

Unmaker's Shadow

**A Two-Round Multi-Rank Adventure for Heroes of
Rokugan (Champions of the Emerald Empire)**

Part Seven (Final) of *Shadow's Path*

Round Two

by Rob Hobart

The Living Darkness threatens to consume all of Rokugan. A strange meeting puts you on the path of a ritual which may be able to name the Shadow... but with Shosuro herself hunting you, can your quest possibly succeed?

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

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

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

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

GM's Information

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

This adventure is a Multi-Rank adventure. This means that it has two sets of statistics for NPCs, one for low-end parties (Ranks 1, 2, and 3) and one for mid/high-end parties (Ranks 2 through 5).

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 Multi-Rank adventure, and contains two sets of statistics for the villains: one for Low-End parties (School ranks 1-3, average 2) and one for High-End parties (School ranks 2-5, average 3.5).

The Skill and Trait roll TNs listed in the module are for high-end parties. For a low-end party, reduce the TNs by 5.

The GM may need to make additional "tweaks" for parties which lie at an extreme end of the power curve. Suggested tweaks are listed below:

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

- The Goju invaders at the Centipede Castle number only four, instead of six.
- Yogo Junzo is accompanied by only three Yogo bushi, instead of four.
- The fight with Shosuro and Bayushi Aramoro will only last two rounds.

High End Party (average party Insight Rank is Four or higher):

- Yogo Junzo's accompanying Yogo bushi are Fire 4 and School Rank 4.
- Shosuro has Strength 7, Agility 7, skill rank 10 in Tantojutsu, has Magic Resistance of rank 3, and is considered to be Insight Rank 6 for purposes of resisting hostile magic.
- The fight with Shosuro and Bayushi Aramoro lasts four rounds.

Adventure Summary and Background

Two years ago, the Living Darkness allied itself to Fu Leng, the dark god who was beginning to awaken from his thousand-year imprisonment. Under cover of assisting his return, the Darkness began to spread throughout the Empire, slowly subverting the Clans and insinuating itself into the highest ranks of Rokugan's ruling class. Now, as the Shadowlands openly ravages the Empire, and Toturi the Black marches on Otosan Uchi, the Shadow is spreading in their wake like wildfire, devouring entire towns and castles.

The only group in the Empire which has a way to stop the Shadow is the sinister conspiracy known as the Kolat. For centuries, the Kolat has kept fragments of a ritual which could potentially force the Sun and Moon themselves to come down to the earth and name the Shadow. Such a cataclysmic event has as much potential to destroy the Empire as to save it, and the Kolat has always hesitated to use it, even as a last resort.

Now, with the Shadow moving faster and more powerfully than ever before, a split has developed within the ranks of the Kolat. Some among the Ten Masters believe the time has come to use the ritual, lest the entire world be devoured. The majority, however, remain unwilling to take such a drastic step, particularly since doing so would mean to depend on the intervention of the very gods which the Kolat hopes to overthrow.

Emon, the "Shadow Bane," one of the Ten Masters, has decided to take matters into his own hands. He has arranged to smuggle the fragments of the ritual to Yasuki Taka, who he suspects (correctly) of running his own clandestine operations independently of the Kolat.

Taka, in turn, contacts the PCs to arrange for them to meet with Emon. Some of the PCs may already serve as Taka's agents – and many of whom are enemies of the Kolat. In Round One, the PCs took up the quest, struggling to retrieve the remaining fragments of the great ritual from various libraries across the Empire. Now, with the ritual fully reconstructed, they must find and retrieve the ancient relics and artifacts which are key to completing the ritual.

NOTE on RUNNING THIS SCENARIO: Some PCs in the campaign may have certs marking them as "Owned by the Kolat." This adventure represents the last chance for those PCs to free themselves of the Kolat's influence. If they fail to do so, they will face likely death after the upcoming adventure "The Dragon's Heart."

SPECIAL NOTE on PARTY COMPOSITION: It is assumed for this round of the adventure that at least one PC in the party has played the adventure Funeral Pyre and encountered the burned, crippled Bayushi Kachiko. If none of the PCs have done so, Bayushi Aramoro will not approach them, and the final two parts of the adventure (Part Six: Aramoro Intervenes and Part Seven: Kyuden Bayushi) will not take place.

Introduction: The Objective

At the end of Round One, the PCs should have successfully reconstructed the outlines of a ritual which can summon down the Sun and Moon to name the Shadow and end its threat to Rokugan. In order to perform this ritual, however, the PCs must retrieve several sacred artifacts. These are as follows:

- The Jade Hand.
- The Obsidian Hand.
- The Tears of Lady Doji.
- "A Gift Freely Given" by the Lady of the Forest, the ruler of the Kitsune Fox Spirits.
- The Golden Obi of the Sun Goddess. The Obi must be bathed in the flames of the Fire Dragon, which may be found in a special orb in Ryoko Owari.

The PCs should already have figured out, in Round One, what these items are from the clues they found. If not, they can make another attempt to remember/research the answers now.

For each of the six descriptive elements listed below, each PC may make one roll of either **Lore: Relics** (or

similar **Lore** skill)/**Intelligence** at TN 15, **Theology/Intelligence** at TN 20, **History/Intelligence** at TN 20, or **Simple Intelligence** at TN 25. A successful roll earns the first clue. The PC may then make a second roll, with a Raise, to get the second clue.

Alternatively, if the PCs are still at one of the three Clan libraries where they recovered the ritual, and can spend a day researching, they can substitute make a roll of **Research/Intelligence** at TN 20 or **Calligraphy/Intelligence** at TN 25 instead.

“An obi woven from the light of the Sun.” 1st Clue: There are rumors of a golden obi associated with the worship of the Sun Goddess. 2nd Clue: The obi is said to be in the possession of the Centipede Clan.

“Bathed in Celestial Fire.” 1st Clue: “Celestial Fire” is probably a reference to the Fire Dragon. 2nd Clue: There is a sacred glowing orb at the Temple of the Sun in Ryoko Owari which is said to contain the preserved breath of the Fire Dragon.

“Hand of a maddened Fortune, cut free by a vengeful son.” 1st Clue: Some stories claim that Lord Moon is mad, or was driven mad by the rebellion of his children. It is said that Lord Moon’s hand was cut off when Hantei defeated him. 2nd Clue: There are rumors of a black stone hand which has been in the possession of the Scorpion Clan for a thousand years.

“Hand of sacred stone.” 1st Clue: “Sacred stone” probably means jade. 2nd Clue: There have been rumors of a “Jade hand” being used by the “rebels” in the Crab civil war. Supposedly it was smuggled out shortly before the war ended.

“Tears shed by the most beautiful of Kami, mingling beauty and sadness, gift more precious than life.” 1st Clue: The most beautiful Kami was certainly Lady Doji. 2nd Clue: It is said that Lady Doji shed jade tears when she learned of her brother Fu Leng’s death. The tears have been preserved by her descendents in the Doji and Kakita families.

“A gift offered freely and without guile by the Lady of the Forest, the ten-tailed fox.” 1st Clue: The Lady of the Forest is a name given to a legendary supreme Kitsune spirit, inhabiting the lands of the Fox Clan. 2nd Clue: It is said that the Lady of the Forest is an aspect of Benten, the Fortune of Love. She is capable of granting wishes, or of stealing men’s hearts

forever. What manner of gift could she give? And what could convince her to give it?

The Hands

It is a good bet that at least one PC has played through the adventures in which the Obsidian Hand and the Jade Hand appeared. In fact, it is quite possible that at least one PC has the cert “Bearer of the Obsidian Hand” or “Bearer of the Jade Hand.” This solves the problem of finding these artifacts.

Even if none of the PCs has one of these certs, there is an excellent chance that they have previously met/played with PCs who do. They will know that they can eventually track down these PCs, a task which will have to wait until after they recover the other items.

In the unlikely event that none of the PCs in the adventure has the cert, and none of them have ever played in an adventure with a PC who possesses those certs, the party will simply have to collect what they can now and go on. Since the actual completion of the ritual is beyond the scope of this adventure, this is not a serious problem.

Where Do We Go?

The PCs will most likely already know the locations of the Obsidian and Jade hands – if a PC at the table is not themselves in possession of a cert marking them as a bearer of one of these items, they should at least have played in the past with other characters who do. In the unlikely event that nobody at the table has any idea where to find the **Obsidian** and **Jade Hands**, the PCs will simply have to gather the other items and hope for the best. Since the ritual itself cannot actually be performed within the context of this adventure, it will not be a fatal problem if the PCs cannot locate one or both of the Hands.

The **Golden Obi of the Sun Goddess** is the creation of the Centipede Clan, and presumably is still in their possession. Thus, to acquire it, the PCs will have to travel to Centipede lands.

The **Tears of Lady Doji** are of more uncertain status. A PC who rolls Lore: Crane (or a similar Lore skill) with Intelligence at TN 15, or History/Intelligence or Theology/Intelligence at TN 20, will recall that the Tears are of indeterminate number, and have been recorded as being in the possession of both the Doji and Kakita families over the centuries. (The PCs do not know how many of the Tears they need, although the instruction that they must be “clutched in the Jade

hand” suggests no more than two or three.) Thus, the PCs must presumably travel to either Kyuden Doji or Shiro Sano Kakita in order to retrieve them. Since Kyuden Doji has already fallen to the Shadow (as recorded in the adventure Blood of Midnight), that leaves Shiro Sano Kakita the only option.

The **Lady of the Forest** has only been seen in the Fox lands. This makes the PCs’ destination here obvious (although persuading her to offer a gift may not be so simple).

The only possible place where the PCs can find the **“breath of the Fire dragon”** is in the legendary great orb at the Temple of the Sun in Ryoko Owari, the “City of Lies” in Scorpion lands.

Travel and Time: Where Are We Now?

If, as is most likely, the PCs met with Yasuki Taka at the end of Round One, they will be in either the Imperial Capital or the Crane city of Samui Kaze Toshi. If they chose to avoid Taka and operate entirely on their own, they could potentially be in Kyuden Agasha, Kyuden Ikoma, or Kyuden Asahina.

In order to retrieve the three items they need, the PCs will need to visit Centipede lands, Shiro Sano Kakita, and the Fox Lands. Finally, in order to bathe the Golden Obi in the breath of the Fire Dragon, they will need to visit Ryoko Owari. As with Round One, the PCs are not required to seek the items in a particular order. However, given their goals and the geography of the Empire, Ryoko Owari will almost certainly be the last stop on their journey.

The following section breaks down travel times between these various locations. The GM should keep track of how many days the PCs spend in travel, and update the players on timeline events that progress elsewhere in the Empire (see the next section).

From Samui Kaze Toshi:

- To Centipede Lands: by sea, four days directly to the Centipede Valley.
- To Fox Lands: Five days overland, or one day by sea to the Crane port of Mura Sabishii Toshi and then two days inland.
- To Shiro Sano Kakita, via Scorpion lands and Beiden pass: ten days to the Pass, then (if Beiden Pass is still open) eight more days.
- To Otosan Uchi: Three days by sea up the coast.
- To Ryoko Owari: Twelve days overland (goes through Fox lands).

From Otosan Uchi (Imperial Capital):

- To Centipede lands: one day by sea up the coast, or four days overland through the Mountains of Regret.
- To Shiro Sano Kakita: Six days overland.
- To Fox Lands, by sea: Four days down the coast to Mura Sabishii Toshi, then two days overland.
- To Fox Lands, by land: Fourteen days to Beiden Pass, then (if the Pass is still open) seven more days through Scorpion lands to Fox lands.
- To Ryoko Owari, by sea: Same as to Fox lands, but add nine more days.
- To Ryoko Owari, by land: Same as to Fox lands, but only five days past Beiden Pass.

From Kyuden Ikoma:

- To Otosan Uchi: eighteen days overland.
- To Shiro Sano Kakita: Seven days overland.
- To Fox lands: Ten days to Beiden Pass, then (if the Pass is still open) seven more days.

From Kyuden Agasha:

- To Otosan Uchi: Nineteen days overland.
- To Shiro Sano Kakita: Twelve days overland.
- To Beiden Pass, overland: Twenty-five days. If pass is open, from there, seven days to Fox lands, or five days to Ryoko Owari.

From Kyuden Asahina:

- To Otosan Uchi or Centipede Lands, by sea: one day to the coast, then three days by sea to Otosan Uchi or four to Centipede lands.
- To Shiro Sano Kakita, by sea: one day to the coast, two days up the coastline, then twelve days overland.
- To Beiden Pass, overland: Eighteen days, then (if Pass is still open) nine days to Shiro Sano Kakita or fourteen days to Otosan Uchi.
- To Fox lands: Five days overland.
- To Ryoko Owari: Sixteen days overland.

From Fox Lands:

- To Ryoko Owari: Nine days overland.
- To Beiden Pass: seven days. If Pass is open, from there, nine days to Shiro Sano Kakita, or fourteen days to Otosan Uchi.

From Centipede Lands:

- To Otosan Uchi: Four days overland, one day by sea.
- To Samui Kaze Toshi: Four days by sea.
- To Mura Sabishii Toshi: Five days by sea.

Pushing the Pace

The PCs may decide to try to push themselves to travel faster, especially once timeline events begin placing pressure on them (see below). The PCs may make one attempt to speed their pace during each segment of their journey (between each of the “way points” listed above).

PCs who are traveling mounted can roll **Horsemanship/Awareness** at TN 20. If the horse was successfully treated with **Animal Husbandry/Intelligence** at TN 15, the PC can get a Free Raise on the roll. Creative use of spells like *Nature's Touch* and *Ride Like the Wind* can also award a Free Raise.

PCs who are traveling on foot must roll **Athletics/Willpower** at TN 20. The PC gets a Free Raise if s/he has some ability that enhances travel speeds (such as the Hiruma School or the Centipede Tattoo). Again, creative use a magic could also earn a Free Raise.

If at least two-thirds of the PCs make their rolls, their travel time is shortened by one day out of every seven (rounded off). Thus, if this portion of their journey was slated to take fifteen days, with successful rolls the time is reduced to thirteen days.

Timeline Events

As the PCs spend time on their quest, larger events will continue to transpire within the Empire, and the PCs should learn about them as the adventure progresses. The PCs should pick up this information from the gossip of other travelers, nervous talk in the common rooms of Inns, speaking with border guards as their travel papers are inspected, and so forth.

Where the PCs will begin on the timeline will depend on how quickly they completed their quest in Round One. If things went mostly in their favor, they can complete Round One in about fifty days, but it could potentially take considerably longer. The GM should keep track of where the PCs are in the timeline when Round One ends, and begin from there.

After sixty days:

- Crab forces crush the Three-Man Alliance at the Battle of Crimson Grasses (on the Blessed Ground Plain). There are rumors that Shadowlands forces intervened in the battle, although whether they took sides or merely slaughtered indiscriminately is uncertain.

- Rumors of the attack on Shiro Kitsuki reach the rest of the Empire. The nature of the attacking force is uncertain, but is generally believed to be Shadowlands in nature. Losses are reported as heavy, and the Kitsuki daimyo is known to be missing.

After seventy-five days:

- A Goju/Shadowlands force besieges Shiro Sano Kakita. If the PCs attempt to visit that castle at any time after this, they will find it surrounded by the Shadowlands army, while Crane troops attempt to rally for a relief effort.

After eighty days:

- Scorpion troops occupy Beiden Pass. Any PCs traveling overland through this region (such as moving overland between Kyuden Asahina and any of the other locations) will now find the Scorpion in control of the pass.
- Scorpion forces fight the Lion armies in a bloody, two-day engagement near Kenson Gakka, amidst heavy rain: the Battle of Flooded Courage. Lion troops hold the field but are forced to withdraw afterward due to lack of supplies and reinforcements.

After eighty-five days:

- Rumors of the siege of Shiro Sano Kakita reach the rest of the Empire.

After ninety days:

- Crab troops are rumored to have reached the village of Shimomura in southern Scorpion lands. So far, there are no reports of major fighting between the Scorpion and Crab.

After 110 days:

- Toturi's Army is reported to be moving south through Phoenix lands. The Phoenix have declared Toturi a traitor, claiming he switched sides during the spring battles, and there are rumors that he is destroying the remains of the Phoenix and Lion armies as he moves south.
- Kyuden Asahina is reported to have been razed to the ground. If the PCs have somehow not yet completed their work in that city, it is now too late.

After 120 days:

- Rumors leak out of the Mantis Islands that they have lost over half their fleet to a surprise attack from the Crab “turtle ships.”

- It is reported that a vast legion of Dark Moto has swept through Crab lands and is riding north toward the Unicorn territories.

After 130 days:

- The Fists of the Emperor Legion is reputed to be force-marching toward the capital in order to block the march of Toturi's Army.

Part One: The Shadow's Actions

In Round One, the Shadow attacked and harassed the PCs in a number of ways, most notably by sending the powerful Goju Shingosha after them.

Now that the PCs have retrieved the ritual and are attempted to collect the artifacts needed to perform it, the Shadow will become more alarmed, and begins to take even more aggressive measures against them. Both in the Centipede lands and in Shiro Sano Kakita, the Shadow will take specific action against the PCs (described in Part Two and Part Three in the appropriate places).

Goju Zato

In addition to the specific attacks described in Part Two and Part Three, the Shadow will also send Goju Zato, a unique minion, to harass the PCs. He is described in detail in Appendix #1.

At each major location the PCs visit, the GM should have one or two PCs make **Simple Perception** rolls at TN 15. With a success, they notice a plump, smiling Ise Zumi watching them from nearby (passing in a crowd, sitting across from them in an Inn, and so forth). There is a sinister, twisted quality to the smile on his broad, jowly face. Before the PC can take any action, however, he turns away and departs (slipping into a crowd, leaving the inn, etc). If the PC tries to follow, Zato has vanished.

After this has happened at least twice, Zato will make a more open approach: he will sit down at a table with the PCs when they are eating in an Inn, teahouse, or restaurant. Zato will make sure this is in a public place, preferably where the PCs are without most or all of their weapons – any physical attack on him will be a violent disruption of public order which costs the PCs Glory and face. Zato will not directly attack the PCs – he simply talks with them, while indulging his gluttonous appetites (see his description in Appendix #1).

Zato will try to unsettle the PCs and shake their confidence, alternating between cheerful talk in his normal, human voice and dark threats and dire promises in a low, hollow tone. Dark shadows play across his face, clouding his eyes and occasionally distorting his facial features. Occasionally a rat will wriggle out of his hakama and scurry around on his shoulders before slipping back into hiding.

Zato will promise the PCs that their quest is doomed, that the world is already being unmade even as they speak. Above all, he will drop hints that summoning Lord Moon and Lady Sun is a doomed enterprise, because Lord Moon himself is a friend to the Shadow and wants the world to be destroyed.

It is impossible for the PCs to test Zato's truthfulness – as a Goju, he is a creature of pure deceit, without true identity or emotion. He will continue to harass the PCs until they leave (he offers them a mocking goodbye, promising they will meet again). If they attack him, he will drop into the shadows beneath their table and disappear.

Zato will reappear in Ryoko Owari, when the PCs try to recover the Celestial Fire (see Part Five).

Mental Attacks

Besides Zato's direct harassment, the Shadow will also begin to mentally attack those PCs who have Shadow Points. In the case of those PCs with only one or two Shadow Points, this will consist only of vague, badly-remembered nightmares which plague the PC every few nights. For PCs with three or four Shadow Points, the Shadow will launch a more complex and subtle attack.

Effects on PCs with One or Two Points: In between each of the major locations in the scenario (their starting location, Centipede Lands, Fox Lands, Shiro Sano Kakita, Ryoko Owari), each PC with one or two Shadow Points must make a **Simple Void** roll at TN 15. (There should thus be a total of four rolls, unless the PCs wind up visiting some locations more than once.) A failed roll means the PC is spiritually drained and loses a Void point, which does not recover until and unless the PC succeeds on a later roll against the Shadow. If the PCs fails three rolls in a row, s/he gains a Shadow Point.

Effects on PCs with Three or Four Shadow Points: These PCs will suffer a recurring dream in which they are speaking with a former PC who they

know to be dead (or, if possible, one who was taken by the Shadow). Again, as with the minor attacks listed above, this will take place in between each major location the PCs visit. The GM should try to choose a suitable person for the dream based on the player's past experience. If no candidate suggests itself, the GM should use Goju Zato.

The dream conversationalist will verbally attack the PC's faith in bushido, shintao, the Fortunes, and the Empire. The GM should try to tailor the attack to the beliefs, background, and weaknesses of the specific PC – the Shadow will always strike at the PC's weak points, pointing out those times that the PC failed to uphold his/her ideals. These should not be long conversations, but rather brief, frustrating snippets of discussion, after which the PC wakes and remembers only vaguely what happened. After each dream, the PC makes a **Simple Void** roll as listed above, but the TN is dependent on the PC's response to the dream: a PC who lost emotional control, or who failed to role-play credibly, rolls at TN 20, a PC who responded in an average way rolls at TN 15, and a PC who exhibited exceptional self-control and moral strength rolls at TN 10. The consequences for failed rolls are the same as those listed above.

Yogo Junzo

Finally, the Shadow will unleash one of its unwitting minions, Yogo Junzo, against the PCs. Junzo will be deluded by Shosuro (in the guise of Bayushi Kachiko) into believing the PCs are enemies of the Scorpion Clan.

At any time in Round Two after 80 days have passed, if the PCs enter Scorpion lands or Scorpion-occupied territories, the border guards who ask for their papers will pass word to Yogo Junzo, who will begin scrying the PCs with his magic. Shugenja PCs (and PCs with the Elemental Attunement advantage) can roll **Spellcraft/Awareness** at TN 20 or **Simple Awareness** at TN 30 to notice they are being scryed. (Shugenja PCs can, if they wish, attempt a *Counterspell*.)

After 95 days have passed, the PCs will not be allowed to travel through Beiden Pass, no matter what travel papers they have – Junzo has labeled them threats to the Scorpion, and ordered their travel restricted.

Finally, if and when the PCs go to Ryoko Owari, Junzo will travel there with a “strike team” of

Scorpion bushi and attempt to arrest them. See Part Five: Ryoko Owari for details of this encounter.

Part Two: Centipede Lands – The Golden Obi

The Centipede Clan inhabits a single small valley in the Mountains of Regret. The valley is hemmed in on three sides by steep, jagged mountains, while on the fourth (eastern) side, it is open to a sheer cliff which drops a hundred feet down to the sea. A narrow, winding side-road from the Treacherous Pass is the only land access, and is guarded by ronin bushi hired by the Clan.

At the bottom of the cliff, a narrow beach is home to a dozen hardy fishermen, who ply the waters to help feed the tiny Clan. If the PCs approach the Clan by sea, they will need to hire a brave and hardy captain who is willing to bring his boat in and anchor at the narrow beaches below the cliff – there is no dock. A precarious switch-back staircase ascends the cliff to the valley itself.

Regardless of which route the PCs use to reach the valley, they will find the valley of the Centipede to be a welcoming sight:

The small valley is a place of peaceful refuge, carpeted with smooth green grass. Peasant huts and modest samurai residences dot the valley floor, never enough of them in one place to constitute a “village” – or perhaps the whole valley is one large village. On the north side is a modest three-story castle. No wall or fortification surrounds it, and the road which leads to its front gates is smooth and straight, passing beneath a torii arch marked with the Centipede mon.

The PCs will be welcomed graciously to the castle and offered rooms on the second floor, where the handful of courtiers and diplomats assigned here reside.

Speaking with the Daimyo

The ruler of the Centipede Clan is Moshi Juiko, a stern, serious woman in late middle age. Her daughter and heir, Moshi Wakiza, is currently absent, leading the small contingent of Centipede shugenja who are serving in the armies of the Yoritomo Alliance.

If the PCs seek an audience with Juiko, it will be granted on the morning after they arrive. Juiko meets them in a modest, well-lit audience hall on the castle's main floor, accompanied by her small court of

Centipede shugenja (all female), their quiet and retiring husbands, and the ambassadors from the Mantis, Crane, Dragon, and Phoenix Clans.

Moshi Juiko is a woman who feels age creeping steadily closer to her, but is loathe to retire and surrender control to her daughter – it is Wakiza who advocated the alliance with the Mantis, which Juiko agreed to against her better judgment. The subsequent erratic and aggressive policies of Yoritomo have confirmed to her that the alliance is a mistake, but with her daughter still in the field alongside the Mantis armies, she cannot find a way to withdraw without dire loss of face. (She also fears her daughter might not obey an order to return.)

Toward the PCs, Juiko will initially come across as distant and a bit suspicious. How she responds to the PCs will depend as much or more on who addresses her as on what they say – she mistrusts Scorpions, strongly dislikes the Mantis and their Sparrow and Wasp “lackeys,” and tends to trust and respect women more than men. In terms of attitudes, Juiko believes in the Centipede’s traditional role as a pious, peaceful, and contemplative Clan (unlike her daughter’s militarism). She will be cold to any PC who comes across as aggressive, militaristic, or uneducated. Conversely, enlightened and well-mannered PCs, and those who advocate understanding between the Clans rather than war, will impress her favorably.

If the PCs fail to impress her, Juiko will keep any interview short and uninformative. (The PCs can speak later with the various ambassadors, if they wish.) If the PCs do manage to come across well, Juiko unbends a bit and becomes warmer and more gracious. “It is good to have such guests here, in these times of strife, when all counsel us to war and madness.” She looks pointedly at the Mantis ambassador.

Presumably, the PCs will ask about the legendary Golden Obi of the Sun Goddess. Juiko will affirm that the sacred artifact is in their possession. “It is said that every thread in the obi has been blessed with the light of the Lady Amaterasu herself. It has been in our keeping for many generations. One who was honored enough to wear it would be protected by the very power of the Sun.”

Obviously, at some point the PCs will have to try to explain their mission. Juiko has never heard of the Living Darkness, and will treat any discussion of nameless dark forces with skepticism. “The Empire has faced the evil if He Who is Not to be Named for a

thousand years. I hardly see why we need add a new enemy to the list.” She will show more consideration and less sarcasm if the PC speaking to her is female, but she will still not be prepared to accept the existence of the Shadow. If PCs demonstrate their own corruption by the Living Darkness, she will be puzzled by these strange supernatural effects, but still does not accept their story.

Given the situation, Juiko will certainly not be willing to put the Golden Obi into the hands of the PCs. “The Golden Obi is a sacred artifact placed into our care. We cannot allow it to leave our protection,” she explains. PCs who invoke the fate of the Empire, the potential unmaking of the world, and other such dire motivations will find her adamant. “I do not doubt your sincerity, samurai, but I cannot forsake our Clan’s duty simply because you believe it necessary.”

Again, she will be more polite when dealing with high-ranking or female PCs, but her decision is the same.

It is possible, though unlikely, that some PCs may be able to come up with a deceptive alternative reason for requesting the Golden Obi. Juiko is a canny old woman, and it will be quite difficult to deceive her. (If she suspects the PCs are lying to her, she will cast *Whispering Wind* under the pretense of offering a prayer to Amaterasu, then asks the PCs to repeat themselves.) PCs who are caught lying will be expelled from the Valley of the Centipede.

Assuming the PCs avoid this, Juiko will ultimately invite them to spend the night and enjoy her hospitality. This will be a grudging courtesy if the PCs did not impress her, but if they came across well, she will make it a pleasant invitation: “In this way, at least, let me apologize to you for having made your trip in vain.”

Dinner at the Centipede Court

The PCs will enjoy a simple but excellent dinner, in which fish and other seafood figure prominently. Juiko mostly holds aloof from conversation, but listens carefully to any discussions between the PCs and the other Clan ambassadors.

The **Mantis** ambassador, Yoritomo Chuya, is a tall, imposing man with thickly-muscled arms and a slab-sided face. He is polite to Great Clan PCs, but shows them no special deference – it is clear he regards himself as their equal. Chuya’s principle duty here is to make sure the Centipede remain allied to the

Mantis, and he interprets all other actions according to how they affect that goal.

Chuya is quite skeptical of any PC stories about the Living Darkness – he has never heard of such a thing. If he thinks Juiko is showing the PCs any favor, he will attack their claims relentlessly, demanding to know why the Empire has never before heard of this bizarre and improbable evil force.

The **Crane** ambassador, Kakita Okitsune, is a plump middle-aged courtier who seems to regard his assignment here chiefly as an opportunity to enjoy good seafood. He is well-educated and perceptive beneath his self-indulgent exterior, but his girth and weakness for large meals have made him an embarrassment to the Clan in the larger courts – hence his assignment here.

Okitsune will be very interested in the PCs' stories, since they match well with the rumors he has heard about conditions in Kyuden Doji. He may casually ask the PCs for more details about this "Living Darkness," although he is careful to conceal the extent of his interest, masking it as polite conversation.

The **Dragon** ambassador, Tamori Hajite, is a friendly and courteous man who seems to be a reversal of the usual "enigmatic Dragon" cliché. However, it may be noted that he wears a katana, signifying his willingness to fight duels in his own defense. He dresses simply and wears his hair long and loose, held back from his face with a simple headband. Hajite has some political influence here, since he helped arrange the marriage of Moshi Juiko's daughter Wakiza to a member of his family. (Her husband is with her in the field.)

Hajite has met some Kitsuki magistrates with knowledge of the Living Darkness, and knows it is connected with the "Ninja myth." He will be the only truly sympathetic ear the PCs will find, and will question them at some length on their quest.

The **Phoenix** ambassador, Isawa Noriko, is the courtier daughter of a mid-ranking Isawa daimyo. A woman of plain features, she has cultivated charming manners and an elegant, memorable voice to compensate. She is not yet betrothed, and considers eligible PC bachelors from that perspective. Painfully aware of how much less influence her Clan has after the catastrophes of last autumn, Noriko will guard her words carefully around any Dragon or Scorpion PCs.

Noriko has a single Shadow Point, although she herself is not aware of her contamination. She will be intrinsically hostile to the idea of the Living Darkness, and if any PC suggests the Shadow may have been responsible for the disasters in Phoenix lands, she will dismiss such notions: "The presence of the Taint of He Who is Not to be Named has been clearly found. Why invent some other explanation?"

A Glimpse of the Blessed Obi

If, at the conclusion of dinner, the PCs have generally made a good impression on Moshi Juiko, she will offer to let them at least a chance to see the Blessed Obi.

Servants walking at a slow, ritual pace bring in the artifact, laying it on the table with delicate reverence. The Blessed Obi of the Sun Goddess is woven of silk, but the golden cloth seems to shimmer and almost to glow in the light of the candles. The very air in the room feels cleaner, less heavy, in the presence of this sacred item.

Juiko will allow the PCs to observe the Obi for a short time before having it returned to her quarters.

The Shadow Strikes!

On the night after the PCs arrive in the Centipede Valley, the Living Darkness will take action to seize the Golden Obi for itself. Six Goju will slip into the modest Centipede Castle around two in the morning (gaijin time). They will come in through the room of Isawa Noriko, whose own Shadow corruption keeps her locked in deep slumber.

Any PCs who have Shadow Points (including Scorpions with two or more Shadow Brands) must roll **Simple Willpower** at TN 20 (TN 25 if they have 3 or more Shadow Points) to avoid being similarly locked in unnatural slumber. Noises will not awaken them at all. Physically shaking them will allow them to make another **Willpower** roll with a Free Raise to awaken. Actual damage (at least one Wound) will automatically awaken the PC.

PCs who are not affected by this unnatural sleep can notice the Goju infiltrators. This will require a **Simple Perception** roll, TN 15 if a PC is awake, TN 25 if asleep. PCs with 3 or more Shadow Points suffer a +5 TN penalty to their rolls. Some PCs may have taken steps to guard against a night attack, due to suspicion or paranoia – they should receive corresponding bonuses to their rolls, as adjudicated by the GM.

Besides the PCs, the only one who will notice the Goju invasion will be Kakita Okitsune, who is up suffering from a bout of indigestion. If all the PCs fail to notice the Goju, he will awaken them – otherwise, they will encounter him when they go to investigate.

Battle With the Goju

The six Goju invade the upper (third) floor of the castle, the residence of Moshi Juiko and her family. The single ronin guard at the stairs will be killed, his body left to bleed out from stab wounds. Likewise, the servants residing on the third floor will be murdered before the Goju close in on Juiko's personal quarters, where the Obi is kept.

If the PCs interrupt this, five of the Goju will turn on them with full force while the sixth moves on to kill Juiko and capture the Obi. The Goju will exploit the night-time darkness within the castle to use their "Shadow Leap" ability, striking at the PCs from unexpected directions. Unless the PCs can produce a significant light source (such as spells like *Amaterasu's Blessing*), they will be attacked by surprise each round (making their TN to be Hit equal to 5+Armor) as the Goju flick back and forth through the darkness.

Moshi Juiko is asleep. She will awaken if the PCs can make a loud noise (battle cries, loud spells, etc) or get into her room to awaken her (the interior walls are paper, so aggressive PCs can smash through to reach her if need be). If the PCs do not awaken her within three rounds, the Goju attacker will cut her throat. It will spend another round getting the Obi and the third round escaping out the window. Another round after that will take it to the ground outside the castle. At that point, if the PCs have not managed to bring it down, it will escape with the Obi. (PCs who saw the Obi earlier may still be able to track it down if they have access to the spell *The Ties Which Bind*.)

If Juiko awakens, she instantly fries the attacking Goju with a Fire spell, then summons *Amaterasu's Blessing* to fill the upper floor with light. The other Goju flee once their attack is foiled.

Aftermath of the Goju Attack

If the PCs managed to wake Juiko in time, she will be shaken and unsettled by the Goju attack, and treats the PCs with new respect. If they again present an eloquent request for the Obi, she will grant it.

If the PCs failed to save Juiko, but managed to stop the Goju from taking the Golden Obi, the Centipede

Clan will be left momentarily leaderless (until Moshi Wakiza can be summoned home). The other Centipede shugenja here will be bewildered and horrified by this event. Clever and aggressive PCs may be able to lay claim to the Obi with a promise to protect it or to deliver it to Wakiza. Kakita Okitsune will support the PCs on this if they have cultivated his friendship and impressed him.

- Truly ruthless PCs could hide the Obi and pretend it was stolen by the Goju, although such a ruse will cost them Honor (along with anyone else who knows of it) and will require an **Acting/Awareness** or **Sincerity/Awareness** roll at TN 20.

If Juiko died and the Obi was taken, the PCs will be forced to give up on this portion of the quest unless they can track down the Obi with a spell such as *The Ties That Bind*. The Phoenix ambassador, Isawa Noriko, can cast this spell successfully if the Obi was displayed during dinner. So long as the spell is cast within an hour, the PCs will be able to track down a Goju within the Centipede Valley who has the Obi. Otherwise, the Goju will escape with the Obi.

Option: Theft

Ruthless and/or desperate PCs might decide to try to steal the Obi themselves, either by stealth or by force, before or after the Goju attack. The GM will have to adjudicate the success of such efforts.

As a general guideline, to reach Juiko's quarters the PCs will have to either find a way to scale the outer walls of the castle, or get past the ronin guard on the stairs to the third floor. After the Goju attack, Moshi Juiko will place Air spirits around the third floor to alert her to any attack/intrusion, and the guards on the stairs will be reinforced to two ronin and a shugenja.

PCs should, obviously, lose significant amounts of both Honor and (if detected) Glory for such a gross violation of law and etiquette. PCs who go to zero Glory for such acts will be expelled from their Clan and made ronin.

Help From the Yasuki?

In the Centipede lands, the PCs will not be able to call on any assistance from the Yasuki family – they have no representatives here.

Part Three: Shiro Sano Kakita – The Tears of Lady Doji

The Shadow will quickly become aware that the Tears of Lady Doji, like the Blessed Obi, are key to its own destruction. However, since the Tears are held in a blessed shrine within a major castle, the Shadow cannot take direct action against them itself. Instead, it convinces its allies in the Shadowlands to assault Shiro Sano Kakita, much as it earlier convinced the Shadowlands to attack Shiro Kitsuki (on day 45 of the timeline).

By Day 75 of the adventure timeline, the Shadowlands force which struck earlier at Shiro Kitsuki will move south and besiege Shiro Sano Kakita. If the PCs have not already reached Shiro Sano Kakita, they will become aware of this attack through news and rumors by Day 85.

Visiting Before the Attack

It is possible that the PCs will be able to visit Shiro Sano Kakita before this attack occurs. The GM can “fudge” the timing of the Shadowlands attack by up to ten days (back to Day 65) in order to circumvent this, but it is still possible that fast-moving PCs will reach the castle before that time. In that case, they will have to petition for an audience with Kakita Kaiten, the young daimyo of the Kakita family.

It will normally take at least four days for the PCs to get an audience with Kaiten. If any of the PCs are Cranes or have the Ear of the Emperor advantage, the waiting time will shorten to two days – one day if any PCs are Kakita family, Otomo family, or Seppun family.

Kakita Kaiten is a proud, handsome young man in his late teens, with long white hair and an intense expression. Due to the recent death of his sensei Kakita Toshimoko at the hands of the (Unicorn) Emerald Champion, he tends to be prickly toward Unicorns, although diplomatic considerations prevent him from being openly hostile. He also looks down on Lions, Crabs, and Mantis, although in true Crane fashion he prefers subtle put-downs to open insults. Toward other Clans he is essentially neutral.

It is unlikely that the PCs can convince Kaiten to help them at this point. Although he is aware that some dark power has taken possession of Kyuden Doji (and is very worried about what has happened to his lord

Doji Hoturi), he assumes it to be solely Shadowlands-related – the Crane have confirmed the presence of Taint there. Like most well-educated Rokugani, he is not about to credit any wild stories about a previously-unknown evil force related to the “ninja myth.” He is certainly not about to hand over one of the Crane Clan’s most sacred relics solely on the basis of such a story.

Even if the PCs are willing to cash in large numbers of Favors or Allies, Kaiten will not relent. If they are ill-mannered or obnoxiously persistent, he is likely to expel them from the palace (especially if some of them are Unicorns, Lions, Mantis, or Crabs). If they are polite, he will be courteous in return (especially if they are Imperials or fellow Crane), but holds firm to his position. “Please understand, samurai, what am I to think? You ask me to give up one of the most sacred artifacts of my Clan, a legacy of the Lady Doji herself, in order to stop an unnamed evil which has never been seen or heard of before now.”

Eventually, the PCs will probably have to either give up or start plotting a theft. If possible, the GM should again try to “fudge” the timing of the arrival of the Shadowlands/Goju army in such a way that the PCs do not get trapped inside the besieged castle. Preferably, the PCs should either be in the town outside Shiro Sano Kakita plotting their next move, or two or three days away heading to their next objective, when the enemy army arrives.

If the PCs do get trapped inside, they will be expected to join the Crane in fighting to defend the castle. This will mean four rounds on the Battle Table each day that the PCs remain inside the castle, until they escape.

The Crane Castle Besieged

Given the timing of this adventure, it is far more likely that the PCs will approach the Kakita castle after the siege begins. The last two days of their trip will take them through lands stricken with panic. Peasant refugees choke the roads, fleeing with their pitiful belongings strapped to their backs, telling horrific stories of monsters and destruction. A dark pall of smoke clouds the horizon ahead, and frantic couriers race up and down the roads on lathered mounts, riding down anyone who does not get out of their way.

The Crane quickly assemble a small army to try to relieve the city – within a day of the beginning of the siege, the PCs will encounter squads of Crane samurai gathering in the villages near the city, along with a few ronin and ashigaru. After five days, an army of

significant strength (several hundred bushi and ronin, and about the same number of ashigaru) will have gathered, and after seven days Daidoji Uji himself will arrive to assume command.

If the PCs speak with any of the Crane bushi and try to learn more about what lies ahead, they will be given a mixture of fact, rumor, and conjecture:

- The daimyo, Kakita Kaiten, is reportedly trapped within the castle. His status is unknown, although there are rumors he has already been killed.
- The enemy force is composed primarily of undead, but also includes dark, demonic creatures, oni, and possibly maho-tsukai sorcerers. Some reports claim that black-garbed ninja are in the enemy ranks as well.
- Some scouts have reported seeing men in the armor and garb of the Dragon Clan in the ranks of the enemy. Others have reported seeing men dressed as Crane or Scorpion.
- The palace complex is still holding out for now, but it is unlikely to last much longer, since the number of defenders is quite limited.

If the PCs indicate their intention of approaching the castle, the Crane will eventually escort them forward to their command post:

As you crest a low ridge, you see ahead of you the river valley which is home to Shiro Sano Kakita. The large town which surrounded the Kakita palace is burning, smoke billowing up from dozens of structures, and the stench of death rises from the hundreds of peasant corpses which strew its streets and the surrounding fields. Rice paddies have turned a dull orange-pink from blood, and the levies between them are churned to brown mud by the passage of troops.

Smoke rises also from the walls of the Kakita palace. Although the eight-story castle itself still remains largely undamaged, the complex of residences, shrines, dojos, and barracks which surrounds it is badly damaged, and burning in several locations. The high white walls which ward the complex are stained black with smoke and red with blood. Ladders lean against them in many places, enemy forces scaling them like swarms of ants to battle Crane bushi whose blades flash in the intermittent sunlight. A massive struggle is raging around the main gates, which seem to be half-open. As you

watch, a gout of blue-black flame shoots up to bathe a section of the wall, immolating two Crane bushi, who plummet from sight.

If the PCs come here before seven days have passed, the Crane force outside the castle is not strong enough (or well-led enough) to attempt a relief attack, although it is conducting harassment raids against the outer edges of the huge Shadowlands force. The Crane commander is a frazzled Kakita named Tsimuru, a courtier and sometime duelist who has little military experience. He wishes only to wait for Daidoji Uji to arrive and take charge, and will not risk a major attack on his own. If the PCs express the wish to get into the castle (to rescue Kaiten or Doji's Tears), he will refuse to authorize any help. The PCs have three options:

- A Crane or Imperial PC with Glory 5.0 or better can try to overawe Tsimuru and take command of the Crane forces. This will require that the PC role-play a suitable confrontation with Tsimuru and roll an appropriate social skill (most likely **Intimidation**, although **Manipulation**, **Political Maneuvering**, or **Obeisaseru** could also be appropriate) at TN 25. The PC will be given command of the Crane forces until Uji arrives, and can order an attack if so desired.
- The PC can try to "recruit" the Crane bushi into joining an attack on the castle, without Tsimuru's authority. This will require a suitably role-played appeal to courage and honor, and a roll of **Oratory/Awareness** at TN 20 or **Sincerity/Awareness** at TN 25. (TNs are increased by 5 if the PC giving the speech is not a Crane or Imperial.) With a success, a sizable force of Crane (a couple of hundred at least) will defy Tsimuru and follow the PC into battle.
- The PCs can hire some of the ronin and ashigaru here to form their own "army" to conduct an attack. This will require that the PCs have a large number of koku (at least fifty), although PCs with access to other assets or wealth (such as Yasuki merchants or Doji courtiers) could use that as a substitute. The Crane will be irritated at the PCs' actions, but will not stop them.

If the PCs come here after seven days have passed, they will be taken to a low hilltop for a meeting with Daidoji Uji, the daimyo of the Daidoji family. The daimyo of the Daidoji family is a short, athletic, swarthy man who conceals most of his face beneath a heavy leather mask. Uji's eyes are grimly narrowed as

he listens to what the PCs say. Unlike almost everyone else in this adventure, Uji has a pretty good idea of what the Shadow is – he has been observing the situation in Kyuden Doji for weeks – and if the PCs explain even a small portion of their quest, he will be more than willing to help. “Better to place the Lady’s Tears in your hands than to allow them to fall into the clutches of those... things,” he says.

Uji is planning an attack anyway, hoping to at least open a route to rescue Kakita Kaiten from the besieged castle. (He knows he does not have enough strength to actually defeat the Shadowlands army.) He will accept advice from the PCs but will make his own battle plans. The PCs will be free to fight as part of those plans, or to pursue their own mission.

Where Are the Tears?

If the PCs participate in an attack, their goal will presumably be to get in to the castle and recover the Tears of Lady Doji. PCs who roll **Lore: Crane/Intelligence** at TN 20 or **History/Intelligence** at TN 25 will know that the Kakita family keeps these sacred relics in a shrine to Lady Doji located near the center of the complex, just outside the castle proper. A Kakita family PC will know this with a **Simple Intelligence** roll at TN 20.

If none of the PCs know where the relics would be kept, they can ask the Crane here. Daidoji Uji will know, or the PCs can root the information out of other Cranes with some questions and a roll of **Investigation/Awareness** at TN 20.

Alternatively, the PCs can try to break into the castle and then seek out the Tears once they are inside. Any high-ranking Crane officer or courtier will know where the Tears are kept, and the PCs could even request an emergency meeting with Kakita Kaiten to ask his permission to take the Tears. See “Inside the Castle” below for details.

The Battle of Shiro Sano Kakita

If the PCs manage to participate in an attack on the castle, with or without the assistance of Daidoji Uji, the battle will last five hours (five rounds on the Battle Table, page 239 of the L5R GM’s Guide). The Crane will be Winning on the first round of battle, Even on rounds two through four, and Losing on the fifth and last round.

The only way for the PCs to make it inside the castle will be to spend at least one round of battle on the Heavily Engaged part of the Battle Table, or two

rounds at Engaged. (PCs who are Disengaged or in Reserves will have no chance to get in.) In order to fight their way back out again, they will have to spend one round at Heavily Engaged (nothing less will do). This means they cannot spend more than three hours inside the castle seeking out the Tears. If the PCs are still inside the castle after the battle ends, they will have to escape on their own (see “Escaping the Castle” below).

When rolling on the Battle Table, resolve Wound Dice normally, but ignore all Glory results. If any PC gets a Duel or a Heroic Opportunity on the chart, roll on the “Siege of Shiro Sano Kakita: Battle Events” table in Appendix #5, and resolve the Battle Event which results.

Getting in Without Battle

The PCs may decide to try to get into Shiro Sano Kakita on their own, without participating in an army attack.

- Fighting their way inside on their own is quite literally impossible. There are hundreds of zombies, Goju, and Tainted or Shadow-Corrupted samurai in the besieging army, along with numerous Oni and several Shadowlands mahotsukai. A party which attacks alone may be able to slay many of these foes (perhaps a great many, if they are high-Rank), but they will eventually fall.
- PCs who try a stealthy infiltration approach will be facing a very difficult task. In order to get through the Shadowlands force undetected, the PCs will have to go in at night (the non-Goju enemies will easily spot them during the day) and make **Stealth/Agility** rolls at TN 20. PCs who make effective use of magic to cloak their movements should receive Free Raises (1 to 3 of them, determined by the GM based on how creative the PCs are). At least two-thirds of the PCs will have to make their rolls in order to slip up to the castle walls unnoticed. Once the PCs reach the walls, they will have to either scale them (**Athletics/Agility** at TN 25, or **Climbing/Agility** or **Mountaineering/Agility** at TN 20, Free Raise if the PCs have climbing gear) or convince the Crane to lower a rope and let them inside.
- If the party contains powerful shugenja, the PCs may be able to figure out a way to get inside without being intercepted by the Shadowlands army. For example, a very powerful Air shugenja

could probably fly part or all of the party into the castle without getting into arrow range. The GM must adjudicate such magical approaches.

Inside the Castle

Once the PCs get inside (either through a battle, on their own, or by getting trapped there), they will find a desperate situation. Fires have gutted many of the castle's lesser structures, and servants are frantically laboring to keep them from spreading. The main gate has been shattered, and the Crane have built improvised barriers within. Most of the Crane troops are either there or on the walls, but flying squads are also racing around the complex, intercepting those enemies who manage to slip over the wall. The struggle is constant – the enemy, being mostly inhuman, never lets up – and Kakita Kaiten has improvised a rotation schedule to allow the defenders to snatch a few hours of rest here and there. In this crisis even the courtiers have been forced to take up spears and bows.

The PCs have basically two approaches they can take here: they can ask Kakita Kaiten to let them save the Tears, or they can simply go and try to take them. If Daidoji Uji attacks the castle, Kaiten will depart at the end of the fourth hour of battle (Uji will convince him to escape the castle), so after that the PCs are on their own.

Kakita Kaiten is a very different man from what the PCs may have seen before: dirty and exhausted, wearing full armor which is crusted with blood and filth, his eyes hollow and sunken from lack of sleep. In order to convince him to let them take the Tears, the PCs will have to role-play an effective and heart-felt appeal, and roll **Sincerity/Awareness** at TN 20.

- If any PCs are Crane or Imperial, they get a Free Raise on the roll.
- Unicorn, Scorpion, and ronin PCs suffer a +5 TN penalty on their roll.

To take the tears for themselves, the PCs will have to enter the shrine to Lady Doji. It is a sturdy single-story building with one main double-door. The walls are wooden, but with large paper “windows” on three of the walls. The door is guarded at all times by two Kakita bushi. An aged pair of non-combatant monks tend to the shrine inside.

- PCs can try to convince the bushi to let them inside with a suitable role-play appeal followed

by an appropriate social skill roll (**Sincerity**, **Manipulation**, and **Intimidation** could all apply, depending on the approach the PCs take) at TN 20.

- The PCs could also try to distract or divert the bushi, perhaps convincing them they are needed to defend the walls (which might actually be true). This would certainly require a **Sincerity/Awareness** roll at TN 25.
- Sneaky PCs could get into the Shrine by cutting through the paper “windows” or using a shugenja to make a hole in the wall. This will require either subtle spell-casting, or a **Contested roll of Stealth/Agility** against the guards’ **Investigation/Awareness**. The monks will also have to be dealt with in some way, since they will call for help if they feel threatened.
- If need be, the PCs can resort to force. Due to the battle, no reinforcements will be immediately available to help the bushi and monks if the PCs employ violent or coercive methods. The PCs should probably lose Honor for this method, however, unless they manage to subdue their opponents non-lethally.

The interior of the Shrine is a single large chamber with polished wooden floors, lit by candles and by the light which filters through the paper “windows.” At the head of the room is a beautiful statue of the Lady Doji, carved from white stone and inlaid with gold. A polished wooden chest rests behind her, beneath a huge shoji screen covered in paintings of Doji’s great deeds.

The Tears are kept in the chest, wrapped carefully in blue silk. Each of them is a piece of tear-shaped polished jade, about the size of an obi bead. There are five of them. The tears are extremely fragile, and must be kept carefully wrapped in silk or otherwise protected to keep them from shattering.

Escaping the Castle

If the PCs are caught inside the castle by the arrival of the Shadowlands army, if they sneak inside, or if they fight their way inside and then fail to leave immediately, they will have to find a way to get out of Shiro Sano Kakita.

PCs can sneak out with the same restrictions as getting inside the castle – they will need to climb down the walls and then at least two-thirds of them must make

Stealth/Agility rolls at TN 20 to slip past the Shadowlands/Goju army. Magical methods, such as flying, can always be used, of course.

If Kakita Kaiten has not yet been extracted from the castle by Daidoji Uji, the PCs may be able to convince him to make a breakout attempt. This will be a pure role-playing challenge – Kaiten is loathe to abandon his family castle, and the PCs must convince him this is the only option.

If the PCs managed to get into the castle before Daidoji Uji attacks (either by sneaking in, or by making their own attack), Uji will eventually launch an assault to rescue Kakita Kaiten. If the PCs can hold out until then, they can join the breakout.

Finally, it is possible the PCs will be left isolated inside the castle after Daidoji Uji extracts Kaiten. At that point, the defense of the castle will be considerably reduced, and it will not be able to hold out for more than a day or two. The PCs' only chance will be to rally the remaining Kakita defenders for a desperate break-out attempt. This will require suitably effective role-playing, backed by a roll of **Oratory/Awareness** at TN 20 or **Battle/Awareness** at TN 30. In such a last-gasp effort, the PCs will have to spend two rounds of battle at Heavily Engaged in order to escape.

Help From the Yasuki

There are several Yasuki merchants operating in the lands around Shiro Sano Kakita, and PCs can track them down with a few hours' effort. They can supply the PCs with koku to hire a ronin army (up to 100 koku, if the PCs ask). They can also let the PCs know that Daidoji Uji is on his way, if they arrive before he does.

Part Four: Fox Lands – The Lady of the Forest

The most likely route for the PCs to approach Fox lands is from the south, via the road from the Crane port city of Mura Sabishii Toshi. The PCs could also go overland from Samui Kaze Toshi or from Beiden Pass.

- If the PCs approach from Mura Sabishii Toshi, they will arrive directly at Kyuden Kitsune, the seat of the Fox Clan. It is a modest four-story castle built right in among the trees, with none of the open spaces and parade grounds that normally

surround such places. The large village which serves it shelters under the trees, so that from a distance the castle seems to rise alone above the forest canopy.

- If they come from Samui Kaze Toshi, they will arrive first at the large village of Kitsune Mura Mori. This large village is filled with strange architecture – houses grown from trees, sliding doors made from leaves instead of paper, and so forth. There is a large shrine in Inari, the Fortune of Rice, in the center of the village.
- Finally, if they come from Beiden Pass, they will first reach the village of Kaia Osho Mura (Humble Priest Village), the main farming community in Fox lands. It is the only region in the Fox Clan's territory that is largely open and unforested, and produces the majority of the Clan's rice.

Regardless of which route the PCs take, they will be stopped at the border by a small troop of Fox Clan samurai – three bushi and two shugenja – who politely but firmly ask to see the PCs' travel papers. If the PCs have travel papers from Yasuki Taka, or from an Emerald or Jade Magistrate PC, the samurai reluctantly accept them and step aside. Any other papers (or lack of papers) will result in their refusing to allow the PCs to cross the border. The Fox are polite but unyielding.

If the PCs arrive after 60 days, the Fox will be even more cautious – the armies of the Three Man Alliance have been crushed by the Crab, and there are rumors of Shadowlands involvement. Any Crab PCs who are “loyalists” (followers of Hida Kisada) will not be allowed into Fox lands.

Presumably, the PCs will begin asking the local Fox samurai and peasants about appearances by the famed Lady of the Forest. They will quickly learn that the most recent reported sightings of the legendary Lady are in the deep eastern reaches of the Fox lands, near a small village named Kikuza, ruled by a minor daimyo named Kitsune Retsu.

Kikuza Village

The village which nestles inside the forest is large, perhaps 400 or more people, and fairly prosperous. You can see dozens of peasant huts tucked in between the trees, along with several modest sake breweries, a carpenter's hut, a blacksmith, and on the main street a geisha house and a large inn. A

sign over the door shows a Kitsune (fox spirit) snoozing next to a fallen bottle of sake. You clearly notice there are fewer rice fields than normal for a village this size – the Fox are known to rely heavily on foraging and hunting for their diet. On the far side of the village, above the irregular treeline, you can just make out the outlines of a castle silhouetted against the sky.

PCs who have played the adventure *A Chance Meeting* have visited this village before, and may have uncovered a maho cult cell here. The villagers remember that incident with discomfort, and PCs who openly discuss it will not endear themselves to the local population. If the PCs want information about the Lady of the Forest, they will have to smooth things over by being apologetic (**Kuenai/Awareness** at TN 15) or spending generously at the local business establishments.

- If the PCs do smooth things over, or manage to avoid riling up the villagers in the first place, they can learn that the Lady has been seen several times in the forests to the north and west, usually at twilight or under moonlight. Only lone individuals have seen her – she has never appeared to more than one person at a time. The villagers caution the PCs that the Lady is not one to be trifled with lightly.
- If the PCs fail to appease the peasants, they will all claim to know nothing about the Lady of the Forest, and may also pointedly warn the PCs not to meddle with the spirits, which are whimsical and dangerous.

Shiro Ouchi

Some PCs may wish to present themselves to the local daimyo, which is the proper and courteous thing to do when entering a Lord's lands. In this case, however, this may present a bit of a complication, since PCs who played the adventure *A Chance Meeting* may have formed poor relations with the local daimyo's father, Kitsune Iuki (now retired).

Kitsune Retsu's castle, Shiro Ouchi, is a small, humble structure, only four stories high, with barely enough room inside for the daimyo, his family, his personal retainers, and a couple of visitors. The forest crowds close around the structure, and the PCs may glimpse wild animals moving in the trees as they approach.

If any of the PCs disgraced Kitsune Iuki's by exposing the old peasant rebellion in his lands, Retsu will make them cool their heels for several hours before granting them an audience. Even if the PCs' relations with Retsu himself have been good (such as in the adventure *Kuro's Fire*), he will feel that the disgrace of his father obligates him to be harsh toward the PCs.

If the PCs' relations with Iuki avoided such a disaster, Retsu will meet them after only an hour's wait.

Kitsune Retsu is a handsome young man of 17, trained in his family's shugenja school. Unmarried, he can be rendered somewhat tongue-tied by an attractive female, but is otherwise poised and well-mannered despite his youth.

Kitsune Mai is Retsu's younger sister, a beautiful young woman of 14, just past her gempukku. Retsu is looking for a chance to arrange a good marriage for her, and if any PCs are well-known as courtiers, he may seek their assistance in this matter. Mai has had a brief glimpse of the Lady of the Forest, at twilight five days ago, but will not discuss this without permission from her older brother.

Kitsune Aoi is Retsu's mother, and will soon be following her older husband Iuki into retirement. For now, however, she remains at Shiro Ouchi, a pleasant, gracefully-aging shugenja-ko. She retains bitter memories of the disgrace suffered by her husband, and if any of the PCs were responsible for that, she will be sure to remind her son repeatedly.

If the PCs avoided trouble with Kitsune Iuki in *A Chance Meeting*, this audience with Retsu will be simple and pleasant – he will wish them luck with their quest to meet the Lady of the Forest, and politely warn them to be cautious, since she is a mercurial and mysterious being.

If the PCs did have trouble in the past, they will need to be skillfully diplomatic here. Retsu is an honorable young man, and has no wish to be vindictive, but he will feel obligated by his father's memory (and his mother's pressure) to make the PCs pay for their past misdeeds. PCs who offer up apologies and contrition will be able to offer him the chance to declare the matter closed. PCs who are arrogant or judgmental, or who take offense at his current attitudes, will get nowhere – and will, in fact, be expelled from his lands, ending their quest.

Into the Forest

Assuming the PCs can manage good relations with Kitsune Retsu, they will be free to explore the nearby forests and seek out the Lady.

If the PCs have spoken with the villagers and Kitsune Mai, they should know that their best chance to find the Lady will be at twilight. They may also realize that she always appears to lone individuals – this is a rare instance where the PCs are better off breaking up and searching on their own.

In order to meet with the Lady of the Forest, a PC must have an Honor of 4.0 or better. This can be reduced to 3.0 if the PCs meets any of the following criteria:

- The PC has the Blessing of the Kitsune cert, a Kitsune Taboo, or the ancestors Osusuki and Akomachi.
- The PC is a true Sodan-Senzo or has the ancestor Kitsu.
- The PC has Benten's Blessing or Dangerous Beauty.
- The PC has a Shintao skill of at least 5 and Void of at least 4.

The Lady will never appear to a PC with less than 3.0 Honor, regardless of what other gifts they might possess. If none of the PCs are able to meet with her, a clever party might think to ask Kitsune Mai to act on their behalf.

If the PCs ignore the evidence and search in a group, all of them must meet the qualifications, or the Lady will not appear.

The Lady Appears

In the fading twilight, you become aware of a woman walking through the trees. Her eyes glitter bright green. Her long hair and pale green kimono swirl around her as though stirred by winds which only she can feel. Foxes, young and old, frisk and gambol around her feet, their own green eyes nearly as bright as hers. She smiles at you warmly, and calls a greeting in a voice which carries the melodies of running water and rustling grass: "Welcome to my forest. What is your name?"

The Lady is not really aware of the Shadow as such, and will be confused if the PCs try to explain it to her. However, she does know that something is going dreadfully wrong in the world, and that the Taint of the Shadowlands is spreading into the Empire, causing great suffering and destruction. Discussing such matters will make her sad, and she may try to change the subject to something happier. Clever PCs, however, can exploit her sadness to bolster their appeal.

This a pure role-playing challenge. The PCs must convince the Lady of the Forest to give them a gift. She is a gentle and kind being, but also a playful and mischievous one, not above playing pranks on the PCs or toying with their emotions (she does not really understand that doing such things can be hurtful to humans). A PC who appeals to her kindness will have the best chance to convince her.

She can also be flattered and romanced by a male PC, especially one who is likeable or notably handsome (Benten's Blessing, Dangerous Beauty). However, such a PC must roll **Simple Willpower** at TN 20 to avoid falling helplessly in love with the Lady. Such unfortunate PCs will wish to remain in the Forest with their true love, and will, if necessary, fight their comrades in order to do so. (The Lady will find this innocently amusing.) The only way to "cure" them will be to disable them (with force or magic) and remove them from the Lady's presence. Even after that, they will suffer from Lost Love for the rest of their lives.

Good manners are important when dealing with the Lady – a PC who is insulting or temperamental, or who tries to resort to force against her, will anger the Queen of Foxes:

There is a sudden change. The air grows cold, and a bitter wind blows past you. The lady's hair turns pale white and swirls up around her head like a Lion's mane, and green fire crackles around her. For a moment, you have the distinct impression of ten white fox-tails swirling in the air behind her.

If the Lady becomes angry, the PCs will have to apologize quickly and abjectly. Otherwise, she will inflict her Curse and then depart, vanishing into the trees with her fellow fox-spirits.

The Lady's Gift

If a PC avoids angering the Lady, and manages to convince her to help, she will twine some of her hair

into a short braid, then offers it for the PC to cut free. Her gift given, the Lady of the Forest departs, her shape blurring into a great pale fox with ten whirling tails.

Help From the Yasuki

There is only a single Yasuki merchant operating in Fox lands, in the village of Kitsune Mura Mori. If the PCs seek his assistance, he will be able to guide them to the region where the Lady has been seen (Kikuza village, Shiro Ouchi). If the PCs have had trouble with Kitsune Iuki in the past, he will be able to warn them that this could be a problem, and suggest helping with the marriage arrangements for Kitsune Mai as a way of appeasing the daimyo.

Part Five: Ryoko Owari – The Orb of the Dragon

By the time the PCs head for Ryoko Owari, things are getting very chaotic in the Empire. The PCs will most likely have to approach the city from the south – by this time Beiden Pass is probably barred to them.

The PCs will find Scorpion lands to be a-swirl with rumors, stories of the Crab army advancing from the south, of fierce battles in Lion lands across the Spine of the World Mountains, of other battles raging to the north, between Unicorn and Dragon. Amid all this furor, a small group of traveling samurai seems to go unnoticed – except for the continuing attentions of Goju Zato.

Eventually the PCs will reach Ryoko Owari. Unless they took a very unusual approach to their quest, this should almost certainly be the last of their goals.

You reach the top of a small hill. Laid out below you is Ryoko Owari, the City of Stories, the City of Lies. Sheltered within tall walls of black granite, the city is vibrant and prosperous, its streets and piers crowded even in these uncertain times of war. The tiled roofs of fine temples and splendid buildings shine in the sun. Running through the middle of the city is the Kawa no Kin, the River of Gold, the main artery of trade through the western Empire, guarded to the south by two high stone towers left behind from the brief Crab occupation so many centuries ago.

The many gates of the city are watched by troops of the Thunder Guard, the force reporting to the local governor, Shosuro Hyobu. They inspect the PCs' papers carefully, ask the purpose of their visit to Ryoko Owari, and then pass them on. (Unless the PCs

babble something about wanting to break open the Orb of the Dragon in the Temple District.) However, any PC who rolls **Simple Awareness** at TN 20 will get the sense that the guards recognize their names and have been watching for them. (They will deny anything if asked. They are under orders to report the PCs' arrival to Yogo Junzo.)

Inside the City

Ryoko Owari is a huge city, a bustling metropolis home to over 10,000 people – the second largest city in the Empire, after the Imperial capital of Otosan Uchi. Internally, the city is divided into five main districts, three on the east bank of the river (where the PCs arrive) and two on the west bank. Teardrop Island, the licensed district located in the middle of the river, forms its own world separate from the rest of the city.

The eastern districts are the Temple Quarter, the Merchant District, and the Noble Quarter. On the far (west) bank of the river are the Fishermen's District and the Leatherworkers (Eta) District. Three bridges connect the two halves of the city – two from the Merchant District to the Fisherman's District (the Moment's Edge Bridge and the Bridge of Drowned Lovers), and one from just outside the Noble Quarter to the Leatherworkers District (the Bridge of the Dragon).

- The PCs' goal will of course be the Temple District, where the Temple of Amaterasu is located. The two closest city gates to the district are the Gate of Oni's Teeth and the Gate of Increasing Fortune.

The city is kept extremely clean, and bustles with commerce and industry, much of it of dubious legality. Ryoko Owari is the center of the Rokugani opium trade, both the legal medicinal trade and the illegal smuggling run by the Scorpion opium cartels. Five years ago, a semi-secret clash known as the "Opium War" resulted in the destruction of the Soshi cartel, leaving the trade in the hands of the Bayushi and Shosuro families. Last year, a smaller-scale war erupted between those two factions, resulting in the burning of numerous warehouses, as well as some unlucky private dwellings. Neither faction emerged victorious, and they eventually reached a truce and resumed their smuggling operations.

Law in the city is enforced by the Thunder Guard, a force of bushi commanded by Shosuro Jocho, the son of Governor Shosuro Hyobu. They are headquartered in a fortified tower at the Dragon Gate, which stands

just outside the Noble Quarter and controls access to the Bridge of the Dragon.

Meeting the Authorities

Some PCs may decide to be “proper” and visit the Governor, Shosuro Hyobu, to announce their mission here, especially if they had dealings with her in previous adventures. Given what many PCs know about the spreading power of the Shadow within the Scorpion Clan, they should realize this is extremely unwise. (The Yasuki can warn off the PCs, if they ask.) Smart PCs will go directly to the Temple district.

The Governor resides in the Shosuro Palace, a sprawling building located inside the city’s Noble Quarter. The Noble Quarter is separated from the rest of the city by fifteen-foot stone walls, pierced by only three gates – the Dragon’s Gate, the Gate of Condescension (leads to the Merchant Quarter), and the Pious Gate (leads to the Temple District). All three gates are guarded and controlled by the Thunder Guard day and night, and locked between midnight and 6 a.m. (gaijin time). PCs will not be allowed through these gates unless they can claim to have legitimate business in the Noble Quarter (such as presenting themselves to the Governor).

If the PCs do present themselves at the Palace, they will be led through the maze-like interior to a waiting room, where they are served tea. The PCs can roll **Simple Awareness** at TN 20 to sense menace from the guards who escorted them, and at TN 15 to sense a great deal of anxiety from the servants who bring their tea.

The tea is drugged, which can be detected on the first sip with a **Poison/Perception** roll at TN 15 or **Medicine/Perception** at TN 20. PCs who drink more than a sip of the tea will be at a +10 TN penalty to all actions, as the drug renders them slow and clumsy.

PCs who leave immediately will be able to exit the Palace, if they are insistent. The Palace servants and samurai will try to get them to stay, promising that the Governor will be with them shortly, urging them not to insult the Governor with such a hasty departure, etc.

If the PCs do not quickly leave, once they have had a chance to drink the tea, Yogo Junzo and his strike team will burst in and attempt to arrest the PCs as enemies of the Scorpion Clan. Presumably the PCs will fight (submitting to arrest is a death sentence). They will also have to fight their way out of the

Shosuro Palace and the Noble Quarter, since all the Thunder Guard will now be alerted to regard them as hostile.

Help From the Yasuki

The Yasuki family has a modest presence in Ryoko Owari, several shops and warehouses in the Noble Quarter. If the PCs visit the Yasuki, they can warn that Yogo Junzo is in the city, and suggest strongly that the PCs should stay away from the Noble Quarter.

If the PCs run afoul of Junzo in the Shosuro Palace, but manage to get away, the Yasuki can hide them. They can also smuggle the PCs out of the city after a battle at the Temple of the Sun, if they need the help.

The Temple of the Sun

The tallest temple in Ryoko Owari is the mighty temple of Daikoku, Fortune of Wealth, which rises over a hundred feet high and is fronted by a twenty-foot-tall statue of the Fortune, carved from pink granite. Far more impressive than the Shrine of Daikoku found in Unicorn lands, this temple is constantly visited by streams of pilgrims from all across the Empire.

By contrast, the Temple of the Sun, located several blocks to the south, is less imposing. Although the walled grounds of the temple complex are extensive, an oasis of peace within the bustling city, none of the buildings rise more than a single story. The only tall structure is the seventy foot polished oak pillar which mounts a dazzling golden mirror globe – the legendary Orb of the Fire Dragon. If the PCs are in the city at night, they will see that the Orb glows from within, becoming a miniature Sun illuminating the temple and surrounding streets.

The main temple building, and the walls which surround the complex, are made from a beautiful white limestone, unique within the city. The lesser structures – monks’ residences, storage, and so forth – are of normal wood-and-paper construction.

From a standpoint of plotting, it will be preferable if the PCs approach the Temple of the Sun in late afternoon or evening, since the gathering shadows will make for a more dramatic confrontation. However, clever or stubborn PCs may thwart this.

If the PCs approach the great torii arch which stands at the temple gates, they will be met by two smiling monks, who inquire politely as to their business.

“Have you come to offer your devotion to the Sun Goddess?”

Presumably the PCs will at least express an interest in the great Orb. The monks will take them to visit the temple’s abbess: the priestess Meiyo.

Meiyo, Priestess of the Sun

The Priestess of the Sun is an old woman, well over sixty, dressed in long robes of shimmering gold which lightly brush the ground around her. She smiles and bows to you with a serene, beatific expression.

The priestess Meiyo is a woman on the brink of enlightened transcendence – in fact, her feet no longer touch the ground, but float slightly above it, a fact which she conceals by wearing her long robes. She always speaks softly, serenely, without the slightest sign of anger or irritation. Even if the PCs are insufferably crude or ill-mannered, the priestess’ serenity never wavers – although the other monks at the Temple will angrily try to expel such impolite guests.

Presumably the PCs will explain to Meiyo that they must bathe the Golden Obi in the flames within the great Orb. This, by its very nature, will involve breaking a hole in this sacred artifact in order to reach the Celestial Fire within. The other monks will be openly horrified at such a prospect, but Meiyo will simply listen carefully, asking a few questions about the PCs’ quest and goals.

It is impossible to deceive this woman – she can see directly into the PCs’ hearts. (If any PCs try to be deceptive, she will quietly ask why she should listen to those who cannot tell the truth.) The PCs’ best chance is to be completely honest about their quest. If so, Meiyo will agree that their goal must be achieved. She calms the alarm among the monks with a few soft words: “Do you truly Desire the Orb so much?” The monks retreat, abashed.

Crude Methods

It is possible that some PCs may simply ignore the staff of the Temple and try to get access to the Orb directly, either by climbing the pillar, trying to knock it down, or sending up a flying shugenja. This will quickly attract the outraged attention of the monks in the temple complex. It will also attract Yogo Junzo and Goju Zato, who will immediately attack.

Getting to the Fire

In order to reach the Celestial Fire, the PCs will have to find a way to get to the top of the pillar.

- Climbing the pillar will require two rolls of **Athletics/Agility** at TN 25, **Climbing/Agility** at TN 20, or **Mountaineering/Agility** at TN 20. A PC who has climbing claws or similar gear gets a Free Raise. A failed roll means the PC falls, taking 3k3 damage if the first roll fails and 5k5 damage if the second roll fails.
- A shugenja PC who can access any kind of flying magic can easily reach the Orb.
- As a last resort, the PCs can physically chop through the pillar, knocking down and shattering the Orb, giving them one round to bathe the Obi in the sacred flames before they disperse. This action will be resisted by the monks, since it will irreversibly destroy their sacred object.

The golden Orb is a solid sphere, and the PCs will have to break a hole in it in order to thrust the Obi into the sacred flames which burn within. Luckily, the Orb is actually quite fragile, and a PC can break a hole in the side of it with a blow from a blunt weapon (**Weapon Skill/Strength** at TN 10) or a fist (**Jiu-jitsu/Strength** at TN 15 or **Athletics/Strength** at TN 20). A PC who is clinging to the side of the pillar must make two Raises in order to successfully deliver such a blow.

A shugenja can break a hole in the side of the Orb with any spell that delivers kinetic force.

A PC who physically reaches in to place the Golden Obi in the flames will suffer 2k1 damage. The Obi glows with a brilliant light as it is infused with the sacred power. The glow fades after a few minutes, but a faint lingering aura of power remains around the Obi thereafter.

Battle for the Dragon’s Breath

The Shadow will take action either when the PCs have finished speaking with priestess Meiyo and her monks, or when the PCs take action on their own to reach the Celestial Fire.

An aged shugenja, dressed in the red and black robes of the Scorpion, strides through the gates of the Temple of the Sun, followed by several Scorpion bushi. The man’s head is bald, his back slightly

hunched, and a long gray goatee beard hangs from his chin. Long nails turn his wizened hands into claws as he gestures imperiously. “In the name of the lady Bayushi Kachiko and her son, Clan Champion Bayushi Dairu, I command you to submit to arrest!”

PCs who have played the adventures *Price of Loyalty* or *Funeral Pyre* will recognize Yogo Junzo, and a **Heraldry/Perception** roll at TN 15 will note that the bushi behind him wear the Yogo mon, rather than the symbols of the city’s Thunder Guard. There will be four Yogo bushi (unless the PCs are unusually weak).

Assuming the PCs are not foolish enough to give up and let themselves be arrested, Junzo and his troops will attack.

Goju Zato: While the PCs are battling Junzo, Goju Zato will enter the Temple complex, quietly approaching the great oaken pillar which mounts the Orb. He touches the pillar, and blackened Shadow corruption spreads from the point of contact, weakening the ancient wood.

Any PC who is next to the Orb will notice Zato. Otherwise, the PCs can only notice Zato if they roll **Simple Perception** at TN 25. If they are specifically trying to watch the pillar/Orb, or watching for ambushes, the TN is 15.

Unless he is attacked, Zato will continue to corrupt the pillar for three rounds. At the end of the third round the corrupted wood splinters and the pillar topples over, shattering the Orb on the stone courtyard of the Temple. The Celestial Fire roars out of the smashed Orb, quickly rising into the sky and dispersing. The PCs will have one full round in which to try to bathe the Golden Obi in the flames before they disperse forever.

Getting Out of Ryoko Owari

Once the PCs defeat Junzo and Zato and (hopefully) bathe the Golden Obi in the celestial Fire, they will have to get out of Ryoko Owari. This will be problematic, since the PCs have publicly fought with the daimyo of the Yogo family and his personal escort. The PCs will now be wanted criminals, and the Thunder Guard will be watching for them.

If Aramoro intervened to help the PCs (see Part Six below) he will be able to smuggle the PCs safely out of the city. Otherwise, they will have to either find a way to sneak over the walls, arrange to be smuggled

out by the Yasuki, or face a battle with the six Thunder Guards who are posted at each gate of the city.

Part Six: Aramoro Intervenes

This portion of the adventure will only take place if at least one of the PCs visited the real Bayushi Kachiko during the adventure *Funeral Pyre*.

At some critical moment during the PCs’ battle with Yogo Junzo and Goju Zato, a man will spring off a rooftop in dark, form-fitting “ninja” clothing, the lower half of his face covered in a silk scarf. He wields a dark-hilted, blade-blackened wakizashi with precise and perfect grace. His first target will be Yogo Junzo, but he will continue to fight until all of the attackers are defeated.

Once the fight is over, if the PCs have not yet managed to bathe the Golden Obi in the Celestial Fire, he will urge them in a low, hoarse voice to “hurry and finish what you have come to do.”

Once the PCs have finished with their quest, Aramoro will urge them to follow him, and leads them quickly into the back streets of the city. If the PCs follow him, he will lead them into a safe-house in the Merchant District and, eventually, smuggle them out of the city through underground passages.

Speaking with Aramoro

Aramoro will not name himself, but will say he is a “servant to the true lady Kachiko” and asks the PCs to remember that some (or possibly all) of them helped his lady last autumn, at the funeral of “my noble Lord Shoji.”

PCs who met Bayushi Aramoro in *Funeral Pyre* can roll **Simple Intelligence** at TN 10 to recognize him here (his features seem to have lost a little of their distinctiveness). Any PC with the ability to sense Shadow Corruption will be able to tell that Aramoro is corrupted. If a PC tests him with light through a crystal (he will not resist), he appears semi-translucent.

Aramoro has four Shadow Points. His face sometimes loses its features and slides or shifts fluidly, and black shadows flicker across his eyes. He knows he has been infected by the evil force which now runs rampant in Kyuden Bayushi, but is still fighting

against it with all his might. He has come here to plead with the PCs for help, not for himself, but for his true love Kachiko.

“My lady Kachiko is being... consumed... by the evil which stalks our halls wearing her guise. She no longer remembers her past, barely her own name. But is a Scorpion, and she still resists... as do I. In her name, I have come to seek you, who aided her once before.”

Assuming the PCs show at least some interest in helping Aramoro, he will continue, speaking softly, his voice sometimes shifting its timbre unpredictably. *“Lady Kachiko needs your help. She did not tell me why, for she knows the darkness has nearly taken me as it has almost taken her. Please, come back with me. I can guide you into Kyuden Bayushi by hidden ways, ways that are still safe from our enemies.”*

If the PCs refuse, Aramoro’s features shift and warp, and an angry growl emerges from him for a moment before he regains control and leaps away, vanishing into the night.

To Kyuden Bayushi

If the PCs do agree to help Aramoro, he will lead them cross-country to Kyuden Bayushi, a trip which takes four days. Aramoro keeps the PCs away from the major roads, and camps at night in abandoned peasant huts and beneath overhanging trees.

Aramoro never sleeps. While the other PCs are resting, he meditates, battling the darkness within himself, his face sometimes sliding and going dark as the inner struggle continues. The PCs will be wise to maintain a healthy sense of paranoia around him, but for the duration of the journey, he will remain in control of himself.

What Aramoro Knows

If the PCs ask Aramoro for more information on what is happening in Kyuden Bayushi, he can share the following:

- The false Kachiko rules the castle, and her agents are spreading everywhere through the Scorpion Clan. No one can be trusted.
- Many loyal samurai have been exiled or condemned to Traitor’s Grove by the command of the false Kachiko.

- Bayushi Dairu, the Clan Champion, is totally in the thrall of the False Kachiko, and does whatever she commands. However, Aramoro believes this is simply because Dairu believes her to be his mother. “I do not think he has been... infected, not yet.”

Part Seven: Kyuden Bayushi

When the PCs approach the castle of the Scorpion Clan, Aramoro leads them to a cluster of rocks and trees on the slopes below the castle, close to the legendary Traitor’s Grove. He slips in next to a large boulder and opens a concealed wooden doorway, leading into the tunnels beneath Kyuden Bayushi. He will collect a small shuttered wooden lamp from an alcove in the rocks, lighting it and using it briefly and sparingly to guide the PCs through the tunnels.

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

Aramoro will lead the PCs through the tunnels, following a circuitous route which evades all the Bayushi patrols (sometimes simply by stepping into a side passage mere moments before they pass by). As long as the PCs make a reasonable effort to follow his path and not make too much noise, they will be able to avoid notice. If any PCs are foolish and allow themselves to be noticed, Aramoro will abandon them without a second glance – they will have to explain to the Scorpion patrols what they are doing in such a secret, restricted area.

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

Eventually, on the fifth floor, Aramoro leads them out to Kachiko's chamber:

You step through another small, low door and enter a well-appointed room, decorated with silk screens, the windows shrouded in heavy curtains of Scorpion red. A single candle lights the place, and several smoldering incense sticks fill the air with a sweet, drowsy scent. The shadows in the room seem to shift and slide in the corners of your eyes, and you hear whispers on the edge of hearing.

In the center of the room is a large futon, set on a carved wooden frame. A withered, ruined woman lies in the bed, propped up on folded coverlets, barely visible in the dim light. She stirs and mumbles as you approach. Aramoro drops to one knee next to the futon, his head lowered.

The true Kachiko will recognize the PCs. "You," she whispers, in a rasping voice interrupted by deep, gasping breaths. "Yes, you came... before. He found you, brought you to me."

Speaking with Kachiko will be a heart-breaking experience. She is even worse off, mentally, than she was in Funeral Pyre – all but insane, without her memories, unable even to name herself. The following things will trigger vague recollections from her:

- If any of the PCs met with her before, she will seize their hand in a scarred, twisted grip, and whisper urgently, "Is it safe?" The question refers to the Obsidian Hand. She will become agitated, moaning and thrashing about, if the PCs do not answer in the affirmative.
- If any PC is a handsome Crane, she will confuse him with Doji Hoturi, and begins to weep. "She told me... the other me, she told me you were hers now. But you are still mine, aren't you?"
- If any PC is a young and handsome Scorpion, she will confuse him with her son Dairu. "Yes, you came back to me," she whispers. "You are not hers, no, you are mine. Mine and his."
- Kachiko never identifies Shosuro by name, calling her instead "the other one" or "the false one." She shudders with despair when the topic comes up. "She speaks to me, every night, every day. She is all I can hear anymore."

Presumably, the PCs will ask her why she called them here. Kachiko has received a vision from Bayushi, the founder of the Scorpion Clan. She smiles, an awful expression on her burned and ruined face. "He came to me," she says. "He told me how to stop the false one. The pool, the sacred blue water. Down below, in the dark. It is the only way. He has called me there, and I must go. He," she points at Aramoro, "can show you the way."

- Aramoro can identify the "sacred blue water" as Sleeping Lake, the sacred pool which lies beneath Kyuden Bayushi. (PCs who played the adventure *Price of Loyalty* have probably seen Sleeping Lake briefly themselves.)
- Aramoro will be very reluctant to move Kachiko. "She may not survive," he mutters, looking at her with helpless devotion. The PCs will have to be firm and unyielding in order to force him to back down and agree to move Kachiko.

To Sleeping Lake

Kachiko is frail and light, but every movement is an agony for her ruined body. A PC must roll **Athletics/Strength** at TN 20 to move her safely. A failed roll jostles her, causing her to moan in pain – Aramoro will snatch her away, glaring at the deficient PC with dark eyes.

Aramoro and the PCs retrace their steps down the staircase and then wind through the tunnels once more, dodging patrols as before (although there are one or two tense moments when Kachiko lets out weak, delirious moans). Eventually, the PCs enter a larger tunnel, the walls and ceiling lined with stone, the floor a descending staircase worn almost smooth by hundreds of years. Except for Aramoro's lamp (and any PC lights) there are no lights, and the PCs can hear only their own steps and breathing. Finally, they emerge into the cavern of Sleeping Lake.

You enter a large cavern, your light barely reaching a high arching ceiling decorated with stalactites. You can heard the sound of dripping water echoing in the large space, and cool moisture touches your faces. Ahead of you, a ledge looks down on a vast lake, its waters crystal blue in the lantern-light, and seeming to emit a faint blue-white radiance. "Take me to the water," Kachiko whispers.

Any PC with the ability to detect spirits (such as a half-blooded or true-blooded Kitsu, or someone with

the Cloud tattoo) will feel a powerful spiritual presence in the cavern, radiating from the pool.

As the PCs descend the steep slope to the pale white beach next to Sleeping Lake, a high, mocking laugh echoes through the cavern behind them. A woman's voice, sounding eerily like the voice of Kachiko, trills out of the darkness. "Sister! What do you think you are doing?" Shosuro has arrived.

Kami Calls to Thunder

As soon as the PCs reach the shore, Kachiko seems to recover some of her strength and poise. "Put me down," she commands. As she sinks down on the sand, she points at the faint luminescence from the water. "He will come, if I call," she whispers. "We are sisters. He will hear me, if I call." She closes her eyes as if in prayer.

At that point, Shosuro attacks, dropping out of the darkness above the PCs like a silent, deadly ghost. She appears to be a slim young woman, dressed in form-fitting "ninja" garb, with a long black cloak that writhes around her like a living thing. A black razor-edged dagger is in her hand. Her face shifts and slides constantly between a hundred different guises, each of them twisted into an expression of madness and fury.

This is a desperate fight. The PCs' only goal is to hold off the Scorpion Thunder long enough for the spirit of Bayushi to arrive. Given her capabilities, the PCs' best chance may be to go Full Defense and hope for the best.

Any PC who has four Shadow Points must make a **Simple Willpower** roll at TN 20 when their initiative comes up on Round One. Failure means the PCs loses control and "goes over," joining the fight on Shosuro's side. (The PC may make an Honor Test as a back-up.) A powerful verbal appeal, or taking damage from a crystal weapon or light, will allow the PCs to make another **Willpower** roll or an at TN 25 to "snap out of it" and regain control.

Bayushi Aramoro will step in front of Kachiko, drawing his blackened wakizashi and going into a defensive stance. However, when his initiative comes up on Round One, he will fail his **Willpower** roll and turn toward the PCs, his face sliding into formless blackness, and attack. He cannot be broken free of the Shadow's power – the prospect of losing his beloved Kachiko has broken his mind.

The fight will last a total of three rounds (unless the party is extremely weak or extremely powerful). Each round, the light in Sleeping Lake will continue to build. On the third round Kachiko whispers, "He hears us. He is coming."

At the beginning of the fourth round, assuming the PCs have not all fallen to Shosuro and Aramoro, the spirit of Bayushi arrives:

The blue-white light blossoms into a pulsing glow that fills the cavern, illuminating every corner, scintillating on each stalactite. Out of the light emerges the form of a tall, darkly handsome man, dressed in flowing robes, his lower face concealed beneath a mask. His piercing eyes focus on the two women before him. "My children," he says, his voice deep and rich, echoing through the cavern. "Come to me, and be at peace."

Shosuro freezes. Her mutable face settles back into a pretty, snub-nosed girl. "My lord," she whispers. Tears begin to trickle down her face. "You broke your promise, my lord. You and Lord Togashi. You both promised to save me."

"The promise was not broken," whispers Bayushi, "for I am here." He holds out both his hands. Kachiko lifts one trembling, wrecked hand to take his left. He raises his right to Shosuro.

For a long, agonizing moment, she hesitates. Then, with a small cry, she steps forward and clasps his hand with hers. Bayushi enfolds both of the women into his robed arms. The glow brightens and then fades. Where Shosuro stood, all that is left behind is her dagger, the blade gleaming black.

Aramoro will momentarily regain control and prostrate himself when his ancestor appears. However, with Bayushi's departure, and the final loss of his true love, his last fragments of sanity are gone. The PCs must fight him to the death.

Conclusion

The PCs will have to find their own way out of the Bayushi labyrinth. A PC with Precise Memory will be able to retrace their steps to the tunnel where they entered, or a PC can roll **Nazado/Intelligence** at TN 15 or **Simple Intelligence** at TN 25 to remember the route. (PCs with the Precise Memory advantage need only roll **Simple Intelligence** at TN 10.)

Alternatively, bold PCs may simply walk out and confront the Scorpion troops. Without Shosuro's control, the Scorpion will be confused and uncertain, and take the PCs to meet with their Champion, Bayushi Dairu. Young Dairu will demand that the PCs tell him everything, listens carefully to their story, and then sends them safely out of Scorpion lands. "Take what you have learned, and do what must be done," he tells them. "I must try to free my Clan from the darkness which grips it, or my mother's sacrifice will be meaningless."

It is up to the PCs what to do with Aramoro's wakizashi and Shosuro's Dagger. If they hand them over to Dairu, he will keep the wakizashi but places the Dagger into the care of a Scorpion PC (if one is available, otherwise he keeps it personally). PCs who do not meet with Dairu can, of course, keep both weapons if they can make it out of the labyrinth alive.

The Artifacts and the Ritual

Regardless of whether or not the PCs participated in the final fate of Shosuro, they will still have to decide what to do with the ritual and artifacts they have collected. The PCs will not be able to recruit enough shugenja to perform the ritual on their own, and smart PCs may realize it will be unwise to enter the Imperial Capital (where the ritual must be performed) on their own as well.

Yasuki Taka

If the PCs contact Yasuki Taka, he will urge them to keep the spell and artifacts safe while he tries to assemble a group of shugenja to perform the ritual. However, he will also ask them for a copy of the ritual, just in case.

If any of the PCs are Owned by the Kolat and earlier expressed to Taka a desire to be free of that sinister organization's control, Taka will now speak with them one final time, ascertaining where their true loyalties lie. If he is satisfied with their answers, he will make them into his personal agents. These PCs lose the "Owned by the Kolat" cert and gain the "Agent of Yasuki Taka" cert instead.

The PCs will have to decide among themselves who should have responsibility for the various artifacts (certed items).

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:	1 XP
Good role-playing:	+1 XP
PCs complete their quest:	+2 XP
Shosuro is banished:	+1 XP

Total Possible Experience: 5 XP

Honor

Scorpion PCs receive +2 Honor for ending the threat from Shosuro. All other PCs receive +1 Honor. Successfully completing the entire quest (assembling the ritual and collecting all the artifacts) earns all PCs +1 Honor.

Glory

None intrinsically awarded for this adventure.

Other Awards/Penalties

PCs who angered the Lady of the Forest may acquire her Curse (cert).

The PCs can potentially acquire Aramoro's wakizashi, Shosuro's Dagger, the Golden Obi of the Sun Goddess, the Tears of Lady Doji, and the Gift of the Lady of the Forest (all certified items) during this adventure.

Kolat-owned PCs who satisfied Yasuki Taka gain the "Agent of Yasuki Taka" cert and lose the "Owned by the Kolat" cert.

Appendix #1: Togashi (Goju) Zato

Zato is a large, tubby man, muscular and athletic despite his bulk (think of the Asian martial-arts star Samo Hung). He has the shaven head of a monk and is dressed in a simple hakama and gi of Dragon green. PCs who look at him closely will notice an impressive tattoo of the ocean on his broad chest.

Zato is a glutton, always eating and drinking, and will frequently ask others at his table whether they are going to finish their meals. He makes constant jokes and is always shaking with laughter. Whenever he pauses in his meals, he wonders whether it is time for a nap. However, any PC who rolls **Lore: Dragon Clan/Intelligence** at TN 15 will remember that the Ocean tattoo makes one free of the need to eat, drink, or sleep. If they mention this to Zato, or comment on his gluttony, he will smile broadly and remark, “Really? I never realized. Are you going to finish that? Oh ho ho!”

Occasionally, Zato’s hakama will seem to twitch and move. A PC who looks closely, and rolls **Simple Perception** at TN 20, will see a beady-eyed rat peeking out of Zato’s garment. A moment later, Zato’s face briefly shifts and slides like wax. He is of course a Goju, a unique minion of the Living Darkness.

Zato uses his mannerisms to sow doubts in others about bushido, etiquette, and the accepted rules of social behavior. He is malicious and clever, and adept at making others doubt themselves.

FIRE 3	AIR 4
EARTH 3	WATER 3 Strength 4

TN to be Hit: 20

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

Glory: 2.8

Wounds: 54: Dead.

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

Advantages/Disadvantages: Large/Ascetic

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

Equipment: Clothing.

Appendix #2: NPCs

Moshi Juiko, Daimyo of the Centipede Clan

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

TN to be Hit: 15

School/Rank: Moshi Shugenja 3 (casts as Insight Rank 4)

Honor/Glory: 2.7/4.6

Skills: Athletics 4, Calligraphy 3, Courtier 7, Etiquette 3, History 8, Lore (Amaterasu) 9, Meditation 5, Shintao 8, Spellcraft 6, Tea Ceremony 2, Theology 7, War Fan 3.

Spells: *Sense, Commune, Summon*, all Air and Fire spells of Mastery 5 or less.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Social Position (daimyo)/Old

Equipment: Fine kimono, scroll satchel, tessen.

Typical Ronin Guard, Centipede Lands

FIRE 2 Agility 3	AIR 2 Reflexes 3
EARTH 3	WATER 2
VOID 1	

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

School/Rank: None

Honor/Glory: 2.5/0

Skills: Athletics 3, Defense 3, Etiquette 2, Hunting 3, Kenjutsu 4, Kyujutsu (archery) 4, Sincerity 2.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Bad Reputation (bandit), Social Disadvantage (heimin)

Equipment: Daisho set, light armor, bow and arrows (1k2).

Typical Centipede Shugenja

FIRE 3	AIR 3
EARTH 2	WATER 2
VOID 3	

TN to be Hit: 15

School/Rank: Moshi Shugenja 1

Honor/Glory: 1.5/1.0

Skills: Athletics 2, Calligraphy 4, Etiquette 2, Kenjutsu 2, Lore (Amaterasu) 3, Meditation 3, Sincerity 3, Spellcraft 3, Theology 3.

Spells: *Sense, Commune, Summon*, (Fire 1) *Fires of Purity, Fury of Osano-Wo, Wings of Fire*, (Fire 2) *Fires From Within, Inferno's Tooth*, (Air 1) *By the Light of Lord Moon, Tempest of Air*, (Air 2) *Call Upon the Wind, Whispering Wind, Summon Kami of Air*.

Advantages/Disadvantages: None.

Equipment: Kimono, wakizashi, tanto, scroll satchel, medical kit.

Kakita Kaiten, Daimyo of the Kakita Family

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

TN to be Hit: 32 (fine light armor)

School/Rank: Kakita Bushi 4

Honor/Glory: 3.7/7.4

Skills: Athletics 4, Battle 3, Courtier 4, Defense 5, Etiquette 5, History 3, Iaijutsu 6, Jiu-jutsu (mizu-do) 3, Katana 3, Kenjutsu 3, Law 3, Manipulation 2, Meditation 3, Oratory 3, Poetry 4, Political Maneuvering 3, Shintao 2, Sincerity 5, Tea Ceremony 3, Theology 2.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Balance, Gentry, Great Destiny, Quick, Social Position (family daimyo)

Equipment: Kakita blade, fine wakizashi (+1 skill die), fine light armor, fine kimono.

Typical Kakita Bushi

FIRE 2 Agility 3	AIR 3
EARTH 2	WATER 2
VOID 3	

TN to be Hit: 20 (light armor)

School/Rank: Kakita Bushi 1

Honor/Glory: 3.5/1.0

Skills: Athletics 2, Battle 2, Defense 3, Etiquette 3, Iaijutsu 4, Investigation 3, Kenjutsu 3, Kyujutsu (Archery) 3, Sincerity 2.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Quick

Equipment: Daisho (fine quality, +1 skill die to both weapons), light armor, fine bow (+1 skill) with 20 arrows, kimono.

Typical Daidoji bushi

FIRE 2 Agility 3	AIR 2 Reflexes 3
EARTH 2	WATER 2 Strength 3
VOID 2	

[Wounds are at +2 per Rank]

TN to be Hit: 20 (light armor)

School/Rank: Daidoji Bodyguard 1

Rank One Technique: Add Honor rank to total of each Wound rank.

Honor/Glory: 2.7/1.0

Skills: Archery 2, Athletics 2, Bard 1, Battle 2, Defense 3, Etiquette 1, Hand-to-Hand 2, Iaijutsu 2, Kenjutsu 3, Law 1, Medicine 1, Sincerity 2

Advantages/Disadvantages: Strength of the Earth (rank one).

Equipment: Light armor, fine daisho, bow with 20 arrows, yari.

Typical Daidoji Harrier

FIRE 3	AIR 3
EARTH 2 Willpower 3	WATER 2 Strength 3
VOID 2	

TN to be Hit: 15 (20 in Light Armor)

School/Rank: Daidoji Harrier 1

Rank one technique: When attacking a foe unaware of his presence, the Harrier adds unkept damage dice equal to his school rank.

Honor/Glory: 1.6/1.0

Skills: Athletics 3, Battle 3, Climbing 2, Defense 3, Explosives 2, Iaijutsu 3, Jiu-jutsu (hand-to-hand) 3, Kenjutsu 4, Kyujutsu (Archery) 3, Stealth 4, Traps 2, Yarijutsu 3.

Advantages/Disadvantages: None.

Equipment: Light armor, daisho, bow with 20 arrows, yari.

Daidoji Uji, Daimyo of the Daidoji Family

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

[Wounds are +2 per rank.]

TN to be Hit: 20 (30 in Heavy Armor)

School/Rank: Daidoji Bodyguard 4

Rank One: Add Honor Rank to total wounds at each Wound Rank.

Rank Two: If Uji takes Full Defense, he automatically wins initiative the next round.

Rank Three: Uji's TN to be Hit is increased by the value of his opponent's armor.

Rank Four: Two attacks per round.

Honor/Glory: 2.5/6.5

Skills: Battle 7, Commerce 6, Defense 9, Etiquette 3, Hunting 3, Iaijutsu 5, Kenjutsu 8, Kyujutsu 5.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Quick Healer, Way of the Land (Crane lands)/Fascination (gaijin).

Equipment: Heavy armor, fine daisho set (3k2/2k2), fine bow (+1 Kyujutsu), 20 fine arrows (2k2 damage).

Kitsune Retsu, Minor Fox Clan Daimyo

FIRE 2 Intelligence 3	AIR 2 Reflexes 3
EARTH 3	WATER 2
VOID 2	

TN to be Hit: 15 (20 with armor)

School/Rank: Kitsune Shugenja 1

Honor/Glory: 2.8/4.0

Skills: Athletics 2, Calligraphy 2, Courtier 3, Defense 2, Herbalism 3, Hunting 3, Kenjutsu 2, Meditation 3, Shintao 3, Sincerity 3, Theology 2.

Spells: *Sense, Commune, Summon*, (Earth 1) *Earth's Stagnation, Elemental Ward, Hidden Footsteps*, (Air 1) *Nature's Touch, Tempest of Air*, (Water 1) *Heart of Nature*.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Social Position (minor daimyo)/Social Disadvantage (minor Clan)

Equipment: Kimono, wakizashi, scroll satchel.

Typical Thunder Guards, Scorpion troops

FIRE 3	AIR 3
EARTH 2	WATER 2
VOID 2	

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

School/Rank: Bayushi Bushi 1

Honor/Glory: 1.5/1.0

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

Advantages/Disadvantages: None

Equipment: Light armor, daisho set, yari.

Appendix #3: Villains (low-end)

Goju, faceless servants of Shadow

FIRE 2	AIR 2
EARTH 2	WATER 2

TN to be Hit: 15

Attacks: 4k2

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

Skills: Stealth 4.

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.

Yogo Junzo, fallen daimyo of the Yogo family

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

Shadow Points: 3

TN to be Hit: 25

School/Rank: Yogo Shugenja 4

Honor/Glory: 0.4/8.8

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

Spells: *Sense, Commune, Summon*, (Air 1) *By the Light of Lord Moon, Cloak of Night, Quiescence of Air, Tempest of Air, Way of Deception*, (Air 2) *Benten's Touch, Call Upon the Wind, Mists of Illusion, Secrets on the Wind, Whispering Wind*, (Air 3) *Essence of Air, The Eye Shall Not See, Summon Fog, Wind-Born Speed*, (Air 4) *Call Upon the Wind, Wall of Air*, (Earth 1) *Earth's Stagnation, Jade Strike*, (Earth 2) *Armor of Earth, Hands of Clay*, (Fire 1) *Fury of Osano-Wo, Katana of Fire*, (Water 1) *Path to Inner Peace, Reflections of Pan Ku, Reversal of Fortunes*, (Water 2) *Reflective Pool, The Tie That Binds, Wisdom and Clarity*, (Water 3) *Near to Ice, Regrow the Wound, Walking Upon the Waves*.

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

Equipment: Excellent kimono, wakizashi, scroll satchel.

Yogo Bushi

FIRE 3	AIR 3 Reflexes 4
EARTH 3	WATER 3
VOID 2	

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

School/Rank: Bayushi Bushi 2

Honor/Glory: 1.5/2.0

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

Advantages/Disadvantages: None.

Equipment: Light armor, daisho set, bow with 20 arrows.

Bayushi Aramoro, Scorpion Master Ninja, Brother of Shoji

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

Shadow Points: 4

TN to be Hit: 25

School/Rank: Shosuro Shinobi 4

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

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

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

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

Honor/Glory: 1.8/7.9

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

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

Special Shadow Abilities: Aramoro's four Shadow Points grant him the following 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); **Mimicry** (perfectly imitate any other person); **Shadow Stealth** (keep two extra dice on Stealth rolls).

Equipment: Excellent wakizashi (2k2 damage), "ninja" clothing and gear.

normal speed); **Mimicry** (perfectly imitate any other person); **Shadow Stealth** (keep two extra dice on Stealth rolls).

Equipment: Shosuro's Dagger (2k2 Obsidian Tanto), ninja clothing, nageteppe (smoke grenades).

Shosuro, the False Kachiko, the Fallen Thunder, minion of Shadow

FIRE 5	AIR 5
	Awareness 6
EARTH 5	WATER 5
Willpower 7	

TN to be Hit: 30

School/Rank: Shosuro Shinobi 4

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

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

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

Rank Four: Unusable (requires Void points).

Attacks: 7k5 (with her dagger).

Damage: 7k2, and drains a Void point from the target (Shosuro's Dagger)

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

Wounds: 90: Dead.

Special Abilities: As the personal servant of the Living Darkness, Shosuro has a complete set of enhanced Shadow abilities: **Shadow Invulnerability** (takes double damage from crystal attacks and half damage from all other attacks); **Wall-Walking** (move on vertical surfaces or ceilings as easily as level ground); **Insubstantial** (pass through solid matter at

Appendix #4: Villains (High-End)

Goju, faceless servants of Shadow

FIRE 2 Agility 3	AIR 3 Reflexes 4
EARTH 3	WATER 2 Strength 3

TN to be Hit: 25

Attacks: 4k3

Damage: Ninja-to (4k2), Shuriken (3k1), or Garrote (3k2). Damage listed includes Strength.

Skills: Stealth 4.

Wounds: 32: 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.

Yogo Junzo, fallen daimyo of the Yogo family

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

Shadow Points: 4

TN to be Hit: 30

School/Rank: Yogo Shugenja 5

Honor/Glory: 0.4/8.8

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

Spells: *Sense, Commune, Summon*, (Air 1) *By the Light of Lord Moon, Cloak of Night, Quiescence of Air, Tempest of Air, Way of Deception, Wind-Born Slumbers*, (Air 2) *Benten's Touch, Call Upon the Wind, Mists of Illusion, Secrets on the Wind, Whispering Wind*, (Air 3) *Essence of Air, The Eye Shall Not See, Summon Fog, Wind-Born Speed*, (Air 4) *Call Upon the Wind, Dominate the Mind, Wall of Air*, (Air 5) *Poison of the Windspider, Slayer's Knives*, (Earth 1) *Earth's Stagnation, Force of Will, Jade Strike*, (Earth 2) *Armor of Earth, Hands of Clay*, (Fire 1) *Fury of Osano-Wo, Katana of Fire*, (Fire 2) *Aura of Flame, Inferno's Tooth*, (Water 1) *Path to Inner Peace, Reflections of Pan Ku, Reversal of*

Fortunes, Sympathetic Energies, (Water 2) *Reflective Pool, The Tie That Binds, Wisdom and Clarity*, (Water 3) *Near to Ice, Regrow the Wound, Walking Upon the Waves*.

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

Equipment: Excellent kimono, wakizashi, scroll satchel.

Yogo Bushi

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

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

School/Rank: Bayushi Bushi 3

Honor/Glory: 1.5/2.0

Skills: Athletics 3, Bard 2, Courtier 2, Defense 5, Heraldry 2, Iaijutsu 5, Jiu-jutsu 4, Kenjutsu 6, Kyujutsu (Archery) 4, Sincerity 5, Stealth 3, Wrestling 3, Yarijutsu 3.

Advantages/Disadvantages: None.

Equipment: Light armor, daisho set, bow with 20 arrows.

Bayushi Aramoro, Scorpion Master Ninja, Brother of Shoju

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

Shadow Points: 4

TN to be Hit: 30

School/Rank: Shosuro Shinobi 5

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

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

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

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

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

Honor/Glory: 1.8/7.9

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

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

Special Shadow Abilities: Aramoro's four Shadow Points grant him the following 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); Mimicry (perfectly imitate any other person); Shadow Stealth (keep two extra dice on Stealth rolls).

Equipment: Excellent wakizashi (2k2 damage), "ninja" clothing and gear.

Damage: 8k2, and drains a Void point from the target (Shosuro's Dagger). Each time it drains a Void point, Shosuro heals 10 Wounds.

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

Wounds: 108: Dead.

Advantages: Magic Resistance (rank 2), Quick

Special Abilities: As the personal servant of the Living Darkness, Shosuro has a complete set of enhanced Shadow abilities: **Superior Shadow Invulnerability** (takes normal damage from crystal attacks and half damage from all other attacks); **Wall-Walking** (move on vertical surfaces or ceilings as easily as level ground); **Insubstantial** (pass through solid matter at normal speed); **Mimicry** (perfectly imitate any other person); **Shadow Stealth** (keep two extra dice on Stealth rolls).

Equipment: Shosuro's Dagger (2k2 Obsidian Tanto), ninja clothing, nageteppe (smoke grenades).

Shosuro, the False Kachiko, the Fallen Thunder, minion of Shadow

FIRE 6	AIR 7
	Awareness 8
EARTH 6	WATER 6
Willpower 8	

TN to be Hit: 40

School/Rank: Shosuro Shinobi 5

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

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

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

Rank Four: Unusable (require Void points).

Rank Five: Unusable (requires Void points).

Attacks: 9k6 (with her dagger); may attack twice per round.

Appendix #5: Shiro Sano Kakita Battle Events

Consult this table each time a PC gets a Heroic Opportunity or a Duel on the Battle Table. Roll one die.

If a PC falls in the battle, but is not dead, the next PC to roll a Battle Event will automatically get result #5: Rescue a Wounded Samurai, and can try to save their downed friend.

1: Shadow Infiltrator. Have the PC make a Simple Perception roll at TN 20. With a success, the PC notices shadows flickering across the face of a Crane in a nearby unit. He has been consumed by the Shadow, and if left to his own devices will lead his fellow soldiers to disaster. The PCs can point this out and the other Crane will recoil in horror from their fallen comrade, who shape-shifts and flees.

2: Raise the Standard! A Crane standard-bearer topples and falls as his throat is cut by a scuttling Goju. The men advancing behind the standard falter, ready to flee. To prevent a panic, the PC must carry the battle standard during the next round of battle. This makes them a target for the enemy, increasing their Wounds that round by one die. If they do not raise the standard, the Crane will start Losing one round earlier. (This event can only occur once – if it is rolled again, re-roll.)

3. Undead Horror. The PC runs into a Crane unit which has fallen prey to a large force of undead. The zombies have pulled down the outnumbered Cranes and are slowly tearing their bodies apart with claws and teeth. A few of the Cranes are still alive. If the PC stops to rescue them, he will suffer an additional 2k1 Wounds. If the PC does not stop, he loses 1 point of Honor, 2 if he is Crane.

4: Demonic Horror. A huge Oni is ripping squads of Crane bushi limb-from-limb, scattering their remains. The PC can roll **Lore: Shadowlands/Intelligence** at TN 15 to recognize the Oni and advise the Crane on how to fight it, gaining +1 Glory and adding +1 to all Battle Table rolls for the remainder of the combat.

5: Rescue a Wounded Samurai. Dragging the wounded samurai to safety will require a **Simple Strength** roll against a TN of the victim's Earth x 5. Alternatively, a shugenja PC can try to heal the victim or spirit him/her out of the battle with appropriate magic.

6. Cut Off. The PC's unit has been cut off by a unit of Goju and corrupted samurai. The PC will have to spend the next round of battle at Heavily Engaged, and cannot make it into Shiro Sano Kakita that round. (This event can only occur once – if it is rolled again, re-roll.)

7: Maho. The PC's unit is targeted by a maho-tsukai who casts No Pure Breaths. Crane samurai collapse, coughing blood. The PC takes an additional 3k1 damage and is at a +10 TN penalty to all actions until magically healed.

8: The Iron Cranes. The enemy is counterattacking, a wild charge of Oni, corrupted Dragon samurai, and stumbling zombies. The Daidoji troops brace themselves, digging the butts of their yari into the ground as they prepare to withstand the assault. The PC must roll **Simple Willpower** at TN 20 to stand and fight. If the PC breaks, s/he loses 2 points of Honor (1 point for Crab or Scorpions) and suffers an extra 1k1 Wounds.

9: Corrupted Ground. The PC stumbles into a rice paddy whose muddy depths are choked with blood and corpses. The PC must roll **Simple Strength** at TN 15 to avoid becoming bogged in the paddy (trapping him/her at the same level of engagement during the next round of Battle). The PC also must roll **Simple Agility** at TN 20 to avoid touching dead flesh and losing 1 point of Honor.

10: A Samurai's Mercy. One of the Corrupted samurai on the other side, most likely a Dragon, suddenly drops to his knees, screaming in horror, clawing at his own flesh as though trying to tear himself apart. His eyes briefly focus on the PC. "Kill me," he shouts, eyes rolling in his head, blackness chasing itself across his features. If the PC complies, the samurai is saved from eternal damnation. The PC gains 1 point of Honor. (This event can only occur once – if it is rolled again, re-roll.)

Alternate 10 (PCs with Shadow Corruption only): Call of Shadow. The PC is trapped in the midst of a desperate and seemingly inescapable fight. S/he hears the whispering voice offering rescue from the situation. If the PC listens, the Shadow snatches him/her safely out of the fight, but the PC must immediately roll Simple Void at TN 20 or gain another Shadow point. If the PC reject the offer, s/he takes an extra 3k2 Wounds, but gains 1 point of Honor. (This event can only occur once – if it is rolled again, re-roll.)

Appendix #6: Time and Travel

From Samui Kaze Toshi:

- To Centipede Lands: by sea, four days directly to the Centipede Valley.
- To Fox Lands: Five days overland, or one day by sea to the Crane port of Mura Sabishii Toshi and then two days inland.
- To Shiro Sano Kakita, via Scorpion lands and Beiden pass: ten days to the Pass, then (if Beiden Pass is still open) eight more days.
- To Otosan Uchi: Three days by sea up the coast.
- To Ryoko Owari: Twelve days overland (goes through Fox lands).

From Otosan Uchi (Imperial Capital):

- To Centipede lands: one day by sea up the coast, or four days overland through the Mountains of Regret.
- To Shiro Sano Kakita: Six days overland.
- To Fox Lands, by sea: Four days down the coast to Mura Sabishii Toshi, then two days overland.
- To Fox Lands, by land: Fourteen days to Beiden Pass, then (if the Pass is still open) seven more days through Scorpion lands to Fox lands.
- To Ryoko Owari, by sea: Same as to Fox lands, but add nine more days.
- To Ryoko Owari, by land: Same as to Fox lands, but only five days past Beiden Pass.

From Kyuden Ikoma:

- To Otosan Uchi: eighteen days overland.
- To Shiro Sano Kakita: Seven days overland.
- To Fox lands: Ten days to Beiden Pass, then (if the Pass is still open) seven more days.

From Kyuden Agasha:

- To Otosan Uchi: Nineteen days overland.
- To Shiro Sano Kakita: Twelve days overland.
- To Beiden Pass, overland: Twenty-five days. If pass is open, from there, seven days to Fox lands, or five days to Ryoko Owari.

From Kyuden Asahina:

- To Otosan Uchi or Centipede Lands, by sea: one day to the coast, then three days by sea to Otosan Uchi or four to Centipede lands.
- To Shiro Sano Kakita, by sea: one day to the coast, two days up the coastline, then twelve days overland.
- To Beiden Pass, overland: Eighteen days, then (if Pass is still open) nine days to Shiro Sano Kakita or fourteen days to Otosan Uchi.
- To Fox lands: Five days overland.
- To Ryoko Owari: Sixteen days overland.

From Fox Lands:

- To Ryoko Owari: Nine days overland.
- To Beiden Pass: seven days. If Pass is open, from there, nine days to Shiro Sano Kakita, or fourteen days to Otosan Uchi.

From Centipede Lands:

- To Otosan Uchi: Four days overland, one day by sea.
- To Samui Kaze Toshi: Four days by sea.
- To Mura Sabishii Toshi: Five days by sea.

Appendix #7: Timeline Events

After sixty days:

- Crab forces crush the Three-Man Alliance at the Battle of Crimson Grasses (on the Blessed Ground Plain). There are rumors that Shadowlands forces intervened in the battle, although whether they took sides or merely slaughtered indiscriminately is uncertain.
- Rumors of the attack on Shiro Kitsuki reach the rest of the Empire. The nature of the attacking force is uncertain, but is generally believed to be Shadowlands in nature. Losses are reported as heavy, and the Kitsuki daimyo is known to be missing.

After seventy-five days:

- A Goju/Shadowlands force besieges Shiro Sano Kakita. If the PCs attempt to visit that castle at any time after this, they will find it surrounded by the Shadowlands army, while Crane troops attempt to rally for a relief effort.

After eighty days:

- Scorpion troops occupy Beiden Pass. Any PCs traveling overland through this region (such as moving overland between Kyuden Asahina and any of the other locations) will now find the Scorpion in control of the pass.
- Scorpion forces fight the Lion armies in a bloody, two-day engagement near Kenson Gakka, amidst heavy rain: the Battle of Flooded Courage. Lion troops hold the field but are forced to withdraw afterward due to lack of supplies and reinforcements.

After eighty-five days:

- Rumors of the siege of Shiro Sano Kakita reach the rest of the Empire.

After ninety days:

- Crab troops are rumored to have reached the village of Shimomura in southern Scorpion lands. So far, there are no reports of major fighting between the Scorpion and Crab.

After 110 days:

- Toturi's Army is reported to be moving south through Phoenix lands. The Phoenix have declared Toturi a traitor, claiming he switched sides during the spring battles, and there are rumors that he is destroying the remains of the Phoenix and Lion armies as he moves south.
- Kyuden Asahina is reported to have been razed to the ground. If the PCs have somehow not yet completed their work in that city, it is now too late.

After 120 days:

- Rumors leak out of the Mantis Islands that they have lost over half their fleet to a surprise attack from the Crab "turtle ships."
- It is reported that a vast legion of Dark Moto has swept through Crab lands and is riding north toward the Unicorn territories.

After 130 days:

- The Fists of the Emperor Legion is reputed to be force-marching toward the capital in order to block the march of Toturi's Army.