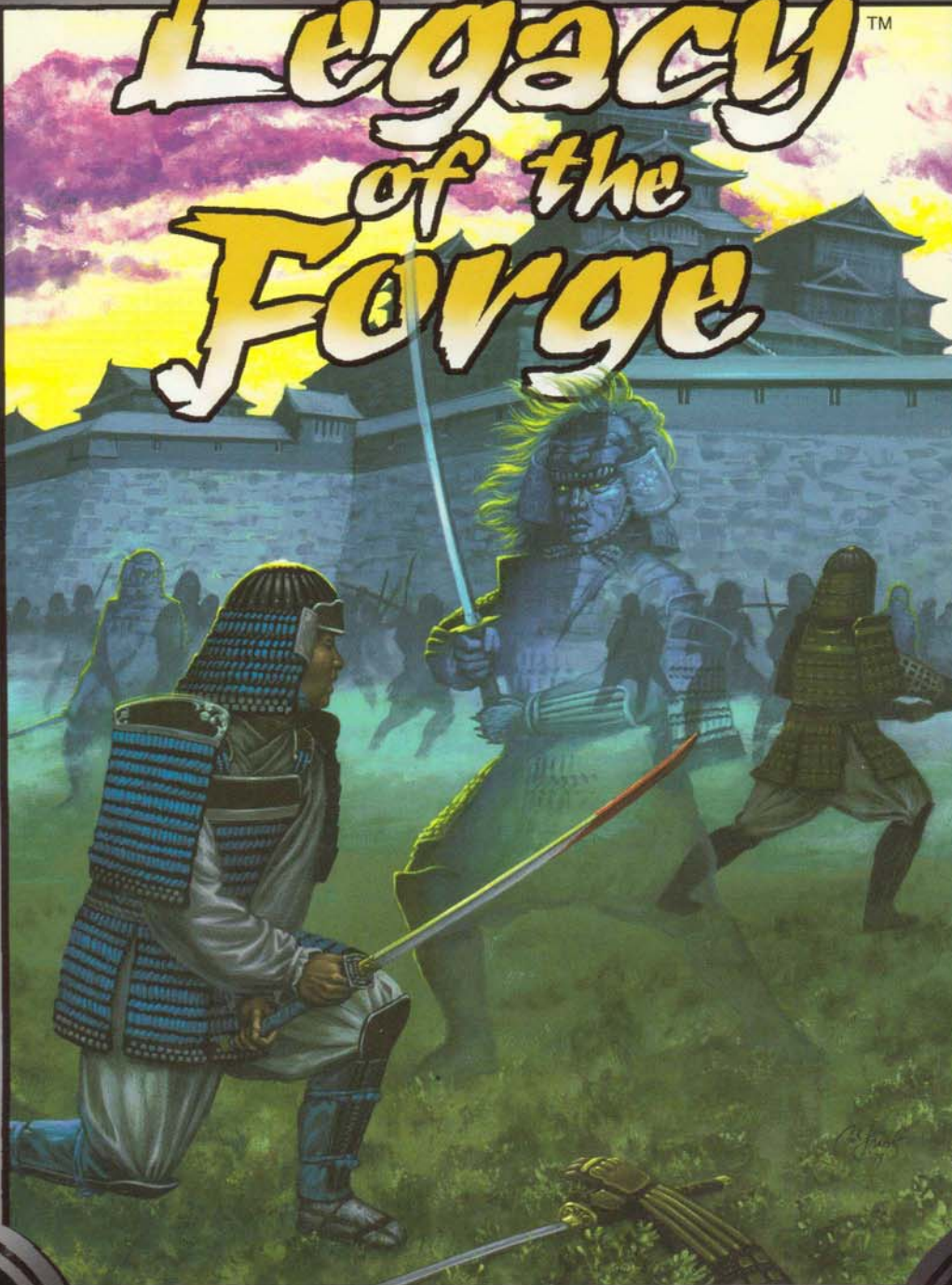




Legend of the Five Rings™

Legacy™ of the Forge



B-2
Bushido
Series

Timeless Warfare in Rokugan

Written by
Patrick Kapera





Legend of the Five Rings

Legacy of the Forge



*"Sometimes, to honor the past,
we must sacrifice the future..."*

– Tankenka



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THANKS TO . . .

Maureen Yates and John Zinser, who are responsible for this fine writing gig, and for making my life a more habitable place to wake up in the morning. Thank You.

DEDICATION

This book is for my true legacy, my fellow garage-gamers – David Trask, David Molinar, Sam Ortiz, and Omar Topete – who have stood by me through the years, and been my greatest inspiration. Sorry for all the sessions I've missed since I started this job!

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SUGGESTED CHARACTER COMPOSITION

1 - 3 Bushi and 1 - 3 Shugenja; School Ranks 3 to 4

SUGGESTED REFERENCES

L5R RPG, Way of the Lion, Way of the Crane, Way of the Scorpion, Way of the Phoenix

From the Journal of Shikken Tankenka

I feel I must document this moment for posterity. Future generations should know how the war began, where and when the first terrible mistake was made, and who was responsible...

Matsu Agame's form is that of a death shroud as he steps boldly forward upon the wet morning grass of the outer plains and kneels upon a sheet of thick white linen. Gale winds whip at his dark clothing, and the first light of morning crests upon his shoulders. Mist clings to everything in sight, a pale, moist net alighting on the crowded masses upon the northern plain. There is a deafening silence all around, threatening to steal away the vicious injustice of this moment, freezing it in time forever.

Surrounding the samurai are his family and friends, whom I have heard him call "students", though he has no formal right to train them. They are his audience; the kaisha are only a formality, uninvolved witnesses to Agame's atonement.

Approaching from behind, Agame's son Jzedan takes his place at the river's edge, standing squarely and taking firm hold of his katana. The mist becomes a gentle spring shower, soaking through the young man's clothing. They are so unconventional, these two. Black cloth at a seppuku! So blatant in their protest. But then, I suppose they have a right. The burden of Agame's guilt is nothing compared to the greater tragedy this ceremony represents.

A long pause follows, and a have a moment for reflection, and some clarification.

Two weeks ago, I arrived here at Toshi Ranbo and began negotiations with the diplomat Asahina Denosei, who is both an able orator and an honorable man, and who has become my constant companion. By Imperial decree, we were to invest ourselves in the mutual cause of peace, to bring the families of the Lion and the Crane back from the brink of impending war. Our talks involved various dignitaries of both clans, including the famed Matsu Tsuko, whose proud form I can now make out at the very edge of the amassed Lion forces below.

Tsuko is a troubled spirit, and though she will not discuss it, I believe the cause of her inner turmoil is linked to this place and to the death of the Akodo Champion, Arasou. Her anger is too focused, too rigid for diplomacy, and our efforts with her clan have been terribly stymied by it. Time and again, I have tried to open lines of communication with her, but she is willing only to listen, and refuses to consider a compromise. Without Matsu Tsuko's support, I fear the endeavor of peace is wasted.

Arasou himself is a more salient detail, however, as I believe that the memory of his death is being used to further Tsuko's rage, and promote this conflict beyond hope of redemption. The cause of this artifice, I fear, is an old rival, a woman who has encouraged friction between the Lion and the Crane before, and has provided me with much personal grief. I have trailed her to this place, to Violence Behind Courtliness City, where I am sure that her plan is already at work.

Agame is speaking now. He is too far away for me to hear his voice, but I know his words. I heard them echoing through the halls as I tried to approach his chambers last evening. I was denied, of course, my business seemingly uninvolved with his dishonor. But the words claim otherwise, their bitter malice drenched in the conspiracy of their birth:

The moments mingle
Past and future collide here
I am without shame

Agame is dying to protect her secret, and there is nothing I can do for him. With his death, there is only one person left who knows the truth beside me, one who knows of the plague that Sozui means to release upon the Empire. He remains at the Swift Sword, where he may safeguard my notes and watch over the restless spirits while I am gone.

It is my fault that Agame bends upon his blade this day. If I had not drawn him into this web of intrigue, not told him of the Kitsu and their ancient Legacy... I was so careful with the others, never repeating their names or writing them down in all the many weeks of my search. How could I be so careless?

The blood of another is upon my hands.

The words continue from Agame, of the reason for his selfless act. He says that he is to die for his indiscretions with Doji Meiko, the daughter of a Crane general posted here. He claims that his life is meaningless before her honor and continued happiness – another bold move, and one which will not be forgotten by her family. He also speaks of his love for her, and how its impassioned flame still burns within his breast.

No one would have known of their affair if I had not come here. He is dying for my cause.

I close my eyes as he begins the cut. I cannot watch this happen. I cannot see another die for me. His only crimes were love and the inability to see through Sozui's corruption. He never knew what he was getting into, not until it was far too late for him to escape. He certainly never knew that two families would be shamed for his actions. I wonder at the fates of his beloved men, his "students." Will they be asked to follow his path as junshi, or cast away as honorless ronin when all this is done?

Sensing something is wrong, I gaze down upon the ceremony again, and find that Agame has paused between the first and second thrusts. The wound is grievous, and his body is shaking. He is frozen in place, and I suddenly realize the terrible reason why...

Izedan raises his sword for the finishing blow, and his face becomes a taut mask of shame. If his father cannot complete the three cuts himself, the dishonor will remain.

All my hopes for the Empire spiral downward into forlorn depths of madness and despair.

Izedan is dead, killed by an arrow from within the ranks of the Crane.

Agame's shame lingers. He died sobbing Meiko's name, his cut unfinished.

Outside, as I write this, I can hear nothing but concord's final death throes as the armies collide.

This city has lived up to its name.

We are at war.

Fortunes favor us all...



Introduction

WHAT IS *LEGACY OF THE FORGE*?

The second adventure in our acclaimed Bushido (B) series, *Legacy of the Forge* is an epic saga of war, honor, and the price of duty. Similar to the first episode in the Bushido series, *Code of Bushido*, *Legacy* explores the personal ethics and morals of the characters involved, posing difficult questions as well as exciting and dangerous situations. As with all *Legend of the Five Rings* story packs, this adventure can be played alone, or as part of an ongoing campaign.

Legacy of the Forge has one distinct difference from our other story packs, however: it directly continues from the short scenario *The Silence Within Sound*, contained in the revised *L5R GM's Screen*. Although it shares two of the same NPCs and much established background, *Legacy* is self-contained and can be played completely without knowledge of *The Silence Within Sound*.

The dramatic backdrop of *Legacy* is an ancient feud between the Lion and the Crane Clans. The storyline hints at dark times ahead for the Empire. During the course of the adventure, the characters must confront their own codes of honor and loyalty, and even the most shrouded secret of all, the hidden land of the dead – Jigoku.

You will notice that *Legacy* is significantly longer than most of our other story packs. It contains a tremendous amount of information about the Crane, the Lion, and their feud, as well as supplemental rules, a new Advantage, and descriptions of full-scale battle sequences scripted for the RPG. Characters who undertake this adventure are in for the ride of their lives. But, as with all L5R adventures, there is also a significant possibility of death. The L5R world is a dangerous place, and characters who brave the gauntlet must be prepared to risk everything. *Legacy of the Forge* offers something unique in this regard as well – a path beyond death, and a resolution beyond the fires of a hero's pyre.

Players who are familiar with *The Way of the Lion* and *The Way of the Crane* will recognize many of the NPCs and storylines here. Plots first introduced in the CCG and elsewhere in the roleplaying game are interwoven, secrets are discovered, and a great power is unleashed upon the contested keep of Toshi Ranbo... and beyond. By the end of the tale, the characters will have faced a powerful ancestor, freed countless souls bound in death, and brought resolution to one of the greatest battles of the epic struggle between the Emperor's right and left hands.

But that's a tale best left for the characters to discover...

THE THEME OF *LEGACY OF THE FORGE*

Legacy of the Forge, like all the modules in the Bushido series, is a module for experienced players. It deals with issues that are close to the heart of a samurai, issues that an inexperienced player may have difficulty understanding. While we have added significant information to this story pack, it is always best to read through it carefully before beginning. The primary theme of *Legacy* is that of lingering deeds: events which have an impact upon this life, and the Rokugani afterworld beyond.

Dark deeds call forth dark powers, and even the soul of a departed hero is not safe from the evils that men have wrought in times past. The heart of a samurai must withstand the tests of life, and death. Only by conquering both can one shine a harsh light upon the lingering shadow of yesterday's dishonor, and be truly at peace within himself.



Gamemaster's Notes

One Man's Mission

Over the last several months, the smell of conspiracy has grown across the Empire. Many are mistaking it for simple tension, though there is one who knows better...

Tankenka (see his personal history in the sidebar) is a *shikken*, an Imperial regent charged with keeping the peace between clans, enforcing the Emperor's will, and maintaining open lines of communication between the Imperial Palace at Otsan Uchi and the various regional daimyo of Rokugan. He gained the appointment by way of favors called upon after the Battle of the Humble Turtle (see *The Silence Within Sound*, a mini-adventure within the revised GM's Screen, for details on this conflict). He has performed his duties with all the compassion and determination gained during his time as a monk of the Yaruki Jukko temple (destroyed during the aforementioned Battle).

Within Tankenka's breast beats the heart of a kami, left behind by a water elemental who inhabited his body for many years prior to the Battle at Kenson Gakka. Through its power, he senses that seemingly unconnected events across the Empire are coming together in a disastrous fashion. His personal investigations into several key incidents within the last year have proven to him that there is a guiding hand behind them, that of Bayushi Sozui, the primary instigator of the troubles at Kenson Gakka, and the source of much of Tankenka's personal anguish.

In his capacity as a *shikken*, Tankenka began piecing these "random" events together, studying every instance in which Sozui was involved or might have had an impact. He watched for signs

that these events were moving toward a particular goal, promising the last vestige of Sanshien within him that he would prevent such a thing when the time came. And he remained quiet about his suspicions, knowing that others would look at him with confusion and fear, both for the aberration he had become, and the silent threat he noted at the horizon.

Some of the various events his researches focused upon include:

- The Battle on the Plains of Gaiju Shindai (see *Winter Court: Kyuden Seppun*, p. 82), in which over five hundred samurai lost their lives to the fledgling war between the Lion and the Crane. Tankenka noted that this battle erupted from an unexpected altercation between the generals on the field, and that evidence pointed toward an outside source for the friction. This source was only identified as a "brash samurai-ko with a sharp and witty tongue" that goaded them into conflict. She vanished shortly thereafter.

- The catastrophic loss of life when armed trade negotiations between the Daidoji and the Mantis Clans erupted into open violence. The Yasuki were blamed publically, but unsubstantiated reports also point to a fair-skinned courtier whose double-dealings through the three-day conference inspired anger and resentment between the delegates of all parties. One of the Daidoji bodyguards even mentioned that the courtier acted with the quick and agile rhythm of a primed warrior when the fighting began.

- An attack on Matsu Kiare, a dignitary who was traveling along his clan territory's southern edge when he was set upon by what appeared to be Daidoji guardsmen (see *Winter Court: Kyuden Seppun*, p. 84). According to the Lion, the attackers focused upon their horses, and were responsible for their late arrival at Winter Court. The matter was taken up loudly during the proceedings, but was left unresolved due to the intervention of a female Dragonfly courtesan (later found to match Sozui's description).

- A samurai-ko who stood in for a Master at the Kakita Academy has been widely reviled among the Crane Clan. The Master had been sorely wounded during a combat maneuver along the coastline several weeks before an important exhibition of Kakita's technique at a distinguished religious celebration. The *Iaijutsu* drills the stand-in performed for the students were subtly flawed, and her interpretations of *The Sword* differed just





TANKENKA

The shikken who requests the player characters' aid at the beginning of this adventure has a long history which directly affects his decisions prior to the adventure. He is Scorpion by birth, but has been ousted from the clan for a perceived betrayal (as a field shugenja in their armies, he refused to employ his spells to undermine the defense of a harmless "enemy" target).

He has been labeled *junshin* and exiled from Scorpion lands, never to return.

Tankenka spent three years anonymously wandering the fields and cities of Rokugan, committed to the fact that this Long Walk was his last. But a strange calling within his spirit drew him to a small temple at the shores of Three Sides River, where he was contacted by what he believed to be the spirit of the Order's founding *shinpu*. The *shinpu*, which called itself "Sanshien", told him that the temple was corrupt, and that its "secret masters" (the Scorpion) were trying to upset the balance between neighboring clans (the Lion and the Crane).

enough to be insulting. When the students presented their skills for the assemblage, their true master (and all the assembled Kakita Artisans) were greatly dishonored. The memory of this slight remains an angry cloud at the front of their minds.

Tankenka does not know what Sozui's ultimate intentions are, but suspects that she may

be acting independently of her clan. He has tracked Sozui to the area of Toshi Ranbo, where this adventure begins.

GMs are encouraged to integrate the events listed above into their games (or to design their own) prior to the start of this adventure, possibly centering plots in and around the locations



mentioned. This will give their campaigns a greater unity over several adventures, and make the players feel more involved with the higher forces at work behind the scenes. It is also quite easy to imagine a game which builds directly upon such events, strung together only by the recurrent presence of the mysterious Scorpion bushi, Sozui. In such a case, the players would travel a path parallel to Tankenka's, which will work well with the introductory scenes of this adventure.

THE SCORPION INSTIGATOR

As for Sozui, there is indeed a method to her madness. Though her long-term objective is beyond the scope of this adventure (and therefore not detailed here), her immediate goal is clear: to incite conflict between the already bickering Lion and Crane Clans by any means possible. This has been a "pet project" of hers for some time now, and includes all of the events mentioned above, as well as the orchestrated attack upon the monks of Yaruki Jukko during the Battle of the Humble Turtle.

But there is another, far more insidious design at work here as well – one in which she and her Scorpion superiors are tempting history itself.

Four years ago, Sozui secured the services of a corrupt full-blooded Kitsu Sodan-Senzo – a man named Goden, whose station at his family's ancestral home (now the Matsu training grounds, #73 on the map of Rokugan) was considered quite valuable to the cause. She intends to use his talents to further both internal and external tensions of the various families of both the target clans. By carefully manipulating the popular perceptions of fallen heroes and the dishonored dead – followed closely by well-timed uses of the Kitsu's abilities (such as during the incident concerning Daidoji Yorei) – Sozui hopes to cultivate a tangible fear that several ancestors of both clans are unhappy with the current state of affairs in the Empire. Specifically, she wishes to imply that they are angered by the decisions of the leaders of the target families.

The corrupt Kitsu – whose position includes the honored right to reveal to the recently dead the path across the Bridge of Lights into Jigoku – began guiding certain key spirits astray. These unfortunate souls lost their way in the complicated plane between the Worlds of the Living and the Dead, eventually joining the ranks of the *yorei*, bound to the physical world by

Goden's treachery. They walk the fields of Rokugan without voice or purpose, unable to continue their journey toward reincarnation without Goden's death (which – having no form of their own – they cannot enact themselves).

The most prominent figure to suffer this fate was the former champion of the Akodo family, Arasou. The terrible sorrow felt by Matsu Tsuko at his death was shared by most of her clansmen, and even many outside their ranks. Arasou was well-liked and respected far beyond his station, a testament to the code of Bushido and the honorable path of the samurai warrior. His death upon the field of battle outside Toshi Ranbo wo Shien Shite Reigisaho was mourned across the Empire, and buried deep within the breast of those who could not let his memory fade.

Trapping Arasou's spirit in the physical plane is considered a masterstroke by Bayushi Sozui and her Kitsu co-conspirator. They look forward to using the pain of his recent death to maneuver the Lion and the Crane that much closer to war. Most of those who cared for him are still alive, and could be urged to hasty action by knowledge of his continued torment as a *yorei*. For three years, Sozui and Goden have shared this secret with no one, leading only a few additional spirits astray. They periodically use these lesser known spirits to further their plans or "pocket" them for a later time.

Arasou, for his part, has not been idle, however. Walking the scarred and barren world of Meido since the Kitsu's deception, he has observed the contemptible man's actions, waiting for a time to strike back. The vengeance of a true samurai is not to be underscored, especially when they have nothing to lose.

Eventually, Arasou's chance for retribution came, though its form was as unexpected as the villains' motives...

TOSHIGOKU AND THE LEGACY


Kitsu legends speak of a place between the known tiers of the Celestial Order, where the furious go after death. Endless war-torn fields are littered with the shattered remnants of a thousand fallen provinces and the broken bodies of countless angry dead. It is an embittered realm, where Bushido has been warped beyond reason, corrupted by the meaninglessness of eternal warfare. This place is called *Toshigoku*, the realm of fighting spirits, which has been lost within the



TANKENKA (CONTINUED)

But the spirit was not that of a human at all. It was the kami that resided within Three Sides River, which bordered the lands of all the clans it spoke of. In his tenure as *shinpu* of the temple, it gradually worked its way into Tankenka, taking him over, body and mind. Once, during a dire fever, the monk recognized the being for what it truly was, and tried to fight it back. But he failed, and Sanshien took his form over completely. It remained within the monk's body for several years, eventually helping to thwart a Scorpion plot to retake Kenson Gakka and incite war between the Lion and the Crane.

After the crisis at Kenson Gakka, Sanshien returned to its home in Three Sides River, and Noshin left the temple. He went back to his childhood name, Tankenka, and returned to his Long Walk. At fifty-nine years of age, his life-cycle is nearly complete, and he believes that the last days are upon him. But there is one final thing that he must accomplish before the end – he must track down and stop the Scorpion instigator Bayushi Sozui, who was instrumental in the plan to take back Kenson Gakka, and now continues her efforts to incite war across the Empire.



SPEAKING THROUGH THE NPCs

Several NPCs encountered during this adventure – Ukiai throughout, several of the *junshi* in Acts Three, and Four, and Isebo during the final Act – can be used in a unique way at the table. During play, while they are with the group, the GM can take on their roles, remaining “in character” as the NPC for lengthy periods of time, as if playing a character of his own (only one that has already been prepared within the scenario).

This benefits the game in several ways. First, it endears the players to your NPCs. If they grow accustomed to you speaking in a certain way, or acting out certain mannerisms at the table, they will come to associate their enjoyment at the table with that NPC, which improves their opinion of them. This style of play also allows you to develop the NPCs much more than is possible with simple third-person description. In addition, the NPCs can provide the group with information from a presumably “neutral” source (but be sure that the NPC would know what you reveal). Lastly, when the entire group – GM included – can go for prolonged periods of time without acting or speaking “out of character”, it can only enhance the roleplaying experience.

hateful realm of the dead – Meido – for nearly a thousand years.

The fierce spirits who inhabit this place are drunk upon the intoxicating sweetness of Bushido, and look forward only to an eternity of restless struggle, rising each morning to continue the martial contest, with no hope of victory or failure. Their anger never calms, and their souls never know true peace. They are the Legacy of the Forge, warriors who have been neglected or forgotten by their descendants after honorable death upon the field of battle. Like yorei, they are spirits who have become trapped in the dark underworld and cannot move forward in the cycle of reincarnation.

The Legacy are the faceless dead, stripped of their identity and purpose by the neglect of their families. Some were ronin, or had no one to remember them; others are reviled or dishonored in the Living World for some wrong they are thought to have performed, whether true or not. This is the ultimate cause of the Legacy spirits’ anger, and the reason why they continue to wage war, even beyond death.

The Kitsu have a name for these beings. They call them *toshi*, which (literally) means “fighting spirits.” Early Kitsu forays into the realm of Jigoku discovered that they were a dangerous threat both to the balance of the spirit world and to the lives of all in Rokugan. Those spirits which could be saved were freed of their angry mission, and returned to their proper course in the Celestial Heavens. The rest were sealed off within a distant part of the underworld by the Sodan-Senzo Masters and forgotten.

But nothing remains buried forever, and eventually, the Legacy found its way home...

SOZUI’S MASTER PLAN

Bayushi Sozui first discovered the ancient Kitsu scrolls documenting their struggle with the faceless dead while studying at their archives (also located at #73). In them she saw an opportunity not only to further her goals but also to provide her clan with a trained legion of devastating might. All that she required was a means of controlling the fighting spirits after their release, something the ancient Kitsu masters thought impossible.

Continued research eventually provided Sozui and Goden with the notes of a little known Sodan-Senzo named Jikai, who had devoted his life to the study of the original Legacy texts. He

theorized that the *toshi* might be controlled through one or more kami spirits. Unfortunately, his notes also indicated that the kami used would most likely be destroyed in the process (the reason for the Sodan-Senzo’s obscure reputation and the exile of his notes within the archives).

There was some logic to the notes, however. It is widely accepted within the shugenja community that yorei have an affinity for kami, evident in a form of “sensei-student” relationship. Often, after a shugenja works to satisfy a yorei’s longing on this plane so that the ghost may pass on to Jigoku, it is a kami which is summoned to lead it there. This is especially true if a Kitsu is not available to perform the task. So utilizing the kami to control the *toshi*, however dishonorable, made a reasonable amount of sense.

Sozui was determined to test the validity of Jikai’s theory. Beyond harnessing the power of the kami, Jikai’s notes indicated several additional conditions that had to be met. Foremost among them was the need for a battle of “epic” proportions to be engaged during the attempt. This catalyst was viewed as a bridge between the Legacy’s dark prison and the physical world – the warriors of the battle would become vessels for the fighting spirits in their time on the physical plane.

Over the following weeks, Sozui and Kitsu Goden went to work to engineer such a conflict, and found the upcoming peace talks at Toshi Ranbo wo Shien Shite to be perfect for their needs. Sozui “prepared” the negotiations, making sure that several key figures on both sides were sympathetic to continued violence between the clans. Arasou would prove most useful to help incite the fighting; Goden ensured that he would be ready when the time came for a “proper appearance.” The plan in place, both instigators retired to the peace negotiations, ready and willing to commit the Empire to war.

THE ARMORER AND THE LOST NOTES

As attentive as Sozui and Goden were in their research, they missed one critical element. Jikai’s later notes were gauged toward finding a release for the fighting spirits; controlling them was only the first step. Once they were manifest again in the Living World, Jikai believed that it would be possible for someone to lead them across the barren realm of Meido and into Jigoku where they belonged, but only at the cost of that

samurai's own life. He detailed a potential ritual which could be performed to attempt this, but the Kitsu Masters – seeing only a steady stream of selfless samurai wasting their lives in the effort – separated the later notes and declared them heretical.

These notes also warned of the greatest danger in dealing with the Legacy of the Forge: as long as the toshi remained in the Living World, every death by their hand would increase their number. While they act as flesh, each victim rises to join their ranks. Unless the ritual to lead them home was performed quickly, a Legacy unleashed upon the Empire would rapidly grow out of any kami's control, destroying everything it touched.

These later notes were never found by Sozui or Goden, due to the efforts of an armorer stationed at Shiro Sano Ken Hayai (#73), Matsu Shimesu. Unknown to any but Tankenka (see below), Shimesu has been watching Sozui for many years. Their histories are closely related (please see pages 31 and 59 for more), and he blames the Scorpion and her clan for much of his misfortune in life.

Tankenka encountered Shimesu during his initial forays into Sozui's past. Shimesu had already been observing the instigator for some time at that point, and proved an invaluable resource concerning her history, motivations, and apparent goals. While the *shikken* continued his investigations elsewhere, he had left Shimesu in charge of watching Sozui. When Sozui and Goden began investigating the Kitsu archives for information about the Legacy, Shimesu informed Tankenka of their search, and conducted his own as well. He was the first to find the heretical notes, hiding them away before the villains could track them down. They remain in a *hirajiro* (outpost) upon the Plains of Battle, where he left them while accompanying a Lion *Daibutai* (squadron) on maneuvers there.

By the time Tankenka arrived at Shiro Sano Ken Hayai, Sozui had already left for Toshi Ranbo. Shimesu had not been able to establish Sozui's intentions, except that they had something to do with the *toshi* and Jikai's notes. Nor had Shimesu been able to discover the identity of Sozui's accomplice (Goden, who had left for Toshi Ranbo with her). Fearing the worst, Tankenka continued on to Toshi Ranbo, leaving Shimesu behind to safeguard knowledge of their findings if anything should happen to him.

Tankenka arranged to be assigned to the peace negotiations at Toshi Ranbo, and sent word to the Emperor that he would need additional assistance in his efforts there. This aid comes in the form of the PCs, whom Tankenka may already know from the Battle of the Humble Turtle (if the players have played through *The Silence Within Sound*).

COUNTER STRIKE


When he arrived at Toshi Ranbo, Tankenka contacted Matsu Agame, one of the principal diplomats entrenched in the peace talks. Agame lived at Toshi Ranbo, and Tankenka would have a far easier time ferreting them out with his help. Unfortunately, Tankenka's journal – stolen by Sozui days before the start of the adventure – revealed Agame's involvement.

The Lion's secret relationship with the daughter of a visiting Crane general became the target of Sozui's attention. Bringing it to light, she ensured that Agame would no longer be a threat. Publicly dishonored, and with the peace talks at stake, Agame had no choice but to request *seppuku*. The delegates and armies of both clans gathered for the event, which was considered a stepping stone toward further relations between them.

But revealing Agame's shame was only the first part of Sozui's counter-stratagem. Concealing herself within the Crane forces, she planned to cut him down during the ceremony, before he could complete the cut. The Lion would blame the Crane for the attack, and violence would erupt while she escaped.

In the end, Agame provided Sozui with an even better opportunity. Unable to complete the cut himself, his son (Izedan, who had taken the role of his second) made a far more hurtful target. With Izedan dead by Sozui's sneak attack, and Agame himself bleeding to death upon the ceremonial *seppuku* mat, open fighting between the clans was assured.

Confident that the fighting upon the plains outside Toshi Ranbo was sufficient for the ritual, Sozui joined Kitsu Goden at Arasou's shrine, where they would perform the specifics. Tankenka, the only one to observe her movements, followed. This brings us to where the player characters arrive, only to find Toshi Ranbo the center of a major battle.



NEW ADVANTAGE : PERCEIVED HONOR (VARIES : 2/4/6)

This option allows a character's outward Honor (what everyone sees) to vary by 1 Rank per Rank purchased in the Advantage. For example, 2 CP would mean that a character with an actual Honor of 1 would be perceived as having an Honor Rank of 2, while 4 CP would allow the same character to be perceived as having an Honor Rank of 3.

Several conditions apply to those who purchase this Advantage:

- The perceived Honor Rank rises and falls with the character's real Honor.
- This Advantage does not affect any mechanic in the game that relies on Honor, such as Honor Tests or the Daidoji Bodyguard Rank 1 Technique, for example. PCs still use their true Honor in such cases.
- PCs may still gain Honor for actions above their current (true) Honor.
- PCs must maintain their modified Honor in public. If they act below their Perceived Honor in public, the effects of the Advantage are negated. The player must spend time and effort in public rebuilding his perceived Honor to regain the modified Rank. (satisfying the GM that he has rebuilt his reputation).
- Severe infractions witnessed by the public or a sensitive individual (such as the PC's lord or an important daimyo or influential NPC) result in the loss of the Advantage, permanently.



UKIAI

EARTH: 2 [3]

Stamina 3

WATER: 2 [3]

Perception 3

FIRE: 2 [2]

AIR: 3 [3]

VOID: 3 [3]

Skills: Animal

Husbandry 2, Appraisal 2, Athletics 3, Bard 2, Calligraphy 1, Cipher 3, Commerce 2, Defense 4, Etiquette 2, Forgery 2, Hand-to-Hand 2, Heraldry 1, History 2, Horsemanship 1, Kenjutsu 2, Lore (Bushido) 1, Oratory 3, Sincerity 2, Sleight of Hand 2, Stealth 2, War Fan 3

Honor: 1.1 (1.8)

Glory: 1.2

School: Ikoma Rank 2 (Tankenka was his Patron)

Advantages: Luck (6 Points), Perceived Honor (2 Points, new – see page 11)

Disadvantages: Coward

Weapon: Tanto 1k2

Armor: Light

Clan War Statistics

TN: 7

W: 3

ATT: +0

DAM: +0

#S: 1

Background: Ukiai acts as the PCs' servant until the end of the adventure, or until they send him away. He is adept at bargaining, and will do everything he can to avoid being returned to the Lion forces (where he believes that he will die on the battlefield).



Synopsis

This adventure focuses on the characters' efforts to discover how Tankenka and Bayushi Sozui relate to the present conflict between the Lion and the Crane.

Act One focuses upon the PCs' efforts to contact Tankenka at Toshi Ranbo. The Lion and the Crane have begun fighting before they arrive, however, and they must wade through the warfare to get to the city. Discovering where the regent is located (near Arasou's shrine at the center of the fortress), they must again force their way through the front line, but find it changed, the soldiers possessed by spirits of the Legacy. Finally, at Arasou's shrine, the PCs encounter one of the two true villains of the adventure, Bayushi Sozui. Tankenka is killed, and the PCs are left with several unanswered questions.

Act Two presents the PCs' investigation into the Legacy and why it has returned. During this time, they are observed by Kitsu Goden, Sozui's accomplice, who eventually sets a dangerous trap for them when they get to close to his schemes. He leads them into Jigoku, where he casts them adrift, never to be seen again. The Legacy are waiting there for them as well, ready to claim their spirits. The PCs' only allies are the ghosts of Akodo Arasou and Tankenka, who explain much of the Legacy's history to them, and lead them back to the Living World.

Act Three is a fast-paced trip across the Plains of Battle, to the outpost where the ancient notes of Kitsu Jikai are hidden. There, they face an Oni that has been driven mad during an attack by Sozui and the Living Darkness, and which guards the scroll. Even after reasoning with the monster, they are still not out of the woods: a division of

Crane soldiers arrives, claiming the outpost. They are promptly possessed by the Legacy and attack the PCs.

Act Four concludes Legacy of the Forge. The characters arrive at Shiro no Yojin, where they hope to perform the ritual described by Kitsu Jikai and end the Legacy's suffering once and for all. But Sozui and Goden are on hand as well, and aren't willing to let go the Legacy so easily. The PCs must contend with constant Crane attacks, spiritual intervention, and the efforts of the principal villains if they wish to succeed in their ultimate objective.

How to Involve the PCs

The party enters this adventure through Tankenka and his personal quest to discover Bayushi Sozui's ultimate plan. His most recent findings are located within his personal journal (the Opening Fiction to this book), and are a physical prop that the players can recover during play.

Before starting, it is assumed that the characters have received communication from Tankenka, either personally (if he has been introduced previously in a campaign – perhaps in *The Silence Within Sound*), or through "proper channels" (if they are magistrates or other "troubleshooters" that have been called in to aid him in his peacekeeping efforts at Toshi Ranbo). This communication can be found as another handout on the opposite page, which may be photocopied and handed to the players before they design characters. The scroll from Tankenka is delivered by an Ikoma *shoko kanbu*, a military messenger who runs commands and responses from one unit to another upon a battlefield. His name is Ukiai, and his orders include joining the PCs on their journey to meet Tankenka. He will become a Dependent for them throughout the first Act of the adventure (and probably to its end), and their aide – if not friend – along the way.

If the players ask, there is no way that the scroll could have been tampered with en route to them. It was handed to Ukiai at Toshi Ranbo, and has not left his sight during the trip to them.

Noble Samurai,

I write this letter to request your help.

Tensions between the Lion and the Crane are at an unprecedented level. Border skirmishes have become more prevalent – and far more costly for both sides – in recent months. Several small villages have swapped hands. If something is not done to quell the animosity between the armies soon, the Emperor is certain that the conflict will spread. I am inclined to agree.

I have been assigned to mediate peace talks between the Lion and the Crane at Toshi Ranbo wo Shien Shite, and find the task to be more than one man can handle alone. A group of assistants may aid me in this matter, as well as in my own personal investigations into the relevant history and background of those involved, and I have chosen you.

The selection is as much due to your martial prowess as your cultured social skills; if this erupts into open violence, your ability to defend yourselves will prove invaluable. I do hope that it does not come to that; much effort has been made over the last several weeks to ensure that we can find a peaceful solution to this unfortunate set of circumstances.

Be aware that one or more of you have been chosen for your experience with things spiritual. My private inquiries point to a common denominator in many of the cases where emotions have flared between the clans. Though I am loath to explain here, it almost seems as if someone is engineering the conflict, and I desire to ask the local kami for their assistance in revealing the root of the matter.

I relate this to you in confidence; please do not repeat it until I have had a chance to confirm my suspicions and we have spoken in person.

I look forward to seeing you here,

Tankenka, Imperial Regent and Peacekeeper





MATSU TSUKO

EARTH: 4 [6]

WATER: 3 [6]

Strength 5

FIRE: 4 [6]

Agility 6

AIR: 3 [5]

Reflexes 6

VOID: 3 [5]

Skills: Archery 3, Athletics 3, Battle 5, Hand-to-Hand 5, Heraldry 3, History 3, *Iaijutsu* 2, Intimidation 5, Kenjutsu 5, Knife 2, Lore (Bushido) 4, Shintao 1, Sincerity 1, Wrestling 2

Honor: 4.3

Glory: 8.5

School: Matsu Rank 5

Advantages: Death Trance, Strength of the Earth (4 Points), Great Destiny, *Leadership* [5]

Disadvantages: Brash, Driven, Lost Love (Akodo Arasou)

Weapon: Katana 3k2

Armor: Light

Clan War Statistics

TN: 8

W: 6

ATT: +2

DAM: +3

#S: 2

See Also: *Clan War Lion Army Expansion*, page 32

Background: Please see *The Way of the Lion*, page 76



"This is where it begins. It is the middle and the end, for all things are a circle, and all lessons can be seen in the futures of our children."

– Anonymous

This Act takes place at Toshi Ranbo wo Shien Shite (location #81 in the *L5R RPG*, p. 237). It is broken down into Scenes according to the player characters' most likely route through the fortress. Each is keyed to a specific location or series of locations on the Toshi Ranbo map (page 16), and should be presented as the PCs travel through those areas. Run them in the order presented; the Scenes document the entire battle – as the players see it – from beginning to end, relieving the Gamemaster from having to randomize or intuit the results of each Battle Round as it happens.

Like much of the adventure, this Act has a high probability of PC mortality. Should any character die, particularly in an unheroic manner, take the player aside and give them the option of bringing them back as part of the Legacy. Once the ritual is completed the fighting spirits arrive, the character can inhabit the body of an NPC of the GM's choosing, rejoining his party as a yorei. His statistics should remain the same as they were during his life, though imposing a few Wounds or a minor handicap is not out of the question. Thereafter, the player character may accompany his party wherever they go, his bond to them just as powerful as his bond to the Legacy. (He is a hero, not one of the faceless dead, and should therefore be given some leeway to make his own decisions, rather than being forced to act as the rest of the *toshi* do.)

Getting Started

The most engaging manner in which to open the adventure is *in media res*, with the Lion and the Crane already waging their battle outside the fortress at Toshi Ranbo when the PCs arrive. All of the descriptions and challenges presented here are written from this standpoint, and the players are left to their own to figure out how to react to it. Finding Tankenka should be their principal concern, and all your efforts should be devoted to guiding them in this direction.

THE PLAINS OUTSIDE THE FORTRESS

The player characters should be able to spot that something is wrong at Toshi Ranbo within the last several miles of their journey. Regardless of how they approach, or from what direction, what they see remains the same.

As you approach the large city-fortress of Toshi Ranbo wo Shien Shite, you find the fields surrounding it are an angry sea of soldiers, wave upon wave crashing against one another in a stormy embrace. The morning sun is obscured behind a thick pallor of high, dark clouds, and a steady shower pelts the men and women upon the field, reducing their vision and hindering their balance. Blood and sweat mix with the mud upon the ground to form a mire that slows the fighting down to a brutal grind.

The Lion and the Crane are locked in a bitter struggle which rages around the entire fortress, and threatens to flood through the central gates at any moment. The Way of the Elements is littered with the bodies of the dead, pierced by archers at the city walls or charred beneath a deluge of hot oil and coals from the murder holes within the many bridges crossing above.

The scene is a nightmare of uncoordinated death, soldier and diplomat alike trampled underfoot. The generals' commands are lost in the maelstrom surrounding you as the forces expand and engulf your party...

There are two primary options for characters during this Scene. The first is to engage in the battle, with either the Lion or the Crane. Another is to push through the battle, trying to enter the castle itself (which is presumably where Tankenka is located). Asking the men upon the

field where one lone diplomat is (out of the hundreds who were negotiating here) will do the party little good, and may even cause them to be swept up in the battle, whether they desire to be or not.

Getting to the city gates (near #7 on the Toshi Ranbo map) is an arduous procedure. It involves playing through one Battle Round of mass combat (see page 114 of the *L5R RPG*), using the leftmost Heavily Engaged column. (For the purposes of this option, the party is assumed to be avoiding the worst spots, but still must make it to the city gates, which are where the heaviest

fighting is happening. Should the players opt for another approach, adjust the column they use on the Battle Chart accordingly.)

One or more characters may become involved in a Duel or Heroic Opportunity during this Round. Should this happen, they have the following options:

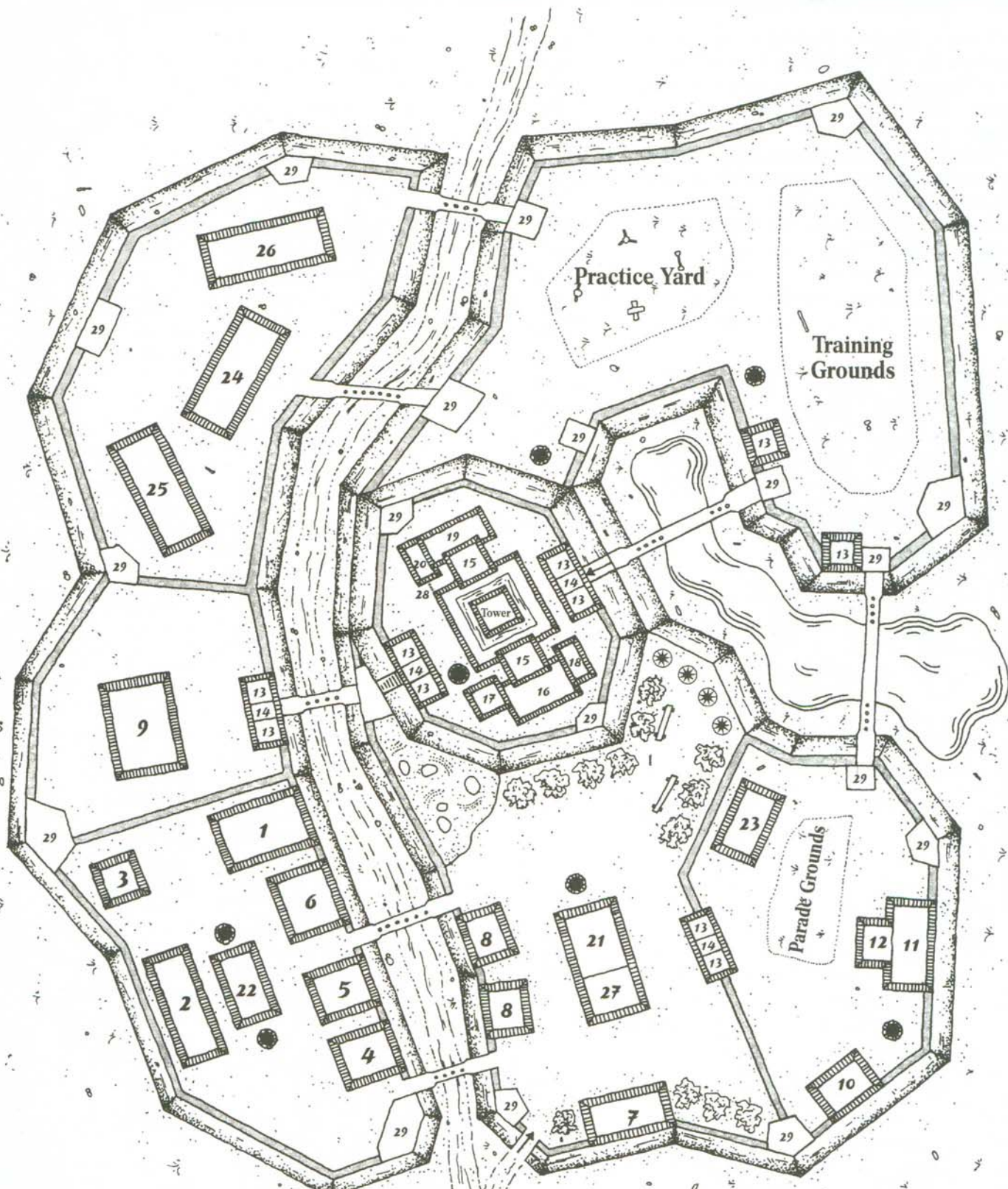
- **Duels:** In the chaos of a battle this large, it is easy to become disoriented, and duels can occur for any number of reasons. The fact that a character may bear the mon of an opposing clan (or even one that the duelist finds distasteful) may



HOW TO PRESENT GREATNESS

In Rokugan, legends walk among the common man every day, and heroes are born upon the field of war with regularity. These legends occasionally come in contact with the player characters. The presence of Matsu Tsuko in the opening Act, coupled with Gohei in Act Two and Daidoji Uji in Act Four, allows the GM of *Legacy of the Forge* a special chance to introduce the PCs to the heavy hitters of Rokugan. Not only do the characters have a chance to impress these NPCs with their skill, honor, and understanding of the Code of Bushido, but they also have a chance to learn from them as well.

This is where the Gamemaster comes in. It is their responsibility when presenting "great" NPCs to also present their deportment, posture, and utter self-confidence. Samurai do not get to be Ranks 4 and 5 without a high degree of outward karma and presence. GMs should strive to be as commanding and unrelenting as possible when roleplaying Tsuko; remain stoic and absolutely dedicated as Gohei; and as calculated and esoteric as they can when Uji. Never ease your resolve, and your players will remember these NPCs as they should – as legends!



Toshi Ranbo

be all that is required, or a more elaborate chain of events may be the cause (such as the PC “accidentally” helping one side or the other along, enraging an enemy commander).

Once a PC has been “called out”, it is a dishonorable act to ignore the challenge, but that does not mean that the players will not try. Refusing such an opportunity results in a loss of 1 Honor Point (more if the challenge was highly visible); if the challenger is of lower School Rank than the PC (determined by the GM), then the loss is increased by one for each Rank of difference between them.

• **Heroic Opportunities:** Though it can be dishonorable to ignore the chance to have this kind of impact on a battle (again, usually when the refusal is highly visible), there is commonly someone else to pick up the slack, taking the PC’s place. GMs should present the specifics of the Opportunity, describing them with the PC as the

central focus, and let them decide how to handle the situation. Their actions can then be interpreted according to the tenets of Bushido and the circumstances in which they are performed.

GMs need to know the game stats for any opponents that the PCs engage or duel upon the field. They may use the generic soldier statistics (page 64), altering them slightly with each individual encounter, or may design them “on the fly” as he goes.

Once the party reaches the ramp leading up to the city gates, they will be faced with an unexpected scene:

Blocking the outermost gates of Toshi Ranbo are several Lion samurai, their armor showing signs of severe combat and their mempo glaring outward with defiant pride. They stand in a tight circle, guarding themselves as much as the entryway. The mon upon each of them has been torn free, shredded and cast aside in anger. Each of them watches the surrounding combat carefully, the tension of waiting clear within their taut muscles. It is as if they are daring someone to rout them from their post.

These soldiers are the diplomatic entourage formerly assigned to Matsu Agame. After their lord’s dishonorable death, these men knew that – by the standards of Rokugani martial society – they would soon follow. Without a lord to command them, they are considered *junshi*, “masterless of heart” (in direct opposition of *junshin*, or “pure of heart”). They have no future with the clan, and may only continue as ronin. As a result, they believe they have even less to lose than any other samurai fighting upon the field.

With no one else willing to stand by them, the *junshi* have formed their own “unit.” Either because they have accepted their fate or through sheer determination, they have managed to punch a hole in the Crane defensive lines, and taken a position here at the city gates. They intend to stand their ground – to the death if needs be – giving the Lion army the opportunity to storm the fortress.

The players may be (justifiably) confused by a Lion unit holding the gates of a Crane-occupied city, and unsure how to approach this situation. In truth, they should be careful how they proceed. Crane PCs will be violently opposed without question, while all others save Lions will be challenged when they advance.

TOSHI RANBO

1. Shintao Temple
2. Trading House
3. Public Bath House
4. Geisha House
5. Tea House
6. Inn of the Brooding Tempest
7. Stables
8. Servant’s Home
9. Former Library (now a Treasury)
10. Strategic (General’s) Offices
11. War Offices
12. Command Barracks
13. Guard Barracks
14. Armed Check Points
15. House Guard Barracks
16. Imperial Courts
17. Guest Home
18. Indoor Garden (with skylight)
19. Memorial Hall (of Ancestors)
20. Akodo Arasou’s Shrine
21. Home of Yoriki (travel captain)
22. Sake House
23. Generals’ Home
24. Armory
25. Equipment Storage
26. Additional Food (Siege) Storage
27. Holding Cells
28. Archway Entrance to Arasou’s Shrine
29. Guard Towers





LION JUNSHI

EARTH: 3

WATER: 2

Strength 3

FIRE: 2

Agility 3

AIR: 3

VOID: 2

Skills: Archery 2, Athletics 3, Bard 2, Battle 3, Calligraphy 1, Courtier 3, Defense 3, Etiquette 3, Hand-to-Hand 2, Heraldry 1, History 2, Horsemanship 2, Iaijutsu 2, Kenjutsu 2, Knife 2, Lore (Crane Clan) 2, Oratory 2, Poison 1, Sincerity 2, Stealth 2

Honor: 1.7

Glory: 2.3

School: Akodo Rank 2

Armor: Light

Clan War Statistics

Reference Lion Elite Spearmen (*Clan War: The Clans*, page 39).

Background: Originally trained under Akodo Agame as Lion Clan diplomats, these samurai have more than proven themselves on the field of battle. They are courteous, providing, and compassionate while under the PCs' command.

Gamemaster Notes: Detail-oriented GMs may wish to develop these soldiers as individuals, using these statistics as a basis for proper character design.

The party will have to convince the *junshi* that their purpose at the fortress is honorable (or unrelated to the combat) to continue through the gates. This will require a logical explanation (the truth is enough, though players should be rewarded for inventive roleplaying in this scene unless their words are careless or derogatory). Also, the GM should require the character doing the talking to make an Awareness + Sincerity or Oratory roll against a TN of 25 (reduced by 5 or 10 for good roleplaying).

The only other option is to slay all of the defenders (there are twice as many as PCs). They are not skilled combatants, though their former lord did train them in some minor Matsu methods (equivalent to the Rank One bushi technique). See their sidebar on this page for more. Note that characters who *choose* this option (i.e. are not *forced* into it), lose 3 points of Honor for their impertinence.

Of the two, the better option by far is diplomacy. Not only does this avoid undue Wounds and Honor loss, the characters may be lucky enough to befriend the *junshi*, gaining important information as a result. Success with the explanation above opens a dialogue with the samurai (see their sidebar for more on roleplaying them), but within moments of this a dispatch of Crane soldiers arrives to intervene.

There are as many Crane footsoldiers as PCs, plus half that many archers. Use the generic statistics for both (see page 64). The footsoldiers storm the gates from within, trying to push the characters and the *junshi* out of their position, while the archers take positions upon the city walls, firing down upon them from above.

Just as the skirmish ends, several Lion soldiers who have broken through the Crane lines join the group at the gates, congratulating the PCs and their *junshi* companions for their honorable victory. Any *junshi* that survived now continue their questions about the PCs' intent within the fortress. Their words are quick but not angry; they are genuinely trying to help. Should the PCs at any point ask how the battle began, the *junshi* relate the events surrounding their lord's seppuku as best they can. One among them adds that he "saw where the arrow that killed Izedan came from, but could not find the archer."

The PCs are pointed in the direction of the city (across the bridge closest to the gates) when they ask of Tankenka's most likely location. A quick look will tell them that there are no Crane

defenders upon the bridge or within sight in that direction, all of them presumably having joined the battle at the gates a few minutes before.

THE INN OF THE BROODING TEMPEST

Read the following as the party heads toward the city:

The narrow bridge stretches across the Way of the Elements, its surface slick with rain and blood. Its slight arch is pierced with dozens of murder holes, poised above the rallying troops below. No Crane guardsmen can be seen along its length, or within the city beyond. Darting across and into between relative safety of the city walls, you glance about for hidden archers or armed *yoriki*. The high walls are littered with the bodies of fallen defenders, some of whom have plummeted to their deaths upon the low buildings or walkways within.

The simple "city" of Toshi Ranbo is more of a traveling village, consisting of seven buildings, a row of merchant booths, and a waystation within one self-contained section of the fortress. All of the structures are made of stone and wood, and seem to be locked tight. Ukiai, still reeling from the bloodshed upon the fields outside, steels himself and points to one of the southern buildings, the Inn of the Brooding Tempest. "That is where the shikken resides."

It will be important to refer to the map of Toshi Ranbo as you read this section.

Getting to the Inn (#6 on the Toshi Ranbo map) is not difficult, but when the PCs arrive, they find its doors and windows shut and barred. They cannot enter without blatantly breaking and entering, which – even during a time of war – is a dishonorable act without suitable cause. Announcing themselves (as per the standard custom) grants no response.

If the players ask, Ukiai can point to Tankenka's room, located on the second floor of the building, facing out toward the Way of the Elements. The Inn's outer wall is flush with the city wall, and forms the primary defensive barrier on that side of the road. He will lead them along the western side of the building and to the edge of the eastern bridge, where they see the following:

The second bridge leading into the city looks just as grim as the first, several bodies collapsed upon its length, their armor perforated by several long, thin arrows. The sounds of fighting can still be heard below, as the Lion and the Crane mercilessly clash along the Way of the Elements.

PCs who wish to look at Tankenka's window will have to step out onto the bridge to do so. This will make them potential targets of the Lion archers below (also responsible for the bodies upon the bridge). These samurai have Attack values of 4k2 with their bows, and fire upon anything that makes itself visible upon the bridge.

If any player specifically asks to look for the origin of the arrows within the bodies, allow them a Perception + Battle roll against a TN of 20 (the archers' Stealth) to notice them. They have taken up a position beneath the first, western bridge (the one the PCs presumably crossed into the city upon), and are surrounded by a cadre of their fellow samurai, who are holding back the Crane. They are on high ground, which allows them to pick off opponents with much greater efficiency than the common indirect fire of most samurai forces.

If the PCs do not ask to look for the archers and step out onto the bridge to observe Tankenka's window, give them one combat round to do as they wish before they are attacked by two to three 4k2 Archery attacks (GM's call, dependent upon the character's TN to be Hit and other martial Skills; the PCs should not be threatened with death here, merely scared).

If any of the PCs upon the bridge are wearing Lion mon (any family), they will not be fired upon unless they are seen as cooperating with Cranes. Ukiai (who will accompany the party out onto the bridge to point out Tankenka's window) is wearing his Ikoma mon, and is therefore not a likely target for the archers (though helping Cranes would bode badly for him as well). Conversely, any characters openly wearing Crane mon will be focused upon throughout this Scene.

Tankenka's window is partially open, its wooden shutter pushed up and out at a ninety-degree angle with the outer wall. The slight wind has blown out a candle that is sitting upon a table beside the window, and the curled edges of a scroll can be seen upon its surface, weighed down by a small stone. This is all the PCs will be able to discern before the archers attack, as described above.

If the party has skilled archers within it (and enough ammunition), this situation could easily become a "Mexican standoff", with the PCs attempting a protracted archery engagement with the protected group below. The Gamemaster may allow such a fight to continue as long as he wishes, but may also interrupt the alternating volleys with a screaming man who barrels across



the bridge from within the central courtyard (near #8):

You are startled by the cries of a man who is stumbling across the bridge toward you, fleeing from a sudden commotion within the courtyard on the far side. The Lion have broken the Crane defenses, and are flooding through the city gates *en masse!* The sounds of their assault upon the southern war offices resounds throughout the castle, echoing from the high walls protecting the central castle.

The man running toward you is dressed in a heavy, light-blue kimono with large Crane mon visible upon his breast. His hair is stark white, in keeping with the fashion of many Crane samurai, braided into a long tail that flings about behind him as he falters across the bridge. A volley of whistling bolts rip through the air around him, and he falls to his hands and knees, apparently injured.

The Crane is Asahina Denosei, Tankenka's primary supporter in the diplomatic negotiations taking place here at Toshi Ranbo. He had retired



to the Shintao garden at the foot of the castle during the seppuku ceremony, to reflect on the situation and how to recover from it. Having little training as a warrior, Denosei was unsure what to do when the fighting began. He was certain that the fortress would stand, however, and he still hoped for a political end to the disaster, so he remained at the garden for the time being.

Moments ago, the Lion crushed the Crane's front line and joined the junshi who had taken the city gates. Their violent entry into the fortress shocked and frightened Denosei, who decided that the best place to be through the rest of the attack was the city, where defenders and military targets are few. His flight across the bridge was reckless, however, as the PCs have seen. One arrow is lodged through his left leg, just below the knee, and he cannot walk by himself.

If the characters do not do something to help him within two combat rounds, he will be cut down by additional volleys. He is roughly halfway across the bridge, prone, and highly vulnerable. It will take the characters one full round of running or two rounds of walking to get to him. Running requires a Reflexes + Athletics roll with a TN of 15, and three Raises are required if a PC wishes to use Archery for suppressive fire or to attack the Lion along the way.

Those who fail their Reflexes rolls slip, falling upon the bridge's slippery surface. They have one last chance to catch themselves before they tumble off into the fighting crowds below. They must make another Reflexes + Athletics roll, this one with a TN of 25. Success indicates that the PC grabs hold of one of the murder holes, his legs dangling beside and beneath the bridge. Such characters become easy targets for the Lion archers, who gain one Free Raise to hit them until they pull themselves back up (Strength + Athletics, with a TN of 20; they may try once per round, with no chance of additional failure).

Failure with the second Reflexes roll means that PC has fallen off the bridge and landed among the fighting masses below. He takes two dice of Wounds from the fall, and must find his own way back into the castle (which should not be too tough now that the gates have fallen, unless the PC is a Crane). Don't forget, however, that the Lion archers may spot him after his fall, and turn their attentions to him.

The Lion archers begin firing on the second round (they were aiming at Denosei's prone form during the first). Each round of PC suppressive

fire increases this by one (i.e. one round of suppressive fire means that the Lion will fire on round three, two means round four, etc.). It is possible to completely prevent the Lion from firing at the bridge in this manner. Suppressive fire rolls are made against the Lion archers' TN to be Hit, but no damage is done to them as a result (they are assumed to take cover).

Getting Denosei back across the bridge requires at least one character with a minimum Strength of 2. Up to two such characters may help him stumble across, working together as per the rules on page 103 of the L5R RPG. The roll to bring Denosei safely back across the bridge uses the average of the character's Reflexes and Strength (rounding down) + Athletics. The TN is 20. Success means that the characters and Denosei have made it safely to the far side, out of range of the Lion archers. Failure means that they have been pinned for a round, and must try again during the next (unfortunately, it also means that the archers get another round of shots off at them).

Once they are across the bridge, the characters can tend to their wounds (and Denosei's). This requires an Intelligence + Medicine roll (TN 10 + Wound Modifier of the patient) for each. Denosei has taken 5 Wounds from his leg injury, plus any additional Wounds he suffered during the rescue.

Denosei can help the party enter the Inn of the Brooding Tempest. He is known to the innkeeper, who will simply open the doors once the Crane diplomat announces himself. He can also show the PCs where Tankenka's room is, in the off-chance that Ukiyai was killed on the bridge on upon the plains. Tankenka's letter and Denosei's endorsement are enough to convince the innkeeper to allow the PCs entry into his room. When they enter, read the following:

The small, sparse confines of Tankenka's room are misty from the open window. Simple floral designs decorate the walls, but it is obvious that the shikken lived a monk's life, even long after he gave up his position at the Yaruki Jukko Temple. The simple bed and one writing table are all that adorn the humorless chamber. Upon the table is a single candle, it's flamed doused by the moisture from outside, and one sheaf of rice paper, its ends coiled together about a small weighing stone. Outside the window, the sounds of fighting continue, and fires can be seen to the south.

The paper is one of Tankenka's journal entries, depicted as a prop in the opening section of this book. Feel free to photocopy these pages to give to the players when they examine the scroll. Picking up the scroll will present a small, square mirror upon the table beneath it. This is one of Tankenka's only prized possessions, as either Ukiyai or Denosei will testify. Revealed, however, something unprecedented happens to the mirror:

Lifting the scroll from the table, the slight drizzle that was falling upon the paper now touches the surface of a mirror beneath. The droplets splash into the surface as if it were a small pool of water, the ripples circling outward and collecting together in an odd symmetry. Within moments, images begin to form within the ripples, the diffused light from outside reflecting upon the mirror's surface. The colors begin to merge into shapes, portraying a scene...

"Tankenka," Ukiyai exclaims as he sees the figure within the mirror. The shikken is dressed in unusual travel clothes, and is approaching a low, stone edifice beside one of the many waystations of the fortress. The surrounding confines are close, and as he rounds a corner, they grow closer, shadows engulfing him within a narrow alley. Beyond him can be seen several figures, two of whom motion frantically about a swirling sphere of power.

(This mirror belongs to Tankenka; please see the sidebar on page 22 for more on this item.)

After the image above runs its course, or if the PCs touch the mirror, its surface returns to normal, becoming rigid and clear once more. Allow the players to read the journal entry and discuss what the image may have meant for a moment before dropping the next event on them:

A chill wind sweeps through the room as the window slams shut. You are plunged into darkness, broken only by the dim light from between the cracks of the outer wall and the shutter. Each of you begins to sense that the heat is being sucked away, as if an ethereal wind has passed into the bedroom, and is consuming it whole. The focus of the wind seems to be the exterior wall.

When your eyes begin to adjust, you notice a figure stepping through the floral designs there, one hand reaching out to you and the other clutching its chest as if in pain. Then its eyes level upon you, two vacant orbs of white haze...

ASAHINA DENOSEI

EARTH: 2

WATER: 2

Perception 3

FIRE: 2

Intelligence 5

AIR: 2

Awareness 4

VOID: 4

Skills: Acting 3,

Appraisal 3, Astrology 2, Bard 2, Calligraphy 4, Courtier 4, Dance 3, Etiquette 3, Heraldry 2, History 2, Investigation 3, Law 3, Lore (Lion Clan) 4, Oratory 4, Research 2, Seduction 3, Shintao 4, Sincerity 4, Tea Ceremony 3

Honor: 4.7

Glory: 2.8

School: Asahina Rank 3

Spells: Sense, Summon, Commune, Hands of Jurojin, Calm Mind, Evil Ward, Bente's Touch, Whispering Winds

Advantages: Bente's Blessing, Ear of the Emperor, Gentry (family farmlands)

Disadvantages: Idealistic, Soft-Hearted

Weapon: None

Armor: None

No *Clan War* Statistics
(Denosei will not fight)

Background: Within two years after his gempukku, Asahina Denosei was accepted as a *shikken* candidate and began formal training as an Imperial Peacekeeper. His assignment at Toshi Ranbo is not his first, but the extreme violence during Act One sickens the pacifist within him.



TANKENKA'S MIRROR

The Yaruki Jukko temple – where Tankenka was *shinpu* for many years – was called the “Order of Courageous Reflection.”

They believed that meditating before a reflective surface (being able to observe one’s self at all times, and never being above critical analysis of your own heart) was the only true path to self-enlightenment.

When the Order was wiped out after a failed Scorpion siege of nearby Kenson Gakka, Tankenka took one of their precious mirrors from the ruins.

The remaining fragment of the kami Sanshien within

Tankenka was enough to awaken the item’s dormant spirit, making it a *nemuranai*, and bonding it with the *shikken*. What the

PCs see at the Inn is his reflection at Arasou’s Shrine (though they may not immediately realize this).

As it did with Tankenka, the mirror is able to attune to an owner after a certain time (8 months, minus the

PCs’ Void), thereafter gaining a supernatural link with him. For as long as the attuned PC carries the item,

he cannot be affected by Water spells or effects, nor can he drown. Finally, should the character ever part with the mirror, its surface will reflect his present location whenever anyone else looks into it.

This is the ghost of Arasou. It has come to show the player characters where to go next (his shrine). It cannot speak or affect the physical world, and so interaction with it will be limited at first. Should the party obtain another source of light, or open the window, they will see the form for what it is. Arasou still wears the armor he died in, and his body shows the terrible wounds that killed him. As a *yorei*, he has no feet and cannot communicate except visually.

There is a palpable sorrow present in the room with Arasou, the reason for the drop in temperature and light. Even with the window open, light remains dim, and torches will offer little warmth near him. The party should feel Arasou’s pain when they look at him – the death he felt in life, the anger and resentment he feels in death. Hopefully, they will wonder what happened to him, why he has remained here on the physical plane, and desire to help. Also, if they are watchful (Perception roll; TN 20), they may notice that the ghost’s edges are slightly blurred, bleeding into the background. (Arasou is slowly “losing” himself after being led off the proper path to *Jigoku*; his strong personality is on protective, and has helped to retain his form, but after three years, it is beginning to slip).

More importantly in the short run, however, is showing the players what their next move should be (getting to Arasou’s shrine). There is enough evidence within the room to point in that direction, but if they do not catch on, the Gamemaster may wish to have Arasou’s ghost point directly at the castle when the subject comes up. Also, you may want to allow an Intelligence + History or Lore: Architecture roll (TN 10) to work out that the building seen in the mirror was a shrine.

The first player to piece together that Tankenka has headed to Arasou’s shrine for some reason should be rewarded with an additional Experience Point at the end of the adventure.

Through the Front Line

There is only one viable route to the shrine – across the central courtyard (past #21/27), through the Parade Grounds and across the bridge to the training Grounds, and past still one more bridge to the castle proper. Along the way, the PCs will be faced with several (at least five)

guard stations. These are the greatest complication the PCs will face. Perhaps the easiest way of overcoming this obstacle is to join the Lion forces attacking the fortress, and help them punch through the stations *en route* to the castle (especially since the concentration of fighting remains concordant with the PCs’ goals throughout the rest of the Scene). The material presented for this Scene assumes this *intended* approach – at first.

THE BRIDGE

Getting back across the bridge to the central courtyard may seem daunting to the PCs, who are likely already wounded and fearful of trying to dodge the archers’ fire again. But the reality of the situation is far less dangerous. Bound by all of the restrictions of common *yorei*, Arasou may not cross the arched bridge with the PCs. But he can travel almost anywhere else, as the PCs will see once they start across:

The Lion bowmen begin their assault once more as you stumble across the bridge toward the central courtyard. But a moment later, the firing inexplicably stops. Looking down upon the archers, you can see that their attention has been drawn away by something high upon a nearby wall, and falling... Akodo Arasou looks to you as he drifts down toward the Way of the Elements, his eyes a stern warning – “Go! Go now!”

The PCs will not be attacked again as they cross the bridge, and no one guards the opposite entrance to the courtyard. If they watch Arasou’s descent, the PCs witness the Lion who have secured the Way of the Elements gathering in awe, unsure how to respond to his appearance. They will not have long to meander about, however, if they wish to continue on toward the castle and Arasou’s shrine, especially if they wish to take advantage of the Lion advance:

The Lion forces have overwhelmed the Crane’s second line of defense, plowing through the wall surrounding the War Offices and Parade Grounds, leaving a trail of dead or dying Crane in their wake. The carnage is staggering – dozens of men lie broken upon the marching fields like gruesome puppets whose strings have become tangled together. Several fires have erupted throughout the southwestern portion of the fortress, and smoke trails into the sky in a dark

purple plume, obscuring the sun which is now peeking out of the cloud line.

Most of the damage is focused upon parts of the fortress that the Crane have reconstructed during their occupation over the last three years. Banners, gardens, statues... all have been deliberately destroyed in the Lion armies' wake.

The rock garden to the north of this area and the trees and statues all about have been fired or otherwise defiled by the Lion as they passed through. Little remains of any of these monuments, and certainly nothing the characters might salvage.


THE FRONT LINE

The following description assumes that the characters are arriving at the Parade Grounds through the guard post in the central courtyard:

Concentrated fighting occurred here, as is evidenced by the countless bodies from both sides that litter the area. Buildings have been toppled and walls collapsed by the strength of powerful elemental blasts. The guardhouse at the edge of the next bridge is completely destroyed, its foundation ripped up and out, the structure reduced to so much rubble.

Yet beyond the bridge, the greatest devastation can be seen. The forces of the Lion have begun their push across the final bridge and onto the path leading up into the castle's heart. Dozens of samurai clash within the Training Grounds, threatening to spill back across the bridge toward you at any moment. The generals of both sides seem unable to regain control of their forces, as if the soldiers are somehow possessed...





HANDLING CHARACTER DEATH

It is highly probable that at least one character will perish during this adventure. This is both expected, and encouraged.

Not only will it offer the players first-hand knowledge of the hazards of war, but also a unique roleplaying opportunity – as one of the Legacy.

When a character dies, take the player aside and explain that he will have the chance to return to play soon as a yorei (ghost). Do not give them details; all you wish to know is whether the player is interested in the challenge of playing his own character after death. If so, set the character aside until an opportunity presents itself, perhaps letting the player run another, minor character in the meantime.

Ukiai works perfectly in this regard. The PCs have already gotten a feel for his character through your portrayal of him as an NPC, so they are not acting “blind”, and he has a built-in reason to follow the PCs around Toshi Ranbo, and perhaps beyond. If Ukiai has died somehow, or is otherwise unavailable (perhaps because he is being played in place of another “dead” character), give the player another that can contribute to the current Act.

The reason for the soldiers' condition is the ritual that Sozui and her Kitsu partner are conducting. As the power of the Legacy takes shape, these samurai are being driven into a frenzy of combative rage, readied as vessels for the toshi. There is little the player characters can do about it at this time; their choices are limited to remaining where they are and watching, or crossing the bridge to join them. This decision will affect the coming Scene, as noted there.

SCALING THE WALLS

The players may wish to scale the fortress walls to the east of the city, entering the courtyard surrounding the treasury and fighting their way through the back (northern) entrance to the castle. This is very difficult; the fortress walls stand twenty feet tall at their lowest point, and are sheer, with no footholds of any kind. Climbing them without something to stand upon requires a Strength + Athletics total of 25. Other characters may help, using the rules for Working Together.

Generally, there is little to stand upon about these walls. Industrious PCs may be able to find something, though (stone benches like the ones in the central courtyard, tables from within many of the buildings, etc.). Such aids reduce the TN to climb the walls by 5 for every 5 feet they can stack up.

Storming the Castle

Gamemaster Notes: The ritual to summon the Legacy concludes within this Scene, and the toshi arrive here. From this point until the end of the Act, combat becomes much more deadly for all involved. Gamemasters should use this condition to their advantage, presenting the terrible realities of warfare on the battlefield whenever possible. Mass combat is not pretty, and the Legacy only makes matters worse.

Conduct one Battle Round according to the standard rules, with the Lion still winning (for now). Ask each player what their character is trying to accomplish during that time (they may choose to act as a group; that is fine, but their actions must be resolved individually). A list of the most probable responses and how to handle them follows:

- **Getting Across the Final Bridge:** To reach the castle, the PCs will have to wade through the combating forces within the Training Grounds,

and pass across the bridge itself (the focus of the current fighting). This is not possible within the current Battle Round, and circumstances will change greatly after the Legacy is summoned (see Getting Across the Bridge, below). The best the PCs can hope for during this Round is to join the soldiers skirmishing upon its length (Heavily Engaged).

- **Contacting the Commanders of Either Side:** The characters must opt for Engaged to enter the same region of fighting as the commanders of a given side (noting which army's officers they intend to contact when they do). In addition, any Glory received during the Combat Round is halved (rounding down), and one extra die of Wounds are rolled (if the result is one or more dice to begin with).

If a Heroic Opportunity or Duel comes up when the player rolls on the Combat Table, they are successful in contacting the commander in question. They must present themselves, which can be a tricky proposition during a confrontation of this magnitude (Awareness + Battle; TN 20). With success, a dialogue is opened with the commander. Failure results in the character losing 3 Glory when the commander rebuffs them for interrupting his duties. Failure by more than 10 points means that the officer challenges the PC to a duel in response. Note that it is not possible for Crane to make amiable contact with Lion commanders, or vice-versa.

PCs will find dialogues with commanders of the forces quite illuminating. They can explain (colored by their own perspective) that the Lion took a firm hold of the city gates and rushed through the parade grounds with little trouble, proceeding to this area quickly. The battle has become stalled here, partly due to Toshi Ranbo's admirable defenses, but also because of a sudden disorganization within the ranks of both armies. It is as if they have all become distracted by some external (and invisible) force.

An effective way to segue into the arrival of the Legacy force would be to have it overcome the commander in front of the PC they are talking with. Take the notes below, and adapt the description according to the specifics of the situation.

- **Rallying the Troops:** With the influence of the Legacy, this is nearly impossible. The best the PCs can hope for is to “distract” the soldiers one-on-one, drawing their attention from the ghostly images transfixing their minds. A character must state that he is devoting his entire

Combat Round to this venture. The effects upon the Combat Table's results are the same as for contacting a commander, above (½ Glory, +1 die of Wounds, and success only possible with a Duel or Heroic Opportunity result). The two results are handled differently, however:

Heroic Opportunity: The PC has one chance to gain a soldier's attention (an Honor Test vs. a TN of the soldier's Willpower x5; note that all normal Honor gains and losses for such a test are waived in this instance).

Duel: Use the same mechanics as a standard Iaijutsu Duel (page 109 of the *L5R RPG*). Unless released from the influence of the Legacy first, the soldier will choose Focus (thereby Raising his TN) each round, until he must Strike, and will then try to kill the character. It is assumed that the character uses each of his "Focus" rounds to attempt an Honor Test as with Heroic Opportunity, above. Success at any point ends the duel and brings the soldier out of his stupor.

Once a soldier's attention has been drawn from the approaching Legacy, read the following:

Before your eyes, the soldier slumps awkwardly to the side, his robust form suddenly jarred out of sync with the rank and file around him. His sword lowers to his side, as if he is unaware that he is standing within a battlefield, and you find yourself concerned that he might be an easy target. Dragging his heavy body toward one of the crumbling buildings beside the war-torn Training Grounds, you try to bring his mind into focus.

"Wha... what happened?" His words are confused. "How long have I been unconscious?"

The soldier honestly believes that he has been out cold since the initial push into the Training Grounds. He does not have any idea how he came to be with the character, and does not remember any of his actions since the Legacy force took hold of him. Again, it could be quite dramatic for the Legacy to finally take complete hold of a soldier while one of the PCs is conversing with him.

ARRIVAL OF THE LEGACY

At the end of the Battle Round, after the characters have resolved their actions and are preparing for the next, read the following:

The battle frenzy of the soldiers rages all about you, crackling through the air as a palpable force of nature. The ravaged forms of fallen samurai


are scattered across the wide, flat grass of the training fields, and the coppery smell of fresh blood overpowers your senses. Worst of all is the fighting before the castle and upon the bridge leading there. The strong crush the weak, or merely drive them aside in a violent mission to find more worthy opponents. It is as if all of the warriors have been consumed by a bloodlust outside themselves, which has taken complete command of them and driven them to the very edge of sanity.

A moment later, there is a flash above you, rocketing outward from the central keep and across the lands surrounding Toshi Ranbo. The moment it is past, there is a threading pulse within the wind and a subtle rumble to the earth. Then the warriors begin to turn upon themselves, roiling backward from the goal and pouring out across the bridge with incredible speed.

At first, seeing the armies turn back, you think the Asahina have summoned a great power to aid their cause from within the castle; that the onslaught of the Lion has finally ended, and the Crane have turned the tide. But before the next breath, you witness an Akodo gut his fellow Matsu, and the Crane forces striking one another down in an effort to clear a path. The samurai are like a swarm of locusts, feeding upon each other as much as the enemy, and they are coming for you...

The player characters must decide quickly what they are going to do. Facing the Legacy is unwise, but not impossible to survive. Use generic soldier statistics for any skirmishes the PCs enter, modified by the Legacy mechanics (located in the sidebars on pages 28-29).

Hiding – though less noble – might be more sensible at this juncture. Have each PC that chooses to avoid the incensed forces generate a Reflexes + Stealth total against a TN of 15. Success means that the character has found cover during the sweeping rush of soldiers. Failure means that he did not. Fortunately for such characters, the Legacy forces are – at this point – ecstatic simply with their release. They ignore anything that does not pose an immediate threat or impediment to their charge. Unless the PC chooses to engage them, he is simply battered as they pass around him, suffering (4 minus his Agility) dice of Wounds.



HANDLING CHARACTER DEATH (CONTINUED)

When the Legacy arrives, make the appropriate adjustments on his character sheet (according to the Legacy mechanics on pages 28-29), and hand it back to the player, explaining that the character has "returned" at the moment the toshi were released. The character remembers how he died, but everything from then until this moment is a void. Do not explain further – let the player work things out as he goes. This provides the greatest potential for roleplaying, and gives him a reason to solve the Legacy problem, as it is intricately linked to his "new" existence.

Though the character has become part of the Legacy, his bond with the other characters is what keeps him close to them; he will not vanish with the rest at the end of this Act or later in the adventure.

Keep in mind that this option is best used in moderation. More than one "Legacy" character per three or four regulars can greatly distract from the overall enjoyment of the game, and should be avoided. It is a good idea to have a couple back-up characters for this eventuality, just in case.



ARASOU'S SHRINE

When Akodo Arasou died on the field outside Toshi Ranbo wo Shite Shien, the Lion Clan was stricken a terrible blow. Many of them looked up to the samurai warrior as a hero of the old legends, and a few even claimed he was a direct descendant of the illustrious Akodo himself. In death, he was even more idolized, a martyr in the silent "war" with the Crane that was brewing at the time.

Monuments were constructed in several locations in honor of Arasou's memory. An immense statue stands before his resting place at the Akodo Hall of Ancestors, and another smaller version adorns the training grounds at Shiro Sano Ken Hayai (see Act Two). But perhaps the most elaborate was constructed beside the castle at Toshi Ranbo itself.

A shrine, built entirely from stone, rests at the northeastern corner of the edifice. From the outside, its function cannot be determined, its surfaces smooth and undecorated, but all Lions know its purpose. Beyond the high archway beside it, a narrow pathway ends with a door that has been sealed since the building was finished. And within – hidden from public view yet etched in the minds of all who saw it the day of Arasou's death – is his armor, ravaged by the vile Crane attacks that stole away his life.

Tankenka's Fate

The soldiers sweep outward from the castle to the edges of the fortress before slowing in their charge. There, they proceed to lay waste to anything that moves, including each other. During this time, the characters have a moment of relative "calm" to enter the castle grounds if they wish:

The guard post high upon the pathway above the bridge has been overrun from within, the defenders having broken rank and joining the rest in their deranged fury. At last, the castle lies open for your approach.

None of the castle grounds matter for the purposes of this Scene other than Arasou's shrine. The PCs may already realize this from clues at the Inn of the Brooding Tempest, and head straight there. Otherwise, allow them to wander. When the characters approach the shrine, read the following:

The entrance to the shrine is located within a narrow court cut into the castle's backside. Kanji denoting Arasou's name, lineage, and accomplishments line the archway leading into the court, and rows of well-maintained flowers bloom to either side of the walkway beyond. Low voices are heard as you approach, echoing from within the darkness beyond a sharp turn in the path, presumably the true entrance to Arasou's shrine.

These voices are Matsu Goden and one of the Crane generals, who has been possessed by the spirit of Kakita Tobasu (see the sidebars on pages 36-37 for more on him). Goden and Tobasu are speaking of Sozui's plans for the Legacy. If the player characters attempt to sneak up on them or listen in to the conversation, read the following:

Suddenly, the figure of an armored man steps through the far wall and enters the court. His eyes are focused beyond you, at the entrance to Arasou's shrine, and he passes beyond your vision without incident. The second and third figures are not so inattentive, drawing weapons and closing upon you quickly. When they enter the light, their forms are seen to have no solid shape. They are nothing more than mere outlines without form, a pair of glowing eyes their only distinct feature.

These are two of the faceless dead (see their sidebar on page 29 for statistics). As the rest of the Legacy, they seek nothing other than a state of constant blissful warfare. Unlike the rest of the Legacy, however, they cannot be harmed by any normal weapons, affected only by crystal, jade or magical means. The PCs would be wise to retreat from the court as quickly as possible. Remaining can only result in the character's deaths (unless, perhaps, a shugenja among them has substantial attack spells).

Once outside the court, the PCs will experience the following:

Stumbling back outside the court, you quickly glance back at the archway for signs of pursuit. The three faceless warriors observe you from the shadow, hovering around another person that has stepped forward into their ranks. He is tall and powerful, his mempo a wide, feral smile within a flaring kabuto. At first, you are sure that he is corporeal – a human, perhaps a general, though his armor is without mon. But a moment later, he and the faceless figures fade and vanish, absorbed into the waning shadow of the archway.

The distant sound of warfare, ever-present for as long as you can recall, is gone. Far at the edge of the castle grounds, you notice that the battling armies have slowed their warfare, coming to a glow and grinding halt. The soldiers blunder about, apparently in a daze, unsure what to do next.

The light above you is muted abruptly by something falling toward you. It crashes to earth with a sickening crack, and you realize that it is dressed in the same unusual travel clothes you saw upon Tankenka in the vision upon the mirror. Contorting sideways in pain, the *shikken* spasms twice, then goes still.

The players may assume that Tankenka is dead, and they are nearly right. But if they approach him, he will roll listlessly back toward them, blood trailing from his eyes and mouth, and cough hoarse words at them. The PCs will have to lean in very close to make them out: "...not over... you must... lead them home."

Though he will die shortly after uttering these final words, his hope is that the PCs can continue his quest – to discover Bayushi Sozui's plan and stop it, and to somehow bring the restless spirits of the Legacy some sense of peace. The words "you must lead them home" are a direct reference

to the notes of Kitsu Jikai, and the ritual he proposes therein. Tankenka believes that this formula can help the Legacy return to their proper place in the Celestial Heavens.

Should the characters look to where Tankenka fell from, they will see the figure of Bayushi Sozui – his killer – standing at the highest point of the castle, the tower above. She is observing the characters, memorizing their faces. Though the PCs will not be able to make out details (she wears no mon), they will be able to tell that she is a ronin. (She wears her katana slung over her back, has cropped her hair, and dresses in unconventional light armor.)

Ending the Act

Sozui ducks out of sight a moment later, and will vanish from the fortress thereafter. The characters have no chance to find her. Using the Shadow Abilities of Swiftiness and Stealth, she travels across pools of darkness until she is outside the fortress. Then she heads out across the plains, not to be seen again until the final Act of the adventure (at Shiro no Yojin).

Searching the entrance to Arasou's shrine, the characters find only the unconscious form of a Kakita general (the one Tobasu's spirit inhabited). He remembers nothing. Goden has also used his Shadow Ability (he only has Stealth) to escape the castle grounds, rejoining the ranks of the Lion as they regroup outside the fortress. He keeps a low profile through the Lion's strategic retreat to Shiro Sano Ken Hayai, where he resumes his post as a Kitsu lore keeper. Tobasu and the faceless dead fade away with the inexplicable disappearance of the toshi spirits. The PCs will encounter both of them again during Act Two.

The warriors who were possessed by the Legacy find themselves at a loss to explain the last several hours. The evidence pointing to a protracted conflict cannot be disputed, but the widespread devastation and irregular trail the armies have left behind are confusing. The generals and diplomats of both sides bicker about the probable causes of this for many hours after the end of the Act.

There is nothing more that can be learned from Toshi Ranbo. No amount of argument will convince Lion and Crane representatives that a supernatural force was responsible for the disastrous battle, and many will point to an attempt as a premeditated diversion from the truth.

The survivors remember only what led up to their memory loss (Agame's seppuku, and what came after), and most of them are willing to accept that the Crane somehow turned the tide of battle through superior tactics and proper use of Toshi Ranbo's defenses.

There are no answers forthcoming here, only questions that will drive the party through the rest of the adventure.





THE LEGACY

Toshi Spirits

These are the rank and file of Toshigoku. They are intangible and may only interact with the physical world by possessing living bodies (which they can do at will, and without rolls of any kind). While they are present, the true personality is suppressed. Victims only retain vague feelings of rage and anguish from the experience, and rarely have any recollection of their actions while a *toshi* was within them. *Toshi* remain only as long as there are living beings to destroy around them, and then vanish from sight until they find another battle to fight.

While inhabited by a *toshi*, a person's statistics are augmented as follows:

EARTH: +2

WATER: -2

Strength +2

FIRE: +0

AIR: +0

Awareness -2

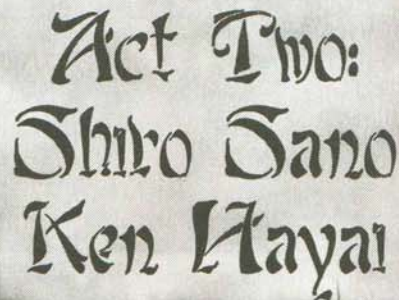
VOID: +0

Skills: None but martial

Clan War Statistics

The GM has one "*toshi*" unit throughout the battle that he can assign to one unit each turn. While the *toshi* are assigned to a unit, that unit is -1 to all Morale and Maneuver Tests. The unit must take a casualty to eliminate the *toshi*, returning the unit to the GM's control in the following turn.

Gamemaster Notes: It is extremely bad form to unleash *toshi* upon player characters.



Act Two: Shiro Sano Ken Hayai

"When searching for a needle in a haystack, burn the hay. Whatever remains is the needle."

- Tankenka

In sharp contrast to the bloodshed of Act One, this Act remains marginally calm throughout. The primary thrust of the Act is the investigation of the player characters into their experiences at Toshi Ranbo.

Castle of the Swift Sword

Shiro Sano Ken Hayai is the ancestral home of the Kitsu family, where Akodo first brought the five bronze-haired men he claimed were transformed from animals of the kitsu valley (*Way of the Lion*, page 44). They were granted dominion over its gentle, rolling fields by the Akodo in exchange for maintaining the histories of the Lion Clan (a task that was eventually transferred to the Ikoma, explaining their presence in later centuries).

The Castle of the Swift Sword is a Lion Clan melting pot, with no single family controlling the area completely. The Kitsu have largely moved on, only one Sodan-Senzo remaining (Goden), and this more to keep up appearances than for any practical purpose. The Ikoma use the facilities here for a small amount of training, and to retain records of the heroic samurai they have encountered, but very little happens here anymore that keeps their attention. And though the area has a fully operational bushi-training school (for both Akodo and Matsu), the prestige of graduating from this place has long since waned.

Today, the Castle of the Swift Sword is more of a waystation than a castle or a city. No permanent defensive structures exist upon its grounds; it has no strategic importance. Other than the fact that it rests at the confluence of two of the Emperor's largest roads, it has little value to anyone who does not live there... save the PCs, of course.

RESPONSE TO THE ARMIES

For all of these reasons, the inhabitants of Shiro Sano Ken Hayai will respond with thinly-veiled shock when the armies of the Lion arrive after their engagement at Toshi Ranbo. The soldiers' memory loss and theories of spiritual intervention spreads to everyone within hours, and most (especially the Kitsu shugenja of area 21) express great interest in the mystery. Goden becomes a minor celebrity, being the only Sodan-Senzo present for the incident, but will withdraw into the Kitsu Meditation Cell (area #1) soon after, claiming that he must "consult with the ancestors for guidance in this matter."

PC inquiries into the affair will be warmly accepted, though most of the answers they receive will be colored by this "melodramatic thrill with the unknown." Remember this when speaking in character as any of these people. They may elaborate or offer undue opinions, convoluting the investigation in their excitement.

THE NEIGHBORING VILLAGES

Shiro Sano Ken Hayai itself does not have the facility for a large army, such as the one brought back from Toshi Ranbo. The soldiers are therefore housed within the homes of peasants in neighboring villages. The PCs are afforded similar lodging if they desire it, and will have to walk the few li to the Kitsu ancestral home to conduct their inquiries.

Having the soldiers reside at these homes is one of the main reasons why rumors about what happened at Toshi Ranbo spread so quickly. The peasants overhear the soldiers speaking of their experiences and - mindful of the angry response common from Rokugani spirits - begin spreading wild versions of the truth and bold theories about what is really happening. Before long, the entire area will be buzzing about the events of Act One, and it will become increasingly more difficult to separate fact from fallacy. More on this can be found throughout this Act's Gamemaster Notes.

PC Investigations

Although there are a great many ways that the following information may be gained at the Castle of the Swift Sword, it is presented with the assumption that the players interview Goden and others in the area, or study the family archives (located in #22). Keep in mind that the archives are a restricted location, and that none are allowed there without the permission of Goden or one of the Kitsu trainers.

Impetuous investigators and those samurai that choose to be brash in their research will not have great opportunity to gather this information, or to encounter many of the theories of those around them. They will tip off Kitsu Goden, who is watching for just such behavior (see page 41 for more), and trigger the final Scenes of the Act without having the chance to prepare. In this situation, like many others, composure and care are the PCs' greatest assets.

MATSU TSUKO

Speaking to Matsu Tsuko about the crisis will prove less than productive. She remains quiet about Toshi Ranbo, instead focusing on the training of the men under her command. For the first twenty-four hours – prior to the next report of the Legacy upon the Plains of Battle – she grills her officers in battle simulations and relentlessly terrorizes her troops on the training field. Food deprivation, repetition of the same maneuvers from before sunrise until well after sundown – her methods are merciless.

She does not sleep during this Act, roving Shiro Sano Ken Hayai each night until only the animals are awake to hear her. The last stop she makes each day is the monument erected in Akodo Arasou's honor at his death three years ago. The tall statue stands between areas 5, 18, and 21 on the Swift Sword map, countless offerings amassed at its feet, intended to appease his spirit's restless journey. Tsuko brings no offering of her own, instead standing proudly



THE LEGACY (CONTINUED)

The Faceless Dead

These are the spirits which have languished in Toshigoku the longest. They no longer have identities, having lost them to the void long ago, and are now only filled with untapped rage at their condition. Like yorei, they are very predictable, consumed only with a lust for war. Also like yorei, these terrifying beings cannot be attacked, and may pass through walls and other physical barriers (being non-physical). They are susceptible to crystal, jade, and magic, and may only be harmed by these substances.

EARTH: 4

WATER: 2

Strength 4

FIRE: 0

Agility 4

AIR: 3

Rolls When Attacking:

6k3

Rolls For Damage: 8k1 (hands and ethereal "weapons")

TN to be Hit: 20 (as specified above only)

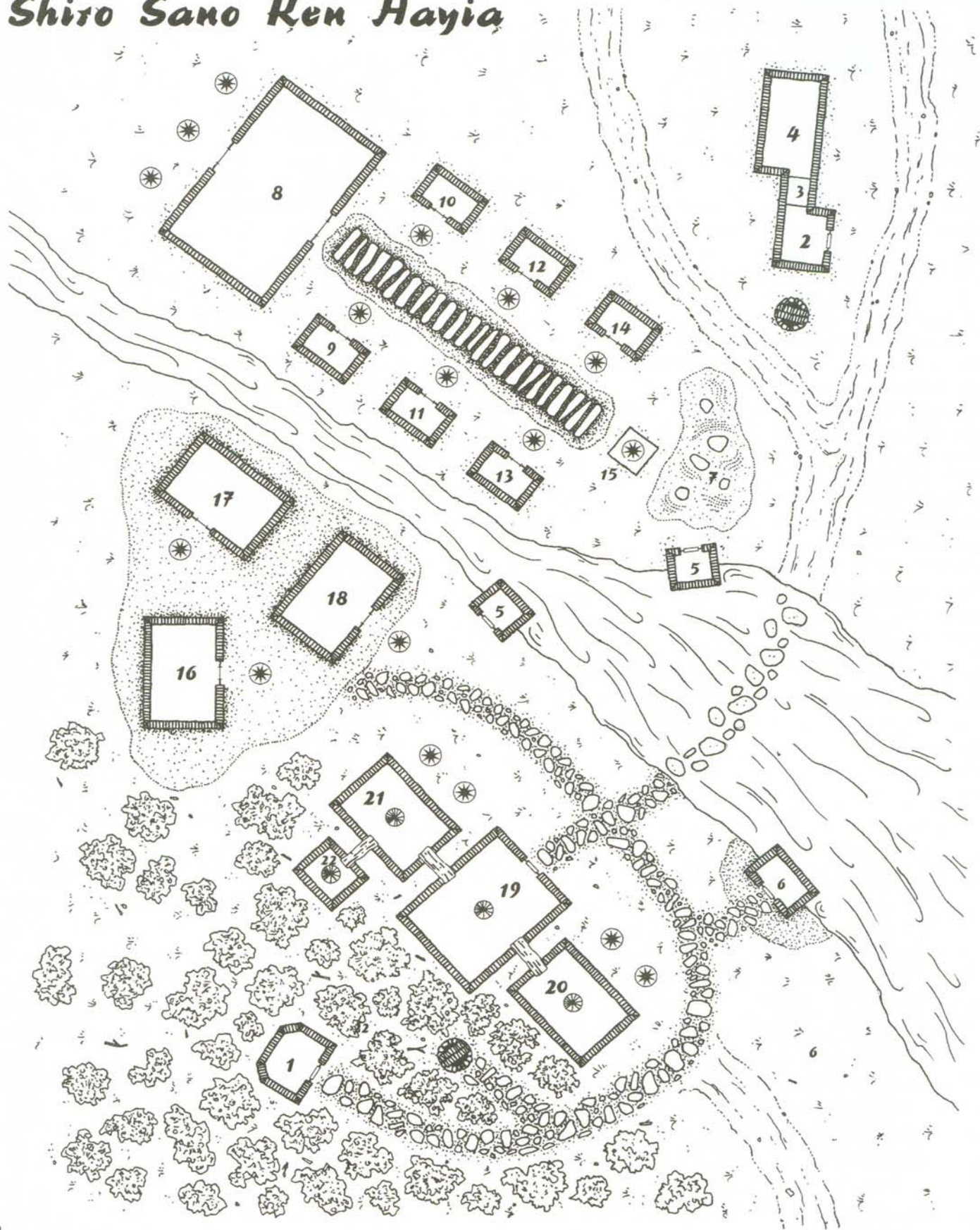
Armor: 5

Wounds: 10: -1; 20: -5; 30: Dead

Clan War Statistics

The Faceless Dead have no impact upon the *Clan War* game. They cannot be used as units, nor do they affect *Clan War* mechanics in any way.

Shiro Sano Ken Hayia



CASTLE OF THE SWIFT SWORD LOCATION DESCRIPTIONS

1. Kitsu Meditation Cell: This is where Goden and others contemplate matters of the spirit and begin journeys into the realms of Meido, Jigoku, Toshigoku, and elsewhere. Although there is enough space within the single chamber to accommodate several people, it is common practice for a Kitsu to use the chamber alone. The walls of the place are spaced so that a single person may only scarcely make them out by candlelight; the Kitsu believe this “partial sensory deprivation” enhances their spirit-walks. Note that this area is commonly hidden from public view by the strategically-cultivated tree line.

2. Yoriki's Home: The travel captain for Shiro Sano Ken Hayai is Kitsuki Daran, a traditionalist who values logic above all else. He is a sardonic man, though he fancies himself an able conversationalist. His skills as an investigator cannot be discounted, however; he is an excellent source of information about the Castle of the Swift Sword, and surrounding regions. If the mystery of the Legacy is presented to him, he will devote much time to it, finding spiritual dilemmas an interesting diversion from his daily duties.

3. Holding Cell: Daran's single cell has remained empty for many months. He prefers what he calls “practical education” to martial punishment (“Why lock someone up when they can be better educated with a careful thought or a swift sword?”)

4. Stables: Five average-quality horses are available within for upstanding samurai.

5. Fishing Houses: The majority of the foods eaten at Shiro Sano Ken Hayai are either caught or grown locally. Also, many of the Matsu students use the houses during night hours as practice studios, finding the scenery and subtle vibrations of the floor (caused by the passing river beneath) calming.

6. Home of Kitsu Goden: This small structure is the home of Bayushi Sozui's associate. During the PCs' investigations, Goden spends most of his time at location #1, deep in reflection. He will come into play during *The Trap* (see page 36).

7. Shintao Rock Garden: Other than a pleasant diversion, this provides nothing of value to the characters' research.

8. Matsu Training Grounds: Many Lion bushi begin their instruction here (learning the basics of the Rank One and Two Matsu Bushi Techniques before passing on through the family dojo). Ranks of them can be seen in practice daily, and Matsu Tsuko spends a good deal of her personal time in this place. Visually, the training grounds are a simple spectacle – students spar before a long wall upon which several banners display the Matsu School's many lessons.

9 – 14. Family Dojo: Students receive training in smaller groups in these unadorned buildings, progressing through more and more difficult regimens. They are separated by family: locations 9, 11, and 13 are Akodo, and 10, 12, and 14 are Matsu, for the Techniques of School Ranks 3, 4, and 5, respectively. Graduates from the Rank 5 dojo take their family's final test at location 15.

Fifteen wooden planks have been set into the ground between the family dojo, one for each test a bushi must pass to proceed along the path of enlightenment. These tests are given by the masters of the dojo one School Rank higher than the bushi's current training level (Rank 5 “students” are tested by a master of one of the private dojo – locations 16–18).

15. Tetsu Matsu (Matsu's Judgment): Under the considerate gaze of their kami ancestors, Matsu and Akodo bushi complete their formal training here. All three masters (see #s 16–18) are present during the ceremony, which includes a mock-iaijutsu duel with each Master in succession.

16–18. Dojo Numo, Gishaku, and O-Jiteko (respectively): Each of the three permanent Masters of Shiro Sano Ken Hayai has their own dojo. Special maneuvers and advanced studies are learned in these places, with the consent of a bushi's present sensei. Two of the Masters (Numo and O-Jiteko) are well past their Inkyo, but are not expected to leave their posts any time soon. Their lives here resemble a state of monkhood, and – but for their interaction with the younger generations – could be considered a form of retirement.

19. Ikoma Hall of Scribes: Here, Scribes and Bards document the actions of their heroic charges, and share information collected from across the Empire. Very little is “taught” to an Ikoma Omoidasu, but the occasional session on public oration or effective chronicling can be found among the many private “cells” here. A spiral staircase leads to the roof of this building, allowing visitors a spectacular view of the whole of the Castle of the Swift Sword (including location #1), and access to the rest of the Ikoma/Kitsu holdings (which have no external doors).

20. Ikoma Historical Collection: Within this building are halls of statues and shelves of preserved scrolls, dating back hundreds of years. Omoidasu bring the chronicles of their samurai charges here to be displayed, immortalizing the stories forever. These are meant to be shared, so any may enter and view them at their leisure.

21. Kitsu Shugenja School: This is where Kitsu who have been born without the blood of their ancestors learn the standard practices of shugenja. Unlike the Sodan-Senzo, these candidates learn in a group environment, and any are welcome to apply to the School. There are two Masters – Nejuto and Murusite.

22. Kitsu Archives: The Kitsu equivalent of #20, this is where most of the Kitsu scrolls (including those on Sodan Senzo research, like that of Jikai) are kept. Much of the information the PCs are searching for can be found within the many rows of scrolls here (see *PC Investigations*, page 29, for more).



KITSU GODEN

EARTH: 2 [5]
Willpower 7

WATER: 2 [2]

FIRE: 3 [5]
Intelligence 6

AIR: 3 [3]

VOID: 4 [4]

Skills: Acting 2, Astrology 2, Bard 4, Calligraphy 4, *Defense* 3 [1], Hand-to-Hand 1, History 5, *Horsemanship* 2, Intimidation 2, Investigation 3, Knife 1, Lore (Ancestors) 4, Lore (Ghosts) 4, Lore (Kitsu History) 4, Manipulation 4, Meditation 4, Nofujutsu 2, Oratory 2, Research 2, Rhetoric 2, Shintao 3, Sincerity 3, Stealth 3, Tea Ceremony 3, Theology 3

Honor: 0.4 (2.2)

Glory: 1.3

School: Kitsu Rank 4

Shadow Points: 1

Shadow Ability: Stealth (+2 kept dice to all Actions involving stealth)

Advantages: Balance, Full-Blood Kitsu Ancestry, Perceived Honor (4 Points, see page 11)

Disadvantages: Low Pain Threshold

Weapon: Jitte 1k1

Armor: None

Clan War Statistics

TN: 6
W: 5
ATT: +2
DAM: +0
#S: 1

before her fallen love's image and staring into his eyes, looking for something...

Characters who press the issue with Matsu Tsuko are likely to spark her ire, perhaps even receiving a painful (though not lethal) blow for their troubles. The best they can hope for from her is quiet support once word of their search reaches her.

INTERVIEWING THE KITSU

The Kitsu are not guarded about their knowledge, but they are protective of what that knowledge can do if released to the general public. Many of the "secrets" of the Kitsu family are only secrets because they would not be accepted by the rest of Rokugan. This is the case with Toshigoku and the Legacy, a topic which has been buried for so long that few remember it. None of those at Shiro Sano Ken Hayai are familiar with it save Kitsu Goden, who will be understandably guarded about the information.

Yet he will not blatantly obstruct the PCs' pursuits. This would draw attention to his deceit, and he wishes to retain his position for a while longer (until he finds the missing Jikai notes). Goden will give the PCs general information concerning the spirit world, offering no theories about the events at Toshi Ranbo. He claims that he is "in conference with the ancestors" (a feasible claim for a Sotan-Senzo of his standing), and that they have not yet come to a conclusion about what the incident means.

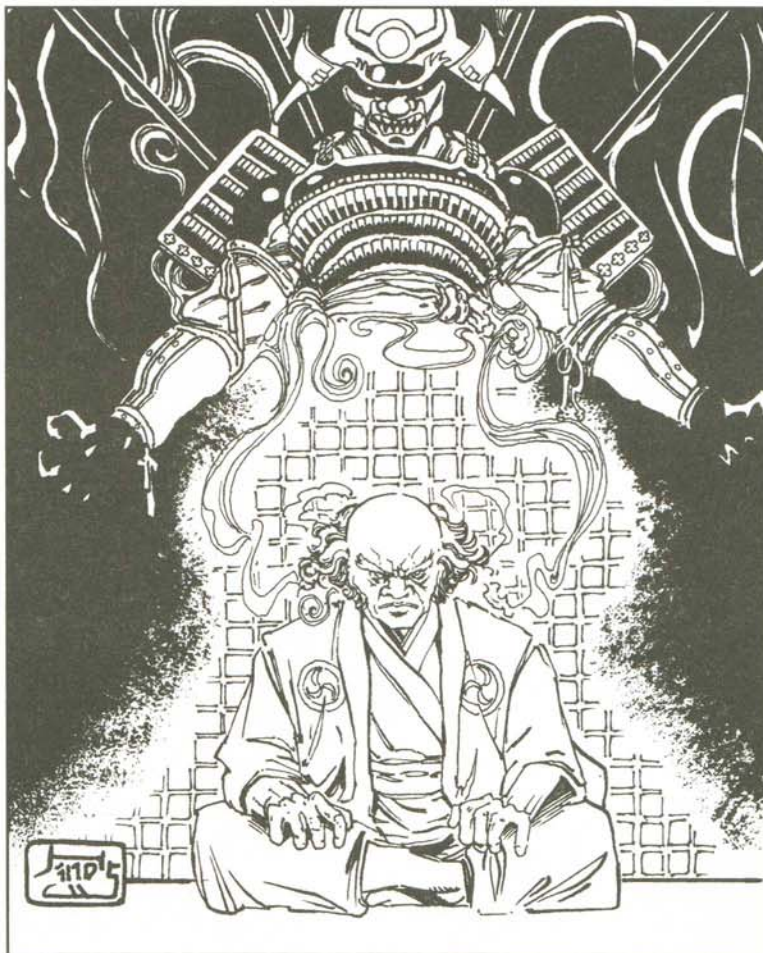
THE SPIRITUAL WORLD

Gamemasters should draw from the following material when answering PC questions about the spiritual world. Tailoring the information according to its source is a good idea (for instance, Goden will avoid specific references to Toshigoku and the Legacy, keeping his responses broad and careful, while one of the Kitsu Shugenja Masters might speak of a "scroll they came across in the archives once"). The GM should feel free to

elaborate as the situation demands; perceptions of the spiritual world vary greatly from one person to the next, particularly with regard to its geography and metaphysics.

The Rokugani afterlife can be a confusing place. According to all accounts gathered by the Kitsu (and directly from communion with those who have remained behind after death), the landscape is barren and difficult to traverse, which a principal reason why the Kitsu eventually took the role of guides for spirits of the recently deceased. Different rules apply in the various regions beyond the veil of death – honor is often not a concern, glory might be irrelevant, all of the mores that Rokugani live by lose their importance.

This frightening realm can be roughly broken down into several indistinct



“regions”, each with its own purpose and nature. These regions overlap often, and are commonly confused by the layman, which is why there are so many conflicting theories about the afterlife in the Emerald Empire.

The whole of the underworld is known as Meido, a barren place that all spirits must pass through en route to their final destination. Jigoku is the most common of these destinations – the Dead Realm, where Fu Leng fell and where spirits must live off their life’s debt before passing on to another life in the Celestial Wheel. Jigoku is known as the province of Emma-O, the Fortune of Death and judge of the underworld, who must determine a spirit worthy before it can pass on. Her servants are the infamous Oni, beings native to the Dead Realm, brought here to the Living World by the Dark One himself. Much is known of Jigoku, gathered by centuries of Kitsu scholars, and its distorted reality has been reasoned to a science, leaving much of the fear and questioning about it to history.

But being the nexus of many spiritual realms, Meido is rumored to contain many more “pockets” of spiritual activity, any number of which can be held responsible for ghosts and supernatural phenomena experienced by the people of Rokugan. When spirits become lost within Meido, they sometimes find these alternate locales (or are somehow drawn there), returning changed. This metamorphosis is not always beneficial, and accounts for a great many stories of monstrous ghosts and ethereal demons.

GHOSTS

Typically, ghosts are very predictable. Shugenja have developed a large array of practices and tools for dealing with them. Rokugani have grown accustomed to the fact that they appear every once in a while, and that they can be “solved”, religious problems that can be “categorized” and eliminated with little fanfare.

But the appearance of the Legacy has mystified the shugenja of Rokugan. They cannot easily quantify the phenomenon, and have no ready answers for how to deal with them. Possession is very rare, and has never been seen before on this scale. This kind of mass migration from Jigoku would have been noticed by the Kitsu before now, but this is not the case.

Questions abound among the religious – will jade or crystal harm or hinder them? What do these spirits hunger for? Combat? Violence?

Revenge against someone? Or an entire clan? Will Spirit Ward magic have any effect on them? Could they be *goryo* (many witnesses claim to have seen an odd glow about the possessed soldiers)? Little ancestors, seeking definition through purpose (i.e. fighting)? Are *kami* involved (and if so, to what end)? Every hypothesis only leads to more controversy, which grows by the day during this Act.

Ghosts are commonly quite powerful by themselves. If the numbers conjectured at Toshi Ranbo are correct, the entire Empire could be threatened. Still, the Legacy has returned a sense of wonder to the subject of ghosts in Rokugan. People look over their shoulders again, questioning the stories they have been raised with. Counter to the fear rippling through the peasant population, many Lion samurai find the situation fascinating. They gather in private places and talk of the extraordinary battle at Toshi Ranbo, and how the spirits have taken a stand against peace in the Empire.


Please refer to the L5R Rulebook (pages 192–193), *Winter Court: Kyuden Seppun* (pages 61–62), *The Way of the Phoenix* (pages 26, and 30–34) and *The Way of the Lion* (pages 116–119) for additional material on ghosts and the spiritual world.

KITSU GODEN

As mentioned elsewhere, Kitsu Goden declines to comment on the Legacy event, declaring that he is communicating with Lion Clan ancestors about it. He is cautious about how he words responses to the characters and others, never referring to the occurrence as a “problem.” He is considerate of worries and fears related to the event – especially any pointed questions the characters may have.


As the only full-blooded Sodan-Senzo available for comment at Shiro Sano Ken Hayai, Goden is constantly pestered by samurai and peasants of the surrounding villages. His services as a spiritual medium are regularly requested, which keeps him busy for a good part of this Act (too busy to “help” the PCs in their endeavors).

When talking to the PCs as Goden, listen carefully to their words. Should they ever mention the “Legacy”, “Sozui”, or any other aspect of the Scorpion instigator’s plan, he will immediately begin planning their demise. As soon as is feasible, Goden will invite the characters to *The Trap*, described on page 36.



KITSU GODEN (CONTINUED)

Background: Kitsu Goden is a supremely arrogant man. He makes a clear distinction between courage of the mind and courage of the body, claiming that “those who devote their lives to Bushido alone are unable to muster true strength of character and enlightenment.” This opinion stems mostly from his long-standing resentment of physical life, which he sees as “suffering” (his constant forays into the realms of the dead – sometime for entire days or weeks at a time – have colored his vision of life). Publically, however, he remains stoic and detached, in order to hide these beliefs.



KITSU PCs

Players who bring Kitsu characters to the table may ask the Gamemaster what they know of Toshigoku and the Legacy. The answer is “nothing.”

They will certainly know of the Kitsu Archives, and that ancient secrets are rumored to exist on the scrolls within. If they are

Rank 4 or 5 (or have somehow become well-known to the family in the past), they might even have communicated with and been able to gain access to one or more of the Kitsu shugenja at Shiro Sano Ken Hayai before (though none know of Goden, regardless of their Glory).

Allow the players Lore rolls (especially if they have the Lore: Ghosts or Lore: Jigoku Skills) to glean the information in the *Supernatural World* and *Ghosts* sections, if they so desire, but no amount of dice-rolling should grant them information about the Legacy or the lost realms within Meido. This is information the Kitsu have been very careful to conceal over the centuries, and it is not likely the PCs will have come across it before.

THE KITSU MASTERS

The Kitsu Shugenja scholars (area #21) have a great many theories about the events at Toshi Ranbo, though they will be loath to reveal them unless they trust that they will not be repeated (i.e. the PCs provide a plausible explanation for their interest and an assurance of silence, and succeed with an Intelligence + Sincerity roll; TN 15). They are taking a very close look at the history of Toshi Ranbo, trying to substantiate their ideas. The common denominator in their research is Akodo Arasou, whose presence at the battle makes sense to them (he died in the last major conflict held there).

But the martial spirits are another matter altogether. There are too many of them to have all died in one battle, as has been the case with a few historical parallels. They would have to be the sum total of all fallen samurai from that location, or gathered from several locations, for this to have happened. One among them – Kitsu Nejuto, believes that this is a manifestation of a *mikokami* of war (Bishamon, perhaps, or a lesser-known figure), and that it is trying to convey a message to the Rokugani people.

Gamemasters are encouraged to develop and present all manner of wild theories through these NPCs and others in this Act. Part of the fun here is to play up the fascination and paranoia caused by the Legacy's arrival before things get serious again.

One last thing that the Kitsu Masters might be able to help the party with involves protective magic used against spirits. The Kitsu Sodan-Senzo use Spirit Ward magics during their trips through the afterlife. Presumably, these can be found within the Kitsu Archives, but a spell version has been formulated by the non-blooded Kitsu shugenja for their own purposes.

If the characters specifically ask about such wards, this spell is sure to come up. The Kitsu shugenja will be willing to part with this spell if the characters have been pleasant and have humored them.

THE AKODO AND MATSU MASTERS

Akodo Numo, Akodo O-Jiteko, and Matsu Gishaku find the present situation fascinating (from a warrior's perspective). The thrill of war is back in the air, the students are training with more heart, and everyone is paying close attention to Bushido again.

Though they openly support the theory that ancestors of both clans are chastising their descendants for their docile lives (which, in turn, helps them keep their students in line), their private discussions are more exploratory. Perhaps the spirits were soldiers who failed on the battlefield, valuing their lives too greatly and failing to surrender them for the cause of Bushido? Maybe the spirits have been denied the right to return as samurai for these indiscretions? (Of course, the PCs will only become privy to these views if they befriend one or more of the Masters, humoring them with long discussions about the importance of field training and the under-utilization of kimabusha (cavalry), and eventually succeed with an Awareness + Oratory check).

KITSUKI DARAN

The yoriki of the Castle of the Swift Sword questions the validity of reports from Toshi Ranbo, and the fascination they have inspired. He believes that the memory loss of the soldiers can be attributed to something else, perhaps battle fatigue or a contaminant in their water or food supply. He is quick to support “logical” solutions that can be explained by physical means, and even quicker to dismiss suppositions that involve ghosts, kami, and life after death.

Daran is a grounded person. He believes in the supernatural world that has been proven and displayed time and again for the last thousand years, just like everyone else. But he does not immediately attribute inexplicable circumstance to it, preferring to reason such puzzles out methodically. He does not jump to conclusions, which makes him the minority here in Shiro Sano Ken Hayai, but certainly not elsewhere in the Empire (where word of the events at Toshi Ranbo are frequently questioned as hearsay or exaggerations of the truth).

THE ARCHIVES

Eventually, the player characters will try to gain access to the Kitsu Archives. Permission to enter may only be acquired from Kitsu Goden, who will be reluctant to grant it. The information contained in the Archives is protected from prying eyes for a reason, he tells them. Much of the information upon the scrolls could be dangerous if allowed into the wrong hands.

If the characters are persistent, however, they may convince Goden to allow them access. They



must explicitly identify the subject matter they are interested in, which he will then gather for them. The characters will be allowed to read through only the material that relates to their request, and then only with Goden's supervision, or that of one of the Kitsu Masters.

Certain subjects are considered "restricted", and are not relinquished under any circumstances, though this is not the case with any of the scrolls concerning the Legacy and Toshigoku. As when he is interviewed, any references to such matters will be carefully avoided; Goden will depart for an appropriate amount of time, and then claim that the subjects are unknown to the Kitsu. Clean and simple. But he will not overlook such an incident. The moment any of the PCs begin asking questions that directly target his secret, he will begin preparing *The Trap* (see page 36).

The Archives have been magically sealed by the non-blooded Kitsu Masters (who are bound by family honor not to release them without Goden's authorization). No force the PCs have at their disposal can hope to penetrate the seal.

Events

The first two of the following "events" are meant as constant backdrops to the PCs' investigative efforts, while the last can be used to balance the flow of the adventure – plug it in when the action begins to slow down.

RESPONSE TO THE LEGACY

As represented throughout this Act, responses to the Legacy's appearance are diverse, especially between the various castes. People are confused (and very disturbed) by the fact that the shugenja cannot determine what is wrong. The peasants' reactions are the most vehement; they are afraid of spiritual reprisal, of *goryo* or *gaki* rising to attack them in the night. They have begun to see omens everywhere, and bad dreams are recounted and picked apart for their meaning. The Kitsu (particularly Goden) are constantly pestered for advice and to perform rituals to appease the angry spirits.

Ancestor worship is a folk religion, and not dogmatic; it is therefore interpretive. This is the cause of much of the chaos for the remainder of the adventure – first surrounding Toshi Ranbo and Shiro Sano Ken Hayai, and later spreading

across the Plains of Battle, and even to the territories of neighboring clans. Most believe that the ancestors have somehow become displeased with the present, and are making their case known, though speculation varies concerning the details.

Ritual purification is more than commonplace now, and giant mura torches can be seen at the heads of huge crowds marching through villages each night. Prayers are offered to the kami at every opportunity, requesting forgiveness. Food, incense, crude weapons, and other minor gifts are left before the many ancestor statues throughout the Castle of the Swift Sword, petitioning the Fortunes for mercy, or justice, or whatever can make amends and return the spirits to their sacred rest. As of the end of this Act (when the PCs depart from Shiro Sano Ken Hayai), there is no response.

THE LION MILITARY

The Lion military is also unsure how to contend with the odd experiences of its soldiers. Few have any memory of the time they were possessed, and those that do only recall a perpetual throbbing within their minds and bodies, as if their blood were racing through them with unprecedented fury. Nothing could sate their hunger for battle; every death by their hand only increased their rage. Some have been removed from duty, the memory of cutting down their clansmen in cold blood permanently etched upon their mind's eye.

The Lion troops consider the Castle of the Swift Sword a welcome respite, though it is one that they will not have the chance to enjoy for very long. Within a day or two of their arrival, reports begin to filter in of skirmishing on the Crane borders, and they are called back into active duty once again. By the time that the PCs are ready to leave the Castle of the Swift Sword, few will remain (mainly the junshi, whose questionable status is considered detrimental to the morale of the other soldiers).

THE PHANTOM DUELIST

The focus of this subplot will be whatever character is currently in possession of Tankenka's mirror. Failing that (if none of them has it), it will be the character with the highest Iaijutsu Skill.

It is common practice for samurai to test one another for "swordlessness" when they first meet, or when they have not seen one another for many

NEW SPELL: SPIRIT WARD

Ring: Earth

Base TN: 15

Casting Time: 3 Actions

Duration: 1 hour

Mastery: 4

Concentration: Total

Raises: Effect

Effect: This Spell is very effective against ghosts and all form of spirits. The shugenja draws a circle in salt about himself and anyone else who is to be protected, and then – with a successful casting roll – falls into a deep trance-like sleep. For one full hour (or until the shugenja is awakened), spirits must overcome his Willpower x5 (+ 5 for every Raise made) to pass over the line. Chambers may be similarly protected if lines of salt are placed over all vertical points of ingress (windows, doors, and any other opening in the walls).



KAKITA TOBASU

The Legacy's chain of command is not based upon Bushido, but on identity. Spirits trapped within Toshigoku have lost all memory of who they were, but a select few have retained their name (and features) – and can manifest visually in the Living World.

These are the “generals” of the Legacy. Kakita Tobasu is a good example of this:

EARTH: 5 [5]

WATER: 3 [4]

Strength 5

FIRE: 4 [4]

AIR: 3 [4]

Reflexes 5

VOID: 4 [4]

Skills: Archery 3, Athletics 5, *Battle* 4, *Defense* 3, *Etiquette* 2, *History* 2, *Iaijutsu* 5 [4], *Intimidation* 3, *Kenjutsu* 4, *Leadership* 3, *Lore (Meido)* 4, *Meditation* 3, *Shintao* 4, *Sincerity* 2

Honor: 4.1

Glory: 5.7

School: Kakita Rank 3

Advantages: Heartless, Irreproachable

Disadvantages:

Antisocial (4 Points), Forgotten

Weapon: Katana 3k2

Armor: Heavy

Clan War Statistics

TN: 8

W: 5

ATT: +2

DAM: +1

#S: 3

• Causes Fear (see the *Clan War Rulebook*, p. 66), as does any unit he commands.

months. These tests are commonly non-violent, and involve the two warriors facing off in a silent “Chi” challenge. At the end, both are aware of which would have won if the duel were for real. An example of such a silent test can be found on page 35 of the *L5R RPG*.

At a martial training ground like Shiro Sano Ken Hayai, this is even more common. So it is not extraordinary when the PC in question (an accomplished duelist in his own right) is approached by another bushi in this manner. The man is an Akodo bushi that the party has never met before, presumably one of the soldiers being trained at the local dojo. But he moves with the fluid grace of a duelist far exceeding his years, and watches the PC with angry eyes, full of passion and hate.

Speaking directly to the PC, the duelist claims that he seeks revenge for an “untimely death”, and demands a duel to the death. He will not reveal his name or elaborate on the wrongs he is seeking retribution for. No amount of questioning or diplomacy will stay his hand – he will settle for nothing less than a mortal Iaijutsu duel.

If the PC accepts the duel and faces the man, the duelist draws out of his stance, uttering the words “You have learned well the way of Heaven.” Then the Akodo slumps forward and becomes disoriented, like the soldiers did at the end of Act One. He has no memory of challenging the PC, or anything else during the time he was possessed, except the name “Hifune.”

Should the PC ignore or refuse the duelist, however, he will hound the group, regardless of where they go or what they do. He harasses them until the PC has no choice but to accept the duel or lose face. If the character still wishes to ignore the duelist, he must succeed in a Contested Honor Test roll against himself (i.e. roll and keep his Honor in dice, aiming for a TN of his Willpower x5), or lose five Honor Points. Following such a loss, the Akodo speaks the words “Your sword is your own”, and slumps forward as above.

Research into this enigma will reveal that Akodo Hifune was once a samurai in the time of the Kami who failed to accept an honorable challenge, fleeing from a superior opponent in shame. His ghost spends eternity presenting the lesson to others. (This is a symptom of the Legacy's release; as long as the *toshi* remain on the physical plane, spiritual activity will increase, until it becomes unmanageable.)

The Trap

When the PCs have sufficiently worried Goden (or at a time of the Gamemaster's choosing), the party is summoned to the Kitsu Meditation Cell (location #1) for a “private discussion.” The invitation arrives in the hands of a nondescript ashigaru levy (actually one of Sozui's ninja footmen), who plays the role of a *heimin* a little *too* well, bowing repeatedly and never looking the PCs directly in the face. The invitation reads as follows:

*Honorable petitioners,
My deliberations with the ancients
have delivered fruit that I believe you
will find intriguing. Please come speak
with me at the meditation cell behind the
university at dusk. Follow the path to
the well, and then walk through the tree
line to where it continues.
I eagerly await your arrival.
-Goden*

Finding the meditation cell is simple. Read the following as they enter the forest:

The path to the meditation cell leads behind the Ikoma Hall of Scribes and into the tree line, ending at a well. Following the instructions on the invitation, you look beyond the next grove, finding that the path continues unabated. It is almost as if this second path was purposefully concealed within the forest for some reason.

A short walk later, you see a simple structure ahead, its surface unbroken except for a single heavy wooden door. A few feet away, you can see that the door is ever so slightly ajar, and that long, white tendrils of mist cling to the gap between.

If the characters announce themselves per custom, or otherwise make their presence known, Goden's voice – frantic and filled with fear – will be heard from within. Sounds of struggle accompany his cries for help, begging the characters to enter. When they do, read the following:



The meditation chamber is dark, with no windows or doors other than the one you have entered through. The walls – commonly a uniform expanse of small squares – are almost completely obscured by a growing darkness, as if they are being eaten away in shadow. Where the walls have vanished, the dimensions of the room expand beyond your vision, flush with the horizon, becoming another place, another realm, where the land is barren and lifeless, and Amaterasu’s blessing light has faded away. The only features visible upon the broken land are several large obelisks of splintered rock, jutting out of the ground at irregular angles.

Goden remains the focus of the twilight realm’s encroachment, the last part of the cell that remains bright and pure. But his control is slipping, his face a painful mask of concentration as he tries to stave off the influx of darkness. The mists flooding into the room from beyond threaten to overwhelm him, tendrils of ethereal smoke tentatively snaking in through the pocket of light around him. Beneath his furrowed brow, his eyes lock with your own, pleading for aid.

Behind him, within the shadowed mists, figures gather, waiting for the light to vanish. They stand behind a tall samurai, whose gleaming mempo is frozen as a vicious smile of recognition. The figure steps forward, bracing above Goden, preparing to strike...

This is a trap staged by Kitsu Goden and Kakita Tobasu. Tapping the power of the Legacy, they have created a physical gateway into Meido, the dark underworld. They intend to lure the characters into Meido by “threatening” Goden, then kill them (making them part of the Legacy), or strand them (lost in the spiritual realm, the characters would join the ranks of the dead as yorei).

Successful Perception checks at this point (TN 10) will allow the characters to notice that the spirits now appear more substantial, as if their forms are tangible. (This is because – in Meido – they are as real as the PCs are on the physical plane.) The PCs may assume from this that the spirits can be hurt in this place (and they would be right).

If the characters react to this, engaging the spirits to save Goden, the faceless dead respond in kind, and combat ensues. If not, the pocket of light surrounding Goden slowly vanishes, the wall of the meditation cell behind him replaced by a grey blanket of mist. The door leading back outside the cell also disappears, trapping the characters in Meido.

Goden’s strained features relax and he stands, joining Tobasu and the Legacy spirits, or walking out of the characters’ attack range. He tells Tobasu, “End their suffering,” and strolls away, carefully picking his path through the jagged obelisks as the characters defend themselves from the Legacy.

KAKITA TOBASU (CONTINUED)

Background: Kakita Tobasu is unknown to any within his clan. He died almost five hundred years ago, the victim of a sneak Phoenix attack. He and his unit were caught during routine maneuvers, and destroyed by an army of Shiba House Guard accompanied by a small cluster of Isawa shugenja.

The attack was never questioned, as the Isawa performed the Ritual of Forgetting upon Tobasu and his men, and Tobasu has remained a prisoner in the realm of Toshigoku ever since. In that time, he has continued to learn, to grow as a warrior, but he has been unable to hone his techniques as a samurai.

Every one of his men has “slipped away”, becoming one of the toshi – and eventually, the faceless dead, and he has watched them go, unable to help remember them. These are the sources of his anger, the reason he cannot give up this new war within the Living World, until it has all been forgotten the way he was...





CLAN WAR AND THE RPG

Clan War, the miniatures wargaming system set in the world of Rokugan, has been designed for use with the L5R RPG. The battle sequences in this adventure can easily be run using the miniatures game, even including personal figures for each of the player characters. Players respond quite favorably to visual aids, and there are few things more visual than miniatures.

Note, however, that some degree of preparation is involved. All of the figures you will be using prior to starting the adventure should be gathered together, as well as any landscapes you would like. Have them at the ready when you shift from the RPG to the miniatures game. The transition must be as seamless as possible to maintain the players' attention.

The actual koku (point) values of the armies are left up to the GM and players, depending on the amount of time they wish to play. The following ratios should be in effect to mimic this adventure's battles:

Toshi Ranbo:

1:1 (equal)

Plains of Battle:

2:1 (Crane) until Gohei arrives, then 1:1 (equal)

Shiro no Yojin (both battles):

3:2 (Crane)

There should be no way for the characters to escape the cell before they are thrust into Meido. After the fighting, Arasou and Tankenka will arrive and – able to speak here where their spirits reside – will inform the characters of the ritual which may be used to stop the Legacy (Jikai's notes), and where it can be found (within an outpost upon the Plains of Battle).

Also, there should be no way for the characters to prevent Goden from leaving; he plays a larger role in Act Four. If the characters devote their attentions to the death of the betraying Kitsu, Arasou will arrive early (see below), blocking their attacks. (Arasou considers himself a steward of sorts for the Legacy, and does not wish to pass on to his next life without seeing them avenged; killing the Kitsu would release his spirit from its confinement on the physical plane, which he cannot yet allow.)

FIGHTING THE LEGACY

Conduct the combat between the characters and the Legacy spirits as a standard L5R skirmish. The ghosts are physical in Meido, and may be harmed by the characters. Supporting Tobasu are twice as many faceless dead as PCs, which will swarm upon the character who appears strongest. They do not wish to defeat the party; they are only interested in giving them the *impression* that they do (so that the Living Darkness may listen in on the following conversation between them and the spirits of Tankenka and Arasou; see the upcoming Scene).

Characters who die in this Scene join the Legacy as one of the faceless dead. They cannot return as spirits to aid their companions; their deaths are final. Should the characters have trouble dispatching the spirits, Gamemasters may wish to introduce Arasou and Tankenka early (see below), and then modify the boxed text of the next encounter accordingly. These spirits are able fighters, and – without considering their statistics – should eliminate at least one Legacy spirit per round (per the GM's needs).

During this Scene, any PCs that have died and returned as ghosts may act with physical substance once more, just as the faceless dead and Tobasu. They cannot, however, return to the Living World with the characters in the following Scene; they are dead, and must remain so.

One final note: Spell use is unrestricted here; all of the necessary elements are available.

ARASOU AND TANKENKA

Survivors of the battle will still be faced with finding a way out of Meido. Allow the players to sweat over this problem for a short time (and mourn any characters who fell in the battle with the Legacy), before reading the following:

The desolate landscape stretches as far in every direction as you can make out with no variation. The only break in the monotonous terrain are the twisted obelisks and a distant mountain range that appears no more inviting. The air is dry and burns your lungs, and the ground is parched. There is no water here, no vegetation, no life of any kind. Can you die here, without water or food? Or will you just walk the barren realm forever, without end?

As you ponder your fate, the knee-high mists about you begin to part, collecting together as a wall of dull grey. Upon their surface form images, a thousand tiny flares falling together in time, like a waterfall of light. From within the cloud, a voice can be heard, commanding but laced with kindness. "Beautiful, isn't it?"

The forms of Tankenka and Arasou step forward out of the mist, which loses its substance again and drifts back toward the blighted earth. "The ancestors are pleased with you," Tankenka continues. "You have come far, and learned much, but there is still one secret you must know..."

The spirits intend to show the characters the path back to the physical world, parting the veil of death so that the PCs may return to their lives. But first, there are important things to discuss – here, where the spirits' voices can be heard.

Tankenka thanks the PCs for their efforts thus far, applauding any heroic actions they have performed and tactfully rebuking them for failures. In death, he has become a pragmatic man, unfettered by social grace. He speaks his mind, focusing on the problem at hand. His interests lie in averting open warfare between the Lion and the Crane, which can only be accomplished if the Legacy is put down first.

Arasou shares Tankenka's devotion, though not for the same reasons. Having a Lion's heart, he finds peace with the Crane unnatural, but the Legacy is another matter. Arasou is a samurai to the bone; the code of Bushido defines him. He sees the Legacy spirits – who have performed their duty with honor, yet are shamed by the thoughtlessness of others – and can only feel

sympathy. He cannot move on to his next life knowing that such honorable men have been so grievously wronged.

Together, they explain what they know of Bayushi Sozui and Kitsu Goden, and how the Legacy came to be released (as related in the Gamemaster Resources section at the beginning of this adventure). They know that Goden has made an alliance with the Legacy, and is working with Sozui to cause war between the Lion and the Crane, though what purpose the conflict will ultimately serve is unknown.

“The Kitsu and the Scorpion do not know what they have unleashed upon the Empire,” Tankenka tells you. “The toshi grow in number with every conflict. The Kitsu ancestors recognized this, but could not help them. So they sealed them away, never to be seen again... until now. You must put them to rest. There is a ritual, hidden within an outpost on the Plains of Battle. It can stop them, but only if you find it soon. The longer the Legacy strides the realm of man, the larger it will grow. Soon, very soon, it will be too large for the ritual to work.”

Tankenka tells the PCs that an armorer posted at the Lion training grounds – Matsu Shimesu – knows the location of the ritual scroll. He can lead the PCs into the Plains of Battle and identify its location. Arasou continues, saying that – to ensure their safety – the characters should ask for an escort of Lion troops. “Take the regent’s mirror to Matsu Tsuko, and ask her to look into it. She will give you what you need.”

Throughout this Scene, the characters may notice that the shadows around them appear to be layered, and that one of the layers is shifting irregularly. Periodically during the conversation with the spirits, describe the scenery of Meido to them again, including subtle hints about this element. Some examples follow:

- “The mists cling to your calves, lazily swirling around you like a small whirlpool. The gray is laced with black – is that your shadow, or someone else’s?”

- “As you listen to Tankenka’s words about the ritual, your eyes are drawn beyond his shoulder, to something lurking within the jagged stone forest. But when you focus your vision, it is gone. Was it ever really there?”

- “Without warning, something darts by your leg. When you look down, only the mist can be seen caressing your skin there.”


Be careful not to make this too prominent in the Scene (no more than once every five or ten minutes of roleplaying); otherwise, the characters will either end the conversation or become too paranoid to continue.

These effects are caused by the Living Shadow, which lurks within the pooled darkness about the characters during this entire Scene, listening. The words become part of it, transferred simultaneously across the whole of its being and finally arriving within the two extensions of itself that have a vested interest – Goden and Sozui. The information gained here is important to them; if they can find the ritual scroll first, and destroy it, they can be free of the characters’ meddling and retain the power of the Legacy for themselves.

The characters may ask whatever they like of the two spirits, and will receive honest, helpful answers in return. Tankenka can explain the mirror’s abilities (a result of its spirit awakening), or elaborate upon his long history with Bayushi Sozui. Arasou can explain how he was initially bound to the Living World. When the characters are done talking and are ready to return to Shiro Sano Ken Hayai, the two spirits will lead them home:

Leading you through a thick patch of the jagged obelisks, Tankenka crests a low rise and waves his arm toward the vale beyond. “Do not look back once you have started across. The journey can be disorienting, and we wouldn’t want you getting lost.” His voice is warm and gentle, and his words reassuring. For a moment, the image of his brutal death returns to you, the sound of his body as it strikes the ground... But you fight the memory back, and look into the vale below.

The Lion encampment outside the Castle of the Swift Sword can be seen sprawled out before you like a two-dimensional painting, the oil blurring at its edge, burning away when it slips into the dead realm of Meido that frames it. As you look to Tankenka, the painting begins to dissolve, losing its substance and vanishing into the mists. “No,” he says abruptly, conjuring memories of your own sensei, “do not focus upon me. Look to the Living World, and never look back.”



CLAN WAR AND THE RPG (CONTINUED)

Statistics have been included throughout this book (in italics and brackets) for use with *Clan War*, also, some pre-existing *Clan War* stats have been referenced for convenience. Some revision may be required to make the most of *Clan War*’s advanced rules, but – by and large – you should be ready to go with what you have here and the referenced *Clan War* statistics.

Generic troop statistics (for both the RPG and *Clan War*) can be found at the end of this book, and should be used to fortify existing numbers during battlefield sequences of the adventure. Gamemasters who believe that these are too simple, or that desire additional “spice”, may choose from the many elite troops available for the *Clan War* game to supplement these suggestions. This makes the adventure’s battle scenes run much more like tournament wargame sessions, with two players (or two teams of players) pitting not only their tactical knowledge against one another, but also the fundamental construction of their units.



MATSU SHIMESU

EARTH: 3 [3]

WATER: 2 [3]

Strength 4

FIRE: 2 [2]

AIR: 2 [3]

Reflexes 3

VOID: 3 [3]

Skills: Acting 3,

Appraisal 2, Archery 3,
Armorer 4, Athletics 3,
Battle 1, Commerce 1,
Defense 3, Hand-to-Hand 2,
History 2, Investigation,
Knife 3, Lore: Scorpion Clan
3, Mimic 2, Research 2,
Shintao 3, Sincerity 2,
Sleight of Hand 2, Stealth 3,
Theology 2, Traps 2,
Weaponsmith 1

Honor: 2.2

Glory: 0.4

School: None

Advantages: Combat
Reflexes, Great Destiny (to
lead Legacy home)

Disadvantages: Social
Disadvantage (heimin),
Sworn Enemy (Bayushi
Sozui)

Weapon: Tanto 1k2

Armor: None

Clan War Statistics

TN: 5

W: 3

ATT: +0

DAM: +1

#S: 1

Each character must focus upon the image of the Lion encampment to avoid being lost on the way back to the Living World. This requires that they choose a single point to fix upon, and that they roll their Willpower against a TN of (30 - their Perception x5). Failure results in the character being "lost" along the way, joining Tankenka and Arasou within the spiritual realm of Meido until the rest of the party puts the Legacy to rest (at which time, he will continue to Jigoku to await his next life). Success, on the other hand, merits the following description:

When your eyes return to the picture, the edges begin to congeal, hardening once more. As you stare intently into the deep portrait, you feel yourself drawn to it, drawn into it. The painting curves about your vision, filling your mind, and the images upon its surface begin to move together - slowly at first, then more and more lifelike until the air around you is fresh and clean once more, and soft, wet grass can be felt beneath your feet. You are back.

The Armorer

Matsu Shimesu's quest has made him a dour man, full of brooding purpose. The sting of his life is somewhat soothed by his constant proximity to the military forces of the Lion, though the vicarious pride he feels in their accomplishments is hollow comfort.

The PCs will find him a reliable ally in their cause, though they may find his inability to look past his personal mission disconcerting. He has not smiled in many years, takes all of his meals in private, and rarely speaks. The only indulgences he allows himself are the long moments he spends regarding armies upon the field of battle. When he speaks of warriors marching upon one another, he gains a reverent glaze and his words become fluid and elated. He refers to war as "the dance", and soldiers as "artists."

Shimesu is currently assigned to the Lion training grounds, a post he enjoys, though he dreams of joining samurai in their marches across the Empire once more. Convincing him to accompany the party should not be too difficult if they inform him of their experiences with Tankenka, and even less so should they show him

the mirror. He expresses surprise at Goden's betrayal, not realizing that the Kitsu was in league with Sozui.

The armorer is a capable combatant, and the most loyal of servants. The players can expect the highest level of respect and courage from their new companion. His quest will ensure that he is there until the very end, not swaying in his devotion until the adventure is over and the Scorpion instigator is finished.

The Task At Hand

The end of Act Two is less abrupt than that of Act One, and the players now have more information about the Legacy and how to stop it. There is still much to do, however. The characters must travel across the Plains of Battle (where battles between the Lion and the Crane have started cropping up, possibly fueled by the Legacy spirits) and acquire Jikai's experimental ritual. From there, the task becomes finding the Legacy and performing the rite, ending the threat for now.

But there are still several handicaps the characters must contend with. Most within the Empire do not even believe that there is a supernatural danger loose among them, let alone one of the Legacy's magnitude. Even shugenja, who are trained to see spirits in everyday life, find the concept of Toshigoku alien and unconvincing. Only the small number who have been directly exposed to the threat (or have been persuaded by the evidence the PCs carry) are willing to aid in the quest.

For their part, those at Shiro Sano Ken Hayai do what they can. Word is sent to Otsan Uchi and Imperial representatives, warning of the danger and urging them to provide assistance to the player's mission in any way possible. The Kitsu shugenja summon a powerful Oni to safeguard the ritual scroll, just in case.

THE JUNSHI

Finally, there is the matter of the mirror, and Arasou's wish that the characters give it to Matsu Tsuko. Should they honor his request before leaving Shiro Sano Ken Hayai, Tsuko refuses it twice, per Rokugani custom, then indifferently glances into its depths. She tells no one what she sees upon its surface, retiring to her chambers for the evening before responding to the PCs' gift.



MATSU SHIMESU (CONTINUED)

Background: When very young, Matsu Shimesu was kidnapped by the Scorpion. The deceivers' true target was Sozui (see page 58), a young Kakita girl promised in trade for Shimesu to cement relations between the clan families. The Scorpion kidnappers had no need for him, other than to balance Sozui's abduction, and to incite conflict between the children's families; he was simply a tool.

He was given a heimin family in the Crab lands, to spend his life as a commoner. As soon as he was able, Shimesu ran away, heading for his homeland, where he would reveal the Scorpion plot and rejoin his family. But the Matsu were not pleased with his survival. They warned him to leave, or he would be killed. The family could never acknowledge his life again, or risk being blamed for Sozui's disappearance, which would greatly shame their house. Thus, Shimesu learned the true sharpness of Scorpion forethought, and how to hate them.

Matsu Shimesu has made it his mission to track down the Scorpion instigator named Bayushi Sozui, whom he blames for his misfortune, and kill her. Only then, he reasons, can he himself make the three cuts, ending his misguided existence. She is his obsession, the sole reason for him to continue.

SOZUI AND GODEN

As of the end of this Act, Kitsu Goden is no longer welcome in civilized Lion lands. He is a traitor and has stained the honor of the Kitsu family by misusing his position with their ancestors. From here until the end of the adventure, he remains with Bayushi Sozui, acting as a liaison for, and servant of, the Scorpion Clan.

Together, they leave Shiro Sano Ken Hayai and set out upon the Plains of Battle in search of the outpost where the ritual scroll is hidden. They know that the place is protected by an Oni, and use the extensive presence of the Living Shadow to help in the endeavor.

Their search happens "off-camera", as it were, while the player characters recover from their harrowing experience within Meido and prepare for the trip across the Plains of Battle to obtain the ritual scroll. During this time, the players may request the help of their lords and consult various resources (Allies, Sensei, and the like), as they wish.

In the morning, Tsuko will appear a little less consumed, her comportment slightly more positive than before. She offers the party the services of the junshi whose courageous actions provided an entrance into Toshi Ranbo during Act One. These soldiers are all that can be spared at this time, given the strained state of affairs across the Lion Plains of Battle and continuing pressure at the Crane borders.

For the remainder of the adventure, these men and women (augmented by a small complement of Lion soldiers from the training grounds) serve the PCs dutifully, seeing in their new commanders both a means for their own honorable redemption and to avenge the death of their own lord. In game terms, they will provide the players with an opportunity to take charge of a small unit of soldiers on the field of battle, so they may understand the other side of war. They have already been soldiers. Now it is their turn to be generals.





THE CRAZED ONI

EARTH: 3 [5]
Stamina 7
WATER: 4 [5]
Strength 6
FIRE: 4 [5]
Agility 5
AIR: 5 [5]
Rolls When Attacking: 8k4
Rolls For Damage: 10k2
TN to be Hit: 25
Armor: 6
Wounds Per Level: 20: -1;
40: -3; 80: Dead

Clan War Statistics

TN: 7
W: 5
ATT: +2
DAM: +2
#S: 1

• Causes Fear (see the *Clan War Rulebook*, page 66).

Fear 4: This Oni does not attack to kill (see below). Its intent is to punish the defender, stripping them of their conscious resistance and reducing them to their barest essentials before passing on from Jigoku.

(Fear description continued on next page)



Act Three: Across the Plains of Battle

"Wherever there is light, there must also be shadow."

– Bayushi Sozui

This largely-scripted Act challenges the PCs upon the Plains of Battle, and documents their acquisition of the ritual scroll needed to end the Legacy's threat. Overland travel from the Castle of the Swift Sword to the outpost where the scroll is hidden is not detailed; GMs who wish to stage additional Scenes during this period may do so without affecting the overall plot structure of the adventure.

The Plains of Battle

The Plains of Battle are a rich and fertile region that has been controlled by the Lion for many centuries. The extensive tracks of flat land are perfect for training armies, though much of the Empire relies upon its rice yield each year to survive. The Lion have always been challenged by these twin purposes for the land, knowing that a time would come when one of the two would take precedence. That time may have arrived.

After their brief presence at the Battle of Toshi Ranbo in Act One (now being referred to as The Forgotten Tide), the Legacy spirits were not seen or felt for many days. Their *de facto* leader, Kakita Tobasu, has continued his eternal struggle with the Lion at the border with the Crane, possessing military forces and sparking conflicts, then withdrawing for a time. Eventually, the fighting spilled out into the Plains of Battle, the most likely target for Crane aggressions, and war erupted.

The PCs find the Plains of Battle an embittered place to be, where the Legacy has taken hold and the rules of warfare have changed. Stories of dishonorable battle frenzy, fever-induced madness, and entire villages drawn into the Lion-Crane struggle are told at every waystation, and travelers are warned that they pass into the heart of the Plains at their own risk. The forces of Shiro



Akodo and surrounding fortresses are strained by the unexpected attacks, and will be unable to assist them in their journey.

THE OUTPOSTS

Across the Plains of Battle can be found many small forts – most little more than small bunkers built between the endless rice paddies. There are a few, however, which are larger. Called *hirajiro*, these bulwarks guard against sudden or unexpected incursions of enemy forces upon the highly-valued Plains of Battle. They are staffed by a small complement of Lion soldiers, occasionally with the assistance of Imperial Magistrates or ashigaru drawn from the many hinin villages within the area.

Most *hirajiro* take advantage of natural surroundings to enhance their defensive capability. They have walls of clay plaster on a reed background, enclosing watch-towers, armories and training spaces, and domestic rooms. They are very flammable, most having little or no stone in their construction, which allows their garrisons to leave nothing behind should they be forced to retreat.

Currently, the Crane armies have begun taking the outposts closest to their borders under cover of night. They are hiding forces within, preparing to occupy the lands around them, and to stage a major offensive into Lion-held territories. This presents the greatest threat to the Lion's ownership of these lands in over four hundred years.

Getting There

The trip from the Castle of the Swift Sword to the *hirajiro* where the ritual scroll is hidden takes from three to five days for player characters on horseback. There is only one planned event during the PCs' travel from the Castle of the Swift Sword to the *hirajiro* where the ritual scroll is hidden. At some point during the final night of their journey, read the following:

The night air is calming as you march through acres of unbroken blue. Moonlight reflected from the endless rice paddies around you only enhances the beauty of the scene, and you find yourself lulled into a dreamy mind by the rhythmic swaying of the horses beneath you. The hooves of your mounts have been padded, and

you travel without torches, in an effort to avoid the sporadic fighting here in the Plains of Battle.

Moments later, the idyllic setting is shattered by a sepulchral howl rising up to the heavens from somewhere ahead of you. The ground rattles, sending countless ripples through the submerged harvest pools. The sky is filled with to overflowing by the mournful creature's bellow, and the world around you suddenly recoils and withers, drawing back upon itself in response to the awful pain it must be suffering.

As the last mewlings fail, you find yourself frozen, and wonder at the terrible sound. It could not have been human, yet its agony was so clear that you could nearly sympathize...

The sound came from Oni no Giama, summoned by the Kitsu shugenja to protect the ritual scroll until the PCs' arrival. It has been attacked by Bayushi Sozui (and, more importantly, the Living Shadow branded upon it). When Sozui and Goden found the *hirajiro*, they tried to take the scroll, but Oni no Giama intervened, and a ferocious magical skirmish ensued. Though the Oni was able to force the instigator and her associate back, it paid a terrible price in the process; the Living Shadow brutally lashed out at the creature, stealing its name away.

Oni that are able to acquire the names of the shugenja who summon them are free to travel Rokugan as they please, no longer bound as Emma-O's servants in Jigoku. These names are values above all else by these beasts, and to lose one is considered the greatest possible injury.

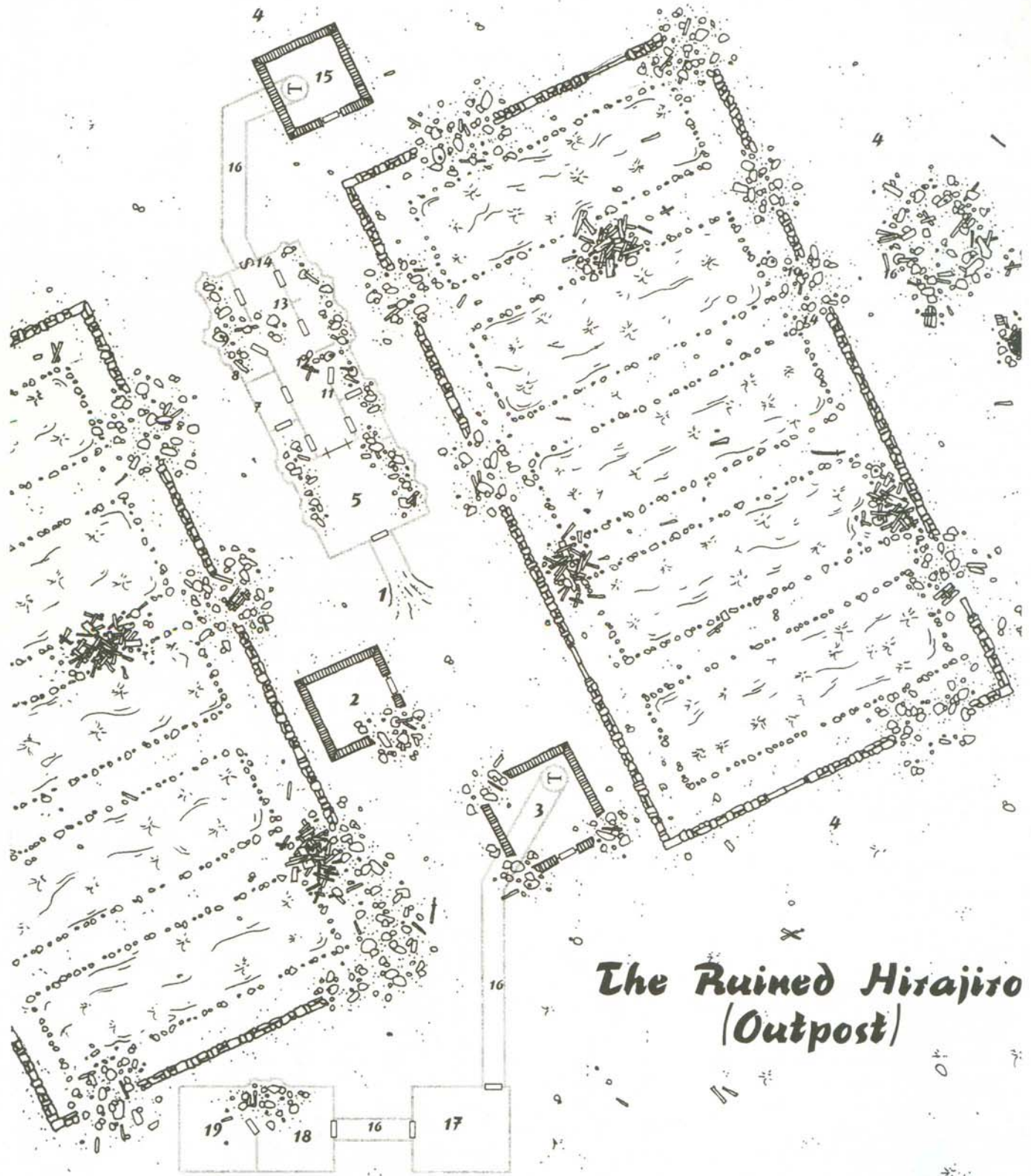
The scroll remains safe – for now, still safeguarded by the Oni, who is bound by his "contract" with the shugenja of the Castle of the Swift Sword. But it grows weaker (and less sane) by the hour; the PCs are running out of time.

The Ruined Hirajiro (Outpost)

The *hirajiro* where Tankenka hid the ritual scroll is one of the best-built among those upon the Heigen no Otaku. Most of its structure is below ground level, and the buildings visible above are mainly constructed of stone and mortar. But in recent days the Crane have attacked, slaughtering the entire defending Lion force. All but a few of the Crane were killed as well, their

THE CRAZED ONI (CONTINUED)

Whenever it succeeds with an attack, its becomes whatever the target fears most. The defender must immediately make a Willpower roll against a TN of 40 (double the creature's normal Fear Rating). Success shakes off the Oni's mental assault, but the wounded person takes the full effects of the physical attack. Failure reduces the physical damage to the minimum rolled with the Oni's Damage dice (i.e. it keeps only the lowest two dice rolled), but the target must also choose one Ranked item (Trait, Skill, Glory, Honor, etc.), that is reduced by one Rank – permanently. (This is what the Oni did in Jigoku to prepare spirits for their next life, effectively "deconstructing" them and leaving nothing but their core essence to pass on). Finally, any characters that fail this augmented Fear Test also suffer the standard side effects (cannot use Void Points against the Oni, and must drop dice lower than the Fear Rating when combating it).



The Ruined Hirajiro (Outpost)

RUINED OUTPOST LOCATION DESCRIPTIONS

- 1. Outpost Entrance:** This sloping corridor-trench cuts into the ground, leading from the servants' home into the eastern compound. It has remained intact, though the door at its end remains barred from within.
- 2. Servants' Home:** Only a small part of this building was damaged, and that possibly by accident. The servants had nothing of value, and inquiry into the building will reveal that they were killed *after* the initial attack was over.
- 3. Hetman's House:** Although this building was damaged quite extensively during the attack, the trapdoor leading down into location #16 remains intact (and hidden). The hetman of the "village" here died defending the stables (#4), and his body can be found within the piles near that location.
- 4. Stables:** This area has been completely obliterated – first by tetsubo and other blunt instruments, and then by fire. Stacks of bodies lie where they fell defending the compound's precious steeds, all of them grey-blue with postmortem age.
- 5. Underground Outpost:** The sole watchtower for this site has collapsed into the entrance to the eastern compound, forming an awkward burial pile for the many killed when it fell. The room below – what can still be made out – is a command center, and contains several weapons (mostly peasant-class, with one katana), and several maps of the outlying areas hung (now precariously) on the walls.
- 6. Outpost Corridor:** This long, low hallway is the heart of the eastern compound; eight doors are spaced regularly along the right- and left-hand walls, leading to other sections. Near its center, the corridor is difficult to traverse due to debris from the ceiling having collapsed in several locations, and it appears to the naked eye that several more are about to follow (this is an inaccurate assessment).
- 7. Barracks:** The western wall and most of the ceiling of this room have fallen in, covering the majority of the floor with debris. Nothing of value can be found by digging, though the personal effects of several samurai may be interesting to the players.
- 8. Training Room:** This is the only room within the eastern compound that survived the attack intact. Within can be found several tatami and training mats, weapons racks (with only a few swords, pole-arms, and bows left), and the body of the sole surviving samurai of the attack, who committed seppuku after he "failed in his mission to protect the *hirajiro*." His blood stains a copy of Akodo's *Leadership*, open to a sentiment on loyalty (see *The Way of the Lion*, page 29).
- 9. Food Storage:** There is still enough "preserved" food here to support the PCs' group for up to another three or four days, though much of the stored water has been ruined (and it is unknown whether the local wells remain fresh after the attack).
- 10. Toilet.**
- 11. Barracks:** Another barracks, just as damaged as location #7.
- 12. Destroyed by Fire:** This room's original function is lost, having been fired (possibly from within).
- 13. Armory:** This room has been looted by the Crane prior to their retreat. Nothing of important remains.
- 14. Bath Chamber:** The bloated body of a man who died in the initial minutes of the attack lies face down in the rancid waters of the tub here. His form is scarcely recognizable as human any longer. The method of death seems to have been an arrow through the nape of the neck.
- 15. Temple:** The Crane are a religious clan, moreso than most, and ignored this building completely in their assault. Its contents (including the trapdoor leading to the eastern compound) remain in their original locations, though it appears that someone has searched the room after the attack. (This was the work of the Oni, currently located at #19, who has stolen one of the idols from the temple).
- 16. Secret Underground Passage:** These subterranean tunnels connect the two compounds to the surface through trapdoors (hidden before the attack), and the western compound rooms together. There is nothing special about them.
- 17. Secret Equipment and Food Storage:** The only room in the western compound to have survived the attack unscathed, this place is filled with supplies necessary during a siege or prolonged battle. The shredded body of a hinin lies upon several of the boxes (he was attacked by the mad Oni after taking refuge within the compound). His blood is still fresh, and originates from the northern passage (#16 in the direction of #18).
- 18. Secret Armory:** This room is filled with weapons and armor intended to resupply troops on long field operations across the Plains of Battle. The northeastern corner of the room has collapsed in, revealing another chamber beyond (#19). From within, the sound of irregular breathing and a low murmur can be heard.
- 19. Oni Lair / Scroll Room:** When the PCs enter this area, refer to *The Crazy Oni* (page 44).
- 20. Ritual Pyre:** Prior to the attack, this is where bodies of the dead were committed to the flames.
- 21. Peasant Huts:** These locations housed the *heimin* and *hinin* workers who supported the surrounding farmlands. If any of the peasants were spared in the attack, they are not present during this Act.



THE HONORABLE THING TO DO

Players may find it difficult to reconcile the deaths of the Crane soldiers.

After all, being under the influence of the Legacy, they are not in their right minds.

If circumstances were different, they might simply give up the outpost and move on, knowing that the Lion armies would eventually challenge them for the territory.

Unfortunately, the reality is that the characters must sacrifice the Crane if they wish to survive and continue with their quest to end the suffering of the toshi.

At its core, the *Legend of the Five Rings* setting demands this kind of challenge. Samurai are constantly asked to choose between duty and conscience, loyalty and life.

Gamemasters should be unrelenting in their presentation of such dilemmas. Ultimately, they are what defines good player character samurai from great player character samurai.

Characters should not suffer Honor loss in this decision; the choice alone is penalty enough.

bodies littering the Plains beside those of their enemy, and the remainder have withdrawn, shortly to return with reinforcements.

Upon their arrival at the outpost, read the following to the players:

Originally, the outpost that Matsu Shimesu has led you to was well-fortified, most of the buildings made from stone or heavy wood. But most of the structures have since been reduced to rubble, the site apparently overrun by Crane forces. Both armies took enormous losses, bodies strewn across the surrounding fields as far as the eye can see. The casualties are especially heavy within the compound's perimeter, where they are stacked two deep in places.

Only three buildings remain standing, those belonging to the servants and hetman, and a small temple, which looks to have been completely spared the ravages of the attack. The rest have toppled or burned to the ground. In a few places, the ground has collapsed under the weight of cavalry charges, revealing subterranean chambers that have been ransacked and partially fired. The destruction, it seems, is near complete.

Shimesu knows where the ritual scroll was hidden (location #19, a former storeroom), and can lead the party there easily. They can either pass through the trapdoor within the hetman's home and make their way through the western compound, or drop through the collapsed ceiling above location #19 and enter the storeroom directly. Either way, refer to *The Crazy Oni* (page 42) when they arrive.

Otherwise, they may search the area as they wish. Use the following key to determine what they find in each location. The next event will not occur until they find the Oni, though the Gamemaster is encouraged to allude that this is not the case; describe "tricks of the light" at the horizon that may have been hidden scouts, or an approaching army, have the players hear disconcerting sounds out upon the plains, etc.

The Crazy Oni

Within the northernmost chamber of the western compound (#19) rests the ritual scroll the characters have been charged with procuring. Matsu Shimesu can point the location out to the PCs. When he was last here, the room was

accessible only through a secret portal from the hidden armory (#18), but part of its ceiling has collapsed during the recent Crane attack. If the PCs wish, they may enter through the rubble on the surface, though this will require that they crawl into the chamber on their bellies.

When the characters enter the chamber, read the following:

A faint radiance illuminates the armory from beyond the rubble of its northern wall. Its source is close and low to the ground, reflecting the sunlight streaming through the collapsed ceiling. As you near the opening, you find that one of the idols from the temple has been carefully placed to catch the light, intensifying it throughout the northern chamber, a crystal image of Amaterasu, the Lady Sun.

You have little time to consider this, however, before a seething voice is heard from within the crystal's light. "Do you know why names have so much power?" it asks. "It is because there are only so many of them..."

Oni no Giama stole the figurine when Sozui attacked. The Living Darkness was, at first, too much for the beast to counter, and it retreated with the scroll across the outpost grounds, finally arriving at the temple. Its name already taken, the Oni was sure that it would be overwhelmed, and fled simply out of instinct. But as a stream of torch light through the crystal statue touched Sozui's Shadow Brands, she recoiled.

The Oni used the image of Amaterasu – something it would normally have found detestable – to keep Sozui at bay, and eventually forced her from the outpost. The Oni then placed the idol at mouth of the room where it was bound to keep the scroll safe, knowing that as long as its light remained, Sozui and her hated brands could do it no more harm.

The Oni is now very protective of the statue. It will not allow any others to touch or move the piece, defending it at all costs. The creature has lost more than its name; it has lost its mind, believing that the Darkness is a punishment, sent by Emma-O, its mistress in Jigoku. It believes that the Fortune of Death is displeased with the Oni's subjugation by humanity, and is trying to destroy it. This idea is further supported by the crystal image of the Sun Goddess, which the Oni takes to mean that it has somehow gained the protection of Amaterasu herself.

The player characters must convince the Oni that they are legitimate in their claim to the scroll without inciting its anger. This can only be accomplished through careful negotiations with the monster, something most PCs may find counter-intuitive. It has embraced the comforting grace of Lady Sun, whom it believes is the only force to turn to now that its natural mistress has abandoned it.

Gamemasters should play up this monster's newfound devotion to the light. Through the rest of this Act (and possibly to the end of the adventure, if the characters treat it kindly), the Oni provides a unique opportunity to present an Oni as something less than a slaving monster from the bowels of Jigoku. Ideally, the players may even come to feel pity for the Oni, which sacrificed its own freedom for the sake of their cause.

Care must be taken near the Oni, however. Scorpion player characters with Shadow Brands of their own will be attacked on sight. The Oni looks at all things comprised of darkness as enemies now, and will strike out decisively at them, without regard for itself. Characters who have become part of the Legacy will not suffer this fate, however, not having any of the innate trappings of the Living Shadow.

Attacking the Oni will mean death for the entire group, as it has the strength of several samurai and is driven purely by fear at this point. Other than this eventuality, however, this Scene entails little threat for the PCs. As soon as they are able to acquire the scroll from the Oni, much larger problems than a slightly deranged Oni will present themselves (see the next Scene for more).

The Crane Arrive

When tensions with the Oni have calmed (and preferably after the guardian has given the scroll to the PCs), the sound of approaching cavalry will be heard outside. The party will be informed by a member of their junshi guard that the advancing troops are Crane. When the characters come to the surface, read the following aloud:

The commander of the Crane forces is unknown to you. He draws his horse up within charging distance from the posted junshi guard, and announces himself. "I am Doji Masihine, Chui of the Crane armies and decorated soldier of

the Battle of the Humble Turtle! It was my cunning that felled this outpost, and I demand that we be allowed to occupy it!"

The condition of his troops supports his assertion, though his words betray his inexperience as a field commander. Considering his obvious deficiency as a leader and the weakened state of his forces, you might be able to defend the *hirajiro*, though he has the advantage in strength of numbers.

Give the players a chance to split up their troops as they wish (there are 40 junshi/Lion soldiers under their command) before conducting the Scene. These placements will become important as the Scene progresses. A wet-erase mat or enlargement of the map provided with this adventure will be helpful for these purposes.

From this point, the Act quickly degenerates into open conflict. It is possible for the characters to persuade Masihine to stand down if they





MATSU GOHEI

EARTH: 5 [5]

WATER: 4 [5]

Strength 6

FIRE: 4 [5]

Agility 6

AIR: 4 [4]

VOID: 3 [3]

Skills: Archery 3, Athletics 4, Bard 4, *Battle* 4, Hand-to-Hand 4, Heraldry 3, History 3, *Horsemanship* 3, *Jaijutsu* 3 [2], Intimidation 4, Kenjutsu 5, Lance 3, *Leadership* 3, Lore: Ancestors 2, Lore: Bushido 4, Lore: Military Tactics 3, Oratory 3, Shintao 3

Honor: 3.9

Glory: 6.3

School: Matsu Rank 5

Advantages: Daredevil, Irreproachable

Disadvantages: Bad Reputation (Bragging), Brash, Proud

Weapon: Katana 3k2

Armor: Heavy

Clan War Statistics

TN: 8

W: 5

ATT: +2

DAM: +2

#S: 2

Background: See *Clan War: The Clans*, page 34 or the *Lion Clan Expansion*, page 36

relinquish the outpost to him, but there are other forces at work here. Kakita Tobasu and the Legacy – at the behest of their new ally, Bayushi Sozui – will invade the bodies of the Crane at the first sign of a peaceful resolution to the standoff. From that point, the Scene will become a mass combat skirmish, adjudicated by the standard rules for such battles (page 114 of the *L5R RPG*).

The main difference between the battle at Toshi Ranbo and this one is the fact that the characters are in a position of leadership here. Their ability to command the junshi troops on the field of battle takes precedence over survival on a personal scale (as in Act One). Gamemasters should strive to present this Scene from this perspective whenever possible, urging the characters to take a detached role in the active combat sequences to provide authority for their soldiers.

If Gamemasters are concerned that this approach will spoil the “first-hand” appeal of the L5R Battle system, they are encouraged to allow the players to take the role of one of the junshi in addition to their own character. This allows them to experience the battle from both views. PCs with the Leadership Advantage may allocate their Skills to the junshi they command, within the standard limits.

THE NUMBERS

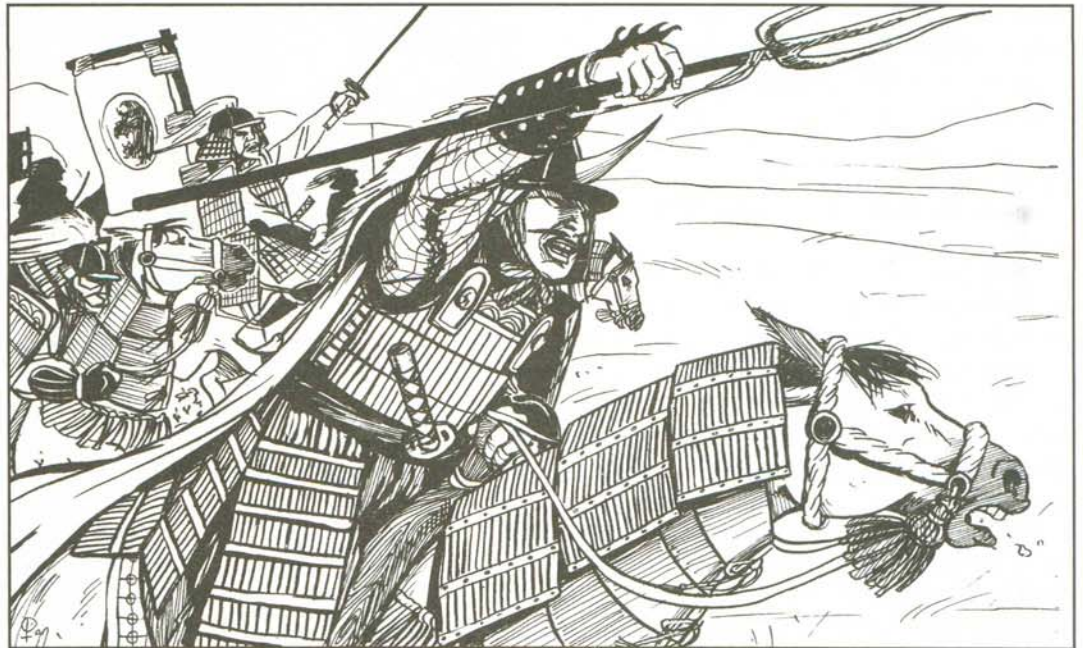
The PCs should already know how many *junshi* each of them commands, and where they are located on the field. They are facing 80 Crane soldiers, led by four gunso beneath Doji Masihine. Each of these gunso leads a *guntai* of 20 men, which they will move to outflank the PCs’ forces, and overpower them. The Crane are weak from previous battles upon the plains (currently at a -1 modifier; *RPG* or *Clan War*), and they know that they will have to take the outpost quickly, or not at all. With the power of the Legacy coursing through them, however, and outnumbering the PCs’ forces two to one, they have a significant advantage.

One important resource the PCs have access to (depending on their actions during the previous Scene) is the Oni guardian. If the PCs are able to convince the Oni that the Crane are allied with the Living Shadow or Emma-O, or that they pose an immediate threat to its safety, they will have its support in the battle as well.

Tobasu/Masihine will focus his attention on the nearest skirmish. If two are equidistant, he will gravitate toward the one with the most samurai.

THE MECHANICS

The battle will progress according to the sidebar on page 114 of the *L5R RPG*. Each PC commanding a unit of *junshi* rolls his Perception



+ Battle against that of the gunso opposing him. If more than one gunso opposes him (or somehow more than one PC unit gangs up on a gunso's forces), their roll is modified according to the rules for Working Together (page 103 of the *L5R RPG*).

An even outcome in any battle results in the loss of 1 die of samurai from each force in the battle, plus a number equal to the opposing commander's Battle Skill or Intelligence, whichever is lower. Note that a roll of ten with this die means ten casualties; the die is *not* rerolled.

If either side is clearly successful, however, the results are far more damaging. The commander of the winning force rolls a number of dice equal to his Battle Skill or Intelligence, whichever is lower, keeping *the highest two among them*. In this case, any 10s are rerolled. The result is the number of troops lost by the enemy. Friendly losses are determined by the formula for even outcomes (1 die, plus the losing commander's Battle Skill or Intelligence, whichever is lower).

In both cases, these losses may be distributed among the troops of each side as the PC and GM desire.

If the PCs are able to draw the Oni into the fray, it adds a die of casualties to the enemies opposing the unit it is attached to, regardless of who wins the Round.

As explained in the sidebars on pages 38-39, *Clan War – the Legend of the Five Rings* tabletop wargame – is very useful in scenes like this. Not only will the miniatures provide excellent reference throughout, but the players will feel more immersed in the setting by physically seeing it for themselves. Also, the RPG was not designed to support combat of this scale, and so results must always be arbitrary to some degree. *Clan War* can relieve the GM of this responsibility, putting the fates of the PCs' forces in the hands of a system designed expressly to determine them.

LION REINFORCEMENTS

The party will likely assume that they must somehow overcome the Crane to survive. They may even commit themselves to ending their lives in this battle, according to the tenets of honorable warfare dictated in the Code of Bushido. But this is not the case. After three Battle Rounds (or fewer if the PCs are doing very badly), a small Lion force arrives:

The battle at the outpost has continued for almost an hour when a cloud upon the horizon signals the arrival of new forces. The sashimono among them – unclear until they are nearly upon you – is golden with brilliant yellow-red lacing. They are Lion! And spearheading their charge is the famed Matsu Gohei, his defiant call to arms cleaving a path before him as the mythical blade of Akodo himself.

Unperturbed, the Crane push forward once again, the spirits of Toshigoku guiding their offensive.

Gohei commands the remainder of a daibutai (currently 60 samurai), all of which are cavalry. This number can be adjusted according to the needs of the Scene, of course – Gamemasters should carefully judge a number that will still provide for a challenge when facing the remaining Crane troops. From here, the battle continues as in the last Scene, until one force or another prevails.

Ending the Act

When the fighting is over, the characters have a chance to resume their quest. Jikai's notes indicate that the spirits from Toshigoku can be relieved of their suffering and returned to their proper place in the Celestial Wheel through the invocation of a ritual he has outlined. There are two conditions which must be met for the ritual to succeed, however:

- The ritual must take place during a “battle of epic proportions.”
- Someone must sacrifice themselves in honor of the tortured dead, and volunteer to lead them through the spiritual plane of Meido, using the ritual scroll as a map.

The scroll does not specify where the ritual must take place, other than the fact that it must be the site of a major battle. Gohei can offer Shiro no Yojin as the perfect opportunity. He has been recalled there with his forces by Akodo Toturi, who is sure that the castle will be the focus of the next major Crane border offensive. Shiro no Yojin is the closest fortress to the characters' position, and is one of the likeliest targets along the western Lion-Crane border.

DOJI MASHIME

EARTH: 4 [4]
 WATER: 4 [4]
 FIRE: 4 [4]
 AIR: 4 [4]
 VOID: 4 [4]

Skills: Acting 3, Archery 4, Athletics 4, *Battle* 4, Calligraphy 2, Courtier 1, *Defense* 3, Etiquette 4, Hand-to-Hand 3, Heraldry 2, *Horsemanship* 2, *Iaijutsu* 4, *Kenjutsu* 4, *Leadership* 3, Manipulation 3, Oratory 3, Rhetoric 2, Shintao 4, *Siege* 3, Sincerity 3, War Fan 2

Honor: 3.4

Glory: 4.1

School: Daidoji Rank 4

Advantages: Different School (Daidoji Bushi)

Disadvantages: Idealistic

Weapon: Katana 3k2

Armor: Heavy

Clan War Statistics

TN: 8
 W: 4
 ATT: +1
 DAM: +1
 #S: 2

Background: Doji Masihime is an inspiration upon the field of battle. He fights with a fever born of his love for Bushido and his clan, harboring no ill feelings for his enemies. Ironically, his greatest asset against Gohei during Act Three might be his intrinsic ability to undermine an opponent's resolve and direct their anger (both of which Gohei has in abundance), but Masihime's integrity remains an obstacle.



KAKITA GENSA

EARTH: 3 [3]

WATER: 3 [3]

FIRE: 3 [4]

Agility 4

AIR: 3 [4]

Reflexes 4

VOID: 2 [2]

Skills: Archery 4, Athletics 2, Bard 2, *Battle* 2, Defense 3, Etiquette 3, Heraldry 2, Horse Archery 3, *Horsemanship* 4, *Iaijutsu* 3, Kenjutsu 3, Law 2, Leadership 1, Shintao 3, Siege 1, Sincerity 3, Tea Ceremony 4, War Fan 2

Honor: 3.1

Glory: 2.3

School: Kakita Rank 3

Advantages: Cadence

Disadvantages: Driven (to gain glory as a warrior)

Weapon: Katana 3k2

Armor: Heavy

Clan War Statistics

TN: 8

W: 3

ATT: +1/+1

DAM: +1/+1

#S: 1

Background: Kakita Gensa's ultimate goal is to obtain a position of command within the Crane military by virtue of his skill alone, to prove to his family that he is nothing like his foppish father (a Kakita Jester). He has done well for himself at the Duelist Academy and in minor skirmishes so far, and is convinced that the current aggressions with the Lion Clan are his opportunity.

Act Four: Shiro no Yojin

"Perhaps, from Shiro no Yojin, a lesson can be drawn, if only in blood. For there is no example so moving as that of loss, of death. The echoes of Shiro no Yojin's tragedy may yet prove to ring true for our sons and daughters to come."

– Kitsu Jikai

The final Act of this adventure should proceed quickly from start to finish, in keeping with the rapid acceleration of the scenario so far. The Legacy is – through Bayushi Sozui – a servant of the Scorpion and the Living Darkness now, and the *toshi*, intoxicated with the thrill of warfare they have experienced since their release, are gaining recruits by the hour. If the PCs do not succeed here, it may no longer be possible for the Legacy to be stopped, placing the entire Empire in danger.

Shiro no Yojin, the setting for this Act, is an extremely important location in the war effort. Currently in the hands of the Lion, the castle was built under the authority of the Crane. Beyond the enmity generated during the Night of Falling Stars (see *The Way of the Crane*, page 46 and *The Way of the Lion*, page 108-109), the Crane recognize the value of controlling the fortress. Given the current boundaries of the two clans, if the Crane manage to secure Shiro no Yojin, they will have a permanent foothold upon the Plains of Battle. This would break the Lion defensive line that has plagued their strategists for centuries, aid all their other border skirmishes, and increase the effect of their war efforts on all fronts.

ENEMIES IN OUR MIDST

During a moment of calm between Crane attacks, and some hours before the arrival of the PCs, Bayushi Sozui and Kitsu Goden arrive at the castle with a small entourage of ninja disguised as yojimbo. They, too, recognize the importance of the location, and intend to release the Legacy upon the Lion with the next attack. As word has not yet arrived at the border of Goden's treachery, it is easy enough for the two to disguise their arrival as that of a Lion entourage (a Kitsu Sodan-Senzo and his Akodo bodyguard).

They claim to have been sent to aid the struggling defenders, who have become hard-pressed to stave off the incessant assaults of the enemy. Goden promises to seek the counsel, advice, and guidance of the ancestors, and to report his findings to the Rikugunshokan of the castle as soon as he has completed his consult. The two retire to private chambers (#20) immediately thereafter, not to be seen again until after the PCs' arrival.

Shiro no Yojin

Since The Swordsman's Last Stand, Shiro no Yojin has belonged to the Lion. It is a far smaller fortification than Toshi Ranbo, for instance, are far less easily defended. The Matsu have long prepared for the castle to be attacked by the Crane, and have adapted great portions of it to their defenses. Still, there remain parts of the castle that they dare not enter, for fear that the ghosts all know to exist within should catch them. The uppermost levels are most avoided, as this is where most of the families that plummeted to their deaths on the Night of Falling Stars lived, where they watched as the Lion armies approached, and where they leapt to their deaths from when it was obvious the castle would not stand as Crane.

The closest major military assistance Shiro no Yojin can count upon is that of Shiro Akodo (#52 on the Rokugan map), where Toturi commands the Lion armies from. Though Shiro Akodo is better fortified and has a much larger complement of soldiers at its disposal, it is suffering from the same heavy border fighting as Shiro no Yojin, and is in no position to offer aid. For the time being, the Lion troops at Shiro no Yojin are on their own.

Arrival

Read the following when the PCs arrive at Shiro no Yojin:

As you close on Shiro no Yojin, you can see that the castle is preparing for another attack. A division of Crane soldiers are marching from the east, drawing their footmen close together for the uphill battle toward the fortress, while fanning their archers out to either side to aid in the effort. The Lion are bracing for the assault, gathering troops at the mouth of the downward slope and staffing their watchtowers with their best bowmen. At least a hundred men are committed on either side; the battle promises to be impressive.

The Lion general in charge of the castle, a tall man with a bald pate and long, thin mustache bars, draws his horse up among the soldiers at the slope. Barking orders to the assembled samurai, he sits high in his saddle, observing the Crane army's precision with a combination of respect and envy.

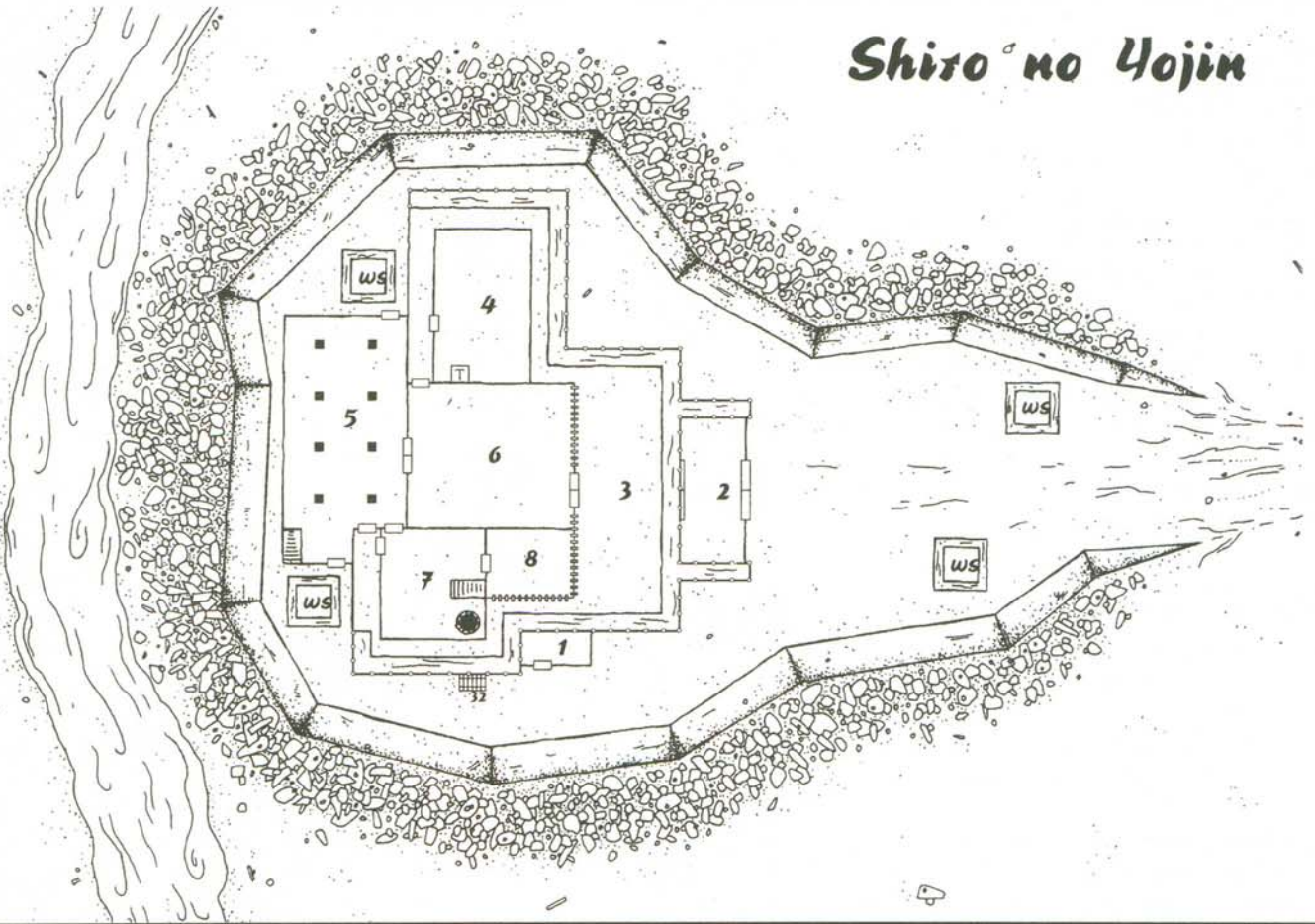
Suddenly, he slumps forward and topples from his mount, disappearing within a crowd of footmen. Recoiling, the samurai break formation, unsure of what to do next, and their cohesive defense is lost. Confusion sweeps through the outer ranks as two captains step forward near the fallen general's body and face one another.

Perceptive characters (those who ask about the cause of the general's fall), should be allowed a Perception check (TN 15). Success indicates that they caught a glimpse of an arrow extending from his neck as he collapsed. Further probing (asking where the arrow came from) requires another check, this time with Perception + Archery (TN 20). Success results in the character having a fairly good idea where the missile was shot from (the balcony on level 6 of Shiro no Yojin).

The two Lion captains stand to either side of the fallen general. Their faces are dour, and they draw their swords. Crowded Lion forces around them back away as they begin screaming at one another. There is a moment where you are sure that the scene will come to violence before you realize that they are testing one another, trying to decide who should command the army in their general's stead.



Shiro no Yojin



SHIRO NO YOJIN LOCATION DESCRIPTIONS

1. War Offices: Made of bamboo and plaster, this temporary building moves about per the needs of the command structure.

2. Inner Gateway: This is the second line of defense for the castle (after the bottleneck formed at the end of Fierce Road). Lion archers line the ramparts surrounding this area, and can fire down upon intruders from three sides at once.

3. Courtyard: During times of peace, this area is a practice ground, but today it has been readied for the expected assault. Long lines of obstacles have been erected across this area, so that invading forces will be slowed long enough for the archers to fire upon them from the upper walkway.

4. Barracks: Additional housing has been allocated on the higher levels to accommodate Lion reinforcements.

5. Stables: The only staircase leading to the second level is located here (so attackers must fight through the lower level).

6. Inner Gateway: This is the last line of defense before invaders can begin occupying parts of the castle. This area, too, has been filled with obstacles for cavalry and footmen.

7. Dining Hall: Isebo's current meeting area.

8. Kill Cell: These rooms offer views of critical locations through arrow slits and murder holes, allowing Lion archers and siege personnel to help maintain control of the castle.

9. Conservatory: Before the Lion occupation of the castle, this room was a favorite of Crane artisans. Daidoji Kimeiko – mother of Yorei – spent many nights, often until dawn, composing delicate music here. Early in their time at the castle, the Lion sealed off the room, claiming to hear phantom music from within. They boarded up the windows and buried the door behind packed dirt and a false wall to insulate the sound, but it is still heard occasionally, drifting through the halls.

10. Private Rooms: These are standard (sparse) Rokugani bed-chambers. The PCs will be offered one upon their arrival.

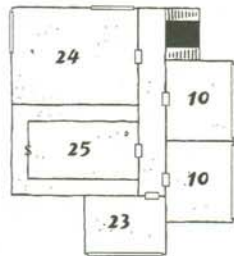
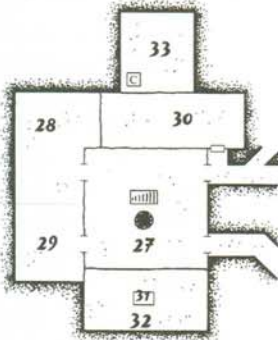
11. Kill Cell: The only function of these areas is to defend the castle, and help eliminate enemy invaders. This is an interior room, and has no arrow slits, though murder holes have been drilled into the floor. They are intended to defend the side passage on the first floor (leading into #6).

12. Ballroom: Once a grand spectacle meant for the finest court gatherings, this location has been completely abandoned.

13. Balcony: This is the point from which the Crane families leapt to their deaths during the infamous Night of Falling Stars. The fall is over seventy feet to the ground floor, and over one hundred to the rocks at the river's edge below.

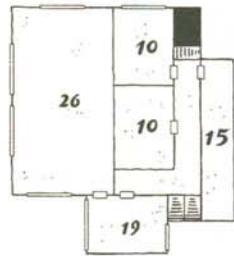
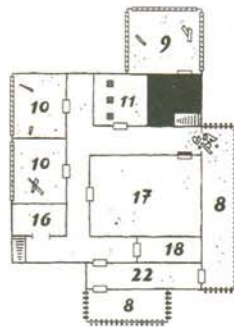
14. Sake Room: Adjacent to the magnificent ballroom, this was once used by influential diplomats when they desired privacy. It also lies empty now.

Labyrinth Level (-15')



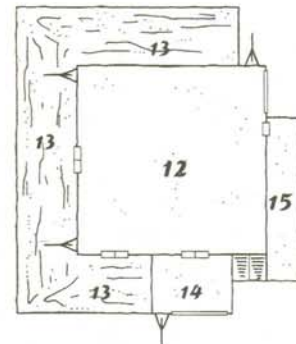
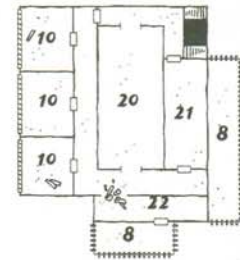
Level 4 (45')

Level 2 (20')



Level 5 (60')

Level 3 (30')



Level 6 (75')

15. Servants' Entrance: This hallway was built exclusively so that none would have to look upon the *heimin* and *hinin* attendants when they weren't working. An elaborate bell-and-pulley mechanism was included, so that the servants could be summoned from the ballroom by simply tugging on a long silk rope. The mechanism still works today.

16. Genkan (Entry/Storage): This is the repository for shoes and other visitor items.

17. Dignitary Chambers: The last inhabitant of this luxurious bedroom was Daidoji Kimeiko, but the room has remained empty since the Lion took control. A door to the west has been boarded up from the outside, and centuries-old tradition prescribes that those who pass by it utter a prayer to the Fortunes for their safety. The reasons for this are a mystery, lost with the Crane families who died here.

18. Garrison Office: This small chamber has become a small command center used by *gunso* and *taisa*.

19. Sozui's Room: With a superior view of the north and south walls of the castle, Sozui is able to stage her archery attack during *The Arrival* (see page 51) from here.

20. Poetry and Art Museum: Alcoves line the outer edges of this long hall, which once contained the finest examples of Crane artistry available. Sadly, the castle no longer requires aesthetic value, and everything that was not part of the structure itself has long since "vanished."

21. Armory: This is one of the few rooms within Shiro no Yojin that has retained its original function.

22. Samurai Passages: Shiro no Yojin has always been a military fortress, even when the Crane were hosting important diplomats and celebrations. The presence of the soldiers was underscored, however, by the use of these passages.

23. Guest Suite: Another bedchamber, styled after the castle's standard (see #10).

24. Library: When the Crane lost the castle, they left behind hundreds of scrolls, and even a few books. Most are of little practical value to the Lion.

25. Treasury: The central room here looks like a study, a series of carved wooden panels decorating the walls. One of these opens inward to reveal a secret hallway surrounding the first room. Characters who succeed with a Perception check (TN 25) may notice the discrepancy between the internal and external dimensions of the room.

26. Private Dojo: This area has been converted into a makeshift training room.

27. Kitchen.

28. Food Storage.

29. Servants' Chambers.

30. Equipment Storage.

31. Grate: The only entrance into the prison (#33).

32. Prison: The most reviled captives have always been held in the cells closest to the grating, where the sight of freedom was thought to increase their suffering.

33. Armory/Siege Storage: This room is only accessible through the barracks above (#4).

AKODO ISEBO

EARTH: 3 [4]

Stamina 4

WATER: 4 [4]

FIRE: 3 [4]

Agility 4

AIR: 3 [4]

Awareness 5

VOID: 3 [3]

Skills: Animal

Husbandry 2, Archery 3, Athletics 4, Bard 3, *Battle* 3, *Defense* 3, Etiquette 2, Hand-to-Hand 4, Heraldry 2, History 3, *Horsemanship* 3, *Jaijutsu* 3, Intimidation 1, Kenjutsu 3, *Leadership* 3, Lore: Ancestors 3, Medicine 2, Oratory 4, Shintao 4, Siege 3, Sincerity 2, Tetsubo 2, War Fan 2, Wrestling 4

Honor: 2.8

Glory: 3.2

School: Akodo Rank 4

Advantages: Inheritance (military post), Voice

Disadvantages: Gullible

Weapon: Katana 3k2

Armor: Heavy

Clan War Statistics

TN: 8

W: 4

ATT: +1

DAM: +1

#S: 2

Cresting the nearest ridge, the Crane attackers are taking full advantage of the Lion's momentary pause, and increase their march, picking up speed for a crushing assault. The Lion – too involved in the captains' chi-bout – are unprepared for the imminent offensive.

The characters arrive scant moments before the Crane strike occurs, and are close enough to have seen where the arrow came from. Any attempts to interrupt or resolve the bragging contest between the captains (though it may be effective for the purposes of defending the castle) will result in both NPCs disliking the characters (a potential setback through the rest of the Act).

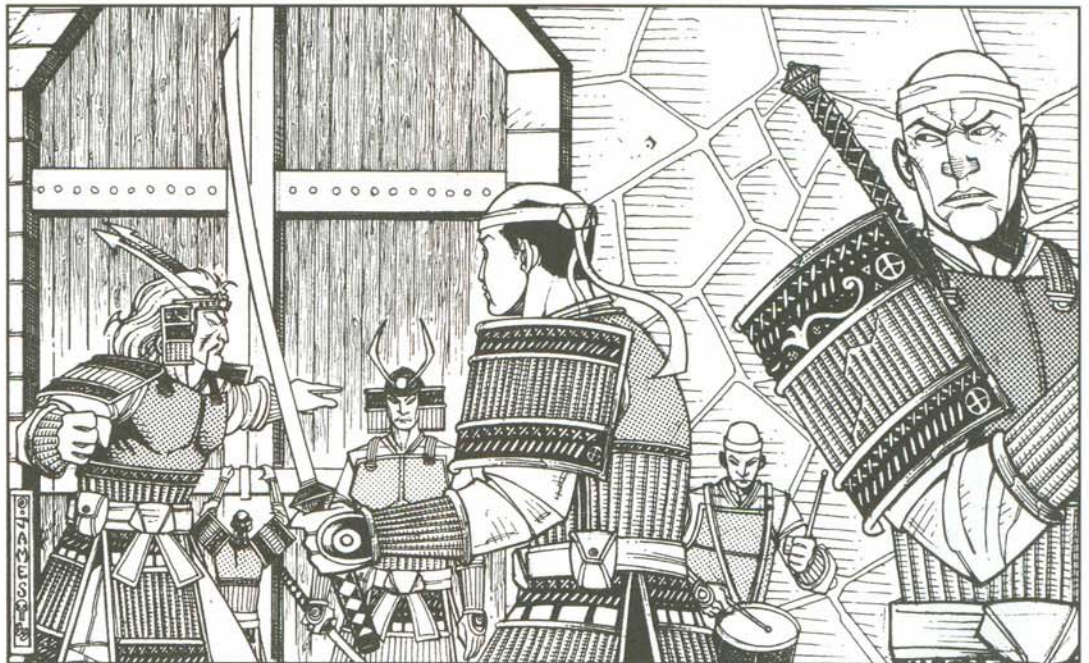
Rallying the troops at the front line is another option. The attempt requires an Awareness + Battle roll (TN 25); the Leadership Advantage reduces this TN by 5. With success, the Lion are ready to defend against the Crane when the two forces collide; otherwise, the first Round of battle is dominated by the Crane, who roll through the front line and up the forward slope of Shiro no Yojin with little effort. Lion casualties in such a case are devastating (25 deaths during the first half-hour), and the skirmishing thereafter takes place around and beyond the watchtowers.

Note that only one character is required to rally the troops, but up to two more can work together with the first to improve his Skill roll; any others are only getting in the way, and would be better served elsewhere on the field.

No Honor should be lost for intervening here. Just as mortally defending themselves from the Crane during Act Three, this situation has no "winning" solution; players should not be penalized for being thrust into such a predicament. Forcing them to choose in such a situation is enough. Ignoring the choice, however, should result in a loss of 3 Honor (such choices are the stuff of mythic Rokugani stories, and players who disregard them are ignoring their duty as samurai).

The remainder of this Scene is a battle sequence (according to the standard rules), in which the Crane attempt to gain a foothold within the lowest level of the castle, but are repelled. Each Round represents about 20 minutes of time. Both forces begin with 100 samurai, led by the appropriate number of officers (see *The Way of the Lion*, pages 96-98). The fighting sequences are scripted in brief here, but may be adjusted according to the GM's needs and for drama's sake:

Round One: If the PCs managed to rally the Lion front line, the Lion and Crane begin skirmishing at the foot of the castle's forward slope; the Lion and Crane both take heavy casualties (up to 20 lost) in this Round. Otherwise, the skirmishing sweeps up the slope and surrounds the watchtowers. Archers become involved on both sides (though the Crane have much more luck in this case), and the Lion suffer the worst losses (up to 25 lost).





Round Two: The bragging contest between the Lion captains ends here, with Akodo Isebo taking command of the troops. A sensible officer, he immediately recognizes any help the PCs offered last Round and grants them a “field promotion” to gunso (sergeant), adding Lion soldiers to their junshi to round their unit out at a full squad of twenty. From here on in, they are actively involved in field command decisions for this battle. The Crane make a small amount of headway here, pushing the skirmishing line to the watchtowers, or slightly beyond (depending on the results of Round One). Casualties for the Lion are about two dice worth; the Crane lose only one.

Round Three: The watchtowers fall this round or next, depending on the efforts of the PCs during Round One, pulled down with grappling lines. The skirmishing line is now just past their point on the map, and falling quickly back to the Outer Gateway of Shiro no Yojin, regardless of the efforts of earlier Rounds. Casualties equal those of the previous Round.

Round Four: If the watchtowers did not fall last Round, they fall now. Pockets of Crane soldiers approach the Outer Gateway, but are held at bay by the archers flanking the castle's immense doors. The Crane general goes missing this round (killed by Isebo in a duel). Both sides lose one die of soldiers this Round.

Round Five: The Crane, now aware of their general's death, are temporarily stymied. Another has replaced the commander, but Isebo's personal guard has crippled the Crane command structure, eliminating several of his staff officers and taiko drummers. The Crane suffer heavy losses here (three dice), while the Lion fare only slightly better (two), taking advantage of their position to push the Crane back.

Round Six: Under Isebo's direction, the Lion form a wall of bodies between the Crane and the Outer Gateway, using their bulk to drive the scattered Crane units back toward the slope. By the end of this Round, it is obvious to the new Crane commander (Kakita Gensa) that the Crane will lose this battle. He orders a retreat, which the Lion are only too willing to grant. The Lion lose another die of samurai here (to a minimum of 25 remaining). The Crane lose another three dice of samurai; the survivors (including Gensa) pull back, vanishing to the south.

Allow PCs involved in the battle (and particularly those in command of troops) to decide how they wish to fight the battle each

Round – where their forces will move and what they will attack, etc. Describe only the parts of the battle that they are aware of (within their line of sight), alluding to what is happening elsewhere by the “general tide of the battle.” This will allow you to focus the fighting as if it were a common skirmish between the samurai and individual foes, and make it easier for the players to become involved.

The Crane have been repelled, but at an awful price. The Lion defenders have been severely reduced in number, and the castle defenses have sustained incredible damage. All that the Lion can do, however, is prepare the fortress for another siege, and wait. Hopefully, the next army to arrive will be Lion reinforcements, and not another Crane attack.

THE BALCONY

Any of the PCs may search the balcony (#13) after the battle sequence. None of the doors or stairwells leading there are barred or obstructed, though several of the Lion soldiers will question their intent, claiming that the upper levels of the fortress are “haunted by the fallen Crane who dwelled here before.” (This is only a warning; none will physically stop the PCs.)

If the PCs search the balcony anyway, they will find the following:

The eastern end of the high balcony offers a spectacular view of the fighting upon the forward slope of the castle grounds below, including the location between the watchtowers, where the Lion general was cut down by archery fire from this spot. The flag post nearest the location is empty, a Lion banner visible upon the rough wooden deck, supporting the assumption that this was the killer's roost. It is easy enough to imagine the angle of attack, though the distance and moderate wind today testify to the mastery of the assassin. You are dealing with an exceptional samurai... one who has already penetrated the Lion defenses, and is within the castle now.

There is nothing more for the characters to find here. They might make the connection between this event and the death of Akodo Agame mentioned in Tankenka's journal. This is expected (though not required) and can only help them. It provides them with knowledge of Sozui's presence at the fortress, thereby solidifying their purpose there.

AKODO ISEBO (CONTINUED)

Background: Akodo Isebo is a congenial man. He listens intently to everything that is said around him, carefully weighing everyone's opinion with equal regard. Unfortunately, wars are not won by committee, and this personal attribute has gotten in the way of his career on more than one occasion. (If not for the fact that he inherited the post of commander at Shiro no Yojin, Isebo would never have obtained such a command.) He realizes this, of course, but it only serves to fuel his passion for making allies.



The Long Dark Night

DAIDOJI YOREI

EARTH: 5 [5]
WATER: 4 [4]
FIRE: 4 [4]
AIR: 3 [3]
Rolls When Attacking: 4k2
(6k3 vs. Lion)
Rolls For Damage: 6k4
(ethereal katana)
TN to be Hit: 20 (magic,
crystal, ghost, or jade only)
Armor: 5
Wounds: 15: -1; 30: -3;
45: Dead
Special Abilities:
Insubstantial

Clan War Statistics

TN: 7
W: 5
ATT: +1 (+3 vs. Lion)
DAM: +2
#S: 1

• Yorei may not command units.

Background: Yorei's mother died in childbirth upon the plains outside Shiro no Yojin during the Night of Falling Stars, bringing him into the world. His entire life was devoted to retaking the castle, but he failed, finally killed upon the same field stained by his mother's blood. His ghost lives on in the area, insane with grief and rage, appearing once per year on the night of his death (the seventh day of the month of the Snake) to tear any Lion outside the castle to shreds. But with the arrival of the Legacy at Shiro no Yojin, he comes every night, and can enter the castle at will.

After the Crane are repulsed, the Lion forces contend with the bloody scene. Eta servants dispose of the bodies, burning them – one by one – in honorable funeral pyres beside Shadowed Souls River. Even the fallen Crane are respected in this fashion; they have followed the code of Bushido as strictly as the Lion have, and must therefore also be glorified in death. Only the body of the fallen Lion general – Hogite – is permitted upon the castle grounds, in front of the Outer Gateway where all his men can properly mourn him if they wish. These fires burn all night until just before dawn of the next morning, should any impromptu Scenes occur before then.

PREPARING FOR WAR

Isebo consults his siege engineers, discussing possible ways to defend the castle if another attack comes before reinforcements arrive. The characters are welcome to attend this meeting (held at location #1), and any suggestions they make will be considered with equal weight (the GM should incorporate ideas into the following defense structure and the Dawn attack sequence). Without the PCs' input, the following change is made:

- Two palisades of sharpened, criss-crossed, wooden spikes are placed along the forward slope – one just inside the mouth and another where the wreckage of the watchtowers has been cleared. Archers will line the rear of these, hopefully eliminating enemy cavalry before they can reach the castle proper.

DINNER WITH ISEBO

After preparations have been made, work commences on the new defenses. Anything that can be trusted to eta or servants is assigned to them, allowing the soldiers not on guard duty at the ramparts or fallen watchtowers to rest. Isebo asks the PCs to join him in the Dining Hall for tea and rice balls, where he asks them of their reason for coming to Shiro no Yojin (not that he's ungrateful), and why they led a unit of "diplomats" across the Plains of Battle (remember, the junshi were Agame's students, and are therefore not martial pupils by profession).

The conversation is comfortable and friendly. Isebo is a likable man, one of the "common" rank and file who happens to have acquired a position of command that would normally be well out of his league. He is not overwhelmed, and it is obvious to the PCs that he was born for this position, his sharp mind ready to accept unconventional strategies if they are effective. He loves the field of battle, seeing it as a wonderful place where all samurai are equal, and a different (and, his opinion, superior) set of rules apply.

The characters may swap anecdotes and enjoy Isebo's company here, providing them a welcome relief from the rigors of the field. Gamemasters who enjoy unbroken roleplaying Scenes should stage this over their own dinner table, perhaps with tea and cheese puffs, encouraging the players to speak and act entirely as their character would, and doing the same for Isebo. Players that exhibit great enthusiasm or acumen here should gain an extra Experience Point at the end of the adventure.

SEARCHING THE GROUNDS

Eventually, the discussion will turn to Isebo's concerns about general Hogite's death. Should the characters bring up any suspicions about Sozui or a (Scorpion) assassin, he will suddenly become very serious, and ask them – politely – to tell him all that they know of her. If at any point, they mention the balcony or that they believe the killer is within the castle, he will immediately order a squad of his men to scour the grounds and every level of the structure, looking for her. If the characters mention Goden, he will ask them to find the Kitsu as well.

Isebo knows that a Kitsu and his bodyguard arrived at the castle earlier today, though he does not yet realize that they are a threat. A deeply religious man, he has allowed the Kitsu a great deal of latitude, not questioning Hogite's orders that his chambers not be disturbed. But any suspicion that the two visitors are responsible for Hogite's death, and his stance will instantly become adversarial. Isebo looked on Hogite as a brother in war and a father in peace, and desires nothing more than to avenge his death (save perhaps to ensure that Shiro no Yojin remains in Lion hands).

The PCs are welcome to take part in the search for Sozui and Goden, though nothing of importance will be recovered. The traveling packs and clothing of both NPCs can be found in their



DAIDOJI UJI

EARTH: 4 [5]

Willpower 5

WATER: 3 [4]

Strength 5

FIRE: 2 [3]

Intelligence 3

AIR: 4 [4]

VOID: 3 [3]

Skills: Archery 3, Appraisal 3, *Battle* 4, Commerce 4, *Defense* 5 [3], Etiquette 2, Hunting 2, *Iaijutsu* 3, Kenjutsu 5, Leadership 2, Lore: Gaijin Culture 2, Lore: Gaijin Warfare 5, "Sai-bore" Technique (Gaijin weapon) 2

Honor: 2.5

Glory: 6.5

School: Daidoji Rank 4

Advantages: Quick Healer, Way of the Land

Disadvantages: Fascination - Gaijin

Weapon: Katana 3k2

Armor: Heavy

Clan War Statistics

TN: 8

W: 5

ATT: +2

DAM: +2

#S: 2

See Also: *Clan War: The Clans*, page 20, *Crane Army Expansion*, page 40

Background: See *The Way of the Crane*, page 90



BAYUSHI SOZUI

EARTH: 3 [3]

WATER: 2 [3]

Perception 3

FIRE: 4 [5]

Agility 5

AIR: 2 [4]

Reflexes 5

VOID: 1 [1]

Skills: Acting 4, Archery 4, Athletics 3, *Battle* 2 [1], Courtier 2, *Defense* 2 [3], Etiquette 2, Explosives 2, Hand-to-Hand 4, *Iaijutsu* 2, Investigation 2, Kenjutsu 2, Locksmith 2, Lore: Subterfuge 2, Manipulation 4, Mimic 3, Poison 3, Sincerity 3, Sleight of Hand 3, Stealth 3, Traps 2

Honor: 0.3

Glory: 1

School: Bayushi Rank 4

Shadow Points: 2 (2 Shadow Brands)

Shadow Abilities:

Stealth (+2 kept dice to all Stealth checks), Swiftess (may use pools of shadow to move up to 200' instantly, undetected)

Advantages: Combat Reflexes, Daredevil, Ambidextrous

Disadvantages: Driven (Scorpion Agenda), Insensitive

Weapon: Katana 3k2, yumi 2k2

Armor: Light

Clan War Statistics

TN: 7

W: 3

ATT: +2/+1

DAM: +1/+1

#S: 1

quarters, but nothing among the belongings is pointedly blameful. Neither of them, nor their "yojimbo", can be found, however (they are again using their Shadow abilities to avoid pursuit), which Isebo will take as a conviction until they can be questioned. The search continues until the dawn attack (see below).

THE MESSENGER

Sometime during the middle of the night, just before the PCs are preparing for bed, an Ikoma *shoko kanbu* (staff officer) arrives, informing Isebo that the castle is in danger. The Crane are regrouping to the south, amassing just over 500 troops under the banner of Daidoji Uji, famed daimyo in the Crane Clan. Worse, there are no reinforcements available in the area; Isebo cannot expect his soldiers to be relieved for another three days, at minimum.

The Ikoma must continue to the next Lion post with the warning, and is soon gone, riding into the murky night along the border. A sullen hush settles among the ranks of the Lion forces at the castle, as they reconcile their lives. Many of them can be seen praying or meditating if they are off duty before dawn. All of them know that the morning sun will bring their deaths, and they are readying themselves to join their ancestors.

DAIDOJI YOREI

The last encounter of this Scene is a short one, but includes further foreshadowing of the challenges the castle's occupants will face in the morning. Read the following some time after the PCs have gone to bed:

You are roused by a horrible screaming. Somewhere outside the castle, someone is dying. A moment later, you hear shouts from the courtyard below, and the gates of the fortress are drawn open. The pained creaking of the doors is nearly blotted out by the agony in the voices of those outside.

PCs may observe the rest of the Scene from their bedroom windows (if they face the front of the castle), may take up a position elsewhere in the structure, or join the soldiers at the Outer Gateway. Regardless of their vantage point, they witness a shocking sight. The ghostly image of an immense samurai warrior (Perception TN 15 to notice Crane mon upon his armor) is physically clawing apart the Lion soldiers that were posted

at the palisades. His huge form dwarfs those of the Lion as he runs them down and rips them limb from limb. His face is a gruesome mask of fury, as frightening for its lack of sanity as for its intensity.

Four Lion soldiers were posted at the palisades. Two of them have been savaged and left for dead behind the Crane ghost, and a third is only a few feet ahead of it as the two bound toward the Outer Gateway. It is doubtful that the PCs can have any effect on this Scene; even if they manage to get outside in time to help the fleeing Lion, none of them (save those who are part of the Legacy) cannot physically affect the ghost.

Most likely, they will only be able to watch as one of the Lion careens through the gate and the other is forced to the ground and shredded by the ghost. The gateway is closed, and Isebo revises the guard schedule so that none must leave the castle. If any ask, he will explain that the ghost is Daidoji Yorei, a fallen general who lost his life trying to retake the castle from the Lion. Now, it hunts once each year, on the seventh day of the Snake. This information can also be gained with an Intelligence + Lore: Ghosts roll (TN 15).

But today is not the seventh day of the Snake, and the Lion take this event as the worst possible omen of their failure to defend the castle. After this, few will share any hope that they will succeed, including Isebo. But none will falter in their duty; nor will they speak aloud their thoughts. They are Lion, and will remain as faithful to the cause of their clan in death as they have been in life.

Isebo's only words about the coming attack are intended for non-Lion. "There is no honor in retreat, but I cannot ask you to stay." He does not believe that the PCs or their "warriors" are responsible for the defense of Shiro no Yojin, and will provide them ample opportunity to leave if they desire. Should they do so, the adventure ends and they lose half their current Honor Points (Lion characters lose all of their Honor, and hereafter become ronin).

Dawn

The last Scene of the adventure is structured much like the previous Crane attack, with staged battle Rounds that the characters may play through (if they are involved in the fighting).

Isebo will frown upon Lion characters that do not aid him on the field, but understands whatever commitments the others may have (i.e. tracking down Sozui or performing the ritual).

There is no hope of the Lion winning the battle, though the players should not realize this (see the *Pyrrhic Victory* sidebar on page 62 for more on presenting this Scene). But it is for this reason, if no other, that the battle can be called "epic", and why it (unlike its predecessor) fulfills one of the two conditions for the ritual to expunge the Legacy from the Empire. The Lion are waging a desperate fight against insurmountable odds (perhaps as heavy as 20 to 1 odds, counting only troop totals).

THE CRANE ARMY

When the Crane arrive, their forces number just over 450. Of those, some 100 are conscripts culled from neighboring farmlands (both Lion and Crane; many Lion peasants remember how the Lion "stole" the castle, or are unhappy with their present rulers, and are eager to help the Crane retake it). Per the

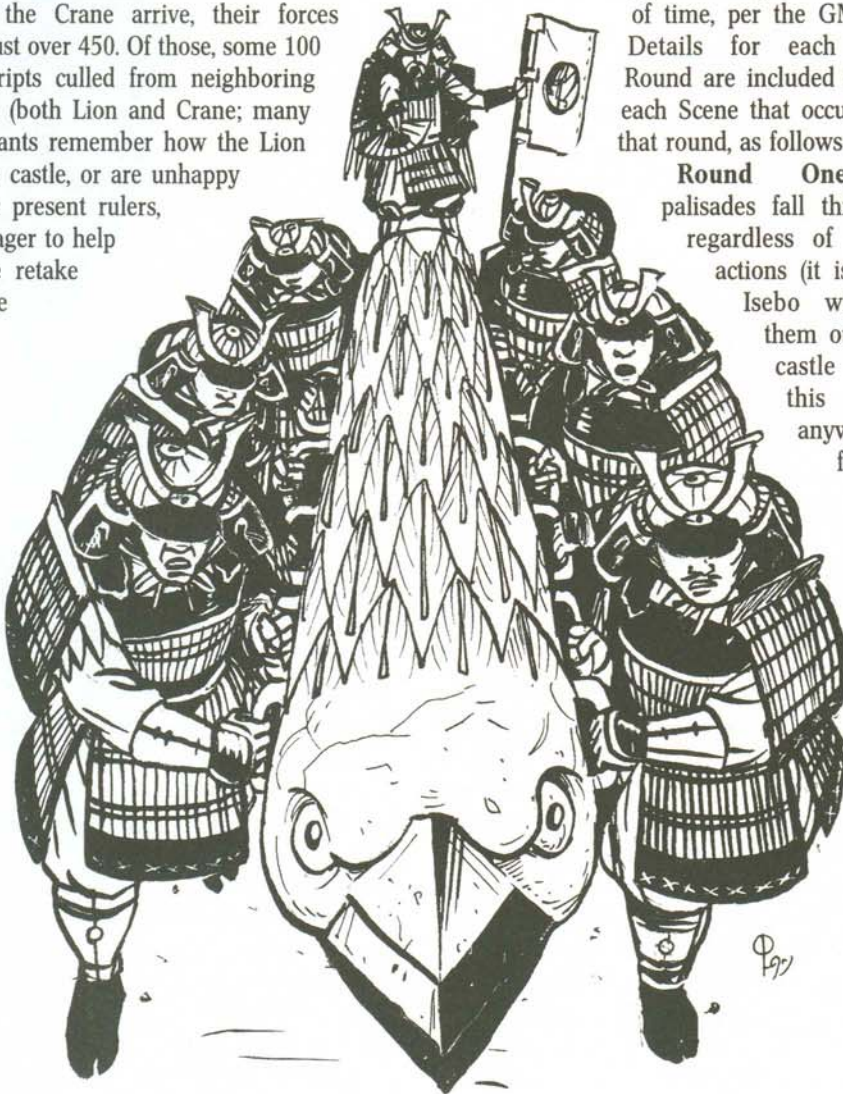
Ikoma's account, Daidoji Uji is the commanding officer for the army, taking a personal hand in his clan's glorious return to the Plains of Battle.

CONDUCTING THE BATTLE

Unlike the previous defense of the castle, this conflict takes some time to pick up speed. The opening Rounds are slow as the Crane tries to punch through the Lion defenses with as few casualties as possible. Daidoji Uji knows that the Crane will succeed this day, and is unconcerned with the amount of time it takes for his soldiers to punch through into the castle; also, he values the lives of his men enough to prolong the attack for a time.

The attack begins at first light. Each Round is approximately 30 - 45 minutes of time, per the GM's needs. Details for each Combat Round are included in text of each Scene that occurs during that round, as follows:

Round One: The palisades fall this Round, regardless of the PCs' actions (it is unlikely Isebo will allow them outside the castle during this time, anyway). With
f e w



BAYUSHI SOZUI (CONTINUED)

Background: 22 years ago, the houses of two families - the Kakita and the Matsu - made an arrangement. As an act of goodwill, they would forge an alliance, and exchange children for one year. (That way, neither would have any opportunity to renege and betray the other, or risk losing their young.) By the end of one year, they assumed, the alliance would be sealed, and all could return to normal.

They could not have been more wrong.

En route to the respective lands, both escorts were slaughtered and the children stolen. Each family blamed the other for the event, and relations between them worsened. Today, the two houses remain locked in bitter dispute, spearheading the current tensions between the clans.

Which is exactly what the Scorpion wanted.

Brainwashed and branded by the masters of shadow, the Kakita's original name has been lost with her innocence. She takes many different identities for many different purposes, but when she returns home, it is to the Scorpion, who are all she has ever known. To them, she is known as Sozui.

For more on Sozui, please see *The Silence Within Sound* (in the revised L5R GM's Screen).



THE LION—CRANE CONFLICT

The prolonged war between the Lion and the Crane will take place mostly upon the Plains of Battle and its borders. Gamemasters who wish to include the war as part of the official L5R storyline, but are reticent to make major changes to the rest of their Rokugan, or endanger other plotlines they may have going on elsewhere in the Empire, may resolve that the conflict is limited to that area for now. Alternately, they can have the war spill out into the rest of the Empire as they wish. L5R products will continue to support the war, presenting it from various perspectives before its epic conclusion.

soldiers to defend them (due to the Yorei's actions the night before), the Crane march right through them and up to the Outer Gateway, only pausing to trade volleys with the archers upon the ramparts. The Lion lose 1-2 soldiers, while the Crane lose one full die's worth.

Round Two: The archers continue to pluck away at the Crane as Uji calls for siege engines to be used against the outer gate. Battering rams, and eventually ladders, are used upon the castle. By the end of this Round, surviving Lion archers have retreated beyond the inner gate to take up positions within the castle's many internal kill cells, where they wait for the Crane to pierce the inner courtyard. The Crane break through the outer gate and begin working upon the inner (second) gate by the beginning of Round Three.

THE LEGACY RETURNS

Round Three: The most important thing that happens during this Round is the arrival of the Legacy. Toshi possess the bodies of the forward Crane ranks (including Uji's command cell), as well as those of all the Lion defenders upon the lowest level (all but the archers and a small number of footmen). Isebo is lost to the Legacy as well during this Round.

The effect of this is staggering. Moments later, the Crane punch into the Courtyard and the Lion and Crane infantry finally meet. At first, it seems that the forces remain loyal to their clan, but within minutes, Crane is killing Crane and Lion is killing Lion, adding new spirits to the Legacy in the process. These new spirits inhabit the bodies of previously unaffected samurai on both sides, and the cycle continues. It should be obvious to the PCs that the Legacy will eventually consume the spirits of all at the castle, including them.

There is an unexpected benefit of this, however. With the Lion and the Crane becoming one fighting force trying to extinguish itself, the objective of claiming the castle becomes unimportant. Over the following Battle Rounds, the PCs may realize that simply allowing the Legacy to continue would save the fortress; the Lion could simply send in troops to occupy it once the fighting is done and the toshi are gone.

Two problems with this course of action exist, however. The first (and most important) is that the Legacy – if allowed to grow unchecked – might consume the entire Empire. Tankenka warned the PCs of this in Meido, and the GM should remind them here. Another is that the

toshi themselves would pay the price for the Lion's (temporary) victory. They would not be returned to their proper place in the Celestial Wheel, and would remain tortured by the neglect of their ancestors forever.

Hopefully, the PCs will decide to continue the ritual to end the Legacy's suffering, even if it means that the castle must fall to the Crane.

THE HALLS OF SHIRO NO YOJIN

Round Four: This Round could be played out as a normal adventure Scene in itself, without the pretense of mass combat rules or chances for Duels or Heroics. The Legacy has taken firm hold of all but a few Lion footmen and archers at this point, and the battle extends through the castle's perimeter and interior. Everywhere the PCs go, they encounter Legacy-inhabited warriors, faceless dead, and unaffected Lion bent on retaining the castle unto their deaths.

The Gamemaster has a great number of resources to draw upon during this sequence: the spirits of Tankenka and Arasou, PCs that have died and joined the Legacy, and even the vengeful ghost of Daidoji Yorei. Ideally, this Scene will play out as a fast-paced, impromptu nightmare combat within the halls of Shiro no Yojin. Of course, the PCs may simply lock themselves up somewhere and attempt the ritual undisturbed (Tankenka's mirror will prevent the Legacy from possessing them), but any that leave should find themselves within a twisted mockery of the castle they know.

COMPLETING THE RITUAL

The ritual is included here with Battle Round Five because that is the point when the ritual will finally end (regardless of when it is begun). The scroll does not mention how long the ritual will take to perform, and the PCs are expected to just start and hope for the best (additional tension in an already hostile setting).

There are no rules for attempting the ritual. If they PCs state that they are performing it at any time up to Round Five, and the two focal characters (or NPCs) are left undisturbed until the end of that Round, the ritual is assumed to be a success. The description of what happens then can be found in the *Last Goodbyes* section.

Round Five: All of the Lion and Crane are now part of the Legacy, stalking one another in the halls of the fortress. Periodically, the PCs should hear fighting very nearby (perhaps even outside the door where they are working, or

spilling into the room if the Gamemaster wishes a greater challenge for the uninvolved PCs). The castle has become a moment out of the PCs' worst nightmares, with everyone but them having gone into a senseless battle frenzy. Death rules the day at every turn.

Outside, as Legacy-inhabited samurai clash upon the fields around the castle, the ghosts of all those who plummeted to their deaths six hundred years ago can be seen again, repeating their defiant act. Throwing themselves from the balcony above, the torches they carry crackle with spectral fire, a dazzling array of beautiful sorrow, before vanishing beneath the uneven waves of Shadowed Souls River, far below.

SACRIFICES

Per the scroll, someone must sacrifice himself during the final moments of the ritual, becoming the Legacy spirits' guide to Jigoku. This is a prime opportunity for one of the PCs to become a figure of mythic Rokugani legend, giving up their own life to save thousands. Players who express an interest in this possibility should be encouraged, and rewarded. If the PC goes through it, provide the player a substantial allotment of "Kharma Points" to spend on their next character, as presented in *The Kharma Rule* section of the Gamemaster's Screen Pack (both versions). We recommend 10 Kharma Points (plus any that the character would normally receive), though GMs may adjust this for balance within their individual campaigns.

Gamemasters who do not want one of their player characters to die have a couple options. The first (and most thematically correct) is Matsu Shimesu. He has devoted his entire life to tracking down Bayushi Sozui; he would be perfectly willing (and grateful) to give his life to correct one of her mistakes. Another is Akodo Arasou. Though already dead, he could still be made the focus of the ritual, and lead the *toshi* home while proceeding to Jigoku himself. Finally, one or all of the characters who have perished and joined the Legacy could take up the mantle, being the ideal candidates for the task.

SOZUI

One person must take his own life in deference to the Legacy's long neglect at the very last moments of Battle Round Five. Another must maintain the ritual without pause for a period of at least one full Battle Round through this Scene.

Gamemasters should not tell them how long they must perform the ritual, allowing them to decide and take the repercussions on themselves.

Allow the characters to perform the ritual wherever they like, describing the setting around them according to the Battle Round notes. Every moment should be tense, but the only critical ones are the last five Combat Rounds (i.e. personal skirmish rounds) of play. During these, the PCs are ambushed by Sozui and her "yojimbo" ninja servitors.

Conduct the combat according to the standard L5R skirmish rules, keeping in mind that the yojimbo focus on keeping the PC guards busy while Sozui tries to interrupt the PC performing the rite. Each round that she is not otherwise engaged and is within range, she will attempt to distract the PC. An attack that causes five or more points of damage qualifies, though the PC should be allowed a last chance to continue "through the pain" (Willpower roll; TN of 15+Wounds taken that round). A successful hand-to-hand "grappling" attack (Contested roll; Sozui must succeed with two Raises) will also work, as she forces the PC into a position in which he cannot talk or move.

Other ways include the use of smoke nageteppo (a last resort; she and her ninja would also be affected), Intimidation and other Contested personal attacks (probable only at the beginning, and only if the PC has a history with Sozui that would justify a reaction from him), and other underhanded means. GMs should be inventive here, but consider the positions of their PCs as well. Be fair, and the Scene – regardless of its outcome – will be fun and challenging. Trick or overpower the group and the entire adventure will fall apart.

Sometime during these last five rounds, the person designated to lead the *toshi* home must perform the seppuku ceremony. The precise details of this are left up to the individual group, though Gamemasters are again encouraged to use Matsu Shimesu for this purpose if he has survived to this Scene.

One final note. It is also recommended that the Gamemaster prepare for Sozui's survival. She is considered to have lived through this adventure – likely escaping with the help of her Shadow Abilities – in the official continuity, and will feature in upcoming L5R products.

NINJA FOOTMEN

EARTH: 3

WATER: 3

Perception 4

FIRE: 2

AIR: 1

Reflexes 3

VOID: 0

Skills: Acting 4, Archery 3, Athletics 4, Battle 2, Defense 3, Explosives 2, Hand-to-Hand 3, Iaijutsu 2, Kenjutsu 3, Mimic 3, Ninjutsu (Blowgun) 2, Ninjutsu (Caltrops) 3, Ninjutsu (Climbing Tools) 3, Ninjutsu (Ninja-to) 3, Ninjutsu (Shuriken) 3, Poison 2, Shintao 3, Sincerity 2, Sleight of Hand 2, Stealth 4

Honor: 2.2

Glory: 0

School: Shinobi Rank 2

Shadow Points: 1

(1 Shadow Brand each)

Shadow Abilities:

Stealth (+2 kept dice to all Stealth checks)

Weapon: Katana 3k2, Shuriken 1k1

Armor: Light

Clan War Statistics

Sozui's henchmen will not take part in mass combat, and are therefore have no *Clan War* stats.

Gamemaster Note:

These ninja are among the few who have graduated to second-year (Infiltrator) status, and retained their signature black kimono. For more on this level of ninja training, please see *The Way of the Scorpion*, page 74.



PYRRHIC VICTORY

Sometimes, the best that PCs can hope for is a pyrrhic victory. *Legacy of the Forge* is one of those instances.

If presented as written, the adventure ends with the Crane recapturing Shiro no Yojin and gaining a permanent foothold within the Plains of Battle, an event that will prolong their war with the Lion for the indefinite future. This was scripted here for two reasons: 1) to support long-term official storylines, and 2) to illustrate one of the fundamental truths of Rokugani life – that few victories are won completely, or without loss.

There is much for the PCs to rejoice if they have been successful in Tankenka's mission. The spirits trapped within Toshigoku have been freed, returned to their proper place in the Celestial Wheel.

Allies such as Akodo Arasou, any PCs that fell during play, and Tankenka himself have been avenged. And a great enemy of the Empire – Kitsu Goden – has been eliminated, releasing all the souls he led astray from their unliving anguish.

Yet it has all come at a terrible price. The Empire knows true war once again, and the person behind it all – Bayushi Sozui – has escaped... for now.

LAST GOODBYES

If the PC performing the ritual is able to continue the procedure until the end of the fifth round, read the following to the players:

The final moments of the ritual are a blur. The words read from the ritual scroll echo through the maze-like hallways of Shiro no Yojin, carried upon an ethereal wind that touches spirit and body alike. In their wake, everything becomes sharp and focused; colors are highlighted, contours are razors' edges, and the everything you look, the structure of the fortress teems with life. Quickly, as a wave collapsing upon itself, the effect fades, leaving only silence in its wake. Bodies of those that were possessed by the Legacy fall to the floor, unconscious.

The nightmare is over, you think. Finally, the threat of the Legacy is gone.

Then, gradually, two figures come into view at the edge of your vision. Tankenka and Arasou, their faces beaming with pride and thanks. They linger only a moment, scarcely long enough for you to be sure that they were ever there at all, and then they are gone as well...

Any characters that look outside in the moments following this description see the whole of the toshi legion (well into the thousands at this point), gathered together upon the southern Plains of Battle. Among them (closest to Shiro no Yojin) are Akodo Arasou, Tankenka, and the person who gave their life during the ritual. After one last thankful glance back at the castle – and the characters – the spirits turn and lead the toshi and faceless dead north.

They are never seen again.

GODEN'S FATE

One last matter of importance remains. Kitsu Goden, recognizing that the characters will succeed with the ritual (and thereby ruin his bid for supernatural power), attempts to escape the castle during the final Scenes. He is captured by the ghosts of those whom he betrayed for the Scorpion and carried away... to what terrible fate none can tell. Though not included in the Scene structure of this Act, it may be intriguing to allow the characters to stumble across him moments before they arrive, and witness his ultimate fate.



ACT ONE:

- Getting past the junshi without violence – 2
- Helping the junshi hold the city gates – 1
- Rescuing Denosei from the archer squad – 2
- Surviving the Act – 1

ACT TWO:

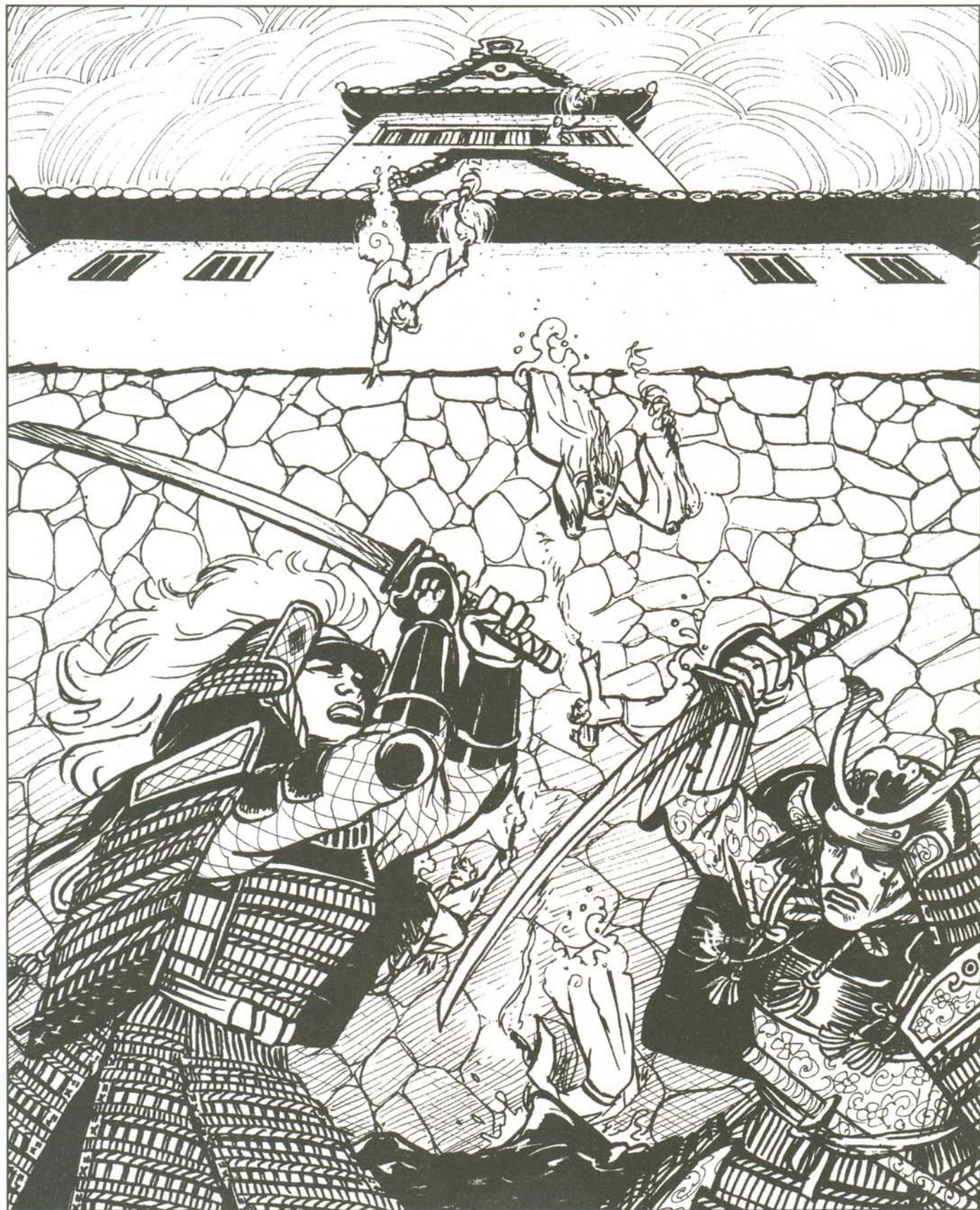
- Investigating the Legacy, ghosts, and spiritual world – 1
- Accepting the Phantom Duelist's challenge – 1 (only the PC involved)
- Surviving Kitsu Goden's trap – 1

ACT THREE:

- Convincing the Oni to give up the scroll without violence – 2
- Taking the scroll by force – 1
- Holding the Crane off long enough for reinforcements to arrive – 1
- Managing their troops effectively in battle – 1

ACT FOUR:

- Noticing where the assassin's arrow came from – 1
- Realizing that Sozui is the assassin (without hints from the GM) – 1
- Rallying the troops before the first Crane attack – 2
- Managing their troops effectively in battle – 1
- Providing useful ideas in the defense of the castle – 1
- Completing the ritual – 3 (4 for person performing it)



Act Four: Shiro no Yojin

GENERIC TROOP STATISTICS

Below you will find statistics for all the primary soldier and officer types common to Rokugani armies, revised for use in *Legacy of the Forge*. These statistics can be universally applied to any clan's force, as the GM desires. Note that these are the rank and file, and that individuals should be tailored to the specifics of their histories. Elite forces, specialists, and those with unusual backgrounds should also vary. For more information on these troops, please see the descriptions located in *The Way of the Lion* (page 94), and the various *Clan War* supplements that feature them.

Statistics in italics may be used in both the miniatures wargame and the RPG (when confused, all statistics in brackets are for use in *Clan War*).

<p style="text-align: center;">HOHEITAI (INFANTRY)</p> <p>EARTH: 2 WATER: 2 Strength 3 <i>Clan War Statistics</i> FIRE: 2 Agility 3 <i>Reference Heavy Infantry (see The Clans, page 77)</i> AIR: 2 VOID: 2</p> <p>Skills: Archery 2, Athletics 2, Bard 1, Battle 2, Defense 1, Hand-to-Hand 2, History 2, Horsemanship 1, Iaijutsu 1, Kenjutsu 3, Lance 2, Lore (Bushido) 1</p> <p>Honor: 2.5 Glory: 1.5 School: Bushi of the proper Family, Rank 1 Armor: Light</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ITE (ARCHERS)</p> <p>EARTH: 2 WATER: 2 Perception 3 <i>Clan War Statistics</i> FIRE: 2 Agility 3 <i>Reference Medium Infantry with yumi (see The Clans, page 76)</i> AIR: 2 VOID: 2</p> <p>Skills: Archery 3, Athletics 2, Bard 1, Battle 2, Defense 1, Hand-to-Hand 2, History 2, Horsemanship 1, Iaijutsu 1, Kenjutsu 2, Lance 2, Lore (Bushido) 1</p> <p>Honor: 2.5 Glory: 1.5 School: Bushi of the proper Family, Rank 1 Armor: Light</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">KIMABUSHA (CAVALRY)</p> <p>EARTH: 2 <i>Clan War Statistics</i> WATER: 2 <i>Reference Medium Cavalry with katana or yari (see The Clans, pages 79-80)</i> FIRE: 2 Agility 3 AIR: 2 Awareness 3 VOID: 2</p> <p>Skills: Archery 2, Athletics 2, Bard 1, Battle 2, Defense 1, Hand-to-Hand 1, History 2, Horsemanship 3, Iaijutsu 1, Kenjutsu 2, Lance 3, Lore (Bushido) 1</p> <p>Honor: 2.5 Glory: 1.5 School: Bushi of the proper Family, Rank 1 Armor: Light</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">GISHI HOI (SIEGE ENGINEERS)</p> <p>EARTH: 2 <i>Clan War Statistics</i> WATER: 2 Perception 3 <i>Reference Kaiu Engineers (see the Crab Army Expansion, page 54); reduce construction to 1/2" of wall per five troops</i> FIRE: 2 Intelligence 3 AIR: 2 VOID: 2</p> <p>Skills: Archery 1, Battle 3, Calligraphy 2, Defense 1, Engineering 2, Hand-to-Hand 1, History 2, Kenjutsu 2, Lore (Enemy Defenses) 1, Siege 3, Traps 2</p> <p>Honor: 2.2 Glory: 1 School: Any, Rank 1 Armor: Light</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">ASHIGARU (PEASANT LEVIES)</p> <p>EARTH: 1 Stamina 2 <i>Clan War Statistics</i> WATER: 1 <i>Reference Ashigaru (see The Clans, pages 71-72)</i> FIRE: 1 Agility 2 AIR: 1 VOID: 1</p> <p>Skills: Athletics 2, Defense 1, Hand-to-Hand 2, Nofujutsu (Peasant Weapons) 2, and one "Profession" Skill (Animal Husbandry, Craft, Weaponsmith, etc.) at Rank 3</p> <p>Honor: 1.5 Glory: 1 School: None Armor: None</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">GUNSO (SERGEANT)</p> <p>EARTH: 2 <i>Clan War Statistics</i> WATER: 3 <i>Reference Gunso Leader Package (see The Clans, page 9)</i> FIRE: 3 AIR: 2 Awareness 3 VOID: 2</p> <p>Skills: Archery 2, Athletics 2, Bard 2, Battle 2, Defense 2, Hand-to-Hand 2, Heraldry 1, History 2, Horsemanship 1, Iaijutsu 2, Intimidation 1, Kenjutsu 3, Lance 2, Lore (Bushido) 2, Lore (Tactics) 1, Oratory 2, Shintao 1</p> <p>Honor: 2.8 Glory: 2 School: Any, Rank 2 Armor: Light</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">CHUI (LIEUTENANT)</p> <p>EARTH: 2 Willpower 3 <i>Clan War Statistics</i> WATER: 3 <i>Reference Chui Leader Package (see The Clans, page 9)</i> FIRE: 3 AIR: 3 VOID: 2</p> <p>Skills: Archery 2, Athletics 3, Bard 2, Battle 3, Defense 2, Hand-to-Hand 2, Heraldry 2, History 2, Horsemanship 1, Iaijutsu 2, Intimidation 2, Kenjutsu 3, Lance 2, Lore (Bushido) 3, Lore (Tactics) 2, Oratory 2, Shintao 2, Siege 1, War Fan 1</p> <p>Honor: 3.1 Glory: 2.5 School: Any, Rank 2 Armor: Light</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TAISA (CAPTAIN)</p> <p>EARTH: 3 <i>Clan War Statistics</i> WATER: 3 Perception 4 <i>Cost: +45</i> FIRE: 3 Intelligence 4 <i>Equipment: As per unit Add Skill Package (below)</i> AIR: 3 VOID: 3</p> <p>Skills: Archery 3, Athletics 4, Bard 3, Battle 4, Defense 3, Hand-to-Hand 2, Heraldry 3, History 3, Horsemanship 2, Iaijutsu 3, Intimidation 3, Kenjutsu 4, Lance 2, Lore (Bushido) 4, Lore (Tactics) 3, Oratory 2, Shintao 3, Siege 2, War Fan 2</p> <p>Honor: 3.4 Glory: 3 School: Any, Rank 3 Armor: Light</p>

A NOTE ON GENERALS

Commanders that have reached the rank of *rikugunshokan* (general) are Rank 4 or 5, and have proven themselves both on the field of battle and as samurai in their own right. All generals are individuals, and should be designed with the same care given to named NPCs. Examples in this book include Doji Masihine, Akodo Isebo, and the famed Daidoji Uji.

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LegacyTM of the Forge



"We are the Lion. Our bravery in life will be rewarded with a warrior's death, and in Jigoku, the stars will weep to have been men such as we were." – Akodo Arasou

The Lion and the Crane, two of the most powerful clans in the Empire. One rich with gold and cunning, the other powerful with bravery and battle-strength. Their feud has spanned centuries, fueling epic poems and legendary battles. Today, the war begins again.

Toshi Ranbo, ancient palace of the Lion, was captured three years ago by the Crane. The Lion Champion, Akodo Arasou, met his death within its grey stone walls. Now the Lion return to avenge him and retake the massive keep. Suddenly, among the teeming samurai on the battlefield, spectres of long dead heroes arise, lifting their swords in defiance and anguish. Have the souls of the dead broken free of Jigoku's chains to fight one more desperate battle, or has some treachery commanded them to interfere?

Can your samurai's courage stand the test of death itself?

- Suitable for 3-6 mid-level (rank 3-4) player characters.
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- Requires a copy of the *Legend of the Five Rings* basic rules.



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