

Funeral Pyre

**A One-Round Mid-Rank Adventure for Heroes of
Rokugan (Champions of the Emerald)**

by Rob Hobart

You are summoned to attend the funeral of Bayushi Shoji, the Master of Lies, and the gempukku of his son Dairu. The hazards of Scorpion hospitality await you... and perhaps much worse.

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A four-hour time block has been allocated for playing this game. The actual playing time should be about three and a half hours.

It is a good idea to ask each player to put a name tag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players to keep track of who is playing which character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in ***bold italics***. It is strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text, instead of reading it aloud, as some of the text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

GM's Information

THIS SCENARIO SHOULD NOT BE RUN COLD! Please read the scenario thoroughly before attempting to run it.

This adventure is a Mid-Rank adventure. This means that only Rank 2 through 4 Characters should be allowed to play. This adventure was not written with Rank 5 characters in mind and cannot anticipate all that these characters may bring to the table. Rank 1 characters can play, but should be warned that they face a higher-than-normal chance of death.

All bulleted information is just that, pure information. Feed it to the players through an NPC when appropriate. Sometimes, reading it straight just doesn't sound right.

The world of Rokugan is a cross between feudal Japan and China. It is set in an age of honorable samurai, serving their Lords (Daimyos) and Empire. Remember that family names come before personal names. Akodo Toturi is from the Akodo family and his personal name is Toturi.

A note on female designations: If a samurai has the designation of -ko, then the samurai is a female. For example, if you see Samurai-ko, then this denotes a female samurai.

A note on commerce in Rokugan: Samurai are not supposed to care about worldly possessions, especially money. A samurai pays a commoner as if the money is meaningless, a concession to the commoner's silly

needs. Between samurai, the exchange of money and merchandise is an exchange of "gifts."

Glory and Honor Awards and Penalties

This adventure contains suggested Glory and Honor awards (and penalties) for dealing with the challenges presented herein. However, at times the players may take extra actions which the GM judges worthy of additional reward – or punishment. The following may be considered as guidelines:

- Performing an act of selfless, sacrificial loyalty to one's daimyo or clan: +1 point of Honor.
- Abiding by the tenets of bushido when one could gain an obvious advantage from breaking them: +1 point of Honor.
- Betraying or disobeying your duty, Clan, or family: lose 1-10 points of Honor and Glory, depending on the severity of the failure.
- Crying out in pain when injured: lose one point each of Honor and Glory.
- Using sneaky, underhanded, or treacherous methods when at an Honor rank higher than zero: lose 1-5 points of Honor.
- Using poison: lose 1-10 points of Honor, depending on the circumstances (there is always an Honor loss for using poison).
- Performing a socially acceptable public act of extreme courage and skill: +1 point of Glory.
- Drunk, insulting, or otherwise ill-mannered in public: lose 1-5 points of Glory.
- Made ronin: Glory drops to zero.

Adjusting for Party Strength

This is a Mid-Rank adventure, and thus can involve parties of widely varying capabilities. The encounters have been optimized for a party of average Rank Two.

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

Low End Party (most/all characters Rank Two):

- Lower all Skill roll TNs by 5.
- The resurrected Shoji has an Earth of 3 (7 Wounds per rank), Carapace 7, and does not have the Billowing Darkness and Unearthly Regeneration Shadowlands Gifts.

High End Party (most/all characters Rank Four):

- The GM may selectively raise TNs by 5, if it seems warranted.
- Shoji has Earth of 5 (11 Wounds per rank), Air of 6 (TN to be Hit 30), and has the Undead Strength Shadowlands Gift (no Wound penalties until dead).

Adventure Summary and Background

Bayushi Shoji, the Master of Lies, is dead. Officially, he was pronounced dead of a heart attack, found lifeless in his room on the morning he was to depart to the Imperial City for the Chrysanthemum Festival. This is the story which the Scorpion Clan tells the rest of the Empire.

The reality is much darker. Shosuro, the Scorpion Thunder and a servant of the Living Darkness, was released from her prison in Kyuden Togashi earlier this year. She came to Kyuden Bayushi and infiltrated it, using her flawless powers of mimicry to sow discord and darkness throughout her former Clan. Only Bayushi Kachiko, Shosuro's kharmic descendent, realized what was happening – but Kachiko is an isolated cripple, driven half-mad by the terrible burns she suffered last year.

Now, Shosuro's plans are nearly ready. She smothered Shoji in his sleep, leaving no trace of her presence, and forcing the bewildered Scorpion Clan to accept that their master had died naturally. (The alternative was to admit that an assassin had infiltrated his quarters, an unthinkable possibility.) When Shoji's funeral is complete and his young son has taken his place as Champion of the Scorpion, Shosuro will be in position to control the boy by masquerading as his mother... while slowly absorbing the secrets and identity of Kachiko herself.

There are two flaws in Shosuro's plan, however. One is Kachiko, who retains just enough of her sanity to know what is happening and take steps against it. The other is Soshi Bantaro, the insanely ambitious daimyo of the Soshi family. Bantaro, already frustrated by his failure to win the Jade Tournament a few weeks ago, is frantic with grief and self-recrimination at his failure to protect the life of his Champion, Shoji. But he knows one way to restore his fallen lord, to bring back the Master of Lies... a Black Scroll.

Note on Running this Scenario: Since the PCs are in the same castle as the Hantei Emperor, they will not be allowed to openly carry weapons. Shugenja can keep their scrolls, and PCs can still carry concealed knives

and other such gear (although doing so in the presence of the Emperor should probably be an Honor loss). Aside from the castle guards, only the Clan Champions (Hoturi and Tsuko) will be allowed to carry their swords.

Player's Introduction

The late summer sunlight gilds the towers of Kyuden Bayushi, blazing on the red banners which flutter from the parapets. The mons of all the Scorpion families are visible, for their daimyo have assembled here for an event of great moment: The funeral of Bayushi Shoji, the Master of Lies, Champion of the Scorpion Clan. The young Emperor himself is expected to attend, leaving the capital for the first time since his coronation, and the senior daimyo and Champions of many of the other Clans are here as well.

You ascend the road to the gates of the castle compound, where Scorpion bushi politely study your travel papers before admitting you. Servants guide you through the notorious hedge-maze of the Bayushi, before you finally arrive at the inner gate of the castle itself. Anyone who attacked this place would be hard-pressed to move their troops through the bewildering defenses.

This adventure takes place three weeks after the conclusion of the Chrysanthemum Festival, where the Empire witnessed the marriage of the Emperor and the appointment of new Emerald and Jade Champions. Just after the end of the Festival, news arrived of Shoji's death. The PCs are among the many samurai from across the Empire who have traveled to attend his funeral. Ronin PCs were hired (for 2 koku) as escorts for either PCs or suitable NPCs (Ikoma Uso, Isawa Tanaka, and Ide Tadaki are all obvious choices).

Many of the PCs may have participated in those earlier events (by playing various other adventures). Now they are here along with others from their Clans to witness Shoji's funeral. Allow them a chance to describe their characters before moving into the first scene.

Scene One: Meetings and Greetings

After you leave your weapons and traveling gear in your rooms, servants arrive to guide you downstairs to the main hall of the castle. There, other servants hold out bowls of water for you to wash your hands and

mouths, while an aged monk intones a ritual of purification, symbolically cleansing you. You are handed a small white ribbon covered in calligraphy, containing prayers for the dead. Finally, these rituals complete, you are allowed to enter the hall proper, and join the scores of other guests circulating slowly through the chamber. Over 200 samurai are here from all across the Empire, including many Clan Champions and family daimyos, and the Emperor himself is supposed to be in attendance, though you see no sign of him as yet.

The servants inform the PCs that the funeral proper will be tomorrow – tonight, Shoji lies in state in his bedchamber, and only the highest-ranking guests will be allowed to visit him.

The PCs are free to mingle, gossip, and socialize with the dozens of other guests here, and to observe the arrival of new guests and mourners. The following list of NPC guests covers those persons who are definitely present, and the GM can improvise additional guests if they are needed.

Two potential guests who are noticeably *absent* are **Yogo Junzo** (daimyo of the Yogo family) and **Bayushi Aramoro** (brother of the late Shoji). If the PCs ask about either of these persons, they will be told that Junzo is currently treating Bayushi Kachiko and performing purification ceremonies over Shoji's body. Aramoro is said to be absent on "vital Clan business."

Bayushi Dairu – the son and heir of Bayushi Shoji is a strikingly handsome, well-spoken, blue-eyed boy of thirteen. He wears a wooden mask which resembles a scorpion crawling across the left side of his face, its tail encircling his right eye. Supposedly the son of Shoji and Bayushi Kachiko, he was actually born from an illicit affair between Kachiko and Doji Hoturi, the current Crane Champion.

Although young, Dairu is skilled and precocious, and will be undergoing his gempukku immediately after the funeral so that he can take his late father's place at the head of the Clan. He will do his best to play the role of heir apparent, graciously accepting the expressions of grief and solicitude from the other guests. Underneath the mask, though, Dairu is still an anxious and lonely boy, and between the burning of his mother last autumn and the recent death of his father, he feels abandoned and alone.

Shosuro Hametsu – the younger brother of Bayushi Kachiko, and family daimyo of the Shosuro. Hametsu wears a black silk veil-like mask which covers the

lower half of his face, and always carries an open fan with which to screen himself further. He is an insecure man who was bullied and tormented by his older sister all through his youth, and has succeeded as family daimyo mainly by recognizing his own inadequacies and surrounding himself with skilled advisors. This is the first time he has left his home castle in years, and he is clearly nervous and unhappy, avoiding all but the most perfunctory conversations.

Shosuro Taberu – the so-called "Poison Crane," a quiet and self-effacing courtier of fearsome skill and slavish loyalty. Taberu has been suborned by Shosuro, who is frequently disguising herself as Kachiko. He will do his best at this event to fan the flames of war between the other Clans, believing that this serves the commands of Kachiko.

Shosuro Tajiki – this handsome, charming young Scorpion wears a thin silk mask which shows off his features. He is a Shosuro assassin (although he maintains the public pretense of being a Bayushi bushi), and is also an Emerald Magistrate. In the past he has served as a personal agent for Bayushi Kachiko. Tajiki is currently engaged in a private crusade to uncover a mysterious conspiracy he has detected manipulating the Empire from hiding (the Kolat), and as a result will be somewhat disconnected from events here at the funeral. (He suspects the Kolat is behind Shoji's mysterious death.)

PCs may have met Tajiki in several previous adventures, and may have helped him to investigate the Kolat in the adventures *In Time of War* and *Way of Deception*. He will make a point of speaking with such PCs and dropping hints of his suspicions, as well as his concerns that he may soon become a target of the conspiracy. Tajiki will also realize that the "Kachiko" who appears at dinner is an imposter, although he will not perceive the involvement of the Living Darkness (he will dismiss such stories as fanciful myths – "I am fighting a conspiracy of men, not some magical shape-shifting ninja nonsense").

Soshi Bantaro – the daimyo of the Soshi family, a thin, angry-looking older man, balding, with a long goatee beginning to turn gray. Bantaro has always been arrogant and prideful, confident in his ability to do anything his lord might demand. Now he has failed twice in the last month – once in the Jade Tournament, where he was defeated without ever reaching the finals, and a second time by failing to save the life of Lord Shoji. Bantaro has recently stolen one of the Black Scrolls, believing it contains the secret to a ritual which will restore his fallen Champion to life, and he has

already picked up some Taint from it. Needless to say, with such dark plans in his mind Bantaro has little time for socializing, and will be abrupt and cold to anyone who addresses him. He will also quickly take offense at anyone who seems to question his ability or judgment. Witch-Hunters and Moto who try to detect Taint near him will need to roll **Simple Awareness** at TN 25 (his Taint is still relatively mild).

Soshi Taushi – an elegant young Scorpion shugenja and a minor daimyo, Taushi is an assistant to Bantaro, and will try to cover for his lord's lapses of etiquette. He is aware that Bantaro is planning something, but does not yet realize just how dangerous and dreadful it is. In the meantime, he will be charming and friendly. If any of the PCs have played *Kuro's Fire* or *Stain Upon the Soul*, he will speak with them briefly about the recent seppuku of Otomo Keisuke, the daimyo of the Otomo family. "A great tragedy, samurai-san. Even the highest among us are not immune to the siren song of opium."

Yogo Aika – an elegant but plain-featured woman dressed modestly but with great care. Aika is a cold-hearted, ruthless Scorpion, the very ideal of their Clan, who thinks nothing of exploiting friendship, bushido, or love in the service of the Scorpion. Since her daimyo Yogo Junzo is absent, Aika acts as his representative and make excuses for his absence. Aika is another failed candidate for the Jade Championship, but has not allowed that failure to embitter her, and will speak in complimentary tones about the winner, Kitsuru Okura.

Doji Hoturi – the Champion of the Crane. A handsome and charismatic man in his late twenties, with long white hair. The Crane Clan Champion is also the former lover of Bayushi Kachiko, and has never completely abandoned his love for her. He is completely unaware that he is the father of her son, Dairu. Hoturi's main focus at present is the rebuilding of his Clan from the recent disastrous war with the Lion, and he will treat all political questions from that perspective.

Doji Takashi – this Crane samurai is a wealthy mid-ranking daimyo and a collector of rare and excellent swords. For the most part he is an honorable man, but also a proud and intense one, his pale eyes stabbing deep into those who speak with him. He wears his hair in the usual Crane white-dyed ponytail. He has brought one of his prized swords, the Kakita blade Genka Ame ("Singing Rain") as a funeral gift, and will show it off later in the evening.

PCs who have played the adventures *Winter Court: Kyuden Asahina*, *Soul of Akodo*, or *Scorpion's Sting* may have met Doji Takeshi before. He will react to them as appropriate, depending on how they behaved in those adventures. Apart from that, he is for the most part a courteous man and a good conversationalist, although he is sensitive to insult and will show a deepening hostility toward Lions (his lands suffered badly in the recent war).

Takashi is accompanied by his wife Kimi, a lovely young woman formerly of the Asahina family. Unknown to him, his wife was involved in a shameful affair with the Phoenix shugenja Isawa Yoritaka shortly before her marriage. Before the funeral is over this incident will become a public scandal.

Kakita (Goju) Naiya – a beautiful and athletic Crane samurai-ko, her white hair tied back in a maiden's foxtail, her face and hands whitened with make-up to reflect the proper tone of mourning. Naiya is actually a Goju, recently devoured by the Shadow, and is here to help Shosuro provoke a resumption of the Lion-Crane war. She will do her best to needle and insult all the Lion who are present, and makes an especial point of mentioning their recent humiliation at Shiro Sano Kakita (see "Gossip and News" below). Hoturi will initially try to restrain her, but will lose focus after "Kachiko" appears at dinner (see Scene Two).

Matsu Tsuko – the Lion Champion is a fiercely handsome woman in her late twenties, with long black hair worn loose. Her dark eyes blaze with pride and anger, and she takes offense easily. The words of Kakita Naiya and Shosuro Taberu will soon have her seething with rage, threatening a resumption of the Lion-Crane war. She is angry about the recent skirmish at Shiro Sano Kakita, and is also anxious about current military affairs and the status of the various Lion troop commitments (see "News and Gossip" for more on all these topics).

Matsu Gohei – a grim, serious, hard-edged young man who wears his hair un-dyed and carries himself like a warrior even in court. Gohei is the so-called "Butcher" of the Lion-Crane war, a ferocious warrior who has earned the hatred of countless Cranes, the slaughterer of the Crane Clan's Tsume vassal family. His presence at Matsu Tsuko's side is clearly a deliberate insult and provocation to the Crane guests. Kakita Naiya will focus her strongest insults against him, hoping to provoke him into a face-losing eruption.

Ikoma Uso – a pleasant, smooth-featured man in his late thirties. His hair is un-dyed and he wears a small

goatee. His usual expression is a polite smile, and he dresses as a courtier. Uso is a Lion spymaster, but self-deprecatingly refers to himself as “a mere diplomat.” PCs may have met Uso before in the adventure *Treachery and Deceit*. His principle concern here is to make sure the Crane and Dragon are not plotting anything against the Lion.

Isawa Tanaka – a square-faced, stocky man in his early thirties, with dark eyes that burn with inner power. Tanaka is an Acolyte of Fire, one of the favored apprentices of Isawa Tsuke, the Master of Fire, and is here as the main representative of the Phoenix Elemental Council – due to the ongoing war with the Dragon, the Council itself could not attend the funeral. Tanaka tends to be somewhat arrogant and to behave in a superior fashion to any non-Phoenix shugenja, especially those who do not follow his favored element. He largely ignores non-shugenja, viewing them as good for little more than protecting their “betters.” Tanaka does, however, have an unpleasant secret – he was once close friends with a fellow Phoenix, Isawa Gonto, who proved to be a secret *maho-tsukai*. PCs who played the adventure *A Chance Meeting* may have been involved in unmasking Gonto – Tanaka will be hostile to these PCs, although he will never reveal his reasons.

Isawa Yoritaka – this Air shugenja is a minor Phoenix daimyo and the second of their three main representatives at the funeral. He is a handsome man (except for a slightly weak chin), and a classic Don Juan, a man who is constantly falling passionately in love with a new woman and pursuing her regardless of cost. His social rank usually allows him to get away with his indiscretions. Four years ago, he had a passionate affair with Doji Kimi (then Asahina Kimi) just before her marriage to Doji Takashi. He will try to avoid acknowledging her presence at this gathering, instead seeking a new object for his fervent affections (preferably a female PC).

Shiba Tsumenitsu – a skilled Phoenix bushi and duelist, as well as a mid-ranking daimyo. Tsumenitsu, who was recently a contestant in the Emerald Tournament, is here on behalf of the Phoenix champion, Shiba Ujimitsu, whose attentions are likewise required by the war. Although Tsumenitsu is a skilled courtier, he is also a proud and spiteful man with a too-high opinion of his own skills as a swordsman. Currently, his poor showing in the Emerald Tournament (where he was defeated by a young Unicorn, Otaku Taro) has left him grumpy, and he will take out his irritation with insults against any lower-ranking Unicorn, Dragon, or ronin PCs.

Mirumoto Daini – the younger brother of the missing Mirumoto daimyo, Hitomi. Daini is here officially to represent his Clan at the funeral, but his real motive is to plead with the Emperor to recall the Imperial leions from attacking the Naga in Shinomen Forest. He also hopes to plead for the release of his Naga lover, the Mara, currently a prisoner in Otosan Uchi. Daini is so distracted by these problems that he has little attention to spare for the Dragon-Phoenix war, other than wishing it would end.

Kitsuki Yasu – the daimyo of the Kitsuki family is a tall, thin, imposing man in his early thirties, with a head shaved bald and decorated with elaborate tattoos. He is harshly judgmental and has a particular hatred of the Scorpion Clan (especially Bayushi Kachiko) – at the funeral he exhibits a sense of cold satisfaction, believing that Shoji’s unexpected death represents the judgment of Heaven against his lies and deceptions. Yasu has an unnerving habit of staring directly into others’ eyes as he speaks, as though trying to bore through into their soul. He takes a dim view of anyone of questionable honor, and is also quite disgusted with Mirumoto Yukihera, the current leader of his own Clan’s Mirumoto family.

Togashi (Goju) Zato – this Ise Zumi is a former player character who fell to the Living Darkness, and will only be present if no players at the table are aware of his fate. He is a fat, almost grotesque man who makes a point of eating anything he can get his hands on – despite the fact that the Ocean tattoo is prominent on his broad, fleshy back. Zato will subtly disrupt events at the funeral, making brief comments and asides which provoke the Lion and Crane representatives.

Ide Tadaji – the Ide family daimyo and Unicorn ambassador to the Imperial court is here on behalf of Lady Shinjo, one of two claimants to the leadership of the Unicorn Clan. Tadaji is a middle-aged man with a goatee and a club foot, and limps around with the help of a cane of polished black wood. Charming, personable, and an immensely talented diplomat, Tadaji will do his best to build support for Shinjo’s faction in the current Unicorn civil war. He will be polite and understanding toward his rival, Shinjo Shono, who he knows is simply carrying out orders.

Shinjo Shono – the eldest son of Shinjo Yokatsu, Champion of the Unicorn, Shono is here on behalf of his father’s faction, to try to weaken support for Lady Shinjo’s faction. He is unhappy with this duty, and is beginning to suspect that his father may indeed be the traitor Lady Shinjo claims him to be. Nevertheless, he

is an honorable and obedient samurai and will do his best to carry out his father's diplomatic goals.

Kuni Nakiro – a young scholarly shugenja from the Crab Clan, and another recent contestant in the Jade Championship. Nakiro has been studying in the Phoenix lands for the last two years, enabling him to skip out of most of the current Crab civil war. Courteous and efficient, Nakiro is in many ways the opposite of the “Kuni cliché,” but is also a loyal follower of Kuni Yori and will try to defend Yori and Hida Kisada against the “slanders” made against them by Hida Sukune's rebel faction.

News and Gossip:

While the PCs are circulating around and meeting the various NPCs, they will have the opportunity to pick up on the latest news of the Empire. The GM should drop the following bits of information into conversation as it seems appropriate, depending on which NPC the PCs are speaking with.

- Bayushi Dairu, the son of Shoji and his wife Kachiko, is to undergo his gempukku ceremony immediately after the end of the funeral, after which he will ascend as the new Champion of the Scorpion Clan. Dairu is only thirteen, but is said to already be a very impressive courtier and a skilled swordsman.
- The Dragon Clan acting daimyo, Mirumoto Yukihera, has occupied several territories in the eastern Unicorn lands, including a diamond mine, and is rumored to be using the wealth to hire ronin for the war against the Phoenix and Lion.
- Word has come of a recent violent skirmish which threatens to derail the Lion-Crane truce. Apparently a Lion force under Matsu Agetoki was withdrawing from the Crane territories toward the Castle of Vigilance (Shiro no Yojin) when, for some reason, it stopped and attacked Shiro Sano Kakita, the stronghold of the Kakita Dueling school. The Lion claim they were tricked into attacking by a Crane provocation, while the Crane insist the Lion struck without justification. Regardless of the case, the Lion troops were badly mauled by the Crane defenders. The Lion claim the Crane employed fire-pits, ambushes, and other dishonorable tactics, but the Crane deny this. Agetoki barely escaped with a quarter of the troops he led into the fight.
- Despite that incident, the peace between the Lion and Crane is still holding (at least for now). However, the Lion are still fighting the Dragon as part of their alliance with the Phoenix, and large numbers of Lion troops are currently in the Dragonfly territories, trying to crush resistance there so they can move on to strike at the core Mirumoto lands. The Lion have also committed a large force, under the command of Matsu Morishige, to intervene in the Crab civil war. That army has already advanced as far as the Sparrow lands.
- The Lion also contribute the greater share of troops to the Imperial Legions. The Emperor has recently ordered the Legions to march on the Shinomen Forest, in order to punish the mysterious “Naga” snake-men for their ambassador's insult to the Son of Heaven. The Legions, under the command of Ikoma Ujiaki, passed through Scorpion lands last week and are probably on the Plains of Thunder by now.
- The Mantis and their Minor Clan allies have recently sent forces to intervene in the Crab civil war. They have occupied Sunda Mizu Mura and claim to be “supervising” the Yasuki territories. (Some of the guests will make less-than-friendly remarks about opportunistic Mantis mercenaries.)

Additional Arrivals

At some point while the PCs are circulating and gossiping, a sudden hush will fall. Guests fall away from the main entrance of the hall as the following scene occurs:

Several bushi in the elaborate armor of the Imperial Guard stride into the room and take up positions on either side of the entrance. Then a slim young man in a dark brown kimono sweeps in, pride and aggression radiating from his every movement. He strikes a dramatic pose and declaims:

“Hear me, Rokugan! Abase yourselves, for among you walks the Son of Heaven, He before whose word the land trembles, He whose shadow brings terror to Rokugan's enemies! Rejoice, for your Emperor comes before you!”

The Imperial Herald steps aside, bowing low, and behind him comes a young man dressed in an elaborate golden kimono. Hantei the 39th steps forward slowly, his thin face expressionless, as the entire room bows low. The Emperor drifts slowly

across the room, making brief nods to the Clan Champions as he passes them, and finally exits, heading upstairs to pay his respects to the body of Bayushi Shoji. After his departure, the sounds of conversation resume, although for the moment they are quieter than before.

Once the Emperor is gone, the Imperial guards will also depart, heading upstairs to place themselves on guard at the rooms where he will be staying tonight. The Imperial herald, Miya Satoshi, will join the rounds of gossip and conversation in the room.

Miya Satoshi – the Imperial Herald and daimyo of the Miya family is a fierce, militant, and angry young man. Satoshi is openly pro-Lion and has recently announced his plan to marry the sister of Matsu Gohei, the infamous “Butcher” of the Lion-Crane war. Officially Satoshi is here to record the funeral for the Imperial histories, but he is more interested in supporting the Lion, sabotaging the Crane, and plotting against any members of his family who oppose his militant policies. He will also be cruel and vindictive toward ronin and Minor Clan PCs (except Mantis), who he despises.

Satoshi is blindly loyal to the Hantei Emperor and will brook no questioning or criticism of Imperial decisions, even implicitly. This will be a particular problem for anyone who later decides to support Mirumoto Daini’s petition for mercy on the Naga.

Scene Two: Dinner

Eventually, Bayushi Dairu will clear his throat, commanding attention, and announce (in a clear, well-modulated voice with hardly a quaver of youthful uncertainty) that dinner is ready to be served. “The Emperor has taken his seat and awaits his loyal subjects in the dining hall.”

Servants lead the guests through a series of doors into a somewhat smaller hall, much of its length taken up by a long dining table. The Emperor, the Clan Champions, and the Scorpion family daimyos sit at a smaller table placed at the head of the hall. Each guest goes prostrate before the Son of Heaven and offers a few words of condolence for Bayushi Dairu (who on this occasion is honored to sit at the Emperor’s left hand) before taking a seat.

Soon after the guests are seated, but before the meal is served, a servant whispers something to Bayushi Dairu. The boy looks shocked but quickly recovers himself and stands up, bowing to the Emperor. “We have splendid news, o-geku-sama (honored guests),” he

says. “My mother, Bayushi Kachiko, has recovered enough to join us for this meal.” Soft murmurs pass through the crowd, and several tense moments pass before the doors slide open:

Bayushi Kachiko glides into the hall, moving with a dancer’s studied grace, her stylish red kimono swirling around her. Despite all the reports of her dreadful injuries in the disaster last year, the widow of Bayushi Shoji appears to be just as beautiful as she has ever been – if there are any scars on her face, they are more than shrouded by the thin silk mask which molds itself to her features. She slides into a place at the table, next to her son Dairu, and bows in acknowledgement of the soft murmurs and bows from the guests.

“Kachiko” is actually Shosuro, taking the form of her karmic descendent. PCs will not be able to detect this, however, without shining a light at her through a crystal – something impossible to do under these circumstances.

Any PC who makes a **Medicine/Intelligence** roll at TN 15 will know that burns always leave scars, no matter how skillful the shugenja or monk who treats them. A **Lore: Shugenja/Intelligence** roll at TN 20 will confirm that not even the spell *Regrow the Wound* would completely eliminate burn scars. PCs who roll **Lore: Scorpion/Intelligence** at TN 20 will know that Kachiko is sometimes impersonated by other women of the Clan, and may suspect that this is another instance of the same.

If the PCs ask about reactions from the other guests, they can easily see that everyone is surprised, and Bayushi Dairu is clearly both shocked and delighted by his mother’s apparent recovery. A **Courtier/Perception** roll at TN 20 (or **Simple Perception** at TN 30) will spot the one guest who is clearly shaken more than any other: Doji Hoturi, the Crane Champion, who has a stunned expression for several seconds before he manages to regain control and school his features.

After Kachiko’s arrival, the dinner begins. It is a very formal affair, and special funeral dishes are served: these are known as otoki, made from unseasoned rice and special grains, and completely vegetarian (no fish, pork, or chicken). There is little conversation during the meal, and a priest comes forth several times to intone prayers for Shoji’s soul to enjoy a safe journey to the afterlife.

Once the meal is completed, the young Emperor rises (everyone bows deeply) and excuses himself in a high-pitched, slightly wobbly voice: ***“We have had a long journey, and the funeral awaits tomorrow. We shall retire for the evening, but please, do not let us disrupt the evening for your other guests.”*** He departs, and the rest of the guests are free to mingle, socialize, and gossip for the remainder of the evening.

Scene Three: Night Falls

After the dinner, the formal part of the evening is over, and the guests are free to circulate through all the “open” parts of the castle (the two main floors) as well as the famous gardens and hedge-maze outside. It is a warm, pleasant evening, and many guests go outside to enjoy the air.

During this time, several of the high-Glory guests will be escorted upstairs to pay their respects at Shoji’s bedside. “Kachiko” will do this in person, ensuring that she will be continually occupied and the PCs will not be able to approach her, question her, or test her with crystal. If a PC tries to “stage” some sort of approach to her (such as walking close by and then “tripping” and touching her with crystal), Shosuro will anticipate the move and react to it – the PC will have to defeat her with a **Contested Reflexes** roll in order to succeed. Regardless of success or failure, such a deed is a major breach of etiquette, and “Kachiko” will exploit the rules of the court to the fullest in condemning and humiliating the PC. The PC will need to make an abject and complete apology (backed with a good **Sincerity** roll) in order to avoid being expelled from the court and possibly challenged to a duel.

Apart from this, the PCs will be free to circulate and talk some more with the other guests.

- Doji Hoturi will be one of the first guests taken away by “Kachiko” to pay his respects. When he returns, a half-hour later, he will be quiet and somewhat confused, and does not pay much attention to what is happening elsewhere. He will depart again later in the evening (to a secret assignation with the false Kachiko) unless the PCs stop him (see “The Fall of Hoturi” below).
- Meanwhile, tensions between the Lion and Crane guests will visibly increase as the evening proceeds, with Kakita Naiya continuing to needle the Lion (especially gloating over their recent defeat at Shiro Sano Kakita).

- Isawa Yoritaka will begin actively attempting to gain the affections of an attractive female – preferably a PC, but if none are available, he will target Kakita Naiya. Other PCs who are observing the social interactions of the evening can roll **Seduction/Perception** at TN 10, **Ichimi Miru/Awareness** at TN 15, **Courtier/Perception** or **Manipulation/Perception** at TN 20, or **Etiquette/Perception** at TN 25 to recognize what Yoritaka is doing. If they beat the TN by 5 or more, they notice that Doji Kimi is aware of Yoritaka’s activities. If they beat the TN by 10 or more, they can tell she is deeply angry and heartbroken by Yoritaka’s behavior.
- At some point, Kimi will leave her husband’s side and begin moving around the room, trying to stay close to Isawa Yoritaka. As the evening goes on, her behavior becomes more obvious, and can be noticed with a **Simple Perception** roll at TN 15. If Yoritaka succeeds in seducing a female PC, Kimi will become quite agitated, and begins actively criticizing and slandering the Phoenix Clan to anyone who will listen.
- Shosuro Taberu will notice Yoritaka and Kimi’s behavior, and will make mention of it to any Lion guests – especially Matsu Gohei, to whom he will also drop stories about the rumors of an illicit affair which swirled around Kimi right before her marriage to Doji Takashi.
- Kakita Takashi will fetch his funeral gift – the sword Genka Ame (“Singing Rain”) – from his room, and will allow some of the other guests to examine its magnificence before he goes upstairs to pay his respects. It is a splendid sword, the hilt wrapped in a pattern of blue and gray, the blade finished in a rippling pattern that seems to flow like water when light shines upon it. Given the chance, Takeshi will recite its history (see Appendix #2). However, as the evening goes on, he will also become aware of his wife’s agitation over Isawa Yoritaka. Takashi will maintain his public decorum, but anyone who makes a **Contested Awareness** roll against him will be able to tell that he is growing more and more tense and angry.

- Mirumoto Daini will spend the evening trying to convince Miya Satoshi to permit him a private audience with the Emperor. If a PC with significant social advantages (Ear of the Emperor, Allies or Favors in the Imperial families, etc) steps in on his behalf, Satoshi will reluctantly agree. Otherwise Daini will meet with no success.
- Soshi Bantaro will depart immediately after the dinner, and will not be seen again until the next morning.
- Shosuro Tajiki will be very concerned by Kachiko's sudden recovery, although he will hide it well (**Contested Awareness** to see through him). If any of the PCs have impressed him or earned his trust in previous modules (such as *In Time of War*), he will quietly inform them that "something is not right, I shall look into it." Shortly after dinner, he will vanish from the guest areas of the castle, using a secret passage to gain access to Kachiko's chambers.

Topic: Kachiko's Recovery

Many of the guests will be commenting on Kachiko's appearance and her amazing recovery. Some (notably the Lions) will express the opinion that some kind of "Scorpion trickery" is afoot, although the most common explanation is that Kachiko's injuries were not as serious as originally reported. Ikoma Uso, for example, will mildly observe that "perhaps the Scorpion simply wanted to appear to be sharing the suffering of the other Clans who lost so much in that tragic earthquake."

It will soon be rumored that Yogo Junzo is the one responsible for treating Kachiko during her long convalescence, and therefore the one who can take credit for her recovery. Junzo, of course, is absent, and gossip holds that he is still speaking rituals and prayers over Shoji's body.

Bayushi Dairu will do his best to shrug off any questions with oblique comments and smiles. However, it will be obvious to anyone who makes a **Contested Awareness** roll against him that Dairu is confused and shaken. He may confide in fellow Scorpions, if they approach him with both sympathy and delicacy: "I have been to my mother's bedside many times. She was horribly scarred and could not even walk." He tries, however, to convince himself that all is well: "Perhaps Yogo Junzo-san found some

new ritual that cured her." If a PC suggests that she might be an imposter, Dairu frowns. "There is a woman, Yogo Asami-chan, who sometimes plays the role of my mother when it is needful. But she is not in the castle, and besides, I know the difference between her and my mother, even if others do not."

Topic: News from the War

The brewing anger of the Lion guests will soon have cause to escalate. About a half-hour after dinner, as the last of the sunset is fading outside the castle, a Lion courier arrives, stained with the mud of the road. He hurries inside and speaks with Matsu Tsuko in a low voice. The Lady of Lions flushes with anger and dismisses the courier with a sharp gesture.

Rumors quickly spread through the room: the Lion have suffered a catastrophic defeat in Dragonfly lands, due to the intervention of a large ronin force under none other than Toturi the Black, the fallen Akodo. The stories say that he fights with his geisha lover at his side, and some versions of the tale have it that she is actually a ronin shugenja.

Tsuko will say nothing to confirm or deny the stories, but is clearly furious. Matsu Gohei will be less circumspect, muttering to anyone remotely sympathetic that "the traitor Toturi must pay for this."

The Fall of Hoturi

At some point before the "Breach of Etiquette" (below), Hoturi will go out into the Bayushi hedge-maze to a pre-arranged rendezvous with "Bayushi Kachiko." If a PC is specifically watching Hoturi, they can notice his departure. Otherwise, they will only notice with a **Simple Perception** roll at TN 30.

If one or more PCs try to intercept/distract Hoturi, perhaps by asking him to restrain Kakita Naiya's provocations, he will try to brush them off quickly. However, his manners are too good to allow him to simply ignore the PCs. Clever players may be able to use this to keep him talking until the "Breach of Etiquette" incident occurs, at which point the distraction of that event will ensure he does not visit Kachiko tonight.

If the PCs do not successfully stop Hoturi, or do not try, then can opt to follow him. This will require making a **Contested Stealth/Agility** roll against his **Investigation/Perception** – otherwise he will notice them. If he does realize he is being followed, Hoturi will try to lose them in the maze – this will require a **Contested Investigation/Intelligence** roll to keep up

with him. (A PC who substitutes **Nazado** for **Investigation** gets a Free Raise on the roll.) If he still cannot lose the PCs, Hoturi will finally give up and return to the castle (by this time, after the “Breach of Etiquette” situation has occurred) and pretend he was simply enjoying a walk.

If Hoturi evades the PCs, or fails to realize he is being followed, he will meet with “Kachiko” in a secluded corner of the hedge-maze. After a whispered conversation, she leads him into a secret entrance to the tunnels below the maze, spiriting him away to a shameful night of forbidden pleasures. PCs will not be able to pursue unless they can spot the hidden entrance (**Investigation/Perception** at TN 35) and solve the hidden control to open it (**Investigation/Intelligence** at TN 30, Free Raise with **Nazodo**). Going into the Bayushi Labyrinth on their own will be quite hazardous – the tunnels are patrolled regularly, and the Scorpion Clan will kill unauthorized intruders.

Breach of Etiquette

This incident will occur at some point later in the evening, after Hoturi leaves for his secret assignment with Kachiko, but before all the higher-ranking guests have finished paying respects to Shoji. Doji Takashi is still displaying his sword (at this point, to Kitsuki Yasu), but is also seething with suppressed anger over his wife’s behavior. If Isawa Yoritaka has seduced a female PC, he is absent, but if he is pursuing Kakita Naiya, he is still here, sycophantically laughing at her gibes as she harasses Matsu Gohei.

At some point, Naiya will make an especially vicious jab at Lion notions of Honor, suggesting that the Lion can hardly claim to be followers of bushido when their war has brought such suffering on the lesser folk they are supposed to protect. Gohei, red with fury, finally loses his temper and roars out:

“Honor?! A Crane woman speaks to me of Honor, while her kinswoman over there forsakes her husband to openly lust after that weak-kneed Isawa?!”

There is a stunned silence. Doji Kimi pales and covers her face with her fan. Doji Takashi, however, turns chalk-white and then flushes deep red, veins standing out in his neck. He draws “Singing Rain” and stalks across the room toward Gohei. For a moment, nobody moves – several courtiers visibly dart looks around the room for the absent Hoturi, hoping he will intervene to stop his maddened kinsman. Gohei, unarmed, drops into a combat stance, preparing to fight as best he can.

A PC can choose to try to intervene in this incident if they wish. They will have to either physically step in and restrain Takashi in some way, or say something powerful and decisive enough to shock Takashi out of his rage.

If nobody acts, at the last moment Matsu Tsuko steps between Takashi and Gohei, slapping Takashi’s blade aside with her hand (and cutting her palm). Her voice is coldly self-controlled. ***“Would a Crane avenge insults with open murder in court?”***

Regardless of whether Tsuko or a PC intervenes, once he is broken out of his momentary rage, Takashi realizes he has shamed himself horrifically – drawing and attacking someone in court is one of the worst violations of law and etiquette imaginable. He drops to his knees, his face gray, then looks around the room, swallowing and blinking. Sweat beads on his forehead. “Your pardon, samurai-samas,” he finally croaks. “I must seek out my Clan Champion so that I may... atone, for this grievous insult to our hosts.”

Takashi and his wife depart the room, leaving whispers and murmurs in their wake. Matsu Gohei looks triumphant, and is unapologetic for his public insult: ***“The Crane dog’s wife is an honorless slut, and if he were a man of Honor I would prove that against him with my blade.”***

Matsu Tsuko coldly observes that Takashi’s insult, coming so soon after the Crane provoked the Lion at Shiro Sano Kakita, shows the Crane have not properly accepted their defeat in the recent war. ***“There is only one apology which will convince me not to seek redress on the battlefield,”*** she growls, and departs for the evening, Gohei in tow.

In the unlikely event that the PCs prevented Hoturi from going to see Kachiko, he will intervene to stop Takashi, and will immediately take the lesser daimyo away to discuss seppuku.

Kakita Naiya, if she is approached afterward, will be unapologetic for her own behavior. ***“Words are the weapons of the court, but the uncouth Lion forgot that words are bound by etiquette, just as war is bound by the code of bushido. It is tragically unfortunate that Doji Takashi-sama lost his temper – I would never have expected that of a man of his rank and talent.”*** A **Contested Awareness** roll will show she is lying.

Visitation

If any of the PCs have Glory 5.0 or better, they will be offered the opportunity to visit Shoji's body and pay their last respects. This will happen late in the evening, after the higher-ranking guests have taken their turns visiting. If the PCs go to visit Kachiko (see Scene Four below) they will be absent and cannot take this opportunity.

PCs who do take the chance to visit Shoji will be led up several staircases to the fourth floor of the castle. The chamber is lit with a dozen candles and sweet incense wafts through the air. Shoji's body lies in state on a silk-swathed pallet. His skin, carefully bathed, looks pale and waxen, but there is no odor of corruption – shugenja have preserved the body, purging it of vermin and decay, until it can be properly disposed of. He is dressed in a splendid formal kimono, and a carved mask covers the upper part of his face. His hands are clasped placidly over his stomach.

Two elite Scorpion bushi (rank five) guard the body at all times, ensuring it is not disturbed. They take this final duty very seriously and will brook no odd or improper behavior from the PCs.

Although all seems well in the room, any PC with the ability to sense Taint will feel uneasy here, and a PC who can sense spirits will detect an unpleasant gray energy hovering around Shoji. Soshi Bantaro is to blame for this – he has already been making secret preparations for the ritual of resurrection. If the PCs try to warn anyone about this, they will not be believed – after all, Yogo Junzo and Soshi Bantaro have been watching over the corpse, so what could go wrong?

Scene Four: A Meeting with Kachiko

How the PCs get to Scene Four will depend on whether any of the PCs have previously performed successful investigations for Shosuro Tajiki.

- If some of them have done so, Tajiki will approach those PCs and ask them to meet with him later, privately, on “a matter of great importance.” He suggests they bring along any of their friends who can be trusted to “deal with vital matters in a discreet and trustworthy way, setting aside matters of Clan rivalry and advantage.”

- If some of the PCs have worked for Tajiki, but failed to do so effectively, he will not approach them.
- In the case of PCs who have not worked for Takashi, he will approach any of them who are Emerald or Jade Magistrates, who have Allies or Obligations with the Scorpion Clan, or who have reputations which seem favorable to him (e.g. they are known to place the safety of the Empire above Clan concerns, they are known to not always assume the worst about the Scorpion Clan, etc). He will not approach PCs who are known to be enemies of the Scorpion Clan (except for PCs whose sole enemy in the Clan is Bayushi Dainashii).
- Tajiki will approach Junshin Scorpions for this mission, but will avoid normal (non-Junshin) Scorpions unless they have worked successfully for him before or have Honor of 3.0 or better. (He is uncertain of the true loyalties of members of his own Clan.)
- If none of the PCs meet these criteria, Tajiki will not approach them unless they expressed suspicions about Kachiko's sudden cure. Barring that, he will not approach the PCs at all, and they will not be able to participate in this portion of the adventure.

Tajiki will make his request after Hoturi has left with Kachiko, but before the “Breach of Etiquette” incident described above. He will ask them to meet him in the Bayushi Hedge Labyrinth in an hour.

Words in the Hedge Maze

Tajiki will meet the PCs alone, in a dead-end of the hedge maze which lies between the castle and the outer gates. He will tell the PCs that they are needed to perform an important service for the Scorpion Clan, a service whose nature he himself does not know. (This is the truth – Bayushi Aramoro intercepted him before he could reach Kachiko, and sent him on this task.) He will tell the PCs this task is vital to both the Clan and the Empire, but that for unexplained reasons it cannot be undertaken by those within the Clan who would normally do such things. “Our situation now is... somewhat complex, samurai-san.”

Tajiki will ask the PCs if any of them have any reservations about helping the Scorpion Clan. PCs who lie in their answer to him must defeat his **Investigation/Perception** with their **Sincerity/**

Awareness or Acting/Awareness. If he detects that any PCs are lying, Tajiki will immediately ask them to leave. He will do the same if any PCs brought along friends who are enemies of the Scorpion Clan.

Assuming at least some of the PCs convince Tajiki that they are worthy of helping, the following scene occurs:

Tajiki steps back, nodding to the dark shadows which fill much of the pathway. “These ones will be suitable,” he remarks, in a low but clear voice, then turns and strides away briskly.

Before you can follow him, another figure steps out of those shadows, seeming to come from nowhere, almost as though he walked through the wall of the hedge-maze. He is dressed in form-fitting dark garments, and his face is largely concealed with a black silk mask and bandanna. He watches you wordlessly, one hand resting on the hilt of a short blade which is slung across his back.

This is Bayushi Aramoro. If the PCs attack him (which they might, given his superficial resemblance to a Goju ninja), he will simply spring away into the darkness and not be seen again – the PCs have failed and will not be given a second chance. On the other hand, non-Scorpion PCs who immediately trust him, without showing the slightest caution or suspicion, will also be found wanting – Aramoro will not consider such fools to be suitable to help his beloved Kachiko. Only PCs who are cautious/paranoid but do not instantly attack will meet with his approval.

Assuming some of the PCs do in fact meet with his approval, Aramoro will say one word: “Come.” He turns, pulls the arm of a small statue, and opens a concealed passage into the Bayushi Labyrinth.

To Kachiko’s Quarters

The tunnels of the Bayushi Labyrinth are lined with stone, braced periodically with wooden beams. Lanterns are placed strategically along the passageways, leaving pockets of darkness between. The stone floors are worn smooth by the tread of a thousand years of feet. Occasionally, side-passages lead down into more natural, earthen tunnels.

Aramoro will lead the PCs through the tunnels, following a circuitous route which evades all the Bayushi patrols (sometimes simply by stepping into a side passage mere moments before they pass by). As long as the PCs make a reasonable effort to follow his path and not make too much noise, they will be able to

avoid notice. If any PCs are foolish and allow themselves to be noticed, Aramoro will abandon them without a second glance – they will have to explain to the Scorpion patrols what they are doing in such a secret, restricted area.

Aramoro will not speak with the PCs except to give brief directions (“follow me closely,” “do not make noise,” “turn here,” etc). If the PCs ask who he is or where he is taking them, he will answer only “that is not your concern.” A PC who rolls **Lore: Scorpion Clan** or **Lore: Ninja** at TN 20 (with the **Intelligence** trait) will suspect Aramoro’s true identity, but he will neither confirm or deny their guess if they speak it aloud.

Eventually, Aramoro will lead the PCs to a small (4’ tall) wooden doorway. On the far side is a narrow, steep staircase, barely wide enough for one person to squeeze through while turning half-sideways. Aramoro lights a single candle and glides up the stairs effortlessly, occasionally pausing to wait for the PCs to catch up. The stairs ascend five slow, painful stories, passing another door on each level. (PCs who suffer from claustrophobia will have a difficult time making this ascent.) Eventually, on the fifth floor, Aramoro leads them out:

You step through another small, low door and enter a well-appointed room, decorated with silk screens, the windows shrouded in heavy curtains of Scorpion red. A single candle lights the place, and several smoldering incense sticks fill the air with a sweet, drowsy scent. In the center of the room is a large futon, set on a carved wooden frame. Someone lies in the bed, propped up on folded coverlets, barely visible in the dim light. You can hear low, labored breathing.

This is the true Bayushi Kachiko. Aramoro will go to the foot of the bed and drop to one knee, lowering his face and murmuring something. (PCs can roll **Simple Perception** at TN 20 to catch, “These are the samurai which Tajiki recommended, Kachiko-sama.”) Then he moves back and waits alertly, arms folded.

If the PCs approach closer, they can see more:

The thin, wasted form on the bed is a woman, although you have to look carefully at the outlines of her body to be certain of that. Her head is a horrible mass of dark red-purple burn scars, the facial features just barely visible, and a blindfold of soft black gauze covers her eyes. Her arms and hands, visible where they emerge from her yukata, are

similarly scarred, the swollen fingers curled into useless half-fists. She breaths slowly and carefully, each breath sounding like a painful labor, but her head shifts toward you slightly as you step closer. “Shadows,” she whispers, in a ragged, ruined voice. “Always shadows, now. Are you more of them?”

Speaking with Kachiko

Bayushi Kachiko is tormented, crippled, and half-insane, but she still retains much of her old intellect and force of personality. She knows Shoji is dead, and that her Clan is in trouble – Shosuro is visiting her every night, tormenting her mind, slowly absorbing more of her knowledge and memories. But Kachiko has not yet succumbed to the touch of the Living Darkness. If a PC tests her with crystal (Aramoro will watch carefully but does not intervene) she will pass.

She knows that one of the things Shosuro seeks is the Obsidian Hand, one of the Scorpion Clan’s most important and powerful treasures. If Shosuro gains the Hand, the power of the Living Darkness will grow immensely. Kachiko wants to send the Hand away with someone who can be trusted to keep it out of the Darkness’ clutches... but the PCs will have to convince her they are the right ones.

This conversation should be a challenging role-play experience for the PCs. They must convince an insane woman to trust them – and they must convince themselves that she is who she says she is, and that they should help her. This will be a difficult exercise, one requiring both diplomatic skill and true honesty from the PCs. If they try to deceive Kachiko in any way, she will see through them – despite her madness she has lost little of her cunning – and will condemn them as servants of the “false one.” If they are honest, they will still have to show that they believe Kachiko’s warnings and that they can be trusted to help her. It will help a great deal if they show some personal understanding of the evil threatening the Scorpion Clan (e.g. if they display crystal, or identify Shosuro for who/what she is).

- Kachiko will never identify herself directly. She is no longer certain who she is. Instead, she will make vague references to her past, such as, “I was beautiful, wasn’t I? Yes, yes, all the young men longed for me, yes,” or, “My lord trusted me, he always trusted me, but I failed him, betrayed him.”
- If a PC asks her point-blank whether she is Kachiko, she will begin to weep helplessly. “I

don’t know,” she whispers. “I don’t know anymore. I think I was... once.”

- Kachiko does still remember her old lover Hoturi. If any of the PCs are handsome males, especially Cranes, she may briefly confuse them with Hoturi. “Don’t look at me,” she whispers, as tears trickle weakly down her face. “Remember me the way I used to be, when we played *go* that winter. Do you remember?” After a short time she will come back to herself. “No,” she murmurs. “You are not him. He is with the other one now. The false one.”
- Kachiko never identifies Shosuro by name, calling her instead “the other one” or “the false one.” She grows fearful whenever the topic comes up. “She comes to me, at night. Whispers to me.”
- Kachiko is suspicious of the PCs, half-suspecting they may be servants of Shosuro. If any of the PCs are females who show the slightest physical resemblance to Shosuro (e.g. small, slim, athletic), Kachiko will briefly confuse them with Shosuro. “No,” she whimpers. “Stay away. It’s another trick, another lie. Leave me be. I won’t let you have him.” The PCs will have to role-play convincingly in order to calm her down and convince her that none of them are enemies.
- If Kachiko does calm down, she will try to warn the PCs what Shosuro is doing. “She is us. What we truly are, what we must not be. She will devour us.”
- Kachiko also knows something is wrong with both Yogo Junzo and Soshi Bantaro. Again, she will have trouble warning the PCs directly, fumbling for words. “Our servants, our daimyo... betray us. So loyal, too loyal. One... serves her, now.” (Junzo.) “And the other... betrays duty for pride.” (Bantaro.) “It will be our ruin. All is lost.” If the PCs make correct guesses as to who she is referring to, she will nod and sigh with relief. If they guess poorly, she moans “No, no, no” shaking her head and thrashing about. Aramoro comes forward, holding one crippled hand until she calms again.
- If the PCs do guess that something is wrong with Junzo and/or Bantaro, Kachiko will try to

issue a warning. “The funeral. Is the body... burned yet?” If the PCs answer (honestly) no, she moans. “It must burn. It must. Nothing must be left.”

- It is possible some PCs may suspect (for reasons of paranoia) that Bayushi Shoji is not truly dead. If they suggest such a thing, Kachiko shudders. “Gone, he is gone, my lord, I failed him. The false one took him. Do not let him return, not now.”
- Kachiko will also express concern over her son Dairu. This will come out as random remarks during other conversations, sometimes confusing the PCs as to who she is talking about. “He is in danger. He does not know, and the false one will take him. Do not let him know the truth.” The PCs will probably not be able to figure out who she is referring to, but if they mention Dairu themselves, Kachiko’s eyes will widen. “He mustn’t meet his father,” she whispers.
- Kachiko will continually doubt and question the PCs’ identity and trustworthiness. “Who do you serve?” she will ask. “Are you really here? What are your names?” (She will place especial emphasis on the last question.) At some point during the conversation, she will lift the gauze bandage from her face, revealing eyes whose eyelids have been burned away. “I see you, but it means nothing,” she murmurs.
- Kachiko will actually be less trusting of Scorpion PCs than she will be of others. “Are you truly one of us? So many serve *her*, now. So many. Only poor dear Aramoro remains at my side, and Tajiki, yes. The others... they do not know, or they do not believe.” She cackles a rasping laugh. “They think I am mad. Am I? Do you think so?” (PCs who think she is crazy, but lie about it, will have a much harder time winning her trust. Kachiko knows she is mad, and distrusts anyone who lies to her.)

The Request

If the PCs do manage to convince Kachiko that they trust her (and that she can trust them), she will finally open up and reveal the true reason she has called them here:

“There is something she wants,” she whispers, leaning closer. Her breath is foul, and smells of death. “She seeks it, always she seeks it, but I have hidden it. She can’t take it from me. Will you take it away? Can you keep it safe from her?”

If the PCs agree (sincerely and without reservations), Kachiko gestures to Aramoro. He hurries over and, in response to an imperious gesture, slowly helps Kachiko out of the bed. With her weight resting on his arm, she takes one tottering step after the other, crossing the room to the far wall, whose wooden surface is carved with elaborate flower patterns. Kachiko’s shaking, clumsy hand depresses several sections of the wall in a specific order. Finally a small panel pops open.

The crippled woman reaches into the small, dark compartment and pulls something out, then turns and totters back to her bed. Clutched in her twisted grip is what appears to be a human hand, perfectly crafted from some dark, gleaming substance. As you watch, you have a momentary conviction that the black hand twitches, but when you look closer it is clearly solid and unmoving.

This is the Obsidian Hand. Kachiko will give it into the care of whichever PC has most impressed her (GM’s judgment). Then she sinks back into her bed, exhausted. “Don’t let her have it,” she murmurs. “The false one... cannot get it.” She sinks into a fitful sleep. Aramoro will guide the PCs back out by the same route they came in.

Failure?

If none of the PCs can convince Kachiko of their trustworthiness, she will turn away, moaning and shaking her head. “False, everything is false,” she whispers. “You are not here, I do not see you. Just another trick.” Aramoro will step forward and insist that the PCs leave immediately. Refusing is dangerous – Aramoro is one of the deadliest warriors in Rokugan.

Scene Five: Seppuku at Dawn

After the PCs visit Kachiko (regardless of the outcome), there will be nothing more to do this night. There will be no more incidents or scandals among the guests (unless the PCs create some of their own), and they will drift away to bed by twos and threes.

If (as is most likely) Doji Takashi was goaded into attacking the Lion, he will probably spend the night in the castle dojo, meditating on his failure. If the PCs

managed to keep Doji Hoturi from his assignation with “Kachiko,” Takashi will have a private meeting with Hoturi that evening, and the two agree that the only option is for Takashi to commit seppuku the next day. If Hoturi spends the night in the arms of the false Kachiko, he will meet with Takashi early the next morning, and they come to the same conclusion.

During the night, while he meditates and tries to compose himself, Takashi will come under attack by the Living Darkness. Goju will repeatedly approach him, using their plastic bodies to torment him with different faces and images, then melting into the shadows without a trace when he tries to approach or attack them. Many of the images will focus on his wife and Isawa Yoritaka, while others will depict him falling at the hands of Matsu Gohei, and still more show Gohei substituting for Yoritaka with Takashi’s wife.

Some PCs may choose to keep Takashi company during his night vigil. Although he wants to be alone, he will be too polite to say so outright. If these PCs stay with Takashi for more than an hour, they will be present when the Darkness begins its attack. They will not come under direct attack, but the Darkness will attempt to put them to sleep so they do not interfere. Have the PC(s) make a total of four **Simple Willpower** rolls at TN 20. For each failed roll, the PC is at –2 dice to all actions (as though struck by the spell *Wind-Borne Slumbers*). If this reduces the PC to zero Stamina dice, the PC falls into a dazed half-asleep state in which the activities of the Shadow are perceived as a strange, surreal, dream-like hallucination.

If the PC already has the cert for Shadow Corruption, or is a Scorpion with two or more Shadow Brands, this experience will require a **Simple Void** roll at TN 15 to avoid getting another Shadow Point. Otherwise there will be no effect.

If the PCs remain awake, they will be able to act when the Shadow begins its attack. Shining light through a crystal, or brandishing a crystal weapon, will drive the Goju away, and they will not return. Otherwise, they can be ousted by bringing a light source close to them (such as a torch or lantern), or increasing the amount of light in the dojo to the point where there are no longer any significant shadows. Once any of these actions are taken, the Goju will halt their attacks, and Takashi will be able to meditate in peace.

Takashi does not understand what the Shadow is, and will be bewildered if any PCs try to explain it. He will assume the Goju attacks are some sort of “Scorpion trick” or perhaps a ghost or evil Shadowlands spirit.

Some PCs may decide to watch Takashi from afar (perhaps with scrying magic) in order to preserve his privacy. If these PCs intervene promptly when the Goju begin to attack, they will be in time to protect Takashi.

The Ritual Begins

Word is delivered to the guests just after dawn that Doji Takashi will commit the ritual of seppuku on the parade ground before the castle. All are invited to attend and see how the Crane expunge the stain of dishonor.

In the chill light of early morning, before the summer light of Lady Sun has crested the mountains, the parade ground of Kyuden Bayushi appears gray and forbidding. A large square pile of lumber has been erected in front of the castle – the funeral pyre where Bayushi Shoji’s mortal remains will meet their end. On the far side of the grounds, well away from the pyre, a white silk cloth has been spread on the ground. Doji Takashi kneels there in garments of white, composing a haiku on a sheet of parchment. His wakizashi rests on the ground beside him.

The Scorpion and their guests, led by Dairu and the false Kachiko, gather in a semicircle in front of Takashi to witness his end. (The Emperor does not attend.) A Crane PC can offer to serve as Takashi’s second, and will be permitted to fetch swords from his/her room for that purpose. Otherwise Doji Hoturi will take up that duty.

Once the second is ready and steps into place, Takashi waits until the first light of the Sun peeks over the mountains and bathes him in its light.

If no PC protected Takashi during the night, anyone who observes him can roll **Simple Perception** at TN 15 or **Simple Awareness** at TN 20 to notice that he looks haggard and exhausted, and his hands are trembling slightly as he finishes his haiku. If he passed the night safely, he appears much calmer, and his hands are steady.

Option One: A Dishonorable Death

If Takashi was successfully attacked by the Goju, the scene proceeds as follows:

Takashi slowly lifts his paper and reads his death-haiku:

*Honor falters, but
Is reborn in my death*

Red flowers bloom

As he sets the paper aside and lifts his wakizashi, carefully wrapping the hilt in white paper, his face suddenly goes slack. Then an expression of terror and fury crosses his features. He leaps to his feet, clutching his wakizashi. Doji Kimi shrieks a horrified “Takashi-sama, no!” in the instant before the Crane lord charges straight for Matsu Gohei. Before he can take two paces, Doji Hoturi strikes him down with a blow so swift that it can barely be seen. Takashi falls to the ground, writhing and groaning in agony for the half-minute it takes him to die.

The Shadow has turned Takashi’s exhausted mind against itself, causing him to hallucinate. There will be no real clue as to what has actually happened, but if any PCs think to look directly at “Bayushi Kachiko” at the moment of Takashi’s death, they can roll **Investigation/Perception** at TN 25 to spot a brief expression of sadistic pleasure cross her features. For a moment, they are not even sure if they are looking at Kachiko – if they saw Shosuro at the end of the adventure *A Walk Through the Mountains*, they can roll **Simple Intelligence** at TN 20 to recognize her face.

No-one else will see this; all attention will be on Takashi and his dishonorable end. After his last death-spasm, Matsu Tsuko steps forward, brows lowered darkly. “So this is how the Crane make their apologies,” she hisses. “So be it. The war will resume.”

Option Two: An Honorable End

If the PCs did succeed in protecting Takashi from the Darkness, the scene plays out somewhat differently:

Takashi slowly lifts his paper and reads his death-haiku:

*Souls rise with the sun
Blazing across a perfect sky
Death is true cleansing*

Finished, Takashi wraps the blade of his wakizashi in white paper, his movements slow, fluid, and precise. Then, without hesitation, he plunges the shortened blade into his stomach. Not a sound escapes his lips as he makes first one cut, then another. Finally he dips his head and the second’s sword flashes, ending the agony with a single clean blow. Doji Kimi covers her face with her hands as Takashi’s body topples forward and lies still, blood soaking into the white cloth.

Even Matsu Gohei appears grudgingly impressed by Takashi’s honorable end. Matsu Tsuko, meanwhile, nods to Doji Hoturi. “The apology of the Crane is accepted, Doji-san,” she says formally. Hoturi nods briefly, his face a mask of calm.

(Note that after the ceremony, if a PC served as Takashi’s second, that PC will be expected to return his weapons to his room – the Emperor will be in attendance soon.)

Scene Six: Return of the Fallen Lord

After the seppuku ritual is finished (for good or ill), *eta* will remove Takashi’s body, and the funeral proper begins. As mentioned above, a carefully-arranged stack of firewood, already soaked in oil, waits on the parade ground. Once it is time for the funeral to begin, two lit torches will be placed to either side of the pyre.

The guests take up positions kneeling in two long rows, forming an aisle from the gate of the castle to the pyre. The young Emperor places himself at the foot of the right-hand row, closest to the castle. Doji Hoturi sits to his side, and Matsu Tsuko and Miya Satoshi opposite from him. The rest of the guests arrange themselves down the two rows, with the Scorpion closest to the pyre. “Kachiko” and Dairu sit at the far end, opposite each other. Between the seppuku and the beginning of the funeral, all the Scorpion change into white mourning robes. Also, Dairu now carries his father’s sword, Itsuwari, the Ancestral Blade of the Scorpion, with which he will perform his gempukku immediately after the funeral.

Servants emerge from the castle gates, carrying a palanquin shrouded in red curtains. Shoji’s body is barely visible within. They advance up the aisle of mourners at a slow, hieratic pace. Walking behind them at the same pace are Soshi Bantaro and Yogo Junzo, likewise dressed in white, each with one hand holding a smoldering incense stick before them, intoning a chant to guide the departed’s soul into the afterlife.

The two shugenja follow the palanquin to the unlit pyre and stand to either side of it, continuing to chant in droning voices. The servants carefully lift the palanquin and set it atop the stack of oil-soaked firewood.

If any of the PCs are watching Soshi Bantaro during this sequence, they can roll **Investigation/Perception** at TN 20 or **Simple Perception** at TN 25 to notice that the hand which is not holding the incense is tucked into his opposite sleeve, and seems to be twitching or rummaging there.

Unless the PCs jump up and interrupt the ceremony (a massive loss of Glory), the scene will proceed as follows:

The servants step back and take up station by the torches, ready to ignite the pyre as soon as the two shugenja finish their prayers. But at that moment something happens. Soshi Bantaro snatches a piece of strange, oily-black parchment out of his sleeve, leaps into the palanquin, and recites a harsh, guttural chant. Yogo Junzo, confused, shouts, “Bantaro-san! What are you doing?” Anxious murmurs run through the crowd of mourners, and both Doji Hoturi and Matsu Tsuko grip the hilts of their swords, ready to leap to their feet.

Let the PCs decide what actions they take. They will not have time to do more than declare an action before the scene continues:

An awful roar of noise comes from the palanquin, and a thundering wave of black energy surges out of it, blasting the curtains away and knocking everyone to the ground with the force of a taifun. The air stinks of death and corruption. Soshi Bantaro shrieks insane, triumphant laughter.

Rising from the palanquin is the body of Bayushi Shoju, his kimono falling away from him in torn ruin. His pale skin has turned green-gray and foul, and sags away from his bones in gaping, bloodless wounds. His mouth hangs open, showing yellow teeth and a blackened, swollen tongue that twitches and writhes like some grotesque worm. A fetid greenish-yellow light shines from the glazed orbs of his open, staring eyes. A hissing, roaring howl emerges from his throat, and he lifts one grisly arm to point at Bayushi Dairu.

Shoju Resurrected

Bantaro has used the Ninth Black Scroll to unleash a monstrous Shadowlands revenant on Kyuden Bayushi. The situation is dire – the revived Shoju is immensely powerful and well-nigh invulnerable, and on the second and subsequent rounds the insane Bantaro will begin fighting on his behalf. Due to the situation (namely, the need to protect the Emperor), most of the high-rank

NPCs will take themselves out of the combat, and it will be up to the PCs to step in... and perhaps save Bayushi Dairu.

- The Scorpion guards will attack immediately, but their weapons (lacking jade) will do nothing. On the first round of combat, Shoju will grab one of them, rip him apart like a chicken, then take his sword and turn it on other foes in later rounds. The guards will continue to fight as bravely as possible, dying fruitlessly.
- Yogo Junzo and “Bayushi Kachiko” will flee immediately (on round one), Junzo using his Air magic to shroud them and fly away.
- Bayushi Dairu will spend the first two rounds of action looking around frantically for his mother, then draws his sword and tries to confront his monstrous father. Given the chance, Shoju will use the Scorpion Rank Three disarm technique to take the sword. Dairu will turn and flee into the castle, and Shoju will try to pursue (unless the PCs can block/distract him).
- Doji Hoturi, Matsu Tsuko, Miya Satoshi and the other high-ranking NPCs will mostly act to protect the Emperor, surrounding him and falling back across the field behind the two Champions’ bristling swords. None of the other shugenja at the funeral will have brought their scrolls.
- Soshi Bantaro does not have much in the way of damage-dealing spells, but will make fiendishly creative use of his magic (especially his Air spells) to disable and defeat the PCs. He will follow his undead lord wherever he goes, until death.

Fetching Gear: Some PCs may decide to run to their rooms to fetch their weapons and gear. From the parade grounds, it will take seven rounds for the PCs to reach their rooms on the upper floor. From inside the castle (once Shoju moves inside) the distance is three rounds.

Shoju’s Path: Unless the PCs delay him, Shoju will enter the castle after six rounds in pursuit of Dairu. Once he is inside, Shoju will take a total of six more rounds to track down Dairu (who is cowering in a corner of the main hall), and kills him on the seventh round, unless stopped.

Defeating the Fallen Lord: Shoju is completely immune to normal weapons and to Air magic. Other magic (including magically enhanced weapons created with spells such as *Biting Steel* or *Immortal Steel*) does half damage. Ancestors and techniques which bypass damage resistance (such as the Rank Four Emerald Magistrate technique, or the ancestor Kakita Rensai) likewise only do half damage. Jade, crystal, and obsidian weapons, and true nemuranai, do full damage. Of course, all the attacks have to get past his Carapace rating.

If the PCs cannot beat Shoju, he will eventually be defeated by the Scorpion Clan. The castle guards will fetch jade powder from the castle store-rooms, the NPC shugenja will get their scrolls, and Yogo Junzo will reappear. After a long and bitter combat, Shoju and the insane Bantaro will finally fall... but by that time, Dairu is dead, leaving the Clan in the hands of “Kachiko.”

Aftermath and Conclusion

Once Shoju is dead (one way or another), the Scorpion will quickly clean things up, doing their best to put a good face on the catastrophe. This will not be as hard as it might seem, given that no notable guests perished in the incident. Still, there will be a definite sense that the Scorpion are out of favor for the foreseeable future.

If the PCs Saved Dairu

Dairu will undergo his gempukku ceremony the next day (after a delay to clean up the wreckage and restore propriety). He is an extraordinarily impressive young swordsman, demonstrating the Scorpion basic techniques flawlessly. At the conclusion of the ceremony, the Emperor recognizes him as the Champion of the Scorpion Clan.

It is up to the PCs whether they want to try to warn Dairu about the true status of his mother. This will require tact, since Dairu will not tolerate any insult or slander against “Kachiko.” If the PCs are cautious and circumspect, they may be able to get their point across successfully. Dairu will not actually admit to any suspicions of his mother, but PCs who make **Contested Awareness** rolls against him can tell their words have reinforced his own inner suspicions.

If the PCs avoid antagonizing Dairu (or simply don’t tell him about Kachiko), he will reward them for their role in saving his life. Such PCs receive the cert for “Blessings of the Scorpion.”

If Dairu Perished

The Scorpion Clan will hold another funeral the next day, this time for Dairu. “Kachiko” will do an excellent job of feigning barely-concealed grief, and Doji Hoturi will offer her his comfort. PCs will not be able to interfere with this, although they can pick up on the “vibe” between the two with a **Courtier/Awareness** or **Seduction/Awareness** roll at TN 20, or a **Simple Awareness** roll at TN 25.

If the PCs still managed to slay Shoju, they will be thanked by Bayushi Kachiko, but will not receive any reward beyond that.

No Rampage?

It is possible (though quite unlikely) that the PCs may interfere in some way and prevent Soshi Bantaro from resurrecting Shoju. In that case, the funeral will go off without interruption, Shoju’s body is successfully cremated, and Bayushi Dairu is safe. The PCs should be congratulated for managing to avert such a catastrophe.

The Fate of the Black Scroll

Soshi Bantaro will stuff the Ninth Black Scroll into his scroll satchel, where it will remain unless a PC takes it. It is most likely that the PCs will leave the Black Scroll in the hands of the Scorpion Clan – the Scorpion will certainly demand its return if they know the PCs have it, and the Emperor will back them.

It is possible that a PC may manage to take the Scroll without being noticed by the Scorpion Clan. Under such circumstances, the PC may decide to keep the Scroll (and gain the cert for it), although doing so will be dishonorable and dangerous.

Status of the Obsidian Hand

If the PCs successfully convinced the true Kachiko to trust them, they have been given the task of protecting the Obsidian Hand. They will have to decide for themselves what to do with the Hand, and who (if anyone) should keep it.

- Some PCs may decide to give the Hand to a higher authority, such as a daimyo or the Emerald Champion. Although this might seem the “correct” choice from a traditional Rokugani perspective, it is a violation of the trust which Kachiko has placed in them.

- If a PC keeps the Hand, that PC gains the cert: “Keeper of the Obsidian Hand.” Only one PC per table can be the Keeper of the Hand. If the PCs try to share the responsibility of the Hand collectively, they do not get the cert.
- If a PC is missing his/her left hand, the Obsidian Hand can potentially fuse onto the stump and become the PC’s hand. The Obsidian Hand will not attach to any PC with an Honor higher than 2.9, nor will it attach to a PC who deliberately cuts off his/her own hand for that purpose.
- There is only one Obsidian Hand in the campaign. If a PC is eligible to attach the Obsidian Hand, e-mail the Campaign Administrator at youta@rollanet.org to determine whether the Hand is still available.

If the PCs defeat the resurrected Bayushi Shoji, they earn 2 points of Glory.

Other Awards/Penalties

If the PCs saved Dairu, they all gain the “Blessings of the Scorpion” cert.

If a PC takes on the task of protecting the Obsidian Hand, that PC gains the “Keeper of the Obsidian Hand” cert.

If a PC keeps the Ninth Black Scroll, s/he gets the cert for that.

Rewards for Completing the Adventure

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

Experience Points

Playing through the adventure:	2 XP
Good role-playing:	+1 XP
Kachiko gives the PCs the Obsidian Hand:	+1 XP
PCs save Bayushi Dairu from Shoji:	+1 XP

Total Possible Experience: 5 XP

Honor

Scorpion PCs will gain +3 Honor for saving Bayushi Dairu. All other PCs gain +1 Honor.

A PC who keeps the Ninth Black Scroll loses 3 points of Honor.

Glory

If Doji Takashi fails to successfully commit seppuku, all Crane PCs lose 1 point of Glory due to the general loss of face for the Crane Clan.

If Takashi successfully commits seppuku, the Crane Clan manages to turn the incident around and shame the Lion Clan in the courts, and all Lion PCs lose 1 point of Glory.

If Bayushi Shoji is resurrected, all Scorpion PCs lose 1 point of Glory.

Appendix #1: The NPCs

Bayushi Dairu, Illegitimate Son and Heir to Bayushi Shoji

FIRE 3	AIR 3
EARTH 2	WATER 2 Perception 3
VOID 2	

TN to be Hit: 15

School/Rank: Bayushi Bushi one

Rank One: Add unkept dice equal to School Rank to all initiative rolls.

Honor/Glory: 1.6/7.8

Skills: Athletics 3, Courtier 4, Defense 3, Etiquette 3, Heraldry 2, Iaijutsu 3, Jujutsu 2, Kenjutsu 4, Kyujutsu (Archery) 2, Poison 3, Sincerity 4, Stealth 1.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Allies (many), Balance, Quick, Social Position (heir to the Clan)/Dark Secret (son of Hoturi).

Equipment: Fine kimono, Scorpion Ancestral Sword (see Appendix #2), wakizashi.

Bayushi Aramoro, Scorpion Master Ninja, Brother of Shoji

FIRE 4	AIR 5 Reflexes 6
EARTH 3 Willpower 4	WATER 3 Perception 4
VOID 4	

TN to be Hit: 25

School/Rank: Shosuro Assassin 5

Rank One: Keep a number of extra dice equal to School Rank when using Stealth.

Rank Two: When an opponent is unaware/helpless (TN 5 to Hit), Raises are not limited by Void.

Rank Three: May Raise TN to be Hit by 10 or 20, but all actions have their TN increased by the same amount.

Rank Four: Spend a Void point to be invisible for as long as he can hold his breath, so long as there is activity in the area.

Rank Five: By spending a Void point and meditating for one minute, move through an inch of solid material.

Honor/Glory: 1.8/7.9

Skills: Athletics 4, Defense 5, Explosives 4, Hisomu 4, Kenjutsu 5, Kuenai 5, Locksmith 4, Ninjutsu 6, Poison 5, Sleight of Hand 4, Stealth 7.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Kharmic Tie (Kachiko), Great Destiny, Shadowbrand (1), Silent/Dark Secret (in love with Kachiko), True Love (Kachiko), Yogo Curse.

Equipment: Excellent ninja-to (+1 kept die of damage), assorted ninja gear.

Soshi Taushi, Assistant to Bantaro

FIRE 3 Intelligence 4	AIR 5
EARTH 2 Willpower 4	WATER 3 Perception 5
VOID 3	

TN to be Hit: 25

School/Rank: Soshi shugenja 3

Honor/Glory: 0.6/4.8

Skills: Acting 4, Calligraphy 3, Courtier 5, Dance 3, Etiquette 5, History 4, Horsemanship 4, Investigation 6, Law 3, Lore (shugenja) 5, Lore (Unicorn Clan) 3, Meditation 4, Poetry 3, Sincerity 5, Sleight-of-Hand 3, Spellcraft 5, Stealth 4, Theology 3

Spells: *Sense, Commune, Summon*, (Air 1) *By the Light of Lord Moon, Cloak of Night, Way of Deception, Wind-Born Slumbers*, (Air 2) *False Tongue, Know the Shadows, Mists of Illusion, Secrets on the Wind*, (Air 3) *Bad Karma*, (Air 4) *Forget*, (Water 1) *Path to Inner Peace, Reversal of Fortunes*, (Water 2) *Reflective Pool, The Tie That Binds*, (Fire 1) *Biting Steel, Evil Ward*, (Earth 1) *Earth's Stagnation*

Advantages/Disadvantages: Heartless, Innate Ability (Secrets on the Wind), Social Position (assistant to Soshi Bantaro), Unicorn Steed / Dependent (Bayushi Mitsumi)

Equipment: Kimono, wakizashi, scroll satchel, Unicorn riding horse, puzzle box (TN 30) containing notes and papers.

Yogo Aika, Scorpion Shugenja-ko, Assistant to Yogo Junzo

FIRE 3 Intelligence 4	AIR 4 Awareness 5
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EARTH 3 Willpower 4	WATER 3 Perception 4
VOID 3	

TN to be Hit: 20

School/Rank: Yogo shugenja 4

Honor/Glory: 0.7/2.4

Skills: Acting 3, Calligraphy 2, Courtier 3, Dance 3, Etiquette 4, Investigation 3, Law 3, Meditation 3, Poetry 2, Seduction 5, Sincerity 3, Sleight-of-Hand 3, Stealth 4, Tantojutsu 3, Tea Ceremony 2, Theology 2

Spells: (Air) *Cloak of Night, Forget, Know the Shadows, Mists of Illusion, Secrets on the Wind, Way of Deception, Wind-Born Slumbers*, (Water) *Path to Inner Peace, Reflective Pool, Reversal of Fortunes, The Tie That Binds*, (Fire) *Biting Steel, Evil Ward, Fury of Osano-Wo*, (Earth) *Earth's Stagnation*, plus can create Yogo school wards as per Way of the Scorpion.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Apparent Honor (1), Innate Abilities (Know the Shadows, Forget, Wind-Born Slumbers), Quick/Bad Reputation (Can't Find a Husband)

Equipment: Fine kimono, scroll satchel, tanto, nageteppe (smoke grenades)

Shosuro Hametsu, Daimyo of the Shosuro

FIRE 2 Intelligence 4	AIR 3
EARTH 2	WATER 2 Perception 4
VOID 3	

TN to be Hit: 15

School/Rank: Shosuro Assassin 3

Rank One: Keep a number of extra dice equal to School Rank when using Stealth.

Rank Two: When an opponent is unaware/helpless (TN 5 to Hit), Raises are not limited by Void.

Rank Three: May Raise TN to be Hit by 10 or 20, but all actions have their TN increased by the same amount.

Honor/Glory: 0.6/8.4

Skills: Explosives 4, Leadership 6, Locksmith 4, Ninjutsu 4, Poison 7, Sleight of Hand 4, Stealth 5.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Bad Reputation, Small

Equipment: Excellent kimono, tessen (poisoned edge), hidden tanto (poisoned edge).

Shosuro Taberu, the Poison Crane

FIRE 3	AIR 3 Awareness 5
EARTH 2 Willpower 3	WATER 2 Perception 4
VOID 3	

TN to be Hit: 15

School/Rank: Bayushi Courtier 4

Honor/Glory: 0.9/5.8

Skills: Courtier 6, Defense 3, Etiquette 5, Forgery 5, Investigation 3, Kenjutsu 3, Law 4, Sincerity 8, Seduction 4

Advantages/Disadvantages: Ally (Ide Tadaji), Read Lips, Voice/Meddler

Equipment: Excellent kimono, fan

Shosuro Tajiki, Scorpion Assassin, Troubleshooter, and Emerald Magistrate

FIRE 4	AIR 3 Reflexes 4
EARTH 3	WATER 3 Perception 4
VOID 3	

TN to be Hit: 20

School/Rank: Shosuro Shinobi (Assassin) 3/Bayushi Bushi 1

Shosuro Rank One: Keep a number of extra dice equal to School Rank when using Stealth.

Shosuro Rank Two: When an opponent is unaware/helpless (TN 5 to Hit), Raises are not limited by Void.

Shosuro Rank Three: May Raise TN to be Hit by 10 or 20, but all actions have their TN increased by the same amount.

Bayushi Rank One: Add unkept dice equal to School Rank to all initiative rolls.

Honor/Glory: 0.4/3.7

Skills: Acting 6, Archery 6, Athletics 3, Battle 3, Defense 4, Etiquette 5, Explosives 3, Horsemanship 4, Iaijutsu 5, Kenjutsu 5, Law 3, Lore (Kolot) 2, Medicine 4, Ninjutsu (shuriken) 5, Poetry 3, Poison 4, Seduction 6, Sincerity 5, Stealth 6

Advantages/Disadvantages: Apparent Honor (2), Dangerous Beauty, Heartless, Shadow Brand (1), Social Position (Emerald Magistrate)/Dark Secret (Shosuro assassin), Sworn Enemies (many).

Equipment: Kimono, puzzle box (contains poisons), sash of an Emerald Magistrate.

Doji Hoturi, Daimyo of the Doji Family and Champion of the Crane

FIRE 4	AIR 4 Reflexes 5
EARTH 4	WATER 3
VOID 4	

TN to be Hit: 25

School/Rank: Kakita Bushi 5

Honor/Glory: 5/7.6

Skills: Battle 4, Courtier 9, Defense 6, Etiquette 9, Heraldry 6, History 5, Iaijutsu 8, Katana (specialized weapon skill) 4, Kenjutsu 4, Kyujutsu (archery) 6, Lore (Lion Clan) 4, Meditation 4, Poetry 10, Political Maneuvering 6, Shintao 5, Sincerity 10, Tea Ceremony 7.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Benten's Blessing, Cadence, Kharmic Tie (Bayushi Kachiko), Luck (rank 1), True Friend (Kakita Toshimoko)/Compulsion (women), Dark Secret (illegitimate son, Bayushi Dairu), True Love (Bayushi Kachiko).

Equipment: Excellent daisho set (Kakita blade), excellent kimono.

Doji Takashi, Crane Daimyo and Sword Collector

FIRE 4 Agility 5	AIR 3 Reflexes 4
EARTH 3 Stamina 4	WATER 3
VOID 3	

TN to be Hit: 20 (25 in light armor)

School/Rank: Kakita Duelist 4

Honor/Glory: 3.4/5.9

Skills: Archery 4, Athletics 3, Bard 2, Battle 2, Courtier 4, Defense 5, Etiquette 4, History 2, Iaijutsu 6, Jiu-jutsu (Mizu-do) 4, Katana (specialized weapon skill) 2, Kenjutsu 5, Lore (shugenja) 2, Lore (swords) 6, Oratory 3, Poetry 4, Shintao 2, Sincerity 5, Tea Ceremony 2, Theology 2.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Gentry, Heart of Vengeance (Lion Clan), Social Position (minor daimyo)/Fascination (swords)

Equipment: Fine kimono, daisho set (exquisite quality, +1k1 damage and +1 Katana skill)

Doji Kimi, Unfaithful Wife to Doji Takashi

FIRE 2	AIR 2 Awareness 3
EARTH 2 Strength 3	WATER 2 Perception 3
VOID 3	

TN to be Hit: 10

School/Rank: Asahina shugenja 1

Honor/Glory: 2.3/4.6

Skills: Bard 3, Calligraphy 4, Courtier 3, Dance 4, Etiquette 3, Meditation 3, Sincerity 5, Shintao 2, Tea Ceremony 2, Theology 2.

Spells: 3 Air, 2 Earth, and 1 Water, as deemed appropriate by the GM.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Dangerous Beauty, Social Position (Asahina Tamako's cousin, Doji Takashi's wife)/Dark Secret (affair with Isawa Yoritaka), Jealousy (Isawa Yoritaka), True Love (Isawa Yoritaka).

Equipment: Fine kimono

Mirumoto Daini, Destined Hero

FIRE 4	AIR 4
EARTH 3 Stamina 4	WATER 3 Strength 4
VOID 4	

TN to be Hit: 29

School/Rank: Mirumoto Bushi 4

Honor/Glory: 3.4/7.5

Skills: Archery 4, Battle 3, Courtier 6, Defense 6, History 4, Heraldry 3, Horsemanship 2, Iaijutsu 5, Kenjutsu 8, Lore: Naga Culture 3, Lore: Shugenja 3, Meditation 4, Shintao 4, Yarijutsu 4.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Allies (Kitsuki family, Naga), Ambidextrous, Benten's Blessing, Great Destiny, Luck (rank one), Quick, Way of the Land (Dragon lands)/Brash, True Love (the Mara), Vain

Equipment: Fine kimono, fine daisho set, light armor.

Kitsuki Yasu, Daimyo of the Kitsuki

FIRE 3 Intelligence 4	AIR 3 Awareness 4
EARTH 3	WATER 3

	Perception 4
VOID 3	

TN to be Hit: 15

School/Rank: Kitsuki Magistrate 5

Honor/Glory: 3.5/8.4

Skills: Courtier 8, Etiquette 4, Heraldry 8, Herbalism 9, History 6, Horsemanship 5, Kenjutsu 4, Law 7, Lore (all) 5, Nazado 10, Poison 7.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Clear Thinker, Large, Magic Resistance, Voice/Brash, Driven (justice), Sworn Enemy (Bayushi Kachiko).

Equipment: Fine kimono

Matsu Tsuko, Daimyo of the Matsu and Champion of the Lion

FIRE 5 Agility 6	AIR 4 Reflexes 6
EARTH 4	WATER 5
VOID 3	

TN to be Hit: 30

School/Rank: Matsu Bushi 5

Honor/Glory: 4.3/8.5

Skills: Athletics 3, Battle 6, Hand-to-Hand 5, Heraldry 4, History 4, Iaijutsu 2, Intimidation 5, Kenjutsu 7, Knife 5, Kyujutsu 2, Lore (Bushido) 5, Shintao 3, Sincerity 2, Wrestling 3.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Death Trance, Strength of the Earth (rank two), Great Destiny, Leadership/Brash, Driven (destroy Crane), Lost Love (Akodo Arasou)

Equipment: Fine kimono, excellent daisho set (+1k1 damage).

Matsu Gohei, the Butcher of the Clan Wars

FIRE 3 Agility 5	AIR 3 Reflexes 4
EARTH 4	WATER 5 Strength 6
VOID 3	

TN to be Hit: 20

School/Rank: Matsu Bushi 4

Honor/Glory: 4.3/3.4

Skills: Athletics 4, Battle 6, History 2, Intimidation 4, Iaijutsu 4, Jiu-jutsu 3, Kenjutsu 6, Kyujutsu 3, Sincerity 3.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Combat Reflexes, Student to Water/Brash, Overconfident, Proud
Equipment: Kimono, daisho set.

Ikoma Uso, Lion Spy

FIRE 3 Intelligence 4	AIR 4
EARTH 3 Willpower 4	WATER 2 Perception 4
VOID 3	

TN to be Hit: 20

School/Rank: Ikoma Spymaster 3

Rank One: Taking the Measure. Gain a free Raise against opponent (in social or combat interactions) by making a Contested Awareness roll.

Rank Two: The Lion Cannot Fail. When rolling with Sincerity, add 3k1 to the roll.

Rank Three: Perception Becomes Victory. Make an Investigation/Perception roll at the beginning of combat at a TN of (opponent's Insight Rank x 5). If successful, may make an additional attack each round against this opponent for this combat.

Honor/Glory: 1.2/4.3

Skills: Bard 3, Calligraphy 3, Courtier 5, Defense 4, Etiquette 6, Heraldry 4, Investigation 5, Kenjutsu 4, Law 3, Lore (many) 2, Manipulation 5, Meditation 3, Oratory 3, Research 3, Shintao 2, Sincerity 6, Stealth 4.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Apparent Honor (2), Blackmail (many)

Equipment: Fine kimono, wakizashi (1k2).

Shiba Tsumenitsu, Phoenix Daimyo

FIRE 4 Intelligence 5	AIR 5
EARTH 3	WATER 3 Perception 5
VOID 4	

TN to be Hit: 25

School/Rank: Shiba Bushi 4

Honor/Glory: 2.4/5.8

Skills: Athletics 5, Battle 4, Calligraphy 3, Courtier 5, Defense 4, Etiquette 5, History 3, Iaijutsu 7, Jiu-jutsu (hand-to-hand) 3, Kenjutsu 6, Law 3, Lore (iai-jutsu) 3, Manipulation 4, Oratory 2, Poetry 3, Rhetoric 4, Shintao 4, Sincerity 6.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Allies (Matsu family, Shiba family), Gentry, Kharmic Tie (Mirumoto Sanbe), Luck (rank 1), Social Position (daimyo)/Jealousy (swordsmanship), Proud, Nemesis (Mirumoto Sanbe), Sworn Enemy (Mirumoto Sanbe).
Equipment: Fine kimono, fine daisho set

Isawa Tanaka, Phoenix Shugenja,
Assistant to Isawa Tsuke

FIRE 5	AIR 3
EARTH 3	WATER 2
VOID 3	

TN to be Hit: 15

School/Rank: Isawa Shugenja (fire) 3

Honor/Glory: 2.3/3.5

Skills: Athletics 3, Calligraphy 3, Courtier 2, Defense 3, Etiquette 4, Kenjutsu 4, Lore (Shuegnja) 4, Meditation 5, Research 3, Sincerity 4, Shintao 3, Spellcraft 5.

Spells: *Sense, Commune, Summon*, (Fire 1) *Fires of Purity, Fires That Cleanse, Fury of Osano-Wo, Katana of Fire, Wings of Fire*, (Fire 2) *Fires From Within, Summon Fire Spirit*, (Fire 3) *Breath of the Fire Dragon, Fist of Osano-Wo, Heart of the Inferno*, (Air 1) *Quiescence of Air, Tempest of Air*, (Earth 1) *Force of Will*.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Sensei (Isawa Tsuke)/Bad Reputation (arrogant), Dark Secret (was friends with Isawa Gonto)

Equipment: Kimono, wakizashi, scroll satchel.

Isawa Yoritaka, Phoenix Daimyo and
Disgraceful Womanizer

FIRE 3 Intelligence 4	AIR 4
EARTH 3	WATER 3
VOID 3	

TN to be Hit: 20

School/Rank: Isawa shugenja (Air) 3

Honor/Glory: 1.6/6.1

Skills: Bard 2, Calligraphy 3, Dance 3, Etiquette 4, Investigation 3, Law 1, Lore (shugenja) 3, Meditation 3, Oratory 3, Poetry 5, Seduction 6, Shintao 2, Theology 4

Spells: 4 Air, 4 Earth, 3 Fire, 1 Water, as chosen by the GM.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Gentry, Luck (rank 1), Social Position (minor daimyo)/Bad Reputation (womanizer), Compulsion (womanizing), Lechery
Equipment: Fine kimono

Ide Tadaji, Unicorn Ambassador,
Daimyo of the Ide

FIRE 4	AIR 4
EARTH 3	WATER 3
VOID 4	

TN to be Hit: 20

School/Rank: Ide Emissary 4

Honor/Glory: 2.4/6.2

Skills: Commerce 4, Courtier 6, Etiquette 5, History 3, Law 4, Lore (Politics) 4, Oratory 3, Shintao 3, Theology 2, Tantojutsu 4.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Clear Thinker, Social Position, Voice/Bad Fortune, Lame

Equipment: Fine kimono, walking cane, tanto.

Shinjo Shono, son of the Unicorn
Clan Champion

FIRE 3	AIR 3
EARTH 3	WATER 3
VOID 2	

TN to be Hit: 15

School/Rank: Shinjo bushi 3

Honor/Glory: 3.7/5.3

Skills: Animal Husbandry 2, Battle 3, Courtier 1, Defense 3, Etiquette 2, Horse Archery 4, Horsemanship 7, Hunting 4, Kenjutsu 4, Sincerity 3, Stealth 2, Yomanri 4.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Absolute Direction, Social Position (Yokatsu's eldest son)/Idealistic

Equipment: Fine kimono, fine daisho set

Miya Satoshi, heir to the Miya family

FIRE 3	AIR 3 Reflexes 4
EARTH 3	WATER 5
VOID 3	

TN to be Hit: 20

School/Rank: Miya Shisha 1/Matsu Bushi 3

Honor/Glory: 2.8/7.6

Skills: Archery 4, Battle 3, Calligraphy 1, Courtier 1, Defense 2, Diplomacy 1, Etiquette 3, Heraldry 4, History 2, Horsemanship 2, Hunting 3, Iaijutsu 2, Kenjutsu 4, Manipulation 2, Sincerity 2

Advantages/Disadvantages: Combat Reflexes, Multiple Schools, Social Position (Miya family daimyo)/Brash, Insensitive, Overconfident.

Equipment: Fine kimono, fine daisho.

Kuni Nakiro, Well-Meaning Shugenja

FIRE 3	AIR 2
EARTH 4	WATER 3
VOID 3	

TN to be Hit: 10

School/Rank: Kuni shugenja 2

Honor/Glory: 2.2/2.4

Skills: Calligraphy 3, Courtier 1, Defense 3, History 2, Etiquette 2, Jiu-jutsu 1, Kenjutsu 2, Lore (Phoenix Clan) 5, Lore (Shadowlands) 4, Medicine 2, Meditation 3, Research 4, Shintao 2.

Spells: *Sense, Commune, Summon*, (Earth 1) *Earth's Stagnation*, (Earth 2) *Summon Earth Kami*, (Earth 3) *Preservation*, (Water 1) *Purify Water, Reversal of Fortunes*, (Fire 1) *Evil Ward, The Fires That Cleanse*, (Fire 2) *Fire From Within*.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Clear Thinker, Strength of the Earth (rank 2)/Dark Secret

Equipment: Kimono, wakizashi

Typical Bayushi bushi (interchangeable)

FIRE 3	AIR 3
EARTH 2	WATER 2
VOID 2	

TN to be Hit: 15 (20 in light armor)

School/Rank: Bayushi Bushi 1

Honor/Glory: 1.5/1.0

Skills: Athletics 3, Bard 2, Courtier 2, Defense 3, Heraldry 2, Iaijutsu 3, Jiu-jutsu 3, Kenjutsu 5, Kyujutsu (Archery) 4, Sincerity 5, Stealth 2, Yarijutsu 3.

Advantages/Disadvantages: None

Equipment: Light armor, daisho set, yari.

Typical Scorpion Courtier

FIRE 2 Intelligence 3	AIR 3 Awareness 4
EARTH 2 Willpower 3	WATER 2 Perception 4
VOID 3	

TN to be Hit: 10

School/Rank: Bayushi Courtier 1

Honor/Glory: 1.2/2.3

Skills: Courtier 4, Dance 2, Etiquette 4, Investigation 3, Kenjutsu 2, Law 3, Oratory 2, Poetry 3, Seduction 4, Sincerity 5, Sleight-of-Hand 3, Stealth 3, Theology 2.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Dangerous Beauty

Equipment: Fine kimono, fan, wakizashi.

Appendix #1: The VILLAINS

Kakita (Goju) Naiya, Fallen Crane

FIRE 2 Agility 3	AIR 3
EARTH 3	WATER 2

TN to be Hit: 15

School/Rank: Kakita Bushi 2

Glory: 3.6

Skills: Courtier 2, Dance 3, Defense 2, Etiquette 4, Iaijutsu 4, Sincerity 5

Advantages/Disadvantages: Strength of the Earth (rank one)/Insensitive, Vanity (looks)

Equipment: Fine kimono

Togashi (Goju) Zato, Fallen Ise Zumi

FIRE 3	AIR 3
EARTH 3	WATER 3 Strength 4

TN to be Hit: 15

School/Rank: Togashi Ise Zumi 2 (Tattoos: Ocean, Tiger)

Glory: 2.8

Skills: Athletics 4, Bojutsu 3, Etiquette 2, Jujutsu (kaze-do) 5, Shintao 4, Sincerity 3, Wrestling 2.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Large/Ascetic

Equipment: Clothing

Yogo Junzo, fallen daimyo of the Yogo family

FIRE 3	AIR 6 Awareness 7
EARTH 4	WATER 3
VOID 2	

Shadow Points: 4

TN to be Hit: 30

School/Rank: Yogo Shugenja 5

Honor/Glory: 1.1/8.8

Skills: Calligraphy 9, Courtier 2, History 8, Kenjutsu 3, Lore (maho) 7, Lore (Shadowlands) 5, Meditation 5, Shintao 8, Sincerity 6, Theology 8.

Spells: Any spells he may require.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Crafty, Great Destiny, Innate Abilities (all Air spells), Strength of the Earth (rank two)/Bad Reputation (temperamental), Insensitive, Phobia (women), Yogo Curse.

Equipment: Excellent kimono, wakizashi, scroll satchel.

Shosuro, the False Kachiko, minion of Shadow

FIRE 6	AIR 6 Awareness 7
EARTH 4 Willpower 6	WATER 4 Perception 6

TN to be Hit: 30

Attacks: 9k6 (with ninja-to).

Damage: Ninja-to (6k2)

Skills: Acting 10, Athletics 4, Courtier 6, Defense 7, Etiquette 5, Ninjutsu 7, Sincerity 8, Stealth 9.

Wounds: 72: Dead.

Special Abilities: Shosuro has the complete set of Shadow abilities: Shadow Invulnerability (take double damage from crystal attacks and half damage from all other attacks); Shadow-Walk (move instantaneously between any two shadows within 100 feet); Insubstantial (pass through solid matter); Mimicry (perfectly imitate any other person); Shadow Stealth (keep two extra dice on Stealth rolls).

Soshi Bantaro, fallen daimyo of the Soshi family

FIRE 1	AIR 5
EARTH 2	WATER 2 Perception 4
VOID 3	

Shadowlands Taint Rank: 1.3

TN to be Hit: 25

School/Rank: Soshi Shugenja 3

Honor/Glory: 0.0/7.4

Skills: Calligraphy 8, Courtier 5, Etiquette 3, Herbalism 6, Law 5, Lore (Maho) 4, Lore (shugenja) 3, Meditation 7, Shintao 7, Sincerity 6, Tantojutsu 5, Theology 10.

Spells: *Sense, Commune, Summon*, (Air 1) *By the Light of Lord Moon, Cloak of Night, Quiescence of Air, Tempest of Air, Way of Deception, Wind-Born Slumbers*, (Air 2) *Call Upon the Wind, Know the Shadows, Mists of Illusion, Secrets on the Wind, Whispering Wind*, (Air 3) *The Eye Shall Not See, Summon Fog*, (Air 4) *Call Upon the Wind, Wall of Air*, (Water 1) *Path to Inner Peace, Reversal of Fortunes, Sympathetic Energies*, (Water 2) *Reflective Pool*, (Earth 1) *Earth's Stagnation, Know the Ground*.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Higher Purpose (ambition), Innate Abilities (all Air spells), Shadow Brand/Bad Reputation (overconfident), Brash, Dark Secret (murdered his father), Shadowlands Taint, Weakness (Fire).

Equipment: Excellent kimono, scroll satchel, tanto.

Bayushi Shoji, the Fallen Lord, Undead Horror

FIRE 3 Intelligence 5	AIR 5 Awareness 6
EARTH 4 Willpower 5	WATER 2 Perception 5

Shadowlands Taint Rank: 6.0

TN to be Hit: 25

School/Rank: Bayushi Bushi Rank 5

Rank One: Add unkept dice equal to School Rank to all initiative rolls.

Rank Two: TN to hit an opponent who attacked him and missed on the previous round is 5 + Armor.

Rank Three: Disarm an opponent by rolling by rolling Kenjutsu/Agility against opponent's Weapon Skill x 5. With two Raises, the disarmed weapon ends up in his hand.

Rank Four: Two attacks per round.

Rank Five: Declare Raises after the attack roll.

Wounds: 18: +3; 27: +6; 36: +10; 45: +15; 54: +20; 81: Dead.

Skills: Acting 4, Battle 4, Courtier 6, Defense 5, History 4, Iaijutsu 5, Katana 8, Kenjutsu 5, Kyujutsu 3, Law 5, Poison 5, Sincerity 6, Shintao 4, Stealth 5.

Carapace Armor: 9

Advantages/Disadvantages: Clear Thinker/Benten's Curse, True Love (Bayushi Kachiko), Unluck (rank one).

Shadowlands Gifts and Abilities: Fear 3, Billowing Darkness (create a cloud of darkness with a radius of 10' for every rank of Taint, gaining a point of Taint each time), Blessing of the Dark One (+1 Wounds per rank), Superior Invulnerability (no damage from normal weapons, half damage from all magic except jade, full damage from jade, crystal, obsidian, and true nemruanai), Unearthly Regeneration (heals a number of Wounds per round equal to Taint rank), Unholy Vision (can always see, even in darkness, smoke, or when magically blinded).

Appendix #2: Swords

History of the Sword “Singing Rain”

The sword Genka Ame (“Singing Rain”) was forged by the famed Crane weaponsmith Kakita Tozaru during the reign of Hantei the 31st. The thirty-first Hantei was noted for his strong disapproval of the quarrels between the Clans, and even once took his Winter Court in Kyuden Hida, in order to persuade the other Clans to show more respect for the duty and suffering of the Crab. Perhaps you have read the novel *Meifumado*, which recounts that infamous winter.

Kakita Tozaru said he was inspired to create his blade by the sound of rain beating on the tiles before his smithy. He said the rain made a music more beautiful than anything he had heard in the courts, and declared to the Kakita daimyo that he would capture that beauty in a blade. His words were heard, and mocked, by a courtier named Soshi Tsume, who averred that no mere creation of steel could match the perfect beauty of nature. This was indeed the view of the entire court, and Tozaru was subjected to much mockery and loss of face.

Kakita Tozaru spent an entire year forging the sword, working daily in his smithy. During his labors, stray sparks from the forge destroyed his vision in one eye, and he was half-deafened by the ceaseless pounding of the forge hammers. But when he finally presented the sword as a gift to his daimyo, there were none in the court who could deny that he had captured the perfection of rain in the steel.

The Scorpion Ancestral Blade, Itsuwari

The ancestral blade of the Scorpion is a 3k2 katana.

The sword has a special property: it makes the wielder appear to be standing next to where he actually is. As a result, the wielder’s TN to be Hit is figured at 10 x Reflexes rather than the usual 5 x Reflexes.

On the second and subsequent rounds of combat, opponents can roll Kenjutsu/Awareness at TN 25 to see through the illusion. With a success, that opponent is no longer affected by the sword. Each opponent makes the roll separately.