstrated early in the module by the duel between Seppun Biransei and Doji Reju.

Appendix Three presents all eight of the provincial daimyo that are here to be courted by Toshiken's followers. The presentation format is as follows:

Name: The character's name, along with their Clan affiliation, School/Rank, Glory, Status and Honor.

Description: A basic description of the character, their usual appearance and dress, typical mannerisms, and so on.

Position: The initial bias the character has, with a brief explanation and the amount of Influence they begin with.

Information: Various sources of information about the character, along with the needed dice rolls and TNs to actually gain anything from the listed source. All characters will have a reputation that can be discovered through **Courtier (Gossip)** / **Awareness** rolls; success with at least a 15 allows the PC to learn of the other two possible rolls. Succeeding at one of them will allow them to increase Oharu's Influence with that NPC by 1 or Dsichi's Influence by 3.

Access: What is required to gain an audience suitable for negotiation with the character. This can always be accomplished through **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** rolls, but other approaches might also intrigue the NPC enough to allow them to speak with a PC. If attempting to speak with an NPC of their own Clan, the PC gains a number of Free Raises on this roll equal to their Status Ranks. If a PC happens to have an Oath of Fealty to the daimyo in question, they do not have to roll for access, but will still have to roll for any conversation with the NPC. If a PC gains an audience with the daimyo, they may bring a number of “guests” to the meeting (i.e., other PCs) equal to their Status Rank.

Possible Leverage: At base, the PCs have a chance to learn about the interests and desires of the character; these are the specific points of information that the main courtiers are most interested in. This requires an **Etiquette (Conversation) / Awareness** roll to pick up on the things important to them. If the PC roleplays a particularly relevant approach during these discussions, the GM should feel free to reward them with Free Raises, but remember that a character may only take advantage of a Free Raise on a Skill roll if they actually possess at least one Rank in the Skill in question. Other Skills are possible for these rolls at the GM’s discretion, particularly relevant Lores. Learning a piece of leverage grants Oharu 2 points of Influence and Dsichi 4 points of Influence with that character.

Relevant Traits: Rather than supply complete character sheets here, the most important dice pools and relevant Social and Mental Advantages and Disadvantages needed for the character are listed in this entry. If the dice pool lists one or more Emphases, the character possesses those Emphases – otherwise, they do not. If for some reason it becomes necessary to know about mechanical traits that are not listed, the GM is encouraged to use these traits as a guideline to make their own determination.

While running this module, any time a PC publicly fails an Etiquette roll by more than 15, they will lose one point of Glory. However, it should be noted that it is nearly impossible to get through the entire module without failing an Etiquette roll for most characters. If the PCs are losing a significant amount of Glory, the GM may wish to allow them to spend experience during the course of the module to increase their ranks of the Etiquette Skill. The eyes of the Empire are on the Imperial Winter Court, but that can be a significant reason for learning.

Character Notes

Check the PCs’ character sheets for the following:

- A cert from SoB28, “Claiming the Throne” (may have been recorded as “Confusion in Court”).
- Any Returned Spirit PC.
- “Mark of the Cat” from SoB21: A Time for Vengeance or SoB33: The Killing Grounds.
- Characters with an “Owl” cert, or those who are otherwise loyal to the Imperial Regent.

Introduction

The PCs have received invitations to the Imperial Winter Court in Kyuden Tonbo. This is a prestigious event, despite the Regent’s declaration that the official Imperial Court is taking place in Otosan Uchi this year, and a recognition of the PCs’ accomplishments. There are guests from all around the Empire, though very few of significant rank have chosen to attend.

Kyuden Tonbo sits at the base of the northern mountains, the last bastion of civilization before those seeking to enter the Dragon lands must begin the long, dangerous journey through those inhospitable passes. Though only a Minor Clan, the Dragonfly have long served as hosts to powerful or influential samurai from every Clan, and their guest quarters are as elegantly-appointed as one would expect to find in the Crane lands. The city surrounding the castle has a surprising array of merchants and entertainments – Kyuden Tonbo also serves as a trade route for the Dragon, so a wide variety of goods pass through here on their way north. The locals, servants and samurai alike, are friendly and welcoming, despite what might be imagined as a certain amount of stress owing to the influx of almost two hundred guests on top of the sizable entourage that accompanied the Emerald Champion last year when he brought the Empress to reside here.

PCs with less than two Ranks of Status will be given rooms at the inns in the city. Those with higher Status are granted rooms in the palace itself, with higher Status characters having more spacious rooms and better proximity to their superiors. The palace shows signs of recent renovation and expansion – the two wings devoted to most of the guests were built within the last year, after the Emerald Champion arrived here with the child Empress.

Once they settle in, the PCs have several days to explore the city and the palace (though the Imperial

wing is entirely off-limits to all but Imperial PCs, and even they will be denied access to Tsudao herself). The Empress and Emerald Champion will remain in seclusion until the official opening of court, allowing the guests to mingle while the last few samurai to arrive make their way to Kyuden Tonbo. The PCs should have an opportunity to meet one another during this period, and begin to gather some basic information on the situation in the Empire and the likely focus of the coming months.

Rumors

PCs who make a **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll, at a TN of 10 learn one rumor at random from the following list, plus one extra rumor for every 5 points by which the roll beats the TN. The rumors include:

- Though the Imperial Winter Court is the most prestigious event of the season, relatively few samurai of high rank have chosen to attend. In fact, the provincial daimyo rumored to have been invited expressly by the Emerald Champion are the highest-placed Clan samurai present (apart from Toshiken himself, and a few members of his personal staff). Notably, these daimyo have not publicly declared their support for either the Champion or the Regent.
- With the Champion's esteemed wife Kakita Narumi remaining in Kyuden Doji to oversee the Crane's official Winter Court, Toshiken has been left with relatively few skilled courtiers to assist him in ensuring the comfort of his guests. A few Emerald Magistrates, like Doji Oharu, have been busy providing political assistance to the Champion.
- Though the tensions between the Imperial Regent and the Emerald Champion are known through the Empire, the two men (or their politically-savvy allies) are making every attempt to remain civil. A representative from the Regent is expected to arrive shortly – Otomo Dsichi, an experienced courtier who once served as a District Governor in Otosan Uchi. Officially, he will be here to check on the child Empress and the care she is being given while in the Emerald Champion's custody, but little doubt that he will be a divisive presence in the court.
- Kyuden Tonbo has recently been expanded significantly; after the Emerald Champion arrived here last year with the child Empress, he ordered the construction of two new wings on the palace, a new wall to be built around the city, and a barracks for the Imperial Legion. The castle's wings and the barracks are complete, but even with the

additional funds from the Champion, the wall is only half-done.

- Unusually, fighting between the Dragon and Phoenix Clans continued through the autumn. Though it has stopped for the winter, it is understood that there are to be peace talks in Honored Treaty City in the spring. The Imperial General, Seppun Murayasu, is spending the winter there in preparation for overseeing the matter – there are concerns that the conflict between the Clans has begun to overstep the Imperial laws regarding warfare. It is thought that the Crane and Crab Clans may take the opportunity to formalize a cessation of their hostilities there as well.
- The Emerald Champion has been focused almost exclusively on his duties as the protector of the child Empress, turning more and more of his other responsibilities over to trusted subordinates. Even here, some wonder if he is too distracted with his concern for Tsudao to perform all of the duties of his position.
- A gradual increase in banditry across the Empire has left many in the court baffled. Though Yoritomo Gusai, the Defender of Golden Sun Bay, has loudly proclaimed his successes at dealing with piracy along the coasts, a number of bandit gangs are striking at villages and towns all along the northwestern Empire. As many of these bandits are mounted, most of them have managed to elude capture, but it is hoped that when the Imperial General finishes dealing with the few peasant rebels, the Imperial Legions will be able to deal with the issue.

Kyuden Tonbo

The guests are welcome in the palace of Kyuden Tonbo, and many are gathering in the castle's main hall. Also recently expanded, it boasts a sizable dais that bears a copy of the Steel Throne, and a pair of smaller platforms on either side of it for the highest-ranking guests. There are several small alcoves and meeting rooms along the walls, and it is designed to allow those sitting on the dais to look out into the gardens if they wish (and the weather allows for it).

On the whole, the castle is designed to be welcoming and serene. It has many guest chambers to house visitors who are waiting for a guide through the Dragon mountains, and the addition of the child Empress and Emerald Champion has changed the Dragonfly's routine only slightly. The gardens are mostly covered over for the winter, though a partially-covered pathway still allows the castle's guests a tranquil view of its sleeping beauties. There is a sizable library, though it is mostly intended for light entertainment of the Tonbo's

guests than for in-depth research, and several small shrines scattered throughout the caste – the Tonbo are a particularly pious family. There is, however, no dojo in the castle proper; the small room set aside for the guards has been pre-empted by the child Empress and the Emerald Champion, leaving the small dojo in the city and the one attached to the Legion barracks as the best places for a bushi to practice.

The City

The city that surrounds Kyuden Tonbo is surprisingly large, though like the castle, it goes to great efforts to seem less significant than it is. A great deal of trade passes through the small city, and there are a wide variety of merchants who have expanded their wares in anticipation of the number of wealthy samurai guests. Nearly any legal items may be purchased in town (though their base price will be between 5-10% higher than those listed in the book). PCs who lack formal court garb may acquire it for 2 koku. (Those who cannot afford it, for whatever reason, may accept a Minor Obligation to the Dragonfly who will ensure their guests are garbed appropriately.)

Additionally, as the Tonbo family is primarily a shugenja family, there are several dozen shrines scattered through the city and the surrounding countryside. All of the Seven Fortunes have a small temple, and the lesser Fortunes and ancestors are venerated in small shrines throughout the Tonbo lands. The largest temple is to Fukurokujin, the Fortune of Wisdom, who is particularly venerated by both the Dragon and Phoenix, the two Clans that the Dragonfly descend from. Many prayers have been laid on the Fortune's altar lately, begging him to share his blessing with the Clans that they may end their strife.

Though the pacifistic Tonbo family did have a small dojo in their castle, they have recently begun to support a private dojo in town run by a quiet ronin who calls himself "Kawa" (river). Though relatively few Tonbo take the path of the bushi, they usually attend either the Shiba or Mirumoto Bushi Schools; while he cannot teach them their Techniques, Kawa has demonstrated sufficient familiarity with those Schools to be of great service to the Dragonfly's guards. Guests from other Clans are welcome; all Kawa asks is that every student training in his dojo treats others with the respect and courtesy due another samurai.

A note on weapons and armor: As guests in Kyuden Tonbo, it is expected that the PCs will leave their katana in their rooms during their stay unless they need them for some specific purpose. PCs staying in town will be expected to leave their blades at the castle entrance. Choosing to carry their katana or any other

weapon in the castle will cause them a loss of Honor as per a Minor Breach of Etiquette (as listed on pg. 91 of the corebook) every day they choose to do so. This can be mitigated by carrying it on the right side of their obi, reducing it to once for each scene in which they do so. (This will require them to ready their weapon as a Complex Action, negating any Mastery Abilities they may have in that regard.) Armor may be worn, but at double the listed penalty, and cannot be mitigated. This will quickly reduce their Honor to below 3, but then, characters so obviously prepared for violence should not expect otherwise. Finally, no PC may bear any weapon in the presence of the Empress – the Seppun guardsmen will simply not allow them to enter a room she is in, and there is no point in arguing.

The Duel

Just before the court is scheduled to officially open, one of the last arrivals finally enters – Otomo Dsichi, the Imperial Regent's envoy, and his entourage. Traveling with Dsichi is Seppun Biransei, a swordsman of singular skill and with a reputation as a brutal duelist. Biransei is the Imperial Kaishakunin, a post of some controversy – it is his duty to stand as second for the seppuku of high-ranking samurai, and the position carries with a certain amount of threat. (There are concerns that the Regent intends to use Biransei as a sort of executioner.) Biransei is not here in an official capacity, but that does not stop him from finding a use for his sword. The group from the Imperial Capital will not be in Kyuden Tonbo for a full day before Biransei is involved in an altercation. Any PC who is spending their time in the castle, particularly in the main hall, has a chance to learn of it as it is happening.

Shortly before mid-day the day before the court is scheduled to open, the usual tranquility of the main hall is shattered by raised voices. A small crowd gathers by the doors facing out into the garden, where Seppun Biransei stands confronting one of the more flamboyant of the Crane guests. Biransei speaks in a voice as hard and cold as the mountains to the north. "I asked you to repeat yourself, Doji."

The flat omission of an honorific causes the Crane's face to pale in anger, and he narrows his golden eyes. "I merely observed that I did not expect to see you here, Seppun-sama, and that it is comforting that you have finally decided to demonstrate your loyalty to the Empress."

"No samurai can allow their honor to be questioned in such a fashion. I serve the Empress with my oath to the Imperial Regent, as I assume you serve her through your oath to the Crane Champion." Biransei rests his hand deliberately on the hilt of his sword,

riding on his right hip. “I will hear an apology for your ill-considered words, or I will have satisfaction with steel. I bear permission from my lord to engage in a duel to the death; if you cannot find the courage to ask your lord for the same right, then I will face you to first blood. Immediately.”

It is evident to any PC who succeeds at an **Investigation / Awareness** roll with a TN of 20 that Biransei was looking for this opportunity, and is eager to prove his point. He is, unfortunately, entirely within his rights. Reju’s reaction is somewhat conflicted – he understands what’s going on, and he is both offended and somewhat concerned over the situation. He cannot gain permission from his lord (Doji Kurohito) for a duel to the death for quite some time, but to leave the issue unresolved through the entire winter would make him appear cowardly. Likewise, offering an apology would cause a serious loss of face, but he has been manipulated into a very uncomfortable position.

PCs may be concerned about the concept of violence at the Imperial Winter Court, but the court has not officially opened yet – a technicality that Biransei is determined to exploit.

If the PCs wish to get involved, they have very few available options. They can convince Reju to apologize, though this will be extremely difficult; it will require either a **Courtier (Manipulation)** or **Sincerity (Honesty) / Awareness** roll (depending on the method they use for their argument; TN of 50) to get him to back down. If the players ask who his lord is, they may roll **Lore: Heraldry / Intelligence** (TN 20) to remember that Reju is sworn directly to Kurohito, but that Kakita Toshiken is his lord’s stepfather and could be considered an acceptable proxy if they think that Biransei is bluffing about taking the duel to the death. (He isn’t.) At most, the PCs can remind the participants to “take it outside” – that fighting in the castle itself is a fairly significant violation of protocol. Biransei intends to simply take the matter out into the garden, though resolving it in somewhat more formal surroundings is acceptable to both parties. (The dojo in town, for instance, or the temple to Bishamon.) It should be obvious because he intentionally set up this situation, but no amount of talk will sway Biransei – all the PCs could do is earn his ire.

Note that Reju is an honorable student of the Kakita Dueling Academy, and will not allow another to fight in his place. Nor will he knowingly allow anyone to “cheat” on his behalf. If a PC attempts to do so subtly, he will notice any magical meddling due to his tattoos, though not the source, and explain the situation to Biransei. Biransei will insist on the duel regardless, but

it will change the outcome – taking greater caution, he will only injure Reju, and not maim him. (The GM should adjust the following description accordingly.)

If the PCs talk Reju down, he will apologize in a quiet, even tone and depart immediately thereafter. Otherwise, word will spread through the castle quickly and a small crowd will gather wherever the duel will be fought.

Doji Reju’s short-cropped white hair ruffles in the wind, one hand spread as though offering a gift in the typical Kakita stance. Seppun Biransei looms opposite him, jaw clenched tight but his body utterly relaxed as the duelists study one another. Minutes pass, neither man blinking. Then, in an explosion of primal force more startling for his size, Biransei’s blade lashes out and up, all the power of his frame focused on the edge of his blade. Only half of Reju’s sword clears its saya before the Seppun’s blade cleaves deeply into his forearm, and the Crane’s momentum draws his arm further into the cut.

There is a sudden, shocked hush at the viciousness of the blow. Even Biransei appears startled at the injury before he covers his face with a stern expression. Blood dripping from his arm, Reju painfully slides his sword back into its sheath. He pries useless fingers from the hilt of his sword and, voice thin but steady, bows. “I apologize for my words, Seppun-sama. They were ill-considered and rude.”

Biransei nods once, grimly, then flicks the Crane’s blood from his sword before sheathing it and returning the bow. “The matter is done, Doji-san. Let it not be repeated, lest the upcoming festivities be... marred.” After a moment, he nods again. “I apologize for the depth of your injury. You are fast, Doji-san.” Reju merely nods wordlessly in return and moves aside.

Biransei is genuinely surprised that he did as much damage as he did – he was intending to severely injure Reju, but did not expect to cripple him. (In game terms, it can be described as “choosing not to keep low damage dice”). He is not terribly upset over it, but it was not his intent. Having made his point, Biransei leaves amid whispered furors.

PCs who wish to assist Reju with his wounds may roll **Medicine (Wound Treatment) / Intelligence** (TN 25) to stop the flow of blood; healing spells like Path to Inner Peace or Regrow the Wound will do the same automatically (and, as the Tonbo are primarily trained as Water shugenja, an NPC will offer if no PC does). However, anyone who succeeds at a **Medicine /**

Perception (TN 20) roll will realize that Reju will certainly lose the hand – the damage is too extensive without the intervention of powerful magic. Unfortunately, no one capable of casting the Mastery Level 6 spell Peace of the Kami is present. Reju's career as a swordsman is effectively over, and he will initially contemplate seppuku – however, if any PC follows up on his fate through the winter, they will discover that he has been approached by Kakita Toshiken and given a position in the Ruby Dojo (the training grounds for Emerald Magistrates).

Following this event, few of the attendants at the court are willing to speak out against the samurai who have declared for the Imperial Regent in fear that it will get back to Biransei. The Seppun's brutality will grow in the telling, and few will take the risk of crossing either him or Dsichi.

Part One: The Winter Court Opens

Despite the unfortunate duel and the rumors surrounding it, the Imperial Winter Court will officially open the next day. All of the attendants are expected to be present for the opening ceremonies; because the child Empress will be there, no one save her guards are allowed to carry weapons, and everyone is expected to wear their absolute best clothing. (PCs who do not have appropriate court garb will lose a full Rank of Glory. This will apply each time they appear in court where the Empress is – the six set scenes.)

The main hall is lit with the warm glow of dozens of lanterns as the assembled court gathers for the opening ceremonies. A gong sonorously tolls, once... twice... three times. The child Empress Toturi Tsudao enters, borne upon an open platform by four burly Imperial Guardsmen and surrounded by a squad of the most elite miharu the Empire has to offer. Kakita Toshiken leads her procession, clad in the Emerald Armor of his office; his face is still handsome, though recent years have left careworn marks on his features. The last members of the party are Otomo Dsichi and a few other select Imperial advisors. The entire crowd drops to their knees in a soft rustle of silk as the court prostrates itself before the Child of Heaven. The bearers move to the central dais, while Toshiken takes position with a handful of the advisors on the lower platform to the Empress' right and Dsichi leads the bulk of the courtiers to the platform on the left.

Once settled into the throne, the Empress speaks in a light, clear voice, full of the earnest seriousness only a child is capable of. "Rise, my loyal servants. Welcome to this Imperial Winter Court. I bid you heed the words of my Champion. Toshiken-san." The Emerald Champion nods gravely to the Empress, who beams for a moment with pride.

Coming to stand before the central dais, Toshiken addresses the court. "I thank you for your attendance and attention, samurai of Rokugan. The Empress is gladdened to see so many honest and dedicated servants here in her first official Winter Court. We all give thanks to Tonbo Manako, not just for his hospitality, but for his generosity in providing accommodations fit for the Empress." He offers a small bow toward the daimyo of the Tonbo family, kneeling at the front of the right-hand dais.

Tsudao's clear, piping voice rings out in enthusiasm. "My room has pictures on the walls! They're really pretty. And the floors sing!" A few chuckles pass through the crowd, and Manako bows deeply to the Empress, a small smile on his face. The Emerald Champion clears his throat, and, abashed, the Empress sinks back down into her cushions as Toshiken continues.

"It is our hope that you will enjoy the entertainments that have been arranged for all our guests, and take full advantage of this season of peace to assist one another in preparing for the future." With another small bow, Toshiken evidently cuts his prepared speech short to avoid any further royal interruptions, and gestures for the musicians in alcoves along the walls to begin playing. With no further ceremony, the Imperial Winter Court has begun.

The court will erupt into scores of individual conversations, and the high-ranking samurai will begin to circulate through the crowd. The exceptions are the Emerald Champion, who elects to remain with the miharu at the central dais, and Tsudao herself, who remains on display atop the throne. (This is a recurring theme for the child Empress; she may be loved by her people, but she has few people who are close to her. As much an icon as a ruler, particularly due to her youth, she spends much of her time alone, even when in the midst of a crowd.)

It is worth pointing out to the players that four of the highest-ranking samurai present, provincial daimyo Hiruma Buntaro, Matsu Takako, Tsuruchi Shizu, and Isawa Toichi are among those standing behind Otomo Dsichi on the left-hand dais. Asahina Yama and Moto Gemmei are the only two daimyo on the more sparsely-

populated right-hand dais, while Kitsuki Baishon and Soshi Josuke are evidently mingling with the crowd. The locations of the daimyo indicate which side of the conflict they are most currently listening to, as they have invitations to accompany both the Emerald Champion and the Regent's representative on their respective platforms; those not appearing on either platform do not have a current bias. This fact will come up in each of the main court scenes through the winter, and it is expected that as the PCs and other courtiers follow through on their agendas, where each daimyo is standing will shift accordingly.

The first evening's entertainment consists of music and feasting, while the courtiers are encouraged to meet and mingle with each other now that court has "officially" opened. The political machinations that have already begun start to be pursued in earnest. In that vein, the PCs, who were invited at the express wish of the Emerald Champion, will find themselves approached by the leaders of both of the main political factions: Otomo Dsichi, the representative of the Imperial Regent, and Doji Oharu, an influential Emerald Magistrate in service to the Emerald Champion.

Both courtiers will greet the PCs politely, individually or in groups as the PCs happen to be gathered, and will invite them to join them for tea later that evening. The meetings, of course, are mutually exclusive, and the courtiers will have noticed the PCs get approached by the other; in case there is any confusion, the PCs may roll **Courtier / Intelligence** at a TN of 15 to realize that they are, indeed, being asked to pick a side between the two powerful men.

If, for whatever reason, there are PCs who do not wish to get involved, they are welcome to make that choice – it will make the season somewhat less stressful, but ultimately less rewarding, for them. PCs who wish to play both sides against each other will find it extremely difficult, as both men are very experienced and highly connected courtiers. Those seeking to engage in a bidding war will find that Dsichi not only has deeper "pockets" in that the Imperial Regent commands rather more resources than the Emerald Champion has seen fit to entrust to Oharu, but that Oharu will not actually bother to engage in any sort of bidding. Those interested only in maximizing their personal gain will be accepted by Dsichi, but Oharu will only offer to ease their way into gaining a position in the Empress' Court. Should that not be enough, he will spend his energy in dealing with other, less demanding potential pawns.

Needless to say, PCs with a pre-existing strong tie to either the Regent (for example, members of the Owls) or to Oharu (those who owe him an Obligation) should

be expected to attend upon their respective leash-holders. This will not stop the opposite number from approaching them, but the PCs should be aware that choosing to side against their superior will result in negative consequences (loss of Honor, Glory and Status at the start, and possibly escalating from there).

The following scenes should be run fairly quickly; establishing the characters involved (both their similarities and differences) is important, but if time is an issue, it may be useful to give the PCs an overview and abstract most of the interactions. It is important to note that the PCs are not expected to utilize their own abilities or Favors to meet the needs of the daimyo, but merely to inform the experience courtier of what they learn. The requirements of most of the daimyo are well outside the scope of what PCs can accomplish on their own, but the courtiers will be more effective with others sharing the talk of learning how to apply their influence and resources.

Meeting with Dsichi

Otomo Dsichi is an old courtier with a lifetime's experience manipulating the court. He is in his early sixties, and has entered semi-retirement as a "political advisor" multiple times, only to return to more active duties. Once handsome, age has left him wrinkled and white-haired, though he dresses impeccably and has a personal presence sufficient to bely his physical frailty. Dsichi has chosen to support the Imperial Regent as a matter of practicality as much as tradition – he has very little emotional investment in the conflict, which gives him an intimidating dispassion and usually prevents him from being surprised by an unforeseen gambit on the part of his opposition.

Dsichi will greet the PCs with pleasant courtesy, taking the time to go through the proper motions. He engages in small talk easily, asking them about their travels and likely pressing them for details of some of their more notable deeds (at least those appropriate for polite discussion). Eventually, he will get to the point:

"I am so very pleased to share the company of such sagacious samurai. It is warming to this old heart to know that there are still those who understand the necessities that face the realm and are willing to work toward a greater, unified future for the Empire. I would ask you to assist me with this crucial task. For the most part, all I require is information. Simply inform me what the key matters are that concern those daimyo who are present, and it will enable me to smooth over any problems that they are currently facing. In the interests of the Empire as a whole, of course."

Dsichi will barely acknowledge Oharu's efforts, or those of PCs operating on Oharu's behalf, but will indicate if asked that he expects to be quite busy "ensuring the stability of the realm", leaving him unable to see to all of the matters that require attention on his own.

Meeting with Oharu

Doji Oharu sees himself as a good samurai; or, at least, as good a samurai as he can be given his unfortunate addition to opium to combat the pain of his crippled leg and the various tasks he has undertaken of necessity to keep himself a valuable servant. Objectively, he is moderately corrupt, but he is loyal in his fashion to the Emerald Champion (who has, after all, enabled him to extend his network of contacts and allies through the course of his service). Unfortunately, Oharu's personal resources are stretched thin and the Emerald Champion's have been devoted to other tasks (and, of course, Toshiken does not trust Oharu *that* much). Oharu is in his mid-forties, somewhat past his physical prime, and somewhat dissipated from a life of indulgence. For all that, he is handsome and personable, though currently rather stressed and worried.

"My friends... as I have said countless times before, the Empire is in need of your services. I am making every effort to assist Toshiken-sama with the political maneuvers facing the court, but our distinguished opposition simply has far more resources at his command than I. I will do what I can to counter his efforts, but if you could assist me in learning the most efficient ways to put my resources to use, it would be greatly appreciated."

Personal Gain

The Winter Court is a good place for the PCs to attempt to increase their own personal agendas by seeking a place in the Empress' Court. This may be done in and amongst the rest of the module without effecting their ability to take any actions they choose. There are a few requirements:

- The PC must spend Favors and Influence from their Allies; each Favor is worth one point of Status, no matter its source, and each Ally provides points of Status equal to their Influence by reducing their Devotion by one. Courtier characters may reduce the total cost by 5. (For example, a PC wishing a Social Position in the Empress' court worth Status 2.0 would have to

spend 20 Favors/Influence, or 15 if they were a member of a Courtier School.)

- The maximum Status permitted through this is 3.5.
- The PC must have five Ranks in at least one Skill, to serve as the explanation for the type of position they are gaining. (For example, a PC with Courtier 5 could be a minor political advisor, or a bushi with Kenjutsu 5 could be a guard for their Clan's delegation to the court.)
- The PC gains a Minor Obligation to the Clan (other than their own) that provides the most Favors or Influence. If there are multiple Clans providing the same amount, then the PC gains multiple Obligations. (The Imperial Families qualify as a "Clan" in this instance.)
- Finally, having such a position is likely to sit poorly with those samurai who support the Imperial Regent. It does not qualify as a Sworn Enemy, but it is definitely a declaration of a political nature.

Note that this Position does NOT replace the PCs' existing Status, and must be bought from zero. However, it does not replace any existing Social Positions the PC has.

This represents an opportunity for those players who are uncomfortable with player submissions to both gain Status and to make use of the Favors and Allies they have accumulated through the campaign. It is worth noting that these mechanics are far more expensive in terms of Favors spent, as a trade-off for their accessibility. Additionally, membership in the Empress' Court is moderately impressive, but is not unique and the position is relatively generic by necessity. Those players interested in more personalized advancement should contact the Campaign Admin and make the attempt through player submissions.

Part Two: Seeking Standing

A wide variety of courtly games and entertainments will be taking place over the long winter months. Even if only one event was scheduled every day, there would be over a hundred different entertainments to describe – certainly beyond the scope of this module. However, there are a few specific events that will take place each month, so the module has been broken down into each of the four winter months.

Due to the high formality associated with the venue and their demanding schedules, the PCs are limited to how

many times they may attempt to meet with or learn about the daimyo. There are five events, and the PCs may make only attempt to gather information **or** gain access to a daimyo **once** before each event (allowing each PC five attempts to learn something about or meet with a daimyo over the course of the module). Doing so allows them to help the courtiers expand their patron's Influence with the daimyo in question.

PCs who learn something valuable about a daimyo's desires or needs may inform Oharu to increase that daimyo's "Champion Influence" by 1. PCs who share their information with Dsichi increase that daimyo's "Regent Influence" by 3. (Dsichi is more experienced, and has access to far more resources than the Emerald Champion has entrusted to Oharu.) Actually speaking with a daimyo is far more difficult, but can yield greater results – a PC who succeeds in both speaking with and then the associated roll for one of the "Leverage" tactics gains an additional point of Influence for their side. (Making 2 points for the Champion or 4 points for the Regent.) At most tables, supporters of the Regent will be outnumbered, but their actions will carry much more weight because Dsichi has significantly more wherewithal to put behind their efforts.

If there are no opposing PCs, the GM should increase the tension by applying points for the side opposing the PCs. This can be done either at random (though Buntaro or Takako are less likely to be courted) or deliberately in order to force the PCs to keep working. In general, points for Oharu should be fewer than Dsichi's. Despite the disparity in their resources, Oharu and Dsichi are evenly-enough matched to keep them from applying their own points to the contest, but the GM should feel free to keep the tension up to avoid complacency.

The First Event: Starviewing Party (Month of Hida)

Studying the night sky to interpret signs of the will of the Heavens is common-place, and attempting to discern the signs that can be seen in the patterns of the stars is a frequent pastime among samurai. Before the bitter cold of winter sets in, the court will convene for a short trip to a clear hilltop to meditate upon the stars while studious shugenja attempt to divine the path of the future.

Results from the first round of information or interview rolls should be visible in this scene; the daimyo will attend the party in the immediate company of the courtier with the greatest amount of Influence over them.

The expedition is chilly, but not dangerously cold (though PCs from the southern portions of the Empire, especially the Mantis isles, may be extremely uncomfortable). Little of note happens at the party itself initially; the PCs may wish to interact with various NPCs, but the daimyo should be inaccessible as they are always swamped when they appear in any public forum. Servants will circulate with warm sake and tea, and a few musicians will accompany the group to provide soothing accompaniment. Any PC paying attention to the stars, however, may roll **Divination (Astrology) / Intelligence** (TN 25) to spot an unexpected comet. In general, comets are seen as harbingers of change – an unsettling prospect for Rokugani at best. This particular comet, traveling in a direction against the course of the Moon, indicates a challenge from outside the Empire to present itself in the year to come. Those not paying attention to the stars, or who fail the above roll, will hear the surprised reactions among the astrologers (giving them a chance to roll if they had not already done so), but the shugenja will only describe the omen as "unsettling."

The Second Event: Festival of the Moon's Wrath (Month of Togashi)

The Empire has several minor festivals that are celebrated during the winter months. The Festival of the Moon's Wrath is a placatory celebration of the Moon. Though since the Lady Hitomi replaced Onnatangu, most of the Empire has a somewhat more positive opinion of the Moon, many still prefer to offer her whatever respect they gave her predecessor. The Festival of the Moon's Wrath occurs over two days – from the sunset on the seventh day of the month to sunrise on the ninth day. During that time, it is considered ill fortune to speak at all; Rokugan is ideally covered in silence as a tribute to the Moon.

In general, samurai spend the Festival surrounded by close friends or family, but as the Imperial Winter Court is the most public event of the year, the pious Tonbo hosts have offered a variety of silent entertainments, and a particularly enterprising artisan has polished slats of dark cherry wood for sale, with chalk. Many of the courtiers have taken advantage of the opportunity to demonstrate their skill at writing to continue communicating without speaking – PCs who wish to do the same may purchase a kit for 1 koku. Expressing simple concepts requires a **Calligraphy / Reflexes** roll at a TN of 15; more complex sentences or ideas increase the TN.

The results of the second round of rolls will be visible here; each daimyo will attend the court at the dais of the courtier with the most Influence with them.

There is a calligraphy contest on the first night; PCs who wish to enter may roll **Calligraphy / Agility**; success at a TN of 25 earns them a point of Glory, but they will not prove victorious over Isawa Katsue unless they roll more than a 50. Doing so wins them three points of Glory and a prize of a particularly fine writing desk carved with symbols of the Fortunes.

The second night will begin with a silent game where the court are encouraged to match the titles of a dozen relatively obscure *Yamato-e* paintings (colorful, narrative works of a classical nature) with their works. The appropriate roll would be **Artisan: Painting / Intelligence**, but before the game can be completed, the court will be shocked by the sound of a low scream from the gardens. PCs who wish to investigate will see a servant huddled just outside the door, covering his mouth and hiding away from a violent tableau:

Akodo Tetsuhiro, a member of the Lion Clan's guard, stands over a moaning form. Blood drips from his lacerated knuckles, and red has splashed across the snow, glistening with the reflection of the golden aura that marks him as a returned spirit. The figure on the ground scrambles fitfully away from the Lion, and the battered face is barely recognizable as Tonbo Naoki, one of the local shugenja.

How the PCs choose to react is up to them, however, any character that speaks during the Festival of the Moon's Wrath gains "Lady Moon's Disfavor", which acts as a one-use version of Unluck. (It should be marked on the PC's report sheet as it lasts until it is used, even into future modules.) Any character who engages in violence during the Festival gains "Wrath of the Moon" instead, which functions as the "Lingering Misfortune" Bad Fortune Disadvantage – when triggered, the PC automatically fails a roll, but once used, it is gone. (Again, this should be marked on the character's sheet.)

Though asking questions to learn what happened will prove difficult without incurring the above penalty, the PCs may use various means of non-verbal communication to attempt to understand the happenings. The Lion, already having a hard time controlling his temper due to the festival and his Curse, snapped and savagely beat the shugenja when the hapless Tonbo overheard him muttering to himself and offered a gentle correction. If queried no the matter somehow, Tetsuhiro will claim that the Tonbo insulted

him – a justifiable complaint, though not acceptably resolved in the manner he did.

This can be resolved in a variety of ways; the Dragonfly guards are quite unsure how to handle the situation. Getting Tetsuhiro to depart requires a **Courtier (Manipulation)** or **Etiquette (Courtesy) / Awareness** roll (TN 50, or 30 if the PC is willing to speak) will cause him to shove through the crowd rudely, but relatively peacefully. A PC may wish to challenge him to a duel – this should gain any but the most honorable characters some Honor, and need to be resolved appropriately. Initiating further violence will subject the PC to the Wrath of the Moon, though the Dragonfly guards will step in after two Rounds to help overwhelm the Lion (ending the combat). Tetsuhiro's Brash Disadvantage ought to be given consideration when determining his reactions, though allowing a PC to make a Social Skill Roll in lieu of putting the NPC's reaction up to dice that the PCs have no control over is to be preferred.

Ultimately, it is up to the PCs to determine how they wish to react. If no PC wishes to get involved, the guards will hesitantly escort Tetsuhiro from the garden; he sullenly goes along without fighting. In any event, he will spend the rest of Winter Court confined to his room by the order of Matsu Takako.

Akodo Tetsuhiro

Air 3	Earth 3	Fire 3	Water 4	Void 4
Reflexes 4		Agility 4		
Honor 5.5		Status 2.0		Glory 3.3

Initiative: 7k4

Attack: 9k4 (katana, Simple) or 8k4 (unarmed, Simple)

Armor TN: 25

Damage: 8k2+5 (katana) or 5k1+5 (unarmed)

Wounds: 15 (+0), 21 (+0), 27 (+2), 33 (+7), 39 (+12), 45 (+17), 51 (Down, +37), 57 (Dead)

School/Rank: Matsu Bushi 3

Techniques: *The Lion's Roar:* Adds Honor Rank to all damage rolls. May move an additional 5 feet per Turn in addition to the bonus received from Full Attack Stance. (Does not exceed normal maximum move per Turn.)

Matsu's Fury: When taking Full Attack Stance, choose an opponent within 30'. If you successfully hit him this Turn, the target is frozen with fear and cannot take Move Actions to move from current position. During the Reactions Stage, an affected opponent may attempt a Willpower roll against a TN equal to the amount of damage dealt from your latest attack to negate the effects of this Technique (the opponent does not suffer Wound Penalties for this roll). If he fails, the effects of this Technique end during the next Reactions Stage (the

second after he was struck). Enemies who are immune to Fear cannot be affected by this Technique.

The Lion's Charge: May make melee attacks as a Simple Action.

Skills: Athletics 2, Battle 4, Defense 2, Iaijutsu 4, Jiujutsu 4, Kenjutsu (Katana) 5, Kyujutsu 2, Lore: History 3 **Mastery Abilities:** Iaijutsu 4 (may ready a katana as a Free Action); Jiujutsu 4 (+1k0 unarmed damage); Kenjutsu 5 (+1k0 sword damage, may ready any sword as a Free Action)

Advantages/Disadvantages: Strength of the Earth / Brash, Curse of Toshigoku, Wrath of the Moon

The Third Event: Kemari Tournament (Month of Fu Leng)

The third event is a kemari tournament, sponsored by the Seppun Miharū for the entertainment of the child Empress. Everyone is encouraged to participate; the PCs roll **Games: Kemari / Agility** (the Athletics Skill may be substituted, but only adds unkept dice; 10s will not explode, as the roll is still considered Unskilled). Because kemari is played in full court garb, it counts as a Social Roll for any Disadvantages that may apply; any PC who rolls less than 25 must make an **Etiquette / Reflexes** roll (TN 20) to avoid losing a point of Glory. If any PC fails the second roll by more than 10 (taking another point of Glory loss if they fail it by more than 15), they will be awarded a special prize by Tsudao, who feels bad that they “looked like they weren’t having fun even though they tried their hardest”; they receive a small fan marked with the kanji for “Courage”, and gain a point of Honor for having their attempt recognized by the Empress. (The lowest-rolling PC, if more than one find themselves in this position.)

PCs who succeed at the TN of 25 do not lose any Glory, but do not gain any unless they roll 30 or higher (which will earn them a point). If they roll more than a 45, they manage to best the most accomplished player in the court (Mirumoto Tora), gaining three points of Glory, a prize of a high-quality courtier’s garb (including the tall hat and fully appropriate for both kemari or making a fashionable statement in court), and the pleasure of making the child Empress clap her hands in delighted joy.

Once again, the daimyo will be assembled according to the Influence that has been gathered for them so far, watching the tournament in the company of the courtier for their side.

Afterwards, whether he won or not, Mirumoto Tora will invite any participants to join him at a sake house in

town (the Sleepy Cat) to celebrate. He is gracious and friendly, especially to PCs who are returned spirits or who have the “Mark of the Cat” (from SoB21: A Time for Vengeance or SoB33: The Killing Grounds), offering to pay.

Tora is fascinated by characters with experience with other Spirit Realms – returned spirits, those with unusual heritages, or those who have faced spirits. He recognizes the Mark of the Cat most readily for the latter group based off his own bakeneko heritage, and will encourage the PCs to share tales of their deeds. He is most interested in the o-toyo they faced, but will be more than slightly evasive in his own explanations. Tora has a Taboo that forbids him from revealing his own true nature, so any explanation the PCs manage to worm out of him will be at best partially incomplete, but he has no reason to avoid sharing his theories and understanding of the Spirit Realms.

In particular, he will explain the situation the previous month, where Tetsuhiro lost control of himself, as being an example of the ways that people are affected by the Spirit Realms they pass through. *“Even the intervention of a powerful nemuranai like Oblivion’s Gate was not sufficient to keep them from retaining some effects from their time there. I expect that, given enough time, we will see more such events; the human mind has only so many ways to adjust to traveling through the Realms.”*

Getting answers out of Tora can be resolved in a number of ways: convincing him or tricking him to speak of his abilities requires a **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** roll (TN 25); engaging in a drinking game is a Contested Earth Roll (against his Earth 3); or, an attractive female PC can choose to sleep with him – no roll required, given that he will be flirting in a relatively acceptable fashion with any attractive women. (He is handsome and charming in a somewhat outrageous fashion, though does not press if turned down.)

In any event, any PC that treats Tora well and answers his questions can take him as an Ally (with 1 Devotion and 1 Influence).

The Fourth Event: Emerald Champion’s Challenge (Month of Ryoshun)

One of the last events before the New Year’s Festival will be a multi-part tournament sponsored by the Emerald Champion. PCs who wish to compete will be put into three-man teams; the players are welcome to form their own teams, though at least two Clans must

be represented on each team as part of the point of the event is to demonstrate how the Clans can effectively work together. (If the table makeup does not allow all of the PCs to be on the same team, the rolls for a few eligible NPCs have been included in Appendix #2; the GM should select a few characters at random to form their own teams or to join the PCs.)

Each member of the team must make the appropriate roll for each section of the contest, and the team adds their totals together. The total TN for victory in each of the events is listed below, along with the roll and a basic description of the section. Techniques or Emphases apply only at the GM's discretion, as each individual roll is an abstraction of an entire contest. Void may be spent as normal, though the entire event takes place on the same day.

- Section One: Garden Race. A section of the garden has been cleared for a foot-race with various obstacles. **Athletics / Strength** (TN 90)
- Section Two: Kenjutsu Tournament. A round-robin style (where each contestant faces every other) with shinai, judged by the Champion. **Kenjutsu / Agility** (TN 115)
- Section Three: Iaijutsu Tournament. A single elimination tournament, where the PCs cut a mon from their opponent's sleeve. **Iaijutsu / Void** (TN 100)
- Section Four: Poetry Presentation. The PCs must both write and read aloud an original poem. **Artisan: Poetry / Awareness** (TN 70)
- Section Five: Cha-no-yu. Though it is a tea ceremony, the true test of this contest is to make it through a tea ceremony after going through all of the previous event without disgracing oneself due to exhaustion or irritation. **Etiquette / Willpower** (TN 90)

The PCs gain one point of Glory for each event they win, plus an additional point for taking part. If a PC team wins three contests, they are victorious. If a PC team or teams win two contests, they are tied (with each other or with an NPC team), and share in the prize: a meal with Kakita Toshiken in their honor, and tea sets for each of them painted with the mon of the Emerald Champion and a blazing sun to represent the Empress.

Though a great honor, and a pleasant meal, little of consequence happens at the dinner itself. The victors will be joined with those daimyo who are currently supporting the Champion; those supporting the Regent watched the tournament in Dsichi's company, as should be expected.

Following the meal, there will be one last opportunity for the PCs to gather information or meet with the daimyo before the New Year's Celebration and the closing of court.

Part Three: The New Year Begins

Oshogatsu, the New Year's Day celebration, is observed with grand festivities and a riotous display of fireworks provided by the Dragon Clan. The entire court assembles in the main hall for one last enormous feast and party; the courtiers take one final opportunity to attempt to outdo one another in games and artistry, and everyone is wearing clothing meant to display them at their best. Amid swirling music and flowing silks, the Empress takes the central dais for the last time of the season. Servants circulate with refreshments, and relaxed, festival air grips the crowd.

The Emerald Champion will remain on the platform to the right of the Empress, sternly looking down on the festivities, while Otomo Dsichi regards the gathering with a lofty, benevolent attitude from the dais to Tsudao's left. The daimyo that have been successfully courted by the efforts of the PCs and the preeminent courtiers will arrange themselves appropriately, and each side will react with a certain smug satisfaction or tense displeasure, depending on how many daimyo they were able to sway to their side.

Finally, the child Empress will exit the court, entering into her *shihohai*, a ritual of seclusion where she prays for the fortunes of the Empire in the coming year and makes offerings to the Heavens on behalf of all her subjects. Tsudao is accompanied in this by Kakita Toshiken and those daimyo who chose to publicly support him

With that, the Imperial Winter Court closes. The Empire may face another challenge in the year ahead, but all of the samurai of Rokugan stand ready to defend their realm and Empress.

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

Completing the adventure:	1XP
Good roleplaying:	+1XP
Participating in at least one court event:	+1XP
Successfully Helping One of the Courtiers	
Gain Influence With at Least One	
Daimyo:	+1XP
Total Possible Experience:	4XP

Glory

As long as they took part in any court events, the PCs will gain a point of Glory. Otherwise, they lose a point of Glory.

A PC who failed an Etiquette roll by more than 15 at any point in the adventure loses one point of Glory each time.

Other Awards/Penalties

Any PC who loses 5 or more points of Glory through the course of the module gains one extra point of experience that may only be spent on the Etiquette Skill.

PCs who make a deliberate attempt to sabotage one side or the other by offering their assistance under false pretenses will lose a full Rank of Glory as the courtier involved spreads word of their duplicity through the Empire, and gain either Kakita Toshiken or Hantei Okucheo as a Sworn Enemy (worth 8 points). Any Honor loss for such deception should be adjudicated based on the character's base Honor Rank, but any other than the most dishonorable characters should lose some Honor.

Any PC who spent enough Favors or Influence from their Allies gains a "Social Position: Member of the Empress' Court" cert.

If more than four of the daimyo lend their support to the Regent, any PC who assisted Otomo Dsichi gains a "Social Position: Member of the Regent's Court" cert. Dsichi will also provide this position to any PC that required bribery to assist him. Alternately, in this instance, any character who is a member of the Owls has the Status of that Position increased by 1 point for each daimyo over four that declares for the Regent (five daimyo means +0.1 Status, all eight would mean +0.4).

PCs may gain several Allies over the course of this module (though they should not use them to gain a position as a member of the court). Those helping Oharu gain him as an Ally (1 Devotion, 2 Influence) or increase his Influence by one IF they helped ensure that at least one of the daimyo declared for the Emerald Champion. Those helping Otomo Dsichi gain him as an Ally (1 Devotion, 3 Influence) IF they did the same for him.

Mod Reporting Sheets

Any prizes won during the court events should be recorded.

Any PC who spoke during the Festival of the Moon's Wrath gain "Lady Moon's Disfavor." Those who initiate violence gain "Wrath of the Moon."

GM Reporting

Did any PCs earn a place in the Empress' Court? Who?

Were any PCs given a place in the Regent's Court? Who?

Please list the final Influence tallies for each daimyo, for both side:

Hiruma Buntaro
Asahina Yama
Kitsuki Baishon
Matsu Takako
Tsuruchi Shizu
Isawa Toichi
Soshi Josuke
Moto Gemmei

GM must report this information BEFORE 7/29/2013, for it to have storyline effect

Appendix #1: NPCs

Doji Oharu

Air 4 Earth 3 Fire 4 Water 2 Void 5
 Awareness Willpower
 6 4
 Honor 3.2 (6.2) Status 4.5 Glory

School/Rank: Kakita Bushi 1/Doji Courtier 5

Techniques: *The Way of the Crane:* Add twice Iaijutsu Skill Rank to all Initiative rolls. +1k1+1 to attack and Focus rolls while in the Center Stance and the Combat Round following.

The Soul of Honor: by conversing with another person for a few minutes, can make a Contested Roll of Courtier (Manipulation)/Awareness against the target's Etiquette (Courtesy)/Awareness to learn whether they are in need of any favors or assistance.

Speaking In Silence: Cadence: can roll Courtier / Intelligence at TN 15 to communicate simple ideas with any other Crane who is trained in the Doji Courtier School or who has at least 5 Ranks in the Courtier Skill. More complex ideas can be conveyed with Raises.

The Perfect Gift: Any time in court or in an urban area, can roll Courtier / Awareness at TN 20 to come up with a suitable gift or a helpful political favor for someone else. By calling Raises on this roll, can acquire a rarer or more potent gift or favor. If such a gift or favor is accepted, may immediately take that person as an Ally with 1-point Devotion, without XP cost

Voice of Honor: In any debate or argument, may make a Contested Roll of Courtier (Manipulation)/Awareness against the target's Etiquette (Courtesy)/Awareness to forced them to concede that their position conflicts with Honor, and if they persists in this position they will commit a breach of etiquette. (It is the GM's discretion, based on the circumstances, as to whether it is a minor or major breach.)

The Gift of the Lady: By conversing with someone for a few minutes, may make a Contested Roll of Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness against the target's Etiquette (Courtesy) / Willpower to shift the target's emotions in a favorable direction.. If the target is an Ally, gain a bonus of +5k0 to the total of this roll.

Skills: Artisan: Origami 3, Calligraphy 3, Courtier (Gossip, Manipulation) 6, Defense 4, Etiquette (Courtesy) 6, Games: Go 2, Horsemanship 1, Iaijutsu (Focus) 5, Investigation 3, Kenjutsu 5, Kyujutsu 1, Lore: Heraldry 4, Lore: Law 2, Medicine 2, Perform: Oratory 4, Sincerity 7, Tea Ceremony 3, Temptation 5.

Mastery Abilities: +1k0 to Contested Rolls using Courtier or Etiquette. +6 Insight. +5 to total of all Contested Rolls using Sincerity or Temptation. Ready sword as a Free Action. +1k0 to damage rolls with swords. Free Raise to Focus Rolls.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Allies (Many), Benten's Blessing, Crafty, Perceived Honor (3), Social Position (Emerald Magistrate), Strength of the Earth, Voice / Compulsion: Opium (I), Lame

Otomo Dsichi

Air 3 Earth 2 Fire 3 Water 2 Void 4
 Awareness Willpower Intelligence Perception
 6 4 5 4
 Honor 6.2 Status 7.0 Glory 5.3

School/Rank: Otomo Courtier 5

Techniques: *The Voice of Heaven:* does not lose Honor for using Intimidation (Control); may make a Contested Roll of Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness vs Etiquette (Courtesy) / Awareness when in conversation with a member of a Clan to provoke disagreement between them and a member of another Clan

Destiny Has No Secrets: (if contacts available) may spend Void to make a Courtier / Awareness roll at TN 25 to learn one piece of critically useful information (GM's discretion)

My Master's Voice: against Honor Rank 1.0+ samurai, may take Complex Action to make Contested Intimidation (Control) / Willpower vs target's Etiquette (Courtesy) / Willpower (target gets Free Raise if they sincerely believe they are acting honorably); success means target cannot take actions that would directly attack, obstruct, or threaten courtier or allies

The Emperor's Protection: any time in debate, may spend Void to make Contested Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness vs Etiquette (Courtesy) / Awareness to force them to concede or lose 5 points of Honor

The Virtues of Command: when making Contested Social Roll against someone who reveres Imperial authority, gains +5k0 to the roll

Skills: Artisan: Painting 3, Calligraphy 4, Courtier (Gossip, Manipulation) 7, Defense 3, Etiquette (Bureaucracy, Courtesy) 8, Games: Go 4, Horsemanship 2, Intimidation (Control) 6, Investigation (Interrogation) 4, Jiujutsu 2, Kenjutsu 2, Lore: Bushido 4, Lore: History 3, Lore: Heraldry 5, Lore: Meditation 3, Perform: Oratory 5, Sincerity (Deceit, Honesty) 6, War Fans 5

Advantages/Disadvantages: Balance, Luck I, Voice / Bad Health, Obligation (Hantei Okucheo)

Seppun Biransei

Air 3 Earth 4 Fire 3 Water 4 Void 5
 Reflexes 5 Agility 5 Strength 5
 Honor 8.3 Status 4.0 Glory 5.0

Initiative: 10k5+5

Attack: 10k6 (katana, Simple)

Armor TN: 30 (35 light armor)

Damage: 9k2 (katana)

Reduction: 3 (light armor)

Wounds: 20 (+0), 28 (+3), 36 (+5), 44 (+10), 52 (+15), 60 (+20), 68 (Down, +40), 76 (Dead)

School/Rank: Seppun Guardsman 5

Techniques: *Never in Darkness:* +5k0 to resist Social Skill Roll to tempt away from duty; +1k1 to Investigation to detect ambush or surprise attack

The Clouds Part: may spend a Void Point to add +8 to total of attack and damage rolls until next Turn

Sun's Light Reveals: may spend a Void Point as a Free Action to roll Investigation (Notice) / Perception at TN 25 to see through all illusions or disguises, whether magical or mundane. If in presence of Emperor, his immediate family, or high-ranking Imperial officer, do not need to spend the Void

Speed of Heaven: make attacks as a Simple Action when using weapons with the Samurai keyword

Heaven Never Falls: any time within 20' of charge, may spend a Void Point to take damage instead of them; if still standing, may immediately take a Simple Action. May be used even if Blinded, Prone, Stunned, Dazed, Entangled, or at Down Wound Rank (but not Grappled or Out)

Skills: Athletics 3, Battle 2, Defense 5, Etiquette 1, Horsemanship 3, Hunting 2, Iaijutsu (Focus) 7, Intimidation 5, Investigation (Notice) 4, Jiu-jutsu 4, Kenjutsu (Katana, No-dachi) 8, Kyujutsu 5, Polearms 5

Mastery Abilities: move across Difficult Terrain as though it were Moderate, no penalty from Moderate Terrain; may keep previous Full Defense Roll, add +3 to Armor TN while in Full Defense or Defense Stance; may Full Attack while mounted; Free Raise to Focus Roll while in a duel, gains +2k2 to Focus if win the Assessment roll; +1k0 unarmed damage; +1k0 damage with sword, may ready swords as a Free Action, 9s explode on damage with sword; ready bow as a Simple Action, increase range of bows by 50%; +5 bonus to initiative on first round when using a Polearm, damage against mounted or larger opponents with polearm increased by +1k0

Advantages/Disadvantages: Irreproachable, Large, Luck I, Paragon of Duty, Quick / Failure of Courtesy, Obtuse

Appendix #2: Other NPCs

Though they do not need full stats, the following NPCs will also be present at the court and are roughly described here simply to give the GM ideas for characters to help flesh out the crowd.

Toritaka Midori is a quiet, unassuming Crab bushi from the Toritaka family. She is more a scout than a spirit hunter, however, her family's history as a Minor Clan lends her a certain empathy with the Dragonfly hosts. (Status 1.5, Glory 2.8, Honor 4.1; Hiruma Scout 2; Athletics/Strength 7k3, Kenjutsu/Agility 5k3, Iaijutsu/Void 4k3, Poetry/Awareness 3k2, Etiquette/Willpower 5k4)

Doji Reju, a famous and skilled Crane duelist. He was tattooed by then-Dragon Champion Hitomi and bore her name for a time, but after the Battle of Oblivion's Gate and her ascension to become the Moon, he rejoined the Crane and reclaimed his previous name. After his maiming, he will be recruited by the Emerald Champion to serve as a sensei of the Ruby Dojo. (Status 3.0, Glory 6.3, Honor 5.7, Kakita Duelist 2/Kikage Zumi 2; Athletics/Strength 7k3, Kenjutsu/Agility 8k4-10, Iaijutsu/Void 9k4, Poetry/Awareness 4k3, Etiquette/Willpower 7k4)

Mirumoto Tora is a handsome, graceful, somewhat arrogant Dragon samurai frequently given assignments to court functions due to his talent with kemari. He is also a bakeneko (a cat spirit shapeshifter originally from Sakkaku), and is responsible for a series of minor pranks that plague the court. He is friendly, particularly with those that have experience with the other Spirit Realms. (Status 2.0, Glory 4.2, Honor 3.8, Mirumoto Bushi 1; Athletics/Strength 8k3, Kenjutsu/Agility 7k5, Iaijutsu/Void 5k3, Poetry/Awareness 5k4, Etiquette/Willpower 4k2)

Akodo Tetsuhiro, a returned spirit from Toshigoku, is present as one of the Lion guards. His first life was before the Dragonfly Clan was created, so it was thought that he was unlikely to cause an issue. Unfortunately, his temper has been strained beyond the snapping point.

Moshi Yukari is one of several members of her family that have been expressly ordered to travel among the other families of the Mantis Clan. She has sailed with the Yoritomo and traveled through the woods with the Tsuruchi, and her experiences have left her somewhat more martial than is common in her family. (Status 2.9, Glory 4.1, Honor 4.0, Moshi Shugenja 3; Athletics/Strength 5k3, Kenjutsu/Agility 5k3, Iaijutsu/Void 5k3, Poetry/Awareness 6k4, Etiquette/Willpower 6k3)

Isawa Katsue is a pious fire shugenja with a family connection to the Tonbo – one of her ancestors was Isawa Moroko's sister (one of the founders of the Clan) and her family has maintained the relationship through the centuries. Katsue is contemplative and intelligent, emphasizing the illuminating nature of fire rather than its destructive side. (Status 1.7, Glory 3.6, Honor 5.3, Isawa Shugenja (Fire) 2; Athletics/Strength 3k2, Kenjutsu/Agility 6k5, Iaijutsu/Void 5k4, Poetry/Awareness 5k3, Etiquette/Willpower 6k3)

Bayushi Shichiro is an unobtrusive bushi that the PCs may or may not remember encountering during "New Beginnings" as he was one of the contestants in the Topaz Championship. He has gone on to quietly prove his competence among the Clan, and is often given assignments where his ability to avoid notice is most helpful. (Status 2.0, Glory 1.5, Honor 3.7; Bayushi Bushi 3; Athletics/Strength 6k3, Kenjutsu/Agility 7k4, Iaijutsu/Void 5k3, Poetry/Awareness 6k3, Etiquette/Willpower 7k4)

Ide Himeko is a pretty young courtier with a somewhat darker outlook than is common among her Clan. Though not as scheming as most Scorpion, her methods tend to have more similarities to the Bayushi than what her Ide sensei taught her. She is the younger sister of Iuchi Aseo, the provincial daimyo of the Unicorn Shinten Province. (Status 3.4, Glory 2.4, Honor 3.2; Ide Emissary 3, Athletics/Strength 5k2, Kenjutsu/Agility 5k3, Iaijutsu/Void 5k3, Poetry/Awareness 7k4, Etiquette/Willpower 9k4)

Tonbo Manako: Under normal circumstances, the lord of the castle would be important as the host of the court; unfortunately for Manako, his guests are all so concerned with the larger politics of the Empire that he is somewhat left to his own devices through most of the court. Fortunately, Manako is philosophical about the situation and will simply make the best of things. The presence of the Empress is both a blessing and a curse in his mind – it means that the tiny Dragonfly are taking a place of importance in the Empire, but that also will make them a target of the more powerful Clans. Though loathe to ask them for more assistance than they have already provided, Manako quietly hopes that the Dragon will soon end their fighting with the Phoenix so that they may be ready to defend the Tonbo lands once again... Manako is not a particularly powerful shugenja; though pious, he prefers to rely on dealing with people in a courteous and honorable fashion over asking the spirits to handle day-to-day matters for him.

Appendix #3: Daimyo of Contention

Hiruma Buntaro, Kinbou Province

Hiruma Bushi 4, Glory 6.9, Status 6.0, Honor 4.2

Description: Buntaro is a grizzled older bushi who is missing his left arm. His clothes are, quite frankly, not appropriate for the Imperial Winter Court: they are plain and worn, and woefully out of fashion. He seems to have little interest in the games of the court, looking almost hunted as he is surrounded by courtiers.

Position: As a loyal Crab, Buntaro is inclined to pay more heed to his Clan Champion's obvious choice for leadership, and has a great deal more respect for Okucheo's strength than Toshiken's. The Regent begins with 5 points of Influence.

Information: Court gossip (**Courtier [Gossip] / Awareness**):

- TN 15: Buntaro is the daimyo of the Crab Kinbou province, which is the poorest and smallest of all of the recovered Hiruma lands. His appearance bears out the meager resources at his command, much to his detriment in the courts.
- TN 20: He is a veteran of the Battle at Volturum, where he lost his arm. Though this prevents him from fighting in the field, he is an able administrator who understands the needs of his bushi quite well.
- TN 25: Due to his province's lack of resources, he is known to have a great interest in efficiently using what he does have. A Doji courtier who gave him a gift of a bag of nails a few years ago was praised loudly by the daimyo for his insight.
- TN 30: It is not widely-discussed, but Buntaro has agreed to allow three ronin otokodate to establish themselves in villages with the promise of the Hiruma name and full rights as Crab if they serve for five years.

Alternate knowledge (**Lore: Shadowlands / Intelligence**):

- TN 15: Buntaro was a successful scout before the battle where he lost his arm; it is thought that his intelligence and dedication proven during that career is most of why he was chosen to be a daimyo after his maiming.
- TN 25: Buntaro's older brother was a member of the Damned, after becoming Tainted during a routine patrol. He died with honor years ago, but Buntaro has a great deal of respect for that unit and those who continue to fight despite their affliction.

Alternate knowledge (**Commerce / Intelligence**):

- TN 15: The Crab Kinbou province is the smallest and poorest in the Clan, with few natural resources

and the cleansing of the land leaving it with essentially no ability to support agriculture.

- TN 25: Though it has few resources, the province does have a number of skilled and dedicated artisans, who have the ability to produce incredible goods by the efficient use of what they have.

Access: Simple Request – a player may meet with Buntaro by succeeding on an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll, TN 40.

Alternate Access: A PC who wishes to make a gift of a new kimono may roll **Etiquette (Courtesy) / Awareness** at (25) to avoid giving insult, but may be able to convince Buntaro that his appearance in court will be a direct reflection on his province and drastically affect how well he can represent it.

Possible Leverage: Polite conversation – **Etiquette (Conversation) / Awareness**, TN 30.

Leverage 1 – Buntaro wishes to see more support for the Damned or other Tainted units in the Empire – more than just Crab were Tainted due to the March to Volturum, though most samurai try to pretend otherwise.

Leverage 2 – The Crab are not too proud to accept a bit of charity, though doing so in a fashion to avoid insult does require a bit of effort; donations of tools or materials used for construction would be greatly appreciated.

Leverage 3 – Buntaro is very interested in discussing trade through the Empire; he wants to import raw materials and export finished goods, with his province to retain the unused materials as part of their payment.

Relevant Traits: Air 3 Earth 4 Fire 4 Water 3 Void 4; Courtier 1, Etiquette 2, Investigation (Notice) 5, Sincerity 3; Silent, Missing Limb

Asahina Yama, Ashin Province

Doji Magistrate 3, Glory 4.8, Status 6.2, Honor 6.6

Description: A plain-featured man of average height and build, Yama is impeccably dressed but manages not to stand out in the Court. He speaks far less than he listens, drawing out those who wish to speak with him so that he can learn what they truly want.

Position: As a former magistrate and a Crane, Yama has a certain interest in Toshiken's success, but is not willing to sacrifice his province for the Emerald Champion's struggle against the Regent. The Champion begins with 1 point of Influence.

Information: Court gossip (**Courtier [Gossip] / Awareness**):

- TN 15: Yama is not a shugenja, but a former magistrate whose province borders on the Crab lands and has significant problems due to its proximity and chaos of the last few years.
- TN 20: Yama has a reputation as a silent observer; his training as a Doji magistrate taught him the value of listening more than speaking in conversation, and his intensity is known to be intimidating.
- TN 25: He was appointed after the previous daimyo of his province failed in his duties; he immediately cleaned house and removed all of the old advisors from their posts. He is focused on making sure the mistakes of the previous administration are not repeated.
- TN 30: Yama is known to have a great deal of respect for history and tradition, and values education. His vassals are required to be conversant in Rokugani history and he enjoys discussions of the relevance of its lessons to the present day.

Alternate knowledge (**Commerce / Awareness**):

- TN 15: The Ashin province has suffered from the fighting with the Crab; it has lost more villages and holdings to the Crab than any other Crane province. There also remains some damage from the tsunami two years ago, though only in the outlying regions of the province.
- TN 25: There is significant criminal activity in Yama's province – bandits on the roads, pirates on the coast, and gangs in Wall Above the Ocean Village (the major trade hub that serves as his capital). His experience as a magistrate was likely part of why he was given administration of this province.

Alternate knowledge (**Lore: History / Intelligence**):

- TN 15: Yama is devoted to studying the patterns in history, and has publicly avowed to avoid the mistakes others have made in the past.
- TN 25: He is currently very interested in the way the Empire has handled regencies in the past –

there are few instances of it happening, and there is little consensus of precedence among them.

Access: Simple Request – a player may meet with Yama by succeeding on an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll, TN 40.

Alternate Access: Scholarly PCs who make a point of discussing the parallels between the current political situation and those faced by the Empire in history may roll **Lore: History / Intelligence** (30) to gain Yama's attention.

Possible Leverage: Polite conversation – **Etiquette (Conversation) / Awareness**, TN 50.

Leverage 1 – Yama will not state it outright, but he has limited magistrates from his Asahina vassals to assist in dealing with the crime wave in his province. Support from either side would be of great interest to him.

Leverage 2 – Yama would be quite appreciative of anyone who would bring some political pressure on the Crab Clan to help recover some of his lost holdings.

Leverage 3 – Though it was two years ago, some of the more isolated villages of the Ashin province still suffer from damage from the tsunami. Materials and support would be appreciated, particularly since the coastal villages are the ones most firmly in his control (and have not been taken by the Crab).

Relevant Traits: Air 4 Earth 3 Fire 3 Water 3 Void 3; Courtier (Gossip) 4, Etiquette (Conversation) 5, Investigation (Interrogation) 5, Sincerity (Honesty) 4; Bland, Can't Lie

Kitsuki Baishon, Sinjutsu Province

Kitsuki Investigator 4, Glory 3.9, Status 6.0, Honor 6.4

Description: Tall and lean, Baishon has sharp features and keen eyes. He keeps his hair in a proper samurai topknot, and dresses well, if not as opulently as most courtiers. In conversation, he is focused and cuts through most attempts at circumventing the truth.

Position: As the daimyo of one of the less-defensible Dragon provinces, Baishon is very concerned about the possibility of retribution for his Clan's general repudiation of the Imperial Regent. He does not care for what he's heard, but is initially unwilling to antagonize the situation further. Neither the Regent or Champion have any Influence in the beginning.

Information: Court gossip (**Courtier [Gossip] / Awareness**):

- TN 15: Toi Koku is the primary trade-post for the Dragon Clan in the south; they move grain and rice through there to feed the Clan.
- TN 20: Baishon is a former investigator and magistrate for the Dragon Clan; his strengths were in upholding the law and investigating crimes, though he has had some success in translating those skill to administering to his province.
- TN 25: He has recently caused a minor issue with the Crane; a Daidoji samurai visiting his province was accused of a crime and he tried to allow the evidence against them to bring charges with the lord of the accused. Ultimately, his case was denied due to the lack of testimony and the ruling of the Emerald Magistrates taking precedence on inter-Clan crimes.
- TN 30: Buntaro is working on a comprehensive treatise on the law, gathering information from people from all around the Empire on how criminals operate and what can be done to thwart them.

Alternate knowledge (**Investigation / Awareness**):

- TN 15: Baishon does not seem comfortable with the Dragon's alliance with the Lion...
- TN 25: ... however, this is due entirely to his concern over losing the trade his province has always relied on – the new Dragon Clan provinces in the Dragon Heart Plain are a worry to him because they may supplant his province's trade value.

Alternate knowledge (**Lore: Law / Intelligence**):

- TN 15: Like nearly all of his family, he prefers the use of evidence over testimony in criminal investigations.
- TN 25: He has appealed to the Emerald Champion to be allowed to use evidence in his own lands even over samurai from other Clans.

Access: Simple Request – a player may meet with Baishon by succeeding on an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll, TN 45.

Alternate Access: By making a **Lore: Law / Intelligence** roll (TN 30), a PC may demonstrate knowledge of the law that is of interest to Baishon for his treatise.

Possible Leverage: Polite conversation – **Etiquette (Conversation) / Awareness**, TN .

Leverage 1 – As mentioned, Baishon wants to be able to bring evidence against any accused criminals in his province – he lacks support from Imperial authorities, however, though he will speak at length about the relevant precedents that apply to his case.

Leverage 2 – Baishon is loyal to his Clan, but he has concerns over keeping his province's trade with the Lion and other southern Clans. He is anxious that the Clan's good fortune in expanding their territory into the Dragon Heart Plain does not lead to misfortune for his own province – assurances that the Lion will still trade with the closer Sinjutsu province would set his mind at ease.

Leverage 3 – Baishon is always looking for information for his treatise on crime; arranging for his agents to have access to other Clan's legal records, or sending copies of said files to him, would definitely earn his interest.

Relevant Traits: Air 3 Earth 2 (Willpower 4), Fire 3 (Intelligence 4), Water 3 Void 4; Courtier (Gossip) 3, Etiquette (Courtesy) 4, Investigation (Interrogation) 5, Sincerity (Honesty) 4; Clear Thinker, Driven: Justice

Matsu Tokako, Tonfajutsen Province

Matsu Bushi 4, Glory 7.1, Status 6.4, Honor 7.3

Description: Tokako is an extremely dignified older woman, who wears the silver in her hair as a symbol of her dedication to duty. She wears soft gold and brown silks, of admirable quality if not overly ornate design. She prizes sincerity and straightforward speech, and keeps a firm grip on her Matsu temper.

Position: Tokako is a traditionalist who is devoted to Bushido and upholding the glorious history of the Empire. (She is also not altogether fond of Crane in general.) The Regent begins with 3 points of Influence.

Information: Court gossip (**Courtier [Gossip] / Awareness**):

- TN 15: The daimyo of Tonfajutsen is a famed duelist and tactician; her province is a significant trade hub for the Lion, as two of the major highways of the Empire meet in the village of Tonfajutsen and a great deal of the Clan's trade with other Clans passes through there.
- TN 20: Takako is in her early fifties; her mother did not retire until she was almost sixty and she seems to be following in those footsteps. Her daughter is stationed on the Unicorn front, far from home, where she has served with distinction against the Moto.
- TN 25: Takako loves go, having often publicly said that she views it as a chance to hone her intellect and combat focus – not a common attitude among her family.
- TN 30: Tonfajutsen has been increasing their stockpiles of fine manufactured goods from the Crane lands over the last year on Takako's orders.

Alternate knowledge (**Battle / Intelligence**):

- TN 15: Though a Matsu, Takako is very calculating; she prefers to set up her battle-plans ahead of time and only lets loose her family's famed passion once actually on the battlefield.
- TN 25: Takako has a reputation as a logistical genius; though a skilled leader and tactician, her ability to ensure that her troops always had what they needed when they needed it was almost certainly why she was chosen to serve as the daimyo of one of the Clan's most important logistical resources.

Alternate knowledge (**Iaijutsu / Intelligence**):

- TN 15: Takako is renowned as a skilled duelist, who has fought twelve duels over the course of her life, most of them on the battlefield.
- TN 25: Five of the duels she was involved in were to the death; tellingly, three of those were against Kakita.

Access: Simple Request – a player may meet with Tokako by succeeding on an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll, TN 35.

Alternate Access: PCs may challenge her to either a duel or go game; Contested **Iaijutsu / Void** (9k4) or **Games: Go / Intelligence** (9k4); if the PC beats a TN of 25, she will be interested in speaking with them. If they manage to beat her, they will gain two Free Raises on the following roll.

Possible Leverage: Polite conversation – **Etiquette (Conversation) / Awareness**, TN 40, Free Raises for winning game/duel.

Leverage 1 – Twenty-five years ago, Takako slew a Crane by the name of Kakita Motoro in battle. His brother Jirochi swore a blood feud, though little has come of it over the intervening decades. Though Takako is not afraid of the consequences of her actions, she would prefer the matter be resolved in a fashion that does not require bloodshed.

Leverage 2 – Takako is interested in gathering more of the fine manufactured goods from the Crane lands because she anticipates that the Lion will once more turn to war against them sometime within the next year. This is based primarily on the history between the Clans, though she believes the Crane's support of the Unicorn has good odds of antagonizing the Lion fairly soon.

Leverage 3 – Takako has been asked by some of her allies to look for a justification the Lion could use to go to war with the Dragonfly. She does not particularly wish to do so, for a number of reasons, but her allies – not because she wants to, but her allies have asked it over her and she feels she owes them. (She will absolutely refuse to name said allies, and inquiring too closely will cost the PC the Influence gain.)

Relevant Traits: Air 4 Earth 3 Fire 4 Water 4 Void 4; Courtier 2, Etiquette 3, Games: Go 5, Iaijutsu (Focus) 5, Investigation 2, Sincerity 2; Tactician, Idealistic

Tsuruchi Shizu, Enzan Province

Tsuruchi Archer 3, Glory 3.8, Status 6.0, Honor 3.7

Description: A fit, athletic woman with powerful arms from years of archery practice, Shizu is not conventionally pretty but her personality is strong enough that most people don't notice. She is fairly casual in her dress, though not scandalously so, with a preponderance of jewelry. She has a tendency to remain awake late, partying well into the night, and frequently gets an early start in the morning, making her grasp of etiquette quite lax.

Position: Shizu respects the strength and ambition that the Imperial Regent has shown, but bluntly, he has yet to do much for her. The Regent begins with 2 points of Influence.

Information: Court gossip (**Courtier [Gossip] / Awareness**):

- TN 15: Shizu served her Clan for years as a bounty hunter before being granted her position as daimyo of the Enzan province. The region's most notable feature is the Aka Mizu-umi, a mountain lake that provides the Tsuruchi family a great deal of food in the form of fish.
- TN 20: Shizu is not exactly a paragon of honor or courtesy. Though pleasant enough in a rough sort of way, she is very lax in her attitudes toward propriety and rank. She greatly enjoys sake and song, far more than she enjoys proper behavior.
- TN 25: Perhaps due to her attitudes, she is unmarried. There have been rumors she is looking for husband for more than five years, though she has yet to seriously pursue her options.
- TN 30: Aka Mizu-Umi is known to be haunted. While it does not present a danger the vast majority of the time, it certainly represents an unfortunate influence in the province.

Alternate knowledge (**Investigation / Awareness**):

- TN 15: Shizu arrives late to court most mornings, even by the relaxed standards of courtiers – it is rare she is seen out of her rooms before mid-day.
- TN 25: Mantis songs have been heard in some of the rougher sake houses in town, but have begun to spread through nearly all of them.

Alternate knowledge (**Lore: Spirits / Intelligence**):

- TN 15: Aka Mizu-umi was the site of the "Battle of the Hour of the Wolf" – a bloody battle that left the lake haunted.
- TN 25: Once a year, on the anniversary of the battle, the waters of the lake run red and blood washes up on its shores. This leaves the peasantry frightened for weeks surrounding the event, greatly reducing the productivity of the province.

Access: Simple Request – a player may meet with Shizu by succeeding on an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll, TN 50.

Alternate Access Lore: Underworld / Intelligence (TN 20)

Possible Leverage: Polite conversation – **Etiquette (Conversation) / Awareness**, TN (40) or drinking contest (4k4, 20 to get points).

Leverage 1 – Shizu is very interested in getting a shugenja wise in the ways of the spirits to help exorcise the ghosts of Aka Mizu-umi. Though the haunting is only once a year, it is a blight on her lands, and anyone who could provide her with assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Leverage 2 – Though she does not speak of it often anymore, she is interested in opening a theater in her province – she is very fond of kabuki, and feels that the Mantis could use some more culture. (Provided, of course, that it does not require changing her own ways too much...)

Leverage 3 – Though a skilled and generally successful bounty hunter for years, she does remember one particular bounty that escaped her years ago. The murderous ronin "Hiken" was never brought to justice, and she has always hoped that someone else would be willing to take up the case when she was called back to the Tsuruchi lands, but it never happened.

Relevant Traits: Air 2 (Reflexes 4) Earth 4 Fire 3 Water 3 Void 3; Courtier 1, Etiquette 2, Investigation (Notice) 4, Sincerity 2; Quick, Compulsion: Alcohol

Isawa Toichi, Maryoku Province

Asako Loremaster 5, Glory 2.7, Status 6.3, Honor 6.1

Description: Toichi is a consummate courtier: polite, friendly, and always willing to talk but seldom saying anything that might cause conflict. He is handsome and elegantly-dressed; the scent of incense generally surrounds him, and he always has a set of prayer beads on his person.

Position: Toichi is a great believer in tradition, but has reservations about the character of both of the opposing leaders. The Regent begins with 1 point of Influence.

Information: Court gossip (**Courtier [Gossip] / Awareness**):

- TN 15: The Maryoku province is in a lot of ways the political center of the Phoenix lands, being the location of Kyuden Isawa.
- TN 20: Toichi, unlike most Isawa, is trained as a courtier, not a shugenja. He is studious and pious, as one might expect of a Loremaster, and he has the advantage of immediate access to the famed Isawa library.
- TN 25: Though a scholar of some renown, Toichi's personal passion is for ikebana. He has sponsored more than one artisan over the years.
- TN 30: Toichi views himself as a gatekeeper between the shugenja of the Clan (including the Elemental Masters) and the "mundane world", allowing them to focus on spiritual leadership while he handles more petty concerns.

Alternate knowledge (**Lore: History / Awareness**):

- TN 15: A conference discussing the returned spirits was hosted in his lands; it attracted a great deal of interest, but not all of it was positive.
- TN 25: The Lion Empress' Guard attacked his province last year, claiming to avenge an insult to the Empress issued during the conference; few outside their Clan understand what happened, and Toichi is particularly confused.

Alternate knowledge (**Lore: Shugenja / Intelligence**):

- TN 15: Because the Elemental Masters lead the Clan, there is no real family daimyo of the Isawa. Toichi frequently makes most of decisions for the day-to-day affairs of the family.
- TN 25: There is a semi-heretical fallacy inherent in his assumption of power: in the minds of most Phoenix, the "spiritual world" encompasses all things, including the "mundane world" he serves as a gatekeeper of.

Access: Simple Request – a player may meet with Toichi by succeeding on an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll, TN 35.

Alternate Access – Craft a public display with **Artisan: Ikebana / Awareness** (TN 25)

Possible Leverage: Polite conversation – **Etiquette (Conversation) / Awareness**, TN 45.

Leverage 1 – Toichi desires some sort of assurance that the Lion Empress' Guard attack was an isolated incident and does not represent a true threat from the Lion Clan or Imperials.

Leverage 2 – Toichi is interested in the growth of his province; he hopes to increase the political influence of the Clan via its alliances with the Scorpion and potentially with the Crane. If more samurai can be convinced to travel to the northern Phoenix lands, he is willing to open sections of the Isawa library; this will require spreading the word to samurai the Clan will not find objection to.

Leverage 3 – Rather than passively listening for his desires or needs, a PC can force him to confront his assumption of political power from the Elemental Masters; this requires a **Courtier (Rhetoric) / Awareness** roll at a TN of 30, and does require knowing that his attitude is dangerously close to heresy.
Relevant Traits: Air 3 Earth 2 (Willpower 3) Fire 2 (Intelligence 5) Water 2 (Perception 3) Void 4; Courtier (Rhetoric) 5, Etiquette (Bureaucracy) 5, Investigation (Search) 3, Sincerity 4; Sage, Idealistic

Soshi Josuke, Kinbou Province

Bayushi Bushi 4, Glory 6.2, Status 6.0, Honor 3.9

Description: Josuke is a tall, muscular man who looks far more like a bushi than a provincial administrator. He walks with a limp, disdaining the use of a cane, and is fond of wearing predominantly red silks (with highlights of very dark purple). His wooden mask conceals his features, but his voice is deep and smooth. Speaking with him can be unsettling – he is exceptionally pleasant and rarely has a harsh or unkind word to say, but... he is a Scorpion.

Position: Though he is far from uninterested in the power struggle, Josuke does not yet feel he has enough information to make a wise decision. Both the Regent or Champion begin with one point of Influence.

Information: Court gossip (**Courtier [Gossip] / Awareness**):

- TN 15: The Scorpion Kinbou province is the closest Scorpion province to the Unicorn lands; a great deal of trade with the Unicorn passes through them. As the daimyo of the province, Josuke is undoubtedly familiar with the customs of his neighbors.
- TN 20: Josuke has had a rough life: a bushi of some ability, he was a member of the Imperial Legions years ago, before the Scorpion Clan Coup. Later, he was married to a Unicorn in a political marriage years ago. Unfortunately, his bride and unborn child died during their exile to the Burning Sands
- TN 25: The Kinbou province produces a variety of scented goods, from perfumes to incense.
- TN 30: Josuke is known to be very fond of taiko and has the largest collection of drums in the Empire.

Alternate knowledge (**Lore: Unicorn / Awareness**):

- TN 15: Some of the more common items the province trades for from the Unicorn are materials for the perfumes and incense they trade through the Empire.
- TN 25: Josuke has used his contacts among the Unicorn to expand his collection of drums to include several from outside the Empire.

Alternate knowledge (**Battle / Intelligence**):

- TN 15: Josuke did not fight during the Scorpion Clan Coup; as a hohei in the Imperial Legions, he was assigned far from the capital and the Scorpion did not inform him of the matter before it happened.
- TN 25: He was left abandoned as a ronin in the Crab lands when the Scorpion Clan was disbanded, and worked his way through the Empire serving as a wave-man. Josuke actually fought with Toturi's Army during the Clan War, and gladly took up his mask again when the Clan was restored.

Access: Simple Request – a player may meet with Josuke by succeeding on an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll, TN 50.

Alternate Access – drumming performance
Perform: Drumming / Agility (25)

Possible Leverage: Polite conversation – **Etiquette (Conversation) / Awareness**, TN 45.

Leverage 1 – The lifeblood of Josuke's province is trade with the Unicorn; he is interested in increasing their trade through Empire as a way of increasing the prosperity of his province (with increased revenues through indirect tariffs). He also wants to expand trade of his own province's goods, perfumes and incense, through the Empire.

Leverage 2 – Josuke has lived a hard life and devotes himself to his duties; however, he has been looking for an artist who can create a likeness of his lost wife for some time with no success.

Leverage 3 – Josuke was assigned to his province to provide some military preparedness for the Soshi lands (not in immediate anticipation of any attack, but because the Scorpion prepare for everything). Those who can share information on Unicorn battle tactics (especially recent innovations) will be appreciated.

Relevant Traits: Air 4 Earth 3 Fire 4 Water 3 Void 3; Battle 5, Courtier (Manipulation) 4, Etiquette (Courtesy) 5, Investigation (Notice) 3, Lore: Unicorn 5, Sincerity (Deceit, Honesty) 4; Paragon of Duty, Lost Love (wife and child)

Moto Gemmei, Kawabe Province

Moto Vindicator 3, Glory 4.2, Status 6.0, Honor 3.4

Description: With long, flowing hair and large eyes, Gemmei is quite pretty despite sun-darkened skin. Her wealth is demonstrated in the quality of her clothes and jewelry, and her taste in their restraint. Gemmei is friendly and outgoing, though she always demonstrates a firm grasp of propriety.

Position: Though she thinks that the power struggle between the Emerald Champion and the Imperial Regent has little to do with her province, she is somewhat concerned about the tales that have spread concerning Okucheo. The Champion begins with 2 points of Influence.

Information: Court gossip (**Courtier [Gossip] / Awareness**):

- TN 15: The Kawabe province is mostly covered by the White Shore Lake – it produces fish as food for the Unicorn. A major Shrine to Daikoku is located in the province, and may have something to do with its prosperity.
- TN 20: While all Unicorn daimyo can claim to own a herd of quality steed, Gemmei's is smaller than any other daimyo due to the relative lack of open spaces to keep them in.
- TN 25: Gemmei is an Old Moto, proud of her Rokugani heritage and traditions. Her family has served as daimyo of the Kawabe province for four generations.
- TN 30: Gemmei sees herself as an integrationist, seeking ways to teach the New Moto of Rokugani traditions. She has a personal passion for the tea ceremony, and engages in it as often possible.

Alternate knowledge (**Horsemanship / Intelligence**):

- TN 15: Her horses are of decent quality, but lacking quantity, she is forced to breed the best steeds she can and trade off the excess to other Unicorn.
- TN 25: As might be expected, Gemmei is a skilled horsewoman, who enjoys taking daily rides even in the depths of winter.

Alternate knowledge (**Commerce / Intelligence**):

- TN 15: The Kawabe province provides food for the Unicorn armies – high-protein dried fish to sustain

them on long marches. It is not especially glamorous, but it is often critical for their military maneuvers.

- TN 25: Because the terrain of the province has little open ground to allow for the cultivation of crops, Gemmei trades for a variety of tea blends in order to provide for her fondness for tea ceremonies.

Access: Simple Request – a player may meet with Gemmei by succeeding on an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll, TN 45.

Alternate Access: A PC may attempt to impress her with their skills as a rider. This requires a **Horsemanship / Agility** roll (TN 30); they gain a Free Raise on this roll for having a quality mount (a Gaijin Riding Horse, for example, though an Utaku Battle Steed may be worth more Raises at the GM's discretion.) Unlike other access attempts, any PC who wishes to speak with her must succeed on the roll.

Possible Leverage: Polite conversation – **Etiquette (Conversation) / Awareness**, TN 35. If a PC wishes to perform a tea ceremony with her (requiring a successful **Tea Ceremony / Void** roll at a TN of 20), they gain two Free Raises. Failure, however, increases the TN by 5.

Leverage 1 – As may be expected for her Clan, she is interested in expanding the bloodlines for her herd; since she has to focus on their quality rather than quantity, acquiring steeds from impressive stock is important.

Leverage 2 – Gemmei is always looking for ideas to help her teach the New Moto Rokugani traditions. She wants to find ways to come to common ground with her newly-extended family,

Leverage 3 – Because of her love of the tea ceremony and the lack of her provinces open territory, she is always looking for teas and other supplies for tea ceremonies (proper pots, cups, tables, etc).

Relevant Traits: Air 3 Earth 3 Fire 4 Water 3 Void 4; Courtier 3, Etiquette (Courtesy) 4, Investigation 3, Sincerity (Honesty) 4; Irreproachable,

GM Cheat Sheet

	Starting Influence	Month of Hida	Month of Togashi	Month of Fu Leng	Month of Ryoshun	New Year's Festival
Hiruma Buntaro	5Regent					
Asahina Yama	2Champion					
Kitsuki Baishon	0					
Matsu Takako	3Regent					
Tsuruchi Shizu	2Regent					
Isawa Toichi	1Regent					
Soshi Josuke	1Regent / 1Champion					
Moto Gemmei	2Champion					

Hiruma Buntaro	Tactic:	Damned Support	Tools/Materials	Trade
	Used By:			
Asahina Yama	Tactic:	Magistrates	Crab Pressure	Tsunami Relief
	Used By:			
Kitsuki Baishon	Tactic:	Evidence Precedence	Lion Trade	Treatise Info
	Used By:			
Matsu Takako	Tactic:	Blood Feud	Crane Trade	Dragonfly Info
	Used By:			
Tsuruchi Shizu	Tactic:	Exorcism	Kabuki Theatre	Escaped Bounty
	Used By:			
Isawa Toichi	Tactic:	Lion Assurance	Tourist Trade	Confront on Heresy
	Used By:			
Soshi Josuke	Tactic:	Unicorn Trade	Artist	Unicorn Tactics
	Used By:			
Moto Gemmei	Tactic:	Breeding Stock	Instructors	Tea Ceremony Equipment
	Used By:			