

Divide and Conquer

**A One-Round Introductory Adventure for
Heroes of Rokugan: Spirit of Bushido
Month of Akodo, 1141 (Early Summer)**

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The Lion and Scorpion have fought over the heart of the Empire for centuries. Will an arranged marriage between the Clans ease their strife, or provide more opportunities for conflict?

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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 an Introductory adventure; the encounters have been optimized for a party of Rank One PCs. PCs with more experience may prove more capable than those without any, but there should not be enough difference to significantly affect the outcome of the module. GMs are encouraged to increase the TNs of Social Skill rolls by 5 for those PCs who have more than two Ranks of Glory or who have played more than six modules (as more is expected of such characters).

Adventure Summary and Background

With the Scorpion Clan's difficulties in recent memory (the abolishment of the Clan following the Coup, the Exile to the Burning Sands), they have taken some effort to make peace with their neighbors. Though some of the Clan disagree with Champion Bayushi Yojiro's plan to smooth relations with the rest of the Empire, the Scorpion are loyal to their lord's wishes and overtures have been made to most of the other Clans.

To that end, the Scorpion have brokered a tentative peace treaty with their nearest northern (and most militant) neighbors in the Lion Clan. The daimyo of the provinces on either side of the famous Beiden Pass have both offered one of their vassals as the principals in a marriage treaty to secure the understanding between the Clans. The renowned Scorpion actress, Bayushi Shamate, is due to marry Matsu Hataki, a promising young magistrate of the Lion.

Unfortunately, with the long history of enmity between the Clans, there are samurai on each side who are more interested in continuing the conflict. Bayushi Kuemon, a friend of Shamate's brother, was at one point quite interested in Shamate himself; after his advances were rebuffed, it has left him bitter and now interested in ruining the match that has been made for her. (Being a relatively clever Scorpion, however, Kuemon will be using his cousin Eitarou as a stalking-horse.) Matsu Umeko is a high-ranking Lion samurai-ko who has found a certain amount of glory fighting against the Unicorn, but the recent lessening on that front has led to her being reassigned and left her with rather more time on her hands than is good for her.

These two samurai will be working independently to sabotage the attempt at peaceful relations between their Clans. The PCs will be asked to help discover the reason that the negotiations have been having such

problems. Over the course of the module, they will have the opportunity to discover the plots that are going on, and will be called upon to help deal with the bandit gang that both Umeko and Kuemon have hired independent of one another.

This module is intended as an introductory module for new players and characters; as a court-mod, it does involve a significant amount of character interactions that may take more time than initially planned for. Such things can be difficult to judge, particularly if the module is to be run in a specific time-slot, but the actual mechanical challenges presented by this module are deliberately simple and streamlined in order to allow the table to focus on roleplaying and interaction with each other and the various NPCs.

Character Notes

Check the PCs' character sheets for the following:

- Owls
- Characters with "Oath of Fealty: Yogo Tobusa" will gain a Free Raise with most Social Skill rolls when interacting with other vassals of Yogo Tobusa.
- Characters with "Oath of Fealty: Matsu Akane" will gain a Free Raise with most Social Skill rolls when interacting with other vassals of Matsu Akane.

Introduction

The PCs have been sent by their daimyo to the village of Beiden in the Scorpion lands in order to attend the wedding of Matsu Hataki and Bayushi Shamate. Beiden is a Scorpion commercial center located on the south side of Beiden Pass, the largest pass through the Spine of the World Mountains that divides the northern and southern Empire. It is not a large military holding like the Lion castle Shiro Matsu on the other side of the Pass, but it does see a great deal of trade. It is therefore a prosperous and energetic community, a bustling town well used to hosting guests from across the Empire.

Of course, as an important holding on the border with a frequently hostile Clan, Beiden does have minimal defenses. There is a low wall, likely sufficient to discourage bandits or small-scale assaults, but quite obviously not enough to hold off a concerted invasion. This is deliberate, as the village's primary defensive attribute is its role as a sink for any forces that invade the Scorpion through Beiden Pass: there are many buildings that are nothing more than traps for the unwary, the streets are broken and several of them dead-end abruptly, and there are numerous hidden

passages through the surrounding countryside. Most of these facts will mean little to their PCs, as the Yogo provincial daimyo has expressly ordered his vassals to make their guests comfortable, but understanding the town's role could help make clear the nature of the relations between Lion and Scorpion.

The PCs are made welcome by the locals, who are going out of their way to be exemplary hosts. This may confuse some of the non-Scorpion samurai present, as the Yogo family is principally noted for being cursed to betray the thing that they love the most. However, for that very reason, the Yogo truly appreciate an opportunity to host weddings and give a new couple a chance at something that they themselves will likely never really have. (It would be horribly bad luck to have a Yogo serve as the officiating shugenja at a wedding, but they like providing the party.)

The PCs, along with most of the wedding guests, will be put up at the *Silver Cloud Inn*, a relatively famous establishment known for its selection of teas. Only the highest-ranked Lion have been given rooms in the daimyo's manor, though the estate is open to the guests for parties and gatherings until all hours of the night.

The wedding guests are mostly Lion and Scorpion; very few samurai from the other Clans have been invited. With the exception of representatives from their allies in the Dragon and Phoenix, respectively, the PCs are the only guests present from other Clans. Imperial PCs should be present to accompany Miya Gokinju, with any ronin or monks hired to serve as his escort (a situation that he finds aggravating, but of course he complies with his lord's command). PCs from the Phoenix, Crane, Unicorn, or Minor Clans have been invited by the Scorpion, while PCs from the Dragon, Crab, and Mantis received their invitations from the Lion. In truth, most of the rest of the Empire was deliberately kept away in order to lessen the chances of something going wrong (or, if something does go wrong, to reduce the number of witnesses), but Kueemon and Umeko were able to arrange for a few potential problems in the guest list.

The town has prepared for a week-long celebration to commemorate the joyous occasion, and the PCs will have a day or so to explore the town before the court begins. There are several markets, where those interested in shopping can find nearly anything normally sold in the Empire. Illegal goods require a **Lore: Underworld / Intelligence** roll at a TN of 25 to obtain, but will be somewhat scarce; the local magistrate is careful to keep any truly dangerous businesses under firm control, so poisons and explosives will not be available to the vast majority of

PCs. (Delving into the black market early on will give the PCs a Free Raise when asking questions later among the underworld, if they choose to do so.)

There are numerous tea and sake houses, most of which are used to catering to the constant stream of travelers through the Pass. There are several geisha houses as well; though they are not among the most famous in the Empire, they still help lend the small city a cosmopolitan air.

The temple district is somewhat smaller, with a few shrines to Scorpion ancestors or Fortunes favored by the Clan. There are only two sizable temples in town, one to Tengen (Fortune of Literature) and one to Jurojin (Fortune of Longevity).

The roads are well-lit, and the straighter passages in the samurai district are decorated in anticipation of the festivities that will accompany the wedding. Banners fly over the daimyo's estate, proclaiming the status and presence of the Lion guests.

If the PCs are particularly proactive about trying to scout out the political terrain (checking out rumors or trying to find out who else has been invited before the dinner), they will likely come to Ikoma Takeshi's attention. He will make sure to invite such energetic samurai to a meeting after dinner (as detailed in the "Making Friends" section of Part One).

Part One: Welcome to Beiden

Festivities and games are planned for the entire week leading up to the wedding. The official opening of court is, of course, the first thing that happens, the night after the PCs arrive in town. All of the wedding guests are invited to the daimyo's estate for dinner.

Daimyo Yogo Tobusa's court has been decorated in bright colors in anticipation of the upcoming wedding. Rich red silks hang on the walls, accented by fine gold cords, an elegant counterpoint to the clothing of the courtiers – red and black-clad Scorpion mingle with the golden kimono of the Lion guests. A vast, well-tended garden is visible through the wide doors of the main hall.

Yogo Tobusa himself shares a dais at the head of the room with his high-ranking guests. Matsu Akane, the daimyo of the Lion Yama Province to the north and the liege of the groom, watches the gathering and speaks politely with Tobusa, a stern expression on her

face. Bayushi Shamate, the bride-to-be, sits at his left, her mask a stylized white oval with red stripes giving the vague impression of a smiling face. Her brother sits next to her, a tall man with a scowl covered by neither the black winged half-mask on his face nor by samurai propriety. Matsu Umeko, a protégé of Akane, is on the Lion daimyo's right hand, with Ikoma Takeshi, the daimyo's political advisor, on the edge of the dais.

The dinner is a splendid affair, with excellent food and fine music softly played in the background. The Scorpion present either pull their mask just enough away from their face to eat, or remove their mask entirely to display another, smaller one under it; the bride is one of the latter, revealing a light veil that does nothing to conceal her attractive features.

Conversation at the high table is somewhat stilted and formal, judging by the body language of the participants. Apart from Bayushi Eitarou, the bride's brother, the high-ranking samurai are genteel and polite, though given to frequent pauses (to accommodate Tobusa's need to shift his mask in order to eat). It is obvious, however, that they are mostly strangers to one another.

As the dinner comes to a close, Yogo Tobusa will rise slowly to his feet to make a brief welcoming speech. The older daimyo leans heavily on a black walking stick, and his black robes are accented with white markings of mourning. His voice is warm, however, if thin with age. "I thank you all for your attendance at this most joyous of events. May this be but the first of many times that our Clans might come together in peace. Kampai!" He raises a cup in one hand to assembled gathering, then takes a sip as the toast is repeated through the hall. "To show our deep pride in this union, my family has arranged a festival for the next several days. There will be events every day, that you may demonstrate your skill and honor. I hope that you all enjoy yourselves as much as I will."

Matsu Akane rises and bows to the host after a smattering of applause, most of the Scorpion present showing their approval of Tobusa's sentiments (though one slender man in deep red turns away from the dais abruptly). In a clear voice, she begins a short speech of her own. "I am certain that I speak for all your guests, Tobusa-san, when I thank you for your generosity and hospitality. The Lion are privileged to be welcomed in such a fashion, and though we cannot offer you any jewel to compare to that which you are giving up, I would like to express my appreciation of your loss by presenting to you a gift." At a gesture, a Lion groom leads a trio of horses into the garden in

sight of the court room. "Our recent exchanges with our mutual neighbor to the west has resulted in certain improvements in our breeding stock, and I would present you with three of the finest steeds my stables has to offer."

The immediate reaction is somewhat reserved; while the Lion guests seems to think to be a fairly generous gift, the Scorpion present are not as expressive. The PCs may roll **Investigation / Awareness** (TN 20) to realize that the majority of the Scorpion present have stiffened, as though insulted. (Scorpion PCs do not need to make this roll, as they know what the issue is.) Those who notice the problem may roll **Lore: Scorpion / Intelligence** (TN 15) or **Courtier / Intelligence** (TN 25) to remember that the Scorpion Clan considers the number three to be extremely unlucky; while all Clans have their own superstitions, it is certainly an extremely bad omen at the least if not a direct insult. The Scorpion in deep red mentioned above, Bayushi Kuemon, will lean in to speak quietly to Eitarou; PCs may roll **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** to take note of this.

Tobusa bows slowly to the Lion daimyo. "Your offer is appreciated, but I could not countenance accepting such tokens. I am an old man, largely incapable of riding such creatures as they should be. It would be cruelty to subject them to my infirmity."

Akane shakes her head, continuing the courtly game of refusal. "But these steeds have been trained specifically to be riding horse for those who are no longer in need of a war-horse. As your service to your Clan has been long and storied, surely you would not seek to deny these poor animals a chance to serve as they should in turn?"

Tobusa pauses for a moment in thought, then shakes his head. "Of course not, Akane-san. I thank you for your gift." Akane's jaw drops, and Tobusa turns from the shocked Lion to face his guests. "Please, make yourselves welcome in my home. I invite you to speak with each other this night and enjoy the music and company. I must ensure that my gifts are given an appropriate place in their new home." With that, he stumps down from the dais, leaning heavily on his walking stick and moving as quickly as possible.

By cutting the traditional game of three refusals short, Tobusa has given Akane a mild insult; undoubtedly this was done in response to the unlucky number chosen, but the Lion present (apart from perhaps any PCs) do not seem to understand that. Akane sits back down and exchanges a few terse words with her Clan-mates, but does not react in a visibly overt fashion.

This should provide the PCs an opportunity to gather a bit of information and to mingle with the assembled samurai. There are a few things that can be learned without any real difficulty:

- The planned events include a wrestling tournament tomorrow morning, with a poetry contest in the afternoon. The next day will see a Go tournament in the morning; though there is nothing specific planned for the afternoon, the daimyo has sponsored a performance of a classic Lion play starring Bayushi Shamate, the bride. A hawking expedition is planned for the day after that, with an iaijutsu tournament to take place in the afternoon. Further plans are still only rumors – everything from a horse-race to fireworks are being theorized.
- It will take very little effort for the PCs to learn the names and positions of the higher-ranking guests present, as well as the Dragon and Phoenix guests. Information on them can be found in Appendix #2. The PCs should be able to approach them for short conversation; these are highly busy people, but they will likely speak even with low-ranked PCs briefly if approached.
- Something that stands out significantly is that the groom is not yet present. The Lion have offered the excuse that he was delayed by finishing an important case; as a magistrate, some of his duties require his personal attention. However, they assure the Scorpion that he will be here before the wedding, five days from now.

Other Rumors

Any PC who wants to try to learn some of what is being talked about may make a **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll, TN 10; a successful roll learns one rumor at random, plus one extra rumor for every 5 points by which the roll beats the TN. (PCs with either “Oath of Fealty: Yogo Tobusa” or “Oath of Fealty: Matsu Akane” receive a Free Raise on this roll.) The rumors include:

- With the recent sudden death of his eldest son to illness, the future of Yogo Tobusa’s lands are somewhat in doubt. His youngest son is only twelve, and though a precocious lad, is still at school. His middle son is studying in another Clan’s lands, and has been for some time, though few can agree on where he is. Tobusa is growing older, and is likely to retire in the next few years; it is probable that the Scorpion will have to find another daimyo to tend these lands.
- A series of fires in the Lion lands has been a matter of concern to several of the guests; it appears to be the work of an arsonist (an incredibly serious crime

in Rokugan) who has steadily been moving south. In fact, there are some reports that the responsible party may now be in the Scorpion lands...

- It is obvious that most of the guests at the wedding are either Scorpion or Lion, though each of those Clan’s allies have sent a representative. From how the local samurai speak of it, this is intentional: the Lion and Scorpion both wished to lower the likelihood of incidents by keeping the guest-list restrained. (The PCs are of course the exception to this.)
- Yogo Tobusa has made no secret of his preference for the Imperial Regent; the Emerald Champion is not much respected in the Beiden Province. Though obviously his duties as a provincial daimyo limit his involvement with the organization, Tobusa is a patron of the Owls, the Imperial investigators who serve Hantei Okucheo. This is a source of contention with Matsu Akane, who despite her general distaste for the Crane, has expressed serious doubts about the Regent and thrown her political support behind the Emerald Champion.
- While marriages in Rokugan are normally political matters, and this one obviously is, there are whispers that the bride and groom are actually in love. They met the previous year, before the potential for a marriage was even in consideration, and apparently hit it off quite well. Some even say that they have become closer than is entirely proper already.
- A few of the guests from the western Scorpion provinces mention that bandits have been a worse problem this year than they have been for some time. This is troubling, though at least the regular peasant uprisings have grown less frequent, so the Clan’s military forces have been more able to deal with them. Unfortunately, many of the bandit gangs appear to be mounted and are generally escaping capture – all the Scorpion have been able to do so far is scare them away from certain prime targets by strengthening their defenses. More troubling locally are a few reports of bandits in the Pass, though they have so far proven to be little more than nuisances (they have not struck any samurai caravans).
- Hataki’s absence has been noted by the Scorpion, who are darkly muttering that it does not bode well for the union of the Clans. The Scorpion consider it fully justified to declare war against someone who backs out of a negotiated marriage, and some speculate that the Lion may be trying to change their mind at this late date.
- The Imperial guest, Miya Gokinju, is an Imperial Cartographer of some reputation. He is known to

be comfortable both in the court and in the field, and has fought half-a-dozen duels over the last several years (not always to victory, but he has at least proven his skill). His current assignment is mapping the so-called “Shadows of Beiden”, the smaller passes through the Spine of the World Mountains that are not as suitable for trade or military use, and he has by all accounts performed this duty with impeccable dedication.

These rumors will also be available through the module; in addition, each of the NPCs has certain information that can be learned about them with a successful Gossip roll. That information is given in Appendix #2. The PCs should also be given regular opportunities (in general, during each contest) to detect the tensions between the Lion and the Scorpion. While this is primarily a background element, it should serve to remind them to keep on task.

Making Friends

At some point in the evening, Ikoma Takeshi will approach each of the PCs and ask to meet with them later that night. He is actually approaching several of the guests, but the PCs are the only ones who will (hopefully) respond. Players who are inclined to dodge this attention should be encouraged to accept; they have no real reason to insult the Lion in such a fashion, and no real way to realize that he would not likely react poorly. Scorpion PCs who seek advice from their superiors will be encouraged to attend, so as to keep an eye on his intentions.

As the court will be going well into the night, the PCs will have some time to gather information before meeting with Takeshi. Eventually, however, he will gather them all in a private meeting room with drinks and snacks.

After shooing out the servants, Takeshi turns to you with a friendly smile on his homely face. “I thank you for agreeing to meet with me; the other samurai were... ah, too busy.” He shrugs philosophically and continues. “Well, so it goes. For the benefit of those who may not be aware: I am Ikoma Takeshi, political advisor to Matsu Akane, daimyo of the Yama Province. I also serve the Imperial Regent as an Owl, though my duties in that regard are significantly less pressing as a general rule. I was responsible for negotiating the marriage agreement between the Lion and Scorpion.” He sighs. “More on that in a minute. Would you each be so kind as to introduce yourself?”

This is an opportunity for the PCs to familiarize themselves with the other characters. If they are not already acquainted, they should be sure to say a few things about themselves so that the other players know what to expect.

“Excellent, excellent. I hope that you’re willing to help me... As I said, I was given the task of arranging the marriage that we are here to attend. Unfortunately, that task was rather more challenging than I anticipated. For whatever reason, it seemed like virtually everything I did met with some sort of impediment. If they had not been so insistent on the matter, I would have thought that the Scorpion did not actually want the match to go through.” (If there are any Scorpion PCs present, he will give them a glance, shrug slightly, and murmur “No offense intended...”)

“At any rate, as the unfortunate incident with Akane-sama’s gifts demonstrates, there are many opportunities for miscommunication to cause... well, problems. If there is some agency at work in this matter, I would appreciate some help in discovering it. If it is nothing more than coincidence and mistakes, I would like to know that as well: it will help demonstrate that both sides should be careful.” He smiles again, this time hopefully. “So can I count on you?”

Takeshi is a favored vassal of his daimyo, and has a certain amount of political power as a result. For most characters at this level, having him as an Ally would be useful for them and their own daimyo. He can offer little more than his own favor and the political connections he has of his own; ronin will be offered two koku for their observations. Takeshi is friendly and sincere in his honest desire to bring peace between his Clan and the Scorpion; while some players may be concerned about his honor due to his connection to the Regent, Takeshi is a good man who simply feels that the Emerald Champion has failed and that a proven leader like the Hantei may be better for the Empire.

The PCs are not obligated to assist Takeshi, but they should at least now be aware of the situation and will know enough to be looking for the problems that will beset the court over the next few days...

Part Two: Court Games

There will be several contests and events over the next several days; each of these will be used by both Matsu Umeko and Bayushi Kuemon to drive further wedges between the two Clans. Overall, the Lion will be attempting to make the Scorpion look weak, while the

Scorpion will be playing up the Lion's warlike nature. Being continuations of their centuries-long feud, these ideas naturally have some traction and will make the other side defensive, propagating more tension between the Clans. Additionally, the allies of each Clan will also pitch in; Gennai Eriko will exchange words regularly with Mirumoto Renan – an antagonism that will relatively quickly become more personal, though it starts as defense of their respective allies. The two will bicker incessantly, with Eriko's anger only growing hotter fed by Renan's acid sarcasm.

During these events, there will be descriptions of the way that each event is being used to stir up the tensions between the Lion and Scorpion. The PCs can use these opportunities to attempt to discover who is behind it, or to attempt to counteract their efforts (it is not required that they know who is behind things to work against it). Either course requires a **Courtier / Awareness** roll. Attempting to reduce the tension uses the Manipulation Emphasis and has a TN of 20; there is no further mechanic for this, but the PCs' efforts should be taken into consideration through the rest of the module. Discovering the source of the tension uses the Gossip Emphasis and gains the PCs information based on how well they roll, as listed below:

- 20: There are two separate parties at work.
- 30: Matsu Umeko is the source of the tension among the Lion.
- 35: Bayushi Eitarou appears to be the principle Scorpion stirring up trouble against the Lion.
- 45: Bayushi Eitarou is working with his cousin Kuemon, but Kuemon is actually the one behind it.

A PC receives a Free Raise for every previous roll they've made over the course of the module; this will allow them to continue working to figure out the puzzle. This information should be described in terms of observing the court in action, seeing which courtiers are saying what and to whom, and judging who is responsible for beginning the various trends.

The PCs should be encouraged to take part in at least one event over the course of the module. It is important that they represent their lords and Clans in some manner; however they feel that they will perform, a samurai should not let fear of failure prevent them from attempting a challenge. Failing that, they should be attempting to either discover the sources of the conflict or trying to reduce the tensions between the Clans.

Day Two, Morning

The next day, the court will gather in a cleared section of the garden, where a temporary arena has been set up. The first event is a wrestling tournament using a simplified version of the classic sumai rules. Any PC

who wishes to participate may do so. The format is simple: the wrestlers attempt to push the other out of the ring. More vigorous physical contact (actual strikes) are discouraged and frowned upon, but not grounds for disqualification. Each PC should roll **Jiu-jutsu (Sumai) / Strength**. (Techniques or Advantages such as Large may provide an additional unkept die at the GM's discretion.) If they choose to perform strikes against their opponents, they may add their unarmed damage rating to their dice pool. Success at a TN of 20 earns them a point of Glory, unless they are using strikes. If a PC rolls more than 35, they are the victor and gain an additional point of Glory (whether or not they used strikes) – the one who rolls the highest is the winner amongst the PCs. Unless a PC rolls 35 or more, the eventual victor is Matsu Umeko. In addition, the victor is given a headband with their personal mon as a prize.

During the wrestling, it becomes fairly obvious that the Lion participants are much more inclined to use strikes than the Scorpion are. This fact is commented upon at length among the Scorpion members of the audience, particularly as the Lion are also doing much better overall in the standings than the Scorpion are. The two facts are only somewhat related; the Lion are also more likely to have the Jiu-jutsu Skill. The Lion are just more competitive and violent, something that the Scorpion are quick to point out in as they comment upon the matches among themselves.

Day Two, Afternoon

Following a large outdoor lunch, the court will gather in the main hall, where numerous desks have been set up with writing materials for the poetry contest. Each participant is expected to create a work in honor of the marriage; the system is a simple **Artisan: Poetry / Awareness** roll. Players who write a poem gain a Free Raise on this roll. Once again, those who exceed a 20 on their roll gain a point of Glory, while a PC who rolls the most over 35 is the victor and gains an additional point of Glory. The basic format is a standard Rokugani haiku: a three-line poem with five syllables in the first line, seven in the second, and five in the third. The typical haiku makes use of natural imagery to evoke its response.

Like every other contest, this will be used to continue the strife between the Clans. Many of the NPCs will offer poems that highlight the differences between the Clans, and most of them are easy to interpret at being slights against their opposite number (intentional or not).

Examples of the styles of poems offered by the most contentious samurai:

Matsu Umeko chooses to imply that the Scorpion's political wives are a sign of their weakness:

*Whispered words dark masks
The fire burns both away
Silk parts before steel*

Bayushi Eitarou makes a direct response to Umeko's claim:

*Cannot words stop steel?
Two words stop short whole legions:
Duty and Honor.*

Ikoma Takeshi tries to use imagery as a unifying tactic:

*Wood scrapes pottery
Ryoko Owari spring
Surprise harmony*

In addition to the Glory, the victor is given a finely-crafted calligraphy set. Unless a PC rolls 35 or more, Ikoma Takeshi is the victor.

Day Two, Evening

Following the poetry, the PCs will have more time to investigate the courtly antics. There will be another lovely dinner with music and singing, and gatherings among the various courtiers through the night.

Day Three, Morning

Yogo Tobusa is renowned as a master of the game of go; while he is by no means the best player in the Empire, he is still a high-ranked samurai with a fondness for the game and is inclined to promote it whenever he has a chance. It is therefore largely unsurprising to the court that he has chosen to sponsor a tournament at the celebration; go is favored by the Scorpion as being a subtle game that requires thought and planning, while the Lion have a passion for it due to the level of tactical thinking required and the importance of positions and formations. Those who wish to participate must roll **Games: Go / Intelligence**; once again, those who succeed at a 20 perform well enough to earn a point of Glory, while a PC who beats a 35 by the highest margin will be victorious and gain an additional point. Bayushi Kuemon will eventually prove victorious unless a PC bests him in the finals by rolling 35 or more; the victor is given a beautiful go set with red and gold stones.

The conflict between the Clans in this scene revolves entirely around the audience; a large number of the courtiers simply choose to observe and make commentary about the games (and, by extension, the players). This has a tendency to continue on the theme of Lion as "aggressive" and the Scorpion as "weak." As before, directly trying to refute these claims is

largely impossible, but the PCs will have the opportunity to attempt more subtle manipulations or try to determine the responsible parties.

Day Three, Afternoon

There is no actual event scheduled for the afternoon; Tobusa planned on the tournament running long. There are some basic gatherings and the usual socialization provides the PCs an excellent opportunity to look into the situation.

Day Three, Evening

That evening, the guests are invited to the Golden Fox theater to watch a performance of the play "Virtue", by Ikoma Jijo. The choice of this particular play is somewhat controversial – the subject matter is the fall of a Crane lady, Doji Nashiko (emphasizing the common enemy for both the Lion and Scorpion), but as her fall led to her becoming the Demon Bride of Fu Leng, it is a somewhat uncomfortable work. However, it is one of the more challenging roles for a female lead to be found in Rokugani theater, and it allows Bayushi Shamate to showcase her range as an actress.

The conflict between the Clans is somewhat understated during the play itself; there are far fewer opportunities for the court to engage in banter without interrupting the play and losing face. (PCs who wish to do so will face the loss of both Glory and Honor, at least one point each per interruption.) However, there is still a minor disruption during the play that the PCs may be interested in.

About halfway into the play, the PCs may roll **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** at a TN of 20 to see Bayushi "the Hawk" Manzo enter the theater and approach Yogo Tobusa's seat of honor. The magistrate leans down urgently and whispers in his lord's ear, then the two men head toward the doors. As Tobusa is somewhat impaired, it will provide the PCs with ample opportunity to catch up or exit before they do. A half-dozen of the local doshin (peasant deputies) wait out in the foyer of the theater, where Manzo and Tobusa stop for a quick conference.

The daimyo and the magistrate are not immediately welcoming of well-meaning offers of assistance from random low-ranked samurai. Approaching them openly requires an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll at a TN of 40. Attempting to get close enough to eavesdrop without being spotted, however, is a **Stealth / Agility** (TN 20) roll; they are somewhat distracted by their conversation.

Manzo is bringing the news to Tobusa that a caravan bearing gifts for the wedding was ambushed by bandits

in Beiden Pass the day before. The news has only come into town today, as the entire caravan was killed; there were no Clan samurai present, only merchants and their hired guards. There are no immediate leads on the bandits; Manzo plans on sending some of his men into the pass to look for them, but is more concerned that the groom's party, expected in the next day or two, make it through without incident. Tobusa will order him to do whatever it takes to ensure Hataki's safety before returning to his guests.

The Stolen Goods

The PCs have a few options they can pursue on this, if they wish, though it is by no means required. They can approach Manzo on their own to offer assistance (the TN for the Bureaucracy roll is reduced to 25 when dealing with Manzo without Tobusa); the magistrate is willing to have their help looking into the matter, but he will focus his own efforts on the Pass end of things. If the PCs ask about the gifts, he can provide them with a list (they are principally domestic items, though some of them do have substantial monetary value – silk hangings, fine porcelain, and a small gold statue for a family shrine). They came from the Imperial capital, as tokens of the Imperial approval of the wedding. If asked about the cargo, the magistrate will muse that the shipment should have been fairly secret; only a few people knew that the gifts were coming in on that caravan, which was otherwise carrying nothing of value. (Matsu Akane arranged the shipment, though the local magistrate and daimyo obviously also knew about it in advance; Matsu Umeko and Bayushi Kuemon were the ones responsible for dealing with the practical matters of the shipment.) Manzo thinks that the bandits would not have been foolish to have brought the items to Beiden to sell, though they would have had time, and will not himself devote any manpower to looking into that possibility. Again, however, the PCs may do so if they wish.

Finding the local fence who took the stolen goods is actually possible, with a fairly straightforward **Lore: Underworld / Intelligence** (TN 20) roll. (The PCs may roll **Investigation / Intelligence** at a TN of 35 instead.) Success leads them to Nokomi, the proprietor of a basket-shop who also has a very quiet business dealing in objects of undetermined origin. She will cooperate with the samurai to the best of her ability, far too frightened of the possibility of being accused of any crime to lie. She readily identifies the man she bought the items (the gold statue and the porcelain) from as “Akuyama”, a hulking ronin with a brutal reputation.

Gathering this information takes a few hours; if the PCs begin immediately on the night of the play, they can actually track Akuyama down to a dilapidated inn and

attempt to apprehend him there. As a ronin, he has very few rights – if the PCs can overwhelm him themselves, they will be able to deliver him to the magistrate. If they think to ask Manzo for permission first, he will grant it, though not give them leave to wear armor (reasoning that if they walk through the city in full armor, the word might get to their target). In this instance, the PCs can catch Akuyama largely unprepared – he will have his dai tsuchi but be unarmored and likely be on his own.

It is possible that the PCs may try to talk with Akuyama; he is not particularly cooperative, but can be bribed if the PCs think to try it. This does require a **Temptation (Bribery) / Awareness** roll with a TN of 25; however, the PCs may add one to their roll for every koku they spend and Akuyama's Greedy Disadvantage gives them a +1k1 to the roll. If bribed, he will turn over a small packet of letters containing two sets of instructions telling which caravan the Imperial gifts would be on, and a picture of a Lion samurai (Matsu Hataki, with a depiction of his personal mon). If this happens, it will essentially prevent the following combats; while Akuyama's men have at this point killed the doshin the pass, causing Manzo to heighten his alert status, after being bribed, Akuyama will simply depart the province with his payments in hand, seeking better pickings elsewhere (and fewer political entanglements).

If the PCs wait until the next day, they can find sign that Akuyama was in town until just before dawn, and headed up into the Pass sometime in the wee hours of the morning. Physically tracking him to his lair is possible (with a **Hunting (Tracking) / Perception** roll at TN 20), but by the time the PCs catch up to him, he will have found gathered some of his men and will be in his armor. If the PCs confront him, they will face a combat with him and a number of his men equal to the number of PCs present. Fortunately, the other ronin are not in armor, but it is highly unlikely that the PCs will be either.

Capturing Akuyama alive will be possible in this instance, though difficult; see the Conclusion for the results of his capture.

Day Four, Morning

Assuming the PCs have not gotten busy pursuing the underworld leads, they will be invited on a hawking expedition the next morning. This form of courtly hunting is generally popular in the more refined courts of the Empire – the samurai ride out with hawks and falcons to catch small game. This is less of a competition and more of an opportunity to get out away from the castle while maintaining a veneer of civility.

The countryside around Beiden is very hilly, with sparse woodlands in the valleys, but possesses a certain stark beauty; the Spine of the World Mountains loom to the north and serve as a constant reminder of the divisions in the court.

Those who wish to specifically participate in the hunting may roll **Animal Handling (Falcons) / Intelligence** or **Hunting / Perception** to meaningfully participate. Succeeding at a TN of 25 earns them a point of Glory, but there are no “prizes” other than the small animals taken by the animals, and no “winner.”

As a principally social event, however, this does also serve as an opportunity to pursue the courtly investigations; the Scorpion and Lion are still wrangling, but by this point, the conflict between Mirumoto Renan and Gennai Eriko will come to a head. During the hawking expedition, the two will begin a heated discussion resulting in Eriko challenging Renan to a duel. The challenge is questionable, as it is not initially intended as a duel to the death, but they neither of them have permission from their lords to engage in such behavior. If the PCs do not intercede, they will meet later that night and Renan will seriously injure Eriko. PCs from those Clans will be asked for assistance, but it will take some effort to dissuade them from their decision – a **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** roll at a TN of 30 is required to encourage them to seek more peaceful resolution. The TN drops to 20 if, instead, the PCs are attempting to get them to wait until they can perform the duel with all due ceremony (getting permission from their lords but requiring several weeks, if not months, worth of delay). PCs who previously made a specific effort to defuse the situation between these two NPCs may well be able to avoid this situation before it occurs.

After the hawking party has been out of the castle for three hours (about when they’re getting ready to head back), Bayushi Manzo will come galloping up. He makes little effort to keep his tidings discreet: one of his patrols sent out into the pass was ambushed and slaughtered by bandits. He has also received word that Matsu Hataki is supposed to be travelling south on the next day, and he is quite concerned about the situation.

The Lion are up in arms about the lack of security provided by their Scorpion hosts; in turn, the Scorpion are highly suspicious of the Lion’s motives and very nearly accuse the Lion of wishing to pull out of the marriage agreement. (And, as mentioned before, the Scorpion Clan do consider that to be an insult dire enough to warrant going to war.)

Day Four, Afternoon

The original intention for the afternoon’s activity was an iaijutsu tournament. However, following the unhappy news of attacks in the Pass and the resulting accusations on both sides, the event using live steel is cancelled. An impromptu sake-tasting party will take place instead; there are no mechanics associated with this unless a player is deliberately attempting to drink to excess, in which case they are likely to become drunk and suffer a penalty of +5 to all TNs for the rest of the day.

However, Ikoma Takeshi seeks out the PCs during this time to find out what they have discovered so far in their investigations. If they have not yet been able to pinpoint those responsible for stirring up the conflict between the Clans, he encourages them to ask around some more before things come to a head the next day. If they have figured out some of the responsible parties, they can inform him of this. In either case, he will ask them to accompany him along with the guard contingent heading into the pass the next day to meet with Matsu Hataki and escort him to Beiden.

It is possible that more proactive PCs will seek to enter the pass on their own, or attempt to rouse some support for the idea among the rest of the court. Securing the assistance of any of the NPCs is possible, though it requires a great deal of political effort (and a **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** roll with a TN of 30). Getting either Bayushi Kueemon or Matsu Umeko to go along should increase the TN by 10. The information in the next section should be relevant for the expedition into the Pass, no matter who the PCs accompany.

Part Three: Into the Pass

If the PCs do not travel with the official group, they will not be able to secure permission to wear armor or carry heavy weapons. They will have much more freedom to explore the pass, however. If they have Miya Gokinju’s map, they will have an extremely easy time finding their way. Studying the map and making a **Battle / Perception** roll at a TN of 25 will allow them to determine that the divide where a small pass on the north-western side of the main Beiden Pass meets the main pass would serve as a particularly good site for an ambush. Without the map, they may make a **Hunting (Trailblazing) / Perception** (TN 30) roll to locate the various passes in order to make the Battle roll to find the ambush point.

If the PCs find the ambush point before the attack, a **Hunting (Tracking) / Perception** (TN 20) to track the

bandits back to their camp. It is possible for the PCs to position themselves above the bandit's camp (where most of the dozen bandits will be out of armor and unprepared for an attack) in order to attack them with ranged weapons, spells, or even potentially creating an avalanche. In this instance, there are likely only two or three bandits in armor, in addition to Akuyama being fully ready, and most of them will have to spend a round or two in grabbing weapons before defending themselves. In this encounter, again, the bandits will fight until it is obvious they cannot win; Akuyama will fight until the end, but the others will likely scatter and flee as soon as he falls.

The assumption is that the PCs will accompany a contingent of guards from both Clans into Beiden Pass to escort Matsu Hataki to his wedding. Matsu Umeko, Bayushi Kuemon, and Bayushi Eitarou will also travel with them and a dozen samurai; Bayushi Manzo is in command of the Scorpion representatives, while Matsu Umeko is the highest-ranked Lion samurai present. The tension between the two Clans remains palpable, even in the pass where danger has been recently demonstrated. The PCs will be given permission to wear armor and carry weapons of war on this mission, and the NPC guards will likewise be prepared for potential violence.

The PCs should get a chance to roll **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** or **Battle / Perception** when traveling through the Pass, both on the way out and the way back, to spot the potential ambush. On the way to meet with Hataki, the TN is 30; it is well-hidden unless one is looking for it.

The group will have no initial difficulties in travelling to meet Matsu Hataki. Hataki is a handsome young man, tall and broad-shouldered, with keen eyes and a steady gaze. He is young for his position, but he has proven himself a capable magistrate, serving his daimyo for the better part of a year. Traveling alone, he is somewhat nonplussed at the heavily armed and armored escort, though polite and agreeable to their presence, particularly when the potential threat has been explained to him.

On the way back, the PCs may make the same roll to spot the ambush point – a place where the mountain on one side of the pass drops off in a sharp divide. A small pass above the divide actually leads up and along another trail, but it is harder to access than the basic path and difficult to even see. This second roll receives the benefit of a Free Raise, however: the bandits lie in wait in the divide, and their lack of discipline undoes some of the benefit they otherwise receive from their concealment.

If the PCs do not successfully spot the bandits, they will be surprised – they suffer a -20 penalty to their Initiative Score. The bandits attack en masse, half of them peppering the group with arrows and half of them closing to melee range. Particularly threatening targets are prioritized (PCs in heavy armor or with large weapons). Akuyama, who has orders to kill Hataki, charges in with a roar and will focus on fulfilling his contract unless interfered with by the PCs. Kuemon and Umeko will attempt to slay Akuyama in battle.

Conclusion

If Akuyama is slain in battle, it will be very difficult to determine who hired him – he does have the letters on him as well as the sketch of his target, but there is no indication of where the letters came from. Investigating the letters goes nowhere – the paper is generic sheets from Tobusa's stores and the writing, while of different hands, is not identifiable as belonging to any character. Various spells may be able to identify the writers, though of course such magical testimony cannot be used to make an accusation. Hataki will take over the investigation at this point, though his wedding and then his regular duties thereafter will almost certainly mean that he will be unable to make any progress.

If Akuyama is captured, he will reveal under torture that he was hired by both Matsu Umeko and Bayushi Kuemon (working independently and without knowledge of the other) to stir up trouble between the Clans by stealing the Imperial gifts and putting pressure on the wedding by attacking trade in the Pass. Kuemon was the only one behind the attack on Hataki, however; Umeko either was not willing or did not think to have her fellow Lion assassinated in order to further her military career. (She's ambitious and ruthless, but not that dishonorable.) The testimony of a ronin is not enough to bring charges against either Kuemon or Umeko, however. Both will lose a great deal of face, and they will have significant political problems in the near future, but they are not likely to be punished for their actions as there is not enough proof for Rokugan's legal system. The PCs can gain some satisfaction from having thwarted their intentions, at least.

If Hataki is slain the ambush, then the small pass off the main Beiden Pass route that the bandits used for their assault will be named in his honor: Hataki Pass. Tensions between the Lion and Scorpion will continue to rise...

Assuming the PCs involve themselves in the matter, they are likely to help save Matsu Hataki. He and

Shamate are married in a gorgeous ceremony before their assembled guests. The couple swear their oaths before a Soshi shugenja and emerge from the shrine. Shamate, now Matsu Shamate, takes an oath of fealty to Matsu Akane in order to begin her new life as a court voice for the Yama Province.

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
Participate in at least one courtly event:	
<i>or</i>	
Lower the tensions between the Clans	+1XP
Prevent Matsu Hataki from being killed	
<i>or</i>	
Prove that either Umeko or Kuemon was behind the plot:	+1XP
Total Possible Experience:	4XP

Honor

If the PCs discover that Matsu Umeko and Bayushi Kuemon are the ones responsible for the situation, and are able to publicly reveal it, they gain an amount of Honor equal to (10 – their current Honor Rank). (So a character with Honor 4 gains 6 points of Honor.)

Glory

If the PCs help defeat the bandits in combat, they gain 4 points of Glory. Otherwise, any other Glory gains are listed in the mod. If a PC gains no Glory over the course of the module, they lose one point of Glory for inactivity. (The GMs may waive this loss at their

discretion if the PC was active through the court and simply was the victim of bad rolls.)

Other Awards/Penalties

The PCs gain a Favor from the Lion Clan and the Scorpion Clan, unless they uncover the fact that an NPC from that Clan was behind the plot. (If Umeko is discovered, they do not gain a Lion Favor; if Kuemon is accused, they do not gain a Scorpion Favor.)

As long as the PCs agree to help him, unless they go out of their way to work against his best interests, they gain Ikoma Takeshi as an Ally (1 Devotion/1 Influence).

Module Tracking Sheets

Did the PC win any of the court contests?

GM Reporting

Did the PCs prevent Hataki from being killed?

Did the PCs publicly uncover Umeko's involvement in increasing tensions between the Clans?

Did the PCs publicly uncover Kuemon's involvement in increasing tensions between the Clans?

Was Akuyama killed or captured, or did he get away?

GM must report this information BEFORE (11/25/13) for it to have storyline effect

Appendix #1: NPCs

Akuyama

A hulking brute who looks barely clever enough to tie his sandals on, Akuyama is far more cunning than he appears. He is fully aware of his appearance, and is more than willing to allow others to underestimate his brains. His body and face bear the scars of a decade and a half of war, and he easily hefts a pitted and stained war hammer in one hand. Though not a Crab, he is not above using the assumptions of Clan samurai to his own ends.

Air 2 Earth 4 Fire 3 Water 3 Void 3
Honor 1.3 Status 0 Strength 4 Infamy 3.2
Initiative: 5k2+5 **Attack:** 8k3-5 (Dai Tsuchi, Complex)
Armor TN: 25 (Heavy Armor) **Damage:** 10k2 (Dai Tsuchi)
Reduction: 5
Wounds: 20 (+0), 28 (+3), 36 (+5), 44 (+10), 52 (+15), 60 (+20), 68 (Down, +40), 76 (Dead)

School/Rank: none/Insight Rank 3

Skills: Athletics 2, Battle 5, Defense 4, Engineering 2, Etiquette 2, Heavy Weapons (Dai Tsuchi) 5, Hunting 3, Intimidation 4, Jiu-jitsu 2, Kenjutsu 3, Kyujutsu 2, Lore: Underworld 3, Stealth 2

Mastery Abilities: +5 Initiative, may keep a Full Defense Roll in successive Turns, lower opponent's Reduction by 2 with Heavy Weapons, Free Raise to Knockdown with Heavy Weapons, +1k0 sword damage

Advantages/Disadvantages: Disturbing Countenance, Large, Luck I / Bounty, Greedy

Ronin Bandits

Air 2 Earth 2 Fire 2 Water 2 Void 2
Stamina 3 Agility 3 Infamy 1.0
Honor 1.8 Status 0
Initiative: 3k2 **Attack:** 6k3 (katana, Complex)
Armor TN: 18 **Damage:** 6k2 (katana)
(Ashigaru Armor)
Reduction: 1
Wounds: 10 (+0), 14 (+3), 18 (+5), 22 (+10), 26 (+15), 30 (+20), 34 (Down, +40), 38 (Dead)

School/Rank: none/Insight Rank 1

Skills: Athletics 1, Defense 2, Hunting 2, Intimidation 1, Jiu-jitsu 1, Kenjutsu 3, Kyujutsu 2, Lore: Underworld 2, Stealth 2

Mastery Abilities: +1k0 sword damage

Bayushi Kuemon

Air 3 Earth 2 Fire 3 Water 2 Void 3
Awareness 4 Intelligence 4 Strength 2

Honor 1.2

Status 3.0

Glory 4.2

Initiative: 6k4

Attack: 7k3 (katana, Complex)

Armor TN: 25 (Light Armor)

Damage: 6k2

Reduction: 3

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

School/Rank: Bayushi Bushi 2

Techniques: *The Way of the Scorpion:* +1k1 to Initiative Rolls. +5 to Armor TN against any opponent with lower Initiative.

Pincers and Tail: May make the Feint Maneuver for one Raise instead of two.

Skills: Calligraphy 2, Courtier (Manipulation) 5, Defense 3, Etiquette (Conversation) 4, Games: Go 4, Iaijutsu (Focus) 4, Investigation 3, Kenjutsu 4, Lore: Underworld 3, Sincerity 4

Mastery Abilities: +3 Insight, +1k0 to Contested Rolls using Courtier; may retain a Full Defense Roll in successive Rounds, +3 Insight, readying a katana is a Free Action, may make a second Search roll without increasing the TN, +1k0 damage with swords

Advantages/Disadvantages: Crafty, Wary / Disbeliever, Unlucky I

Bayushi Eitarou

Air 2 Earth 2 Fire 3 Water 2 Void 3
Reflexes 3 Agility 4
Honor 2.5 Status 3.0 Glory 4.2

Initiative: 5k4

Attack: 9k4 (katana, Simple)

Armor TN: 20 (Light Armor)

Damage: 6k2 (katana)

Reduction: 3

Wounds: 10 (+0), 14 (+0), 18 (+2), 22 (+7), 26 (+12), 30 (+17), 34 (Down, +37), 38 (Dead)

School/Rank: Bayushi Bushi 1

Techniques: *The Way of the Scorpion:* +1k1 to Initiative Rolls. +5 to Armor TN against any opponent with lower Initiative.

Skills: Artisan: Poetry 2, Athletics 2, Battle 3, Courtier (Manipulation) 3, Defense 2, Etiquette 2, Horsemanship 2, Hunting 1, Iaijutsu 2, Intimidation 3, Kenjutsu (Katana) 5, Sincerity 1

Mastery Abilities: +3 Insight, +1k0 sword damage, may ready a sword as a Free Action

Advantages/Disadvantages: Quick, Strength of the Earth / Failure of Courtesy

Matsu Umeko

Air 3 Earth 3 Fire 2 Water 3 Void 3
Honor 6.1 Agility 4 Strength 4
Status 3.0 Glory 6.3

Initiative: 5k3

Attack: 10k5 (katana,
Full Attack, Complex)

Armor TN: 30 (Heavy
Armor)

Damage: 8k2+6

Reduction: 5

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

School/Rank: Matsu Bushi 2

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

Matsu's Fury: May choose an opponent within 30' when taking the Full Attack Stance: the target cannot take Move Actions to move from their current

position if she hits them with an attack this Turn. During the Reactions Stage, an affected opponent may attempt a Willpower roll against a TN equal to the amount of damage dealt from the latest attack to negate the effects of this Technique (they do not suffer Wound Penalties for this roll). If he fails, the effects of this Technique end during the next Reactions Stage (the second after he was struck). Enemies who are immune to Fear cannot be affected by this Technique.

Skills: Athletics 2, Battle 4, Courtier (Manipulation) 2, Etiquette 2, Horsemanship 3, Iaijutsu 3, Jiu-jutsu 3, Kenjutsu (Katana) 5, Kyujutsu 1, Lore: History 3, Lore: Scorpion 2, Lore: War 4, Perform: Oratory 3

Mastery Abilities: may make Full Attacks while on horseback; +1k0 unarmed damage, +1k0 sword damage, may ready a sword as a Free Action

Advantages/Disadvantages: Benten's Blessing, Heart of Vengeance: Scorpion / Contrary

Appendix #2: NPCs

Scorpion

Yogo Tobusa, daimyo of the Beiden province. An elderly man who walks with a lacquered black cane, he has a quick, amicable smile and a strong passion for the game of Go. Tobusa-sama wears a black iron mempo etched with rough carvings of roses, and has a small, barely visible scar on his forehead – a reminder of his life as a bushi in the Clan's service during his youth. He is somewhat distant and distracted with the pending nuptials, fully aware that the Clan is relying on the marriage to cement their relationship with the Lion.

Honor: 2.7 **Status:** 6.0 **Glory:** 5.9 **School/Rank:** Bayushi Bushi 4

Gossip: TN15: Tobusa's eldest son Yogo Taro died under mysterious circumstances last fall. While there were troubling rumors surrounding his son's life, they have largely fallen silent since he fell ill.

TN25: Tobusa is rumored to be thinking about adopting one of his vassals as an heir. The most likely candidate for this may be Bayushi Kuemon, who is a canny politically-minded bushi (much like Tobusa was in his own youth).

Previous Appearances: SoB34, "Knife in the Darkness"

Bayushi Shamate, actress and bride-to-be. A graceful Scorpion courtier, Shamate has something of a reputation among her Clan as a talented actress. She has not gotten a chance to demonstrate her art to the wide Empire, but she may have the potential to bring a great deal of fame and fortune to her family with her skills.

Honor: 4.1 **Status:** 2.2 **Glory:** 3.8 **School/Rank:** Bayushi Courtier 2

Gossip: TN 15: Shamate is a renowned actress who has headlined several very successful productions across the Scorpion lands. She has never had a leading role outside her Clan's theaters, however, though there is the possibility that her marriage will provide her with an opportunity to perform before a wider audience.

TN 25: Shamate and Hataki are actually in love. There are some indications that she was ordered to foster a relationship with the young magistrate of the province across Beiden Pass from the Scorpion lands for some ulterior motive, but their relationship has evidently become genuinely romantic.

Previous Appearances: SoB34, "Knife in the Darkness"

Yogo Kinnosuke, hatamoto to Yogo Tobusa. A dedicated and polite servitor of his lord. Kinnosuke wears a white mask painted with red cherry blossoms which covers the bottom half of his face. Like many of Tobusa's vassals, he walks with a cane to help mask his lord's need for one – his is a stick of simple birch. Kinnosuke is an amateur historian; though he is very busy with seeing to the arrangement for the wedding, he will be willing to speak with characters about the history of the region.

Honor: 3.4 **Status:** 5.4 **Glory:** 2.3 **School/Rank:** Bayushi Courtier 3

Gossip: TN15: Tobusa's hatamoto has begun to take on more of the administrative duties of running the province; the daimyo's health has been somewhat fragile this last year. There are indications that Kinnosuke is grooming Bayushi Kuemon to step up as his assistant, with an eye to eventually taking on a role of leadership in the province.

Previous Appearances: SoB34, "Knife in the Darkness"

Bayushi Manzo, local magistrate. Called "the Hawk" by both his allies and enemies, Manzo has demonstrated himself a skilled and dedicated agent of the law. He has gained a reputation on both sides of the Pass by cracking down on the inevitable smuggling that takes place across the border between two Clans, and even the Lion are quite respectful of his abilities. He is a grim and dedicated professional, willing to let controlled crime pass in order to keep peace in the province.

Honor: 1.3 **Status:** 3.8 **Glory:** 4.1 **School/Rank:** Soshi Magistrate 4

Gossip: TN15: Manzo is a skilled warrior and magistrate, who earned his position a year and a half ago when his predecessor was accused of poisoning the lord's son. He has since served with distinction and utter loyalty to Tobusa.

TN25: Manzo is practical and focuses more on crime that may cause civil unrest or trouble for samurai than pursuing every petty thief in his province.

Previous Appearances: SoB34, "Knife in the Darkness"

Bayushi Eitarou, Shamate's brother. Eitarou is a fairly skilled bushi coming up through the ranks of Tobusa's guard. Though not as smooth in court as many of his Clan, he is known to be a promising swordsman. He is very proud of his older sister, and feels that her match with Hataki is a waste of her potential value to the Clan. Most of

his information comes from Kuemon, however, who obviously has his own agenda – which Eitarou is currently unaware of.

Gossip: TN15: Eitarou has complained about his sister's marriage since it was announced.

TN25: Eitarou is not a particularly subtle thinker for a Scorpion; he is known to go to his cousin Kuemon for advice and assistance on a regular basis.

Bayushi Kuemon, Eitarou's cousin. A suave and subtle bushi who has spent a great deal of his career in the court, Kuemon will be careful to avoid attracting attention. In conversation, he is careful but somewhat sardonic; he has no interest in rousing suspicion, but he is (mostly justifiably) proud of his intellect, and does have an unfortunate habit of underestimating others' intelligence.

Gossip: TN15: Kuemon is distantly related to the bride and Eitarou; he is a close friend to Eitarou and his star has risen high in the daimyo's court of late.

TN25: Kuemon courted Shamate two years ago, but his suit was rebuffed. To all accounts, he took his rejection in good part but notably has yet to marry.

Lion

Matsu Akane, daimyo of the Lion Yama province. Akane is a cold, calculating warrior who reserves her Matsu rage for the battlefield. In the refined court setting, she is reserved and distant, refusing to rise to the baiting from the Scorpion but doing little to rein in her own vassals.

Honor: 7.3 **Status:** 6.0 **Glory:** 6.4 **School/Rank:** Matsu Bushi 4

Gossip: TN15: Akane was a strong military leader before becoming a provincial daimyo, as many Lion leaders tend to be. Her proven ability to organize the defense of the Lion's southern border almost certainly explains why she was trusted with the governance of the Yama Province.

TN25: Akane is highly suspicious of the Scorpion, but the terms of the marriage were too good to pass up. In addition to gaining a skilled courtier for her own court, the Beiden province will be making several significant trade concessions to the Lion's trade through the Pass. Given the difficulties the Lion Clan often have with their material resources, it was essentially impossible to ignore the Scorpion's persistent offers.

Previous Appearances: SoB34, "Knife in the Darkness"

Matsu Hataki One of Akane's aides, Hataki is an earnest young man recently appointed to a magistrate position for the Lion Clan. He will not be present for the majority of the module, but is personable and friendly when he does finally arrive.

Honor: 7.4 **Status:** 3.5 **Glory:** 4.6 **School/Rank:** Akodo Bushi 3

Gossip: TN15: Young for his position, Hataki was the sole survivor of a bandit attack that claimed his superior when he was just a yoriki. He has nonetheless shown his skill and dedication since and served Akane faithfully.

TN25: Hataki served in the Lion armies, like most Lion samurai, in his youth, fighting against the Crane in a few small border skirmishes.

Previous Appearances: SoB34, "Knife in the Darkness"

Ikoma Takeshi, aide to Matsu Akane. Takeshi is a honorable man, who goes out of his way to make friends and will try his best to serve his Clan. He is a good samurai, dedicated to Akane, but truly concerned that needlessly aggravating his Clan's neighbors is a distraction from the Clan's true duties – the defense of the Empire.

Honor: 8.1 **Status:** 3.5 **Glory:** 2.9 **School/Rank:** Ikoma Bard 3

Gossip: TN15: Takeshi is a traditionalist, devoted to the history and culture of the Empire. Though the Toturi Dynasty had demonstrated their possession of the Mandate of Heaven, he genuinely believes that the Empire's trials over the last few years indicate that new leadership is needed, and that Hantei Okucheo's plan to unite the dynasties represents the best hope for Rokugan.

TN25: Though he is an Owl as well as serving as Akane's political advisor, he has had very little to do with that organization. Technically, he was given the position by Miya Rintaro (before the Imperial's unfortunate seppuku two years ago), but has been primarily devoted to his duties to his Clan. It is whispered that the Owls' leadership is somewhat unhappy with the lack of information to come from Takeshi because of these distractions.

Matsu Umeko, protégé of Matsu Akane. She is the daughter of Matsu Tokako, the daimyo of another Lion province, and was fostered to several different Lion courts along the Scorpion border in her youth. She is a driven career military officer, and has been recently assigned away from the front to her discomfort. She is not truly dishonorable, but is willing to do what it takes to gain a chance to gain Glory and Honor for her family and Clan.

(And she does not care much for the Scorpion...) Among other things, she suggested the gift (having provided the string of horses to Akane in the first place), knowing that it would be an insult to the Scorpion. She is not so far gone to honor to sanction an attempt on Hataki's life (though more because it would not occur to her than because of sentimentality), but she will try to keep Akuyama from being able to provide testimony against her for giving the ronin information on the Imperial gifts.

Gossip: TN15: Umeko served with distinction on the western front against the Unicorn, but has recently been moved away from the front as the fighting has died down. She has been assigned to court duties while the Clan determines what her next assignment will be.

TN25: Umeko was fostered to several courts in her youth along the Lion/Scorpion border. She fought several duels against Scorpion before she was given duties in the Lion armies that pulled her into military actions away from that border.

Other Guests

Miya Gokinju, Imperial Cartographer. He has been busy mapping the Spine of the World Mountains, and will share his results with any PC that can succeed at an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll with a TN of 20. Gokinju has little patience with anyone who is obviously unsuited for court duties, but will demonstrate a reserved respect for those who show skill in the venue. He has little patience for the wrangling between Okucheo and Toshiken, however, and has yet to declare a preference while managing to show both factions "proper respect due a samurai."

Honor: 6.8 **Status:** 4.9 **Glory:** 5.1 **School/Rank:** Miya Herald 5

Gossip: TN15: Gokinju is very nearly infamous for his lack of patience for "specialized" samurai – he feels quite strongly, and makes no bones about it, that samurai should be capable of serving their lords wherever their duties take them.

TN25: Gokinju has been away from the Imperial Capital for three years; he has somehow managed to avoid making a preference known between the Imperial Regent and Emerald Champion. There are few Imperial samurai who have been able to manage such a neutral stance.

Previous Appearances: SoB01, "Undefended Border"

Gennai Eriko, Phoenix representative. Eriko is an angry young shugenja of the Phoenix Clan. Eriko is a woman who has seen a lot at an early age. Though her hair is still bound in a maiden's foxtail, she carries a haunted and cautious look in her eyes and is quick to snap at people for perceived offense or mistakes. She has taken to smoking as a means of calming her nerves and unusually enough carries a kiseru pipe with her.

Honor: 4.1 **Status:** 2.5 **Glory:** 3.7 **School/Rank:** Isawa Shugenja 3 (Water)

Gossip: TN15: Eriko is a veteran of the fighting between the Dragon and Phoenix that ended only earlier this year. She lost a sister to the Dragon, and is known to hold something of a grudge.

TN25: Eriko was invited to this wedding by her ally Bayushi Eitarou, who is reported to have thought that she could use a chance to get away from the reminders of her home.

Previous Appearances: SoB21, "A Time for Vengeance"

Mirumoto Renan; Dragon representative. An Owl with comparably little experience in the court, Renan is cynical and sarcastic. He sees politics as a means to an end, and fully believes that this is how all of Rokugan behaves; he is incredibly jaded for his youth. He is homosexual, but highly unlikely to engage in such activities in such a dangerous arena.

Honor: 5.3 **Status:** 2.5 **Glory:** 3.1 **School/Rank:** Mirumoto Bushi 2

Gossip: TN15: Renan has fought three duels due to his tendency to make comments that other samurai take amiss. He lost one, but still fought with distinction and did in fact survive a duel to the death.

TN25: Renan was invited to this court by Matsu Umeko, who met him over the course of his Owl duties and was vastly amused by his cutting wit.

Previous Appearances: SoB36, "Winter Court: Ootosan Uchi"