

The Unicorn's Tale

**A One-Round Mid-Rank Adventure for
Heroes of Rokugan: Spirit of Bushido
Month of Akodo, 1142 (Early Summer)**

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The Chrysanthemum Lake Festival becomes a political battleground between the Imperial Regent and the Emerald Champion, as both factions lobby for the influential Ide family's support.

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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 Three.

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. Individual encounters will have instructions on how to adjust. If you see numbers such as 6k3/7k3/8k4 these are for Low (Average PC Rank 2) /Mid (Average PC Rank 3)/High (Average PC Rank 4) tier tables, respectively.

Adventure Summary and Background

Almost twenty years ago, during the Scorpion Clan Coup in 1123, a clever Yogo daimyo named **Yogo Tobusa** was worried that his Clan would fail. In particular, he was worried about the fate of his newborn second son, who was born under dire omens. He called in a number of favors (and, less charitably, blackmail) from the Ide family to the west to raise his son as one of theirs. This would be both insurance against political fallout from the Coup and a way of keeping his son's dark fate at a reasonable distance. This fact has successfully been kept a secret until the present day.

The Imperial Regent, **Hantei Okucho**, in order to consolidate his power base has ordered the marriage of the famously chaste Crane daimyo, **Daidoji Nyoko**, to Hebi, who is now the younger brother of the Eijitsu Province's daimyo, **Ide Yaeko**. The Ide family is currently unaligned with either the Regent or Champion factions, so this move is calculated to pull them into the Regent camp. Also, by releasing Nyoko from her vow of chastity, he can guarantee an heir that will be loyal to him, unlike the rest of the Daidoji family – if she dies childless, the province would likely switch into the other camp.

Tobusa's son, **Ide Hebi**, will find himself center stage in the power struggle going on between the Imperial Regent and the Emerald Champion. He's a generally decent person, who may be tragically ruined by his Yogo heritage coming out – or he may end up happily married, depending on how events play out. He is twice-cursed: afflicted by his Yogo heritage, and a unique curse from an unknown source.

Hebi has spent most of his recent years in relative isolation commanding the Shinomen Tower alongside his yojimbo, **Yogo Maginau of the Tansaku**. The Tansaku family are a vassal family of the Yogo, and are the foremost experts on curses in the Scorpion. Ostensibly, Maginau was sent to Hebi as part of an exchange program maintained between the Ide and Scorpion. In reality, he is there to study the effects of Hebi's unique curse, and find a cure.

While Hebi's unique curse mimics Unluck for people around him (especially returned spirits, who have an unfortunate tendency to die in a fashion similar to what originally killed them), or sometimes appears to be the works of a Pekkles trickster spirit, the truth of the matter is that the strands of fate are impossibly tangled near him. This manifests in a bout of unfortunate bad luck or strange coincidence for people around him about once or twice a month. These effects can range from the annoying to the deadly.

The PCs will be called upon to escort Hebi from roughly Shiro Ide in the west to Shiro Daidoji in the east. Both the supporters of the Emerald Champion and Imperial Regent need him to be delivered safely to Shiro Daidoji, as Hebi getting murdered along the way could be taken as a declaration of war against the Regent, and neither side wants an open confrontation right now.

Once the PCs have escorted Hebi to the destination, they can lobby for or against the marriage, depending on their clan, Regent/Champion allegiances, if they found out about his heritage, or plenty of other factors.

This module has the following structure (parentheses indicate what sort of encounter each one is):

Encounter 1 – **The Chrysanthemum Festival** (Court Encounter). The PCs gather at Chrysanthemum Petal Lake in Ide lands to celebrate the day the kami fell to the earth. The PCs lobby the Ide to join their faction.

Encounter 2 – **Going to the Chapel** (Travel). An Otomo announces the marriage of Ide Hebi and Daidoji Nyoko. The PCs are chosen as a multi-clan honor guard to keep him safe along the way. Hebi makes friends with at least one of the PCs, ideally a fellow fan of sumai.

Encounter 3 – **Windfall** (Investigation). In Beiden City, a samurai-ko falls to her death at a sumai tournament, indirectly revealing a bit of the nature of Hebi's curse.

Encounter 4 – **Rocks Fall** (Combat). The party travels through the Beiden Pass. The party comes across a

scene of a Matsu apparently about to kill a baby, but not all is as it seems. The baby is a Tainted trickster spirit.

Encounter 5 – **My Rapid Heart** (Trap). The party reaches Three Sides River, where a recent flood washed out the bridge. When Hebi crosses, the river kami reacts angrily, and destroys all the Ide samurai escorting Hebi and Maginau.

Encounter 6 – **The Fires of Purity** (Trap / Combat). That night, Daidoji harriers attack Hebi at an inn, by setting it on fire, in an attempt to stop his curse from mixing with the Daidoji bloodline.

Encounter 7 – **Shiro Daidoji** (Court). The PCs have to decide if they want to support or oppose the marriage, and can lobby Nyoko either way. Daidoji Uji, head of the Daidoji family will question Hebi and Maginau closely and oppose the marriage.

If you are running this in a four hour time slot, the GM will either need to keep the players moving quickly, or summarize or skip either Encounters 4 or 5 depending on whether the party likes combat or not.

Character Notes

Check the PCs' character sheets for the following:

- Wrath of the Kami (Earth or Water)
- Large
- Any Skill ranks in Jiujujutsu (especially the Sumai Emphasis, or any related Lore Skills).
- Ally: Mirumoto Tora.
- Ally or Oath of Fealty: Yogo Tobusa
- A returned spirit – and ask them how they originally died.
- PCs with “Oath of Fealty” to a provincial daimyo.

Introduction

Players whose daimyo are listed in Appendix #2 as supporting the Emerald Champion receive **Player Handout #1**.

Players whose daimyo are listed in Appendix #2 as supporting the Imperial Regent receive **Player Handout #2**.

Players whose daimyo are evenly split, or do not appear on the list, or do not have a daimyo chosen, receive **Player Handout #3**.

Ronin will start in Turo-Kojiri, in the Eijitsu province. (Turo-Kojiri has a major ronin population.) Ronin PCs

will be invited to the prestigious festival by Otomo Kusai with the understanding they will help lobby for the Hantei (i.e. they incur a Minor Obligation to the Otomo family for the invitation if they do not lobby on the Regent's behalf), and later hired by the Ide family to help escort Hebi for 4 koku.

Part One: The Chrysanthemum Festival

After several days of celebration, the PCs will find themselves participating in one of the highlights of the festival: a viewing of the lake with chrysanthemums strung in trees over the water. Watching the flowers until the first petal falls into the waters symbolizes the fall of the Kami, and is usually a brief midmorning interlude before greater revelry in the afternoon and evening.

A Lore: History or Theology, Courtier (Gossip) or reasonably related Lore Skill for the PC can provide some background information:

- TN 5: The Festival celebrates the day the kami fell to the earth. It always takes place on the sixth day of the Month of Akodo, with the four days before and three days after considered days of rest for the entire Empire, even for peasants.
- TN 10: The Chrysanthemum is the Imperial Symbol of Rokugan. It represents not only the Empire, but their ties to Amaterasu and all the Kami. (Lore: Heraldry can reveal this first bit.) The Chrysanthemum Festival was started by the Hantei emperors many centuries ago.
- TN 15: Although the festival is celebrated across Rokugan, the Hantei emperors traditionally celebrated the festival here, at Chrysanthemum Petal Lake. They did a ceremony that was said to renew the Emperor's connection with the Celestial Heavens.
- TN 20: Since Toturi I took the throne, the Imperial connection to this tradition has stopped.
- TN 25: The high point of the festival was the Emperor picking a single snow-white petal from a chrysanthemum on the lake.
- TN 30: This petal was said to have mystical healing powers, capable of healing any wound or poison in the Imperial Family.
- TN 35: The festival was started by Hantei XVII, the son of Hantei XVI... also known as Hantei Okuchoe - the returned spirit who is the current Imperial Regent.

The waters of the Chrysanthemum Petal Lake, Mizu-Umi Kiku Hanabira, glisten and ripple under the bright rays of Lord Sun. The famous carpet of flower petals on the lake's surface stands as a testament to the unbroken peace and serenity of the Ide lands.

Celebrating the day the Kami fell to the earth, the Chrysanthemum Festival is one of the most popular celebrations in the Empire, not the least because for eight days, all labor – peasant and samurai alike – comes to a complete stop.

Now, at the height of the festival, you find yourself sitting beneath a shady tree, given nothing but water and a single chrysanthemum to gaze upon, as Lord Sun climbs higher and higher in the sky. The early summer air becomes unseasonably hot. The rays of the sun reflecting off the lake burn your eyes, leaving after-images that dance in vivid colors among the carpet of chrysanthemums lining the lake. You hear other samurai shifting nearby, clearly uncomfortable from the rising heat even in their light summer festival kimono.

Hours pass. It gets even hotter.

Assuming nobody quits early or refuses to participate (which could be a Minor or Major Breach of Etiquette per the rulebook depending on how they handle it), the PCs roll **Meditation (Fasting) / Void** or a raw **Stamina** roll. Traditionally, all samurai are supposed to meditate at this point in the festival, but PCs without the Meditation Skill can try to just endure the heat without losing face by using Stamina.

- Those that cannot succeed at a TN of 10 pass out from the heat, costing them 3 pips of Glory and all Void Points. (The Void Points recover normally with rest that night, after the PC has a chance to eat and rest.)
- Those that cannot succeed at a TN of 15 (but do beat a 10) do not pass out, but still lose face from visibly sweating and being uncomfortable. This costs them one pip of Glory and one Void Point.
- PCs that succeed at a TN of 20 with the Meditation Skill (not Stamina) feel a glimpse of enlightenment as they contemplate the perfect balance of the chrysanthemum flower, and begin to understand why it was chosen to be the symbol of the Emperor. They gain a free Void Point that can be used at any one point during this module, even in a round in which they spent another Void Point.
- If a PC rolls 30 or higher using Meditation check, the chrysanthemum they were gazing upon sheds the first petal of the day (if multiple PCs beat 30, then it is the PC with the highest roll). They will be

named the Chrysanthemum Champion as described below. If nobody rolls a 30 or better, the honor will go to Ide Hebi.

Finally, by mid-afternoon, a great deal later than expected, a shout goes up from the crowd, "The first petal has fallen!" With no great attempt to hide his relief, a Moto samurai next to (an intelligent-looking PC) stands up, wipes his sweating forehead and dumps his remaining water over his head. "That was the longest it has ever taken for a petal to fall." He looks over at (the PC), "What portent do you think it means, samurai-san? Are the heavens angry?"

The NPC is named Moto Tamanose. He's an uncouth Moto gunso from the Army of the Left, but he has a strong interest in omens and wants the PC's opinion on if such a long delay for a petal to fall is a sign or omen, and if so, of what.

Divination is unhelpful here, only revealing that it is indeed an omen for the petal to take that long to fall. It is unclear if it represents heaven's displeasure with the Imperial Regent, or the Celestial Heaven's desire to see a Hantei rule as emperor again.

The PC can give any answer he wants. Tamanose will thank them for their insight and begin spreading whatever the PC told him as a rumor (the GM should insert it into the next section for Gossip).

Amid good-natured cheering from the Unicorn, the samurai whose petal fell first is honored by Ide Yaeko, the Ide provincial daimyo hosting the festival here.

If a PC won:

Ide Yaeko's smile is warm as she produces a threaded necklace of chrysanthemum petals. Placing it around the neck of (the PC), she turns to face the crowd. "My fellow samurai!", she yells, "We have a new champion this year! I'm sorry brother, but it would tempt the Fortunes too much for you to claim the prize a fourth year in a row."

Off to the side, a sweating, rotund Ide shugenja fans himself and bows with a genuine smile.

If no PC rolled a 30 on Meditation: *With a genuine smile, Ide Yaeko beckons a sweating, rotund Ide shugenja forward. "Brother!" the daimyo says, "four years in a row your Chrysanthemum has shed its petal first. Truly, you are blessed by the kami!"*

The PCs may roll **Investigation (Notice) / Awareness** (TN 20) to notice that this last sentence is greeted by unpleasant rumblings in the crowd.

Yaeko produces a necklace of chrysanthemum petals, and places it around the neck of her brother.

The champion gains the following:

An Ide Family Favor

+4 Glory

+1 Honor

+1 Status

The PC is named “The Chrysanthemum Petal Champion” for one year (Akodo 1142 to Akodo 1143). In modules set during this time period, as long as the PC wears the chrysanthemum necklace, highly honorable (7+ Honor) NPCs will tend to avoid attacking the PC unless the PC gives them cause. This is a weaker form of the Sacrosanct Advantage. (If multiple PCs are the Chrysanthemum Petal Champion at future tables, only the PC with the highest honor benefits from this.)

Ide Yaeko turns again to the audience, “I give you (PC Name), this year’s Chrysanthemum Petal Champion! We will have some more good news in a bit. For now, let us eat rice – and perhaps drink some, too!” And with a laugh, the festivities begin.

In addition to eating and drinking, the PCs can now participate in various court activities. This includes:

- Gathering rumors/gossip.
- Giving a gift to an Ide daimyo.
- Presenting a public performance.
- Attempting to persuade the Ide family to join the PC’s faction (Emerald Champion or Imperial Regent).
- Talk with other prominent NPCs.

Each PC should be given the opportunity to do at least one of the above, though for pacing purposes, this section should be kept under an hour in a standard four-hour timeslot. If more time is available, it can serve as a good opportunity for roleplay. However, **all of these are optional** and can be bypassed at the GM’s discretion to tailor the module to the players at the table; if it is more appropriate to move into the main action of the module, there is no reason not to do so.

Rumors

PCs who wish to learn about local matters should make a **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll. Samurai with “Oath of Fealty: Ide Yaeko” receive a Free Raise, and a new Chrysanthemum Petal Champion receives two Free Raises. Compare the result to the chart below to see what rumors they learn, as well as the PC’s response to Moto Tamanose:

- TN 10: Tensions between the Emerald Champion and Imperial Regent continue to mount, but all action right now is taking place in the courts, instead of on the battlefield. Both factions are trying to prevent bloodshed, while still jockeying for influence.
- TN 15: The Ide daimyo hosting the event, Ide Yaeko, is famous for her Winter Courts, which showcase the best artistic and scholastic works of the year. Ide Hebi, her brother, is the commander of the Shinomen Watchtower (a position of little importance).
- TN 20: A number of rockslides, wildfires, and floods have taken place across Rokugan in recent months. While none match the devastation of the tsunami of several years ago, these events have caused significant localized damage.
- TN 25: The Minor Clans have been doing very well of late in the courts. They have won a series of lucrative trade contracts and were included in a Crane/Lion deal to exchange copies of missing history texts destroyed during the War of Shadow. In addition, the Lion have taken a few Monkey shugenja in for training.
- TN 30: Ide Hebi, second in line to Eijitsu Province, has been cursed with tremendous bad luck his entire life, but it never seems to affect him directly, just people around him. He has always personally had very good luck, leaving most of the local samurai glad he is normally stationed far away.
- TN 35: After Ide Hebi was born, the fortune teller called in to read his fortune died of a heart attack. Needless to say, this was a very inauspicious omen. Everyone attempting to read his future since has died as well.
- TN 40: This might explain why Ide Hebi’s parents (now deceased) treated him distantly and sent him off to command the Shinomen Tower as soon as he passed his gempukku. Ide Yaeko, his sister and the current daimyo is much warmer to him, though.
- TN 45: Shugenja around Rokugan have joined a multi-clan spiritual renewal movement. Rumors say they are forming a secret task force dedicated to purify the worst regions in the Emerald Empire.
- TN 50: The Unicorn Clan was gifted a magnificent golden pearl by the Naga of the Shinomen Mori before they returned to sleep. Nobody seems to know what it does, though.

Gifts

PCs who present appropriate gifts can gain Glory and a bonus to their attempt to lobby the Ide family.

- A normal gift gives no Glory, and +2 bonus to the Courtier roll to influence the Ide.

- A well-thought gift (especially items related to: peacemaking, scholarship, art, sake, and storytelling) gain the PC +.1 Glory and a Free Raise on their Courtier roll.
- A brilliant gift (a rug used by Shinjo, art or a composition by the PC with a 40+ on the roll) gives the PC +.2 Glory and 2 Free Raises.
- A poor gift (weapons, art made by the PC or sake brewed with less than a 15 on the check) costs the PC -.1 Glory and a -5 penalty to Courtier.

Performance/Games

Throughout the festival, samurai will put on impromptu performances. PCs can find areas where samurai take turns reciting poetry, playing Sadane or Kemari, having horseback competitions, and so forth. There are even circles of scholars walking the grounds debating the finer points of a variety of subjects.

Ide courtiers will be walking around making the PCs feel welcome, trying to see to their every need, and inviting them to participate in the festivities.

At one point, the entire festival pauses to watch as an Iuchi musician plays a beautiful song on her koto and sings (reminiscent of the Tao):

*I am not earth.
I am not water.
I am not fire.
I am not air.
What am I?*

It's a rhetorical question – the PCs don't need to answer it. The crowd will show great approval of this song.

The PCs are free to participate in something to try to win some glory. Basically, the GM should use their judgment if it is appropriate for the relatively pacifistic family hosting the event. A horseback race is about the most martial a contest that would be acceptable.

PCs that give a good showing of themselves here (20+ on their roll) on acceptable Skills gain a pip of Glory and a Free Raise on their attempt to lobby the Ide family.

PCs that roll a 40+ at storytelling, art (any kind), Etiquette (the Ide love learning new customs), Lore (any honorable subject), or sake brewing will gain an additional pip of Glory and an extra Free Raise, as these are the interests of the relevant Ide daimyo.

Doing really poorly (less than 10 on the check) causes the PC to lose two pips of Glory unless they can make a

TN 20 **Etiquette (Courtesy) / Awareness** roll to save face.

Iaijutsu duels, sumai, Low Skills, and so forth are a Minor Breach of Etiquette with the Ide Family, costing the PC Honor and Glory and a -5 penalty to Courtier rolls with the Ide. A similar TN 20 Etiquette roll can be made to learn these topics are inappropriate.

These benefits do not stack with the gift-giving section above. PCs can only do one performance or game.

Lobby the Ide

The reason most of the PCs will be here is to attempt to persuade the Ide family to align themselves with their faction (either the Imperial Regent or the Emerald Champion, who are currently struggling for control of the Empire). The PCs can either roleplay this out, or they can make simple rolls if time is a concern. Free Raises for good arguments and roleplaying are appropriate, at the GM's discretion.

While there are three Ide daimyo here, each PC will only have time to talk with one of them. A TN 15 **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll reveals what each Ide daimyo likes:

Ide Yaeko – The host of the event. She likes sake, art, and scholarship. She married a Phoenix samurai a few years ago, gaining a thriving silver trade for her province.

Ide Yumiko – Co-daimyo of the province holding Shiro Ide on the north side of the lake. She enjoys shocking samurai with outlandish henna tattoos over her body. She collects exotic clothing and loves listening to stories.

Ide Umi – Married to Yumiko and co-daimyo. He likes stories, especially ghost stories. He collects exotic rugs and ikebana.

They are all peace-loving Ide. While they are not absolute pacifists like the Asahina and some Phoenix, they greatly prefer peace to war, and approaches along these lines will be well received.

Lobbying a daimyo requires a **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** roll. The base TN is 30 (25 for Insight Rank 2 PCs). If PCs are lobbying both sides, the PC that rolls the highest for any given daimyo wins their support. (For example, if a supporter of the Emerald Champion rolls a 36 against Yumiko, but a Regent supporter rolls a 42, then Yumiko will support the Regent).

Whichever side two of the three daimyo support at the end of court wins the Ide support. If this threshold is not reached, they stay neutral.

PCs get Free Raises on this roll for:

- The Chrysanthemum Champion. (+2 Raises)
- Good roleplaying or argument (+1 or more)
- Having the brass ring of the Khan (+1 Raise)
- Having the favor of Ide Tadaji (+1 Raise)
- Spending a favor of Ide Tadaji (+4 Raises)
- Hantei supporters mentioning the tradition of the Hantei being here at the festival (+1 Raise)
- Taking advantage of the omen/rumors spread by Moto Tamanose above (+1 Raise)
- Giving an appropriate gift (+1 or more)
- An outstanding performance (+1 or more)

The results of this encounter should be recorded in the module tracking sheet in the back.

Some may wish to talk with **Ide Hebi, commander of the Shinomen Tower** – he is not a daimyo though, but if they want to waste their one chance for lobbying talking to him, they may do so. It becomes quickly clear he is a sumai fan – talking to him is like talking to a modern sports fanatic. He is drunk right now, and will not talk about anything else. The first PC who talks to him and has sumai-related skills (Lore: Sumai, Jiu-jitsu, etc.) automatically succeeds on lobbying him. Without these skills, a PC can show or feign interest in sumai with a TN 25 Sincerity (Honesty or Deceit) check. If successful, he will talk to Ide Yaeko for the PC, giving another PC two Free Raises on the check to lobby her.

PCs of neutral daimyo will wish to talk with the Ide or other PCs to find out who they support instead of lobbying. A TN 15 Social Skill roll (Courtier or other Skills as appropriate) will get the Ide to repeat the fact that they are neutral, torn between an appreciation for the long history of the Hantei Emperors (the Imperial Regent is a former Emperor) and the fact that they have strong ties to the Toturi family from Tadaji's service as Imperial Advisor, and the Emerald Champion best represents these interests. They are currently leaning toward supporting the Regent, though, since he is the father of the Emperor who started the festival here and his current control of the bureaucracy makes him a fairly strong force for stability.

These neutral PCs can write a report to their daimyo on all this and make their recommendations on the advantages/disadvantages for each side for +1 Glory.

Talk with other prominent NPCs

There are samurai from every Great and Minor Clan attending the festival, as well as a few ronin invited by favored guests. Samurai of all status attend the festival,

but the PCs are not important enough to talk to most of them.

The Ide maintain surprisingly good relations with their Scorpion neighbors to the east, even to the extent of exchanging students each year between the Ide's famous Calm Heart Dojo on Chrysanthemum Petal Lake and the Dojo of Lies in Ryoko Owari. In fact, the head sensei of the Dojo of Lies, **Shosuro Taberu** is present. He has a long friendship with Ide Tadaji, played out over their famous long-running go games. He will politely refuse to talk with non-Scorpion PCs.

Taberu will, however, seek out Scorpion PCs and tell them that they will soon be asked to travel to a Crane Court, and to do what they can to surreptitiously weaken the Crane while they are there. He does not care about the Emerald Champion vs. Imperial Regent divide, just about gaining an advantage over the Crane in the courts. He does not know the details of the coming conflict, only that it should prove explosive – if the PC can get the Crane to suitably embarrass themselves, it would be most... delicious.

Yogo Tobusa is an affable, elderly Yogo who runs the Beiden Province. He walks with a cane, and enjoys both sake and games of go. Like Taberu, he maintains strong relations with the Ide. He is a supporter of the Imperial Regent, but like most Scorpion is willing to trade favors. If a PC burns a Favor from any Major Clan or Imperial Family, he will lobby an Ide daimyo of the PC's choice with a roll of 7k4 with one Free Raise for every extra Favor expended. If they have him as an Ally or Daimyo, this roll improves to 8k5.

Ide Tadaji, the Imperial Advisor and former Ide family daimyo, is here but is too busy to talk with the PCs. He will be very polite, but deny opportunities to talk with him unless the PCs have a Favor with him, in which case he will fill them in on any information they might be missing (taken from the Lore and Gossip sections). PCs may either mention his favor or call it in to lobby the Ide, as mentioned in the section above.

Otomo Kusai is the representative of the Imperial Regent at the event. He is very interested in getting the Ide to support Okucheo, and will try to recruit any PC who approaches him. If they are Emerald Champion supporters who freely agree to lobby for the Regent here, they gain him as an Ally with Influence 2 and Devotion 1. If they don't agree, he will use the Rank Four Otomo Courtier Technique "The Emperor's Protection" to force them to acknowledge the Regent as the correct choice: he rolls 7k3/8k4/9k5 (if the PC is Insight Rank 2/3/4) against the PC's **Etiquette (Courtesy) / Awareness**. If the PC succeeds, they can

resist without losing any Honor. Otherwise, the PC must either lobby for the Regent, or lose five points of Honor.

When all the PCs have had an opportunity to try at least one of the court activities, it will be time to move on to the next encounter.

Part Two: Going to the Chapel...

Shortly before sundown, Ide Yaeko takes to the stage again. After a minute, the samurai are gathered, and quiet enough for Yaeko to speak. "Samurai of Rokugan! I have more good news today! The Imperial Regent, Hantei Okucheo, has granted leave for my dear brother, Hebi-san, to marry the famous daimyo of Hayaku Province – Daidoji Nyoko. It is my sincerest wish that this marriage will further strengthen the ties between us and our Crane cousins. As they were the first to welcome us back to Rokugan, I wish to be the first to announce my genuine pleasure at having Daidoji Nyoko-san as a new sister. My brother will bring twenty of these good wishes with him to Shiro Daidoji – the finest horses from my personal herd! Now, samurai, I humbly beg that each of you join me in celebrating my brother's eternal good fortune. Kampai!"

The party will continue. PCs will soon be approached by Yaeko's hatamoto, Ide Heiwa, who will request that they join the honor guard escorting Hebi to Shiro Daidoji. He tells them while there is no specific threat against Hebi's life, there are many people who could be opposed to such a marriage, and so would feel safer if a multi-clan escort would accompany him.

Emerald Champion supporters might feel a bit uncertain about supporting a ploy by the Imperial Regent, but they should be reminded that *both sides* are attempting to avoid open violence, and the murder of someone whose marriage was arranged by the Regent, or even the theft of the horses, could be a provocation to start a war. They can always sabotage the ploy via courtly means – Hebi just needs to arrive safely. If PCs still are reluctant to go, one of their Clan superiors will order them to join the honor guard.

There's not much to do else for the PCs to do at the rest of the festival, except gather more rumors. The Ide daimyo and other NPCs are now unavailable.

Hebi is too busy accepting congratulations to talk to the PCs right now, but they can catch a glimpse of him (his

description is in the Appendix). He seems to be a good natured fellow, with a warm smile for all the NPCs offering him their congratulations.

In addition to the rumors on Hebi above, PCs can learn the following with a Courtier (Gossip) roll:

- TN 10: Many people here are confusing Daidoji Nyoko, daimyo of the Hayaku Province, with Daidoji Nayoko, daimyo of the Ichigun province. Nyoko is an experienced duelist and samurai-ko, Nayoko is an inexperienced young girl who likes eating sweets, fruit, and fish. There are rumors circulating about both of them, which takes some effort to sort out.
- TN 15: Daidoji Nyoko is famous for taking a vow of chastity, which the Imperial Regent has just absolved her of. It is unclear what Nyoko thinks about this.
- TN 20: Daidoji Nyoko is a strong supporter of the Imperial Regent. Many people are speculating this marriage was arranged to draw the Ide into a political alliance with the Hantei.
- TN 25: Nyoko is a very large woman, but is a skilled duelist nonetheless. She is also quite skilled in the ways of the court.
- TN 30: Nyoko is an avid tea collector, who collects rare blends from across the Empire. She is very fond of the tea ceremony.
- TN 35: She enjoys listening to samisen music, and has taken practicing her kata to it.

Without needing a roll, it becomes quite clear that supporters of the Hantei and the Ide themselves are very positive about this marriage, but Toturi-supporting NPCs are trying to figure out a way to oppose it without giving offense or starting a war.

In any event, the next morning:

Lord Sun rises shockingly bright in the morning, causing the rotund and more-than-a-little hung-over Ide Hebi to begin sweating immediately. Squinting up at the sky, he produces a fan and begins trying to cool himself. Behind him stand twenty mounted Ide samurai in two precise lines of ten each, their polished armor and weapons radiant in the early light of the sun. Each leads a fine riding horse behind him.

Hebi sketches a short bow, wipes his forehead, and says, "Samurai-sans, I am grateful to see you here. Allow me to introduce my long-time friend, Yogo Maginaw of the Tansaku." A man in fine red silks rides forward. "As my yojimbo on loan from our Scorpion friends to the east, he shall be your immediate superior for our journey and will arrange your duties. If you see or hear anything... strange,

please report it to him. Now – let us set off. We should make Shiro Daidoji in about two weeks.” Pulling himself into the saddle of a mammoth Unicorn warhorse, he looks across your group and beckons (the biggest or strongest PC forward) and motions everyone else to begin marching behind him.

Travelling with Ide Hebi: As they begin travelling Hebi will ask the PC he beckoned forward if he has any experience as a sumai wrestler. And if not, if he has any experience with jiu-jitsu, or other wrestling styles. He mentions he doesn't like the Unicorn wrestling style of Bariqu. It doesn't help the clan integrate with the rest of Rokugan. Besides, sumai is so much more interesting, don't you think? Has the PC ever been to a sumai match? Really? Who wrestled? Were any Yokozuna (the highest rank of sumai wrestler) there? *“You know people always told me I should have been a sumai wrestler, because of my size, but my parents always thought it would be inappropriate for an Ide. Did you know sumai rings always have to be blessed by a shugenja first? Even though everyone dislikes them, they say the Yogo make the finest shugenja for these blessings because of their Ward Magic. I learned a bit of it, since I'd love to bless a ring one day.”* (Etc., etc.) If the PC peters out in the conversation, he'll send the PC back and pick another PC to talk incessantly about sumai with. If a PC really has participated in an official sumai match, or has at least three ranks in Jiu-jitsu or a related Skill and is willing to tolerate Hebi's incessant chatter, he will gain Hebi as an Ally (Influence 2 / Devotion 1).

Overall, Hebi should come across at least *a little bit* annoying, without fully alienating the PCs or players. He can be thought of as a modern day sports fanatic who is not interested in talking about absolutely anything else.

One thing the PC might pick up on is that he learned a bit of Ward Magic. The Yogo *only* teach it to people in their family (Lore: Scorpion TN 25 to know this), but he claims he convinced a travelling Yogo shugenja to show him some tricks. In reality, his birth father sent the shugenja as a secret favor to his son.

Travelling with Yogo Maginau: Yogo Maginau is technically in command of Hebi's guards, making him theoretically the PCs' superior, but since they're just serving as an honor guard for Hebi, he knows better than to push it. He will very humbly ask the PCs, if they don't mind, to conduct patrols on the road (scout and mounted PCs mainly), to stand watch at night (dividing them up into three watches, which will matter later on), and will ask shugenja PCs to do divinations about any

threats on the road (if they roll high, give them hints to the future events of the module).

On this last point, he will stress, very empathetically, not to try to read the future of Hebi. He won't say why, just that it is not recommended. If a PC persists in doing so, he suddenly suffers a sudden stroke, taking 5k5 Wounds which bypass Reduction, and learns nothing more than that fate and destiny are impossibly tangled near Ide Hebi.

If asked who the Tansaku are: *“We are a very small, very unimportant family serving in the Scorpion lands to the east of Ide Hebi-sama's home. My services were provided as a gift from the Scorpion to Hebi-sama at his gempukku. The Scorpion and the Ide have always been very friendly, exchanging students and services every year.”* While this is all true, he is avoiding talking about his actual purpose – to study Hebi's unique curse and to try to find a way to defeat it. (This is what the Tansaku family do.) He will evade any further inquiries, saying it would not be appropriate to reveal anything further.

Lore: Scorpion (TN 30) reveals that the Tansaku are a minor vassal family for the Yogo, who specialize in the study of curses. It is certainly an odd choice of bodyguard to send to the Ide, but he is a very competent bushi.

Courtier (Gossip) (TN 20) on Maginau reveals he joined the service of Ide Hebi when he passed his gempukku, and has been a loyal and dutiful servant ever since. Rolling 30 or higher (or a Lore: Bushido roll) reveals that he is surprisingly honorable.

You travel for several days, with Yogo Maginau keeping his mounted Ide guards on constant patrols circling ahead and behind your group on the road. When you reach the border of Scorpion lands, the guards carefully remove and pack their armor into their saddlebags. Three days later, you arrive in Beiden City, with nothing more exciting happening than all the saddles breaking at once when you enter town.

No amount of investigation or communing with the kami reveals any clues, other than all the saddles broke, at once – other than Hebi's.

Each of the saddles failed in a different way (some split in half, some stirrups came off, some appeared to be rotten on the inside, etc.) It was, as far as can be determined, just a really weird (and expensive) coincidence. Hebi and Maginau say nothing about it, though the PCs can tell they look a bit worried. They

will dismiss any concerns, purchase repairs out of their personal funds, and continue on quickly.

Part Three: Windfall

When you arrive in Beiden City, you are met by Yogo Tobusa's hatamoto, Yogo Kinnosuke, who bows deeply to you all, and with a small smile, informs Ide Hebi that a sumai tournament has been scheduled for that night, with two Ozeki scheduled to fight each other. If he would be honored to do so, as a respected shugenja, Hebi-sama would be invited to bless the ring before the match. Hebi nearly falls off horse accepting the offer, and brightly informs you all that you will be spending the night in Beiden City.

Ozeki are sumai who have won a tournament suffering no losses, and a match between a pair is usually considered a grand event. The PCs have a chance to wash up before the match and gather rumors or do shopping. The rumors here are the same as in the sections listed above, with the additional rumor (TN 20) now flying through the Empire that vague "important people" are strongly opposed to the marriage, and will do whatever it takes to make sure it fails. No specifics are ever mentioned, but it does seem the threat is real, and that Maginau's precautions (which might have seemed silly before) are warranted.

It is also clear the Yogo family is giving Ide Hebi his heart's desire, and so he'll probably owe them a significant favor in the future, but it's also not really the PC's place to say or do anything about this.

The sumai tournament has brought crowds from all over Rokugan, eager to see two Ozeki "White Star" sumai compete in a match that might indicate which one will be the next Yokozuna (the highest rank in sumai, won by two consecutive Winter Court tournament wins without losing a match). The atmosphere is overwhelming, with the stomping of feet and eager shouting from the crowds during the pre-match ceremonies. The arena is built very high around the ring, but does not appear to have a single empty seat. Your seats are at the edge of the ring, next to Yogo Kinnosuke. It is an obvious honor.

Ide Hebi appears in a fine purple and silver-embroidered kimono. He walks to the center of the dohyō, his fan extended, a smile threatening to break through his impassive face, and exhorts the kami in a loud, singsong voice to protect the wrestlers. He then takes a broom, and brushes the edge of the ring. This rids it of evil spirits and creates the fine sand border

(called "The Snake's Eye") that shows if wrestlers step out of the ring.

As he moves to place the traditional wardings on the four pillars surrounding the ring, a scream rings out, piercing through all the noise in the arena. Everyone's attention is drawn to a softly glowing samurai-ko at the top of the stairs, perched precariously on one foot, as her geta lodges in a gap in the step. Though several samurai lunge to catch her, she topples, and falls with several sickening crunches down the long flight of stairs. She collapses at Hebi's feet, her spine obviously broken. Staring at him, she struggles to say something, but collapses back to the ground and dies. The faint aura surrounding her fades as her last breath escapes her.

The sumai match gets cancelled at this point, as the arena is completely defiled. The crowds file out in shocked horror. Hebi motions the PCs quickly forward. *"Did you notice she was a returned spirit? Does anyone know her name? Did you see someone push her?" He looks around and sees the Yogo hatamoto calling for yoriki. "Quickly, then. This is important – I am going to ask the kami for assistance. Can you suggest which questions to ask? We will get three."*

PCs with Medicine can roll it (TN 15) to see there are no signs of foul play other than the obvious falling injuries.

Hebi succeeds at his roll to summon a fire kami from the flames above the sumai ring, which saw everything. Hebi pulls out and sets a small scroll of fine parchment aflame as a sacrifice. He calls three Raises for clarity so the answers are fairly straightforward.

The facts that kami knows:

- What was her name: *"She was Yogo Sebone, before she was reclaimed by fate."*
- What was she trying to say to Hebi? *"Murderer!"* At this, Hebi will turn bright white.
- Who murdered her? *"Ide Hebi."*
- How did she fall? / Who pushed her? *"She was pushed, but by no man or woman."*
- Was she pushed? / What pushed her? *"She was pushed by her fate to fall."*
- What was her fate? *"She escaped her path when she came back to this world. She is back on her proper path now."*
- Why did her fate suddenly reassert itself now? *The kami will just point at Hebi, and then fade away.*

After three questions are asked, the fire spirit will fade away and Hebi will quickly clean up the ashes before Yogo Kinnosuke returns, and say nothing to him about the commune.

The Yogo hatamoto comes forward, yoriki in tow, staring at the body silently. “Her name is... was... Yogo Sebone. A returned spirit. She first died when I was a young man. She died... falling down a flight of stairs.”

At these words, Hebi’s face becomes pale, and he faces away from the body. His voice is low as he speaks, “Samurai-sans, I believe it is time to leave. Yogo-san, we thank you for your hospitality.” The PCs might want to continue investigating the death but the Yogo will insist that his yoriki will handle the matter and escort the PCs out.

They might want to sell out Hebi as the murderer, but given that Hebi just got into town, and the Yogo hatamoto was right there, watching Hebi eagerly do the purification rituals, it will not amount to anything. (Also, of course, the hatamoto has specific instructions regarding Hebi...)

The Yogo actually don’t react especially strongly to this sudden death, as the Yogo Curse has made unfortunate accidents more common here than in other lands.

The PCs might speculate what all this misfortune means, but Hebi and Maginau will continue to ignore the issue, believing that as long as they keep moving, it won’t be much of a problem. Some PCs might suspect an inhuman source, like a Pekkles or Pekkles no Oni (trickster spirits), but no investigation or attempt to trap them turns up anything. (Which doesn’t necessarily mean anything, as they’re notoriously hard to find.)

Any returned spirits in the party might start getting nervous about how the woman died a second time just as before; while obviously a returned spirit PC should not be killed out of hand in this fashion, it is still worthwhile to play on the player’s paranoia. A PC that died in a duel, for example, might have a person that looked just like the guy that killed them bump into the PC and challenge him to a duel, and then apologize and move on, for example. While the party is heading into Beiden Pass is a good opportunity to meet travelers coming into the Scorpion lands, which could account for many sorts of “happenstance meetings.”

Part Four: Rocks Fall, Everyone Dies

The next morning, you head into the Beiden Pass. Ide Hebi still looks shaken from the events of the night before, and spends much of the ride up into the mountains in whispered conversation with Yogo Maginau. If the PCs dishonorably manage to listen in somehow (Stealth opposed by Maginau’s Investigate), Maginau is comforting his lord, and telling him that it is likely his curse interacts badly with returned spirits, and so may wish to stay away from them in the future. Hebi is honestly saddened that his curse killed someone and wishes to avoid it again.

Hebi will order any returned spirit PCs to the end of the line, behind the cavalry escort, where he hopes they’ll be far enough away to be safe from his curse.

As Lord Sun reaches its zenith, you likewise reach the upper reaches of the pass. Ide Hebi looks grateful that the air here is much cooler than in the lands down below, and finally folds up his ever-present fan. After about an hour of further travel, you hear screaming coming from far down the road ahead. A rush of terrified peasants run past you, yelling something about a samurai-ko “killing all the babies” a mile up ahead.

Suddenly, the ground starts rumbling, and rocks and bits of dirt start tumbling down the high walls of the pass towards you. Ide Hebi mutters something under his breath, and snaps his fan at his retainers. “Stay here. Watch for trouble. Guard the horses. We will go up ahead.” Maginau looks like he is about to protest, but Hebi cuts him off with a look. *Motioning to you, he beckons you forward.* There is no time to put on armor, but there is certainly time to make quicker preparations – casting spells, etc.

As you come to the top of a hill, the rumbling grows even worse from the ground. Cresting the summit, you see several people (three peasants and a Dragon bushi) in a loose circle around a tableau: a female Matsu bushi in heavy armor stands with a no-dachi held high above her head, muscles trembling, poised to strike down upon a baby lying in the dirt beneath her heel. The peasants are holding each other, watching in horror, while the Dragon samurai merely appears amused at the scene, seemingly on the verge of laughter.

They are 60’ away. Give the PCs a chance to react. First, find out if any of them have Mirumoto Tora as an

Ally (from *SoB35 Winter Court: Kyuden Tonbo*). If so, they recognize the Dragon bushi; he is a somewhat arrogant kemari expert who is secretly a bakeneko (a cat shapeshifter spirit). Currently, he is thoroughly enjoying watching a self-righteous Matsu be brought low by a spirit from Sakkaku. But it is a Tainted spirit, so he doesn't like *it* very much, either.

There's two main options PCs will do here: the first is to leap into combat to save the baby, the second is to try to talk to the NPCs (either to talk down the Matsu, or to find out what is going on).

If the PCs try talking:

The peasants have nothing to say, having just come upon the scene, and not having the sense to flee. They can only say the Matsu bushi has been standing there for a few minutes, shuddering and staring at the baby. It is not their child, if the PCs ask.

The Matsu and the baby will not respond to talking.

The "Mirumoto", however, if approached, will say *"Oh, my friends... I am quite enjoying seeing a righteous Matsu get her karmic reward, it is so very tragic..."* and will refuse to explain further unless a PC has him as an Ally. If so, he will tell the PC to do the smart thing and to put an arrow into the head of the Matsu first, and then the baby. (While this indeed is the smart thing to do, it would be dishonorable for a samurai to do so without any more reason, and the bakeneko will certainly not give that justification. He would be very amused to see a PC lose Honor for this.)

PC's that explicitly ask to try to identify the baby get a (don't tell them the category) TN 30 Lore: Spirits or Lore: Shadowlands roll to identify it as a rare creature named a Konak Jiji no Oni. If the PC says anything out loud about this, the "baby" will realize the jig is up, and release the Matsu from her paralysis, starting combat.

If the PCs start combat, they need to roll initiative: *Suddenly the ground lurches under your feet, and a hail of rocks fly sideways from the cliffs surrounding you. With a scream, Hebi is hit on the head by a rock, and collapses in a heap. The Dragon bushi laughs, "The Earth Kami must really hate you, Ide-san, if they are attacking you instead of the baby."* (This counts as the kami's action for the first round.)

The bakeneko will retreat into the rocks if attacked, shapeshifting if need be to escape into the cracks. He will otherwise not participate in the combat, but will watch with open amusement, clapping at inopportune times.

Hebi (who takes 15 Wounds from the box-text rocks, and starts Prone) will spend his first round putting up an earth ward to protect him from further attacks by the kami. After that he will stay within the ward and cast healing spells on the PCs, or buff spells if no PC needs healing. This might mean the PCs will need to come close to him for touch-range spells. **He will call out for injured PCs to run to him for healing.** (Hebi's stats are in the Appendix.)

Note: The numbers below in the form of X/Y/Z are for low/normal/high tier tables corresponding roughly to Insight Rank 2, Insight Rank 3, and Insight Rank 4 parties

"The Baby" – Konak Jiji no Oni

The konak jiji is a distant cousin of the pekkle. It is a spirit that resembles a human baby. It has no shapeshifting abilities and cannot take on any other form, but since the konak jiji does not need to rely on elaborate tricks this limitation does not bother it.

Air 3	Earth	Fire	Water 2
Awareness 4	3/4/5	3/3/4	
Initiative: 5k3/6k3/7k3			Attack: Bite
			6k3/7k3/8k4 (complex)
Armor TN: 15/20/25			Damage: 2k1/3k2/4k3
Reduction: 3			

Shadowlands Taint Rank: 4.0

Wounds (low-tier party): 20: +5, 40 +10, 60: Dead

Wounds (normal party): 25: +5, 50 +10, 75: Dead

Wounds (high-tier party): 30: +5, 60 +10, 90: Dead

Special Abilities:

- *Deceptive Weight:* If picked up, it automatically hits the target (paralyzing the target, dealing damage and possibly tainting them), and then increases its weight to 400 pounds. Moving a Konak Jiji or PC holding it when it has increased its weight requires a TN 40 Strength roll (which may be cooperative).
- *Paralysis Venom:* If a Konak Jiji successfully hits a target, it injects a paralyzing venom that stuns the target for up to two minutes. (Stunned characters can take no actions, and have their Armor TN reduced to 5+ any armor bonus; this does not recover sooner than the two minutes it takes for the poison to run its course)
- *Taint:* PCs bit by it must roll an Earth Ring roll at TN 12 or gain a point of taint.
- *Spirit.*

Tactics: It will lie in wait until a PC comes forward to save it, then automatically bite the PC and increase its weight so that it and the PC cannot be moved. It will continue biting the PC every round thereafter - though

its attack roll is not automatic, a stunned PC has only an armor TN of 5+Armor.

Once the jig is up, it will move to attack the nearest PC.

Note on the stunning: Unlike normal stunning, the Konak Jiji stuns for two minutes per attack (multiple attacks don't stack, but they do reset the duration of a stun). A PC can attempt an Earth Ring roll of TN 20 to shake off the stun during the Reactions phase of each round.

Matsu Onohime, Fallen Berserker

Matsu Onohime, travelling on foot was fortunate enough to recognize the trap presented by the Konak Jiji, even putting on armor first, but made the mistake of putting her foot on it to behead it, which allowed it to inject its poison. She is now permanently insane from the influence of Sakkaku and the Taint coursing through her veins, and will attack any target in sight not from Sakkaku (i.e. the Konak Jiji and the Bakeneko). Up close, the PCs can see her eyes are now pitch black.

Air 3 Earth Fire Water 3 Void 3
 3/3/4 3/4/5

Strength 4

Honor 6.5

Status 2.5

Glory 2.5

Initiative: 6k3

Attack: 9k3/10k4/10k5

(-5 from Heavy Armor)

Damage: 8k3+6

Armor TN: 30

Reduction: 5

Wounds (low-tier party): 57: Dead

Wounds (normal party): 57: Dead

Wounds (high-tier party): 76: Dead

Taint Rank: 4.1

School/Rank: Matsu Berserker 3

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

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

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

Skills: Battle 1, Defense 2, Hunting 3, Jujutsu 3, Kenjutsu (Katana, No-dachi) 6/6/7, Kyujutsu 1, Lore: History 1

Mastery Abilities: +1k0 unarmed and sword damage, may ready a sword as a Free Action (high-table: 9s explode on sword damage)

Advantages/Disadvantages: Blood of Osano-Wo / Cursed by Sakkaku, Jurojin's Curse

Special Abilities:

Tainted Movement: may move 30' with a Free Action, or 60' with a Simple

Undead Strength: suffers no Wound Penalties

Tactics: Matsu Onohime will be held in place by the Konak Jiji (though she will not suffer a penalty to her Armor TN as it will allow her to dodge) until a PC picks up the "baby", at which point it will free Onohime. She will immediately attack the paralyzed PC one time. Each attack after that she will cycle through the rest of targets to attack (include Ide Hebi in this, and if she's going to TPK the party she'll go after the peasants, too... she cuts them in half with one blow automatically).

She starts in the Defense Stance (+5 Armor TN) until freed, at which point she shifts into Full Attack at the first opportunity. When she is in Full Attack Stance, she spends one Void Point per Round to boost her armor TN by +10, negating the penalty.

Each kill she makes costs her a full rank of Honor, which will lower her damage slightly.

She can be very dangerous, however, her chaotic nature causes her to shift targets after each strike. This will help prevent damage from all getting focused on one PC, which could easily kill them.

If captured alive, she will be permanently insane and useless for questioning. Tora might explain things if he's still around – basically, every month or so a spirit from Sakkaku will pull a prank on her. It was her *bad luck* she got a (very rare) Tainted one this time.

The Earth Kami

The Earth Kami in the Beiden Pass have grown increasingly agitated at the ongoing presence of a tainted trickster spirit, and will lash out at all in the fight.

Initiative: 6k3

Wounds: They cannot be attacked or injured.

Shugenja Options: A shugenja can deal with them by casting Sense with three raises to contact them and then either 1) Commune with five raises to banish them, or, 2) Convince them to only attack the bad guys with a TN 25 Spellcraft (Importune) / Awareness roll.

Rocks: 6k3 attack (complex action), 6k3 damage, only against targets with Wrath of the Kami: Earth. They will prioritize this over Earthquake.

Part Five: Be Still, My Rapid Heart

Earthquake: As a complex action, the earth kami shake the ground beneath one target (chosen randomly between the PCs, the Konak Jiji and the Matsu, with tainted creatures getting two chances). The target must make a Reflexes roll at TN 20 or fall prone.

Tactics: They cannot attack any targets in the Elemental Ward Hebi will put up on the first round, with either rocks or the earthquake attack. Once the Konak Jiji is defeated, they will calm down and no longer attack anyone.

After the end of the encounter, Hebi will spend all of his remaining Water and Void spell slots healing any damaged PCs (using Regrow the Wound, which will fully heal any PC in a minute or two). Hebi will then collect the Ide samurai. Maginau will study the Matsu closely for a few minutes, and then proclaim that she was cursed by Sakkaku, the Realm of Mischief, which is known to result in trickster spirits attacking the victim from time to time. She was driven mad by the extended contact with the Tainted spirit. Most spirits from Sakkaku are immune to the Taint, but Pekkles are not, and this is a close cousin to a Pekkles.

Hebi will look nervous about the encounter, but Yogo Maginau will openly reassure him that the encounter was “just a coincidence”. Hebi at this point sighs and comes clean... mostly: *“Samurai-sans, I must be completely honest with you. My whole life, I have been surrounded by strange events that others have called ‘just a coincidence.’ I do not know if I am cursed, or plagued by trickster spirits like this poor woman, or something else. All I know is that as my travelling companions, I owe it to you to understand the risk you take travelling with me. If you wish to depart from this journey, I will bear you no ill will.”*

The PCs can now get some answers from Hebi and the Tansaku – basically strange, inexplicable things have been happening to him his whole life, ever since a fortune teller died reading his fortune when he was first born. The Tansaku thinks this entangled his fate, which results in strange coincidences and possibly the second death of the samurai-ko in Beiden, which was identical to how she was first killed.

Leaving now is not really an honorable option for the PCs, who are basically obligated to see him through safely, but if they wish to leave they get 2 XP for the module, and lose a rank of Honor (if their honor is 3+) and Glory.

Emerging from Beiden Pass into Lion lands, you are met by a delegation of Lion samurai, who bow politely to Ide Hebi and announce they are an escort for your journey to the Crane lands. Several days pass uneventfully as you travel east, and soon after passing Shiro Matsu you finally reach the Kawa Mitsu Kishi, the Three Sides River. The Three Sides Watchtower overlooks the road on the Crane side of the bank, giving the Daidoji guards stationed there an excellent view over the Lion lands on the other side.

The PCs may roll various Lore Skills (Lion and Crane PCs get a Free Raise):

Lore: Geography (TN 15): It is also called the Three Stones River due to the three famous stones in it, Radeki, Gensei, and Tenero, which were named after Lion samurai who died here. The stones are only visible at the lowest point in the summer, which is almost here.

Lore: History (TN 20): The Battle of Three Stones was fought here in the 5th century, in which 45 Phoenix shugenja slaughtered a thousand Lion samurai. As a result, the Lion began training their shugenja for war. Today is the anniversary of that battle.

Lore: Geography (TN 20) or **Acting / Intelligence** (TN 15): There is a famous play written about the river, called “The Three Stones River”, in which it was said that any name thrown into the river would be carried to the cursed Lake of Sorrows downstream.

Lore: Theology or **Spirits** (TN 20): The un-honored dead are reputed to rise again from time to time here to attack the living, so many shrines dot the shores of the river and the lake downstream in their honor. Today, the monks are on their annual pilgrimage to honor the dead.

Lore: Theology (TN 25): The river is home to a mighty kami, named Shanshien, who decided one day, about 30 years ago, to become human. For six years the land suffered, as the kami pretended to be the abbot of the nearby Temple of Courageous Reflection.

The Lion guards halt in confusion at the sight that greets you when you arrive. The famous bridge across the river is washed out, with a single rope ferry across the river providing the only means of transport. A mass of chaotic humanity mobs each side of the river, samurai, merchants, and peasants alike hopelessly

trying to form a line for the ferry. Adding to the confusion, a long procession of monks on each side of the river are making their way up the banks, beating drums, shining mirrors against the sun, and making a general mess of things as they cross through the ferry line. They stop at each shrine along the river, offering prayers to the forgotten dead.

Your Lion escort quickly makes a path to the ferry, and the bowing ferryman quickly apologizes for the mess, saying the river kami has been quite angry of late. Hebi tells him not to worry, that as a priest, he will make the appropriate propitiations while crossing. He divides the group into four crossings: your group will cross first and make contact with the Crane on the other side, to prepare the way through the crowd for the rest of the group. He and his men will cross second, then the horses on the third and fourth trips.

The PCs cross first, uneventfully, along with any animals they have.

When Hebi and his men reach the middle of the river, Hebi makes an offering to the river spirit, opening a very ornate bottle of sake, pouring it into the churning water. The water boils where the sake hits it, and there is a sudden loud sound, like the ringing of a thousand gongs.

With a tremendous roar, the course of the river reverses, and the water rushes upstream, dropping the ferry into the thick mud of the river bed below. A wall of water forms a hundred yards upstream, in the shape of a gigantic, angry face. Hebi's men yell in terror and leap off the ferry, and start floundering through the deep mud. A few of them make for the three rocks in the middle of the river, the rest head toward your bank, calling for help. People on both banks begin screaming in terror and heading for higher ground. Hebi begins praying from the center of the ferry, his yojimbo clutching his kimono to keep him from falling out. A magical ward soon springs up around the two of them.

Give the PCs a chance to react. Attempting to enter the channel, when it is readily apparent that a wall of water is about to rush down it, requires overcoming **Fear 5** (TN 30). Moving through the deep mud reduces their Water Ring by 2, to a minimum of 1. (Athletics 3 reduces this to a reduction of 1, and Athletics 5 allows them to ignore the penalty entirely.) Overcoming the fear and wading in, in the face of certain death is worth 2 points of Honor, or 4 points if the PC is below Honor Rank 4. They gain an equal amount of Glory.

Merely staying on the banks, when a tidal wave is about to hit, requires a **Fear 3** (TN 20) roll, and is worth one pip of Honor to remain to try to help the struggling Ide samurai by throwing ropes or whatnot.

Failing the Fear roll means the PC moves out of the suspected splash zone. Failing by 15 or more, the PC panics and flees, losing a pip of Honor and Glory.

The river is 20' deep in the center, and 300' wide, with the ferry at the midpoint, 150' away. The banks slope gently down, but getting back out will be tough.

There is not much the PCs can do. Flight spells are probably too slow to get to Hebi in time, and ropes and such won't help much. But it is possible they might rescue one or two Ide samurai, the ones who get closest to the PCs, which might make the next encounter (with the Daidoji Harriers) easier.

Shugenja might want to commune with the river kami, but need six Raises on Commune to do so. If they can do this somehow, then a TN 50 **Spellcraft (Importune)** / **Awareness** roll can convince it not to attack.

After three rounds, the water strikes. Hebi's men are swept downstream and die. A few of them cling to the rocks desperately for a few moments before getting ripped off, screaming, and never emerge again. However, the water flows around the ferry, where a small bubble of protective magic keeps out the worst of the tidal wave. The ferry floats up to the surface in a small island of calm water, and drifts downstream placidly, amidst a massive raging torrent that destroys the last remaining pylons of the old bridge.

Any PCs in the river within 50' of the bank must roll **Athletics (Swimming)** / **Strength** (TN 20) or take 3k3 damage as they get smashed by the tidal wave before washing up on the shore. PCs that make it to the center somehow must roll instead at TN 30 or take 6k6 damage before being ejecting onto the bank by the kami. PCs with Wrath of the Kami: Water or are wearing the mon of the Ide family, have the TN raised by +5, and take +1k1 extra damage. PCs with both get double the penalty.

Afterward, Hebi says prayers for his dead men (he is absolutely heartbroken) and decides to press on with just the PCs for protection, leaving the horses in the care of the Lion Clan until later. The Yogo is wide-eyed and mute, clearly shocked by his men dying, as well as his own close brush with death.

Obviously unsettled, the Daidoji guards on shore will check to make sure everyone is okay, and ask if any of

them need healers (they won't, since Hebi can heal everyone).

The Daidoji opposed to the marriage wanted to engineer a natural disaster to kill him, in a way that couldn't be used to start a war. So they started dressing in the robes of an Ide shugenja and conducting various offensive actions against the river in secret. They'd run away each time, and since it couldn't chase them out of the course of the river, it got more and more angry. The kami, which was already very headstrong and independent, finally became fully enraged and knocked down the bridge crossing the river three days ago. When it saw Ide Hebi, in the hated colors of its enemies (and who has Wrath of the Kami: Water!), it chose to kill him and all the Ide with him. Only Hebi's ward magic saved him and his loyal bodyguard.

The PCs won't have any way of discovering the above, unless they think to commune with a spirit (six Raises to commune with the river, fewer Raises to commune with other spirits who know less) to find this out. Even still, the Daidoji were in disguise the whole time, and will not be identifiable by the spirits. As with the sumai match, Hebi can do the communing, but this time it won't occur to him on his own, as he's a bit out of sorts right now.

Part Six: The Fires of Purity

If time is running short, either skip this encounter entirely, or do not have the Harriers engage in any combat, simply have them leave after setting the inn on fire.

Ide Hebi and Yogo Maginau look quite bedraggled after their experience in the river, their fine kimonos soaked and covered in mud. After giving a long and heartfelt prayer to the people that died in the river, Hebi says that he will spend the night in the town nearby, to continue on to Shiro Daidoji tomorrow.

PCs who make an **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** roll (TN 15) will notice Yogo Maginau's hands trembling badly. His normally stoic face has slipped somewhat, and his eyes look haunted.

When you enter the Benten's Touch Inn, a fine new establishment, the manager quickly shoos out all the merchant guests for your exclusive usage. Maginau calls for sake, and lots of it. Hebi glances at him, nods slowly, and says, "Yes, perhaps we all need a chance to relax tonight. I will call for baths for all of us."

Looking at Maginau he says, "Please, my friend, drink a glass for our people that did not make it here."

The Truth Comes Out?: This encounter is the one time Maginau is vulnerable, and likely to spill the truth about Hebi to anyone. He gets drunk very quickly, taking Hebi's words to mean drinking one glass for all the Ide samurai that died... which is quite a bit for a non-alcoholic. After a bit, he will sit next to the prettiest female PC at the table. While he's not normally lecherous or a drunk, tonight he is making an exception.

Other than the normal verbal fumbblings of a drunk, Maginau will keep telling the PC that he knows a secret about Hebi-sama, "but, no, I can't tell you." Repeatedly. Coaxing the secret out of Maginau will take a **Courtier (Manipulation)** or **Sincerity / Awareness (TN 25)** roll, or a **Temptation (Seduction) / Awareness** roll at TN 15. He will tell the PC it is *very important* they understand this is a secret, but will forget to actually swear them to secrecy.

Then he'll spill Hebi's Dark Secret – he is the natural son of Yogo Tobusa, Daimyo of Beiden City, that Tobusa had him adopted into the Ide family at the time of the Scorpion Clan Coup, that Tobusa has been helping him from time to time (sending him shugenja tutors as well as Maginau himself), and that Hebi has a strange curse that is different from the normal Yogo curse, that nobody really understands. But he thinks it has something to do with fate, because a fortune teller died when reading Hebi's fortune as a baby. Maybe she cursed him? Who knows? As a Tansaku, *he* should know. Including how to fix it. But he doesn't. Which is strange, if you think about it. (All of this comes out in a sort of drunken stream-of-consciousness fashion.)

Maginau will collapse unconscious afterward, avoiding any more questions, and will not remember saying this in the morning. He'll still be passed out during the combat at midnight. Even if the PCs cast Jurojin's Blessing on him, he'll pass out from the stress of the previous day.

The Daidoji Strike Back: At midnight, the Daidoji Harriers attack. When they found out two weeks ago that Ide Hebi would be coming here, and carried a dark curse within his blood that would mix in with the Daidoji blood at the daimyo level, they immediately began preparations to kill him in such a way that it must *appear to be an accident*. (In other words, he can't die by being shot through with arrows.) This would avoid both bringing dishonor onto the Crane, and to avoid a war starting between the Regent and the Emerald Champion.

This inn was built as a deathtrap. Paranoid PCs might think it strange that the inn is brand new, but the innkeeper knows nothing of what is going on (he's not in on the plot) nor is anyone else working there in any way suspicious.

Pit traps dot the gardens around the inn – during the day, if the PCs choose to poke around it is an **Investigation (Search) / Perception** (TN 40) to notice them, since they are covered and nonoperational. At night, the Harriers sneak in and put punji sticks outside each PC's window. The PCs may roll **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** (TN 40) to detect this if they are inside, as the walls are thick, and designed to both deaden sound and be highly flammable. (Roll the Harrier's Stealth if PCs are standing guard outside for some reason.) A pit trap lies right outside Hebi's window. It is still covered, but now operational.

When the Harriers are all in place, they pepper the inn with fire arrows. The building, being brand new and designed for this purpose, will go up in flames immediately. The passageway out of the rooms has been barricaded. Hebi will immediately start the five-minute process to importune the kami for an Extinguish.

If a PC makes it into the gardens, the Harriers will attempt to attack from stealth and immobilize the PC with a mancatcher (sasumata), rolling it as a grapple check using **Polearms / Agility** against their non-armored Armor TN. If successful, the next round they will attempt to throw the PC using an opposed grapple check (**Polearms / Strength** vs. the PC's **Jiu-jitsu / Strength**). If successful, the PC gets tossed into a pit trap. The PC then gets covered by an archer, who will put an arrow into their hand if they try to climb out.

The harriers are honestly trying *not* to kill any PCs here. Their sole goal is to make sure Hebi dies by something that can be explained as natural means, as he presents a threat to the Clan. If the fire is extinguished (by spell or mundane means), they will Stealth back into the night and leave, the mission failed. They cannot kill Hebi by normal means, and will do their best to make sure no PC dies, attacking only with mancatchers or arrows to the hand unless they have no option.

The PC's horses and extra gear will be in the stables, which will not catch on fire. For simplicity, it can be assumed the PCs just have their daisho and armor in their room, and their traveling backpack. The PCs won't have time to put armor on, and it is a complex action to toss their gear out the window to save it from the fire.

Note: Crane PCs will absolutely not be attacked by the Harriers. Their rooms will not be set on fire (though they'll eventually burn later), punji sticks will not be set outside their windows, and the Harriers will not attack them. The Harriers will not identify themselves, but Crane PCs may still recognize their tactics with either **Lore: Crane** or **Battle / Intelligence** (TN 20) rolls. This may present a moral quandary for the PCs if they choose to fight, as they'd essentially be attacking members of their own Clan who are not fighting back, but it won't cost them Honor.

Scorpion and Lion PCs will be attacked preferentially. Called shots (with three Raises) can be used to deal facial damage to hurt their diplomatic skills in the final encounter (if scarred, they will suffer a -5 penalty on all Courtier rolls in that encounter). This scarring will be non-permanent and will heal after the module is over.

The Hazards: (See the map in the Appendix for a detailed layout.)

Sleep: The PCs, Maginau, and Hebi will all start out asleep, except for the two or so PCs on watch in the corridor outside their rooms. Maginau will need to be rescued by a PC, as he is most likely passed out.

Fire: When the building is set on fire, it is immediately obvious to anyone on watch, who will presumably wake everyone by shouting. If not, a raw **Perception** (TN 15) is enough to wake up from sleep each round. The fire does no damage the first two Rounds (starting after the ambush round), and then 2k2 fire damage each round after that.

On the first round, Hebi will put up a fire ward, which prevents his room from burning. After five minutes, Hebi will finish an Importune and cast Extinguish, which will put out the fire – assuming, of course, the PCs don't do anything to interfere. If the PCs somehow interrupt the Extinguish, the building will collapse 10 minutes after the fire started, dealing 10k10 damage to all still inside.

Smoke: After two rounds, it becomes very difficult to see inside of the building. The smoke will deal 1k1 damage per round (even in Hebi's warded area) unless they drop to the ground to breathe, reducing movement by half.

Blocked Door: There is a single door to get out of the private rooms and into the common area to escape, or to get to the well in the courtyard. When the inn goes up in flames, it becomes barricaded by falling debris from the roof, with a TN 35 **Strength** roll needed to burst it open.

Punji (Pongi) Sticks: The Harriers have set up Punji Stick traps outside the window of each room, except Hebi's (which has a pit trap instead). Jumping out a window will land the PC on the Punji sticks, which inflicts 4k3 damage. If they take damage from this (after reduction and possibly a void point), they are Lame (as per the disadvantage) until healed.

Pit Traps: Pit traps are hidden beneath the hedges in the gardens, with a cunning cover on them to disguise them until they take the full weight of a man, at which point the cover collapses, and the PC falls into the 20' deep pit. The PC takes 4k4 damage from the trap, and, if they are the first into the pit, are entangled as well. This means their first round(s) must be spent attempting TN 20 Strength checks until success, after which they are no longer entangled. After that, it is a TN 30 Athletics (Climbing) to escape as a complex action, or TN 20 to escape with two complex actions. Other than the pit outside Hebi's room, the PCs won't fall into them by accident, but must be tossed in by a Harrier.

The Harriers: There are **3 Harriers** for most parties of PCs. Add one if there is a large group of combat-effective PCs, subtract one if there are a lot of combat-ineffective PCs.

The Harriers hide in the garden with a 10k4/10k5/10k6+5 (low/mid/high) to their Stealth rolls. Anyone who makes it into the gardens will attempt to be mancatchered and tossed into a pit trap.

If no combat is going on, and a PC is in a pit trap, they'll send a guy over with a bow to talk to them reasonably. They'll tell the PC to just stay there until it all blows over, and that they just need to make sure Hebi dies of natural causes. "His blood carries a tainted curse that needs to end with him."

They're as honorable as ninja-types get, and will not use poison, disease, or kill innocent bystanders if they can avoid it. If asked who sent them (either now or after combat), they honestly don't know. Their orders always come anonymously, but are always honorable (well, from a certain perspective) and the information provided has always been accurate. They won't admit to being Harriers, just saying that they're Scouts who sometimes do special missions to protect the honor of the clan. If a PC tries to climb out, they'll put an arrow into their hand (which needs two raises, and results in a +10 TN to the escape roll) and tell them to stop it.

If Hebi escapes the inn and the pit trap outside his window, the Harriers will retreat, as his death will no longer look like an accident if he is filled full of arrows.

Daidoji Harrier

This plain-looking man with white hair wears a simple black cloth outfit that blends into the night.

Air 4 Earth 3 Fire 3 Water 4 Void 2
Agility 4
Honor 4.5 Status 2.0 Glory 0

Initiative: 8k4 **Attack:** 8k4/9k4/10k4
grapple with Sasumata
(complex) or
8k4/9k4/10k4 Yumi
(complex)

Armor TN: 30/32/32 **Damage:** None or 5k2

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

School/Rank: Daidoji Scout 2 / Daidoji Harrier 2

Techniques: **Surveying the Land** (+1k0 with Stealth and Hunting, +1k1 trap damage (included)), **Scouring the Shadows** (+2k0 on attack rolls against unaware opponents), **Move Like Shadows** (lose half honor, +1k1 trap damage (included)), **Iron Feather** (add stealth to Armor TN (included)).

Skills: Athletics 5, Craft: Explosives 3, Hunting (Traps) 5, Investigation 4, Stealth (Sneaking, Ambush) 5/7/7, Kenjutsu 1, Knives 4, Kyujutsu 4/5/6, Polearms 4/5/6.

Mastery Abilities: Not hampered by difficult terrain, may make simple moves while Stealthed for Water x 10' of movement, **+5 to Initiative for the first round of combat.**

Advantages/Disadvantages: Bland, Crafty, Silent.

Development: After five uninterrupted minutes of importuning the spirits, Hebi will Extinguish the flames. PCs will probably be either stuck in pits and fuming at the Daidoji calmly talking to them, or unconscious, or the Daidoji will be down. If the PCs capture a Harrier alive, he will very reasonably explain why it was necessary to try to kill Hebi and make sure it was through "natural causes." (The news that he has a cursed bloodline bothers Hebi quite a bit, but he will deny it.) The PCs should turn any Harriers over to the Doji Magistrates who quickly show up after the fire – and they will later vanish from prison.

Hebi moves the party over to a new inn, where they spend the rest of the night without incident.

Part Seven: Shiro Daidoji

Three days later, you reach your final destination – Shiro Daidoji, the seat of Daidoji Uji, the Daidoji family daimyo. Your group is greeted with polite courtesy and are ushered into austere, but still elegant quarters. Several days go by, with the servants telling

you nothing more than “Events are being arranged, please ask again tomorrow.”

The PCs may roll **Etiquette (Courtesy) / Awareness** (TN 25) to realize they are being given a very formal, cold reception; it is evident that the locals are not terribly happy about the situation.

The Scorpions’ Time to Shine: Scorpion PCs should be reminded that they’ve been tasked to create a serious embarrassment for the Crane while they’re here by Shosuro Taberu (a courtier with the sobriquet of “the Poison Crane”). There are a few methods that they can use (and inventive PCs might have their own ideas; the GM should use their discretion, and set similar TNs):

Option 1) They can seduce Daidoji Nyoko prior to her marriage, ruining her image as a chaste, virtuous maiden – this requires a TN 35 **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll to gain access to her alone, and a TN 50 **Temptation (Seduction) / Awareness** to seduce her. While a virtuous woman, Nyoko has just been released from her vow of chastity. The PC can gain a 6 point Blackmail Advantage on her, gaining Nyoko as a 4-point Sworn Enemy in the process. Alternatively, they (or another PC) may use **Courtier (Gossip)** to share the secret to the world, winning a pip of Personal Status from Taberu (to a maximum of 3.9). If the PC does not hide the source of the rumors (needing a raise on the Gossip check), Nyoko is gained as a Sworn Enemy.

Option 2) PCs can feasibly skulk about the castle and attempt to eavesdrop on the heated conversations taking place within the castle. This requires three TN 40 **Stealth (Sneaking) / Agility or Acting (Disguise) / Awareness** rolls. Any failures, and the sharp-eyed Daidoji guards will spot the imposter, escorting the PC back to their quarters, causing them to lose five points of Glory. If successful, however, they discover incriminating evidence that Daidoji Uji was responsible for sending the Harriers to set up Hebi’s death as an accident, which would be devastating to the Crane Clan if revealed. This allows the PC to have a 7 point Blackmail on Uji (gaining him as a 7 point Sworn Enemy), or to use Courtier (Gossip) to spread the truth, which would result in Uji becoming dishonored, and not appearing in the next scene. This also earns the pip of Status from Taberu as above.

The **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll has a TN of 50 – (5 x the Glory of the PC). A Raise is needed to conceal the source of the rumor. If they do not, the PC will gain the enmity of the entire Daidoji Family (which should be noted on their module tracking sheet) and a rank of Infamy.

Both options will inflict an honor loss on the Scorpion of pips of Honor equal to their current Honor Rank.

The Final Confrontation:

*Finally, your group is called into an austere meeting chamber, where the head of the Daidoji family, Daidoji Uji waits with his trademark mask covering his face. (Non-Crane PCs may roll **Lore Crane / Intelligence** at TN 20 to know that he wears this when fighting enemies, to remind them he is not to be trusted; Crane PCs do not need to roll to know this.) Daidoji Nyoko is here as well, wearing an expensive kimono over her bulky, athletic frame. The only other people in this room are the other Daidoji provincial daimyo. Once the door is closed, not even servants enter the room.*

Without preamble, Daidoji Uji speaks. “We have been debating this... announcement... of a marriage by the Imperial Regent for some time. An announcement made without consulting the rest of us. Abbreviating our debate, we have decided that we will allow Nyoko-san to make the final decision. The Crane clan must be united to be strong, and we will not let the Regent split our family over such an... insignificant matter.”

Nyoko steps forward and runs her eyes over Hebi’s expansive frame, not quite looking him in the eye. She speaks softly, “The Regent speaks for the Empress, and so I cannot question his wisdom in this matter. Reports of Ide Hebi-san’s bravery and compassion have reached us even here in Shiro Daidoji.” She darts her eyes over his face and smiles, “I would not feel it so great a duty to marry this man.” (Hebi smiles back at this point, pleased.) “However,” she frowns again, “There have also been disturbing reports. Ujisama suggested, and I agreed, that I would withhold making a final decision on this marriage until I had received a report on these events firsthand from his travelling companions. Samurai-sans – What say you about Hebi-san? His character? Is he suitable for marriage? What about the ‘strange events’?”

Overall, she is asking if they support the marriage or not. There’s a lot of different factors as to why a PC should support this marriage. Supporters of the Regent might want to support his plans (and vice versa for supporters of the Champion). Crane Clan PCs aware of the curse might be rightfully terrified at having it introduced into the Crane bloodline. Other Clans might encourage the marriage as a way to weaken the bloodline. Shugenja studying the twists of fate might be concerned about what would happen to fate if a returned spirit, like the Regent, were to arrange such an influential marriage. And so forth.

Each PC should have a few minutes to talk. Mentions of a strange curse will trouble all the Daidoji daimyo immensely. If the PCs learned he is a Yogo, the daimyo will react almost violently to the idea of marriage – even the Scorpion don't generally allow Yogo to marry outside their family. On the other hand, mentions of his bravery, mercy, kindness, usefulness as a spellcaster in a Clan with very few, etc., will cause the daimyo to be pleased.

If the issue of his Yogo heritage is not mentioned by the PCs, Daidoji Uji will raise it, saying *“Hebi-san, these reports of a strange curse suggest – forgive my impoliteness – you might have Yogo blood in your family. Your province famously trades samurai with Beiden Province every year, including your own Yogo bodyguard. Is there truth to these rumors?”* Hebi will turn white at this in anger, but maintain his face and deny it. He honestly does not know he's the son of the Yogo lord. (Magainau, thankfully, is not in the room.) The PCs can chime in now on the subject.

After they've all had their say, each side makes a **Courtier (Manipulation)** or **Sincerity (Honesty or Deceit) / Awareness** roll. Add *all* the rolls for each side together. Each PC gets to add the following modifiers, based on their speech earlier, which might apply for or against them:

- Mentioning Hebi has a strange curse. (One Free Raise to *oppose* the marriage)
- Stating for sure he has Yogo heritage. (Three Free Raises *against* the marriage)
- Mentioning an act of bravery or kindness. (One Free Raise *for* the marriage)
- Mentioning his love for sumai. (One Free Raise *against* the marriage, as she does not like it.)
- Mentioning the Regent ordered it, so it is her duty to marry him. (Two Free Raises *for* the marriage)
- Mentioning something about fate, especially in regards to returned spirits. (One Free Raise for or against depending on the argument.)
- Mentioning the spirits called him a murderer in the sumai death scene. (One Raise *against*)
- Mentioning the political ramifications of an alliance with the Unicorn. (One Raise for or against, depending how it is argued.)
- Giving a gift of rare tea blends or a samisen to Nyoko (One Free Raise of the PC's choice)
- If a PC happens to be a vassal of Daidoji Nyoko, they receive four Free Raises for whichever side of the argument they choose.

The side that has the highest total wins.

Daidoji Uji adds a +20 bonus to the side opposing the marriage, as he thinks this is all a plot to contaminate the Daidoji bloodline. If he is not here (due to being dishonored by the Scorpion, say), remove this bonus.

Daidoji Nyoko adds a +40 on the side of sticking with the marriage. Although she has her doubts, she likes Hebi's character, and feels duty bound to carry out the Regent's wishes.

Crane PCs that roll a 30 or higher on their individual Courtier or Sincerity roll gain a point of Personal Status (to a maximum of 3.9) from impressing the Daidoji hierarchy with their words.

Conclusion

If the marriage was called off, but his Yogo heritage was not revealed, Hebi will return to the Ide lands, dejected, and relations will sour between the Ide and the Daidoji families somewhat. It is possible that the PCs might get Nyoko to commit seppuku in protest against her orders to marry. (This should be noted in the module tracking sheet.)

If Hebi's Yogo heritage is revealed (and the marriage is called off), however, he will be disgraced and return to his father in Beiden City, who will eagerly make use of the talented shugenja who now knows all the secrets of the Ide family. Nyoko will not feel any need to kill herself, due to such outrageous an order (marrying a Yogo!). Her support for the Imperial Regent will be shaken, but she will not shift allegiances from this event alone.

If the marriage takes place, it will happen at the local Shrine to Benten, though with the rest of her family more or less opposed to it, it will be rather simple. Hebi will marry into the Crane Clan, becoming Daidoji Hebi.

The ultimate fate of the couple will, like any other marriage, be determined only by the passing of time.

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
Ide Hebi Survives	+1XP
The PC gives testimony to the Daidoji:	+1XP

Total Possible Experience: 4XP

Honor

In addition to honor gains/losses through roleplaying:

- Overcoming their fear to rescue the Ide samurai in the flood scene is worth between +.1 and +.4 Honor. Fleeing in panic costs -.1 Honor.
- Becoming the Chrysanthemum Petal Champion is worth +.1 Honor.

Glory

- In the first encounter, PCs can gain or lose Glory during the Chrysanthemum Petal Competition (between -.3 Glory for passing out and +.4 for being named the Champion).
- At the Chrysanthemum Festival, PCs can gain or lose one or two pips of Glory.
- PCs who flee the tidal wave in panic lose -.1 Glory. Those who wade in gain +.2 or +.4.
- Scorpions (or any other Clan) who get caught sneaking in Shiro Daidoji lose -.5 Glory. If they spread rumors and do not conceal the source, they gain a rank of Infamy.

Status

Scorpion who manage to successfully embarrass the Crane in their own castle and do not keep it secret gain +.1 Personal Status from impressing Shosuro Taberu.

Crane PCs who roll a 30 or higher on a Courtier or Sincerity roll in front of the assembled Daidoji daimyo gain +.1 Personal Status for impressing them with their words.

Note: PCs are capped at 3.9 Personal Status. Neither the above rewards nor the Chrysanthemum Champion reward will allow a player to go over 3.9 Status.

Other Awards/Penalties

If the marriage was stopped, the PCs gain a Daidoji Family Favor.

If the marriage took place, the PCs gain Daidoji Nyoko (Influence 2 / Devotion 1) as an Ally.

All PCs who treated Hebi well gain him as an Ally (Influence 2 / Devotion 1). PCs who played up to his love for sumai gain an additional point of Devotion.

One PC at the table may become the Chrysanthemum Petal Champion. This has the following benefits:

Ide Family Favor

+4 Glory

+1 Honor

+1 Personal Status

The PC is named “The Chrysanthemum Petal Champion” for one year (Akodo 1142 to Akodo 1143). In modules set during this time period, as long as the PC wears the chrysanthemum necklace, honorable (7+ Honor) NPCs will tend to avoid attacking the PC unless the PC gives them cause. This is a weaker form of the Sacrosanct Advantage.

-If multiple PCs are the Chrysanthemum Petal Champion at later tables, only the PC with the highest honor benefits from this.

Module Tracking Sheets

Note if a PC was for or against the marriage, if he or she played up to Hebi’s love for sumai, and if they found out he had Yogo heritage.

GM Reporting

- Was the Ide family successfully lobbied for the Emerald Champion or Imperial Regent factions?
- Did the Daidoji Harriers escape?
- Did the Scorpion manage to embarrass the Crane? If so, how?
- Did Maginau survive the fire?
- Did the marriage go through?
- Was Hebi’s heritage revealed?

GM must report this information BEFORE 6/29/2014 for it to have storyline effect

Appendix #1: NPCs

Ide Hebi

Ide Hebi is an overweight Ide Shugenja. Generally jovial, however he becomes very intense when talking about his one true love – sumai wrestling. He’s a large man, though more wide than tall, in an elaborate kimono with purple and silver (real silver, not silver-colored) thread running throughout it. He constantly fans himself with an ornate purple fan with a unicorn motif on it.

Air 3 Earth 3 Fire 3 Water 4 Void 4

Honor 7.2 Status 5.0 Glory 2.8

Initiative: 6k3 **Attack:** by spell

Armor TN: 26 (Defense Stance) **Damage:** by spell

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

School/Rank: Iuchi Shugenja 2/Yogo “Ward” Path 1 (Insight Rank 3)

Technique: *Spirit of the Wind:* May sacrifice one spell slot of any element as a Complex Action, to grant one target individual an additional Simple Move Action. This Simple Action is in addition to the target’s normal Actions per Round. The additional Action must be used on the target’s next Turn or it is lost. Gain a Free Raise on any spell with the Travel keyword.

Basic Warding: Hebi may create an elemental ward as a complex action by spending a void point and spell slot of the appropriate element. This ward hedges out active kami of that element in a 10’ radius for five minutes. (For example, a ward against fire will prevent anything from catching on fire within 10’ of him, and would stop all fire spells from being cast in or out.)

Affinity/Deficiency: Water/Fire

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon; (Air:7k3) Blessed Wind (ML1), Nature’s Touch (ML1); (Earth:7k3) Elemental Ward (ML1), Soul of Stone, (ML1), Earth’s Protection (ML3); (Fire 6k3) Fires of Purity (ML1), Mental Quickness (ML2); (Water:10k4) Path to Inner Peace (ML1), Cloak of the Miya (ML1), Wisdom & Clarity (ML2), Regrow the Wound (ML3), Heart of the Water Dragon (ML4)

Skills: Battle 2, Calligraphy (Cipher) 2, Courtier 2, Etiquette 2, Defense 3, Horsemanship 1, Lore: Bushido 2, Lore: Heraldry 4, Lore: History 3, Lore: Sumai 8, Lore: Theology 3, Medicine 3, Meditation (Void Recovery) 3, Sincerity 5, Spellcraft 5

Mastery Abilities: may retain a Full Defense roll in successive Rounds, +1k0 to Spell Casting Rolls

Advantages/Disadvantages: Large, Lucky III, Sage / Dark Fate (the events of this module), Dark Secret (Yogo heritage), Fascination (Sumai), Compulsion II

(Sumai), Unlucky III (only affects people near him), Wrath of the Kami: Earth, Wrath of the Kami: Water.

Tactics: He typically will ward himself during the first round of combat, and then heal any of the PCs after that with Path to Inner Peace, as long as he doesn’t need to leave the ward. If no PC needs healing, he will give melee characters Fires of Purity. If he gets attacked, he will cast Cloak of the Miya on himself, and switch to Full Defense stance after that.

Yogo (Tansaku) Maginai

Maginai is a nondescript bushi, who wears the crimson colors of his clan proudly. He doesn’t talk much about his past or his little-known family, preferring his work for Hebi to be more secretive. He is as much a scholar as a bushi, and finds the study of curses to be a passion as much as it is his ordered mission.

Air 3 Earth 3 Fire 4 Water 3 Void 4

Intelligence 5

Honor 5.7 Status 3.0 Glory 2.1

Initiative: 7k4 **Attack:** 9k4 (Katana, Simple)

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

Reduction: 3

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

School/Rank: Bayushi Bushi 4

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

Pincers and Tail: May Feint with one Raise.

Strike at the Tail: May Fatigue an opponent with a successful attack. During the Reactions Stage, an affected opponent may attempt an Earth Ring roll against a TN of 25 to negate the effects of this Technique. If he fails, the effects of this Technique end during the next Reactions Stage (the second Reactions Stage after he was struck).

Strike From Above, Strike From Below: May make melee attacks as a Simple Action.

Skills: Courtier (Manipulation) 4, Defense 5, Etiquette 4, Iaijutsu 4, Investigation 4, Kenjutsu 5, Lore: Curses 7, Lore: Scorpion 3, Lore: Shadowlands 2, Lore: Spirits 3, Lore: Unicorn 2, Sincerity (Deceit) 4

Mastery Abilities: +6 Insight, may retain a Full Defense roll in successive Rounds, +3 Armor TN in Defense or Full Defense Stance, may ready a sword as a Free Action, +1k0 damage with swords

Advantages/Disadvantages: Sage, Virtuous / Dark Secret (Hebi’s Heritage), Soft-Hearted

Appendix #2: Daimyo Support List

Emerald Champion

Crane

Asahina Manobu & Ume
Daidoji Nayoko
Daidoji Heizo & Raicho
Daidoji Tsukasa
Doji Hoshi
Doji Kei
Kakita Hisaki
Kakita Inejiro
Kakita Yae

Dragon

Agasha Hibiki
Agasha Odasake
Hitomi Anako
Kitsuki Rikuto
Kitsuki Shichirou & Hara
Mirumoto Akashi &
Tsukiyama
Mirumoto Isao
Mirumoto Nobu

Lion

Akodo Daisuke
Akodo Kasumi
Akodo Kohaku
Ikoma Bokkai & Suzuko
Ikoma Yachi
Kitsu Koan
Matsu Akane

Mantis

Moshi Reiko
Tsuruchi Meiji
Tsuruchi Totoya
Yoritomo Date

Phoenix

Agasha Hama

Agasha Manabu
Isawa Mitsukuni

Scorpion

Bayushi Makoto & Atsuko
Shosuro Atsumori
Shosuro Ryouta
Soshi Toshiro

Unicorn

Shinjo Mei-Ling
Utaku Ju-Jing
Utaku Qiu Mei

Monkey

Toku Yorikane

Sparrow

Suzume Gesshin

Evenly Split

Lion

Akodo Kyuwa

Mantis

Yoritomo Utaemon

Phoenix

Isawa Mariko

Scorpion

Bayushi Hotaka
Soshi Ayane

Imperial Regent

Crab

Hida Dayu
Hida Rei
Hida Sorai
Hida Tatsuya
Hiruma Yabu*
Kaiu Mai
Kuni Roka
Kuni Tsubu
Toritaka Shippou
Yasuki Ebi
Yasuki Minoru

Crane

Daidoji Nyoko

Lion

Akodo Hiraku
Ikoma Sho

Mantis

Yoritomo Marihito
Yoritomo Tadanobu

Phoenix

Asako Toson
Shiba Gidayu

Scorpion

Yogo Tobusa

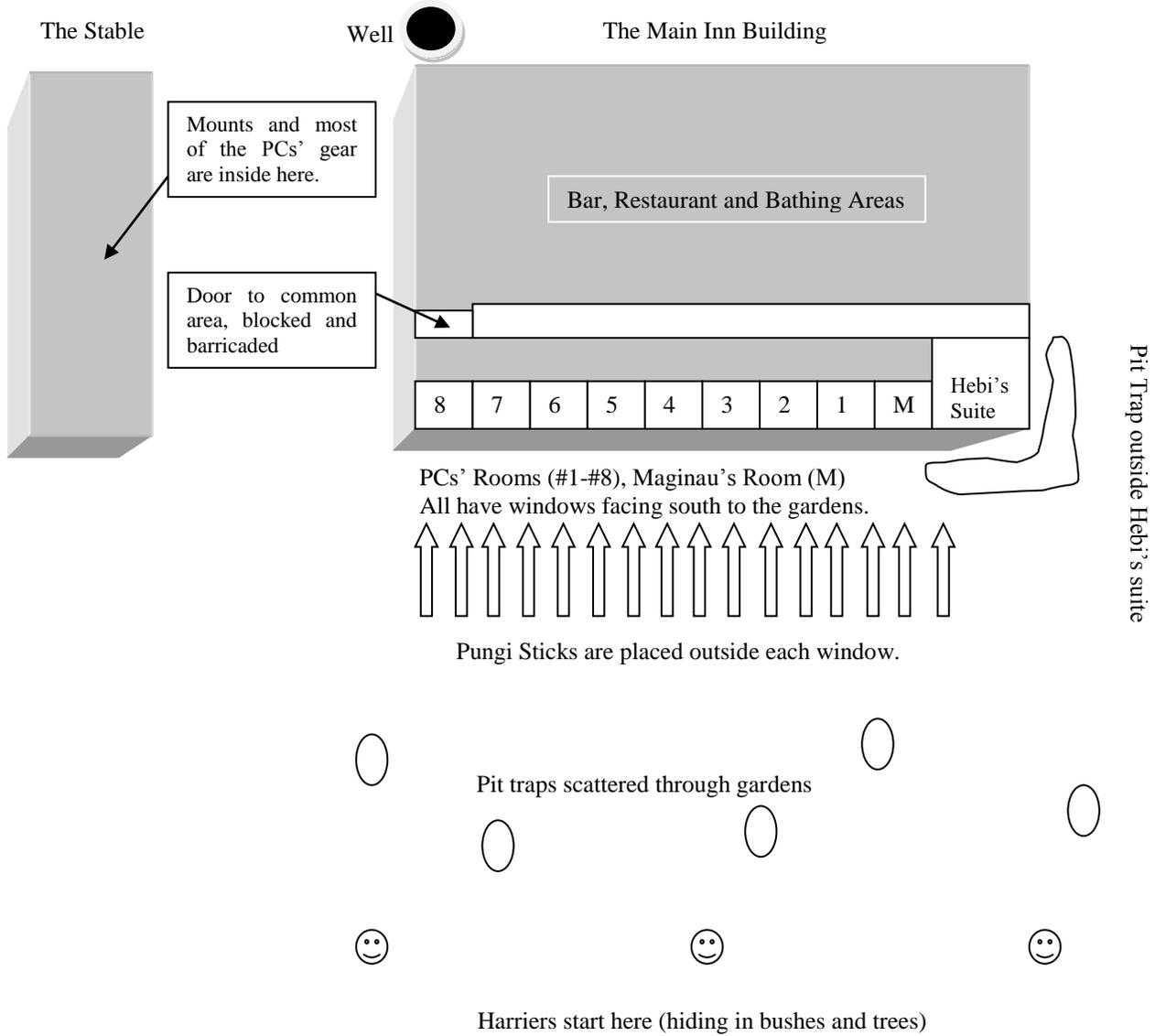
Unicorn

Horiuchi Hachirou
Moto Su-Tai

Fox

Kitsune Teika

Appendix #3 – Map of the Benten’s Blessing Inn



Player Handout #1

To Our Loyal Vassal,

We are sending you to attend Choyo no Sekku – the Chrysanthemum Festival – held on the banks of the Chrysanthemum Petal Lake near Shiro Ide. This festival takes place each year on the sixth day of the month of Akodo to celebrate the day the Kami fell to earth. The Hantei emperors have always attended the festival, which makes it a very politically sensitive event given the current rivalry between the Imperial Regent and the Emerald Champion.

The entire Ide family is currently unaligned between the two factions, so we would like you to try to impress them during your stay there, and lobby them to support the correct faction – the supporters of the Empress and the Emerald Champion, of course. The Ide family are well known peacemakers, so the high arts will be more likely to impress than more martial exploits.

We have word that the Imperial Regent, Hantei Okucheo, will attempt a ploy during the festival. Do what you can to foil his plans, but keep all of your opposition political. We do not want to start a war with the Regent, and certainly do not want to give him an excuse to spill blood in reprisal.

Travel papers are attached.

*May the kami bless you,
-[Your daimyo]*

Player Handout #2

To Our Loyal Vassal,

We are sending you to attend Choyo no Sekku – the Chrysanthemum Festival – held on the banks of the Chrysanthemum Petal Lake near Shiro Ide. This festival takes place each year on the sixth day of the month of Akodo to celebrate the day the Kami fell to earth. The Hantei emperors have always attended the festival, so it is important that we supporters of the Imperial Regent make an appearance to remind people of this fact.

The entire Ide family is currently unaligned between the two factions, so we would like you to try to impress them during your stay there, and lobby them to support the Empress - and her Imperial Regent, Hantei Okucheo-domo, of course. The Ide daimyo overseeing the festival, Ide Yaeko, is known for her love of both history and the arts, so providing an artistic recounting of the long tradition of Hantei emperors attending the festival is an approach you might consider. Additionally, it is worth mentioning the fact that the chrysanthemum petals plucked each year by the Hantei emperor possessed miraculous curative powers for members of the imperial family – a fact the peace-loving Ide should truly appreciate. With the blessings of the kami, they should come to see that restoring the proper order of things is in everyone's best interest.

Finally, the Imperial Regent will be announcing the engagement of Ide Hebi, Ide Yaeko's younger brother to Daidoji Nyoko at the festival. Nyoko-san is one of Okucheo-domo's strongest supporters, so this marriage will be very influencing in guiding the Ide family to the right path.

You will be asked to keep Hebi-san safe on his journey. Make sure he arrives safely, and the marriage proceeds as planned. Travel papers are attached.

*May the kami bless you,
-[Your daimyo]*

Player Handout #3

To Our Loyal Vassal,

We are sending you to attend Choyo no Sekku – the Chrysanthemum Festival – held on the banks of the Chrysanthemum Petal Lake near Shiro Ide. This festival takes place each year on the sixth day of the month of Akodo to celebrate the day the Kami fell to earth. Traditionally, the Hantei emperors attended the festival, which will make this year's event interesting, with the current tensions between the Imperial Regent – a former Hantei emperor – and the Emerald Champion.

As our family has not yet decided which way we will stand on that divide, keep your eyes and ears open. Talk to members of both sides. When you return, we will expect a report on the advantages of each side, and a recommendation of which to support.

Travel papers are attached.

*May the kami bless you,
-[Your daimyo]*