

The Wasp's Nest

**A One-Round Mid-Rank Adventure for Heroes of
Rokugan: Spirit of Bushido
Month of Hantei, 1141 (Late Spring)**

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Friendship burgeons between the Lion and the Tsuruchi, but old feuds do not die quietly.

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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, and thus can involve parties of widely varying capabilities. The encounters have been optimized for a party of average Rank 3.

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

Low End Party (most/all characters Rank 2): At the GM's discretion, the TNs to rolls during made during the investigation can be lowered by 5.

High End Party (most/all characters Rank 4): No changes.

Adventure Summary and Background

The first Tsuruchi was the bastard son of a Lion and a Scorpion, defied both his parents' Clans, stole a castle from the Scorpion, and convinced the Emerald Champion (at the time, a Crane with little love for either the Lion or Scorpion Clans) to support his claim as a Minor Clan, ensuring that neither Clan could retaliate against him. The Wasp Clan was a thorn in the side of both Clans that spawned it until it was absorbed into the Mantis Clan when the Mantis became a Great Clan, but the Lion are known for their long memories and reverence for history. Thus it was a surprise to many when, during the negotiations that led to Seppun Murayasu becoming the Imperial General, Lion Champion Kitsu Motso publicly declared in Imperial court that the Lion Clan would no longer hold hostile intentions toward the Tsuruchi family merely on the basis of history.

The recently-elevated daimyo of the Tsuruchi family, Tsuruchi Ichiro, has followed up on this opportunity to make peace over the last year, and envoys from both Clans have been busy in arranging the best way to establish a potentially lasting peace while still saving face. After months of negotiations, Ichiro has prepared a joint demonstration of kyujutsu, to be held at Kyuden Ashinagabachi, to formalize the new state of affairs. He has also invited samurai from the other Clans to attend the gathering, so that word of the event might spread across the Empire (and ensure that the Lion could not change their minds without a significant loss of face). The PCs will be part of these delegations unless they are themselves of the Tsuruchi family, in which case

they are present to make sure the gathering goes smoothly.

While most Lion have complied with their Champion's word, old hatreds run deep, and not all are willing to bury the grudge so easily. There are several high-ranking Akodo and Matsu who were not thrilled with Motso's declaration; Motso himself had some doubts about the matter, given that his position in his own Clan is not as strong as it could be. A few of his more unscrupulous advisors interpreted a request to find a way out of the "peace talks" quite liberally, and are working behind the scenes to sabotage the relationship without their champion's knowledge. The Mantis's recent economic alliance with the Unicorn and Crane, two of the Lion Clan's traditional enemies, complicates matters further, as the same mid-ranking Tsuruchi that brokered that deal also brokered the non-enmity arrangement with the Lion.

Unbeknownst to most of the Lion delegation, Ikoma Kousuke has come to Kyuden Ashinagabachi with the goal of sabotaging the event and rekindling enmity between the Lion and Tsuruchi. He will work behind the scenes to make the Lion delegation's lives as miserable as possible by disrupting the Tsuruchi family's hospitality. In the course of this, he will attempt to implicate Tsuruchi Ikado, the master sensei of the Tsuruchi Archer School, who was one of Tsuruchi's closest confidants and whose anti-Lion feelings are well-known. Thanks to Kousuke's efforts, the scheduled events will be riddled with complications, making the Tsuruchi look like poor hosts to a Great Clan that just made a very generous overture of friendship given its history.

As soon as it becomes clear that someone is trying to ruin the event, Tsuruchi Ichiro will ask the PCs to find the culprit, due to their reputations and/or their status as theoretically uninterested parties. What they find over the course of the investigation will give them the ability to accuse either Tsuruchi Ikado or Ikoma Kousuke, the actual culprit. The state of Lion-Tsuruchi relations at the gathering's conclusion will depend on if, when, and how the PCs make their accusation.

Character Notes

Check the PCs' character sheets for the following:

- Ally: Tsuruchi (from Winter Court: Kyuden Gotei)

GM Note

The majority of the drama in this module comes from the escalating tension between the Lion delegation and the Tsuruchi. There are no specific mechanics for modeling this, but if things are going very poorly between the two factions, the GM should feel free to improvise appropriate-seeming complications.

Introduction

In celebration of the recent reconciliation efforts between the Tsuruchi family and the Lion Clan, the former Wasp Clan has offered to host a joint demonstration of kyujutsu to further build diplomatic relations, and they have invited representatives from the other Clans to attend the celebration as well.

Lion PCs have been sent with the Lion political delegation as part of Akodo family daimyo Akodo Ginawa's honor guard. Tsuruchi PCs are already at the castle, as are ronin PCs, who have been hired for 2 koku as additional security. All other PCs have been sent with orders to report back on the events that take place, and if possible try to earn favor with one Clan or the other without getting involved in any political messes.

Your journey to Tsuruchi lands takes you along the ominously-named Treacherous Road, the only major highway that connects the former Wasp to the rest of the Empire. Its name could refer to any number of things: that one must travel through Scorpion lands to reach it, that it leads through a steeply-walled wilderness valley, or that bringing an army of any size along it would be foolish at best. As you near your destination, all vegetation and natural cover disappears, and the last few miles take you through a barren canyon. Finally, you emerge onto a largely featureless plateau a few miles in diameter. Kyuden Ashinagabachi stands at its center, its walls and towers covered in arrow slits that warily guard the seat of the Tsuruchi family.

Kyuden Ashinagabachi sits at the center of Ashinagabachi province, which Tsuruchi Shoin normally governs from that castle. Shoin is not currently present, however. PCs with Oath of Fealty: Tsuruchi Shoin know that this is because Shoin was one of Tsuruchi's earliest followers and is something of a loose cannon around members of the Akodo and Matsu families.

The PCs arrive in mid-to-late afternoon. They are welcomed by servants and minor functionaries, shown to their rooms in the guest quarters, and invited to take advantage of the bathing facilities. Even in the guest wing, the castle's corridors wind around many blind corners, making it impossible to forget that this was once a Scorpion holding.

Each PC receives a note inviting him or her to a social hour in the main audience chamber that will have already begun by the time he or she has finished bathing. Tsuruchi PCs have been tasked with helping other guests get comfortable in their temporary home.

Any PC who has Tsuruchi as an Ally will have a quiet encounter with a bald man in monk's robes in one of the castle's twisting corridors (other PCs may encounter him at the GM's discretion, particularly those with a strong relationship with the Brotherhood of Shinsei). He is old and weathered, and his right hand is swollen and gnarled. PCs who succeed on a **Raw Perception** roll at TN 20 recognize that this man was once Tsuruchi, the founder of the Tsuruchi family (members of the Tsuruchi family automatically succeed at this roll). PCs who indicate their recognition without referencing his former life receive a warm smile and a nod. PCs who claim to know him from previous events, however, receive a disappointed look and a polite, if firm correction. *"I do not believe we have met, sama. My name is Tanari."* PCs who have Tsuruchi as an Ally and showed their recognition of him discreetly receive an invitation to briefly have tea with "Tanari" after the first evening's festivities are complete.

A note about weapons: unless the PCs receive explicit permission from Tsuruchi Ichiro, they will be expected to leave any weapons larger than wakizashi in their rooms while they are inside the castle. Even if they have permission, wearing katana inside the castle will alert the other guests that something has gone wrong.

Part One: The First Evening

As the Tsuruchi family does not commonly hold public court due to their isolated location, there is very little to do within the castle, and the servants have all been instructed to direct guests to the main audience chamber once they have finished shaking off the dust of the road. When each PC arrives there, a servant sounds a gong. The room quiets briefly, the servant announces arrivals to the room, and the conversation begins again. The PCs have arrived in time for a sort of cocktail hour, as

servants circulate the room carrying trays of snacks and sake.

Rumors

As alcohol begins to wash over the room, friends are made and tongues loosen. Characters who wish to do some gossiping may roll **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll. Tsuruchi and Lion PCs receive a Free Raise on this roll. The rumors include:

- TN 10: The recent conflict between the Emerald Champion and the Imperial Regent has split the Mantis Clan. A large number of the Yoritomo family have sided with the Regent, while most of the Tsuruchi and the Moshi are staunch in their support for the Emerald Champion.
- TN 15: The Koritome vassal family of the Matsu is known for having the finest archers in the Lion Clan. The family was created in memory of Matsu Koritome, who died to save the life of Hantei XIII, and originally included the two hundred best-performing Lion archers in the archery tournament that was sponsored in his memory. The family's presence here is not without awkwardness, as the first Tsuruchi himself had Koritome ancestors.
- TN 20: The Tsuruchi have sponsored a shrine to Kaze-no-Kami, the Fortune of Wind, to be constructed near Kyuden Ashinagabachi. This is a minor curiosity, as the Tsuruchi have never been a particularly religious family. Some speculate that they have done this because of the role that the wind plays in archery.
- TN 25: Tsuruchi Ikado, the master sensei of the Tsuruchi school, is nearing retirement. As one of the founding members of the Wasp Clan, he was one of Tsuruchi's closest confidants and his hatred for the Lion and Scorpion Clans are well known. A few courtiers wonder idly about how well behaved he will be able to remain during the next three days.
- TN 30: Immediately after the formation of the Frog, Oriole, and Tiger Minor Clans, the Mantis entered into an economic alliance with the Crane and the Unicorn, two Clans that the Lion has historically not been friendly with. Some elements of the Lion Clan claim that this is a poor reward for Kitsu Motso's statement of non-enmity with the Tsuruchi, especially as Tsuruchi Munenori (a PC) brokered both agreements.
- TN 35: When Tsuruchi Ichiro was a younger man, he opposed the Mantis Clan's absorption of his family. While he has come to respect the way Mantis Clan Champion Yoritomo Aramasu has handled the Clan, some still whisper that he might

still pull the Tsuruchi family away from the Mantis if he became dissatisfied with its leadership.

- TN 40: Kitsu Motso's proclamation of non-enmity toward the Tsuruchi has caused him serious political problems within the Lion Clan. While the Ikoma and Kitsu families hold little to no grudge against the Tsuruchi, many elements of the Akodo and Matsu families still view the former Wasp Clan's very existence as a stain on their honor. The last thing Motso needed was more internal unrest, as he is quite unpopular with returned spirits among the Lion, but failing to uphold the proclamation would cause the Lion Clan a great deal of lost face due to how publicly it was made.

Once rumors have been gathered, the PCs will have learned through a combination of gossip and announced arrivals who the important guests present are. The players should be free to examine Player Handout #1, which is a list of relevant NPCs along with what is publicly known about them. Once the players have had the chance to look over the list, an announcement takes place.

The doors to the room close, and the gong sounds one last time. As the crowd quiets, Tsuruchi family daimyo Tsuruchi Ichiro and three Lion samurai take places on a dais in the front of the room. Once all are silent, Ichiro speaks. "Welcome, friends, to Kyuden Ashinagabachi. It is an honor to have so many august visitors from the Lion Clan, with whom we are pleased to begin a new chapter of our families' relationships, as well as samurai from the rest of the Empire to observe these events. Tomorrow morning, we will hold a demonstration of kyujutsu featuring the best archers both the Lion and Tsuruchi can field. The next afternoon, we have planned a hunting excursion. There will also be feasts the next two evenings as we relax after the days' negotiations."

Ichiro offers a bow toward a square-jawed block of a man with greying temples, clad in Lion colors and clenching a tessen in a tight grip. "Before we begin, however, I have the honor of introducing our most prestigious guests. Everyone here should recognize Akodo Ginawa, daimyo of the Akodo family."

Ginawa steps forward, speaking in a deep, gravelly voice. "Ichiro-san, thank you for this generous display of hospitality. I look forward to seeing both of our Clans' finest archers on the field tomorrow." He bows and steps back, clearly less than comfortable in the spotlight.

Ichiro continues, his words obviously carefully chosen. "I also have the pleasure of introducing

Matsu Hanashiro of house Koritome, karo to Koritome vassal family daimyo Matsu Kabetaka."

Hanashiro is a tall and thin man who wears finely-tailored silks in Lion colors, though a half-dozen brightly colored cords of blue, white, purple, and green dangle from his obi. He speaks in a silken, resonant voice. "Kabetaka-dono sends his thanks to you and your family, Ichiro-sama. While he was not able to accept your invitation himself, he hand-picked a squad of our family's finest archers, and it is those men and women who will represent us in tomorrow's demonstration. For both of our families' sakes, I am pleased that our arrows will be flying in the same direction." He bows smoothly and steps back.

Ichiro smiles faintly before resuming an appropriate stern mask over his features. "Finally, we have Ikoma Kousuke, who comes to us from Ikoma family daimyo Ikoma Gohesu-sama's council of advisors."

Ikoma Kousuke is a short, slight man with a precisely shaved pate and topknot and a thin black goatee. His clothing is somewhat archaic in cut, and he has the telltale glow of a returned spirit. "Ichiro-sama, my lord Gohesu-sama sends his regards. Your family and our Clan have not had a long history, but we have had an eventful one. Healing the rift will require effort both on our part and on yours. I look forward to enjoying your hospitality, and I hope that this gathering will be a worthy effort toward the cessation of our estrangement."

Ichiro bows to his guests once more before returning his attention to the crowd. "We welcome the Lion Clan to our humble home. Dinner will be served in a few minutes; we thank you for your patience." The servants carrying sake once again begin to circulate through the crowd as even more servants begin to lay out rows of small tables for dinner.

The six most honored spots are taken by Tsuruchi Ichiro, Tsuruchi Ikado, Tsuruchi Masae, Akodo Ginawa, Ikoma Kousuke, and Matsu Hanashiro; after that, the guests are seated strictly by Status. PCs with Status of 3.0 are seated with the majority of the foreign guests, while PCs with greater Status are seated near the head of the table and PCs with less Status are mixed in with Lion and Tsuruchi soldiers.

The dinner itself is extremely traditional: rice, miso soup with tofu, pickled daikon and burdock root, several varieties of dried fish, and grilled duck, all prepared expertly. Dessert does not come out promptly, however, and after an uncomfortably long pause, harried servants bring around small plates of warm

"kasutera", a wheat-flour pastry that came to the Empire through Mantis trade with gaijin.

PCs with 3 or more ranks of the Courtier skill know that the expected dessert based on such a traditional menu would be something involving mochi and red bean paste, and that kasutera is often considered a lower-class treat. PCs with one or more actual ranks in Craft: Cooking know that kasutera is fairly quick to make and best served room temperature. Most guests accept the dessert offering with grace, although some soldiers from the unit of Lion archers share disapproving looks with each other, and Tsuruchi Masae looks very angry.

Once dinner is completed, the servants take the tables away, and Ichiro invites everyone who does not wish to head to bed to stay for a little while and share some plum wine for dessert. This provides each PC the opportunity to either speak with or gather information about two NPCs of their choice, although PCs who have an invitation from Tanari will only get one such chance before it is time for tea. Each relevant NPC is listed in Appendix #2, along with information that can be gained from a **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll. Once these conversations are over, everyone begins filtering out of the room and heads to sleep.

Tea with Tanari

This takes place in Tanari's room, which might more accurately be described as a cell (in monastic terms). It is about nine feet square, with a hardwood floor, a rolled-up futon in one corner, a stove recessed into the center of the floor, and little else. Tanari prepares and pours the tea himself; although his ruined hand shakes with the effort of controlling the teapot, he obviously enjoys performing the display of hospitality.

"It is possible that it would be wiser for me not to entertain specters of my past life, but I wanted to thank you in person for your previous efforts on my behalf. I will soon be leaving this castle, so this may be my last chance to do so. Please accept my humble hospitality."

Tanari retired last year, and is still getting used to his new role. He is, however, growing to enjoy it. He does his best to dodge questions that threaten to drag him back to his past life, but tries to provide useful advice to those who honestly ask it of him. Answers to likely questions are as follows.

- What is it like to leave your name behind? *"If I truly thought I had done so, I would be happy to tell you. I think that will not occur until I no longer live here."*

- Why will you be leaving the castle? Where are you going? *“Ichiro-sama has sponsored a shrine to Kaze-no-Kami to be built nearby. It will need monks, and I expect that I will end up there once it is built. After all, I spent many years becoming quite familiar with the wind.”*
- What do you think of the recent political developments between the Lion and the Tsuruchi? *“I know both how difficult and how liberating it can be to leave one's past behind. If the conflict ended, I would be pleased; if it did not, I would not be surprised. Regardless, such concerns are not for me now.”*

Throughout the rest of the module, Tanari will keep a low profile unless actively sought out by a PC who had tea with him. He is, after all, still a living symbol of the Lion Clan's dishonor, and it would be disastrous if his presence were known. However, he could not bring himself to depart before he was certain of the likely outcome of his family's overtures to the Lion.

Sabotage!

Ikoma Kousuke is the individual behind all of the sabotage that will take place in the castle during the Lion Clan's visit. By the end of the module, he does the following three things unless stopped:

- The afternoon he arrives, he takes advantage of a quiet moment in the kitchen to drag the barrel of sweet rice flour from the pantry into the secret corridor, and deposits it outside of the secret entrance to Tsuruchi Ikado's room. He then sneaks into Ikado's room, steals a haori from the closet, dusts it in rice flour from the barrels, and leaves it on top of the barrel. While inside Ikado's room, he also leaves a plant and a bag of weighted arrowheads in one of Ikado's closets.
- The night he arrives, he sneaks into the armory through the tunnels. Inside, he goes through each of the quivers of arrows that are to be given to the Lion, replacing several of the heads at random. This makes enough arrows heavier that the Matsui archers have problems during the demonstration.
- The night after that, he grinds up the leaves of the kava plant he brought with him. He then sneaks into the stables at around two in the morning using the secret catacombs and deposits the leaves, as well as plenty of sugar cubes, into the Lion horses' feed bags. By the next morning, the horses are stumbling around as though they were drunk.

If the PCs interact with Kousuke in the tunnels on the second evening, see “Stakeout?” at the end of Part Four.

Part Two: Scheduled Events

The PCs wake up the next morning to servants bringing them breakfast in their rooms. PCs with 5 or more Ranks of the Kyujutsu Skill also receive invitations to participate in the morning's archery demonstration. Participants will be provided a quiver of Tsuruchi-made arrows as a gift, although such PCs are invited to bring their own bows if they wish. Such PCs know that the Tsuruchi family's reputation for arrow crafting is quite distinguished, and this quiver is a significant gift.

The Archery Demonstration

The archery demonstration takes place in the fields outside the castle. A set of wooden bleachers has been set up on the edge of the field next to a pair of black and yellow striped tents. A wooden platform about eight feet tall stands in the field, and several targets are visible in the distance.

A smiling Tsuruchi Ichiro stands to address you, the hem of his black and yellow hakama billowing in the wind. “I thank you for your presence this morning. It is an honor to host a gathering of the Empire's most talented archers. I expect that they will rise to the challenge that Kaze-no-Kami has offered us. I leave you now with Tsuruchi Ikado-san, the master sensei of the Tsuruchi Archer school, who will serve as our master of ceremonies.” Ichiro looks pointedly at the older man standing next to him, who for an instant seems to shrink under his daimyo's gaze.

Ikado steps forward and clears his throat. “This field has a distinguished history. In days past, it played host to the annual tournament that determined which men and women were offered the chance to join our family's ranks. We are more selective now, but we still hold the tournament in honor of the tradition.” He pauses for a beat, withering under Ichiro's stare.

A **Lore: History (Lion or Tsuruchi) / Intelligence** roll at a TN of 20 recalls that a Lion army once slaughtered many of the first Tsuruchi's men on this field as well.

“I have arranged two challenges for today's demonstration. One,” he says pointing to the bullseye target over three hundred feet away, “is a simple distance shot, placed near to the edge of the bow's range. We have also recreated the running shoot from last year's tournament,” he says pointing to the obstacle course, “which tests an archer's ability to be fast and accurate while performing other physical

tasks. The archer who completes the course fastest while hitting all the targets is the winner.”

He turns back to the stands. “Several members of my family will be attempting these challenges, as well as many of the visiting Lion. As this is intended to be a gathering of the Empire's finest archers, however, we have invited a few other accomplished guests to participate.” Moto Altan and Kitsuki Kayuri stand and step forward.

If any of the PCs have been invited to participate, this is their cue as well. Such PCs are handed a quiver of black and yellow fletched arrows. A suspicious PC may roll **Kyujutsu / Perception** at TN 20 to confirm that the arrows they have been given are of the highest quality.

The distance shot is a simple **Kyujutsu (Yumi) / Reflexes** roll (TN 30) to hit the target, though the higher the roll, the closer to center the arrow lands. The obstacle course consists of the following rolls:

- **Kyujutsu (Yumi) / Reflexes**, TN 25, to shoot the first target. Must be retried on a failure.
- **Athletics (Running) / Strength**, TN 15, to run a hundred feet to the next shooting location.
- **Athletics (Climbing) / Agility**, TN 20, to climb to the top of a platform where the third shooting location is. Must be retried on a failure.
- **Kyujutsu (Yumi) / Reflexes**, TN 30, to shoot the second target. This target is further than the first one. Must be retried on a failure.
- **Athletics (Climbing) / Agility**, TN 15, to climb down a rope to the ground.
- **Athletics (Running) / Stamina**, TN 20, to run 300 yards
- **Kyujutsu (Yumi) / Reflexes**, TN 25, to shoot the final target, at the same distance as the first target. Must be retried on a failure.

On each roll, the PC may make raises for speed. Missing the TN for any roll negates two previously accumulated raises, and forces the PC to re-attempt the roll if noted.

Altan and Kayuri go first, followed by any invited PCs, and then a mix of Matsu and Tsuruchi. Altan and Kayuri both hit the distance target and offer competent but relatively slow performances on the obstacle course. The Tsuruchi archers are uniformly impressive, almost never missing shots and turning in fast times on the obstacle course. The Matsu archers are not quite as impressive, as more than the occasional shot falls short.

Any Lion PC who is taking part in the demonstration may roll **Kyujutsu / Perception** at a TN of 40 to notice discrepancies in the arrows they were provided – a random number of the arrows are slightly heavier than the rest, making it extremely difficult to compensate for the different weights. If they do not succeed at this roll, they suffer a penalty of -10 to the total of all Kyujutsu rolls they make for the contest.

Those watching the Lion as they shoot may roll **Kyujutsu / Perception** at a TN of 25 to notice that their arrows are notably inconsistent in their range. Observing the Lions’ reactions allows them to roll **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** at TN 25 to notice that each Matsu archer whose shot falls short is quite frustrated, although all of them manage not to obviously break face. PCs who make a 30 on this roll notice Matsu Toshiko carefully examining several of the arrows in her quiver and frowning deeply, then doing the same with some of the arrows that the other Lion archers were given. All PCs notice Toshiko approach Tsuruchi Ikado with a stern face and share a quiet word with him before handing him an arrow, then march back to her troops.

If no PC beats a 57 on the distance shoot, Matsu Toshiko has the shot closest to the center. If no PC accumulates eight or more raises on the obstacle course, a young Tsuruchi bushi named Tsuruchi Hakobe completes it the fastest. Should one or more PCs beat these numbers, the PC with the highest result on the distance shoot and the highest number of raises on the obstacle course become the victor instead.

After all the competitors have taken their turns, Ikado steps once again in front of the stands. *“As you have seen, these two families boast some of the greatest archers in the Empire. I hope you have enjoyed this demonstration of their skill, and we will see you again at dinner.”* He bows, obviously preparing to depart the field without announcing a victor.

If any PC wonders out loud to another who won, the following occurs:

Moto Altan stands. “<Family>-san is right, Ikado-sama. You did not say who won!”

Hakobe stiffens in defense of his sensei. “It was a great display of skill. I do not see how that is material.”

Altan opens his arms, smiling. “This was a contest, no? Surely it must have a victor!”

Ikado thinks for a few moments too long before relaying the winners of each event. Each PC who won an event gains +0.1 Glory, and the PC who spoke up loses -0.1 Glory.

If no PC questions the lack of an announced victor, Ikado will bustle off inside, leaving the guests to speculate vocally about the nature of the demonstration and the oddity of the competition with no public victor – most of the samurai attribute the sensei's reticence to unwillingness to offer praise for the Lion.

Conscription

As the guests begin to filter back toward the castle for lunch, servants deliver notes to each of the PCs requesting that they report to Tsuruchi Ichiro's private audience chamber immediately. When the PCs arrive, Ichiro and Tsuruchi Masae are already there. Ichiro appears to be barely containing intense anger, and Masae looks terrified. Servants pour tea as Ichiro speaks.

“Thank you for meeting me so quickly. As you might guess, I have little to gain from antagonizing the Lion and quite a lot to lose. However, it seems that someone wants our history of hatred to continue. Several of you seem to have earned a reputation for being helpful in times of need, so I ask for your assistance figuring out who that is. Should you succeed, I will be in your debt.”

If there are any Lion in the party, he continues. *“Whatever your personal feelings about my family are, your Champion made his opinion quite clear last summer. The person we seek, whether they hail from your Clan or mine, seeks to undermine him. Do you intend to act on your Champion's behalf or not?”* Should a Lion PC wish to deceive Ichiro, he or she must beat his **Investigation (Interrogation) / Perception** of 10k5 with their own **Sincerity (Deceit) / Awareness**.

If a Lion PC chooses not to help, the PC gains Sworn Enemy: Tsuruchi Ichiro and is unceremoniously removed from the castle and the adventure. Such PCs lose a rank of Glory and receive 2 XP for good roleplaying. Should the other PCs successfully uncover Kousuke's misdeeds, Lion PCs who chose not to participate will lose a full Rank of Status. If a Lion PC tries to hide his or her intentions from Ichiro and fails, all of the above things happen and the PC also gains a rank of Infamy.

Assuming the PCs assent, Ichiro continues. *“A barrel of sweet rice flour went missing from the pantry late yesterday afternoon. Much of that was going to*

become dessert for the feast, so the cooks had to improvise. Furthermore, the quivers of arrows that we gave the Matsu this morning contained arrows that had been tampered with.” He produces a pair of arrows, removes the heads, and hefts them. *“The weight of these heads are different enough to make it all but impossible for an archer to compensate, particularly in the middle of a shoot.”*

He begins to reassemble the arrows. “Most of my most trusted vassals are already occupied trying to keep the Lion delegation happy, so I need you to investigate this for me. Our time is short, as the Lion will only be here for two more days.”

Ichiro gestures to his hatamoto. “Masae-san will be your contact from here on out. You have my permission to search everywhere except our guests' quarters. You may also talk to any of the Tsuruchi here. You are free to speak with the other guests, although I will not force any of them to talk to you unless you convince me I have good reason to.

“I would prefer that you attempt some degree of discretion in this. Once people know that there's an investigation going on, you'll have a harder time getting information out of them and our target will know we're moving, not to mention the damper that it will put on the mood. As soon as you have identified a perpetrator, I want to know. Masae-san knows more than me about what has happened so far, so I will leave you with him. If you have more questions for me, you are welcome to contact me later. Thank you, and good luck.”

Ichiro leaves the PCs with Masae, who nervously answers any questions the PCs have.

Lunch

After this meeting, the PCs are free to return to lunch. As they sit down to begin eating, the following takes place:

A trio of low-ranking Tsuruchi archers are sitting near you, whispering among themselves. One of them speaks under his breath to the others, but still loud enough that you can hear. “The Matsu archers are better than I thought they would be.”

Another one responds, his voice a little too loud. “At least we won the event that counts. Anyone can hit a bale of hay while they're standing still. I watched them run and shoot, and I was not impressed.”

Three Matsu archers a few yards away turn to face him. One speaks with a furious scowl darkening her

features. “Maybe if you hadn’t sabotaged our arrows, you would have seen a real contest.”

“Blaming us for your poor shooting?” the Tsuruchi smirks. “So much for Lion honor.” The three Matsu jump to their feet and rush toward the Tsuruchi trio, who stand to meet them.

Roll Initiative. There are three Tsuruchi archers and three Matsu archers, as described in the stat blocks below (the GM is encouraged to modify the stats as appropriate for their table, bearing in mind that the groups are intended to be members of elite archery units). The two groups are positioned ten feet from one another. Each group is unarmed. The Matsu archers attempt to strike the Tsuruchi, while the Tsuruchi prefer to grapple. If a PC attempts to talk down the combatants, a roll of **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** at TN 40 calms everyone except the ringleader of each side (Tsuruchi Nobuharu and Matsu Sakamae), and a success at TN 50 calms everyone down.

If the combat lasts through three complete rounds, guards descend on the group and pull everyone apart.

Tsuruchi Bushi

Air 3	Earth 3	Fire 2	Water 3	Void 2
Reflexes 5		Agility 3		
Honor 3.5		Status 2.0		Glory 1.5

Initiative: 7k5+3 **Attack:** 6k3 (unarmed)
Armor TN: 30 **Damage:** 4k1 (unarmed)
Wounds: 15 (+0), 21 (+3), 27 (+5), 33 (+10), 39 (+15), 45 (+20), 51 (Down, +40), 57 (Dead)
School/Rank: Tsuruchi Archer 2
Skills: Athletics 3, Battle 2, Defense 2, Hunting 3, Jiujutsu 3, Knives 3, Kyujutsu (Yumi) 6, Investigation (Notice) 3, Sincerity 2, Stealth 2

Matsu Bushi

Air 3	Earth 3	Fire 2	Water 3	Void 2
Reflexes 4		Agility 3	Strength 4	
Honor 6.5		Status 2.0		Glory 1.5

Initiative: 6k4 **Attack:** 6k3 (unarmed)
Armor TN: 25 **Damage:** 5k1+6 (unarmed)
Wounds: 15 (+0), 21 (+3), 27 (+5), 33 (+10), 39 (+15), 45 (+20), 51 (Down, +40), 57 (Dead)
School/Rank: Matsu Bushi 2
Skills: Athletics 2, Battle 3, Defense 2, Etiquette 2, Hunting 2, Iaijutsu 2, Jiujutsu 3, Kenjutsu 4, Kyujutsu (Yumi) 6, War Fans 2

After the fighting has been stopped, unless the PCs managed to talk both leaders down, Tsuruchi Nobuharu is still not satisfied:

“Take back your lies, Matsu!” the Tsuruchi ringleader demands, still seething.

The Matsu glares back at him. “Tsuruchi-san, if you can find the courage to defend your claims with steel, I believe an iaijutsu duel is the traditional way for us to resolve this.”

The Tsuruchi swallows air.

There is a pregnant pause. A PC who speaks up at this point may suggest an archery contest instead, which receives a healthy assent from the crowd. If no one does so, the Tsuruchi stalks off to get his sword, and the following ensues:

The duelists square off against each other. The Matsu’s stance is nervous but practiced. The Tsuruchi clearly has no training whatsoever, and his sword does not make it out of its saya before the Matsu’s katana draws a thin line of blood along the bottom of his right wrist. “Had I followed through, Tsuruchi-san, you would never have held a bow again.” The Matsu sheathes her blade. “Even if you had nothing to do with this, I promise you that the arrows your family gave me to shoot today were compromised.” The Tsuruchi stares transfixed at his bleeding wrist as the Matsu stalks out of the room.

If the PCs negotiated for an archery contest instead, news later passes through the castle that both archers performed equally well through several rounds—the archery equivalent of a karmic strike. The matter is therefore dropped.

After lunch, the PCs are free to investigate while the higher-status NPCs negotiate. During this time, Ichiro, Ginawa, Kousuke, and Hanashiro are unavailable.

Dinner

Dinner that night is similar to that of the previous night, but dessert is a traditional mochi pastry. As things wrap up and sake begins to flow in earnest, one particular conversation seems to attract the rest of the room’s attention.

Tsuruchi Hakobe, a sharply-dressed young man in his late twenties, has begun to gather an audience, presently addressing a skeptical-looking Lion soldier. “I understand my claim is bold, Matsu-san, but you should hear me out. The Wasp Code gives us six virtues: honesty, loyalty, mercy, justice, brotherhood, and judgment. These are not the same as the virtues of bushido, but they can guide a man just as well. Several of our virtues are even the same!”

Ikoma Kousuke snaps his fan shut. “Hakobe-san, I am certain that we could find a less contentious topic for those of my clan and your family.”

“An excellent point, Ikoma-san. We are no doubt biased on this matter, and there are several guests who are not.” He turns to the highest-Status of the non-Lion non-Tsuruchi player characters. *“What philosophical value do you see in the code that has guided my family since its founding?”*

Most PCs will likely be somewhat lost – those who succeed at a **Lore: History / Intelligence** or **Courtier / Intelligence** (TN 20) will recall that Tsuruchi wrote the Wasp Code as a substitute for bushido, a code that he felt had proven itself flawed. It is a codified form of the behavior that the Tsuruchi family followed when they were a Minor Clan of bounty hunters, and was intended to be something of a slap in the face to bushido. The six tents of the Wasp Code are honesty, loyalty, mercy, justice, brotherhood, and judgment. It tends to focus on practicality more than ideals, as it codified the standards of behavior that a family of bounty hunters held itself to.

Characters who learn this information and have three ranks of Courtier or Investigation recognize that Hakobe is looking to legitimize his family’s philosophy and has no intention of actively antagonizing the Lion, but has come dangerously close to doing so just by bringing up a behavioral code that was intended as a slap in the face to something that the Lion hold as nearly sacred.

Hakobe tries to pull each non-Lion non-Tsuruchi PC into the discussion at some point, doing his best to cast the two codes as being compatible and complimentary. Hakobe, or other appropriate Tsuruchi NPCs, will not defend it as superior to bushido, but in general will try (in a somewhat less than articulate fashion) to use it to find common ground with the Lion’s devotion to bushido. The following contributions from NPCs can be added whenever they feel appropriate.

Kitsuki Hatoku: *“It sounds to me like both codes could guide someone to virtue or justify any depth of depravity. No matter how solid a man’s code is, I look to the virtue of the man himself first.”*

Asako Heiwako: *“Bushido has stood for a thousand years. Hakobe-san, your code is quite new, and it will take some time before history can properly evaluate its usefulness.”*

Moto Altan: *“Virtue is virtue. If all truly had virtue, we would not fight over its name.”*

The point of this scene is to highlight the differences between bushido and the Wasp Code and encourage a reasoned debate among the PCs. If the discussion becomes overly heated, Ichiro will awkwardly demand that the subject be changed. The GM should note this on the reporting sheet.

There is also some time after dinner for the PCs to investigate. If they fail to solve the mystery by breakfast the next morning, it will be too late.

Part Three: Questions and Answers

Arranging a private chat with an NPC is a fairly simple matter unless it becomes clear that the PCs are acting with a mandate from Tsuruchi Ichiro. If their somewhat official role becomes open knowledge, speaking with an NPC requires an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** or **Sincerity / Awareness** roll at TN 25.

Kitsuki Hatoku

Hatoku and Kayuri share a room. Kayuri watches silently while a genial but serious Hatoku speaks with the PCs.

- Who might want this event to fail? *“I do not know, although many on both sides might have motives. The Akodo and Matsu families surely still hold their grudge, and Motso-sama may by now regret his declaration of non-enmity. It would surprise me if the Tsuruchi leadership were behind this, as they have much to lose if this goes poorly, but any tradition-minded former Wasp might still be blinded by revenge.”*
- How could someone get to the pantry, the stables, the armory, and the barracks without being seen? *“Do not forget that this was once a Scorpion castle. Secret ways may abound.”*
- Do you know anything else that might help? *“If you intend to accuse a Lion of misdeeds here, tread carefully. I can personally attest that Hanashiro-san is an excellent duelist and tends toward aggressive displays of his skill. He has a strong sense of justice, however, so you might persuade him to your side if your cause is just. I would have my case complete before I attracted his attention.”*

Akodo Ginawa

Ginawa will not consent to a meeting that includes non-Lion PCs until the PCs have spoken with at least one other Lion NPCs. Until then, he is “unavailable”.

Ginawa is a square-jawed block of a man, with greying temples and eyes that always seem to be squinting. He does not normally wear his katana, preferring to carry only his wakizashi and a tessen.

- Are you doing this? *“If I were at home, I would throw you out of my castle for even asking that question.”*
- Who do you think could be doing this? *“I will not speculate to you about this. If it is a member of my clan, he or she will be punished as a traitor.”*
- If a Lion is behind this, what will you do? *“Have him or her executed for treason.”*
- Do you know anything else that might help? *“No.”*

Before the PCs leave, Ginawa has one final thing to say.

“One last thing,” he says, now looking quite tired. “I am sure you understand how badly this reflects on me. If you find that a member of my Clan is behind it, I ask that you tell me before you go to Ichiro-sama. I would appreciate the chance to attend to such a traitor myself in order to save some face.”

Ikoma Kousuke

Kousuke’s suite of two rooms is quite nice, spacious and with an external window. Kousuke himself dresses archaically and has the glow of a returned spirit.

- Are you doing this? *“I serve Kitsu Motso personally. I find the idea that I would go against his wishes quite absurd.”*
- Who do you think could be doing this? *“I have no doubt that it is some lowly Tsuruchi who still thinks of himself as a Wasp and wishes to show that he can still sting. Ichiro-sama has changed with the times, but not all of his family has followed him.”*
- Where were you the afternoon you arrived? *“I am no longer a young man. I thought it would be wise to take a nap before the evening’s entertainment.”* (Investigation (Interrogation) / Perception against his Sincerity (Deceit) / Awareness of 10k5+5 reveals that he is hiding something.)

- You are behind this. *“If you wish to accuse me publicly, I would be happy to summon a champion.”*
- Do you know anything else that might help? *“Tsuruchi Ikado was one of Tsuruchi’s earliest followers, and it is well known that he holds no love for my Clan. I hesitate to accuse him of such base things, but one can never tell what depths a student of such a man might stoop to. Keep an eye out for him, and if you suspect him of wrongdoing, I can do some of my own prying.”*

If the PCs choose to go this route with Kousuke’s assistance, he blackmails Doji Juichi into testifying that he saw Ikado sneaking around last night near the armory while he was returning from the bathhouse to his rooms.

Ikoma Masakazu

Masakazu dresses precisely and unimaginatively, and is about thirty years old.

- Are you doing this? *“Of course not! I would never willingly be party to this sort of thing.”*
- Why would someone want this event to fail? *“We are trying to put on a unified face, but the Lion here do not represent only one faction. I would prefer not to say more.”*
- Do you know anything else that might help? *“The Lion rank and file here have little reason to hate the Tsuruchi, so if there is wrongdoing afoot, you should look high to find it. Among the Tsuruchi, the leadership has much to lose by going after us, so if you suspect that one of them is behind something, I would suggest you look low.”*

At any point, curious PCs may roll **Perception (Interrogation) / Investigation** at TN 15 to know that he suspects more than he is saying. If pressed about this, he will say only the following: *“Do not push me too far, friends. Allow me to say what I can safely, and I will be happy to be of assistance.”* If the PCs push him further than this, he will have them ejected from his quarters.

Matsu Hanashiro

Hanashiro is expertly attired and presents himself well. His true purpose here is to use his dueling skills to win arguments as necessary.

- What do you know about this? *“All I know is that my Clan’s delegation is hardly receiving the welcome that we are due after such a*

generous gesture. After last fall's trade negotiations, I begin to wonder why we have bothered to come here at all."

- Who would want this gathering to fail? *"Some of my clan might have wanted that before our Champion's words last year, but now we seem to be united. It must be some Tsuruchi whelp."*
- Do you know anything else that might help? *"If you wish for this gathering to succeed, you should act quickly. My clansmen's tempers rise faster than they fall."*

If he feels that the PCs are pushing too hard against one of the Lion without a case, he challenges them to make a public accusation and back their words with steel. If the PCs accumulate a strong enough case against Kousuke that he believes it, however, he instead takes that information to Ginawa and presents it as true.

Matsu Toshiko

Toshiko is a quiet, unassuming woman in her mid-twenties.

- Are you doing this? *"I have my hands full keeping ten very frustrated soldiers behaving properly, especially when I feel just as frustrated as they do. I would not have the time to sneak around in the shadows."*
- Why would someone do this? *"Some vengeful Tsuruchi must not be ready to give up the fight. If Ichiro-sama cannot keep his vassals in order, perhaps his family is still unworthy of our friendlier attentions."*
- Do you know anything else that might help? *"I do not. I am sure Ichiro's intentions were genuine, but anyone would have trouble keeping a tight enough rein on a family so new to its status."*

If a PC suspects Toshiko of knowing more than she says, he or she may roll **Investigation (Interrogation) / Perception** at TN 30 to discover that she knows more than she is saying. She will not admit this under any circumstances.

Tsuruchi Ichiro

Ichiro is unavailable while entertaining the Lion, but dogged PCs will be able to see him after they have explored other avenues.

- Are you doing this? *"Invite the Lion here, then intentionally aggravate them? Are you mad?"*

- How are people getting into these different places without being seen? *"Oh, no... I see. This was built a Scorpion castle, with all the requisite secret ways. Whoever is doing this must know about the tunnels. I can get you a map of them."* This earns the PCs Handout #2.
- Who knows about the tunnels? *"Myself, Masae-san, Ikado-san, and perhaps those among the Lion and the Scorpion who have done their research. We did our best to hide and seal them, but that does not mean that someone has not found a way in. I will get you a map, although I ask you not to share this information with others."*

Before the PCs leave, Ichiro has one final thing to say.

"If you have reason to believe that one of my vassals is the culprit, I would appreciate it if you brought him or her to me first. Handling this discreetly myself would help a great deal with placating the Lion."

Tsuruchi Ikado

Ikado is nearly forty years old, and sits down with creaking knees.

- Are you doing this? *"My past words and my personal grudges are well known, but so are my daimyo's wishes. This is not my doing."*
- What is your problem with the Lion? *"I walked many miles with Tsuruchi. Being a member of a Minor Clan that two different great clans tried to wipe off the map can make a man bitter."*
- Do you know anything else that might help? *"As personally uncomfortable as this has been for me, my family's leadership is unanimous in its belief that repairing relations with the Lion clan would be a boon. Investigating myself, Masae-san, or Ichiro-sama would be a waste of your time—time that you do not have much of."*

Tsuruchi Masae

Masae is feeling very high-strung, and snaps at the PCs unhappily if they accuse him of incompetence.

- Are you doing this? *"These events threaten my reputation as an administrator as much as they threaten my family's relations with the Lion. I would never do such things."*
- How are people getting into these different places without being seen? *"This was a Scorpion castle. It has many secrets, although I am not privy to most of them. I*

make sure we have enough arrows and rice. You might ask Ichiro-sama what he knows.” (Investigation (Interrogation) / Perception at TN 20 reveals that he knows more than this, but only wishes to say this much.)

Shosuro Ochiba

Ochiba is a quiet, pretty woman in her late twenties.

- Are you doing this? *“It would make sense for the Scorpion to prefer having the Lion and Tsuruchi at each other's throats, but being caught performing such base sabotage would risk bringing them together against my clan. The risk would be too great. I am not behind this.”*
- Who would want this event to fail? *“A Lion, a Tsuruchi, or perhaps both, likely because his or her master wishes the hostility to continue but cannot act on his own. Many such masters surely exist.”*
- Do you know anything else that might help? (If non-Scorpion PCs are present:) *“I do, and I expect it will assist your investigation, but it is not clear how that investigation might impact my lords. Accept a minor obligation to my clan and I will be happy to share.”* (If there are only Scorpion PCs present, or if the PCs accept an Obligation:) *“There is a set of underground tunnels that connects several places in this castle. I happen to have a map of these tunnels, and I would be happy to copy it for you.”* This earns the PCs Handout #2.
- How would someone know about the tunnels? *“A long time ago, a combined Lion and Scorpion force attempted to destroy the Wasp. I am sure that we shared some of what we knew about this castle with the Lion before that attack. Alternatively, someone could simply live here and have found them.”*
- What else do you know that might help? (If non-Scorpion are present:) *“Tsuruchi Ikado has a history of poor relations with the Lion. I am not exactly in friendly territory, but I could discreetly investigate his recent actions and report what I find.”* (If only Scorpion are present:) *“If you intend to frame someone who our Clan would be happy to see fallen, I can arrange for testimony against that person once you have enough other pieces in place. Ikado-san would be an excellent target, if you think you can put together enough other incriminating evidence against him.”*

If the PCs take this last route, Ochiba blackmails Doji Juichi into testifying that he saw Ikado sneaking around last night near the armory while he was returning from the bathhouse to his rooms.

Tanari

Only PCs who interacted successfully with Tanari earlier can speak to him later on. Cajoling him to talk about current events requires earnest roleplaying, as he is hesitant to involve himself in the world.

- Who would want this event to fail? *“I cannot speak for the Lion, but among my former family I believe it is not any of the leaders. My last act as daimyo was to discourage them from pursuing the many feuds I helped start, and I believe they took that to heart. I cannot say the same for the younger part of the family, which seems to remain hot-blooded to this day.”*
- Do you know anything else that might help? *“I took this castle from the Scorpion, and they filled it with secrets before they left. There is a series of catacombs underneath it that connects many parts of the ground. Let me show you.”* This earns the PCs Handout #2.

Part Four: Locations

The Tunnels

The tunnels below the castle twist and turn around many blind corners. They are about five feet wide and hewn out of rough stone. There is no light save what the PCs bring with them. Each entrance to the tunnels leads to a central chamber, from which a total of seven different corridors radiate. These corridors lead to secret entrances to the following places:

- The pantry
- The stables
- The armory
- An exit behind the castle
- Ikoma Kousuke’s guest rooms
- Tsuruchi Ikado’s quarters
- A storage closet in the Tsuruchi daimyo’s suite

If the PCs have the map, Tsuruchi Ichiro or Tsuruchi Masae are willing to tell them who lives in the guest room and the private room in the royal quarters if they ask.

The floor of the tunnels is quite dusty, as they are not often used. A character with five ranks of Investigation or three ranks of Hunting equipped with a good source of light will be able to make out faint tracks. These can also be found with an **Investigation / Perception** roll of TN 30 or **Hunting (Tracking) / Perception** roll of TN 25. The following sets of tracks can be found at the time that the investigation begins. Following any of these paths before finding the tracks obscures them, making them impossible to find later.

- Two sets of tracks from Kousuke's guest rooms to the center and back
- Two sets of tracks from Ikado's quarters to the center and back
- One set of tracks from the pantry to the center and back
- One set of tracks from the armory to the center and back

If questioned about activity in the tunnels, earth spirits here will dimly report that a "bright person" is the only person to have passed by other than the PCs.

The Pantry

The castle's pantry is attached to the kitchen. It is quite large, with many shelves that hold barrels of sake, soybeans, rice, pickled vegetables, wheat flour, sugar, and other foodstuffs. In one corner of the pantry, there is a circular mark on the ground where another barrel clearly once stood.

The secret door to the tunnels is behind an irregularly shaped stone panel in the wall near where the barrel of sweet rice flour was. Finding it requires an **Investigation (Search) / Perception** roll at TN 30.

The head cook is a jittery but highly competent heimin named Hotaka. He reports that the barrel of sweet rice flour disappeared yesterday afternoon while the kitchen staff was eating before they began preparing the feast. They did not have time to pound more flour, so went with kasutera for desert instead of the mochi pastry they were planning. He does not know about the secret door.

The Stables

The stables are quite similar to any other Rokugani stables that the PCs have seen, with the only difference being that this one is almost completely full with the horses that the Lion contingent brought. There are also racks of saddles, brushes, shovels, and other equestrian equipment.

The secret door to the tunnels is a panel in the floor of one of the stalls that is currently occupied. Below this, a

ladder descends into the tunnels. This can be found with an **Investigation (Search) / Perception** roll at TN 35.

The stable master's name is Tsuruchi Isamu. He does not know about the secret door, and is unaware of any foul play.

The Armory

The armory is a large stone room with shelves containing sets of armor, unstrung bows, and a small amount of swords. There are also several workstations set up that are clearly intended for arrow crafting. All of the arrowheads, both on finished arrows and waiting for completion, have maker's marks clearly stamped on them. (Those arrowheads replaced by Kousuke have no such maker's marks.)

The secret door to the tunnels is located behind a stone panel in a wall that is behind a stack of armor boxes, and is hardly obvious even when the wall is exposed. Finding it from inside the room requires an **Investigation (Search) / Perception** roll at TN 40.

The quartermaster's name is Tsuruchi Mio. She is a stern woman in her mid-thirties, and she is quite angry that something went wrong with equipment that came from her armory. She prepared the quivers of arrows for the Lion yesterday afternoon and set them out by the door. Ikado came to check on them in the late afternoon before she locked things up and came to dinner. Sometime between the beginning of dinner and the next morning, she claims that someone snuck in without leaving a trace and tampered with the arrows. She does not know about the secret door.

Ikoma Kousuke's Room

Getting official permission to search Kousuke's room is not automatic. For Ichiro to authorize such an entry, the PCs must have found the entrance to Kousuke's room in the tunnels and determined that it has been recently used. Alternatively, they can get Ochiba to blackmail Juichi into giving testimony that he saw Kousuke sneaking around near the armory last night.

Ikoma Kousuke's room is rather large, with a window that offers a pleasant view of the featureless plain around the castle. There is a set of cabinets along one wall, a futon on its opposite side, a writing desk, a small wooden box next to the desk, and a larger, open basket of clothing. The only concession to personal taste in the room is a potted plant that sits in the window.

There are several bits of incriminating evidence to be found here that can be found during a thorough search of the room. This requires an **Investigation (Search) /**

Perception roll, with the PCs discovering things based on their total (a spells like Light of the Moon will have its usual effect):

- TN 20: The plant on the windowsill has been recently pruned; a TN 30 Intelligence roll that uses any of any Craft or Lore Skill relating to plants or poisons identifies it as a kava plant, which can be ground up to create a powerful sedative. Any servant can confirm that Kousuke brought the plant with him.
- TN 25: At the bottom of the basket of clothing is a haori that is covered in a fine layer of flour dust.
- TN 35: The small wooden box contains writing implements and paper, but has a false bottom. Below the false bottom is a small stone mortar and pestle, as well as a small black and yellow cloth bag that contains a few weighted arrowheads that lack maker's marks.
- TN 40 (unless the players specify that they are looking through the writing desk): The basket next to the writing desk contains several items of normal correspondence. It also contains a folded note that was once sealed in wax and stamped with a variation of the Ikoma family mon. Unfolding it reveals a map of the castle along with an unsigned note that reads as follows: ***"You are aware of our champion's stated and unstated wishes, and few men of your skills remain available to me. I have attached a map of the castle. I trust you to act appropriately."*** This note is written in very formal High Rokugani. A PC who opens the note loses two points of Honor unless his or her honor rank is 6 or less, in which case he or she loses one point. If Kousuke discovers that the PCs are coming to search his room, he destroys this note and the map.

The secret door to the tunnels from this room his hidden below the tatami floor in one corner. Raising the mat from the ground reveals a hole in the floor with a ladder that descends about ten feet to the catacomb floor. The dust in the corridor below the room has obviously been recently disturbed.

Tsuruchi Ikado's Room

Ichiro will allow the PCs to search Ikado's room without much provocation, as he is aware of Ikado's feelings about the Lion clan.

Ikado has one of the nicest private rooms in the castle, with a spectacular view of the field that hosted the morning's competition and the wilderness beyond it. There is a set of cabinets along one wall, a futon on its opposite side, a writing desk, and a basket of clothing that smells freshly laundered.

A thorough search of his room discovers some incriminating evidence near the back of one of the cabinets; this requires an **Investigation (Search) / Perception** roll at a TN of 15 – success by 50 or more will give the PCs the impression that the objects were almost too easy to find. There, the PCs find a black and yellow bag that contains a few weighted arrowheads that lack maker's marks, exactly the sort on the arrows given to the Lion archers. Next to this is a mortar and pestle and a small potted plant. A TN 30 Intelligence roll that uses any of any Craft or Lore skill relating to plants or poisons identifies it as a kava plant, which can be ground up to create a powerful sedative.

The secret door to the tunnels from this room is hidden below the tatami floor in one corner. Raising the mat from the ground reveals a hole in the floor with a ladder that descends about ten feet to the catacomb floor. The dust in the corridor below the room has obviously been recently disturbed. The missing barrel of sweet rice flour rests at the bottom of this ladder, on which is folded a black and yellow haori that is covered in a fine layer of dust.

If presented with the evidence described above, Ikado claims truthfully that he has never seen the bag of arrowheads before, and that he thought his servants had lost the haori. He knows about the tunnels, but claims truthfully that he has not entered them in months. He also knows that the plant can be used to create a sedative, but claims not to know where it came from.

The Tsuruchi Daimyo's Suite

There is a large storage closet in the Tsuruchi daimyo's suite that contains a door that leads into the tunnels. There is no evidence inside of the secret door having been used recently.

Stakeout?

If the PCs attempt to hide in the tunnels overnight, they may encounter Ikoma Kousuke. At around two in the morning, he leaves his room, enters the tunnels, travels to the center and then to the stables with a bag full of pungent ground-up leaves. A TN 30 Intelligence roll that uses any of any Craft or Lore Skill relating to plants or poisons identifies the leaves as those of a kava plant, which can be ground up to create a powerful sedative. When he returns, he does not have the bag with him.

If the PCs are in the central chamber or either of the tunnels that Kousuke passes through, each PC present may make a **Stealth / Agility** roll at TN 30 in order to escape his notice. If there are no light sources other

than Kousuke's natural aura, they get three Free Raises on this roll.

If a single PC confronts Kousuke, he attempts to intimidate him or her into staying silent. After all, it will be his word against theirs, and he is quite familiar with the Rokugani legal system; he points out that Hanashiro is a skilled duelist and will stand as his champion. If this fails, Kousuke attacks with his wakizashi.

If multiple PCs confront Kousuke, he makes them the following offer.

“Greetings, friends. Among my duties, I serve as a political advisor to Lion Champion Kitsu Motso. While he made a generous statement of friendship to the Tsuruchi two summers ago, information has surfaced that makes his offer seem far too generous. Let me pass and do not speak of this, and I promise you two things. First, you will have the favor of the office of the Lion Clan Champion. Second, I will speak of your deeds far and wide, and make your names known across the empire. What do you say?”

If the PCs accept this offer, they each receive a Lion Favor, gain two ranks of Glory, and lose an amount of points of Honor equal to their current Honor Rank. If they do not, Kousuke will surrender with grim dignity, refusing to speak further – the only exception will be an accusation to a Lion PC: *“Your choice weakens the Clan. I will not have to live with my mistakes for long, but you may not enjoy that luxury.”* He will not be drawn into an explanation or attempt to justify himself further, simply accepting the PCs' accusations with silence. He defends himself with his wakizashi only if attacked.

If captured, Kousuke confesses to all of the sabotage that took place up to the point of his capture, and claims that his actions do not stem from a superior's command. While this is literally true, he took them in response to a request from Ikoma daimyo Ikoma Gohesu, who was attempting to give Kitsu Motso a way out of the agreement. An **Investigation (Interrogation) / Perception** roll against his **Sincerity (Deceit) / Awareness** of 10k5+5 ascertains that Kousuke is both telling the literal truth and hiding something. He will not confess to Gohesu's involvement under any circumstances

Part Five: Accusation

Accusing Ikoma Kousuke

In order to successfully accuse Kousuke, the PCs need the following:

- The Mochi dust-covered haori from the basket of clothing
- The arrowheads from the small box
- Either testimony from Doji Juichi or the once-sealed note from Kousuke's room

Presenting this evidence to Ginawa is enough for him to quietly demand Kousuke's execution.

If the PCs publicly accuse Kousuke without sufficient evidence as described above, he immediately calls for a duel with the accusing PC. Matsu Hanashiro serves as his champion – this duel will be to the death, and the PC . If the challenged PC backs down, he or she loses half a rank of Glory. If he or she loses the duel, it will be impossible to stick a later accusation on Kousuke.

Accusing Tsuruchi Ikado

In order to successfully accuse Tsuruchi Ikado, the PCs need all of the following:

- The barrel of mochi outside Ikado's room in the corridor and his flour-covered haori
- The bag of arrowheads and the quartermaster's testimony that Ikado helped put the quivers together OR Doji Juichi's testimony

Presenting this evidence to Tsuruchi Ichiro is enough for him to quietly demand Ikado's seppuku.

Conclusion

The conclusion of the adventure turns on whether or not an accusation is successfully made by the end of the first day.

Ikoma Kousuke is accused

The PCs receive the following note from Tsuruchi Ichiro when they wake up:

“Thank you for your help. Meeting you in person again would draw more attention to this affair than I can risk, but know that your lords will hear of the service you have done for me. –Tsuruchi Ichiro”

At breakfast, Ikoma Kousuke is conspicuously not present. At the meal's conclusion, Akodo Ginawa stands to address the room.

“It came to my attention yesterday that a member of my entourage did not fully understand his champion’s statement about our clan’s relationship with your family. He has been dealt with. I expect that the rest of our visit will be much less eventful, and I apologize for doubting the sincerity of the Tsuruchi family’s hospitality.”

“All is forgiven, Akodo-san. I am only relieved that we were able to solve this mystery before more damage was done.”

The two men bow to each other, and breakfast proceeds happily.

Tsuruchi Ikado is accused

The PCs receive the following note from Tsuruchi Ichiro when they wake up:

“Thank you for your help. Meeting you in person again would draw more attention to this affair than I can risk, but know that your lords will hear of the service you have done for me. –Tsuruchi Ichiro”

At breakfast, Tsuruchi Ikado is conspicuously not present. At the meal's conclusion, Tsuruchi Ichiro stands to address the room.

“It came to my attention yesterday that a certain member of my family did not share my hopes for peace with the Lion clan. That man has been dealt with. I expect the rest of our guests’ visit will be much less eventful, and I apologize for my poor hospitality up to this point.”

Ginawa stands as well. “I appreciate your diligence, Tsuruchi-san. I would have appreciated it more if such disagreements had been solved before we arrived, but your honesty about this matter is refreshing.”

The two men bow to each other, and breakfast continues somewhat uncomfortably.

No one is accused before breakfast

Ginawa and Hanashiro do not arrive on time for breakfast. Midway through the meal, however, they make a grand entrance.

Ginawa and Hanashiro stalk into the room, and both of their faces are masks of rage. Ichiro stands reflexively as Ginawa addresses him. “Tsuruchi-sama, you said yesterday that we were going to go hunting this morning.”

“That is correct.”

“Then explain to me why all of my horses have been drugged.”

Ichiro’s face breaks. “What?”

Ginawa reaches the center of the room. Hanashiro follows behind him, hands on his sword, in a Crane duelist’s ready stance. “They stagger about like drunks, and their feed bags are full of ground-up leaves and sugar cubes. This insult will not stand.”

“Ginawa-san, I promise to find the one who did this.”

“No. It is too late. We are leaving, and my Champion will hear of how guests are treated in your castle.”

“I promise you that this was not my intent. I am deeply sorry that our hospitality has been so poor.”

“I expect that you will be.” Ginawa stalks out of the room, and the other high-ranking Lion follow behind him.

Epilogue

If no accusation is made successfully, the gathering ends abruptly that morning as people begin heading home. Much later, the PCs hear that Tsuruchi Ikado was responsible for the various mishaps. Tsuruchi Ichiro makes an impassioned apology to the Lion, but is rebuffed. Kitsuo Motso requests permission from both the Regent and the Emerald Champion to declare war on the Tsuruchi family, and begins negotiating with the Scorpion for the right to bring his armies through their territory.

If an accusation was successfully made, the hunting trip goes well, and the second day’s negotiations are also successful. The mood at dinner that night is somewhere between reserved and friendly, a marked improvement over the previous days’ tension.

If Kousuke was successfully accused, the following scene takes place at dinner:

At the end of the meal, Ginawa stands to address the room, directing his comments to Ichiro. “I am pleased

that in these past days we have begun to put our differences behind us. In the end, it is as my champion said last summer: the man with whom we quarreled is no more, and his family deserves our respect. We thank you for your hospitality, and look forward to returning it should you choose to visit our lands.”

Ichiro stands as well. “I would like that very much, and I look forward to negotiating marriages that will formalize our newfound friendship.” He turns to the room. “Thank you all for being part of this historic event.”

Following this, any unmarried Lion or Tsuruchi PCs may submit themselves to be part of the marriage negotiations. Lion PCs may acquire a Tsuruchi spouse, and Tsuruchi PCs may acquire an Akodo or Matsu spouse. All spouses acquired in this way have Status 2.0; if this is higher than the PC’s status, the PC must marry into his or her spouse’s family.

If Kousuke was exposed and there are any Lion PCs in the party, those PCs are privy to the following scene during the ride home.

Ginawa wheels his horse around to face you. “Samurai of the Lion clan! In the past two days, one of our number defied our champion's direct commands. I did not offer him seppuku. I did not offer him a place in the Deathseekers. I ordered his execution.” Ginawa nudges his horse forward. “There are those among us who would find fault with our champion's leadership. Raising such concerns among those of our own clan is acceptable within reason. Raising them in mixed company is unacceptable. Disobeying his direct commands is treason. Think on this as we ride for home.” He turns his horse around, then continues down the trail.

If Ikado was accused and there are any Tsuruchi PCs in the party, those PCs are called into an audience after the Lion delegation leaves.

Tsuruchi Ichiro stands at the head of the chamber with all of his family arrayed in front of him, from provincial daimyo down to the youngest hohei fresh from his gempukku. “By now,” he says with blazing eyes, “you must have heard of the treasonous actions of Tsuruchi Ikado. I considered simply executing him, but in the end chose to offer him an honorable end. Whatever we once were, we are now great clan samurai, and Ikado-san demonstrated in death what he chose not to in life. We answer to our champion Yoritomo Aramasu, who has no grudge with the Lion clan and no desire to incite its fury. If you have a

problem with that, you have a problem with me.” He takes a deep breath. “You are dismissed.”

The End

Rewards for Completing the Adventure

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

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

Experience Points

Surviving the adventure:	1XP
Good roleplaying:	+1XP
The PC contributed to the investigation:	+1XP
The investigation comes to a conclusion:	+1XP

Total Possible Experience: 4XP

Honor

As indicated in the adventure.

Glory

If the investigation concluded successfully, each PC gains a number of points of Glory equal to 3 minus their current Glory rank, to a minimum of one point.

Other Awards/Penalties

If the party brought the investigation to a satisfactory conclusion, each PC gains Tsuruchi Ichiro as an ally with Influence 4 and Devotion 1. Additionally, each Lion and Tsuruchi PC gains .1 status.

Module Tracking Sheets

Players should note who, if anyone, was exposed as the culprit.

GM Reporting

Was anyone blamed for the disruptions? If so, who was it?

Did Ichiro interrupt the Wasp code discussion?

Which, if any, of the NPCs died or was dishonored?

GM must report this information BEFORE 9/12/2013 for it to have storyline effect.

Appendix #2: NPC List for GMs

Crab

Yasuki Nobuhide, Crab merchant patron. He wears Crab colors in expensive but not ostentatious silk. He is a cautious man when it comes to making deals, but willing, when necessary, to take that long-shot risk. He is known among the Yasuki and the Mantis as a shrewd dealer when it comes to merchant pursuits.

Honor: 2.5 **Status:** 3.0 **Glory:** 5.0 **School/Rank:** Yasuki Courtier 3

Goals: Continue to tighten the alliance with the Mantis. Figure out what the Lion are up to.

Gossip: TN 15 – Nobuhide is a rising star among the Yasuki family.

TN 25 – Nobuhide is a very successful merchant patron with ties to merchants throughout the Empire.

Previous Appearances: Winter Court: Kyuden Gotei

Crane

Doji Juichi, Crane diplomat. Juichi is everything anyone would expect from a Doji Courtier: handsome, smooth talking, and honorable. His unmarried status is a mystery to many, as someone of his position should have wed many years ago. Though last year at Kyuden Gotei he was merely an assistant, he is the only Crane diplomat present. Trusting him with Lion and Mantis diplomacy may not be much of a step up in the world, however. If there are any male PCs present who have a romantic history with Juichi, he will arrange to see them in private.

Honor: 5.5 **Status:** 3.0 **Glory:** 2.0 **School/Rank:** Doji Courtier 3

Goals: Figure out what the Lion are up to without getting in trouble.

Gossip: TN 15 – Juichi's journey to Kyuden Hida two years ago was a spectacular failure for him. He lost much face due to the death of his yojimbo. As a result, his star has fallen a bit in the Crane courts.

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

Previous Appearances: Winter Court: Kyuden Hida, Winter Court: Kyuden Gotei, Knife in the Darkness

Dragon

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

Honor: 4.2 **Status:** 4.0 **Glory:** 3.0 **School/Rank:** Kitsuki Courtier 3

Goals: Figure out if the Lion actually intend to honor the statement of non-enmity.

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

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

Previous Appearances: Winter Court: Kyuden Hida

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

Honor: 4.4 **Status:** 3.5 **Glory:** 1.5 **School/Rank:** Mirumoto Bushi 2

Goals: Avoid Hatoku as much as possible.

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

TN 25 – Kayuri has little experience as a duelist, though she was a competent battlefield bushi before her marriage and current posting.

Previous Appearances: Winter Court: Kyuden Hida

Frog

Kaeru Itoshi, Frog merchant patron. The eldest son of Frog family daimyo Kaeru Mikaru, Itoshi is also a successful merchant patron in his own right. He is nervous around higher-ranking samurai, often with a sweaty brow and clammy hands, but is very competent and collected while discussing finance, logistics, and commodities trading. He prefers to keep his relationship to the Frog daimyo quiet, as he enjoys his ability to operate independently for the moment.

Honor: 3.5 **Status:** 3.0 **Glory:** 3.5 **School/Rank:** True ronin (Insight rank 4)
Goals: Deepen symbiotic relations with the Mantis. Attract as little attention as possible from other clans.
Gossip: TN 15 – Itoshi is an independently wealthy merchant patron.
TN 25 – Itoshi's father is Frog family daimyo Kaeru Mikaru, and Itoshi is first in line to inherit the family.
Previous Appearances: Unexpected Allies (KCGF 2012 interactive)

Lion

Akodo Ginawa, Akodo family daimyo. Ginawa is a square-jawed block of a man, with greying temples and eyes that always seem to be squinting. He does not normally wear his katana, preferring to carry only his wakizashi and a tessen. He is here mostly as a figurehead and not particularly happy about it, but will do his best to not display his annoyance. He will stay out of the public eye if possible, preferring to allow his better-qualified underlings to do the political wheeling and dealing.

Honor: 6.0 **Status:** 7.0 **Glory:** 6.0 **School/Rank:** Akodo Bushi 5
Goals: Look impressive. Be inaccessible. Allow Hanashiro and Kousuke room to do their work.
Gossip: TN 15 – Toturi I elevated Ginawa to his current position after the Akodo family was reinstated in the wake of the march to Voltturnum.
TN 25 – Ginawa spent two decades as a ronin before becoming Akodo family daimyo.
TN 35 – Ginawa is a stronger general and instructor than he is a politician. He is likely here only to be a figurehead.
Previous Appearances: Ancestral Dictate, Emperor's Favor, Twisted Fate

Ikoma Kousuke, Political advisor to Ikoma family daimyo Ikoma Gohesu. A returned spirit, Kousuke is a small and unassuming man in his mid-thirties who dresses precisely and unimaginatively in slightly archaic styles. In public, he specializes in meaningless grand gestures. In private, he is one of the last of the Ikoma Spymasters, having escaped the school's recent destruction due to his training 400 years ago not being common knowledge.

Honor: 2.5 (5.5 perceived) **Status:** 5.5 **Glory:** 3.0 **School/Rank:** Ikoma Omoidasu 4
Goals: Sabotage relations between Lion and Tsuruchi by blaming mishaps on Tsuruchi Ikado. Don't get caught.
Gossip: TN 15 – Recently installed Ikoma family daimyo Ikoma Gohesu took Kousuke on as an advisor just after Gohesu's installation.
TN 25 – Kousuke has complained that many members of his family do not know or value the truth of Ikoma's life.
TN 35 – Kousuke has expressed his displeasure with Kitsu Motso's leadership while among the Lion, but despite this has unflinchingly followed Motso's orders while dealing with other clans.

Ikoma Masakazu, Karo to Ikoma Kousuke. Masakazu dresses just as precisely and unimaginatively as his master Kousuke, though he is only about thirty years old. While he is taller than Kousuke, his fawning manner somehow makes him seem smaller than his superior when they are together. He knows of Kousuke's plan to undermine the Lion-Tsuruchi accord and is not at all comfortable with it, though he does not know the extent of the deeds that Kousuke intends to personally perpetrate.

Honor: 8.5 **Status:** 4.7 **Glory:** 3.0 **School/Rank:** Ikoma Omoidasu 3
Goals: Keep Ikoma Kousuke out of trouble, or control the damage he does by blaming him.
Gossip: TN 15 – Masakazu is known to be an extremely honorable man.
TN 25 – Masakazu is normally a genial and happy fellow, and his behavior here has been oddly subdued.
TN 35 – At an internal Lion court a few weeks ago, Masakazu had a serious falling-out with Ikoma Kousuke, though no one knows what it was about.

Matsu Hanashiro, karo to Koritome vassal family daimyo Matsu Kabetaka. A slick and handsome man of about thirty-five years, Hanashiro dresses stylishly in Lion colors, accented with cords worn as tokens of previous victories in duels. He served as an Emerald Magistrate before being removed from the position after using duels too aggressively to prosecute cases. He joined the Lion clan when he married a woman named Matsu Teitetsu, and his high honor and hot temper makes him fit in well with his adopted family.

Honor: 7.5 **Status:** 4.7 **Glory:** 2.0 **School/Rank:** Akodo Bushi 4
Goals: Be a friendly political face for the Matsu family without appearing weak. Win duels if necessary.
Gossip: TN 15 – Hanashiro was born to the Ikoma family, trained in the Akodo school, and married into the Matsu.
TN 25 – Hanashiro was once an Emerald Magistrate, but was removed from the position due to using his considerable dueling skills to stick one too many premature accusations.
TN 35 – Hanashiro's marriage is not one of passion, as both he and his wife have a preference for members of the same sex. Due to his prickly temperament and sense of honor, however, he fits in quite well with his adopted family.

Matsu Toshiko, gunso of Koritome elite archer unit. Toshiko is an accomplished scout and sniper and is devoutly loyal to her clan. Her name came up when Kousuke began looking for bushi who could help him quietly accomplish clan goals, and the two have worked together ever since. He arranged for her to be promoted to gunso recently, and her job here is to keep her subordinates unhappy and poorly-behaved in response to any perceived insult the Tsuruchi offer. While she is aware that Motso-sama wants a way out of the agreement and she intends to give him one, she does not know that much of the chaos that will take place originates with her master.

Honor: 4.5 (7.5 perceived) **Status:** 3.0 **Glory:** 1.5 **School/Rank:** Akodo Bushi 3

Goals: Keep her unit of archers unhappy and poorly-behaved. Do not reveal connection to Kousuke.

Gossip: TN 15 – Toshiko is an accomplished scout and archer who was recently promoted to gunso.

TN 25 – She was promoted based on a recommendation from Ikoma Kousuke, who praised her ability to work well with samurai of other families and professions.

TN 35 – Toshiko's mother was a cousin of Tsuruchi.

Mantis

Tsuruchi Ichiro, Tsuruchi family daimyo. Ichiro wears a yellow and black scarf around his left arm and has a stern watchful look in his eye. He was not a supporter of the Wasp Clan joining the Mantis Clan, but has come to respect Aramasu for how he has handled the Clan.

Honor: 3.5 **Status:** 7.0 **Glory:** 7.0 **School/Rank:** Tsuruchi Archer 4

Goals: Make the Lion happy. Show everyone else that the Lion are happy so the Lion have to stay happy.

Gossip: TN 15 – Ichiro strongly supports Mantis clan champion Yoritomo Aramasu despite his recent seclusion.

TN 25 – Ichiro was once close to Miya family daimyo and Imperial Herald Miya Yumi, but now the two have not spoken in many years.

TN 35 – Ichiro did not support the Tsuruchi's inclusion into the Mantis. Some say that he may still pull the Tsuruchi family from the Mantis clan if he does not approve of its Champion.

Previous Appearances: Winter Court: Kyuden Gotei

Tsuruchi Ikado, Tsuruchi archer school master sensei. At nearly forty years of age, Ikado is nearing retirement. He was a close associate of Tsuruchi, and picked up his master's hatred for the Lion clan, which by now is well-known.

Honor: 2.5 **Status:** 4.0 **Glory:** 2.5 **School/Rank:** Tsuruchi Archer 5

Goals: Get through this stupid show without shooting a Lion in the face.

Gossip: TN 15 – Since Tsuruchi retired, Ikado is the most skilled archer remaining in the family.

TN 25 – Ikado was a long-time confidant of Tsuruchi's. During his time as a minor clan samurai, he was well known for his barely-controlled hatred of the Lion. Tsuruchi managed to put most of his resentment behind him after joining the Mantis clan, but Ikado never did.

TN 35 – Ikado's time as a bounty hunter gave him extensive knowledge of the Rokugani underworld, although he has put that behind him now that he holds a high station in a great clan.

Tsuruchi Masae, Hatamoto to Tsuruchi Ichiro. Masae is an unimaginative man, but one perfectly suited to the job of keeping a fairly remote castle running smoothly. He is, however, extremely high-strung, and is close to snapping due to the pressure on him to keep the Lion warm, well-fed, and otherwise comfortable. As things begin to go wrong, he begins to unravel.

Honor: 4.5 **Status:** 6.0 **Glory:** 2.0 **School/Rank:** Tsuruchi Archer 3

Goals: Keep the Lion comfortable so that Ichiro can make them happy.

Gossip: TN 15 – Masae is a capable administrator, and Kyuden Ashinagabachi runs smoothly mostly because of his considerable efforts.

TN 25 – The things that have gone wrong so far are quite uncharacteristic of Masae's administration.

TN 35 – Masae has not slept well in recent weeks, likely due to the pressure he feels to execute this event well.

Yoritomo Tsuboro, Yoritomo diplomat. Tsuboro is a former ronin who followed Yoritomo during the Clan Wars and swore fealty to the Mantis when they became a Great Clan. He is friendly and somewhat more traditional than many Mantis, making him a better choice for dealing with prickly Lion than many of his louder colleagues.

Honor: 6.5 **Status:** 3.0 **Glory:** 3.1 **School/Rank:** Yoritomo Courtier 2

Goals: Cement good relations between Tsuruchi and Lion. Use these good relations to make money.

Gossip: TN 15 – Tsuboro is known as one of the friendliest and most traditional of the Yoritomo courtiers.

TN 25 – Tsuboro is a former ronin; while he genuinely enjoys his acquired civility, he also enjoys using it to make money from clans and families that more boorish Yoritomo do not deal well with.

Previous Appearances: Winter Court: Kyuden Hida, The Price of Weakness

Phoenix

Asako Heiwako, Phoenix historian. A returned spirit from the early 11th century, Heiwako is an idealistic historian with an obsession for peace. While the Phoenix mostly don't care about the Lion-Tsuruchi announcement, Heiwako's Imperial patron ensured that she would be sent here to chronicle such a momentous event.

Honor: 8.5 **Status:** 2.0 **Glory:** 1.5 **School/Rank:** Asako Loremaster 2

Goals: Record the historic reconciliation of the Lion and Tsuruchi for posterity.

Gossip: TN 15 – Heiwako has written several histories of peaceful resolutions to conflicts both famous and obscure. TN 25 – Most respected scholars consider Heiwako's work to be wide-eyed and inaccurate, however, she has gained some interest from the Imperial Regent for her previous writings, and there are rumors she has been asked to prepare a treatise on his first reign to combat the numerous “outlandish tales” circulating about it.

Scorpion

Shosuro Ochiba, Scorpion diplomat. Ochiba is a quiet, pretty woman in her late twenties who has travelled across the Empire and has spent time in virtually every significant court. Despite some unpleasantness last winter when she was sent to the Mantis isles, she has performed her duties with distinction and grace, and has begun to have a reputation for keeping a pleasant face on the Scorpion Clan despite the occasional mis-step from her Clansmen.

Honor: 3.4 **Status:** 4.0 **Glory:** 2.4 **School/Rank:** Bayushi Courtier 4

Goals: Figure out what the Lion are up to without getting the Scorpion blamed for anything.

Gossip: TN 15 – Ochiba has served her Clan as a diplomat for the last decade without accumulating the expected long list of enemies that most Scorpion have.

TN 25 – Ochiba has managed this despite often being sent to the most volatile and dangerous courts possible.

Previous Appearances: Winter Court: Kyuden Gotei, The Price of Weakness

Unicorn

Moto Altan, Representative of the Khan. Born in the Burning Sands, Altan is a member of the Khan's son's entourage. He is quite advanced in years, with grey-streaked hair and stubble. Though it is nearly summer, he wears leather and fur, much to the chagrin of the more proper guests. A grizzled old veteran archer, he has been sent here in order to learn more about how proper Rokugani do archery, as the Tsuruchi are its undisputed masters. He has travelled extensively, though mostly outside the borders of the Empire, and generally gives the impression that he has seen everything. Though a New Moto, Altan is friendly and approachable if somewhat uncouth.

Honor: 2.7 **Status:** 4.0 **Glory:** 4.6 **School/Rank:** Moto Bushi 4

Goals: Learn about Rokugani archery.

Gossip: TN 15 – Altan was born in the Burning Sands and is an extremely skilled archer.

TN 25 – Altan was a member of the entourage of the Khan's son and has recently been promoted to a position as a sensei of the Moto Bushi School, so that his age and experience may be of best service to the Clan. Though it is not as glorious a position as a guard of the Champion's heir, it is still prestigious and he is not unhappy in the slightest. He feels that “the boy”, Gaheris Koghun, has become enough of a man to choose his own riders, and regards it as simply part of life.

Previous Appearances: Winter Court: Shiro Moto

Player Handout #1: NPC List

Crab

- Yasuki Nobuhide, wealthy Crab merchant patron (Status 3.0)

Crane

- Doji Juichi, Crane diplomat and theater enthusiast (Status 3.0)

Dragon

- Kitsuki Hatoku, reserved Dragon diplomat (Status 4.0)
- Kitsuki Kayuri, Hatoku's wife and yojimbo (Status 3.5)

Frog

- Kaeru Itoshi, diffident Frog merchant patron (Status 3.0)

Lion

- Akodo Ginawa, Akodo family daimyo (Status 7.0)
- Ikoma Kousuke, returned spirit and political advisor to Ikoma family daimyo Ikoma Gohesu (Status 5.5)
- Ikoma Masakazu, karo to Ikoma Kousuke (Status 4.7)
- Matsu Hanashiro, karo to Koritome vassal family daimyo (Status 4.7)
- Matsu Toshiko, gunso of Koritome elite archers first unit (Status 3.0)
- Several Koritome elite archer hohei (Status 2.0)

Mantis

- Tsuruchi Ichiro, Tsuruchi family daimyo (Status 7.0)
- Tsuruchi Ikado, master sensei of Tsuruchi archer school (Status 4.0)
- Tsuruchi Masae, hatamoto to Tsuruchi family daimyo (Status 6.0)
- Yoritomo Tsuboro, Yoritomo representative (Status 3.0)
- Many Tsuruchi bushi (Status 2.0 or lower)

Phoenix

- Asako Heiwako, Phoenix historian (Status 2.0)

Scorpion

- Shosuro Ochiba, Scorpion diplomat (Status 4.0)

Unicorn

- Moto Altan, Emissary from the Khan (Status 4.0)

Player Handout #2: Map of the Tunnels

This map of the tunnels shows a central circular chamber with seven corridors radiating from it. According to the map, these corridors lead to the following places:

- The pantry
- The stables
- The armory
- An exit behind the castle
- A guest room
- A private room in the Tsuruchi royal suite
- A hallway in the Tsuruchi royal suite