

Fist of the Earth

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

by Robert Hobart

A savage earthquake strikes the Imperial capital of Otosan Uchi. Disaster rises on every side, and only the courage and skill of samurai can save the city.

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A four-hour time block has been allocated for playing the game (or this round of the game), but the actual playing time will be about three 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 TOURNAMENT SHOULD NOT BE RUN COLD!

This adventure is a Low/Mid-Rank adventure. This means that characters of any School Rank from 1 to 3 will be allowed to play. Characters of School Rank 4 or higher will probably be too powerful to be properly challenged by this adventure. Details on adjusting the module to different character power-levels are given under “Adjusting for Party Strength.”

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 Low/Mid-Rank adventure, and the encounters have been optimized for a party of average Rank Two. Although many 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 One):

- Lower the TNs for physical challenges (but not for rescuing Hantei the 38th from drowning) by 5.
- If the PCs fight the Goju in the Hito Water Gardens, they face four Goju. If they make it to the Chamber of Shadows, they face six normal Goju, and Goju Hoseki is not present.
- The Shadowbeast is TN 20 to hit. Allow the Shadowbeast to take half damage from jade and magic. Normal weapons inflict 1 point of damage.

High-End Party (most/all characters Rank Three)

- In the Hito Water Gardens, the PCs face nine Goju. In the Chamber of Shadows, they face eight normal Goju.
- The Shadowbeast rolls 6k4 for attack, 5k3 for damage, and has 120 Wounds.

Adventure Summary and Background

This adventure marks a major turning point in the chronicle of the Emerald Empire. A terrible earthquake is about to strike the capital city. The PCs will be among those caught in the disaster, and their responses will have a profound effect on the future of the Empire.

As with most natural disasters in Rokugan, this earthquake is not simply an accident of nature. It has been caused by the Dragon/Oracle of Earth himself, who has sensed a growing and terrible Darkness within the capital city. The source of this evil is none other than Hantei Sotorii, the Emperor's son and sole heir, whose soul fell prey to the Living Darkness during the terrifying weeks in which he was a prisoner of the Bloodspeaker Cult. The Goju, the nameless servants of the Living Darkness, are gathering in the city, preparing to claim Sotorii as their own and bring the Empire one step closer to being unmade.

The Earth Dragon does not understand the nature of this nameless evil; it only knows that it is a torment to it, a nameless agony gnawing at its very being, even as the power of Fu Leng is rising once again. Finally, driven to madness, the Dragon acts – just as the Darkness has planned, wrecking destruction upon the city. The indiscriminate wrath of the Dragon creates the opportunities the Goju have been waiting for.

How much of this the player characters learn depends on how they respond and where they go when the disaster strikes. Once the action gets underway, many events will be happening near-simultaneously, and the GM may need to switch back and forth quickly between separate groups of PCs. This should be done in a dramatic fashion, leaving each group at a “cliff-hanger” so as to maintain the sense of tension and gathering disaster.

During the course of the adventure, the PCs may traverse a large part of the Imperial city, and encounter many NPCs. A slightly-simplified map to this part of the city (adapted from the “Otosan Uchi” boxed set, Alderac 2001) is included at the end of this adventure, along with a map of the tunnels where one of the plots

will reach its finale. The GM should study these carefully and become familiar with the city and what the PCs may encounter as they rush from place to place.

Introduction

It is the last day of the Month of the Dog, the Month of Shinjo (October), in the Imperial year 1122. In less than two months, the Emperor will depart the capital of Otosan Uchi for the next Winter Court, to be held in the lands of the Unicorn Clan. With the Lion and Crane at war, and the Dragon and the Phoenix seemingly moving toward conflict as well, the Emperor is loath to show favoritism to any of these Clans.

For now, however, all such concerns are forgotten as the capital city is lit up by the celebration of the Bon Festival. Throughout the day, parades, dances, and colored streamers have brightened the streets of Otosan Uchi. Samurai and commoners alike join in reflecting on their deeds for the past year, honoring the dead, and praying for the guidance of their ancestors in the coming year.

Allow the PCs a chance to describe and introduce themselves. They are each in the city for the Bon Festival. Some of them may know each other from past adventures, and it can be assumed that they will see each other once or twice over the course of the day. They will not necessarily be together when the action of the scenario begins, however – see below.

As evening approaches, a huge barge floats down the center of the River of the Golden Sun. The Emperor himself is aboard, along with prestigious members of his court, and people crowd the bank, bowing and hoping for the blessing of the Shining Prince. The river is a constellation of stars as hundreds of candles are set afloat on small paper rafts, each candle remembering someone who died in this year of wars and troubles. The lights flow downstream and around the Emperor's barge, as though supplicating him to bring peace back to the Empire. Overhead, Agasha fireworks begin to go off with loud bangs, filling the sky with bright colors.

At this point, establish where the PCs are on the map of the Ekihokey (The Inner City of Otosan Uchi, shown on GM'S AID #2). The city's notable locations are briefly described in GM'S AID #4.

- PCs with Glory of 5.0 or greater, or who have a direct connection to the Hantei line (Imperial

spouse, Ear of the Emperor advantage, etc.) have been honored with a place on the Emperor's barge.

- PCs with Glory 4.0 or better, any Imperial family PCs who did not qualify for the barge, and any PCs who have played successfully through the adventure *Fate of a Hantei* can choose to be with the Imperial heir, Hantei Sotorii, in the Hito Water Gardens.
- Other PCs are with the crowds of samurai (and not a few commoners) on the riverbanks and bridges near the barge. Allow them to choose from the four main locations where samurai have gathered: the Eastern Bridge (Naka Higachi, the Road of Fast Hopes), the Western Bridge (Naka Nihachi), the Imperial Parade Grounds, and the rest of the Hito Water Gardens. If they ask, inform them of where any major NPCs are located.

PCs should not be in the Road of Precious Shadow area (directly below the walls of the Forbidden City) unless they are ronin or enjoy the company of heimin, since this is where the Ekihokei's largest population of heimin and hinin dwell, prostrating themselves on the bank as the Emperor's barge floats by.

Afloat, the Imperial Barge

The barge is a huge wooden platform topped with a silk pavilion roof. Hundreds of colored lanterns light the barge in a kaleidoscope of brilliant colors. In the center of the barge is the Emperor himself, accompanied by the daimyos of the Imperial families (Otomo Sorai, Miya Yoto, and Seppun Daiori). The rest of the barge is occupied by other high-ranking courtiers and guests, including the Imperial Chancellor and the Lion Clan Champion.

The Emperor will not speak directly with any of the PCs unless they were involved in rescuing his son in the adventure *Fate of a Hantei*, in which case he will briefly meet with them to express his gratitude for their service. The other NPCs, however, may interact with the PCs at greater length:

Otomo Sorai. The slim, elegant, perfectly-dressed daimyo of the Otomo family is known for a razor-sharp wit and a talent for ruthless manipulation. As far as he is concerned, the current troubles between the Clans are all to the good, since they prevent any possible threat to the Hantei dynasty. He will do his best to sow discord between any PCs from different Clans, all while staying within the bounds of proper etiquette and manners.

Seppun Daiori. The daimyo of the Seppun family is a worried-looking man who always keeps his eight-year-old son nearby. He will speak pleasantly with any honorable PCs, but is often distracted by the need to keep an eye on his son. If any PC should comment on this, Daiori will either quickly excuse himself (if the PC seems rude or if their words can be interpreted as menacing), or softly observe that his son is all that remains of his late mother (if the PC seems sympathetic or innocent).

Miya Yoto. The aged daimyo of the Miya family will remember PCs who he has met before (in the adventures *Occult Murders* and *Winter Court: Kanrinrin's Duty*) and will chat pleasantly with them, despite his obvious frailty and infirmity. He will also express concern about the wars spreading across the Empire. "Some among us seem to regard such conflicts as little more than a game," he remarks, nodding toward Otomo Sorai. "But I never forget the suffering and destruction which accompanies war, not just for the samurai but also for the helpless *heimin* and *hinin*."

The Imperial Chancellor, Kakita Yoshi. Yoshi is careful to stand on the opposite side of the Emperor from Matsu Tsuko (below), and while he will avoid directly antagonizing the Lady of Lions, he will not hesitate to needle any lower-ranking Lions on board. He will speak disparagingly of the Lion Clan's "brutal" and "savage" conquest of Toshi Ranbo, makes sure to mention the recent disgrace which has fallen on the name of the Akodo family, and so forth. On other topics, his principle goal is to win allies for the Crane Clan.

Matsu Tsuko, Champion of the Lion. Tsuko has just been confirmed to her new position, following the disgrace of Akodo Toturi. She is aggressively hostile to any Cranes on the barge, including Kakita Yoshi. She is dressed in formal heavy armor for this occasion, and stands at rigid attention, ignoring the chatter of the courtiers surrounding her (particularly the remarks of Kakita Yoshi, who she dismisses – to anyone who asks – as a "yapping dog"). To fellow Lion and Lion allies she will speak quietly of her plans to carry forward the war against the Crane until all the Lion's "lost territories" have been retaken. "Toshi Ranbo was only the first step," she promises with quiet satisfaction.

Court historian Otomo Hiroshi. Hiroshi is a courtier, but also a fit and healthy man with a quick wit. He is an official chronicler for the Empire, and PCs who have played any of the Interactive adventures in the Living Rokugan campaign have made his acquaintance before. He is the only one on the barge

who will survive without any help (he is the destined historian of the Living Rokugan campaign).

Bayushi Goshu. The master courtier, his face hidden beneath a fancy wooden mempo, circulates around the raft with a silken smile on his handsome lips. He will offer comments on the foolishness of the other Clans and the futility of war, always choosing his words and audience with deliberate care. If anyone takes offense, Goshu smoothly apologizes and changes the subject.

Ashore, the Naka Nihachi (Western Bridge)

The samurai, courtiers, and wealthy commoners crowded onto this bridge are all lowering paper rafts with lit candles into the water. Many folk speak personal prayers or whisper goodbyes as they set afloat the candles which symbolize their lost ones. If any PCs are here, it may be assumed that they are also setting candles afloat on the river. There are several NPCs here who the PCs may find of interest:

Doji Hoturi and **Doji Kuwanen.** These two brothers, the sons of the Emerald Champion and the leaders of the Doji family, stand quietly at the apex of the bridge, laying paper rafts with candles into the river one after the other. A small group of servants helps them. Each flickering candle records a Crane who has perished in the current war with the Lion, and there are hundreds of them. Hoturi is grim and silent, very different from his normal charming self, as he lays each candle-raft reverently into the water. Kuwanen is slightly more talkative, but still serious. Neither man will speak more than a few polite words with anyone else on the bridge, although they will share condolences with any Crane NPCs who have lost relatives, and express concern for the future now that the “blood-mad Matsu” rule the Lion Clan.

Kakita Enryo. This Crane daimyo, aging handsomely, is here remembering his lost daughters, Seka and Ayami, both of whom have died in the last two years. (PCs who have played the adventures *The Ties That Bind* and *Lies, Lies, Lies* may be acquainted with the incidents which took their lives.) Enryo is a broken man, his passionate nature extinguished by heartache and grief. He is here to say a final goodbye to his daughters before shaving his head and retiring to a monastery.

Kitsuki Yumi. PCs who have played the adventures *Kitsuki Evidence* or *A Magistrate's Duty* may have met this Emerald Magistrate before; she is leaving a candle

for her one-time apprentice Kitsuki Benjiro, who died at the hands of bandits. She will greet these persons and discuss recent events with them. Yumi is greatly concerned about the escalating tensions between the Dragon and Phoenix Clans, and mentions that her Clan's Agasha family is even more upset about this. “The Agasha have gone so far as to suggest that they might not fight beside the Mirumoto, if it comes to war. Such dissension has not stricken our Clan in recorded history. I only hope it will not grow worse.”

Yasuki Taka, ubiquitous Crab merchant daimyo. Taka is officially here in Otosan Uchi to deliver an apology in court for his family's involvement in smuggling gaijin pepper (gunpowder). Now that such unpleasant business is out of the way, he is busily making a few koku with his peddler's cart. He will try to sell worthless trinkets and sweets to anyone he can, while babbling cheerfully about inane topics. Still, sharp PCs may notice the glittering intelligence in Taka's eyes, and the way he misses nothing that is happening around him.

Ashore, the Naka Higachi (Eastern Bridge)

The crowd on the eastern bridge, a mixture of courtiers and commoners, is watching the candles float by beneath them on the smooth surface of the river. This group is far distant from the Emperor's raft, visible from here only as a constellation of lights in the river.

The only noteworthy NPC here is **Kuni Yori**, the sinister, face-painted daimyo of the Kuni family. Yori will speak with any PCs here in his chilling whisper of a voice.

- He will discuss the recent tensions between the Crab and the Crane clans, and their successful resolution. “The honorable Yasuki Taka has just delivered a formal apology in the courts to resolve the matter. Of course, such an apology was purely formality, since the two daimyo who broke the Imperial laws had already taken their own lives in penance.”
- He will also point out the presence of Hantei Sotorii in the Hito Water Gardens (as described below), and use this to sound out the PCs on their attitudes toward the Hantei dynasty. “There have been many rumors of late, regarding young Sotorii's health and welfare. Good to see him out in the air again, is it not?”

Ashore, the Hito Water Gardens

PCs will only be allowed in the garden if they have Glory 4.0 or better, or if they participated in the scenario “Fate of a Hantei.”

This large and splendid garden, one of the most famous locations in the Ekihokei, is a wondrous maze of streams, boulders, shrubs, trees, koi ponds, winding gravel paths, small arched bridges, and gazeboes. There are many private corners and shadowed nooks where courtiers and lovers can meet privately. At the moment, however, almost everyone is down by the riverside, gazing out at the Emperor’s barge and the fireworks.

Under a large gazebo, lit by many colored lanterns, is the Imperial heir, Hantei Sotorii, making his first public appearance since his kidnapping by the Bloodspeakers last year. He is accompanied by the watchful presence of Doji Satsume, the Emerald Champion, along with an assortment of high-ranking courtiers who have been honored to share the presence of the Son of Heaven’s only child.

If any PCs in this area have Shadow Corruption (possibly acquired in the adventures *A Foreign Legacy* or *Darkness Beyond Darkness*), they can roll **Simple Awareness** at TN 20 to notice shadowy figures moving faintly in the darker corners of the garden. Any time the PC tries to focus on one of them, or to look closely, they melt into the shadows.

Hantei Sotorii will not speak with anyone directly – the young heir hides behind the sheltering strength of the Emerald Champion. Besides the Imperial heir and the Champion, there are several other notable NPCs here, as well as a large assortment of courtiers who are milling through the garden, hoping to get a glimpse of the young Hantei. The following specific NPCs are present:

Isawa Kaede: the famed Phoenix shugenja-ko and Acolyte of Void is also the frequent companion of Hantei Sotorii. She is very pretty, with unusually dark skin and piercing eyes that seem to peer right into one’s soul. At present, those eyes are also somewhat clouded and reddish – Kaede is heartbroken by the recent fall of Akodo Toturi, which shattered their engagement. Any PC who rolls **Courtier/Awareness** at TN 15 or **Simple Awareness** at TN 20 can tell that Kaede is deeply troubled.

Kaede will make time to speak with any PCs who are shugenja, who have high Honor (Honor rank 4.0 or

higher), or who helped rescue the Emperor’s son (in the adventure *Fate of a Hantei*).

- If a PC politely mentions that she seems troubled, she will confide that she has suffered from unpleasant dreams of late. She will not describe the dreams, except to mention that they concern her late mother.
- If a PC is Phoenix, or has Allies or Favors with the Phoenix Clan, Kaede may also confide that her father, the Master of Void, has vanished from the lands of the Phoenix.
- If any PCs mention or discuss the Imperial heir, Kaede will smile a little sadly. “I have done my best to be a friend to young Sotorii – he is quite unhappy with the way his father has kept him confined for the last year. I have tried to make him understand that it is merely his father’s concern for his safety, after the terrible events of last year. Still, I do not think such isolation has been good for him – he complains of always seeing people in his room, even when he should be alone. Understandable, I suppose, after his fearful days in the captivity of the Bloodspeakers.” PCs who make **Contested Awareness** rolls can tell that Kaede suspects there may be more to Sotorii’s complaints than mere fear. However, she will discuss the matter further.
- If any PC is uncouth enough to mention Toturi, or Kaede’s engagement, her face tightens into a cold mask, and she immediately ends the conversation.
- If any PCs point out the strange figures in the shadows, Kaede will peer into the darkness for a time, then speak very quietly. “I have seen such things around my father’s house, since he vanished. I do not know if they are real, or merely phantoms or illusions.” She advises the PCs to be prepared for danger, although she will not (and cannot) be more specific.

Seppun Bake: The man who defines “toady” is here, contributing quotations from the Tao and fetid poems on the magnificence of the Hantei dynasty. His behavior toward the PCs will depend directly on their Glory – prominent PCs will get a lesser dose of toadying, while obscure PCs will be snubbed or insulted as occasion allows.

Ikoma Sansho: PCs who have played Evil Feeds Upon Itself may have met this brash, loud-voiced Ikoma bard, a brawler and storyteller who is a

throwback to his family's rough-and-ready founder. He is here as a favor to the Imperial heir, who enjoys his boisterous tales of courage and adventure. He will remember any PCs who wrestled with him when they met before, and offers a rematch to those who might desire it (much to the refined embarrassment of the courtiers here). His stats are listed at the end of the adventure.

Shiba Osagi: This Emerald Magistrate is a small, delicate young woman with piercing eyes and hair trimmed short. She is a bushi, but so gentle and delicate in her behavior that she is often mistaken for a harmless courtier. She is normally assigned to Dragon lands, but has returned to the Imperial capital for reassignment due to the current tensions between the Mirumoto and the Shiba family. She is quite irritated over this, considering her long and honorable service in Dragon lands over the last five years, and tends to look askance at any members of the Mirumoto family she happens to meet.

Ashore, the Imperial Training Grounds

This is a large open field, stamped flat by the tread of many samurai feet. The largest crowds in the Ekihokei are gathered here – there are over 300 people of the samurai caste, most of them accompanied by servants and bodyguards. Many of them are placing paper rafts with lanterns into the river, remembering relatives and friends who have died in the past year. Although there are fewer high-ranking persons here than elsewhere, the PCs can still meet some interesting NPCs:

Ide Tadaji, Unicorn ambassador to the Imperial court. Tadaji is a charming middle-aged man with a carefully-styled goatee and a pleasant, slightly off-kilter smile. He is a master of the Ide style of friendly, guileless diplomacy, and will speak pleasantly with anyone here, especially Crabs (with whom his Clan is currently loosely allied) and Cranes (with whom he has long cultivated good relations). His current favorite topic is the need to end the war between the Lion and Crane, which he views as a tragic waste of lives, resources, and effort. “The Lion have restored their honor through the capture of Toshi Ranbo. Cannot the war end now, and blessed peace return to the Empire?”

Otaku Kamoko, young daimyo of the Otaku family. Kamoko is here to leave a candle for her late mother, whose death still haunts her after several years. She will be instinctively hostile to Lion PCs but is polite to others. She will remember by name any PCs who competed in the Unicorn tournament last year (as

depicted in the adventure *A Foreign Legacy*), and will praise any of them who distinguished themselves there.

Isawa Nobuyoshi, Inquisitor. PCs may have met Nobuyoshi in several previous adventures, including *Legacy of the Dark One*, *Fate of a Hantei*, and most recently *Kuro's Fire*. A grimly serious and fiercely dedicated Inquisitor, Nobuyoshi is especially intent on tracking down the Dark Oracle of Air, which is his former brother, Isawa Gidayu. He will be quite interested in any PCs who can recount encounters with the Dark Oracle (such as the adventures *The Ties That Bind* and *A Heart of Vengeance*). He has little interest in the current quarrel between the Dragon and Phoenix Clans, but takes it as a given that the Phoenix are not at fault (“we are always the Clan of peace, after all”).

Kitsuki Yasu, daimyo of the Kitsuki. Yasu 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 and especially Bayushi Kachiko. 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 irritated that his own Clan's Mirumoto family seems to be rushing heedlessly to war with the Phoenix. If any of the PCs are Mirumoto, he will berate them for their foolishness.

The Earth Dragon Strikes!

Once the PCs have had a chance to get into the spirit of things, talk, role-play, and meet the various notable NPCs, the earthquake begins:

Suddenly a deep, rumbling growl sounds, a noise like the roaring of a beast in torment. The ground vibrates beneath your feet and then heaves violently. The waters of the River of the Golden Sun are suddenly frothing and leaping like the ocean in a taifun, and screams echo everywhere. The Emperor's barge tosses helplessly on the heaving surface of the water. Buildings collapse in clouds of smoke and dust. One whole wall of the Forbidden City rips asunder with a sound like the roar of a demented god, and you can see the Imperial Palaces within tearing open and shattering. Then the clamor abruptly drops off to a fading rumble. Above the diminishing noise of shaking earth rise the wails of countless injured and terrified people, and the crackle of fires.

At this point, as the earthquake subsides, the specific experiences of the PCs depend on where they were when the quake began. From these beginnings, there are several different story “paths” for the PCs, although these paths may meet, overlap, or combine as the scenario progresses.

Scene #1: The Emperor’s Barge

The shock waves from the earthquake hit the barge with the force of a tsunami. The vessel climbs the side of a massive wave, amid shrieks and screams from the passengers. Then the massive vessel flips over like a leaf, hurling everyone into the heaving waters. You catch a brief glimpse of one courtier who manages, improbably, to make a perfect dive into the water. The other guests tumble into the heaving river with shouts and screams.

PCs can attempt similar dives, and can try to save others from the barge. Their chances of success are outlined in Plot-Path #1. Once in the water, they must swim for their lives, and can try to rescue the other passengers (especially the Emperor). After they make it ashore, the PCs can enter other plot-paths, depending on whether they go to the northern or southern riverbank.

Scene #2: The Naka Nihachi (Western Bridge)

The bridge shudders under your feet, then bucks like a mount fatally arrow-shot. Yasuki Taka turns with a merchant’s instinct for self-preservation and sprints toward the northern end of the bridge. An instant later, the bridge collapses, and timbers and bodies alike tumble toward the water in a horrible cacophony of noise. Taka makes a desperate leap and catches the broken ends of the bridge as the main body falls away behind him.

Any PCs on the Western Bridge who try to emulate Yasuki Taka must roll **Athletics/Reflexes** at TN 25 to leap to safety before they are dumped into the water. Aside from the PCs, Taka is the only NPC who successfully makes the leap.

Thos who fall in the water must swim for their lives. See Plot-Path #2, below, for details. PCs who make it to the northern or southern bank of the river (whether by a frantic leap or by swimming) will soon find themselves in Plot-Path #2 (the Imperial Palace) or #6 (the Goju Attack).

Scene #3: The Imperial Parade Grounds

You watch in horror as the Emperor’s barge tilts and then capsizes, dumping the screaming passengers into the water. Thrashing people struggle for their lives in the choppy waters, weighed down by their bulky court kimonos. On the far shore, flames are leaping up from a dozen houses, while on this side of the river, the wall of the Forbidden City gapes open like a shattered egg. Off to the south, behind you, there is a howling noise as a geyser of smoke and dust shoots up, apparently from another building collapsing, followed swiftly by more flames.

Of the NPCs present here, Otaku Kamoko and Kitsuki Yasu will both hurry toward the shore to help the victims on the capsized Imperial barge. Isawa Nobuyoshi will begin to follow them, but then breaks off and cocks his head, listening, before hurrying away south instead. Ide Tadaji, being a middle-aged courtier and a habitué of the Imperial Palace, will instead hurry toward the shattered wall of the Forbidden City, hoping to help the injured there.

Where the PCs go from here determines whether they enter Plot-Path #1 (Emperor’s Barge), #2 (Imperial Palace), #4 (Temple of the Kami), or #5 (Oni on the Loose).

Scene #4: The Eastern Bridge

Even as the bridge stops swaying beneath your feet, you watch in horror as the Emperor’s barge tilts and then capsizes, dumping the screaming passengers into the water. Thrashing people struggle for their lives in the choppy waters, weighed down by their formal court kimonos. You can see lights moving on the northern shore, in the Water Gardens where the Imperial Heir was watching the Festival, but they are moving this way and that in obvious panic, some heading toward the riverbank and the sinking barge while others run heedlessly in every direction. Meanwhile to the northeast, near the Temple of the Kami, flames leap up from collapsing buildings, rising greedily into the night sky. To the southeast, also, you can see pillars of smoke and rubble shooting into the sky as other buildings collapse into a newly-opened crevasse. Piercing shrieks and howls of terror and pain echo from that direction.

Any PC with at least three Ranks in **Lore: Shadowlands** can roll **Simple Perception** at TN 20 to realize that the shrieks from the southeast include a strange, inhuman sound. Kuni Yori will look sharply in that direction, ignoring the spectacle of the

Emperor's sinking barge, and then hurries away. If PCs follow him or ask where he is going, he either ignores them, or (if they are Crab or seem to understand the evils of the Shadowlands) remarks that "I hear the sound of an Oni amid those screams." PCs who accompany him will end up on Plot-Path #5 (Oni on the Loose).

Other options for the PCs will take them to Plot-Path #1 (Emperor's Barge), #4 (Temple of the Kami), or #6 (Goju Attack).

Scene #5: The Hito Water Gardens

As the ground bucks and heaves beneath your feet, sections of the riverbank calve away and drop into the water, while statues, torii arches and ornamental bridges within the gardens topple over or collapse. You watch in horror as the Emperor's barge tilts and then capsizes, dumping its screaming passengers into the river. Thrashing people struggle for their lives in the choppy waters. On the far side of the river, smoke and dust shoot up from the shattered walls of the Forbidden City. To the west, you can see the Western Bridge, the Naka Nihachi, collapsing as well, dumping tumbling bodies into the water. Behind you, to the northeast, flames shoot up from shattered houses in a neighborhood near the Temple of the Kami.

As the rumbling and shaking subside, the screams and wails of the injured echo through the gardens. You can see people rushing down to the riverbank, while a writhing crowd remains behind at the gazebo where the Emperor's son was observing the festival.

Isawa Kaede will rush down to the riverbank, crying out for the Emperor. Other guests and visitors do the same, including Ikoma Sansho and Shiba Osugi. Hantei Sotorii will stay fearfully at the gazebo, guarded by the Emerald Champion, and many of the more timid courtiers (such as Seppun Bake) will do so as well.

If PCs are not rushing to the riverbank themselves, they can roll **Simple Perception** at TN 20 to notice shadowy, black-pajama-clad figures moving through the darker patches of the garden. The figures close in rapidly toward the shore and the Imperial party. Otherwise, the PCs' first warning that something is amiss will be when Isawa Kaede is struck down and dragged away by the Goju. This is Plot-Path #6 (Goju Attack).

If the PCs rush to the riverbank to assist the Emperor's barge, they will probably enter Plot-Path #1 (Emperor's

Barge), while other PCs may decide to help with the Western Bridge Collapse (Plot-Path #3) or the burning Temple of the Kami (Plot-Path #4). Those who remain in the gardens will inevitably join Plot-Path #6.

The Six Plot-Paths

There are a total of six different plot-paths happening more-or-less simultaneously during the remainder of the scenario. Some of these paths are longer, more dangerous, or more important than others, but all of them are significant in some way to the overall result of the story. Each Plot-Path is introduced and described separately below, but the GM should be prepared for them to overlap and intersect as the scenario progresses. The GM should be prepared to switch back and forth between the different Plot-Paths, preferably in a way that maximizes the drama of each situation. Ideally, the PCs should collectively experience as much of the story as possible.

If possible, the pursuit of the kidnapped Isawa Kaede into the tunnels beneath the city should be the climax of the scenario. At least three of the Plot-Paths can lead to the discovery of her capture, so it should not be too difficult for the GM to get the party to this finale.

Plot-Path #1: Emperor's Barge

As the Emperor's barge capsizes, those aboard are flung into the churning waters of the River of the Sun. Otomo Hiroshi, the Imperial Historian, manages to come off the toppling barge in a clean dive. Any PCs who want to emulate his example must roll **Athletics/Reflexes** at TN 25. Otherwise they are dumped into the water with all the other passengers.

PCs who fall off the barge without diving must roll **Athletics/Stamina** at TN 10 or **Simple Stamina** at TN 15 to keep from immediately beginning to drown. A PC who is heavily encumbered (such as wearing formal armor or an exquisite kimono) must add 5 to the TN. Drowning PCs suffer 2k1 damage per round, and must take a Fear Test at rank 3 or be unable to spend Void, due to their panic. (Death Trance protects as normal.) Drowning characters can still try to swim to shore as listed below, but continue to suffer wounds until they reach shore or someone else rescues them.

Swimming to Shore

To swim through the heaving, unpredictable waves to shore will require Swimming rolls, which can be either **Athletics/Agility** tests at TN 10, or **Simple Agility** at

TN 15. It will take two such Swimming rolls to travel to or from the northern bank of the river, and three rolls to travel to or from the southern bank (where the Imperial Parade Grounds are located). A PC who fails a swimming roll begins to drown as above.

A PC who wishes to simply tread water and float with the current can roll **Athletics/Agility** at TN 5 or **Simple Agility** at TN 10. Such PCs, however, cannot make any progress toward shore and cannot help others who are drowning.

Using the Barge Wreckage

Some PCs may think to wonder what happens to the barge after it dumps off its passengers. The vessel breaks up, overstressed by the tumbling waves, but large chunks and logs are still in the water, drifting downstream. Clever PCs can save themselves (or others) by hitching a ride on these pieces of wreckage. The remnants of the barge will eventually drift downstream and into the Golden Sun Bay, where fishing boats will retrieve any survivors in the morning.

The Emperor

Hantei the 38th, middle-aged and frail, is in great danger of drowning. Otomo Hiroshi will realize the threat once he reaches shore and splashes back into the water, shouting “the Emperor!” No others will realize the threat immediately, although Otaku Kamoko and Kitsuki Yasu (from the Imperial Parade Grounds) will both plunge into the river as soon as they realize the situation.

A PC who immediately moves to save the drowning Emperor (right after the barge capsizes) must roll **Athletics/Strength** at TN 20 to grab him and haul him to the surface. The PC will then have to swim to shore with the usual swimming tests (**Athletics/Agility** rolls), but at a +10 penalty due to the weight of the Emperor and his encumbering heavy court kimono. If the PC misses a roll due to the +10 penalty, the Emperor slips from their grasp and sinks beneath the waves (requiring another **Athletics/Strength** roll to retrieve him).

A clever PC may think of cutting or ripping away the Emperor’s heavy kimono – this allows a Free Raise on bringing him to the surface and reduces the penalty for swimming with him to +5.

If a PC goes in search of the Emperor after the initial barge sinking, they will have to find him as he sinks through the night-darkened waters of the river. This will require a **Hunting/Perception** roll at TN 25 or a

Simple Perception roll at TN 30. If a PC comes up with some clever or dramatically effective way to help with the search (such as using magic to improve the light), they can get a bonus to their roll (GM’s discretion).

The PCs have a maximum of five rounds in which to search for the Emperor. If he is not brought to the surface at the end of that time, he is lost, drowned and swept away by the current.

If the PCs get the Emperor to shore, they will discover that he is no longer breathing. To revive him will require either a **Medicine/Intelligence** roll at TN 30, or casting the spell *Path to Inner Peace* with at least four Raises. (A creative application of other magic might work as well, at the GM’s discretion.)

The GM will realize that the odds are very much against the PCs managing to save the Emperor. Dark times lie ahead for Rokugan, and it is the destiny of Hantei the 38th to perish here. Only by the most superhuman of efforts can the PCs thwart this destiny.

Other Drowning Victims

The other NPCs from the barge may also be in need of help from the PCs. (Indeed some of the PCs with their own notions of Honor may feel a certain conflict of loyalty between saving the Emperor and the members of their own Clans.) Specific details for each NPC are as follows:

- **Otomo Sorai** does not know how to swim, and will thrash around in the water shrieking for help. He can be dragged to shore by any PC who makes their swimming rolls at a +5 TN penalty. If he is not rescued within three rounds (or if he is lost after a rescue begins) he will begin drowning, and will be dead within three more rounds if he is not saved.
- **Seppun Daiori** manages to stay conscious as he plunges into the water, but loses his grip on his son. He will frantically call for help in finding the drowning boy. Locating the boy (who is sinking to the bottom of the river) will require a **Hunting/Perception** roll at TN 15 or **Simple Perception** at TN 20. If he is not found within four rounds he will be dead. If the boy is brought to the surface, Daiori will take him to the southern shore himself. He will not pay attention to anything else – not even the status of the Emperor – until his son is safe.

- **Miya Yoto** is too old and weak to swim to shore on his own, and will in any event be distracted by his concern for the Emperor – if a PC tries to rescue him he will weakly shout “the Emperor, where is the Emperor?” He can be rescued with swimming rolls at +5 TN penalties. After four rounds, if he is not rescued, his strength will give out and he will slip beneath the water. He can still be found for two more rounds by rolling **Hunting/Perception** at TN 20 or **Simple Perception** at TN 25. After that he will be dead.
- **Matsu Tsuko** is more than strong enough to swim to shore herself – except that she is wearing heavy ceremonial armor. As it is, she will barely be able to keep herself afloat as the current slowly carries her west toward the bay. She is too proud to call for help, and will urge any Lion PCs to save the Emperor. If anyone helps her anyway, she will grudgingly allow herself to be towed ashore (this requires swimming rolls, but there is no TN penalty – Tsuko is a strong swimmer and helps as best she can). If she is not rescued, she will eventually be picked up by a fishing boat in the bay.
- **Kakita Yoshi**, the Imperial Chancellor, is stunned by the fall into the water and will immediately sink beneath the waves, beginning to drown. PCs must roll **Hunting/Perception** at TN 20 or **Simple Perception** at TN 25 to spot him under the dark waters. Dragging the stunned and semi-conscious Yoshi to shore will require swimming rolls at +5 on the TN. If he is not rescued within five rounds of sinking beneath the waves, he will drown.
- **Bayushi Goshu** manages to stay afloat, but lacks the strength to swim to shore. He will softly ask for help from anyone who is of his Clan or who has allies with (or owes favors to) the Scorpion. Taking him to shore requires normal swimming rolls (Goshu doesn’t struggle or otherwise add to the difficulty of towing him). If he is not rescued, he eventually finds his way to a piece of wreckage and rides it out into the bay, where he is retrieved the next day.

Plot-Path #2: The Imperial Palace

If the PCs move toward the wrecked Imperial Palace, the scene before them quickly resolves into one of horror:

The walls of the Forbidden City have ripped apart, leaving massive splinters of stone lying this way and that like discarded children’s toys. Within, the Palaces of the Hantei and Otomo are torn open like overripe fruit. You can see the ant-like forms of servants and courtiers scrambling through the wreckage. Flames lick up from where shattered lamps have ignited the palace ruins.

If the PCs question any of the servants, they quickly learn that the collapse of the palaces has caught and trapped scores of members of the Imperial court, including the Emperor’s assistant Bayushi Kachiko. Fires are spreading rapidly through the ruins – which are, like most Rokugani castles, entirely wooden above the first two floors. Some of the servants are frantically trying to rescue as many victims as they can, while others are wandering around in a daze or fleeing in panic.

Locating Survivors

PCs who listen at the rubble or shout into it for responses can make rolls to determine where the trapped victims are located. **Investigation/Perception** at TN 15, **Hunting/Perception** at TN 15, **Nazado/Perception** at TN 10, **Engineering/Intelligence** at TN 15, **Siege/Intelligence** at 20, **Simple Perception** at TN 20 or **Simple Intelligence** at TN 25 will all allow the PCs to determine where the survivors are closest to the surface of the ruins. Creative use of magic can also be helpful – the GM should adjudicate such efforts.

Digging Through the Rubble

How successful the PCs can be at rescuing anyone from the ruins is determined by the total number of successful “digging checks” which the PCs and NPCs can make.

A “digging check” is an **Athletics/Strength** roll at TN 15 – or TN 10 if the PCs were able to locate the survivors under the rubble (as explained above). The skills of **Siege** and **Engineering** can be substituted for Athletics by taking a Raise on the digging check. Or, a truly desperate PC can roll raw **Simple Strength** at TN 20.

PCs who come up with creative ideas or magical actions to support the digging should be rewarded with Free Raises. Regardless, each digging check (whether successful or not) takes a full round for the PC attempting it.

A PC who organizes the servants into digging parties can make an **Oratory/Awareness**, **Battle/Awareness**, or **Intimidation/Willpower** roll at the same TN as a normal “digging check.” If none of the PCs think of doing this, Ide Tadaji will do it once he arrives on round four.

A fumbled roll (failing with three or more 1’s) cancels out a successful roll.

Once Bayushi Aramoro has been freed from the ruins (see below), he will automatically succeed on one digging check per round.

The total number of successful digging checks needed to free victims from the ruins are as follows:

4 successful rolls: A minor Otomo courtier.

6 successful rolls: A Scorpion dressed as a yojimbo, with a silk mask over the lower half of his face: Bayushi Aramoro. He shouts that “Kachiko-sama” is trapped farther in, and immediately joins in the struggle to free those inside.

10 successful rolls: A pair of frantic courtiers, one Crane and one Otomo.

12 successful rolls: three more courtiers (two Cranes and a Seppun) and a palace servant. Kachiko’s voice is audible inside. Aramoro will shout for her to hold on, he is coming.

15 successful rolls: Bayushi Kachiko is freed. Unless the PCs managed to dig very quickly or significantly delay the onset of the flames, she will be on fire, screaming as her hair goes up in yellow-orange flames. Aramoro drags her out and throws her down, smothering the flames with his bare hands. PCs who help will have his eternal gratitude.

How Long do They Have?

The fire will spread quickly. If the PCs approach the palace immediately (from the river, the Parade Grounds, or either bridge), they will have a total of 9 rounds in which to dig through the rubble before Bayushi Kachiko burns to death. If they approach after rescuing people from the river, they have 6 rounds. If they come from anywhere else, they are too late. Smart PCs may be able to buy themselves some more time.

Shugenja PCs may summon water to beat back the flames or to protect the rescuers and those trapped in the ruins. The GM should adjudicate such measures

based on the power of the spell, but as a general rule, each successful spell cast in this manner earns the PCs one more round of digging time. The Fire spell *Extinguish* will actually end the fire in one of the palaces, saving everyone within. Extremely powerful Water magic (such as *Wall of Water*) may also put out the fire, especially if cast with Raises.

PCs who organize “bucket brigades” from the servants or passers-by will need to make an **Oratory/Awareness**, **Battle/Awareness**, or **Intimidation/Willpower** roll at TN 15. Such efforts will not be able to extinguish the fire, but they will slow it by 3 rounds for each PC who works on organizing these efforts.

If the PCs are unable to delay the onset of the flames, the schedule of events will be as follows:

After three rounds: The flames will be drawing nearer and the PCs will be able to hear panicked cries from within the ruins.

After four rounds: Ide Tadajo will arrive from the Imperial Parade Ground. If no-one has organized the servants to help with the digging, he will do so, contributing one automatic successful digging check per round until the servants give up on round seven.

After five rounds: PCs coming from the river after attempting any rescues will arrive at this time.

After six rounds: The flames are beginning to burn the rescuers, at the rate of 2k1 burning damage per round. If the PCs take measures to protect themselves (wet cloths, etc), the damage is 1k1 and does not explode. Aramoro, if already freed, will continue to dig frantically, shouting to Kachiko to hold on, he is coming.

After seven rounds: At this point, anyone rescued from the ruins will be on fire, and the flames will have to be doused or smothered in order to save their lives. Such actions take up a round.

After eight rounds: The burning damage from each roll climbs to 3k2 for each PC still working (2k1 if they are protecting themselves). Screams can be heard from within the ruins as flames lick through them. If Kachiko has not been rescued, her screams are among them, and Aramoro’s rescue efforts become desperate to the point of dementia. Any servants who are helping with the rescue will flee at this point, unable to bear the heat and pain of the fire.

After ten rounds: Kachiko perishes within the flames, shrieking in agony. Aramoro must be dragged from the fire or he will perish as well, burning alive while still frantically trying to free her.

Outcome

The rescue of Kachiko is the last thing the PCs can accomplish unless they can summon enough water to extinguish the fire. Otherwise, the palaces of the Hantei and Otomo go up in flames, and the servants concentrate on trying to save the palace of the Seppun, the only one which did not collapse in the earthquake.

After this plot-path resolves with the fate of Kachiko, the PCs are free to go elsewhere. By this time, the Shadowbeast (Plot-Path #5) will be approaching the Imperial Parade Grounds and the eastern bridge (if it has not been stopped), and the Goju will have taken Isawa Kaede below ground (Plot-Path #6).

Plot Path #3: The Western Bridge Collapse

As mentioned before, any PCs on the Western Bridge as it falls must roll **Athletics/Reflexes** at TN 25 to leap to safety before they are dumped into the water. Aside from the PCs, the only NPC who successfully makes the leap is Yasuki Taka.

PCs who are unable to leap to safety may instead make an **Athletics/Agility** roll at TN 20 to make a safe dive into the water. Otherwise, they must make an **Athletics/Stamina** roll at TN 10 or **Simple Stamina** at TN 15 to keep from immediately beginning to drown. A PC who is heavily encumbered (such as wearing formal armor or exquisite kimono) must add 5 to the TN.

Drowning PCs suffer 2k1 damage per round, and must take a Fear Test at rank 3. (Death Trance protects as normal.) Drowning characters can still try to swim to shore as listed below, but continue to suffer wounds until they reach shore or someone else rescues them.

Swimming to shore through the heaving, unpredictable waves will require either an **Athletics/Agility** test at TN 10, or **Simple Agility** at TN 15. It will take a single such swimming roll to travel to or from the northern bank of the river, and two rolls to travel to or from the southern bank. A PC who fails a swimming roll begins to drown as above.

Yasuki Taka will be on the northern bank, sighing over his lost koku and helping survivors out of the shallows and onto the riverbank (he is much too mindful of his own self-preservation to go swimming back into deep water).

There are four notable NPCs in the water with the PCs. Of these, three (Doji Kuwanen, Kakita Enryo, and Kitsuki Yumi) will be stunned by the fall and sink beneath the waves, starting to drown immediately. To find them in the dark waters will require a **Hunting/Perception** roll at TN 15 or **Simple Perception** at TN 25. Shugenja PCs may be able to come up with clever ways of using magic to help with this search.

Once located, the drowning NPCs can be caught and dragged to shore by making swimming rolls as above, but at a +5 TN penalty.

If the PCs swim to shore alone and then go back to look for drowning victims, they will be too late, and the NPCs will already be dead.

Doji Hoturi will keep his head, swim to the northern shore, and then look around frantically for his brother Kuwanen. If a PC has not rescued Kuwanen by that time, Hoturi will swim back into the river to look for him... but comes up empty. Hoturi continues searching for a long time, diving futilely into the dark, choppy waters.

Plot Path #4: Fire at the Temple of the Kami

If the PCs investigate the fire to the north, they will soon arrive at the Temple of the Kami, where they witness the following scene:

Fire roars like a living, hungry thing as it climbs the walls of the great temple's outer ring of buildings. Already the flames have engulfed the gate to the temple complex, and now they are spreading quickly to the other buildings. You can hear the voice of a single priest within, calling for help. Scores of people are scattered about outside the Temple, some staring in horror at the scene, some helping the wounded, others falling to their knees to pray to the Fortunes for mercy.

The fire started from an adjacent building in the Fox Embassy which collapsed, crashing against the side of the Temple. Smaller fires have started in several other

locations, also from collapsed buildings, but none seems as immediately threatening as this one.

The Temple of the Kami is a large single-story complex, consisting of an “outer ring” of three buildings, connected by high walls and enclosing a large courtyard. The only entrance is through the main front gate. The innermost and largest of the three buildings itself encloses a smaller courtyard, forming a sacred “inner ring” which only the most enlightened can visit. Further information on the Temple can be found in the *Otosan Uchi* boxed set.

The voice from within the Temple comes from the caretaker, Shioda, an aged monk. He lacks the strength to climb the walls, and is in imminent danger of perishing along with the Temple.

Putting Out the Fire

Once the PCs arrive, they will have five rounds to get the fire under control. (If none of them come to the Temple immediately after the earthquake, it will burn down before they can arrive to help.) There are two basic approaches which the PCs can take to extinguishing the fire:

- Organize the bystanders into a bucket brigade. This will require a PC to make a skill roll with **Intimidation/Willpower**, **Oratory/Awareness**, or **Battle/Awareness** at TN 20. Without a successful skill roll, they will not be able to get the water moving fast enough.
- Magic can be employed in a number of ways. Low-level spells like *Summon (Water)* could be cast multiple times with *Raises* to generate water, or higher-power spells such as *Castle of Water* or *Wall of Water* can be employed to douse the flames. The GM should reward a shugenja PC who makes creative use of magic against the fire.

Rescuing Shioda

This may become the only option if the PCs are unable to get the fire under control. A PC who runs in through the burning gates of the Temple will take 2k1 of fire damage. A PC can instead climb the walls of the Temple by making an **Athletics/Agility** roll at TN 15.

Shioda will be extremely reluctant to leave the Temple, pleading that it is the most sacred place in the Empire and cannot be allowed to burn down. He will never leave the Temple willingly (the spirits there have cursed him to spend all his life serving them). Physically carrying the old monk out of the Temple

will require an **Athletics/Strength** roll at TN 15 or a **Simple Strength** roll at TN 20. Both the PC and the monk will sustain 3k2 damage on the way out (the PC can't move as fast when burdened by a priest). Lifting the monk over the wall will be much more difficult, adding +15 to the TN, and a failed roll will indicate that PC and monk alike fell back inside the Temple, suffering 2k1 damage.

Magic can also be used to rescue Shioda (such as by flying him out, having an Elemental spirit carry him out, and so forth).

Speaking with Shioda

If the Shioda is saved (whether the Temple itself burns down or not), he will thank the PCs for their efforts, although he will be clearly a broken man if the Temple burned down. Whether he is rescued or not, if he gets a chance to speak with the PCs he will try to warn them of what is happening: “The Earth Dragon is angry and tormented. There is a shadow growing in the city, growing upon the Celestial Dragons, and they convulse under it. Now the city has felt the Earth Dragon's pain.”

If the PCs actually manage to save the Temple from burning down, Shioda will invite them to pray and meditate in the outer courtyard (either now or later, depending on when they have the time). There is a gazebo there which is supposedly built on the site of Isawa's ancient Tower of the Void. Shioda will kneel within the gazebo, silently giving thanks to the Fortunes for saving the Temple.

Any PC who prays or meditates within the Temple will be granted a free +1 rank in the *Shintao* skill. Furthermore, a PC with *Honor* 3.5 or higher, or who had *Shintao* skill rank 5 or higher before they prayed, will be vouchsafed a vision from the Dragon of Earth. This is described in *PLAYER HANDOUT #1*.

Glimpse of the Ninja

At the resolution of this plot-path (after the PCs have either saved the Temple of the Kami or watched it burn to the ground), have each PC at the Temple roll **Investigation/Perception** or **Hunting/Perception** at TN 15, or **Simple Perception** at TN 25. Success notices a pack of dark-clothed shapes, ninja, dragging a small figure in Phoenix orange down a nearby earthquake fissure. This is the kidnapping of Isawa Kaede, from Plot-Path #6. The PCs can pursue if they wish.

Plot-Path #5: Oni on the Loose

An Oni no Wakeru has been imprisoned beneath the city for many decades. In recent years, as the power of the Living Darkness has grown, the Oni's spirit has been devoured, and it has mutated into a Shadowbeast, a terrible creature combining the worst features of Oni and Goju. Now the earthquake has freed it. Liberated, the Shadowbeast rampages through the city, devouring some victims and corrupting others with the essence of Shadow. Its path of death and destruction will eventually lead it to the river and the helpless survivors of the Imperial party.

NPC Reactions

Isawa Nobuyoshi, the Phoenix Inquisitor, will recognize the distant howls of the creature and move immediately to intercept it. Kuni Yori will also hear it, from his post on the Eastern Bridge, and head in that direction as well. If any PCs move that way promptly (immediately after the earthquake), they will encounter the following scene:

Flames shoot up from a pagoda structure which you recognize as one of the Imperial City's great temples, the Temple of Eternal Redemption. One wall of the temple has been torn open, and flames leap from the upper roof. You can hear shrieks of agony from within, mingled with a strange inhuman howling. A trail of destruction leads across the neighborhood to the temple. Temple servants and monks flee for their lives, some of them with garments burning.

Isawa Nobuyoshi will question the refugees, trying to learn what is happening. Kuni Yori will simply stride into the temple, confident of his power. If the PCs follow immediately, they can witness the following scene:

A massive, writhing black form crouches in the temple, surrounded by the bodies of monks and priests. The thing seems to be a creature of pure darkness, shadow come to life, but within the writhing mass (the height of two grown men) you can dimly make out a skinny, bony outline of some clawed beast. The thing snatches up a weakly struggling monk and opens a vast maw before crunching down on the poor man like a ravenous child biting into a rice ball.

Kuni Yori blasts the monster with a Jade Strike, and looks startled when his spell fails to have effect. The creature's shadowy, indistinct form sheds the magical jade like rainwater. Yori tries a couple more times and

then retreats, following the Crab tradition of pragmatism.

Isawa Nobuyoshi will stick around, trying to find a way to defeat the thing, and cooperating with any PC efforts.

The Shadowbeast's Actions

The Shadowbeast will devour several more victims, trying to sate the vast hunger it has accumulated in generations of imprisonment. After a few minutes it leaves the Temple, using its Goju ability to Shadow-Walk (moving instantly from one patch of darkness to another) from the interior to the street outside. From there it begins to lumber across the city toward the river, snatching and eating random passerby and the occasional Imperial guardsman who tries to attack it. It will occasionally Shadow-Walk again, although it does not exploit this ability to the fullest (the near-mindless Oni is still not fully acquainted with its new powers).

The Shadowbeast's affinity with the Living Darkness causes it to take only one-quarter damage from jade (whether normal or magical) and spell attacks (including temporary enhancements such as Biting Steel). Mundane attacks cannot hurt it at all, not even the normal 1 point of damage. However, it does take half damage from true nemuranai (magical weapons). Crystal weapons will inflict double damage, and light shone through a crystal will do 2k1 damage to it, causing it to howl in anguish.

Against low-rank parties, the Shadowbeast takes half damage from jade and magic, and one point of damage from mundane weapons.

If anyone injures the Shadowbeast with crystal or a nemuranai, it will reach out and grab the offender (make an attack roll) and attempt to infect them with the power of Shadow. This appears as black tendrils which writhe out from the Oni's claws and try to force their way into the PC's body. Such PCs must make **Simple Void** rolls at TN 10 or gain the Shadow Corruption cert at one Shadow Point. If they already have Shadow Corruption, they gain one additional Shadow Point.

Where Does the Shadowbeast Go?

If the Oni is not stopped, it will migrate toward the river, drawn toward the Goju there. Eventually, after about half an hour, it will reach the riverbank near where the Emperor's barge capsized. If the PCs saved the Emperor from drowning, it will try to seek him out and destroy him (so that the Shadow-corrupted Hantei

Sotorii can inherit the throne). If the Emperor is already dead, the Shadowbeast will try to kill any other survivors from the Imperial Barge, then cross the river and slay the wounded Emerald Champion, destroying anyone else along the way. If the PCs cannot defeat the Shadowbeast, the Inquisitor Isawa Nobuyoshi will eventually realize its vulnerability to crystal and bring it down after a two-hour rampage – by which time it has slain the daimyos of all three Imperial families and the Emerald Champion.

Getting Crystal and Nemuranai

The PCs may decide to seek out crystal or nemuranai elsewhere in the city, in hopes of stopping the Shadowbeast before it reaches the river and the Emperor. (PCs confronting the Goju in Plot-Path #6 may decide to do this as well.) PCs who go on a search for equipment will be racing against time, since the Shadowbeast will be rampaging closer to the riverbank and the various high-level NPCs will be in increasing danger. The GM should adjudicate their efforts based on how far afield they travel in search of crystal.

- Certain merchants in the Yasuki training grounds will have crystal items, such as brooches or hairpins, which the PCs could use to focus light or as impromptu weapon enhancements. If a PC is a member of the Crab Clan, or has Yasuki allies, the merchants can also provide them with a number of crystal-tipped arrows (roll two non-exploding dice to determine how many arrows are gained).
- The Unicorn Museum and Embassy both have crystal items which can be used against the Shadowbeast. Any PC can roll **Lore: Unicorn Clan/Intelligence** at TN 15 to recall that the Unicorn have legends of fighting shadowy creatures that can only be hurt by crystal. However, the PCs will have to persuade the Unicorn bushi guarding these two locations to let them have access to such items. The GM should adjudicate such situations, based on how well the PCs role-play and what skills (if any) they employ. Successful PCs can get a crystal-edged naginata from the Unicorn Museum, and an assortment of crystal items (broaches, lenses, and so forth) from the Embassy.
- Bold, resourceful, or well-educated PCs may think of trying to get one of the sacred nemuranai from the Imperial palace, such as the Sword of the Hantei or the Ancestral Sword of the Lion. This will require searching through the ruins of the Hantei palace. Every three rounds of search allows

a **Simple Perception** roll at TN 30 to find one of these ancient weapons. If the palace is on fire during this search, the PC will take 3k1 damage per round from the flames. If either weapon is recovered, treat it as a 4k3 katana which adds +2 to the wielder's Kenjutsu skill.

Plot-Path #6: Goju Attack

This is perhaps the most important plot-path in the scenario, and the GM should make an effort to get at least some of the PCs involved with this. Also, with the possible exception of Plot-Path #5 (the Oni), this path will take the longest to resolve, giving the PCs plenty of time to get involved with it after completing other paths.

A large pack of Goju, led by a powerful creature called Goju Hoseki, is attacking the Imperial party. However, their goal is not the Hantei heir – who has already been marked by the Lying Darkness – but one of his companions: the Acolyte of Void, Isawa Kaede. Kaede was once part of a plan by the Shadow to corrupt the Element of Void itself, and while that plan was thwarted by her father Isawa Ujina, the Darkness has not yet given up on being able to claim Kaede for its own. The earthquake has offered the Goju their opportunity.

During the first moments after the earthquake, Kaede and many other guests will rush to the riverbank to check on the Imperial barge. There they will be attacked and overwhelmed by a huge pack of Goju. Kaede is doped with a poisoned blade, captured, and carried off toward the earthquake rift to the northeast. If any PCs are with her, they will be attacked by eight Goju (six if they are a low-rank party, ten if they are high-rank), forcing them to fight for their lives. Goju Hoseki will lurk around in the darkness, using her powers to disable and disorient the PCs, but she will not fight to the death here.

Meanwhile, another pack of Goju attacks the Imperial arty at the gazebo. The initial assault includes a barrage of poisoned shuriken, one of which strikes Doji Satsume, the Emerald Champion. The mighty Crane nevertheless keeps on his feet, brandishing his katana to hold off the hordes of Goju which swarm around the gazebo. The Imperial heir cowers behind him, while most of the other courtiers scream, dodge, and flinch from the violence. (The PCs may glimpse Seppun Bake shrieking like a girl as a Goju drags him away into the darkness.)

If the PCs help with this fight, they will be facing an indeterminate number of Goju, of whom six will engage the PCs (four if the PCs are low-rank, nine if they are high-rank). Once the majority of these have been defeated, the rest of the Goju melt away into the darkness, allowing the PCs to believe they have “saved” the Imperial heir.

The Emerald Champion sinks slowly to his knees, gasping for breath. His face is a pale, unhealthy shade in the dim light, and he rests his katana on his knees with a hand that visibly trembles. The courtiers cluster behind him with anxious whimpers and murmurs of concern. The Imperial heir, Hantei Sotorii, looks around anxiously. “Where is Kaede-sama? She was over there just now.”

Doji Satsume’s life can be saved if a PC can roll **Poison/Intelligence** at TN 20 or **Medicine/Intelligence** at TN 30. A spell that can cure poisons can also work.

Pursuing Kaede

The PCs can pursue Kaede directly if they witness her being subdued and captured by the Goju. If not, Hantei Sotorii will be able to point out the last direction she was seen. If the PCs examine the ground there, they can roll **Battle/Perception** at TN 15 to realize that she was attacked and captured. A roll of **Hunting/Perception** at TN 15 or **Investigation/Perception** at TN 20 can determine that they went northeast toward the earthquake rifts, although it will difficult to follow the tracks for long (the Goju are Shadow-Walking).

PCs at the Temple of the Kami may witness the Goju taking their victim into the tunnels below the Imperial city.

If the PCs are pursuing Kaede’s kidnappers directly, they will see them scuttle northeast toward the fresh earthquake fissure which now gapes there. The Goju will use their Shadow-Walking ability to travel faster than the PCs. (PCs who themselves have Shadow-Walking, as a result of Shadow Corruption, may decide to pursue with that ability – if so, let them. Their odds of making it all the way without succumbing to the Shadow are quite low.)

If the PCs are pursuing “blind” – based on Hantei Sotorii’s directions, for example – they will have to make the guess that the Goju have descended into the dark rift in the earth. (PCs from the Temple of the Kami may have witnessed the Goju dragging Kaede away.)

If the PCs look for clues around the earthquake crevasse, they can roll **Hunting/Perception** at TN 15, **Investigation/Perception** at TN 20, or **Simple Perception** at TN 25 to spot a few scraps of orange silk cloth near the earthquake crevasse.

Into the Tunnels

Once the PCs go into the tunnels, they are entering a different world, a place of darkness, fetid air, and lurking menace. The GM should strive to capture the feel of claustrophobia, the sense that something might strike from the darkness at any moment.

The layout of the tunnels is shown on GM’S AID #3. There are several types of tunnels shown on the map by different symbols: old tunnels, recent tunnels, earthquake rifts, and crevasses.

Old Tunnels: these are ancient passages which have been around for hundreds of years. Generations of yakuza, Scorpions, Tortoise bushi, smugglers, and kolat have used (and improved) these tunnels. The old tunnels have floors packed hard and smooth, and their walls and ceilings are often of stone construction, with ancient calcified beams strengthening the roofs. These tunnels are typically low and narrow – about seven feet wide at the floor, often narrowing to five feet at the top, and with ceilings only six or seven feet high. There are sometimes small shelves in the walls where a lamp could be set to provide light, although no lamps are present now.

Recent Tunnels: these are more recent additions to the complex, and are generally rough-worked earthen passages with only a few stone improvements and an occasional reinforcing wooden beam. Some of these passages are “recent” only by proxy, being decades old; others have clearly been dug only within the last few months.

Earthquake Rifts: these are natural passageways opened by the frequent earthquakes which shake the Imperial city. They are of raw earth, interrupted by occasional boulders or jagged stone rifts. Width varies from only a foot or so to over a dozen feet wide, and the ceiling likewise varies between four-five feet and twenty feet or more. These tunnels are dangerous, since they can easily shift or collapse when shaken by an earthquake, explosion, or other disruption.

Crevasses: These are large, ancient earthquake rifts which have solidified into near-permanent rents in the deep earth. They are often twenty to thirty feet wide

and a hundred or more feet deep. These crevasses form major barriers to travel through the tunnels beneath Otosan Uchi, and in a few places those who use these tunnels have built rope-and-slat bridges to cross them.

Tracking Isawa Kaede

The map shows where the PCs enter the tunnels (near the Temple of the Kami) and where they must go in order to track down Isawa Kaede. Each time the PCs come to a branch in the tunnels, they must make a **Hunting/Perception** or **Investigation/Perception** roll at TN 20, or a **Simple Perception** roll at TN 25, in order to take the right turn.

Alternatively, the PCs might use magic to find the correct route, such as *Communing* with the spirits in the tunnels or casting *The Ties That Bind*.

Encounters Within the Tunnels

There are several encounters which the PCs may run into during their pursuit through the tunnels.

Ambushes: Two individual Goju will conduct ambushes as the PCs advance through the tunnels. These ninja attacks will each come from an unexpected direction, such as dropping from the darkness above, leaping up out of a crevasse, or popping out of a side passage. One ambush will definitely occur if the PCs cross a bridge or a gap (see below).

In all cases, the ambush is the same: a single PC will be targeted each time. The targeted PC must make a Contested roll of **Hunting/Perception** or **Simple Perception** (PC's choice) against the Goju's **Stealth/Agility**. Failure means the PC is caught unawares and is TN 5 to hit. The Goju will spring on the PC and strike for maximum possible damage, then attempt to flee.

Trap #1: There are four of these traps deployed through this part of the tunnels. Each trap is the same – a pit in the floor, concealed by a mud-smeared mat of thin woven bamboo. The PCs can detect these traps if they are probing the floor ahead of them, or if the lead PC can roll **Traps/Perception** at TN 15 or **Hunting/Perception** at TN 20. Failure means the lead PC steps on the bamboo mat. The PC can attempt a **Defense/Reflexes** roll at TN 25 to leap back – otherwise s/he pitches forward into the pit. The victim falls ten feet onto sharpened bamboo stakes, suffering 4k3 damage. If the damage roll is 20 or more points, the PC has suffered a serious injury, rolled from the following table:

1-3: Damaged leg. The PC suffers from the effects of the *Lame* disadvantage for the remainder of the adventure.

4-6: Impaled primary arm. The PC's preferred arm/hand has been impaled and rendered useless. The PC must fight with his/her off-hand, and cannot use two-handed weapons.

7: Impaled other arm. The PC's other (non-preferred) arm/hand is injured. The PC cannot use two-handed weapons, and Dragon bushi PCs lose the benefits of their School Techniques.

8-9: Torso impaled. The PC is in agonizing pain, cannot move faster than 5 feet per round, and is at an additional +10 penalty to all actions until the injury heals.

10: Eye. The PC has gotten a stake in an eye, and permanently suffers the effects of the *Missing Eye* disadvantage. If the PC already had that disadvantage, s/he is now blind, and operates at a permanent +15 penalty to all vision-related actions.

These serious injuries cannot be treated with the *Medicine* skill or the spell *Path to Inner Peace* (although those can both heal the Wound suffered). The spell *Regrow the Wound* can heal these injuries, but cannot replace a lost eye.

Gaps: These are open gullies in the floor of the tunnel, opened by the recent earthquake, with crumbling edges that flake away if the PCs stand too close. The walls on either side are loose, crumbling earth, and cannot safely be climbed (unless the PC can find a clever way of solidifying the soil).

In order to cross one of these gaps, a PC will have to leap it, rolling **Athletics/Agility** at TN 10 or **Simple Agility** at TN 20. Alternatively, a shugenja PC can use magic to cross the gap. Smart PCs who have brought rope with them can set up a crossing fairly easily once they have at least one person on the far side – otherwise they will each have to jump the gap.

If a PC fails the jump, they can attempt to desperately grab the crumbling edge by rolling **Simple Reflexes** at TN 15. A PC who manages to grab the edge will be able to cling to the soft, crumbling earth for two rounds before plummeting to the bottom. Such PCs can be rescued by their fellows (PCs with a combined Strength of 4 or more can pull up the unfortunate), or they can try to pull themselves up with an **Athletics/Strength** roll (TN 15) or a **Simple Strength** roll (TN 25).

While the PCs are crossing the pit, a Goju will ambush one of them, leaping out of the rift in the ceiling. A PC who is struck by the Goju while leaping the pit must roll **Defense/Reflexes** against a TN of the damage suffered, or fall into the pit.

A PC who falls into the pit, for whatever reason, will plummet over seventy feet, suffering 6k6 damage and two broken legs.

Trap #2: There is only one of these traps, located near the entrance to the Shadow Chambers. The lead PC can spot the trap if they roll **Traps/Perception** at TN 15 or **Hunting/Perception** at TN 20. The PCs get a Free Raise on the roll if they are specifically testing or watching for trip-wires.

A trip-wire will tug at the lead PC's foot. The PC can attempt a **Defense/Reflexes** roll at TN 20 to leap back. Otherwise, the PC is struck by the spring-propelled wooden board which slashes out from a slot on the fitted-stone wall. The board is edged with razor-sharp jags of metal: broken bits of katana blades. It slams into the PC and inflicts 5k3 damage on the PC (4k2 if the PC is in light armor, 3k1 if the PC is in heavy armor).

The Shadow Chambers

The place where Kaede is being held prisoner is an ancient stone-walled complex of rooms and passages. The place is probably almost as old as the city above, if not older. There are notches in the walls where lamps would have been placed, and the stone floors are worn smooth by the ancient tread of many feet. Was this a smuggler's hideout, or a Scorpion safe-house, or something worse? There is no way to tell.

As the PCs advance through this area, they will begin to hear an eerie, dissonant, flute-like music. The sound is deeply unsettling, especially to PCs who suffer from inner fears or insecurities (such as the Phobia, Coward, or Frail Mind disadvantages). Such PCs find themselves thinking helplessly of the sources of their weaknesses, and may need to make Willpower rolls at the GM's discretion.

PCs who have Shadow Corruption (from the adventures *A Foreign Legacy* or *Darkness Beyond Darkness*) must make a **Simple Void** roll at TN 10 when they hear this music. Failure means they begin having visions of dark, shadowy figures which no-one else can see. Such PCs are unable to spend Void points for the remainder of this encounter.

The central room in this complex is where Kaede is being held. When the PCs reach it, they see the following scene:

This is a large stone chamber of ancient, close-fitted stone. The stones are slick with damp and mold, and the low ceiling seems to press down on your heads.

In the center of the room, there is a large circular opening in the floor – perhaps a well. A small woman in a ragged, dirty orange kimono dangles above the hole, suspended from a heavy cord which runs through an iron hook in the ceiling.

Dancing around the hole, moving in unholy rhythm to the unsettling flute-like music, are about a dozen dark humanoid figures. You can't seem to make out individual features on any of them, and at times it seems as though they flow into each other, becoming a shapeless mass which writhes and undulates around the prisoner.

Any PC who suffers from Shadow Corruption and who failed the earlier Void roll when approaching this roll must now roll **Simple Void** again, this time at TN 15. Failure means the PC gains a Point of Shadow Corruption.

There are a total of eight regular Goju here (six against low-Rank parties), along with their leader, Goju Hoseki.

The Goju are showing their true form here, as they try to seduce and terrify Isawa Kaede into succumbing to their power. The Goju will continue their unnatural dance until the PCs actively try to stop them. At that point the Goju break apart and whirl into the corners of the room, sliding into the shadows and then spinning out to attack from unexpected directions. This will give them a Free Raise to strike any PC who they beat on initiative. Their leader Goju Hoseki will remain concealed in the shadows as much as possible, using her spell-powers and shuriken attacks to bedevil the PCs. In particular, she will try to extinguish any light-sources the PCs may have, and will also try to snatch spell-scrolls away from shugenja.

If the PCs seem to be winning the fight, Hoseki will attempt to slash the rope holding Isawa Kaede, sending her plummeting into the well. (If the Goju cannot have her for themselves, they would rather she be dead.) A quick PC can attempt to catch the rope by rolling **Hand-to-Hand/Reflexes** at TN 15 or **Simple Reflexes** at TN 20. (Clever PCs may come up with other ways to stop Kaede from falling – the GM should reward

creativity.) However, if the PC has less than a 3 Strength, s/he will have to make a **Contested Strength** roll against Kaede's Earth in order to hold the rope with her weight. The Goju will attack the PC who is holding the rope, trying to force him/her to let go.

If Kaede falls in the well, all may not be quite lost yet. Forty feet down, the well is full of water, and the PCs will hear Kaede splash into it. Since she is bound and semi-conscious, she will quickly drown, but if the PCs can get to her within three rounds, she can be saved.

If the PCs retreat without saving Kaede, the Goju will let them go. If they retreat with Kaede (without killing all the Goju), the creatures will pursue until Hoseki is destroyed or until all the regular Goju are destroyed, whichever comes first.

Victory?

If the PCs manage to destroy Hoseki and at least half of the regular Goju, the remainder will flee, vanishing back into the shadows without a trace. The PCs will be free to carry Isawa Kaede back to the surface (if she lived). She is still dazed from the Goju poison, but slowly revives as she emerges into the outside air.

A rescued Isawa Kaede will share the following story with the PCs:

"My father, the Master of Void, has suffered for as long as I can remember from a... strange poisoned wound, a wasting of his body which also slowly took away his memories and identity. He told me once, years ago, that he had suffered his injuries from a thing that had taken the form of my mother. A nameless thing of darkness and shadow. He told me, also, that such a darkness had tried to claim me... but he had banished it when he gave me my name." The young shugenja-ko looks up at the sky that is growing pale with dawn. "And now my father has vanished, and these... things... tried to take me as well. The Void grows dark. I cannot see what will come next."

Although the PCs' accomplishment will not be publicly lauded, they have earned the thanks of the Isawa family. In the next few weeks, shugenja PCs will each receive a spell-scroll from the Isawa (the "Light of Amaterasu" cert). Non-shugenja each receive a letter informing them that the Elemental Council is thankful to them for their services and will remember their deeds. These PCs get the "Letter from the Council" cert.

Defeat?

If the PCs did not save Isawa Kaede (or did not even realize she was kidnapped), they hear several days later that she was found in a hut outside the city, apparently safe and sound. She returns immediately to Phoenix lands and the PCs do not get a chance to speak with her.

Conclusion

Eventually, regardless of the PCs' actions, the fires will be brought under control, the Shadowbeast will be slain, and order will be restored. What the PCs' actions determine is who specifically survives, and whether the Goju managed to corrupt Isawa Kaede or not.

A final scene will occur as morning brings an end to this chaotic and desperate night:

A thin, red-lit down comes at last to the shattered streets of Otosan Uchi. As the last of the fires are extinguished, a group of palace servants and Imperial Guards manages to extract the Emerald Throne from the smoking ruins of the Imperial Palace. The Throne is scorched and chipped, but it still glistens in the dawn as the servants sluice it down with water from the river.

If (as is most likely) the Hantei Emperor is dead, it falls to his son Sotorii to take the throne.

Hantei Sotorii is very pale, his eyes darkly shadowed, as he slowly looks around at the watching samurai and courtiers. Finally he walks slowly up to the throne and seats himself, his movements a little shaky. A shout rises from the crowd: "All hail, Emperor Hantei the 39th! Banzai!" The new-made Emperor waves weakly at the crowd, squinting his eyes against the light of the rising sun.

If (against the odds) the PCs saved the Hantei Emperor, the scene is slightly different:

Hantei the 38th seems dazed and unresponsive as he is guided to the throne. A pair of servants guide his faltering steps to the throne, while everyone watches in expectant silence. His son Sotorii watches quietly, his eyes shadowed darkly. The Emperor seats himself and looks around in seeming confusion. Finally he speaks. "My city... my people. Why have the Fortunes forsaken us?" He begins to weep. There is a rippling gasp as everyone turns their eyes away from the Son of Heaven's open display of emotion. Only

Mother Sun bears witness, Her light glistening on the Emperor's tear-streaked cheeks.

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
PCs destroyed the Shadowbeast: (to those PCs only)	+1 XP
PCs saved Isawa Kaede from the Goju: (to those PCs only)	+1 XP
PCs saved the Emperor from drowning: (to those PCs only)	+1 XP

Total Maximum Possible Experience: 6 XP

Honor

PCs managed to save the life of Hantei the 38th: +2 Honor.

PCs on the barge could not recover Hantei the 38th from the river: -3 Honor.

Phoenix PCs save Isawa Kaede: +2 Honor.

Other PCs save Isawa Kaede: +1 Honor

Phoenix PCs fail to save Isawa Kaede (if they know she was taken into the tunnels): -3 Honor.

Other PCs fail to save Isawa Kaede (if they know she was taken into the tunnels): -2 Honor.

Glory

PCs managed to save the life of Hantei the 38th: +5 Glory

PCs on the barge could not recover the body of Hantei the 38th: -5 Glory.

PCs saved Imperial NPCs from drowning: +1 Glory per NPC.

Lion PC on the barge saves Matsu Tsuko: +1 Glory.

Lion PCs ignore Matsu Tsuko in favor of saving Crane or Scorpion NPCs: -2 Glory.

Crane or Crane-allied PCs saved Kakita Yoshi: +1 Glory.

Crane or Crane-allied PCs saved Doji Kuwanen: +1 Glory.

Phoenix PCs who save Isawa Kaede: +3 Glory.

Non-Phoenix PCs who save Isawa Kaede: +1 Glory.

Other Awards/Penalties

If the PCs managed (against all odds) to save the Emperor, all of them gain the Ear of the Emperor advantage.

If the PCs saved Isawa Kaede, shugenja PCs will get the cert for the spell-scroll Light of Amaterasu, while non-shugenja PCs get the cert for the Letter from the Isawa Council.

PCs who succumbed to Shadow Corruption from the touch of the Shadowbeast get the appropriate cert.

GM's Aid #1: NPCs and Monsters

Isawa Nobuyoshi, Inquisitor

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

TN to be Hit: 15

School/Rank: Isawa Shugenja (Earth) 3

Honor/Glory: 4.3/4.5

Skills: Calligraphy 2, Hand to Hand 2, Heraldry 3, Investigation 5, Kenjutsu 3, Law 4, Lore (Asako family) 2, Lore (Maho-Tsukai) 4, Lore (Shugenja) 2, Medicine 3, Meditation 3, Shintao 4, Sincerity 2, Spellcraft 3, Theology 2.

Spells: *Sense, Commune, Summon*, (Earth 1) *Elemental Ward, Jade Strike*, (Earth 2) *Courage of the Seven Thunders*, (Earth 3) *Strength of the Crow*, (Earth 4) *Tomb of Jade*, (Air 1) *By the Light of Lord Moon*, (Air 2) *Call Upon the Wind, Whispering Winds*, (Fire 1) *Fires That Cleanse, Fury of Osano-Wo*, (Water 1) *Path to Inner Peace*.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Absolute Direction, Clear Thinker, Read Lips/Bad Reputation (hostile to the Asako family), Driven (to hunt down Isawa Gidayu).

Equipment: Kimono, wakizashi, scroll satchel.

Isawa Kaede, Acolyte of Void

FIRE 2	AIR 4
Intelligence 3	
EARTH 3	WATER 4
	Perception 5
VOID 7	

TN to be Hit: 20

School/Rank: Isawa Ishiken 4

Honor/Glory: 4.7/6.2

Skills: Advanced Medicine 3, Calligraphy 3, Etiquette 4, History 8, Kagaku 3, Lore (Dragon Clan) 3, Lore (Shugenja) 8, Lore (Void) 10, Meditation 10, Research 6, Shintao 10, Spell Research 7, Tea Ceremony 5, Theology 5

Spells: All Void spells, plus any other spells which the GM sees fit to give her.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Chosen by the Oracle (Void), Clear Thinker, Great Destiny, Ishiken-do/Dark Secret (her birth), Soft-Hearted.

Equipment: Exquisite kimono, scroll satchel.

Ikoma Sansho, boisterous Ikoma storyteller

FIRE 3	AIR 3
Agility 4	
EARTH 3	WATER 4
VOID 3	

School/Rank: Ikoma bard 2

Honor/Glory: 2.9/3.1

TN to be Hit: 15

Skills: Athletics 5, Bard 9, Etiquette 2, Hand-to-Hand 5, Iaijutsu 3, Kenjutsu 4, Lore (Ancestors, Lion Clan) 6, Poetry 3, Sincerity 6, Wrestling 8

Advantages/Disadvantages: Hands of Stone, Quick, Strength of the Earth (rank 2)/Bad Reputation (brawler)

Equipment: Daisho set, no-dachi, traveling kimono

Shioda, Caretaker of the Temple of the Kami

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

TN to be Hit: 15

School/Rank: Monk 2

Honor/Glory: 3.8/2.0

Skills: Astrology 2, Bojutsu 1, Calligraphy 4, Etiquette 3, Heraldry 3, Herbalism 2, Lore (various) 2-3, Meditation 4, Poetry 2, Shintao 5, Sincerity 2, Tea Ceremony 2, Theology 3.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Allies (monks), Bland, Clear Thinker/Ascetic, Cures of the Kami, Obligation (caretaker of the Temple), Soft-Hearted

Equipment: Bo staff, clothing, sandals.

Generic Goju, faceless servants of Shadow

FIRE 2	AIR 2
EARTH 2	WATER 2

TN to be Hit: 20

Attacks: 4k2 (3k2 against Low-End parties, 4k3 against High-End parties).

Damage: Ninja-to (3k2), Shuriken (2k1), or Garrote (2k2). Damage listed includes Strength.

Skills: Stealth 5 (3 against low-end parties, 6 against high-end parties)

Wounds: 24: Dead.

Special Abilities: Shadow Invulnerability (take double damage from crystal attacks and half damage from all other attacks). They can “Shadow-walk” and move instantaneously between any two shadows within 100 feet.

Shadow Invulnerability: the Shadowbeast takes full damage from crystal weapons, half damage from true nemuranai, and only one-quarter damage from jade and other magic. Normal weapons do no damage at all. Against low-rank parties, it takes half damage from jade and magic and 1 point from mundane weapons.

Goju Hoseki, minion of Shadow

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

TN to be Hit: 25

Attacks: 7k5 (with ninja-to) or 5k5 (shuriken).

Damage: Ninja-to (5k2), Shuriken (4k1)

Skills: Defense 7, Ninjutsu (ninja-to) 7, Ninjutsu (shuriken) 5, Stealth 6

Wounds: 54: Dead

Special Abilities: Hoseki can create spell-like effects resembling the spells *By the Light of Lord Moon*, *Earth's Stagnation*, and *Way of Deception*. These are each a single action to use and do not require scrolls. She also 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).

Oni no Wakeru/Shadowbeast

FIRE 5	AIR 5
EARTH 5	WATER 5

TN to be Hit: 25

Attacks: 5k3 twice per round (claws). 6k4 against high-end parties.

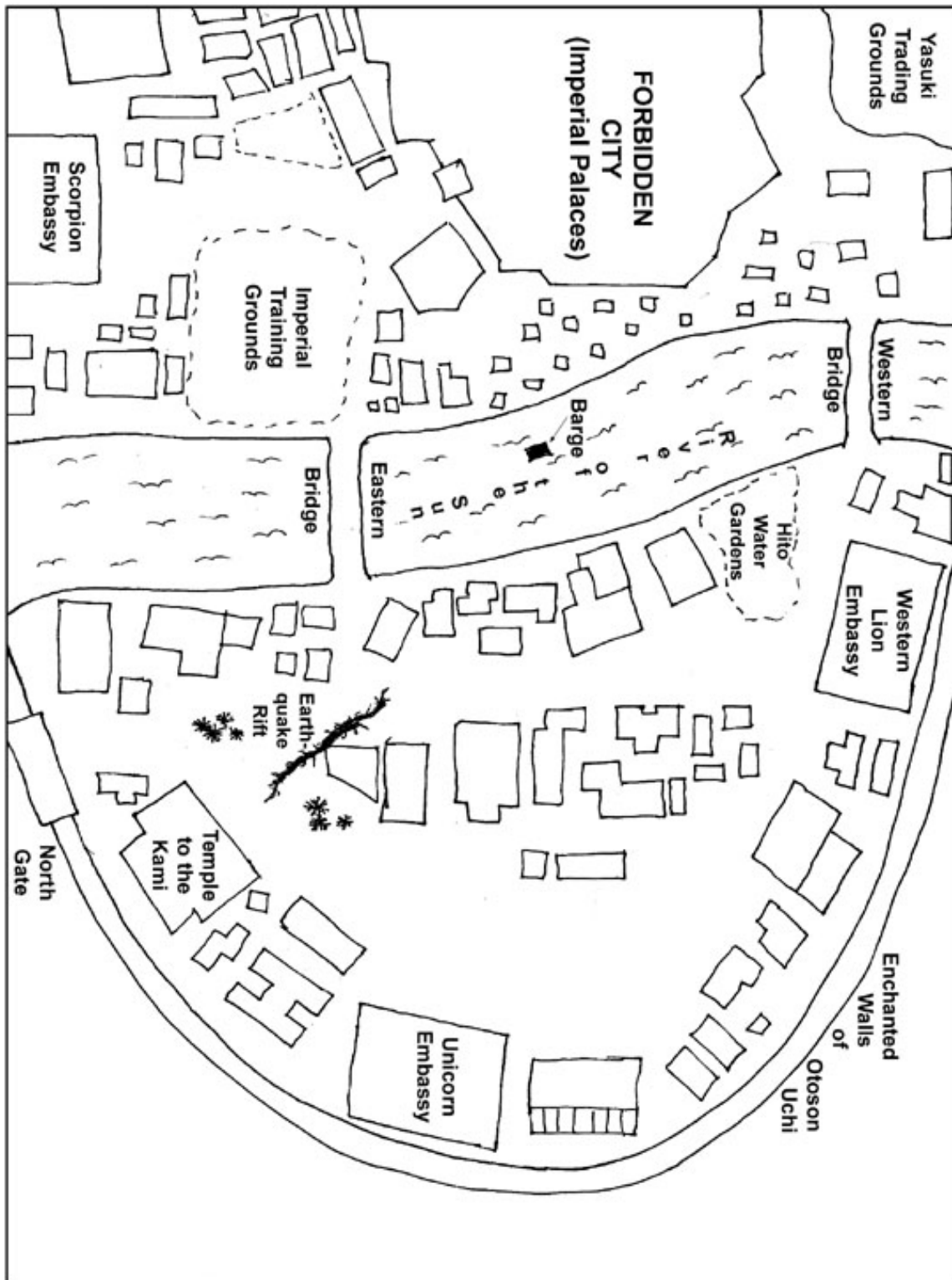
Damage: 5k2, or try to infect with Shadow (5k3 against high-end parties)

Carapace Armor: 4

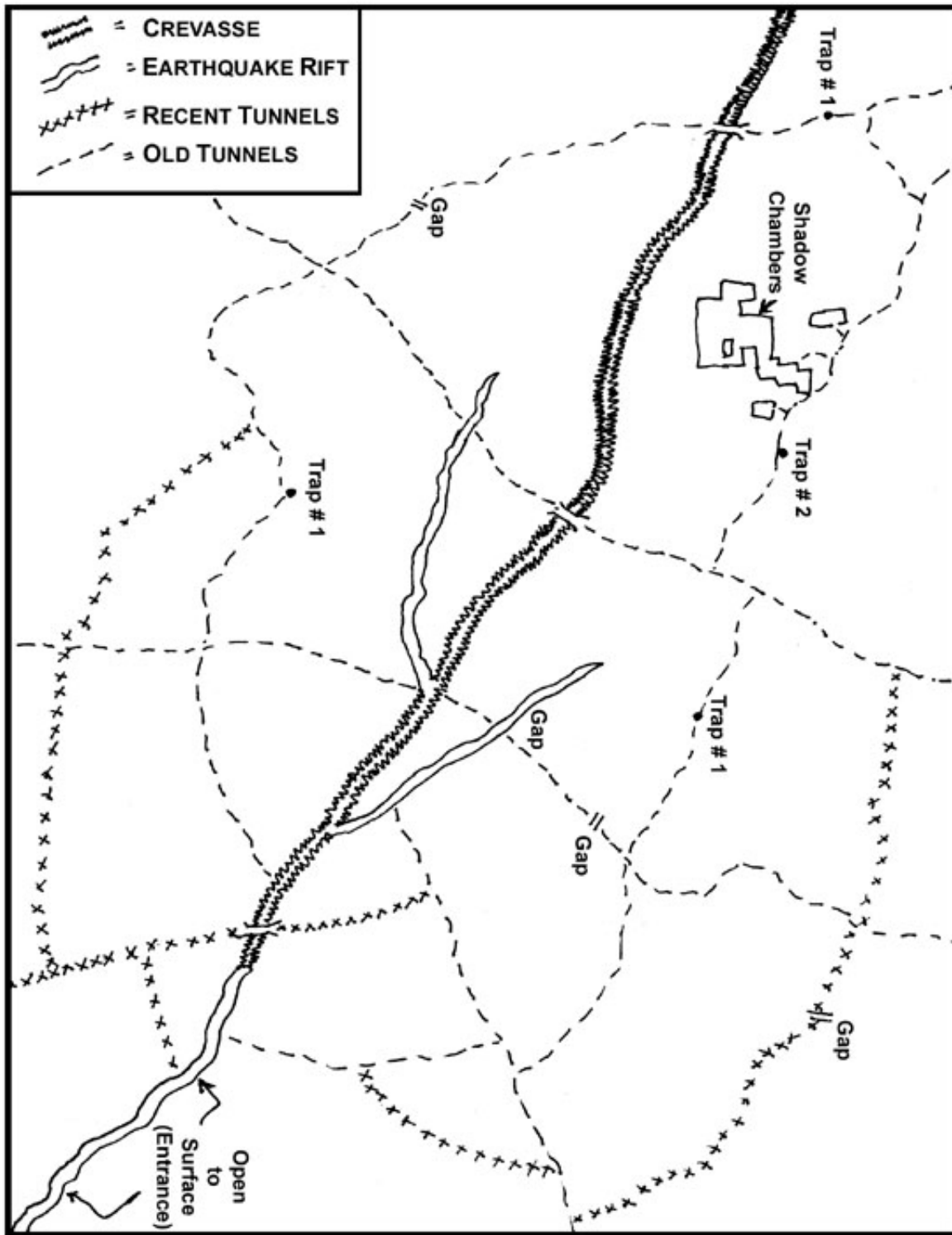
Wounds: 90: Dead (120 against high-end parties)

Special Abilities: The Shadowbeast can “Shadow-walk,” moving instantaneously between any two shadows within 100 feet. It also has a modified form of

GM's Aid #2: Map of the Ekihokei



GM's Aid #3: Map of the Tunnels



Player Handout #1: Vision in the Temple of the Kami

The Earth Dragon writhes before you. Its length is infinite, its power unimaginable. You feel small, insignificant, an insect crawling before a God.

Yet the Dragon writhes in pain. Spikes and gouges of shadow mar its great scaly length. It writhes against their agony, shuddering and trembling, and the ground heaves in sympathetic torment.

Its jade-faceted eyes rotate blindly, and then settle upon you. Its jaws gape, teeth the size of castle towers, and the voice of the Dragon thunders in your head. “Nothing shall save us,” it booms. You feel the Dragon’s terror and fury, its hopeless wrath. “Nothing shall destroy us.” Its body begins to break apart, torn asunder by the shadowy spines. As it shatters apart into tumbling fragments, a last howl of fury fills your mind: “I am become... Nothing.”