

The Chapter of Water: Magic and Shugenja, Advanced and Optional Character Rules, GM's Rules

Shugenja and Magic

As noted in the Chapter of Earth, Rokugani magic is not the same as that found in most other fantasy RPGs. This is seen most clearly in the fact that Rokugani spellcasters – called *shugenja* – are not mere sorcerers, but rather are priests with religious duties and spiritual gifts. In order to be a shugenja, a mortal must be able to hear the voices of the *kami*, the Elemental spirits of Air, Earth, Fire, and Water that comprise all of creation. This ability usually manifests during late childhood, and is most common in the bloodlines of the Empire's various shugenja families (especially the Isawa family of the Phoenix Clan, the acknowledged masters of Rokugani magic). Once they exhibit their powers, such children are trained in their clan's Shugenja School, where they undergo many years of education in how to use and master their abilities.

The standard rules for casting spells are found in the *Chapter of Earth*, but are summarized again here: casting a spell is a Skill Roll of Spellcraft/[Ring] – using the appropriate Ring for the spell – with a TN equal to 10 plus 5x the Mastery Level of the spell. All spells have a Mastery Level between 1 and 5, representing both how powerful the spell is and how difficult it is to cast. Casting a spell requires a number of Actions equal to its Mastery Level, but this can potentially be reduced (to a minimum of 1 Action) by calling Raises beforehand.

In general, only Characters who have trained in one of Rokugan's Shugenja Schools can cast spells. Without the special training and support of a Shugenja School, it is all but impossible to persuade the *kami* to reliably perform spells. (*Ronin* shugenja are a special case, and are discussed later in this chapter in the "Ronin" section.)

Shugenja Schools are similar to other Schools in their basic structure, but have a number of unique features. Unlike other Schools, Shugenja Schools do not have Techniques. Instead, a Rank One shugenja has a Favored Element and starts play knowing a certain number of spells of each Element (determined by the School). When shugenja Characters go up in Insight Rank, they do not learn new Techniques – instead, their School provides them with two new spells at each Rank. Normally, the Player can choose the shugenja Character's new spells, but the GM may decide to award a specific spell based on the storyline or the needs of the campaign, and can also veto a spell if it would be disruptive or seems inappropriate for the story.

In general, shugenja are not allowed to learn spells of a higher Mastery Level than their School Rank. Shugenja Schools usually have 5 School Ranks, although lesser or younger Schools may have fewer. However, each Shugenja School has a Favored Element, and shugenja from that School may learn spells of that Element as though their School Rank is one higher (e.g. at Rank 1 they can learn Mastery Level 2 spells in that Element). Moreover, the Prodigy of Spirit Advantage allows Characters to circumvent these limitations, and the GM can always override this restriction in specific cases to reflect the circumstances of the campaign or the particular storyline of the Character.

Spell Slots

Casting a spell is difficult and tiring, as the shugenja invokes and channels the power of the Elemental spirits. Moreover, the more times the shugenja calls on the spirits, the more reluctant

they become to answer, resenting the continual demands of mere mortals. In game terms, these limitations are represented by “spell slots.”

A shugenja has a number of spell slots for each Element equal to his Rank in that Ring, and uses up one spell slot each time he successfully casts a spell. GMs who wish to emphasize the limitations of shugenja magic may choose to have unsuccessful spell-casting attempts likewise use up a spell slot. It should be noted, however, that this will represent a significant additional limit on the capabilities of shugenja Characters.

Spell slots are normally recovered at the beginning of each game session. However, if a session includes a large amount of “down time” for the Characters – a long journey, a month spent in contemplation at a shrine, a few weeks of frivolity in a winter court – the GM may choose to allow shugenja to recover some or all of their spell slots during that inactivity. This is a judgment call based on how powerful and flexible the GM wants shugenja to be in the game. Allowing full recovery of spells during “down time” will make shugenja significantly more powerful, while restricting spell recovery entirely to the end of playing sessions will maximize their limitations.

A shugenja who has used up all his spell slots in a particular Element can still cast a spell in that Element by spending a Void Point to do so. However, once the shugenja runs out of Void Points, he has no choice but to wait until he recovers his spell slots.

Counterspelling

Shugenja have the ability to interfere with other shugenja’s spell-casting, by reciting prayers that distract the kami and prevent them from answering the spell’s call.

In game terms, a Character can attempt this on their turn if there is another shugenja casting a spell within Short Range. (Thus, this can only be done with casting attempts that require 2 or more Actions, including Rituals.) The counterspelling Character expends a spell-slot in the same Ring as the spell being cast, and makes a Contested Roll of Spellcraft/[Ring] against the caster’s spell-casting roll. If the Character wins the Contested Roll, the spell-casting fails.

Cooperative Spellcasting

Shugenja can Assist other shugenja in casting spells, in a manner similar to the normal Assist rules. In general, any shugenja who wishes to Assist must be within Short range of the shugenja who is casting the spell. The assisting shugenja contribute +1k1 if they know the spell being cast, +1k0 if they do not know the spell. As with other forms of Assisting, the maximum number who can Assist are limited by the caster’s Void Rank.

If the spell requires multiple Actions to cast (due to having a higher Mastery Level), the Assisting shugenja must contribute the same number of Actions in order to bestow the die-bonus. On the other hand, the Assisting shugenja do not lose any spell slots unless the spell is a Ritual (see Rituals and Concentration below).

Shugenja may Assist in counterspelling attempts, but must expend a spell-slot when doing so. They award a +1k1 bonus to the counterspelling roll.

Rituals and Concentration

Some spells are described as “Rituals,” meaning they require much longer to cast than the normal rule of one-Action-per-Mastery-Rank. Rituals are uncommon spells and tend to be difficult to perform, so they are usually cast cooperatively – however, the normal restriction on the number of Characters who can Assist does not apply. In theory, hundreds of shugenja can join together to cast a ritual, and in fact this has happened on a few special occasions in the Empire’s history.

Regardless, any shugenja who Assists in casting a ritual must participate in the ritual for the entire casting time and must expend a spell-slot in the ritual’s Element.

The nature of ritual spells requires the shugenja to remain in a state of intense spiritual focus and concentration throughout the casting time, regardless of whether they are the primary caster or one of those Assisting. This can be quite challenging, especially when the casting time stretches into hours or even days. A shugenja who is trying to maintain concentration during a ritual spell must periodically roll Meditation/Willpower at a TN chosen by the GM. The longer the spell lasts, the higher the TNs will climb. A good “baseline” is to roll every hour, with the TN starting at 15 and then climbing by 5 per hour.

A shugenja who is attacked or otherwise physically disrupted will not be able to maintain concentration on a ritual.

Common Spells and Secret Spells

The practice of Rokugani magic dates back to the dawn of history (possibly even earlier than that) and consequently there are many ancient spells which are known throughout the Empire and taught in every Shugenja School. Such spells can be shared more-or-less freely between allied shugenja from different Clans, since no one is being betrayed by such cooperation.

However, every shugenja family in the Empire also has its own secret spells, prayers developed by famous shugenja in that family and jealously guarded from outsiders. The scrolls for these spells are always written in the School’s cipher to prevent rivals or dishonorable persons from stealing them and making use of them.

In general, shugenja can only learn secret spells if they belong to the same Clan as the shugenja family which created the spell. Shugenja who are trained in another Clan’s School (represented in game terms by the Different School Advantage) may also be permitted to learn secret spells, but the GM should keep close watch on the behavior of such Characters – if they betray the trust of their teachers in any way, they will not be entrusted with any more secret spells, and depending on the severity of their actions they may be disgraced, expelled from the School, or even ordered to commit *seppuku*.

Stealing a shugenja’s scrolls is considered both a crime and a dishonorable act, with appropriate losses of Honor and gains of Infamy (not to mention the risk of arrest/execution/*seppuku*). Moreover, the scrolls have no value unless the thief can break the cipher, a process requiring many hours of work. Deciphering efforts are generally resolved with Calligraphy/Intelligence Skill Rolls, at a TN chosen by the GM; a Clan cipher should be considered at least TN 25 to break, and could easily be higher.

The Great Clan Shugenja Schools

The Schools listed here are the Shugenja Schools of the seven original Great Clans and the Mantis Clan. Only a few Clans have more than one Shugenja School, and these exceptions are often dependent on particular eras in the Empire’s history. For example, the Agasha School is part of the Dragon Clan for over a millennium, but in the early twelfth century during the Hidden Emperor era the majority of the Agasha family flee the clan and join the Phoenix; thereafter, the Agasha School is a secondary Phoenix Clan shugenja school, while those Agasha who remain within the Dragon reorganize into a new family and a new School, the Tamori.

The Kuni Shugenja School (Crab)

The Kuni Shugenja School is notorious for its focus on the Shadowlands, studying the foul secrets of otherworldly creatures and learning strange spells, primarily Earth magic, to oppose such threats. Kuni shugenja are often seen as obsessive madmen who delve into things no sane person should know. Rumors claim they engage in such bizarre and horrifying practices as torturing and dissecting Shadowlands creatures in order to learn more about their strengths and weaknesses.

Although the Kuni do not admit the truth of such stories, they do not exactly deny them either. They understand they must make sacrifices in order to properly serve their clan and protect the Empire from horrors most samurai cannot even grasp.

Benefit: +1 Willpower

Skills: Calligraphy, Defense, Hunting, Kenjutsu, Lore: Shadowlands, Medicine, Spellcraft, any one Skill

Honor: 1.5

Outfit: Robes, wakizashi, knife, one other weapon, scroll satchel, practical writing kit and notebook, small piece of jade, traveling pack

Favored Element: Earth

Starting Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, 3 Earth, 2 Fire, and 1 Water

Shugenja and Armor

Players will note that Shugenja Schools, even the most martial ones, do not include armor as part of their standard Outfit. This does not represent a game-mechanic constraint – unlike some role-playing games, L5R does not arbitrarily make armor into a metaphysical obstacle to magic for the sake of “play balance.” Rather, the absence of armor is due to the Empire’s traditions and social conventions. Shugenja are revered as priests, and as such are expected to show dignity and piety in public by wearing the robes – often quite formal and elaborate robes – of their station.

It is certainly possible for a shugenja to wear armor and still cast his spells. However, this will have significant social cost, attracting negative attention and even disgust from other Rokugani.

Even the Crab and Unicorn, whose shugenja routinely serve on the battlefield, will usually treat a shugenja wearing armor as committing a Minor Breach of Etiquette. At the GM’s discretion, they might make a limited exception to this attitude during times of truly desperate and existential war, such as the Crab Clan’s battle for survival against the Maw in the eighth century, or the Unicorn Clan’s wars of survival immediately after its return to the Empire.

Other Clans will generally treat a shugenja in armor as committing a Major Breach of Etiquette. The peaceful Isawa and Asahina, and the highly traditional Kitsu, will treat it as a Blasphemous Breach of Etiquette and such Characters will be in serious danger of expulsion from their Clan.

The Asahina Shugenja School (Crane)

The Asahina often behave more like monks than priests. Many of them never leave their temple complexes, spending their entire lives in prayer, contemplation, scholarly study, and the creation of beautiful art. Those who do leave Shinden Asahina to enter the larger world of the Empire usually follow a path of benevolence, peace, and religious enlightenment. The Asahina are the masters of creating *tsangusuri* (fetishes), small artistic items which can produce one-time magical blessings; the Crane Clan often presents these unique artworks as gifts to its friends and allies.

The Asahina Shugenja School is known for its pursuit of art and peaceful crafts, and for refusing to use the power of the kami for violence. (Some of the family are so pacifistic they refuse even to take the lives of Shadowlands monsters.) There is a very small sub-set of the Asahina who reject this and are instead militant – a legacy, perhaps, of the family’s founding by an aggressive Phoenix Fire shugenja – but they are seldom seen.

Benefit: +1 Awareness

Skills: Calligraphy, Etiquette, Lore: Theology, Meditation, Spellcraft, any one Artisan Skill, any two High Skills

Honor: 3.5

Outfit: Robes, bo staff, scroll satchel, calligraphy set, traveling pack

Favored Element: Air

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, 3 Air, 2 Water, and 1 Fire

The Agasha Shugenja School (Dragon/Phoenix)

For most of the Empire's history, the Agasha are the Dragon Clan shugenja family and their school is maintained within the Dragon lands. During the time of the Hidden Emperor, however, the majority of the Agasha leave the clan and eventually join the Phoenix, creating a unique situation in which the same school is taught in two different clans. It is not until the time of the Four Winds, a generation later, that the Tamori School emerges within the Dragon Clan as a replacement for the Agasha. Thereafter, the Agasha School is taught only within the Phoenix Clan.

The Agasha are a family and school which embraces contradiction. Their favored Element is Fire, yet they were founded by a pacifist. They are shugenja but often fight alongside bushi. They study the kami as though performing a science, and produce seemingly-magical effects from simple mixtures of herbs and minerals. During their centuries of service to the Dragon Clan, the Agasha pursued many unconventional paths of magic, such as the bizarre alchemical creations called *kagaku* and spells using multiple Elements simultaneously. Although they moderate some of their oddities after joining the Phoenix Clan, they remain among the most eccentric of the Empire's shugenja, and in fact pursue their study of multi-element magic even more zealously.

Benefit: +1 Intelligence

Skills: Athletics, Calligraphy, Defense, Lore: Alchemy, Lore: Theology, Spellcraft, any one Craft Skill, any one High or Bugei Skill

Honor: 2.5

Outfit: Robes, wakizashi, katana or knife, scroll satchel, calligraphy set, traveling pack

Favored Element: Fire

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, 3 Fire, 2 Earth, and 1 Air

The Tamori Shugenja School (Dragon)

The Tamori Shugenja School is very much timeline-dependent, since the Tamori family is formed from the remnants of the Agasha after the majority of that family flees to the Phoenix Clan in the early twelfth century. For campaigns set prior to the Four Winds era, the Dragon Clan uses the Agasha Shugenja School (listed earlier in this section).

The Tamori inherit the Agasha family's studies of alchemy, crafting, and smithing and advance them further. They also become even more martial than the Agasha were, studying the sword as readily as they study the spirits.

Benefit: +1 Stamina

Skills: Athletics, Calligraphy, Defense, Kenjutsu, Spellcraft, any one other Craft Skill, any one Craft Skill, any one High or Bugei Skill

Honor: 2.5

Outfit: Robes, wakizashi, katana or knife, scroll satchel, calligraphy set, traveling pack

Favored Element: Earth

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, 3 Earth, 2 Fire, and 1 Water

The Kitsu Shugenja School (Lion)

The Kitsu family is descended from the last five members of an ancient inhuman race, and they are the most traditional and reactionary shugenja family in the Empire. Kitsu typically orient toward their religious duties to the Lion Clan rather than studying the intricacies of Elemental magic. It is the Kitsu who perform the special prayers at Lion funerals, speeding the souls of dead Lion to their judgment in the afterlife; it is also the Kitsu who commune with the ancestors on behalf of the Clan, seeking their guidance. The most powerful and pure-blooded Kitsu, known as

sodan-senzo, are able to physically journey into the other Spirit Realms to gain unique insights into creation.

The Kitsu Shugenja School teaches unique ways of speaking with ancestral spirits and sensing other persons' links to the Spirit Realms. A small minority within the school do leave the temples to join the Lion in more practical activities (such as supporting the clan in the field of battle), and Player Character Kitsu may be assumed to be part of this minority.

Benefit: +1 Perception

Skills: Calligraphy, Etiquette, Lore: Heraldry, Lore: History, Lore: Theology, Meditation, Spellcraft, any one High Skill

Honor: 3.5

Outfit: Robes, wakizashi, knife, scroll satchel, calligraphy set, traveling pack

Favored Element: Water

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, 3 Water, 2 Air, and 1 Earth

The Mantis (Yoritomo) Shugenja School (Mantis)

The Mantis Clan develops its own bushi, courtier, and shugenja traditions over the course of its thousand-year history as a Minor Clan. The clan's association with Osano-Wo, Fortune of Fire and Thunder, expresses itself as a gift in certain bloodlines for speaking with the spirits, especially those of Fire, while the clan's maritime lifestyle enhances its affinity for Water. Although the clan does not gain the Yoritomo family name until the twelfth century, the Mantis shugenja school exists for hundreds of years before that.

Up until the tenth century, this school has only 3 Ranks. It develops a fourth Rank in the eleventh century and a fifth Rank in the twelfth century after the Hidden Emperor era.

(The Mantis also acquire an additional shugenja school in the twelfth century when they absorb the Minor Clan of the Centipede. That School is discussed under Minor Clans later in this chapter.)

Benefit: +1 Awareness

Skills: Athletics, Calligraphy, Defense, Knives, Lore: Theology, Sailing, Spellcraft, any one High, Merchant, or Bugei Skill

Honor: 2.5

Outfit: Sturdy Clothing, Wakizashi, Knife or Peasant Weapon, Scroll Satchel, Traveling Pack

Favored Element: Fire

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, 3 Fire, 2 Water, and 1 Air

The Isawa Shugenja School (Phoenix)

The Isawa are acknowledged as the greatest shugenja in the Empire and the creators of Rokugani magic. They are also known among the other clans for exhibiting a certain arrogance, an assumption that they are the ones who should handle any issue or problem involving magic or the spirits. This arrogance drove them in the past to weaken the office of the Jade Champion, and in modern times they clearly resent the restoration of that office.

The Isawa shugenja school is literally the oldest school of its kind in Rokugan, and has no specific focus – it seeks mastery over all Elements and all aspects of the kami. Moreover, in most eras of history the Isawa are the most numerous shugenja in the Empire, numbering almost twice as many as the next largest shugenja family in Rokugan. This allows the Isawa to specialize in many different areas of magical study.

There are a sub-groups within the school that pursue specific topics, such as the famous *tensai* who focus near-exclusively on a single Element.

Benefit: +1 Intelligence

Skills: Calligraphy, Defense, Lore: Theology, Meditation, Spellcraft 2, one of either Kenjutsu or Knives or Staves, any one other Lore Skill, any one High Skill

Honor: 3.5

Outfit: Robes, Wakizashi or Knife or Bo Staff, Scroll Satchel, Calligraphy Set, Traveling Pack

Favored Element: At Character creation, choose one Element as your Favored Element.

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, 3 spells of any one element (Air, Earth, Fire, or Water), 2 spells of another element, and 1 spell each of the remaining two elements.

The Soshi Shugenja School (Scorpion)

The Soshi family understands something which other shugenja families try to ignore: the kami have no concept of honor or virtue, and will do whatever a clever spellcaster can persuade them to do. As a result, the Soshi are adept at using magic – especially Air magic – in ways which the rest of the Empire would consider shameful, criminal, or perhaps even blasphemous. Soshi magic is focused on using the kami for stealth, deception, and even mind control. They also undergo extensive training in casting their spells discretely, making it easier for them to use magic in restricted environments such as the courts. Some of the Soshi even cross-train with the Shosuro family's assassins, turning their magic to the service of murder, theft, and espionage.

Benefit: +1 Awareness

Skills: Calligraphy, Etiquette, Lore: Theology, Sincerity, Spellcraft, Stealth, any one High Skill, any one Low Skill

Honor: 1.5

Outfit: Robes, wakizashi, knife, scroll satchel, calligraphy set, traveling pack

Favored Element: Air

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, 3 Air, 2 Fire, and 1 Water

The Yogo Shugenja School (Scorpion)

The Yogo family and School are descended from Asako Yogo, a powerful Fire shugenja, and the focus of their studies is on defending the Scorpion Clan against enemy spellcasters and on opposing the forces of the Shadowlands. They have devised an unusual form of “ward magic” which they keep secret even from other Scorpion. They are also the primary source of recruits for the Scorpion *kuroiban* (“Black Watch”) which hunts for the Taint and its minions.

Benefit: +1 Intelligence

Skills: Calligraphy, Defense, Investigation, Lore: Shadowlands, Lore: Theology, Meditation, Spellcraft, any one High or Low Skill

Honor: 1.5

Outfit: Robes, wakizashi, knife, scroll satchel, calligraphy set, traveling pack

Favored Element: Fire

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, 3 Fire, 2 Earth, and 1 Air

The Iuchi Shugenja School (Unicorn)

The Iuchi, like the rest of the Unicorn Clan, often find themselves in conflict with the normal views and customs of the Empire. They embrace the physical joy of riding their horses unfettered across open plains, and their sensei are just as likely to teach classes in the wilderness as they are to do so in a temple. (For much of their history, after all, this was their only option.) Perhaps unsurprisingly, Iuchi magical traditions emphasize using the kami to enhance travel and to support the clan's mighty cavalry armies.

The Iuchi are also the only shugenja in the Empire to have made a long-term study of foreign (gaijin) magic – during the eight hundred years the Unicorn spent roaming the outside world, the Iuchi mastered a strange alternate form of magic called “Meishodo,” and some of them still practice it today. *Meishodo* ignores the normal Rokugani method of invoking the kami and instead directly taps the underlying elements to create spell effects.

Benefit: +1 Perception

Skills: Battle, Calligraphy, Defense, Horsemanship, Lore: Theology, Meditation, Spellcraft, any one High or Bugei Skill

Honor: 2.5

Outfit: Extravagant clothing, robes, wakizashi, knife or katana, calligraphy set, traveling pack, steed (Unicorn riding horse)

Favored Element: Water

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, 3 Water, 2 Air, and 1 Earth

The Power of the Spirits: Rokugani Spells

The following sections contain full descriptions of individual spells, starting with the “Common” spells known to all shugenja schools, followed by the “Secret” spells limited to shugenja trained in specific clans. To make things easier, we’ve followed a standardized format in describing all spells, as follows:

Ring/Mastery: This shows the spell’s Element and its Mastery Level. The Element determines which Ring is used when casting the spell and thus which spell slot is expended by it. The Mastery Level determines how hard the spell is to cast, how many Actions it takes to cast, and what Insight Rank the shugenja has to be in order for his School to let him learn the spell. (Shugenja may learn spells of one Mastery Rank higher in their Favored Element.)

Range: Spells have a range of either Self (the shugenja can only cast the spell on himself), Touch (the shugenja can cast the spell on anyone he is touching, including himself), Short, Long, or Extreme.

Description: This describes the nature and effects of the spell, including how long it lasts and how many targets it effects. If the spell has unusual properties that ignore the normal rules of magic (such as being a Ritual or otherwise having an extremely long casting time), that will also be explained in the description.

Raises: In many cases, a shugenja can enhance the effects of spells by making Raises on a successful Spellcraft Skill Roll. Since each spell is different, this section lists the specific ways in which a spell can be boosted with Raises. Note that all non-Ritual spells allow Raises to be called before the Spellcraft roll to shorten the casting time, so this effect is not listed in the individual descriptions.

The Three Universal Common Spells

The following three spells are the basic essential lessons taught to shugenja students as they begin learning the ways of the kami. Thus, every shugenja in Rokugan knows these spells. (In fact, almost every other spell in the Empire is derived from some modification, enhancement, or combination of these three basic prayers.) Each of these spells can be cast in any of the four Elements.

Sense

Ring/Mastery: All 1

Range: Self (but see Description)

Description: Sense allows the shugenja to “feel” the presence, quantity, and rough location of one type of Elemental spirits within Short range. The most common use of the spell is to look for spirits with which to Commune (see below), but it can also have more practical uses: the presence of spirits also denotes the physical presence of the Element, so – for example – a caster lost in the desert could use Sense (Water) to try to locate drinking water.

Summon

Ring/Mastery: All 1

Range: Short

Description: This spell lets a shugenja summon a modest physical amount of the chosen Element. Typically this will be about a cubic foot of material, appearing where the caster desires within Range. It appears in a rough ball shape but will immediately conform to the environment around it – earth or water will fall to the ground, for example, while fire will wink out unless there is something available for it to ignite and burn. In general, it is impossible to use this spell offensively in a Skirmish, although clever shugenja can sometimes make creative use of it in various minor ways.

Raises: Raises can be used to summon a more specific type of the appropriate Element, such as wood or iron with Earth, or tea with Water. The GM chooses how many Raises (generally 1 to 3) this requires. These Raises cannot be used to create rare or precious materials, nor can they create spiritually powerful substances such as jade or crystal.

Commune

Ring/Mastery: All 1

Range: Self (but see description)

Description: This spell allows the shugenja to speak with one of the local Elemental kami, asking it questions which it will answer honestly to the best of its ability. The spell normally contacts the most active and energetic spirit of the chosen Element within Short range, and the spirit will answer two questions. However, spirits do not perceive the world in the same ways as mortals, and the nature of the information they can share varies by Element:

Air spirits tend to be playful and easily distracted, and answer questions by expressing emotions or offering riddles and jokes. They are more interested in feelings than in facts, and enjoy playing games with those who speak with them.

Earth spirits are straightforward to the point of bluntness, but are mostly uninterested in the behavior of mortals. They do not understand human emotion and tend to get overly focused on minor details like color or weight.

Fire spirits are irritable, temperamental, and easily angered (although they can be propitiated with an offer of something to burn). They are harder to find than other spirits, since unless an active flame is in the area they tend to be deeply asleep. However, if they can be invoked successfully they usually have the clearest and most accurate perception of the mortal world.

Water spirits communicate with silent visual images. This can be very helpful to a shugenja trying to investigate a past incident, but since the spirits cannot convey scent, sound, or emotion, the information can also be incomplete or misleading.

Raises: If the local spirits are torpid or inactive, the GM may require the caster to call 1 or 2 Raises before rolling in order to “wake up” a spirit enough to answer the questions. The shugenja may also Raise after the roll to get more questions (one per Raise) and for clarity (to get more accurate and informative answers). Since kami have such difficulty comprehending human behavior, asking questions without Raises for clarity can often result in confusing, enigmatic, or incomplete answers. Also, spirits are immortal and do not forget anything, so a shugenja can ask about something that happened decades or even centuries ago; however, this requires a Raise (more than 1 for truly obscure information) to make things clear to the spirit.

Banishing the Spirits

Powerful shugenja have the ability to dismiss or “banish” the Elemental kami from an area, replacing them with new spirits who will have no knowledge of what has happened in the past. This is most frequently done to obstruct magical investigations by other shugenja.

To banish the spirits from an area, a shugenja must cast Sense with 2 Raises (to identify all the spirits in the area) and then cast Commune with 2 Raises (to persuade those spirits to leave). This must be done separately for each Element, of course.

What About Void Magic?

There are no “Void kami” – the Void is the ineffable union of all Elements that underlies reality, and most mortals can only briefly touch it when they achieve rare moments of harmony and enlightenment (represented in game terms by spending a Void Point). From the standpoint of how other Rokugani magic works – namely, through shugenja invoking and persuading the Elemental spirits – there is no “Void magic” at all.

However, there are still Void shugenja.

Very rarely, a shugenja is born with a gift known as *Ishiken-do* – the ability to sense, touch, and commune with the Void itself. Such prodigies are extraordinarily rare. The Isawa family of the Phoenix Clan, the only shugenja family to actively study the ways of Void magic, constantly scour the Empire for those born with this gift, forcing all they find to return to the Phoenix lands, swear fealty, and become *Ishiken* – the Void shugenja. Those who refuse to do so are instead forced to undergo a secret Isawa ritual that permanently severs them from the Void (in game terms, this inflicts the Momoku Disadvantage).

Void shugenja are capable of extraordinary feats. By communing with the union of all elements, of all time and space, they can alter reality itself – making and unmaking it at will (though not without personal cost, as channeling such immense power strains a mortal body to its limits and beyond). Such acts are never performed casually, for in addition to potentially harming the shugenja they can also upset the balance of the world and the workings of fate in dangerous and destructive ways, very difficult to understand or predict.

There are no rules for *Ishiken*. By their very nature they exist outside the bounds of playable Characters, and if they are ever encountered as Non-Player Characters, it should be an event of awe and mystery.

Common Rank One Spells:

Armor of Earth

Ring/Mastery: Earth 1

Range: Self

Description: Among the most basic of defensive spells, this prayer infuses the shugenja’s body with the strength of Earth, protecting him against physical harm. The caster is considered to have Carapace 1 for a number of Rounds equal to the caster’s Earth Rank. However, this infusion of Earth slows the shugenja’s physical speed and dulls his emotions – he is considered to have an Air Rank of one less (to a minimum of 1) while the spell is in effect.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the spell. Each Raise increases the duration by the same amount (a number of Rounds equal to the caster’s Earth).

Blessed Wind

Ring/Mastery: Air 1

Range: Self

Description: This prayer summons a swirling aura of Air spirits who protect you by deflecting projectiles (arrows, etc). The spell lasts a number of Rounds equal to your Air Ring, and while it is in effect you gain +2k2 to your Defense rolls against all non-magical ranged attacks.

Raises: You may extend the spell's duration with Raises; each Raise increases the duration by the same amount (a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Air). You may cast the spell on another person (changing the Range to Touch) with 2 Raises.

By the Light of the Moon

Ring/Mastery: Air 1

Range: Short

Description: Invoking the power of the Moon to shed light amid night's darkness, you call on the Air kami to reveal what has been hidden. All concealed objects within Short range will be revealed to you, the Air kami limning them with a faint glow. This spell can reveal the presence of secret compartments, trap doors, concealed weapons, and similar things. However, it cannot penetrate magical concealment or illusions. Also, note that only the caster can see the glow around the hidden objects.

Courage of the Seven Thunders

Ring/Mastery: Earth 1

Range: Short

Description: This spell uses the willpower of Earth to invoke the indomitable courage of the Seven Thunders, Rokugan's most famous ancient heroes. The spell affects a number of targets up to the caster's Earth Ring, one of whom may be the caster himself. For the rest of the day (or the end of the session, whichever comes first) all the targets gain a +5k0 bonus to their rolls to resist any kind of Fear or Intimidation effect, whether magical or natural.

A special consideration of this spell is that those with a more distant connection to the Seven Thunders are not able to benefit from it to the same degree. Samurai who do not belong to the original seven Great Clans receive only a +3k0 to their rolls, and non-samurai cannot benefit from the spell at all.

Raises: The caster may add more targets to the spell's effect at the rate of 1 target per Raise.

Earth's Stagnation

Ring/Mastery: Earth 1

Range: Short

Description: This spell uses the weight of Earth to pull down an opponent, deadening his limbs until he can barely move at all. The target suffers a 1-die penalty to all rolls using the Agility Trait and the Reflexes Trait, and cannot move more than a few feet during a Round (making it effectively impossible for him to take a Move Action). The effect lasts for a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Earth Rank.

Raises: The caster may Raise to target additional foes, at the rate of 1 target per Raise. The caster may Raise to increase the die-penalty, at the rate of 1 additional die per Raise.

Ebbing Strength

Ring/Mastery: Water 1

Range: Touch

Description: Water is the domain of motion and governs the flows of energy through the universe. This spell uses this aspect of Water to allow the caster to briefly share his energy with an ally, weakening himself in order to strengthen them. You may reduce any one of your Physical Traits by an amount up to your Water Rank. (You cannot reduce your Trait below Rank 1.) The target of this spell increases the same Physical Trait by the same amount. The effect lasts for 1 Round (e.g. until the beginning of your next Turn).

Raises: The caster may extend the duration of the spell, at the rate of 1 Round per Raise.

Elemental Ward

Ring/Mastery: Earth 1 (Ritual)

Range: Touch

Description: Although a few shugenja schools make a strong study of warding magic, this basic ward is known throughout the Empire and is routinely used to protect temples, castles, daimyo, and other important locations and personages. The ward may be placed either on a person or on a specific location (no bigger than a large room). Casting it is a Ritual, albeit a fairly simple one requiring only ten minutes. Once placed, the Elemental Ward lasts a number of hours equal to the caster's Earth (or until the end of the session, whichever comes first); if multiple shugenja participate in the Ritual, they may combine their Earth Ranks to determine the spell's duration.

When a shugenja creates an Elemental Ward, he chooses one of the four Elements to ward against. Anyone who tries to cast spells of that Element on the person/location which has been warded suffers a die-penalty equal to the Ward's caster's Insight Rank. Unfortunately, the Ward does not distinguish between hostile and friendly magic, applying the penalty to all spells regardless.

Envious Flames

Ring/Mastery: Fire 1

Range: Short

Description: Fire's most basic power is destruction, making it easy to persuade summoned Fire spirits to attack enemies. This spell summons a single Fire kami which streaks forth and unerringly strikes one target creature within Short range. The spell inflicts 2 Wounds (unless the target is somehow resistant to heat).

In general, the spell will not actually set fire to the person targeted, since the flame strikes too quickly and winks out too suddenly, but at the GM's option it may ignite lightweight flammable materials such as cloth or paper.

Raises: The caster may Raise to strike additional targets, at the rate of 1 target per Raise.

Fire Kami's Blessing

Ring/Mastery: Fire 1

Range: Touch

Description: Although Fire is an Element of destruction, it also encompasses intellect and creative inspiration. This prayer calls on the Fire kami to stimulate the mind and memory, allowing the target to recall the most obscure details and information. Until the next Sunrise (or the end of the session, whichever comes first), the target gains a +Xk0 bonus (where X is the caster's Fire Ring) to any rolls which use the Intelligence Trait.

The Fires That Cleanse

Ring/Mastery: Fire 1

Range: Short

Description: Destruction is the most well-known aspect of Fire. The spell causes Fire kami to erupt to a chaotic destructive rage throughout the area, inflicting 2 Wounds on everyone else within Short range, both friend and foe. The caster takes 1 Wound, as the kami do make some attempt to avoid harming the one who invoked them.

Raises: The caster may Raise to intensify the strength of the Fire kami, causing them to inflict 1 additional Wound (on both other targets and the caster).

Gift of Amaterasu

Ring/Mastery: Fire 1

Range: Short

Description: This spell is a prayer to Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess, asking her to bestow her favor on the caster in the form of radiant Fire kami. The spell's creation is credited to the Phoenix, but it spread widely in the early years of the Empire. In the twelfth century, when Amaterasu is superseded first by Yakamo and then by the Jade Sun, the name and religious connotations of this spell change, but its effects remain the same.

The spell brings forth warm sunlight to blaze down within the immediate area (everything within Short Range) for a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Fire Rank. This happens even at night, indoors, or underground. The spell is particularly popular among shugenja who are trying to root out assassins or thieves, since the sudden blaze of daylight can reveal hidden foes. It is also popular with the Kuni during night battles against the forces of the Shadowlands.

Raises: The spell's duration may be extended by Raises, with each Raise adding the same amount to the duration (Rounds equal to the caster's Fire).

Nature's Touch

Ring/Mastery: Air 1

Range: Short

Description: Although scholars have variously credited the creation of this spell to the Unicorn, the Phoenix, and even the Fox, it is found in the libraries of every modern shugenja school. The spell uses the communicating power of Air to allow simple communion with a natural animal. The animal can understand the caster's meaning and intent, although how it reacts to such communication is up to it. The spell lasts as long as the caster maintains full and undivided attention on the animal.

Path to Inner Peace

Ring/Mastery: Water 1

Range: Touch

Description: Since Water kami can influence the flow of energy through the body, shugenja long ago learned how to use this to flood an injury with rejuvenating chi, reducing pain and speeding the healing process. The Phoenix are the acknowledged masters of using Water in such a way, but this basic healing spell is known to every shugenja school. The recipient of the spell heals 2 Wounds.

Raises: The caster may Raise to increase the number of Wounds healed, at the rate of 1 Wound per Raise.

Reversal of Fortunes

Ring/Mastery: Water 1

Range: Touch

Description: Water's constant motion and formlessness allows it to influence chance and shift outcomes. For a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Water, the target of the spell may re-roll any one roll each Round. This must be done immediately after the first roll is completed, and the target must keep the second result. Unused re-rolls cannot be "saved" for a later Round.

Raises: The caster may increase the spell's duration, adding a number of Rounds equal to his Water for 1 Raise.

Soul of Stone

Ring/Mastery: Earth 1

Range: Touch

Description: This spell fills the target's soul with the unyielding strength of stone, rendering his emotions untouchable and his focus total. The spell lasts a number of hours equal to the caster's Earth, or until the end of the session, whichever comes first. During that time, the target gains a +3k0 bonus to any rolls made to resist emotional manipulation or the distractions of desire; this includes Courtier rolls, Temptation rolls, Disadvantages such as Compulsion, and any similar effects which the GM judges to be appropriate.

However, this stony self-control also makes it difficult for the target to read the emotions of others, so for the duration of the spell he suffers a 1-die penalty to all rolls using the Awareness Trait.

Raises: The duration of the spell may be extended by a number of hours equal to the caster's Earth in exchange for 1 Raise.

Spirit of the Water

Ring/Mastery: Water 1

Range: Touch

Description: The spirit of water is both fluid and rapid, and can infuse those qualities into mortal flesh. For a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Water, the target of this spell may make a Move Action on his next Turn in addition to his normal Action (which can also be a Move Action).

Raises: The caster may Raise to increase the duration of the spell, adding a number of Rounds equal to his Water for 1 Raise.

To Seek the Truth

Ring/Mastery: Air 1

Range: Touch

Description: This spell calls on the purging power of the wind to sweep through the target's mind, granting him a brief period of mental clarity. The target may ignore all outside penalties to Skill Rolls made with Mental Traits. This includes penalties from Techniques, Wounds, Stress, other spells, or debilitating physical conditions such as fatigue or hunger. However, the spell does not negate the effects of the target's Disadvantages. The spell lasts for a number of minutes equal to the caster's Air.

Raises: The caster may extend the duration by a number of minutes equal to his Air Rank for 1 Raise.

Warning Flame

Ring/Mastery: Fire 1

Range: Touch

Description: This spell stimulates the Fire kami within the mind and senses, allowing the target to notice and react to threats more quickly. For a number of hours equal to the caster's Fire (or until the end of the session, whichever comes first), the target is immune to being surprised and adds +3 to his Initiative Rank.

Raises: The spell's duration may be extended by the same amount (hours equal to the caster's Fire) for 1 Raise.

Wind-Borne Slumbers

Ring/Mastery: Air 1

Range: Short

Description: This spell was originally devised by the Phoenix as a way of upholding their pacifistic ideals, defeating foes without slaying them. However, while some clans embraced this ideal, others found more pragmatic or dishonorable uses for this prayer.

The spell persuades the Air spirits to dampen the target's energy, making him drowsy and sluggish. If the target is already resting or relaxing (such as sitting in a *sake* house or listening to a geisha perform music) he will simply fall naturally asleep. Otherwise, he will remain awake but will be considered Dazed for a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Air.

Raises: The shugenja may Raise to inflict the power of *Wind-Borne Slumbers* on additional targets, at the rate of 1 target per Raise.

Common Rank Two Spells:

Benten's Touch

Ring/Mastery: Air 2

Range: Short

Description: This spell surrounds a single target person with an invisible cloud of Air kami who whisper in the hearts of others, making the target seem more friendly, persuasive, and charismatic. For a number of hours equal to the caster's Air (or until the end of the session, whichever comes first), the target of this spell gains a bonus of +1k1 to all Social Skill Rolls which use the Awareness Trait.

Raises: The caster may extend the duration of the spell, adding a number of hours equal to his Air for 1 Raise.

Call Upon the Wind

Ring/Mastery: Air 2

Range: Self

Description: Flight is among the most visually impressive powers to be associated with the kami of Air, and this basic form of aerial travel is studied in almost all shugenja schools. You surround yourself with winds that lift and buoy you through the air, granting a limited form of flight. You move through the air at roughly the same speed you would move on the ground, but this can still be swifter than normal movement since you can fly over walls, gullies, rivers, etc. (Heavy winds, whether natural or magical, can potentially interfere with this movement or prevent it altogether at the GM's discretion.)

The spell lasts for a number of minutes equal to your Air Rank, and at the end of its duration the Air kami lower you gently to the ground, no matter how high you might be.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the spell, adding minutes equal to his Air for each Raise.

Disrupt the Aura

Ring/Mastery: Fire 2

Range: Short

Description: Anyone whose elements are out of balance will pay a price, and this spell creates such a condition deliberately by aggravating the Fire present in the target's body. For one day (24 hours) or until the end of the session, whichever comes first, the target cannot be healed by magical spells, *nemuranai*, or Techniques. (Mundane treatment with the Medicine skill will still be effective.) The target may realize something is physically wrong with him but cannot find out what is happening without the help of a shugenja – casting Sense (Fire) will show the presence of many excited Fire spirits within the target.

Raises: The caster may extend the duration of the spell by 1 day (within the same session) per Raise.

Elemental Weapon

Ring/Mastery: Air/Earth/Fire/Water 2

Range: Self

Description: Martial shugenja across the Empire make use of different versions of this spell, which creates a temporary weapon from the pure essence of the chosen Element. Each of the four versions of the spell creates a different weapon: the Earth spell brings forth a tetsubo of stone, the Water spell creates a bo staff of solidified liquid, the Air spell forms a yari of pure air visible only as a foggy outline, and the Fire spell summons forth a katana of searing bright flames.

The summoned weapon lasts for a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Rank in that element, and the shugenja must wield it with the appropriate Weapon Skill for its type. Kata for those Weapon Skills may be used when wielding the Elemental Weapons. All of them are considered to be Medium weapons for purposes of damage.

Raises: The caster may extend the duration of the spell, at the rate of 1 Raise for a number of Rounds equal to his Rank in the element.

Extinguish

Ring/Mastery: Fire 2

Range: Short

Description: Fire spirits can be driven away by the proper invocation, a very useful ability in Rokugan since almost all buildings are made from wood and paper. This spell was originally developed by the Phoenix, but its obvious value led to it quickly spreading throughout the Empire. Extinguish dismisses all active Fire kami within Short range of the caster. All non-magical fire in the area of effect is immediately snuffed out, and any damage inflicted by fire (magical or not) within the next Round is reduced by 1 Wound.

Raises: The caster may extend the range of this spell to Long range in exchange for 2 Raises.

Grasp of Earth

Ring/Mastery: Earth 2

Range: Short

Description: This spell causes the Earth kami to reach up and seize hold of the target, often taking the form of a massive hand or claw which grips the unfortunate creature in stony digits. For a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Earth, the target is rendered near-immobile, unable to perform Move Actions, able to only fight enemies immediately adjacent, and suffering a 1-die penalty to all other physical actions. The target may use an Action to try to break free, making a Contested Roll of Strength against the caster's Earth.

Raises: The caster can affect additional targets at the rate of 1 target per Raise.

Haze of Battle

Ring/Mastery: Fire 2

Range: Short

Description: Fire spirits are known for their erratic and temperamental nature, and shugenja have learned how to use this quality to disrupt their foes in both battle and in the courts. The target of this spell is filled with the unfocused fury of Fire, enraging him and forcing him to lose perspective. He gains the Brash and Contrary Disadvantages for a number of minutes equal to the caster's Fire; if he is in a Skirmish, he immediately adopts the Full Attack Tactic and cannot switch from that Tactic for the duration of the skirmish.

Strong-willed persons can attempt to resist the spell at the start of their Turn, making a Contested Roll of their Willpower against the caster's Fire. With a success they shake off the spell's effects until their next Turn.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the spell's duration in a non-skirmish situation, extending it by a number of minutes equal to his Fire for 1 Raise. The caster may also Raise to make the spell harder to resist, inflicting a 1-die penalty on the target's Willpower roll for 1 Raise.

Inari's Blessing

Ring/Mastery: Water 2

Range: Short

Description: Inari is the Fortune of Rice, one of the most beloved of all divine entities. This spell invokes Inari's blessing to create nourishing food and drink, enough to provide one day's sustenance for a number of people equal to your Water Rank. This food is bland but sustaining, typically things like unflavored rice and water. This spell is difficult to cast in the Shadowlands, requiring the shugenja to call a Raise before making the Spellcraft roll.

Raises: The caster may Raise to feed additional people, at the rate of 1 person per Raise. In addition, the caster can use Raises to increase the quality and variety of the food, with specific effects determined at the GM's discretion.

Jade Strike

Ring/Mastery: Earth 2

Range: Short

Description: Jade Strike is the most basic and widespread of anti-Shadowlands spells, and its creation is variously credited to the Phoenix or the Crab, depending on who one asks. Given the universal threat of the Taint, it should not be surprising that the spell has long since found its way into almost every library, although pacifistic and courtly shugenja tend to avoid it.

This spell invokes the highest spiritual purity of Earth, summoning forth a bolt of bright green energy which has the same potency as the sacred stone of jade. The bolt unerringly strikes one chosen target within Short range, and cannot be dodged or intercepted (although magical resistance can thwart it). If the target is Tainted (has at least one full Rank of Shadowlands Taint), the Jade Strike inflicts 3 Wounds as it burns and blasts the corrupted flesh. However, a target who is not considered Tainted (does not have at least 1 full Rank of Taint) will not suffer any damage from the spell, and casting Jade Strike on a non-Tainted samurai is generally regarded as a lethal insult. (Allegedly, within the paranoid ranks of the Kuni family, it is considered acceptable to greet one's fellows with an immediate Jade Strike to ensure purity.)

Raises: The caster may Raise to strike additional targets, at the rate of 1 target per Raise.

Sympathetic Energies

Ring/Mastery: Water 2

Range: Touch

Description: Elemental energy flows between all living things, just as water flows through the earth. This spell allows the caster to transfer any one currently ongoing spell effect from himself to another willing target (who must be touched). Typically, shugenja use this spell to bestow protective spells on others, although creative spellcasters can find many other uses for this prayer.

Raises: You may instead use this spell to transfer a spell between two other willing targets. This requires 2 Raises, and you must be able to touch both targets at the same time.

Reflective Pool

Ring/Mastery: Water 2

Range: Self

Description: The kami of Water are associated with perception, and this allows a skilled caster to use their power to see things far away. By casting this spell and staring into a pool of water, you may view a familiar location up to 1 mile away as if you were present (however, you can only see

what is taking place, not hear it). Any body of water can be used for this spell, but the larger it is, the more clear the visions will be. The spell lasts for as long as you concentrate on it. Normally, a “familiar location” is considered to be a place such as your home, your dojo, the castle where you serve, or your preferred temple; however, you can “attune” yourself to an unfamiliar location by spending at least 10 minutes there in meditation and making a Meditation/Void roll at TN 25.

Raises: You may Raise to increase the distance at which you can view, at the rate of 1 mile per Raise.

Whispering Wind

Ring/Mastery: Air 2

Range: Short

Description: The Air kami can perceive thoughts as easily as spoken words, and by comparing the two they can tell whether what is spoken is believed to be true. By casting this spell, a shugenja can tell if the last thing said by the target was believed to be true or false. Note, however, that the Air kami have no concept of personal opinion or belief – if the target truly believes he is telling the truth, the kami will believe it as well.

Common Rank 3 Spells:

Biting Steel

Ring/Mastery: Fire 3

Range: Touch

Description: Fire spirits can infuse metal with their own fury, turning a sharp edge into a supremely perfect one. This spell enhances the damage of steel-bladed weapons, such as swords, knives, bisento, and naginata. (It cannot affect weapons which are not metal blades, nor can it enhance *nemuranai* or weapons which have already been enhanced by other magical effects.) For a number of Rounds equal to the caster’s Fire, the weapon inflicts 1 additional Wound each time it strikes a foe.

Raises: The caster can Raise to increase the duration of the spell, adding a number of Rounds equal to his Fire for 1 Raise.

Earth Kami’s Blessing

Ring/Mastery: Earth 3

Range: Touch

Description: This spell infuses the target with the strength and resilience of the Earth, making him tougher and more firm-minded. For a number of Rounds equal to the caster’s Earth, the target gains +1k1 on all rolls involving the Earth Ring and its associated Traits, and may take one extra “bonus” Wound before reaching Death’s Door.

Raises: The caster may Raise to increase the duration of the spell, adding a number of Rounds equal to his Earth for 1 Raise.

The Fires From Within

Ring/Mastery: Fire 3

Range: Long

Description: Probably the most widely known and recognized offensive spell from the Element of Fire, this prayer has been in use by Rokugani shugenja since the very earliest days of the Empire. You summon Fire kami to form an orb of flame that hovers in your palm for a moment before streaking toward the target. The sphere gains momentum and size until it hits its target,

making it quite visually spectacular. The spell inflicts a number of Wounds equal to the caster's Fire Rank, and sets alight any burnable items (clothing, grass, wood, etc) on and around the target.

Raises: The caster can Raise for additional targets, at the rate of 1 target per Raise.

Force of Will

Ring/Mastery: Earth 3

Range: Touch

Description: This spell, originally devised by Kuni himself during the First War, infuses the target with an intense resistance to pain and death, the Earth kami bolstering his will to live to superhuman levels. The recipient of the spell is able to shrug off the pain and shock of his wounds, even lethal injuries, for a short time – a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Earth. During that time, the target is immune to all Wound penalties and effects, including the effects of Death's Door. He literally cannot be killed. However, the moment the spell expires, all the effects of his Wounds apply immediately.

Raises: The duration of the spell may be extended by the same duration (Rounds equal to the caster's Earth) once, and only once, in exchange for 2 Raises.

Mists of Illusion

Ring/Mastery: Air 3

Range: Short

Description: The Air kami are playful and with the proper skill they can be convinced to create false images of many different sorts. Although certain Clans and families have made a study of illusion magic (notably the Asahina, the Scorpion, and the Shiba), most shugenja are familiar with this spell, the most widespread and basic form of Air illusion.

Mists of Illusion will create visual illusions of any object, individual, or image the caster can imagine. The images are stationary and cannot extend beyond the spell's range, but they can be as simple or complex as desired. However, the illusions are purely visual, with no sounds, odors, or other such components. Obviously, anyone who physically touches the illusion will reveal its ephemeral nature. The spell lasts for a number of minutes equal to the caster's Air.

Raises: The caster may extend the duration of the illusion, adding a number of minutes equal to his Air for 1 Raise.

Rejuvenating Vapors

Ring/Mastery: Water 3

Range: Short

Description: Water washes away all that is impure, refreshing and reinvigorating those it touches. The target of this spell is instantly refreshed, removing all fatigue, hunger, and other such symptoms, and healing 1 Wound and 1 Stress. However, there is a limit to how much weakness can be circumvented with the kami – a person can only benefit from this spell's effects once per session.

(At the GM's option, the spell can be used more than once per session if the session depicts large amounts of "down time" between castings.)

Raises: The caster can Raise to affect additional targets, at the rate of 1 target per Raise. The caster can also Raise to make the restoring effect more potent: for 2 Raises, the spell will restore 1 Void Point – and if it is used on a shugenja, it will also restore 1 spell slot in each Element.

Summon Fog

Ring/Mastery: Air 3

Range: Long

Description: The Air kami can be petitioned to coalesce in an area to create a thick, obscuring fog. Everywhere around you, out to a distance of Long range, visibility is decreased to only five feet. Fabrics and other absorbent materials within the spell's area of effect become damp, even wet if they remain there long enough. Small sources of open flame, such as candles, may be extinguished at the GM's discretion. The fog normally lasts for a number of hours equal to the caster's Air, although it may disperse more quickly in windy weather or if countered by the effects of other spells (GM's discretion).

Raises: The caster may extend the duration of the spell for a number of hours equal to his Air for 1 Raise.

Tempest of Air

Ring/Mastery: Air 3

Range: Short

Description: Air is playful, but when roused to anger it can exert considerable force. You summon a powerful gust of air that blasts outward from you and knocks down those in its path. Everyone in front of you within Short Range is knocked Prone and is considered Dazed on their next Turn. The blast of air may also extinguish candles, disperse smoke or fog, and similar effects as the GM thinks appropriate. Note that the effects of this spell do not distinguish between friend and foe, making it hazardous to use in some situations.

Raises: You may call a Raise before casting to make the blast of air more potent, extending the duration of the Dazed effect for an additional 1 Round.

The Ties That Bind

Ring/Mastery: Water 3

Range: Self

Description: Even the lightest touch forges a connection between the spirits, and through the clarity of Water that connection may be explored. This spell allows you to seek out the spirits of Water within a single specific object. You must be familiar with the object, either having spent a great deal of time around it or handled it personally. If the object is within a number of miles equal to your Water, you will know its direction and relative distance from your current position.

Raises: The caster may extend the distance at which this spell can sense the target object, adding a number of miles equal to his Water for 1 Raise.

Time's Deadly Hand

Ring/Mastery: Earth 3

Range: Touch

Description: This spell causes the Earth kami within a physical object to abandon that object, weakening its physical strength. Wood warps and flakes, stone and metal turn weak and brittle, cloth becomes thin and fragile, and so forth. The spell's effects are permanent.

Mechanically, any weapon which is affected by this spell will break after the next time it strikes a foe, and any armor will shatter after it sustains a hit. A variety of other effects can also take place, subject to the GM's adjudication – for example, a kimono affected by this spell will rip if it is subjected to the slightest tension or stress, and a scroll will tear and crumble the moment it is unrolled. Weakened stones or beams could be used to sabotage a bridge, to facilitate breaking into a besieged castle, and so forth.

Using this spell can be considered dishonorable in some circumstances, such as destroying a samurai's ancestral katana. Also, as a general rule this spell will not affect awakened items (*nemuranai*), since their empowered spirits resist the shugenja's entreaty.

Walking Upon the Waves

Ring/Mastery: Water 3

Range: Touch

Description: The Water kami buoy up those who carry their favor, granting them passage. The target of this spell may move across the surface of water as if it were solid ground. If the surface of the water is disturbed (by a storm, rolling waves, or similar things) the GM can require extra Move Actions or Athletics rolls to make progress across the roiling surface. The spell lasts a number of minutes equal to the caster's Water.

Raises: The caster may extend the duration of the spell by a number of minutes equal to his Water for each Raise.

Wings of Fire

Ring/Mastery: Fire 3

Range: Self

Description: This prayer summons a cloud of Fire kami who take on the form of large feathery wings sprouting from the caster's arms and back. The caster may use the wings to hover or to fly slowly (equivalent to a normal Move Action). If the caster is high enough to be able to glide, he can move more quickly, taking an extra Move Action every Round in addition to his normal Action (which can also be Move). While the spell is in effect, the caster cannot use his arms for anything but flapping and moving his fiery wings, limiting his potential actions; also, he will set fire to any flammable objects (such as paper or spell scrolls) he touches, although the Fire kami will avoid harming his clothes.

The spell lasts for a number of minutes equal to the caster's Fire. When it ends, the Fire kami immediately disperse regardless of whether the caster is on the ground or in the air – unlike the friendly Air kami, the mercurial and aggressive Fire kami do not particularly care about the caster's fate once they depart.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the spell by a number of rounds equal to his Fire for each Raise. The caster may also Raise to make the wings more powerful, allowing quicker flight – for 2 Raises, the caster may take an additional bonus Move Action reach Round.

Common Spells Rank 4:

Echoes on the Breeze

Ring/Mastery: Air 4

Range: Self

Description: No destination is beyond the reach of the wind. With a simple prayer to the kami, you can send your words across the span of the Empire, whispering into the ear of any one person who you already know. The spell will establish a link between the two of you, lasting for as long as you concentrate. You may communicate with one another, although you hear each other's voices only as whispers. Both participants are instantly aware when the connection is forged, and either can choose to end it at any time.

Fires of Purity

Ring/Mastery: Fire 4

Range: Touch

Description: This spell calls on the Fire kami to protect a single person by enveloping the target in a shroud of bright flames. This protective sheath of Fire kami lasts for a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Fire. The target and anything he carries are immune to any damage from the spell, but anyone else who comes into contact with him or strikes him with a melee attack takes 2

Wounds from the searing flames. Ranged weapons such as arrows are incinerated as they pass through the flames and thus inflict 1 less Wound on the target.

Anyone the target strikes with an unarmed attack or a Small melee weapon takes 2 additional Wounds; anyone he strikes with a Medium or Heavy melee weapon takes 1 additional Wound. His ranged attacks gain no benefit from the spell.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the spell, adding a number of Rounds equal to his Fire for 1 Raise.

Funeral Rites

Ring/Mastery: Air 4 (Ritual)

Range: N/A

Description: This ritual was originally devised by the Kitsu, but due to its widespread applicability it quickly spread to other shugenja families and schools. The Kitsu wished all Rokugani to properly venerate the ancestors, and thus had no objection to sharing their discovery with the Isawa and the other clans as well. For those who do not have Kitsu blood, this spell is one of the very few ways to actually communicate with the ancestors.

The spell is an hour-long ritual prayer which can only be performed in the company of a recently deceased individual's blood relative. This must be done within one day of the funeral (which both the shugenja and relative must have participated in properly). Other shugenja may assist in the ritual but, unlike with other rituals, they must all know the spell and they all use up an Air spell-slot. Once the prayer is properly completed (a successful Spellcraft roll by the lead shugenja), the caster and the relative may both converse for a few minutes with the spirit of the recently departed.

If extra shugenja assist in the ritual, each assisting shugenja extends the duration of the spell, but the exact time the spell lasts is variable – ancestors may decide to depart early if they are unhappy with the questions, or extend their time if they are pleased with their treatment. It is left to the GM how long the conversation lasts.

Typically, this ritual is only used in situations where the living relatives want to make quite sure they are properly remembering and honoring their newly-departed ancestor. The exact results of communing with a departed relative are at the discretion of the GM, but could include learning important information, receiving advice and guidance, or taking up a task which the dead samurai left incomplete.

Maw of the Earth

Ring/Mastery: Earth 4

Range: Short

Description: This prayer causes the Earth spirits to wrench open a large pit in the ground at any location within Short range that is chosen by the caster. Anyone at or near the pit (GM's discretion) must make a Contested roll of their Reflexes against the caster's Earth or fall into the pit, suffering 3 Wounds. They are also trapped in the pit until they are rescued or can climb out. (Climbing out of the pit requires taking an Action and rolling Athletics / Strength roll at a TN equal to the caster's Earth x10.)

Raises: The caster can extend the Range of the spell to Long for 2 Raises. The caster may also make the pit deeper – for every Raise taken for this purpose, the pit does an additional 1 Wound to those who fall in, and the TN to climb out is increased by 5.

The Inner Ocean

Ring/Mastery: Water 4

Range: Touch

Description: This spell evokes the target's inner Water to the ultimate degree, strengthening it to the point where it completely overwhelms the other Elements. The target is physically transformed into pure clear water, along with anything he might be wearing or carrying at the moment the spell is cast. This state persists for a number of minutes equal to the caster's Water, during which time the target cannot speak, attack, cast spells, or directly manipulate physical objects. However, he can still move (Move Actions may be taken normally) and can slide his liquid body up and down slopes and through narrow openings. (The target's physical mass does not change, so he cannot squeeze himself into a small box or otherwise evade the constraints of his size.)

The target is effectively immune to most physical harm, but Fire spells can damage him, as can truly intense mundane heat such as a burning castle or a lava flow. At the GM's option, certain types of physical events – such as being scattered across the ground or partially soaked up with towels – might also harm the transformed person. Once the spell's duration ends, the target's Elements re-balance and he returns to normal.

Raises: The caster may extend the duration of the spell, adding a number of minutes equal to his Water for 1 Raise.

Common Spells Mastery Level 5:

Beam of the Inferno

Ring/Mastery: Fire 5

Range: Extreme

Description: This spell, the ultimate expression of elemental Fire, invokes a tremendous blast of fire that falls upon and incinerates a single target, which can be either a living creature or a single building. A creature struck by the Beam of the Inferno suffers 10 Wounds. A building's wooden and paper components will be set afire, and the shock of the fiery impact will damage or perhaps even destroy the structure.

A side-effect of this spell is that it puts all the Fire kami in the area into a state of agitation; normal fires within Short range will burn hotter and more violently for many minutes after this spell is cast.

Breath of Mist

Ring/Mastery: Water 5

Range: Self/Extreme

Description: This spell is popular among pacifistic families of shugenja, since it provides a way to avert a battle without actual violence. The spell evokes the full power of hundreds of Water kami to reduce the ground to a half-liquid mire while filling the air with water-vapor to obscure vision. Entire armies have been rendered effectively helpless by this spell, unable to move or to strike out at their foes.

In game terms, the spell forces anyone within one mile of the caster who wishes to take Move Actions to make Athletics / Strength rolls against a TN of the caster's Water x10 – failure means they cannot move. The fog, meanwhile, imposes the Blind condition on everyone within the same area.

The caster is immune to both of these effects – the Water kami lift him up and clear a path for his vision.

Fury of the Earth Dragon (Earthquake)

Ring/Mastery: Earth 5

Range: Self/Extreme

Description: This spell unleashes a terrible, ground-wracking earthquake centered on the caster. The earthquake lasts a number of minutes equal to the caster's Earth. It utterly destroys all wooden buildings within one mile of the caster and inflicts severe damage on stone structures. All persons (except the caster) within a one mile radius are thrown to the ground and remain Prone and Stunned for the duration of the spell, as well as suffering 1 Wound. Individuals who are inside buildings (including the caster, unfortunately) will suffer an additional 1k1 Wounds from falling debris, collapsing roofs, etc.

The earthquake is also very likely to result in secondary effects such as fires in collapsed buildings, blocked roads, downed bridges, flooding due to dikes being breached, and so forth – the GM must adjudicate such effects.

Rise, Element

Ring/Mastery: Air/Earth/Fire/Water 5

Range: Short

Description: All shugenja schools of sufficient power to be able to teach Mastery 5 spells have learned how to call forth an extremely powerful Elemental spirit – essentially the ultimate form of the Summon spell. The spell can be learned in any of the four Elements, and functions the same way for all: it calls forth a massive kami in a vaguely humanoid shape. The kami moves, acts, and attacks as the caster directs, but the caster must concentrate on controlling it, using his Action each Round for that purpose. If he fails to do so, or at the end of a number of minutes equal to his Ring, the kami departs. So long as the caster does maintain control, however, the kami may take two Actions (only one of which may be an attack) each Round as the caster directs. The kami is treated mechanically as if it has all Physical Traits equal to the caster's Ring in that Element. Its attack roll is a number of dice equal to 2x the caster's Ring, keeping all dice, and it inflicts damage as a Heavy Weapon. It can take a number of Wounds equal to 3x the caster's Ring, after which it is dispersed (until then it suffers no Wound penalties); however, for purposes of taking damage it is considered Invulnerable (see the rules on Creatures later in this chapter for details on this ability).

At the GM's option, the kami evoked by this spell may produce additional effects based on the Element being used. For example, a Fire kami could set fire to its surroundings, a Water kami could saturate the ground and impede movement, an Air kami could fly and thus cannot be blocked by physical obstacles, and so forth.

Wrath of Kaze-no-Kami (Hurricane)

Ring/Mastery: Air 5

Range: Self/Short/Extreme

Description: The wrath of the air kami and of the Fortune of the Wind is truly dreadful to behold. In casting this spell, you unleash the full force of a hurricane upon your surroundings – you are at the eye of the storm, which radiates outward from you for a distance of one mile. Within the storm's "eye" (Short range from you) there are no ill effects, but outside that zone the brutal power of the storm tears at everything in its path. Objects large and small, including living creatures, are lifted and tossed by the wind – they must hold on to something immobile or be cast into the winds to their certain death. Everyone within the affected region who does not have sturdy shelter suffers 1 Wound each minute from the winds and minor debris, and may randomly be struck by a wind-born object and suffer anywhere from 2 to 5 Wounds.

The storm lasts for as long as you maintain concentration, but cannot last longer than your Air in hours. Also, the spell cannot be cast in a given area more than once per month, since it completely exhausts the favor of the Air kami.

Crab Clan Secret Spells:

Bonds of Ningen-Do

Ring/Mastery: Earth 3 (Ritual)

Range: Short

Description: This spell, a more powerful and specialized evolution of Minor Binding, is a ritual designed to bind or dispel troublesome creatures from the various spirit realms. Any creature from the realms of Sakkaku, Chikashudo, Gaki-Do, Toshigoku, or Yume-Do can be affected by this spell. Casting it requires 10 minutes, although if additional shugenja who know the spell assist in the ritual, the time is reduced by 1 minute for each additional shugenja, to a minimum of 1 minute.

If the targeted creature is within Short range when the spell is successfully completed, the creature can be either bound or dispelled. If it is bound, it must obey the caster's commands for thirty days (suicidal commands will break the spell). This is how the Kuni have forced mujina spirits to labor for them in their iron mines. It should be noted that this use of the spell is considered controversial and even blasphemous by many in Rokugan.

If the creature is dispelled, it immediately leaves Ningen-Do for its native spirit realm, and cannot return for thirty days.

Either way, the spirit creature will regard the caster as an enemy thereafter, and is likely to seek vengeance if it can.

Raises: The caster may Raise to affect additional creatures (at the rate of 1 creature for each Raise) and to extend the duration of the binding (by one additional month per Raise).

Major Binding

Ring/Mastery: Earth 5 (Ritual)

Range: Long

Description: The most powerful development of the Kuni family's Minor Binding spell, this spell has also been known to be employed by other clan shugenja, and the GM may opt to make it available to elite members of other clans, especially the Phoenix Clan. It is used to imprison the more powerful Shadowlands creatures and members of the Lost. Any Lost and any Shadowlands creature can be targeted with this spell. It can also target other spirit creatures who are Tainted.

The spell is a ritual and requires ten minutes to cast (making it quite hazardous when dealing with a rampaging oni), but if additional shugenja join in casting the spell the casting time is reduced by 1 minute per shugenja, to a minimum of 1 minute. If it is cast successfully, the casters make a Contested Roll of their combined Earth Rings against the Earth of the target. If the casters win, the spell calls forth manacles of pure elemental jade, which imprison the creature and render it helpless with the pain of its searing bonds for a period of 12 hours. When the spell expires, however, the manacles instantly crumble into dust, and the creature is liable to seek immediate and bloody vengeance on its captors.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the spell, by 6 hours per Raise.

Minor Binding

Ring/Mastery: Earth 2

Range: Short

Description: This spell was developed by the Kuni family as part of the battle against the Shadowlands. At the GM's option, it may also have found its way into the libraries of the Scorpion and the Phoenix. It is used to safely imprison minor Shadowlands creatures, usually for the purpose of interrogation. Any Shadowlands creature with an Earth of 3 or less can be targeted with this spell. It cannot affect the Lost, Oni Lords or their spawn, or creatures with an Earth of 4 or higher.

If the spell is cast successfully, it calls forth manacles of iron, formed from pure Earth spirits, which trap and bind the target creature for a number of hours equal to the caster's Earth. The captive is held immobile and is physically helpless for that time. When the spell expires, the manacles instantly crumble away into dust.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the spell, extending it by a number of hours equal to his Earth with each Raise.

Purge the Taint

Ring/Mastery: Earth 4 (Ritual)

Range: Self/Short

Description: This spell was created by the Kuni family in the eighth century when their lands were overrun and Tainted by an army from the Shadowlands. It is an elaborate ritual that requires an hour to cast, calling on the powers of Earth to purge the land of the Shadowlands Taint, driving out all the evil *kansen* in the area. The spell will remove all the Taint from the land, plant life, and inanimate objects within Short range of the caster. It will not remove Taint from living creatures, nor will it affect powerful Tainted artifacts or objects made of obsidian.

The removal of the Taint, however, is not without price. The elemental kami in the area are also weakened and purged by the spell, especially the Earth spirits whose efforts are called upon to power it. In the aftermath of casting this spell, the local spirits will be scattered and weakened, inflicting a 3-die penalty on all Spell Casting rolls within the area. This negative effect will sometimes fade with time, especially if it was cast in a single location surrounded by normal lands. But if the spell is cast over a wide area, such as the Kuni Wastes, the elemental kami will usually permanently leave the area, reducing it to a gray, lifeless wasteland.

Strength of the Crow

Ring/Mastery: Earth 3

Range: Self

Description: This spell was developed by the Kuni to allow them to conduct their studies and investigations with less risk of succumbing to the Shadowlands Taint. It infuses the caster with a powerful resistance to the Taint, repelling the dark *kansen* with the pure power of Earth. For a number of hours equal to the caster's Earth, the caster gains a +5k5 bonus to all rolls made to resist gaining the Shadowlands Taint, and any Maho spells cast against him suffer a 2-die penalty. This bonus does not apply to any rolls made to resist an increase in Taint the caster already possesses – it only applies to new Taint gained from outside sources. Likewise it cannot protect the target from gaining Taint by casting Maho.

Raises: The caster may extend the duration of the spell, adding a number of hours equal to his Earth for 1 Raise.

Tomb of Jade

Ring/Mastery: Earth 4

Range: Short

Description: Considered by the Kuni to be the ultimate method for opposing the creatures of the Shadowlands, this spell calls on the purest of Earth spirits, those of jade, to consume the very Taint within the target. The spell can only affect a target who has at least one full Rank of Shadowlands Taint, but the caster will not automatically know that a target is Taint-free if the spell has no effect – there is always the possibility that the target was Tainted but was able to resist the spell.

When Tomb of Jade is cast, the target is momentarily immobilized as the Earth spirits enter his body, and the caster makes a Contested Insight/Earth roll against the target's Taint. Each subsequent Round the caster must again make this Contested roll. If the target wins any of these

rolls, the spell ends. Each time the caster wins, the target takes 2 Wounds as the spirits begin to transform his body into jade. This continues each Round until the target successfully resists, the caster stops concentrating, or the target dies. Those killed by this spell are transformed into statues of pure jade which crumbles away into mundane dust in 24 hours.

At the GM's option, this spell may also be available to the Phoenix.

Raises: The caster may Raise to increase the potency of the spell. Each Raise boosts the caster's subsequent Contested Insight/Earth rolls by +1k1.

Ward of Purity

Ring/Mastery: Fire 3 (Ritual)

Range: Touch/Short

Description: Although Earth is the traditional method of opposing evil forces like the Shadowlands Taint, the Kuni have also learned how to invoke the spirits of Fire to purge and destroy such spiritual abominations. This spell binds a Fire kami into a specific location which it protects against the forces of evil. Casting the spell requires inscribing elaborate kanji on a flat surface in chalk or ink, and takes one minute of concentrated effort, after which the Spellcraft roll must be made. Once the *Ward of Purity* is activated and the power of the kami is fully engaged, it lasts for one full day (24 hours), protecting the surrounding area against the influence of the Shadowlands.

Any creature with at least 1 Rank of Shadowlands Taint who comes within Short range of the ward will suffer extreme pain as the power of the ward burns their very essence. Their bodies ignite and they suffer 2 Wounds per Round until they flee the area. (If overlapping *Wards of Purity* are present, their effects do not stack.)

The Kuni are not terribly secretive with this spell, and there are some reports of it being used by other clans. The GM may opt to make this spell available to shugenja in other clans who have chosen to specialize in hunting the creatures of the Shadowlands, such as Phoenix Inquisitors, Scorpion *kuroiban*, or members of the Jade Legion.

Crane Clan Secret Spells:

Draw Back the Shadow

Ring/Mastery: Air 5

Range: Short

Description: The Asahina understand illusion magic, but as an honorable family they also realize that such amusements must not be allowed to obscure the truth. This spell calls on the Air kami to sweep aside all illusions within Short range of the caster. Any illusions created by spells of Mastery Level 4 or lower are automatically dispelled, while spells of Mastery Level 5 require a Contested Insight/Air Roll between you and the shugenja who created those spells; if you are successful, these illusions are dispelled as well. Ongoing illusions that are not created by spells (such as those created by Shadowlands powers) may also be dispelled with a Contested Insight/Air roll between you and their creator.

Raises: The range of the spell may be extended to Long range with 2 Raises, or to Extreme range with 4 Raises.

Endless Deluge

Ring/Mastery: Water 3 (Ritual)

Range: Self/Extreme

Description: This spell calls on the Water spirits in the sky to congregate and descend to the earth, unleashing a massive rainstorm. Casting this spell is a ritual requiring at least ten minutes;

at the GM's option, casting this spell in an especially dry region, or during a drought, may require more casting time or require Raises to succeed. After the spell is cast, rainclouds gather in a one-mile radius around the caster, assembling with unnatural speed; within half an hour the clouds open up and rain begins pouring down, continuing without cease for a number of hours equal to the caster's Water.

The chief value of this spell is to abate the effects of drought and to extinguish fires – even large conflagrations such as forest fires will be doused within an hour or so. The Asahina consider both of these usages to be more than appropriate. However, the relentless pouring rain obscures visibility and slickens objects, which will impact any battles or Skirmishes fought within the area. The rain also imposes a 1-die penalty on spell-casting rolls for Fire spells within it, since the relentless water makes the Fire spirits reluctant to act. The GM may impose other effects, such as flash-flooding, depending on local conditions.

Raises: The caster may raise to extend the radius of the storm, at the rate of one additional mile per Raise.

The Eye Shall Not See

Ring/Mastery: Air 2

Range: Self/Short

Description: The Asahina are a peaceful family and prefer to avoid conflict rather than stain their hands with blood. This prayer persuades the Air kami to create an area of illusory distraction surrounding you, drawing all attention away from you. The kami whisper in the ears of those within Short range, causing them to be distracted from your presence. You are not actually invisible, but those within Short range simply will not notice you so long as you do not make any loud noises, violent actions, or otherwise draw attention to yourself. Those outside that distance are not distracted by the illusion, and will see you perfectly well regardless of your action or inaction. The spell lasts for as long as you concentrate on maintaining it – you may take Move Actions while doing so, but cannot attack, cast spells, or use the Athletics skill.

False Realm

Ring/Mastery: Air 4

Range: Self/Long

Description: Asahina are masters of both the artistry of illusion and of using those illusions to non-lethally deflect their enemies. You can completely alter the aspect of the terrain within a distance out to Long range from yourself. For example, you can make a miserable swamp look, sound, and smell like a beautiful garden, or vice versa. Although these illusions can be extraordinarily intricate and completely convincing to sight, hearing, and smell, they still have no substance and cannot be physically touched – thus, anyone who enters the area of the illusion is likely to realize that something is wrong. The illusion lasts for a number of hours equal to your Air.

Raises: The caster may Raise to increase the duration of the spell, extending it by a number of hours equal to his Air for 1 Raise.

Favor of the Air Spirits

Ring/Mastery: Air 3

Range: Self

Description: The Asahina see violence as self-defeating, and this spell makes that view into a reality. The caster surrounds himself with a cloud of friendly Air kami who deflect enemy blows and turn arrows back on their sources. This effect lasts for a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Air.

The caster gains a +2k0 bonus to all Defense rolls against melee attacks, and all ranged attacks against him automatically fail; the missiles are flung back at the persons who launched them, who must roll Defense against their own attack rolls.

The spell is not powerful enough to resist the missiles of siege weapons.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the spell, increasing it by a number of Rounds equal to his Air for 1 Raise.

Netsuke of Wind

Ring/Mastery: Air 5

Range: Self

Description: Although it requires great skill, the Air kami can be persuaded to coalesce into a solid form for a short period of time if they are fond enough of the priest asking them. You may create an object out of the air itself, anything that can be held in your hands. This creation looks, feels, smells, and otherwise functions exactly like a real item, and can be used functionally and even handed over to someone else for use. If it is a weapon, it inflicts damage normally, although most Asahina are loathe to use the spell for such a violent purpose. The object disappears after a number of hours equal to your Air Rank, dispersing back into normal air.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the spell, adding a number of hours equal to his Air for each Raise. The caster may also Raise to create larger objects that cannot be held in the hand – the GM adjudicates this, depending on the object created.

Whispering Flames

Ring/Mastery: Fire 3

Range: Short

Description: The creation of this spell is credited to Asahina himself, who sought ways to use Fire magic peacefully after he joined the Crane Clan. The spell causes the Fire kami to gather and dance in a pleasing visual shape and with a soothing rhythmic light. Those who gaze upon the Fire kami see an entrancing and appealing vision that distracts them from taking violent actions. Everyone within Short range (except the caster) is considered Dazed for a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Fire. However, the targets may attempt to shake off the spell's effects with a Willpower roll against a TN of the caster's Fire x10.

This spell's effects are most potent against Rokugani, since the Fire kami find it more difficult to create entrancing images for those they do not understand. The GM may award gaijin and nonhuman targets a bonus to their Willpower roll to resist the spell's effects. Animals, bestial creatures, and mindless creatures such as undead are completely immune to the spell.

Raises: The caster may Raise to increase the duration of the spell's effects, adding a number of Rounds equal to his Fire for 1 Raise.

Dragon Clan Secret Spells:

Agasha's Shield (Tamori's Curse)

Ring/Mastery: Fire 3

Range: Self/Short

Description: Originally devised by Agasha shugenja who were working with *hanabi* (fireworks), in modern times this spell is renamed Tamori's Curse by the Tamori family. The spell creates a zone of protection in which Fire kami friendly to the caster reject any intrusion by other Fire kami. Any hostile Fire spell cast within Short range of the caster suffers a 4-die penalty to the Spellcraft roll. Any hostile Fire spell cast from Long or Extreme range that attempts to affect the caster suffers a 2-die penalty. This protection lasts for a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Fire.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the spell, adding a number of Rounds equal to his Fire for 1 Raise.

Breath of Heaven's Fire

Ring/Mastery: Fire 4

Range: Self

Description: This spell invokes the spirits of Fire to fill the caster with their essence, allowing him to actually breathe fire for a short time. For a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Fire, he may take an Action to breathe out a bolt of flames from his mouth, striking a number of targets within Short range equal to his Fire Ring. Each target suffers Wounds equal to his Fire. The caster may choose to take other Actions during these Rounds rather than breathing fire, but cannot speak or cast spells.

Raises: The caster may Raise to increase the duration of the spell, adding a number of Rounds equal to his Fire for 1 Raise.

Earthen Blade

Ring/Mastery: Earth 5

Range: Self

Description: This spell, favored by the most militant of Dragon shugenja, summons powerful Earth kami to temporarily form a katana of stone in the caster's hand. Imbued with the true strength of Earth, this blade is unbreakable and can cleave through armor, bone, and flesh with equal potency. The sword lasts for a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Earth, crumbling into dust at the end of that time. It is wielded with the Kenjutsu Skill and inflicts Wounds like a normal katana, but ignores all effects of both Carapace and Invulnerability, and every target hit with it is automatically Dazed for 1 Round. Moreover, Defense Skill bonuses from armor cannot be used against attacks from an Earthen Blade.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the spell, adding a number of Rounds equal to his Earth for 1 Raise.

The Mending Forge

Ring/Mastery: Fire 2 (Ritual)

Range: Short

Description: Fire is the Element of creation as well as of destruction, and many Dragon shugenja study the ways of crafting and the forge. This ritual spell takes 10 minutes to cast, invoking the creative power of the forge to remake a material item – anything up to the size of a suit of armor – into its perfect form. The target item loses all damage and blemishes, regardless of their source; broken pieces fuse back together into a harmonious whole. A powerful shugenja can even restore an item which has actually been destroyed.

Normally, this spell can only restore mundane items, not high-quality items or *nemuranai*; however, if the caster offers the Fire kami a gift (another item for them to burn and destroy) of appropriate worth, they can repair such exceptional items as well.

Raises: The caster may Raise to restore an item which has been largely or completely destroyed, so long as some piece of it survives; this requires at least 1 Raise for a small or minor item, with more Raises required for larger or uniquely special items.

Oath of the Heavens

Ring/Mastery: Fire 3

Range: Touch

Description: This spell is an ancient legacy of the Agasha family, and has sometimes been credited as being invented by Agasha herself, perhaps during her rescue from goblins by Mirumoto Hojatsu. In the twelfth century, both the Phoenix Clan Agasha and the Dragon Clan Tamori know the spell, although the Tamori use it far more often. The spell calls on the Fire kami to form a link between the ferocity of a bushi and the intellect of a shugenja, allowing both to work in concert to greater effect. The caster usually targets himself and one friendly bushi, although it is also possible for the caster to bestow the spell's benefits on a different shugenja.

For a number of Rounds equal to the combined Fire of the caster and the target, both individuals receive a +1k1 bonus to all rolls involving the Fire Ring and Fire Traits (e.g. all rolls involving Agility and Intelligence). However, the link also makes each recipient vulnerable to effects on the other – if either recipient becomes Fatigued, Dazed, or Stunned, the other immediately shares the same Condition. If either recipient is reduced to Death's Door (or killed), the spell's effects immediately end.

Raises: The caster may link the target to a different shugenja (rather than himself) for 2 Raises. The bonus created by the link may be increased by +1k0 for 1 Raise.

Strike as Stone

Ring/Mastery: Earth 3

Range: Self

Description: Another spell favored by the militant wing of the Dragon shugenja, *Strike as Stone* calls on the spirits of Earth to strengthen the target's hands and forearms, making them as hard as stone. For a number of minutes equal to the caster's Earth, the target's hands cannot be physically harmed, allowing him to perform a variety of feats such as prying open a lock with his fingers. During that time his unarmed attacks inflict 1 additional Wound.

Transmute

Ring/Mastery: All 3

Range: Short

Description: The Transmute spell is the most notorious and the most secret product of Lady Agasha's deep and intense study of the Elements and their interconnected nature. It is taught in the highest ranks of the Agasha school (and the Tamori school after the Hidden Emperor era). Although it is technically a Mastery Rank 3 spell, only shugenja of Insight Rank 4 or higher may learn it. (It is rumored that Agasha's spirit sometimes bestows knowledge of the spell on her favored descendants.)

This spell allows a shugenja to transform the Elements in a single physical object into other Elements. For example, a wooden table (Earth) could be turned into Air, Water, or even Fire. Only individual inanimate objects can be affected by the spell – it has no power over living creatures. The spell is most easily used to turn a single Element into another Element, such as in the example of the table; for an object made of multiple Elements, the caster must Raise for each additional Element, both those in the original object and those which he wishes to transmute them into. For example, a lit candle (Earth and Fire) would require 1 Raise to turn into a single Element. A wooden table (Earth) transformed into Fire and Air would likewise require 1 Raise.

Transmute cannot affect a complex structure or device (e.g. something made from many separate objects, such as a wagon), although it could target a specific object within such a device (such as the axle of the wagon). The maximum size of an object which can be affected by the spell is roughly equal to a human being in size or mass – when cast against objects which are too large (GM's discretion), the spell will simply fail. The GM is also the final arbiter of how many Elements are found within a physical object; in general, the more sophisticated the object, the more Elements it will contain. The swords of the daisho set (the katana and wakizashi) are believed to contain all five Elements (including Void) and are thus immune to this spell.

Casting this spell uses up a spell-slot from any one of the Elements (shugenja's choice) involved in that particular casting.

Raises: As noted, the caster must Raise in order to affect more than one Element.

Lion Clan Secret Spells:

Call the Spirit

Ring/Mastery: Air 4

Range: Self

Description: Essentially an extremely powerful and specific form of the basic spell Summon, this Kitsu prayer summons one particular spirit from another realm to have a discussion. You may use this spell to summon any spirit from any of the Spirit Realms; however, powerful or unusual denizens of those realms, such as Fortunes, are immune to the summons. If you know something specific about the spirit, such as having seen it before or having intimate knowledge of its actions (for example, "the spirit that killed my father"), you may summon that spirit in particular. The nature of the spell prevents the spirit from attacking you unless you attack first, but it will not necessarily be friendly. The spirit disappears back to its native realm after a number of minutes equal to your Air Rank.

This spell can potentially summon extremely dangerous creatures, such as oni or gaki, and thus should be used with caution.

Defender from Beyond

Ring/Mastery: Air 5

Range: Short

Description: Within the innermost circles of the Kitsu family are the *sodan-senzo*, the ancestral shugenja who carry the bloodlines of the first kitsu spirits. These secretive shugenja have discovered rituals which can persuade the Air kami to carry a message to Yomi itself, calling for the aid of an ancestral *shiryō*.

The spell beseeches the ancestral spirits of Yomi to send aid, and if it is successfully cast, a *shiryō* – a spirit from Yomi – will arrive on the scene in five Rounds, appearing somewhere within Short range. Once it arrives, the spirit reclaims its mortal form, but its spiritual nature is easily sensed from the celestial glow which surrounds it. It will offer whatever aid it can to the caster and his allies, whether that be advice, knowledge, or combat, but it will not do anything dishonorable. Mechanically, a typical *shiryō* will possess a Rank of 3 in all of its Rings and Traits and a Rank of 4 in any useful Skills; the GM has the final say, however, on the spirit's power and abilities.

After a number of minutes equal to the caster's Air Rank, the *shiryō* will return to Yomi. It also leaves for Yomi if its physical body is destroyed or if it is grievously insulted by the caster or his allies.

Although this spell normally calls a "generic" *shiryō*, the GM may opt to allow the shugenja to summon a specific named ancestral spirit with Raises. The GM may also choose to have a more powerful or famous *shiryō* answer the spell if the specific circumstances seem to warrant it. More powerful *shiryō* will possess a School as appropriate for their ancestral clan, typically with a School Rank between 3 and 5.

Raises: As noted, the GM may choose to allow the caster to summon a more powerful *shiryō* with Raises.

Ebb & Flow of Battle

Ring/Mastery: Water 4

Range: Short

Description: Mobility is one of the greatest strengths of Water, and in a battle mobility is often the key to survival and victory. Although the Unicorn Clan is the most effective in using Water magic to enhance mobility, the Kitsu have also studied this path in order to support the Lion Clan on the battlefield. You may choose a number of allies equal to your Water Rank who are located within Short Range; for a number of Rounds equal to your Water Rank, each of those allies may take a Move Action each Round in addition to their normal Action (which can also be Move). This effect stacks with non-spell effects which award bonus Move Actions.

Raises: The caster may include additional allies in the spell at the rate of 1 ally per Raise. The caster may also include himself in the spell's effect for 1 Raise.

Eyes of the Ancestors

Ring/Mastery: Air 2

Range: Short

Description: The Kitsu's spiritual attunement allows them to send the presence of ancestral spirits and of the influence from other realms of existence. This spell will detect the influence of an ancestral spirit or a Spirit Realm on a single target person. This includes any Ancestor, Touch of the Realms, or Fortune's Blessing Advantage, as well as any Curse of the Realms, Haunted, or Fortune's Curse Disadvantage. If the spell detects an ancestor/ghost, the caster may speak with that spirit (though it is not compelled to answer).

Opening the Veil

Ring/Mastery: Water 5

Range: Short

Description: This Kitsu spell invokes the travel aspect of Water to open a temporary portal into the Spirit Realms. The spell can normally only access the realms of Meido or Chikushudo, but extremely powerful casters can sometimes access Yomi, Sakkaku, Toshigoku, Yume-do, or Gaki-do. The portal lasts only one hour (so passage through it is fraught with risk) but while it is open, anyone may pass through, including the caster. However, this spell cannot work in any area which has been warded or protected against the influences of the Spirit Realms (GM's discretion as to what qualifies).

Raises: The caster can Raise to reach the more distant Spirit Realms – 1 Raise to reach Sakkaku or Yume-do, 2 Raises to reach Gaki-do or Toshigoku, or 3 Raises to reach Yomi.

Stand Against the Waves

Ring/Mastery: Water 3

Range: Touch

Description: A samurai who possesses the speed and strength of the mighty river is a dangerous foe indeed, and those Kitsu who serve the Lion Clan on the field of battle have learned how to call on the Water spirits for this power. The target of this spell gains the fluid speed of Water, allowing him to take two different Actions on each Turn. These cannot be the same Action (e.g. he cannot attack twice or Move twice) but otherwise can be anything he might wish. The effect lasts for a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Water.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the spell, adding a number of Rounds equal to his Water for 1 Raise.

Strike of the Flowing Waters

Ring/Mastery: Water 4

Range: Short

Description: Water flows over and through obstacles, and so too can those infused with its energy. When fighting in melee, the target of this spell may ignore the bonuses to enemy Characters' Defense rolls from armor, from the Full Defense Tactic, and from any spell effects of Mastery Level 3 and below. Against enemy Thugs, the target gains a Free Raise to all melee attacks. These effects last for a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Water.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the spell, adding a number of Rounds equal to his Water for 1 Raise.

Mantis Clan Secret Spells:

Dominion of Suitengu

Ring/Mastery: Water 4

Range: Self

Description: The Fortune of the Sea is a wrathful entity, but one who nevertheless blesses those who entreat him properly. This Mantis Clan spell allows the caster to peer into a body of water and see out of any other body of water anywhere in the Empire, so long as it is within 100 miles of the caster. This can include any point along the seacoast, a lake, river, stream, or even a puddle, but the caster must know the location of the body of water he is targeting.

The caster can see everything around that body of water as if he was submerged within it. He cannot hear what is taking place, only see it.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the distance to the other body of water, at the rate of an additional 100 miles per Raise.

The Fist of Osano-Wo

Ring/Mastery: Fire 4

Range: Long

Description: Similar to the spell *Fury of Osano-Wo* but more powerful, this prayer to the Fortune of Fire and Thunder invokes his anger to devastate a building or location at Long or even Extreme range. Massive lightning strikes and vaguely fist-shaped bolts of flame streak from the skies, smiting the area; weak structures and those easily set on fire (such as most Rokugani homes) are destroyed by the spell's fury, or catch fire and are consumed. The spell inflicts Wounds equal to the caster's Fire Ring on everyone within the targeted area.

Those who are fortunate enough to be blessed with the Blood of Osano-Wo are immune to damage from this spell, though it will still affect everyone and everything around them.

Note that the spell can only be cast at Long or Extreme range – it cannot target anything within Short range.

Raises: The caster may extend the range from Long to Extreme in exchange for 2 Raises.

Fury of Osano-Wo

Ring/Mastery: Fire 2

Range: Short

Description: This spell is actually a prayer to the Fortune of Fire and Thunder, inviting his wrath upon the enemy. It can only be cast outdoors, and summons a bolt of lightning from the sky, striking the target for 2 Wounds. Everyone within Short range of the target must make a Stamina roll at a TN of 15 to avoid being deafened for a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Fire.

If this spell is cast during a storm, the damage is increased to 3 Wounds for a moderate storm and 4 Wounds for a disastrous storm or hurricane.

Those who are fortunate enough to be blessed with the Blood of Osano-Wo cannot be targeted by this spell – it will always fail if cast against them.

Raises: The caster may strike additional targets at the rate of 1 target per Raise.

Howl of Isora

Ring/Mastery: Air 4

Range: Short

Description: This spell calls on the power of Isora, the Fortune of the Seashore, to unleash a blast of storm-wracked air and lightning that smites a large area within Short range. The spell may not be specifically targeted and will affect any allies within that area, although anyone standing close to the caster (GM's discretion) will be safe. The sudden roaring onslaught of wind, rain, and lightning inflicts 3 Wounds on everyone within the area, and they must roll their Earth at TN 30 or be Fatigued by Isora's howl. The spell also damages weak or vulnerable physical objects – paper walls will be blown out, scrolls soaked with water, etc.

Raises: The caster may increase the damage inflicted by the spell, adding 1 Wound in exchange for 1 Raise.

Strike of the Tsunami

Ring/Mastery: Water 3

Range: Short

Description: Water is everywhere and can be brought forth at the urging of those it favors. You summon a crushing wave of water that rises out of the ground and overruns everything in its path. The wave roars outward from the caster, striking anyone in front of him who is within Short range. All targets (regardless of whether they are allies, enemies, or passers-by) suffer 2 Wounds and must make an Earth Roll at TN 15 or be knocked Prone. Obviously, everything within the area is saturated with water.

Raises: The caster may Raise to intensify the force of the water. The damage may be increased by 1 Wound in exchange for 1 Raise, and the TN to resist being knocked Prone may be increased by +10 in exchange for 1 Raise.

Suitengu's Embrace

Ring/Mastery: Water 5

Range: Short

Description: The Fortune of the Sea is wrathful, and requires little prompting by his loyal adherents to smite others. This spell fills the target's lungs with seawater, crippling and potentially killing him. The target can take no Actions other than to attempt to resist the spell; each Turn he must make a Contested Roll of his Insight/Stamina against the caster's Insight/Water.

If the target loses a roll, he suffers a number of Wounds equal to the caster's Water; if he loses a second roll, he falls unconscious and is considered to be at Death's Door – he will die within 1 minute unless some form of magical or medical intervention is made. If the target wins a roll, he spends one additional Turn vomiting up seawater and then is fully recovered.

Although ways of combating drowning are not well known in Rokugan, it is possible to save an individual afflicted by this spell using by making a successful Medicine /Intelligence roll at TN 50.

Raises: The caster may Raise to increase the difficulty of resisting the water, imposing a 1-die penalty on the target's Insight/Stamina roll in exchange for 1 Raise.

Whirlpool

Ring/Mastery: Water 5

Range: Extreme

Description: This prayer is a favorite among the highest-ranking Yoritomo shugenja, who see it as the perfect expression of their clan's nature and power. It can only be cast near or on a large body of open water – a lake or sea. The spell excites the Water kami into a tremendous rage, causing them to create a huge and powerful whirlpool that sucks down any ships and swimmers in the vicinity. The whirlpool lasts for a number of minutes equal to 2x the caster's Water Rank, and affects anything within Short range of where it appears.

Any swimmer caught by the whirlpool must make a Contested Roll of Athletics/Strength against the caster's Insight/Water each Round or be sucked down. A boat or ship will likewise be in danger, and the captain must make a Contested Roll of Sailing / Intelligence against the caster's Insight/Water every minute to keep the vessel from being sucked under.

Once under water, all victims will begin Drowning and can only reach the surface again by rolling Athletics/Strength at TN 40.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the whirlpool, adding a number of minutes equal to his Water for each Raise.

Phoenix Clan Secret Spells:

Consumed by Five Fires

Ring/Mastery: Fire 5

Range: Long

Description: A truly potent and deadly Fire spell, one used only by those Phoenix who face the most desperate need. The spell invokes an array of powerful Fire kami to strike down the target with incredibly fierce heat and flame – but in order to persuade so many kami to strike with such immense power, the shugenja must bestow them with a gift: his own life-force.

The target of this spell is instantly killed, burned down to ashes in a matter of seconds. However, the caster immediately suffers the same number of Wounds as were inflicted on the target – an effect which is often (though not always) lethal. This damage cannot be reduced or mitigated in any way, and if it is lethal the caster cannot avert death.

This spell will automatically fail if it targets a creature which is resistant to Fire, and it cannot kill divine entities such as Fortunes.

Raises: The caster may extend the spell's range to Extreme in return for 2 Raises.

Destructive Wave

Ring/Mastery: Fire 4

Range: Short

Description: A highly potent offensive spell devised by the Isawa Elemental Masters, this prayer summons up a great mass of Fire kami which roll outward from the caster in a wave of searing flames. Every target in front of the caster, out to a distance of Short range, takes 6 Wounds. The raging flames make no distinction between ally and enemy – only the caster himself is immune to their effects.

Raises: The caster may extend the power of the Destructive Wave to Long range in exchange for 2 Raises.

The Dragon's Talon (Kuro's Fire)

Ring/Mastery: Fire 4

Range: Long

Description: A potent spell favored by the Phoenix Clan's Elemental Master of Fire, employed to devastating effect on the rare occasions when the Phoenix take the field of combat. In the

twelfth century Naka Kuro, the Grand Master of the Elements, also uses this spell and it comes to be called Kuro's Fire in his honor.

Regardless of its name, this spell calls on the power of the Dragon of Fire to strike down large numbers of lesser foes. When the prayer is completed, bolts of fire resembling the snarling heads of dragons streak out from the shugenja's hands, striking a number of different targets within Long range equal to 2x the caster's Fire. Each target suffers a number of Wounds equal to the caster's Fire. However, the nature of this spell is such that the Fire kami will only attack targets who they consider weak and unworthy; in game terms, the spell can only target Thugs and Characters of Insight Rank 1 or 2.

Raises: The caster may Raise to strike additional targets, adding a number of targets equal to his Fire for each Raise.

Earth Becomes Sky

Ring/Mastery: Earth 3

Range: Short

Description: This spell, a favorite of some of the Phoenix Clan's most famous Earth shugenja, summons up several huge boulders from the ground and hurls them through the air to strike one (or more) target creatures. The target suffers a number of Wounds equal to the caster's Earth Rank. These boulders are made of normal, mundane stone, and thus cannot bypass special abilities like Invulnerability; however, a powerful caster can infuse the boulders with the power of Jade.

Raises: The caster may Raise to add targets, at the rate of 1 target per Raise. (If the caster strikes multiple targets, the number of Wounds the rocks inflict is reduced by 1 for each additional target, to a minimum of 1 Wound per target.) The caster may infuse the rocks with the essence of Jade in exchange for 2 Raises.

The False Legion

Ring/Mastery: Air 5

Range: Long

Description: The majority of the Isawa are traditionally pacifists, and prefer to avert conflict rather than embrace it; this spell seeks to attain that goal by intimidating an enemy with an illusory army. The caster may create a number of illusory soldiers up to his Air Ring x100, all of which must be located within Long range. These false soldiers may be as detailed or as vague as the caster prefers (an example of vague would be "Crane bushi" while a detailed summoning would be "heavy infantry of the fourth Daidoji legion"), but the caster must be familiar with their real-world appearance in order for the spell to work. The illusory figures are fully mobile and will take whatever actions the caster desires as long as they do not move beyond Long range. They can be seen, heard, and even smelled, but have no physical substance and thus cannot physically interact with the world around them. The illusion lasts so long as the caster concentrates on maintaining it.

Raises: The caster may Raise to create additional illusory soldiers, at the rate of 100x Air Rank more soldiers per Raise.

Flight of Doves

Ring/Mastery: Air 2

Range: Short

Description: This spell was originally devised by the Shiba Illusionists, a specialized sub-group within the Phoenix Clan's shugenja traditions, and is one of their few contributions to the ways of magic in Rokugan. The spell is intended primarily for entertainment, but can sometimes have practical applications such as helping a scout describe his experiences to his lord.

The spell invokes the Air kami to “illustrate” a story being recounted by another individual designated by the caster. For a number of minutes equal to the caster’s Air x10, the spirits will supply a visual and auditory illusion to accompany the story, pulling the sounds and images from the mind of the storyteller. The resulting blend of story, sound, and imagery can be quite compelling, and Kakita storytellers have been known to seek out masters of this spell to assist their art.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the spell, adding another 10x Air minutes per Raise.

Freedom of the Air

Ring/Mastery: Air 4

Range: Short

Description: Although most shugenja know how to use Air spirits to fly in a slow and limited fashion, the Phoenix have mastered the true power of the wind’s flight. If this spell targets the caster, it allows the caster to fly freely through the air at tremendous speed – taking a number of Move Actions each Round equal to his Air in addition to his normal Action. If this spell is cast on another willing target, the caster may move that target through the air at the same rate of speed (the target cannot control the movement). A skilled caster can choose an unwilling target with this spell, but in such instances the target may resist the spell’s effects with a Contested Roll of Insight/Earth against the caster’s Insight/Air.

The effects of the spell last for a number of minutes equal to the caster’s Air; at the end of that time, the Air spirits lower the target gently to the ground. (However, if the spell is somehow dispelled before that time, the target will fall.)

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the spell, adding a number of minutes equal to his Air with each Raise. The caster must make 1 Raise to cast the spell on an unwilling target. The caster may add additional targets at the rate of 1 for 2 Raises.

Jurojin’s Balm

Ring/Mastery: Earth 2

Range: Touch

Description: The Phoenix are a clan which embraces mercy and compassion, showing sympathy for those afflicted with needless pain and sickness. This spell fills the target’s body with the purity and vigor of Earth, driving out poisons and impurities.

If the target is under the effects of any Debilitating Poison, or is afflicted by such a poison within a number of hours equal to the caster’s Earth, the poison is completely purged and negated. If the target is afflicted by a Lethal Poison during the same time period, he may re-roll any failed Stamina roll to mitigate the effects of the poison, with a bonus of +1k1 to the second roll. This bonus also applies to any Medicine roll made by another Character to treat the target’s poisoning. Finally, if the target is afflicted by a disease or infection, he may make a Stamina roll at a TN of 20 to be immediately cured.

An interesting side-effect of this spell is that it also cures drunkenness and other forms of intoxication, and makes it impossible for the target to become intoxicated for the duration of the spell.

Raises: The caster may Raise to improve the bonus to resist poison (increasing it to +2k2 in exchange for 1 Raise) or to decrease the TN to be cured of illness (lowering it by 5 in exchange for 1 Raise).

Peace of the Kami

Ring/Mastery: Water 5

Range: Touch

Description: The benevolence of the Water Dragon is without measure. This spell is the ultimate example of Water's healing powers, infusing the target's *chi* with such immense strength that he can be snatched back from the very brink of death. The target is instantly healed a number of Wounds equal to 2x the caster's Water Rank.

Raises: The caster may heal additional Wounds equal to the his Water Rank in return for 1 Raise.

Piercing the Heavens

Ring/Mastery: Air 5

Range: N/A

Description: This spell is a secret of the Phoenix Elemental Council and has never been shared with anyone else; a Phoenix shugenja must be Insight Rank 5 to be even considered for the possibility of learning the spell. It is considered a sacred trust among the most high-ranking of Phoenix priests, and not even all of the Elemental Masters have been found worthy of its power... for to abuse this prayer is to call down the very wrath of Heaven.

This prayer calls for the direct attention of a Fortune (chosen by the shugenja). It may only be performed within a temple or shrine specifically devoted to that Fortune, and may never be cast more than once a month lest it anger the entirety of Tengoku. If the spell is successfully cast, a mote of the Fortune's essence will manifest within the shrine's sacred icon and the shugenja will be permitted to briefly commune with the divine being. The Fortune is neither compelled to answer questions nor to fulfill boons requested, and the utmost reverence must be maintained lest its immediate and terrible wrath be unleashed. However, if true reverence is offered and the cause is worthy, the Fortune may offer help available nowhere else.

Power of the Earth Dragon

Ring/Mastery: Earth 5

Range: Short

Description: This spell is the most powerful of the physically protective Earth spells, calling on the favor of the Dragon of Earth to enshroud the chosen target (which may be the caster himself) with protection against all forms of harm. The Earth spirits absorb all damage inflicted on that person for a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Earth x2. However, there are limits to even Earth's endurance – if the Earth spirits protecting the target absorb a total number of Wounds equal to the caster's Earth x10, they will be exhausted and the spell's benefits for that target come to an end. Also, powerful *nemuranai* and uniquely potent beings such as Fortunes can bypass the spell's protection at the GM's discretion.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the spell, adding a number of Rounds equal at his Earth for 1 Raise. The caster may also Raise to protect additional targets, at the rate of 1 target per Raise.

Prison of Earth

Ring/Mastery: Earth 5

Range: Short

Description: Although the Kuni family shugenja are the most skilled masters of binding spells, the Phoenix have also studied this path, and their Earth shugenja devised this spell to imprison the essence of dangerous spirits and demons for as long as they might desire. Casting this spell requires the caster to possess a gem or pearl in which to imprison the creature. (The GM may, discretionally, allow other rare or precious items to be used, such as a beautifully inlaid puzzle-box or a crystal pendant.) The spell can target any creature native to the realms of Jigoku, Gaki-Do, or Toshigoku, as well as any non-human creature with at least 1 full Rank of Taint.

After casting the spell, the caster must make a Contested Willpower roll against the target. If the caster wins, the creature vanishes and its essence is imprisoned within the item. It will

remain there indefinitely unless the item is physically destroyed. If that happens, the released creature immediately resumes its physical form, and will most likely seek vengeance against the caster... or his descendants.

Raises: The caster may Raise to boost his Contested Willpower roll, at the rate of +1k1 per Raise.

Purity of Shinsei

Ring/Mastery: Fire 2

Range: Short

Description: This spell was originally devised by the Isawa to deal with the threat from the strange magic of the Yobanjin barbarians. The spell calls on Shinsei's principles of Elemental unity and harmony to oppose unnatural foreign magic, using the energy of Fire as a focus.

Purity of Shinsei ends the effects of any *gaijin* spell or spell-like effect. Typically this means targeting an individual who is being afflicted by an ongoing *gaijin* spell effect (such as a samurai laboring under a foreign curse), though it can also target a magical effect which is not afflicting a specific individual (such as a foreign curse on a castle, a village, or a physical item). The GM has final discretion on whether a particular *gaijin* magic effect can be countered with Purity of Shinsei.

Raises: The caster may Raise to bestow the Purity of Shinsei on additional targets, at the rate of 1 target per Raise.

Silent Waters

Ring/Mastery: Water 4

Range: Self

Description: The memory of the ocean is infinite. *Silent Waters* is among the most ingenious of all Phoenix spells, a prayer that allows a skilled shugenja to 'store' spells for later use. After successfully casting this spell, the caster must immediately cast a second spell from any Element; this spell must be Mastery Level 4 or lower. If the second spell is successfully cast, it does not take effect but instead is 'stored' within the caster, bound in place by the Water kami until a specific triggering event takes place. The caster must specify this trigger at the time of casting – examples of suitable triggers include speaking a specific word, drawing a blade, or being struck by an enemy. Whatever the trigger occurs, the stored spell immediately takes effect.

A character cannot have multiple *Silent Waters* in place at the same time. Also, ritual spells cannot be 'stored' with *Silent Waters*, and some non-ritual spells may fail to work properly – the GM should use good judgment in considering whether a specific spell can actually be stored and used with *Silent Waters*.

A spell 'stored' with *Silent Waters* must be used by the end of the session – otherwise, it dissipates. Also, so long as a *Silent Waters* is in effect, the caster may not recover the spell-slots for *Silent Waters* and the 'stored' spell.

Water's Sweet Clarity

Ring/Mastery: Water 5 (Ritual)

Range: Self

Description: Although several shugenja schools make a study of the art of Divination, here as always the Phoenix excel. This spell calls on Water's aspect of augury to evoke enigmatic visions of the future. The spell is a ritual, requiring the caster to focus on a body of water for at least ten minutes while casting; at the end of that time, the caster may ask one question about the future, and the Water kami will offer an answer.

This answer always takes the form of three separate images – these may be connected in any number of ways, such as events occurring over time or three different aspects of the same event. Any other persons who are present will also see these visions on the surface of the water.

Interpreting the visions is up to those who see them, although the GM may choose to allow Skill rolls to help puzzle out their meaning.

Within the Waves

Ring/Mastery: Water 4

Range: Self

Description: This spell was originally devised by Isawa shugenja trying to locate the legendary undersea kingdom which was supposedly the home of Shiba's wife. Although they never succeeded in that goal, the spell they created has seen considerable use in the centuries since.

Within the Waves persuades the Water kami to hold themselves away from the caster in a spherical shape, thereby forming an air bubble around him. The caster can move the bubble by concentrating, allowing him to explore freely beneath the surface of a river, lake, or even the ocean. Other persons can enter and leave the bubble by swimming, and a skilled caster can carry a few passengers along within the bubble's center. The spell lasts for a number of hours equal to the caster's Water, and at the end of that time the Water kami push the bubble (and its occupants) to the surface.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the spell, adding a number of hours equal to his Water for 1 Raise. The caster may also Raise to carry additional persons within the bubble, at the rate of 1 person per Raise.

Scorpion Clan Secret Spells:

Cloak of Night

Ring/Mastery: Air 2

Range: Touch

Description: This spell persuades the Air kami to conceal an object from the sight of mortal eyes. One non-living object (smaller than the caster) becomes invisible to the naked eye for a number of hours equal to the caster's Air. The item can still be detected magically, but only if the opposing shugenja succeeds in a Contested Insight/Air roll against the caster. Also, note that the object can still be perceived with other senses (touch, smell, etc).

Raises: The caster can Raise to extend the duration of the spell, adding a number of hours equal to his Air with 1 Raise.

Cloud the Mind

Ring/Mastery: Air 5

Range: Touch

Description: This spell would be considered blasphemous by most shugenja – if they knew about it, for it is one of the most closely guarded secrets of the Scorpion Clan. The spell persuades the Air kami to invade the target's mind, confusing his memories and making it difficult for him to recall what has happened over the last day (24 hours). Moreover, a truly skilled (and truly unscrupulous) shugenja can actually use this spell to implant false memories in the target to replace those which have been deleted.

Each time the target tries to clearly remember anything that happened during that time, he must win a Contested Roll of Insight/Willpower against the caster's Insight/Air. Otherwise, he is unable to remember anything but a vague formless blur.

The Commune spell (using Air) can detect that the target's memories have been magically altered, if the right questions are asked.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the length of time for which memories are erased, at the rate of 1 additional day (24 hours) per Raise. The caster may implant false memories with 2 Raises.

Essence of Air

Ring/Mastery: Air 4

Range: Self

Description: Air can be merged with the essence of a mortal, and doing so can impart tremendous abilities, albeit at some risk. This spell allows the caster to mix with the wind itself and become both insubstantial and invisible. He may not interact with any physical objects while insubstantial, but he does remain on the ground. No physical touch and no non-magical vision can detect his presence, although he can still be heard and smelled. He can pass through solid objects at a rate of one foot per Round. (If the spell expires while the caster is doing this, the consequences are immediately fatal). The caster may not cast any other spells until he returns to solidity.

These effects normally last for a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Air x2, but the spell can be ended immediately by the caster choosing to physically attack someone – the Air kami consider this to be ruining the joke, and immediately halt the spell's effects.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the spell, adding a number of Rounds equal to his Air for 1 Raise.

Hidden Visage

Ring/Mastery: Air 2

Range: Self

Description: This spell exploits the Air kami's enjoyment of anything they perceive as a joke. They create a subtle illusion that alters the caster's facial features, making him appear to be a different person (but not specifically copying someone else). The caster still appears to be the same gender and roughly the same age and build. This illusion lasts for a number of hours equal to the caster's Air.

An observer who knows the caster and makes a successful Contested Roll of Investigation/Perception against the caster's Insight/Air will recognize a "family resemblance" between the illusion and the caster's normal face.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the spell, adding a number of hours equal to his Air for 1 Raise.

The Kami's Whisper

Ring/Mastery: Air 2

Range: Short

Description: The kami of the wind can carry the softest whispers for great distances, and can even create sounds. The caster petitions the kami to create a sound, either a voice or a natural sound such as an animal's growl or running water. The sound can be created anywhere within Short range. If the spell is used to create the sound of a voice, it cannot impersonate a specific person and is limited to a brief sentence. Normally, the sound cannot be louder than a normal speaking voice, although skilled shugenja can exceed this limit.

Raises: The caster may create a loud noise (such as a shout) in exchange for 1 Raise. The caster can extend the range of the spell to Long range in exchange for 1 Raise.

Know the Mind

Ring/Mastery: Air 3

Range: Short

Description: The Air kami can hear the surface thoughts and emotions of mortals, and this spell exploits that ability. The caster can sense of the surface thoughts of one target person for a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Air. This picks up things the target is actively thinking about, immediate reactions to what is happening around them, and so forth, but cannot ferret out underlying motives or memories.

The caster also gets a +2k2 bonus to any Social Skill rolls made against the target while the spell is in effect.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the spell, adding a number of Rounds equal to his Air for 1 Raise.

Legion of the Moon

Ring/Mastery: Air 5

Range: Short

Description: The Moon can reveal what is hidden, but also conceals those who receive its blessings. This spell uses the Air kami to conceal a large group of people, completely obscuring them from sight. Every individual the caster chooses (within Short range) is rendered invisible to all normal sight for the duration of the spell. Those the caster chooses to exclude from the spell are not affected.

The Air spirits will cease to hide anyone who physically interacts with others; barring that, the spell will last for a number of minutes equal to 3x the caster's Air.

Raises: The caster may extend the duration of the spell, adding a number of minutes equal to his Air for 1 Raise.

Unicorn Clan Secret Spells:

Chi Reversal

Ring/Mastery: Water 5

Range: Touch

Description: Much like the healing spell *Path to Inner Peace*, this prayer invokes Water's connection to the flow of *chi* energy through the body, taking control of that flow in order to alter the target's balance of energy. However, instead of healing injuries, this spell uses the manipulation of *chi* to change the balance of the target's Elements. One "pair" of the target's mental and physical Traits from the same Element (chosen by the caster) have their Ranks flipped for the duration of the spell. Thus, if the caster chose to affect a target's Fire Traits, an Intelligence of 2 and Agility of 4 would become an Intelligence of 4 and an Agility of 2. The effects last for a number of hours equal to the caster's Water.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the spell, adding a number of hours equal to his Water for 1 Raise. The caster may also use Raises to affect additional pairs of Traits, at the rate of 1 Raise per additional pair.

Master of the Rolling River

Ring/Mastery: Water 5

Range: Short

Description: This spell was created by battle-shugenja of the Iuchi family and in modern times it is a favorite in the Baraunghar army. It infuses a military unit with the flowing speed and relentless strength of Water, allowing the soldiers to move more quickly and strike more powerfully on the battlefield. The caster chooses one group of allies (up to roughly a squadron) within Short range to receive this blessing; all troops (and mounts) in that unit may take a bonus Move Action every Round (in addition to their normal Action, which can also be Move) and are

considered to have a Strength 1 Rank higher. These effects can stack with those of other Water spells that produce similar effects (such as *Speed of the Waterfall*). The spell lasts for a number of minutes equal to 3x the caster's Water.

This spell normally only benefits samurai, but a skilled caster can extend to the blessing to cover other allies.

This spell may be used to affect Mass Battle resolution (see the Mass Battle rules later in this chapter). Each casting of the spell during a Mass Battle awards a +1k0 bonus to the commanding general's next Battle Skill roll to determine winning or losing.

Raises: The caster may Raise to allow the spell to affect non-samurai. 1 Raise will allow the spell to affect non-samurai humans (e.g. ashigaru), while 2 Raises will allow it to affect non-human allies such as Naga or Ratlings.

Seed of Qanan

Ring/Mastery: Water 3

Range: Touch

Description: Based on *gaijin* magic, this Unicorn spell uses the Water kami's control over internal energy to briefly create a temporary connection between two people, merging their *chi* and allowing them to call on each others' knowledge and skill. The targets must be touched simultaneously by the caster to establish the initial link of Water kami, and must remain within Short range of each other for the link to continue functioning – if this distance is exceeded, the spell immediately ends.

In game terms, the linked people are able to use each others' Skills, employing whichever Skill Rank is higher for a given task. The effect lasts for a number of Rounds equal to their combined Water Ranks.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration, adding the same number of Rounds (combined total of both targets' Water) for 1 Raise.

Speed of the Waterfall

Ring/Mastery: Water 2

Range: Touch

Description: Those filled with the essence of water find their physical movement is far faster than ever before. The target of this spell may take a Move Action every Round in addition to his normal Action (which can also be Move), and gains a +3k0 bonus to any Athletics Skill roll that involves moving over, past, or around a physical obstacle. The effect lasts for a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Water.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the spell, adding a number of rounds equal to his Water for 1 Raise.

Strength of the Tsunami

Ring/Mastery: Water 2

Range: Touch

Description: This spell calls on Water's affinity to physical strength. The surge of Water kami through the body briefly enhances the muscles, allowing the target to perform prodigious feats. For a number of Rounds equal to the caster's Water, the target's Strength Rank is increased by an amount equal to the caster's Water. (This cannot raise the Strength Rank higher than 6.)

Raises: The caster may Raise to increase the duration of the spell, adding a number of Rounds equal to his Water for 1 Raise.

Steed of the Ebbing Tides

Ring/Mastery: Water 4

Range: N/A

Description: Devised by the Iuchi during their long journeys through the gaijin lands, this prayer summons forth a number of powerful Water kami who take the physical form of a watery, translucent horse. Once created, the Steed lasts a number of hours equal to the caster's Water, and will serve either the caster or one other person (chosen by the caster at the time the Steed is summoned), functioning exactly the same as a normal horse – e.g. it can be controlled with the Horsemanship Skill. It is untiring and will fight selflessly in its rider's defense; for game purposes, the Steed is considered to have the same mechanical statistics as an Otaku Warhorse (see sidebar in the Unicorn Schools section of the *Chapter of Fire*), but also has Invulnerability and Carapace 4 due to its magical nature. If the spell expires or the Steed is actually "slain," the Steed collapses into normal water – which can be an unpleasant surprise if someone is still mounted on it.

Raises: The caster can Raise to extend the duration of the spell, adding a number of hours equal to his Water for 1 Raise.

Tenjin's Ear

Ring/Mastery: Air 3

Range: Self

Description: Named after the Fortune of Scribes, this invocation is derived from the Unicorn Clan's secret *Meishodo* magic. It persuades the Air kami to carry the true meaning of words to the caster's ear, allowing him to perceive the tongue of foreigners. For a number of minutes equal to the caster's Air x3, all audible human speech within Short range is made intelligible to him, regardless of what language is used.

The spell does not grant any enhanced hearing (so whispers still cannot be heard), nor does it bestow any capacity to speak in return.

Raises: The caster may Raise to extend the duration of the spell, adding a number of minutes equal to 3x his Air for each Raise. The caster may also Raise to change the spell's range to Touch (allowing the caster to bestow the spell on an ally) – this requires 2 Raises.

Different Paths (Alternate and Elite)

All of Rokugan's samurai Schools began as a single Technique, developed by an inspired visionary and taught to others. Over time, such Techniques often evolve into Schools as their founders (and the successors to those founders) develop additional Techniques that build on the first one. However, sometimes a Technique can be sufficient unto itself, particularly if it is taught within a smaller group that lacks the numbers and resources to develop it, or is associated with membership in a highly selective elite. These isolated unique Techniques are known as Paths, and they fall into two categories: Alternate Paths and Elite Paths.

Alternate Paths

These represent secondary traditions within Clans and families that have not been able to develop into full-fledged Schools. Generally they replace a School Technique at a specific Insight Rank. Some of them are limited to replacing the Technique of a specific School, while others are available more broadly – to any Bushi School, for example, or even to any member of that Clan.

Most Alternate Paths also have specific prerequisites for admission, such as having enough Ranks in a particular Skill or a high enough Rank in a particular Trait or Element.

When a Character learns an Alternate Path, he replaces his School's normal Technique at that Rank with that Path, then (usually) returns to his School for the remaining Techniques. A shugenja Character will learn the Path Technique in place of the two spells he would normally

gain for advancing in Rank. Thus, a Bushi Character who learns a Rank 3 Alternate Path will learn his School's Techniques for Ranks 1 and 2, learn the Path, then go on to his School's Rank 4 and 5 Techniques (if applicable).

There are two Paths which are exceptions to this "return to your School" rule – the Crab Berserkers and the Lion Deathseekers. See the descriptions of those Paths for the special rules that apply to them.

Elite Paths

These Paths are special training that is only available to the members of small, exclusive, highly-revered groups within certain Clans. They are associated with the most ancient traditions and the most highly advanced training. Elite Paths are all Insight Rank 6 and always have additional mechanical requirements (Skills and Traits/Rings) to qualify for admission. Since they are Insight Rank 6, they do not replace an existing Technique; Elite Paths thus allow the Character to add one additional Technique beyond the 5 Techniques taught by his School.

Joining a Path

Admission to a Path, regardless of whether it is Alternate or Elite, is never automatic. A Character who wishes to join a Path must earn the privilege in-game, through role-play and personal accomplishment. At a bare minimum, the Character must win the approval of both his normal sensei (teacher) in his School and the sensei of the Path. Joining an Elite Path may also require permission from much higher-ranked individuals, possibly even the family daimyo or the Clan Champion. The GM has the final say on whether a Character can gain admission to a Path.

It should be noted that while all Great Clans have at least a couple of Paths, not all of them have Elite Paths. The Crab Clan, for example, has neither the time nor the resources to develop such things.

Crab Clan Alternate Paths:

Crab Berserker

The Crab Berserkers are a unique phenomenon of the Clan – samurai who, faced with the unbearable horrors of the Shadowlands, respond by abandoning some of their own humanity and entering an exalted state in which they feel no pain and fight with incredible ferocity until they are killed. Some of them do this by plunging into a frothing rage, while others become "dead-eyes" whose emotions vanish into an icy killing frenzy, but the end result is the same: Warriors who will not stop until they or their foes are dead.

A Crab samurai does not "train" to become a Berserker. Doing so is a spontaneous event, a reaction to a warrior being put under impossible stresses. This is a role-played event, one the GM and Player should agree is valid for the Character. Once this mental "break" occurs, the Character takes the Berserker Path at his next Insight Rank and can never learn any more Techniques from his previous School – the way of the berserker is all-consuming.

Rank: Any above 1

Replaces: All ranks thereafter

Prerequisites: Character experiences an event that puts him on the path of the Berserker.

Technique – Berserker's Rage.

You may enter a berserk state at the start of your Turn on any Round of a skirmish. Once begun, the berserk state lasts a number of Rounds equal to your Earth plus your Insight Rank, although you may end it early by spending a Void Point. While in the berserk state, you always use the Full Attack Tactic, can only use melee attacks, gain a +2k2 bonus to those attack rolls (this stacks with the normal Full Attack bonus), and must attack the nearest target – friend or foe – every

Round. You ignore all penalties and effects from Wounds (including Death's Door and outright death) as long as the berserk state lasts; they take full effect immediately when it ends.

Kuni Exorcist [Shugenja]

The Kuni family's primary focus is the destruction of the Shadowlands and the Taint, both within and without the Empire, but they also study the ways of other evil spirits such as ghosts, gaki, and yokai. These spirits are known to possess mortals, as are oni and even Bloodspeaker sorcerers, and a small sect within the Kuni specializes in driving out these possessions when they occur.

Rank: 4

Replaces: Kuni Shugenja 4

Prerequisites: Perception 4, Investigation 3, Lore: Spirits 3

Technique – Purge the Darkness.

You can identify a case of possession (whether by ghosts, gaki, yokai, oni, maho-tsukai, or any other entity) by making an Investigation/Perception roll at a base TN of 25 (the GM can adjust the TN for entities which are easier or more difficult to notice). A Raise can identify the specific nature of the possessing being. You can exorcise a possessed person or animal by expending an Earth spell-slot and making a successful Contested Willpower roll against the possessing entity. (This is a ritual requiring several minutes and thus cannot be done in a skirmish.)

Yasuki Taskmaster

Yasuki who serve in the Crab armies are rare, and due to their skills at commerce are often placed in charge of logistics and organization, including the organization and training of ashigaru forces. This eventually gave rise to a specialized dojo, the Taskmasters, which focuses on commanding low-ranking soldiers, ashigaru, and even non-human creatures. Although those taught by the dojo can be from any family, the sensei are usually Yasuki.

Rank: 2

Replaces: Hida Bushi 2, Yasuki Merchant 2

Prerequisites: Willpower 3, Intimidation 4

Technique: Fear is a Gift.

The Yasuki believe the best way to make peasant soldiers face the horrors of the Shadowlands is to make them even more afraid of their own commanders. You treat Intimidation as a Bugei Skill rather than a Low Skill. You may use Willpower as your Trait on any Battle Skill roll, and may use your Intimidation Skill Rank in place of your Battle Skill Rank when rolling on the Mass Battle Table. Any soldiers (peasant or otherwise) under your command may use your Intimidation Skill Rank in place of their Insight Rank when rolling to resist Fear.

Crane Clan Alternate Paths:

Asahina Tsangusuri Artisan [Shugenja]

The Asahina, a shugenja family known for their peaceful nature, are also known as artists who work in magic with the same skill as the Kakita work in other mediums. The works they create, known as tsangusuri or "fetishes," are beautiful items which also function as minor, single-use magical items.

Rank: 3

Replaces: Asahina Shugenja 3

Prerequisites: Any one Artisan Skill at Rank 4 or higher.

Technique – The World in the Palm of the Hand.

You may create an Asahina fetish and imbue it with a Mastery Rank 1 spell with a week's work (at the GM's option, this can take place between game sessions) and a roll of Artisan /

Intelligence at a TN of 20. Once created, the fetish's power can be activated by anyone... by destroying the fetish (requires an Action). Fetishes are usually made in the form a small, readily-transported art items, such as a fan, a small painting, an origami, or a piece of jewelry. The maximum number of fetishes you can have in existence at one time is equal to your Void + Insight Rank – at that point, you cannot make any more until at least one is used.

With the GM's permission, a fetish can house a more powerful spell (up to Mastery Level 3) with a higher TN. Such powerful fetishes are rare and a Character cannot create more than one of these at a time.

Daidoji Harrier Path [Elite]

The exact origins of the Daidoji Harriers are obscure and mysterious. The Crane established a covert training site for unconventional tactics in the ruins of Shiro Giji in the year 330, but for many generations that facility was used merely to train selected Daidoji Scouts in the more ruthless and pragmatic sort of fighting methods. However, at some point the training at Shiro Giji took on a darker and less honorable tone, focusing on the use of truly heinous methods such as poison and assassination. The final turning point seems to have been the decision to covertly manufacture and use “gaijin pepper” (gunpowder), whose secrets were discovered after the defeat of the gaijin in the Battle of White Stag.

By their very nature, Harriers are extremely unlikely to be part of a group of “adventuring samurai,” although a clever GM and Player may be able to come up with a justification. Much like the Shosuro Assassins and Shosuro Butei in the *Chapter of Fire*, the Harriers are a group which is far more likely to appear in the game as opposition to the Player Characters than as one of their own.

Rank: 6 [Elite]

Replaces: N/A.

Prerequisites: Stealth 5, Reflexes 4, Character must be Rank 5 Daidoji Scout.

Technique – Unforgiving Steel.

The Harriers are taught to sacrifice their own Honor for the sake of the greater good of the Crane Clan (as they perceive it), defeating their enemies without regard to method. You gain access to gaijin pepper (gunpowder). When wearing light armor, ashigaru armor, or no armor, you gain a +1k1 bonus to your Defense Skill rolls. Any time you strike an enemy with a ranged or melee attack, you may opt to Daze them with 1 Raise, or to Stun them with 3 Raises.

Doji Magistrate

Since the early days of the Empire, the Doji family has taken on the task of maintaining order and peace within the Crane lands, a tradition that actually pre-dates more well-known law-enforcement traditions such as the Emerald Magistrates. Over time, a Technique emerged in the Doji Academy in support of this duty. In contrast to other “magistrate” traditions, the Doji Magistrate technique is focused primarily on maintaining peace and order within the Clan's settlements rather than on investigation.

Rank: 3

Replaces: Doji Courtier 3, Kakita Bushi 3, Daidoji Iron Warrior 3

Prerequisites: Knives 3, Polearms 3, Perception 4

Technique – Strike of the Just.

The Doji Magistrates are trained to suppress troublemakers and criminals non-lethally, in keeping with the traditions of Doji's compassion. You gain a +1k1 bonus to any Skill rolls using the jitte, sai, sodegarami, and sasumata.

Kakita Kenshinzen [Elite]

The Kenshinzen claim to trace their history to Kakita Shimizu, son of Kakita himself, who became the first true iaijutsu master and is said to have traveled the Empire in the company of Hantei Genji, the Shining Prince. Whether this is true or not, the Kenshinzen are among the most ancient and revered of the Elite Paths, and only the finest and most accomplished of duelists are permitted to train in their single dojo in Kyuden Kakita. The GM must judge whether a Player Character has earned the right to such training.

Rank: 6 [Elite]

Replaces: N/A.

Prerequisites: Iaijutsu 5, Fire 4, Void 4. Character must be a Rank 5 Kakita Bushi.

Technique – A Single Moment.

The Kenshinzen can sense the moments between heartbeats, allowing him to strike at the exact instant needed. You gain a +1k1 bonus on Strike rolls in an iaijutsu duel. (This stacks with the bonus from winning the Focus roll, if applicable.) If you successfully inflict at least 1 Wound on an opponent in a skirmish, you may spend a Void Point to cause that opponent to be Dazed until the end of your next Turn.

Dragon Clan Alternate Paths:

Student of Kagaku (Agasha Alchemist) [Shugenja]

The Agasha family's intense studies of alchemy trace their origins back to Agasha herself, who left behind a mysterious document called *Nazo Bubun no Agasha*. In the ninth century, Agasha Daijoku deciphered the symbols in the document and used the knowledge there to develop the art of Kagaku. The items created with Kagaku are often viewed by the rest of Rokugan as minor *nemuranai*, but in fact have no magical properties and are created entirely using the Agasha family's knowledge of the natural elements.

Rank: 2

Replaces: Agasha Shugenja 2, Tamori Shugenja 2

Prerequisites: Craft (Kagaku) 3, Intelligence 3

Technique – Agasha's Secrets.

You can create alchemical items with a week's work (with the GM's permission, this can take place between sessions) and a roll of Craft (Kagaku)/Intelligence at TN 25. Once created, a Kagaku item can be used by anyone, requiring only an Action to do so, but in the process the alchemical reaction consumes and destroys it. The abilities of Kagaku items are modest but unique; the accompanying sidebar lists the most well-known items and the Player and GM can use this as inspiration for creating other such items.

Mirumoto Master Sensei (Hojatsu's Legacy) [Elite]

The so-called Master Sensei of the Mirumoto family are a tiny elite group who have pursued the perfection of not just their swordsmanship but also their bodies and spirits. It is said that Mirumoto Hojatsu was the first of them, and their tradition is sometimes referred to colloquially as "Hojatsu's Legacy." They are very few in number, far rarer than the Crane Kenshinzen, and seldom leave their remote dojo to visit the rest of the Empire. Earning admission to the ranks of the Master Sensei is a different process for each samurai, as the unconventional Dragon Clan judges each of its members individually; this should be primarily a role-play process between the Player Character and the GM.

Rank: 6 [Elite]

Replaces: N/A.

Prerequisites: Fire 4, Kenjutsu 5, Iaijutsu 5, Void 4. Character must be a Rank 5 Mirumoto Bushi.

Technique – The Sword and the Soul.

The Master Sensei knows that the sword can bring moments of perfect harmony just like art or meditation. Any time you make 3 (or more) Raises on a Kenjutsu or Iaijutsu roll, you regain 1 Void Point. (This can grant “extra” Void Points beyond your normal maximum, but the extra points must be used by the end of the current skirmish/duel or they are lost.)

Kagaku Creations

The Agasha have developed a variety of different Kagaku items over the years. The following list comprises the most well-known ones which all Kagaku students can make. In general, the powers of these items are limited compared to spells, but have the advantage of being non-magical and thus able to be used in situations where magic is difficult or unavailable.

- **Moeagaru (Flash Paper):** This is thin paper treated with a substance that ignites with friction. Rubbing the paper causes it to ignite brightly and be consumed in an instant. Flash paper can be used to distract or, if ignited near the eyes, to Blind someone for one Round. (Reflexes at TN 15 to close their eyes in time to avoid blinding.)
- **Hanabi (Fireworks):** These are used primarily for entertainment at religious festivals, and the Dragon Clan very firmly insists the substances within are not the same as “gaijin pepper” (gundpowder). Hanabi which detonate on or close to someone will cause burns (1 to 3 Wounds, depending on the size of the hanabi) and can also temporarily or even permanently blind or deafen.
- **Hinemuri (Sleeping Fire):** This is a thin transparent fluid that evaporates only very slowly (requiring days) and reacts violently to changes in temperature. For example, a surface coating of Hinemuri can ignite if it is warmed by direct sunlight or cooled by water.
- **Ekitai Kemuri (Liquid Smoke):** This is a thick gummy liquid that, if set alight, releases a huge quantity of harsh, choking black smoke. Liquid Smoke will create visual obscurement within Short Range and also inflicts a 1-die penalty on anyone who inhales it (the penalty lasts for a day).
- **Kitsuki Powder:** Developed by the Agasha to assist their Kitsuki cousins, this soft gray powder has a peculiar affinity for bare fingerprints and footprints and for human blood. If it is scattered over an area, it will adhere to any footprints or hand/fingerprints made with bare skin in the last 24 hours, and to any bloodstains made in the same time-frame.

Lion Clan Alternate Paths:

Akodo War College

A long-standing saying in Rokugan is “An army led by an Akodo general has never lost a battle,” and while this is not literally true, there is no question that the Akodo are the finest generals in Rokugan. Those Akodo bushi who show a particular aptitude for battlefield command are enrolled in the ancient and prestigious War College dojo in the Castle of the Swift Sword. There they study the history of war in Rokugan, learning of every victory and every defeat, mastering every subtle art of warfare.

Rank: 4

Replaces: Akodo Bushi 4

Prerequisites: Water 3, Intelligence 4, Battle 4

Technique – The Eyes of the General.

If you are in command of an army fighting a Mass Battle, you add +1k1 to your Opposed Roll against the enemy commander. If you are rolling on the Mass Battle Table, you add 2x your Water to the roll (instead of 1x Water) and always receive a Heroic Opportunity regardless of the result.

Kitsu Sodan-Senzo [Elite, Shugenja]

A small number of the Kitsu can trace a direct bloodline to the original five kitsu who became human, and this can grant them abilities beyond those of other members of their family. Those who manifest this gift are taught a secret Technique that enables them to project their souls into the spirit realms or even to enter them physically. In game terms, the Sodan-Senzo are uniquely powerful yet also extremely limited in when their power is useful; as such, they are far more appropriate for Non-Player Characters, and the GM should discuss and consider carefully before allowing a Player Character to join their ranks.

Rank: 6 [Elite]

Replaces: N/A.

Prerequisites: Water 4, Void 4, Meditation 5. Character must be a Rank 5 Kitsu shugenja.

Technique – Soul of the Kitsu.

You can detect the presence of portals to the other spirit realms within Long Range with a roll of Spellcraft/Perception at TN 25. You may make a Meditation/Void Skill Roll at TN 30 to project your soul into the realms of Meido, Yomi, or Toshigoku. With a Raise on the roll you may undertake this journey physically rather than just spiritually, and when doing this you may bring other persons with you at the rate of 1 per additional Raise.

Lion Deathseeker

On rare occasions, a Lion samurai who has dishonored himself to the point of *seppuku* may instead be granted a chance to purge his dishonor by dying heroically on the battlefield, slaying the Lion Clan's enemies. Such samurai are admitted to the ranks of the Deathseeker order and, if they survive long enough to reach their next Insight Rank, are taught the Deathseeker Technique to allow them to kill even more foes on their way to death. In game terms, the GM must decide whether a dishonored Lion Player Character will be permitted the option of becoming a Deathseeker.

In many ways, the Deathseeker Order is the honorable mirror to the Crab Berserkers. Like the Berserkers, admission may occur at any Insight Rank, subject to the role-play of the Character and the judgment of the GM. Once enlisted in the Deathseeker Order, the Character generally cannot learn any more Techniques from his former School – he is already dead to them. (There have been a few extraordinary instances of a Deathseeker surviving long enough to be declared as having restored his honor, but these are so rare as to verge on legend – there is only one example of this in the entire twelfth century, for example.)

Rank: Any above 1

Replaces: All ranks thereafter

Prerequisites: Character is dishonored, granted admission to the Deathseeker Order, and survives to his next Insight Rank.

Technique – Honor of the Lion.

You cannot use the Full Defense Tactic. When using the Full Attack Tactic, you may ignore all die-penalties (including for Wounds), although Death's Door and outright death apply normally. While in Death's Door you may roll to Stand Up and Fight as many times as you wish and do so with a +2k2 bonus. Regardless of your Tactic, you cannot seek or use healing (whether magical or mundane) during a Skirmish, though you can be healed afterward if you survive to the end of the fight.

The Lion's Pride [Elite]

Among the most famous military units in the Empire is the Lion's Pride, an elite legion comprised entirely of Matsu samurai-ko. The only man ever permitted to join its ranks is the heir to the Lion Clan Champion, who is required to spend a year among the Pride so that they are willing to take his orders once he ascends to rule of the Clan. The members of the Pride live, train, and fight together at all times, and their ferocity on the battlefield is second to none. Only the most accomplished and honorable of Matsu women are permitted to enter the exalted ranks of the Lion's Pride; the GM should adjudicate whether a Player Character qualifies.

Rank: 6 [Elite]

Replaces: N/A.

Prerequisites: Agility 5, Strength 5, Battle 5, at least four other Bugei Skills at 3 or higher, Honor Rank 3 or higher. Character must be female and a Rank 5 bushi of the Lion Clan (trained as Akodo Bushi or Matsu Bushi).

Technique – The Fury of Matsu.

The warriors of the Lion's Pride are taught to embrace their Honor with the utmost ferocity, overwhelming their enemies with their savage purity. During a skirmish or duel, any enemies within Short Range who have a lower Honor Rank than you cannot spend Void, Honor, Glory, or Infamy Points on their Skill rolls.

Mantis Clan Alternate Paths:

Mantis Fleet Captains

The Mantis Clan is a clan of sailors, smugglers, and pirates, and has been from its earliest history. Those who show particular aptitude for such activities are selected and trained in Kyuden Gotei for the demanding role of a ship's captain, taking command of the Mantis fighting vessels which form their three war-fleets. Such men focus on the arts of sailing, command, and battle rather than their own warrior skills, but in return can command the loyalty of an entire kobune and its crew.

In game terms, becoming a Fleet Captain is likely to move a Character into NPC status, although the GM and Players may be able to come up with justification for the Captain remaining a playable Character. (The most obvious way would be an all-Mantis or "pirate" campaign, but there are other options – perhaps the Captain and his ship are assigned to a special mission of patrolling Rokugan's coasts and rivers, allowing the other Characters to tag along as his friends and comrades.)

Rank: 3

Replaces: Mantis/Yoritomo Bushi 3

Prerequisites: Water 3, Sailing 4

Technique – Master of the Waves.

You gain +2k1 to your Sailing Skill rolls and +1k0 to all other Merchant Skills. When on board your ship, you may substitute your Sailing Skill for the Battle Skill in all situations (including Mass Battle) that would normally use the Battle Skill.

Special Rules: Upon completing training at Kyuden Gotei, you are given command of a Mantis war-kobune and your Status is increased to 4.0 (if it is not already at 4.0 or higher), while your Stipend increases by 10 koku. While on your ship, you are considered to outrank all other Mantis samurai aboard except those of Family Daimyo or higher station. (A ship can have only one commander.) You gain 30 Experience Points which may only be used to purchase the Servant Advantage (representing your crew).

Mantis Storm Riders [Shugenja]

The Storm Riders are the elite of the Mantis Clan's modest shugenja tradition, trained at Tempest Island Temple to serve as the potent heart of the Mantis Clan's fleets. They focus their studies on the ocean, the water kami, and their Clan's divine sponsor Osano-Wo, establishing an intimate connection to the waves and storms. They are notorious for their fearlessness and aggression at sea, even in the worst of *taifun* (storms).

Rank: 3

Replaces: Mantis/Yoritomo Shugenja 3. After the Hidden Emperor era, this Path can also replace Moshi Shugenja 3.

Prerequisites: Water 4, Athletics 3, Sailing 3.

Technique – The Raging Ocean.

You are a true master of the ocean and blessed with Osano-Wo's protection. You gain +1k0 to all Athletics and Sailing Skill Rolls. You may cast an additional number of Water spells each session equal to your Insight Rank. If you have the Blood of Osano-Wo Advantage, you may also cast the same number of additional Osano-Wo spells per session.

Phoenix Clan Alternate Paths:

Isawa Tensai [Shugenja]

The Isawa are the masters of elemental magic, and their elite order known as Tensai are trained to focus on one Element over all others. Those who show both great skill with magic and a special aptitude for a particular Element are asked to join the Tensai order and undergo special training to further enhance their strength in that Element... at the cost of weakening their connection to all other Elements. Being chosen as a Tensai is a significant honor, since the five Elemental Masters who rule the Phoenix Clan are always chosen from the ranks of the most accomplished Tensai in those Elements.

Rank: 2

Replaces: Isawa Shugenja 2

Prerequisites: Spellcraft 4, favored Element at Rank 4

Technique – Embrace the Elements.

You gain a +Xk0 bonus to your Spellcraft rolls when casting spells from your Favored Element, where X is your Insight Rank. When you subsequently go up in School Rank, you learn 4 new spells at each Rank (instead of 2), but all these new spells must be from your favored Element.

Phoenix Elemental Guard [Elite, Shugenja]

The Elemental Guard is one of the two elite military organizations maintained by the Phoenix Clan (the other being the Elemental Legions). There are four Elemental Guards, one for each Element, and the most powerful and loyal of Phoenix shugenja are recruited into their ranks, often by personal invitation by the Elemental Council. They serve as magical shock-troops for those rare occasions when the normally-peaceful Phoenix take to the field of war. In game terms, admission to this organization (or its bushi counterpart, the Elemental Legion) is left to the discretion of the GM; it should be remembered that members of the Guard are at the beck-and-call of the Council, and will thus find it difficult to continue to be "samurai adventurers."

Rank: 6

Replaces: N/A

Prerequisites: Spellcraft 5, Rank 5 in favored Element. Character must be a Rank 5 Isawa shugenja.

Technique – Master the Elements.

You may cast 3 additional spells per session from your favored Element, and gain a Free Raise on

all your Spellcraft rolls with that Element. During a skirmish, you may spend a Void Point on your Turn to add your Rank in that Element to your Defense Skill Rank until the start of your next Turn. If you are rolling on the Mass Battle Table, you may add your Spellcraft Skill Rank to your roll.

Phoenix Elemental Legions [Elite]

The martial counterpart to the Elemental Guard, the Legions are elite bushi formations – one for each Element – whose members are trained to fight alongside the Guard shugenja, harmonizing their physical combat skills with the shugenja’s magic. A combined force of Elemental Legions and Elemental Guard is a truly devastating opponent on the battlefield, though due to the Clan’s reluctance to wage war it is seldom seen. Much like with the Guard, membership in the Legions will tend to limit a Character’s freedom to travel the Empire and engage in adventures, and Players should keep this in mind if they decide to pursue the goal of having their Character become an Elemental Legionnaire.

Rank: 6

Replaces: N/A

Prerequisites: Defense 5, any one Weapon Skill 5, Rank 5 in the Legion’s Element. Character must be a Rank 5 Shiba Bushi.

Technique – Strength of the Five.

The Legionnaires are taught to harmonize their fighting spirit with the elemental kami unleashed by their shugenja allies. When a friendly shugenja within Short Range casts a spell of the same Element as your Legion’s Element, you gain 1 Void Point. If you already have full Void Points, you gain a “bonus” Void Point – you must use it by the end of the skirmish or it will fade away. If you are rolling on the Mass Battle Table, you may add your Void Rank to your roll.

Phoenix Inquisitors

The unique organization known as the Inquisitors is created by the Phoenix Elemental Council in the third century, in response to the corruption of Isawa Akuma (which led to the creation of the first and most terrible of the Oni Lords, Oni no Akuma). They are tasked with hunting down *maho*, the Taint, and other dangerous or illegal magic (such as gaijin magic). They wear a symbol of an open eye on their clothing (and sometimes tattoo it on their flesh), representing both their mystical Technique and their eternal vigilance against all threats.

Due to the long-standing rivalry between the Isawa and the Asako, the Inquisitors tend to attract Asako into their ranks and in some eras are popularly referred to as “Asako Inquisitors.” However, in truth the organization exists independently of either family’s rule and answers directly to the Elemental Council. The Inquisitors share in full the Phoenix attitude that magic is their Clan’s sole responsibility, and as a result tend to have a prickly relationship with other groups and organizations that investigate magical crimes (Witch Hunters, Kuroiban, Jade Magistrates, etc).

Rank: 3

Replaces: Isawa Shugenja 3, Asako Henshin 3, Asako Loremaster 3

Prerequisites: Investigation 3, Lore: Maho 3, Lore: Shugenja 3, Meditation 4, Void 4

Technique – The Eyes of the Inquisitors.

The Inquisitors are taught an esoteric spiritual technique, focusing their chi through their inner eye to disrupt and defeat illegal magic. Any time you are aware of a hostile spell being cast within Short Range of you, whether it is your Turn or not, you may immediately spend a Void Point to make a Contested Roll of your Meditation/Void against the enemy’s spellcasting roll (whatever that roll may be). If the spell is *maho* or gaijin magic, you gain +2k0 to your roll. If you win the Contested Roll, the enemy spell fails.

Scorpion Clan Alternate Paths:

Scorpion Elite Guard [Elite]

Every Great Clan has units of trusted and experienced bushi who they refer to as the “House Guard” or “Elite Guard.” The Scorpion also have a group they refer to by this name... but it is very, very different from the other Clans’ organizations. Trained in a single dojo in Kyuden Bayushi, the Elite Guard study other Clans’ fighting styles, learning specifically how to undermine and disrupt their techniques. When the Scorpion absolutely need to defeat another Clan’s samurai, they make sure to bring appropriate members of the Elite Guard to the fight.

Rank: 6

Replaces: N/A

Prerequisites: Lore (specific other Clan) 5, Kenjutsu 5. Character must be a Rank 5 Bayushi Bushi.

Technique – Eyes of My Enemy.

Select a specific Great Clan when you learn this Technique. When fighting a skirmish against a bushi from this Clan, you may spend a Void Point on your Turn to prevent them from using any of their School Techniques until the start of your next Turn. (This Technique may be used in a duel, and the effect lasts for one Step of the duel for each Void Point spent.)

Bayushi Eiyo’s Technique

During the Hidden Emperor era in the early twelfth century, the Scorpion Clan is exiled for a year to the Burning Sands. During that period, a samurai named Bayushi Eiyo encounters one of the legendary creatures called Ashalan and learns a fighting technique that disrupts the enemy’s fighting style; Eiyo later teaches this technique to a number of successors, though it does not last beyond that generation.

GMs who wish to depict Eiyo’s technique in their campaign can use the Elite Guard Path mechanics for this purpose.

Soshi Deceivers

The most secret of all Scorpion organizations, unknown even to most of those in the Assassin and Butei Schools, the Deceivers were founded by Shosuro herself in her second identity as “Soshi.” They make use of a sinister and mysterious power which they call *Tejina* or sometimes *Kage-do* – the magic of shadows. Ruthless and fanatical members of the Soshi and Shosuro families are recruited into the ranks of the Deceivers and taken to hidden dojos deep in the trackless forests of the Soshi lands, where they are trained in isolation and given strange marks called *kage yakiin* – Shadow Brands. The Brands grant bizarre and supernatural powers, but those who bear them find their own identity slowly slipping away, and some of those taken to these remote dojo never return.

In the twelfth century, the Scorpion finally realize the Deceivers were being used and manipulated all along by the sinister primordial force known as the Lying Darkness. The Deceivers are disbanded and their secret methods purged from the Clan. Thus, unless the GM wishes to change Rokugan’s history for his game, Deceivers are not an option for campaigns set after the Hidden Emperor era.

Ironically, the hyper-secret nature of the Deceivers makes them easier to integrate into a “normal” L5R campaign than the Assassins and Butei. Although the highest likelihood is still that the Deceivers will be adversaries for the Player Characters, the GM should find it relatively easy to integrate a covert Deceiver into an adventuring group... provided the Player of the Deceiver is willing to deal with the consequences.

Rank: 2

Replaces: Any Scorpion School at Rank 2

Prerequisites: Character must be Shosuro or Soshi family and role-play actions which draw favorable attention from the Deceiver dojo.

Technique – The Way of Shadows.

You receive a *kage yakiin* – a Shadow Brand – and gain an additional Shadow Brand with each subsequent Insight Rank (in addition to your School's normal Technique at that Rank). Each Shadow Brand awards you a +1k1 bonus to Stealth rolls and a +1k0 bonus to Athletics and Defense rolls. However, Shadow Brands are infused with the power of the Lying Darkness, and are likely to eventually corrupt you into a minion of Shadow. (See the Lying Darkness section later in this chapter for details.)

Scorpion Kuroiban (Black Watch) [Shugenja]

The so-called Black Watch, which hunts and purges the Taint and Shadowlands influence throughout the Empire (but especially in the Scorpion lands), is founded in the early sixth century by Yogo Itoju, in response to the first attack by the Bloodspeaker Iuchiban. Itoju received permission from the Emperor himself to create the organization, and in theory it answers directly to the Emperor, though in practice it reports to the Scorpion Clan Champion. As one might imagine, the Black Watch's activities do not receive much respect from the Phoenix Inquisitors, though the Kuni Witch Hunters afford them a grudging respect.

Although the Black Watch is traditionally led by the Yogo it recruits members from both of the Scorpion shugenja schools.

Rank: 3

Replaces: Soshi Shugenja 3 or Yogo Shugenja 3

Prerequisites: Earth 3, Lore Maho 3, Lore: Shadowlands 3

Technique – The Black Watch.

The Black Watch are trained to sense the presence of the Shadowlands Taint through their connection to the elemental kami. Any time you target a person (or creature) with a spell (regardless of the nature of the spell itself), you may make a Contested Willpower roll with the target. If the target has at least one full Rank of Taint, you will sense the Taint's presence and roughly how strong it is with a successful roll.

Yogo Wardmasters [Shugenja]

Many shugenja schools make some study of warding spells, such as the Crab Clan's *Ward of Purity* spell, but the Yogo have developed a complete Technique around their mastery of their own unique and unconventional warding magic. Yogo trained in this Technique are often tasked with using their magic to protect key locations in the Scorpion lands.

Rank: 3

Replaces: Yogo Shugenja 3

Prerequisites: Spellcraft 4, Lore: Shugenja 3, Void 3

Technique – Way of the Wardmaster.

You may create a ward by spending at least one hour of time inscribing the ward into any flat hard surface (a wall, floor, ceiling, flat rock, door, table, etc), then rolling Spellcraft/[Ring] at TN 20 to infuse it with elemental power. Creating a ward uses one spell-slot of the chosen Element (Earth, Air, Water, or Fire). Once created, the ward lasts until it runs out of dice (as described below) or until you deactivate it (which takes an Action).

A newly-created ward has a strength of 4k4 in the Ring you used to create it; anyone other than you attempting to approach or pass close by the ward must make a Contested Roll of their own Ring against it. Failure means they cannot pass, but the ward loses 1 die of strength. Success means they can pass but the ward remains intact at its current strength.

Unicorn Clan Alternate Paths:

Moto Death Priest [Shugenja]

The Death Priests are inheritors of the original Moto religious traditions from before their admission to the Unicorn Clan almost a thousand years ago. They worship the Shi-Tien Yen-Wang, vengeful gods of death and judgment. These beings were filled with jealous wrath when their followers switched to worshipping the Rokugani Fortunes, but were finally propitiated after the Hidden Emperor era when the new Unicorn Clan Champion, Moto Gaheris, agreed to let the Unicorn worship them once more. This renewed worship led, in turn, to the Lords of Death finding a modest place within Rokugan's cosmology, assisting the Fortune Emma-O in judging dead souls who await reincarnation.

Those who become Death Priests are regarded with some unease even within the Unicorn Clan and often meet with outright hostility elsewhere in the Empire. Any Character who enters the Death Priest Path automatically gains the Infamy Disadvantage for no Experience Points.

Rank: 2

Replaces: Iuchi Shugenja 2

Prerequisites: Lore: Theology 4, Willpower 4

Technique – Blessing of the Shi-Tien Yen-Wang.

Death Priests have a unique ability to call on the power of their gaijin gods. Once per target per skirmish, you may take an Action and expend a spell-slot (of any Element) to bestow the curse of the Shi-Tien Yen-Wang on someone within Short Range. Make a Contested Insight/Willpower roll against the target; with a success, the target may not benefit from exploding dice or from any effect that allows him to re-roll a failed roll. This effect lasts until the end of the Skirmish.

Student of Meishodo [Shugenja]

During their long exile outside the Empire, the Unicorn encountered many kinds of strange gaijin magic, particularly one type that was able to invoke the power of the elements directly without speaking to the kami. The Iuchi studied this sorcery and found ways to integrate it with their own magical traditions, and brought this modified form of magic – which they called *meishodo* – back to Rokugan.

Rank: 2

Replaces: Iuchi Shugenja 2

Prerequisites: Lore: Shugenja 4, Spellcraft 4

Technique – Mysteries of Meishodo.

Meishodo is a mixture of gaijin and Rokugani magic, resulting in the ability to summon the kami very quickly and reliably but without being able to cajole them into extra efforts. You may use *meishodo* to cast any of your non-ritual Common spells up through Mastery Rank 2 and any of your Unicorn Secret Spells up through Mastery Rank 4. The spell-casting roll gets a +1k0 bonus and casting spell requires only a single Action (regardless of the spell's Mastery Rank), but the spell's effects cannot benefit from Raises. However, your use of gaijin methods causes you to be slightly estranged from the kami; any time you attempt to cast a spell in the normal fashion (without using *meishodo*), you suffer a 1-die penalty to your Spellcraft roll.

Wardog Masters

During their time in the Burning Sands, the Unicorn domestic a breed of fierce and powerful dogs, later bringing them back to the Empire. The training and handling of these beasts, particularly on the battlefield, was sufficiently specialized that the Unicorn eventually established a dojo for it.

Rank: 3

Replaces: Shinjo Bushi 3 or Moto Bushi 3

Prerequisites: Awareness 4, Animal Handling 4

Technique – Ferocity of the Ki Rin.

The War-Dog Masters can train and control a full pack of war-dogs, directing them in combat. You gain Unicorn war-dogs equal in number to 2x your Awareness. You can control their actions in a skirmish by making a Skill Roll of Animal Handling /Awareness, at TN 20 for a simple command (such as “Attack” or “Track” or “Hold Position”). You may use Raises to convey more complex commands, subject to GM’s judgment.

Yomanri Archer

The Unicorn encountered a very different sort of archery in the gaijin lands, a shooting technique that involves aiming carefully in place of the swift Rokugani “arrow knows the way” style. Although the majority of the Unicorn continued to practice Rokugani archery, enough of them adopted the new method that it became a separate tradition within the Clan, with its own teachers and methods. After the Clan’s return to Rokugan, the Clan Champion established a dojo in the Shinjo lands to maintain the archery style they called *yomanri*.

Rank: 3

Replaces: Shinjo Bushi 3 or Moto Bushi 3

Prerequisites: Kyujutsu 4, Agility 3

Technique – The Way of Yomanri.

Yomanri practitioners rely on careful aiming rather than swift instinctive shooting. When using Kyujutsu, you may choose to spend one or more Actions aiming your shot. (You cannot spend more Actions on aiming than your Agility Rank.) Each such Action awards a +1k1 bonus to your subsequent attack roll. If you are hit by an enemy or otherwise interrupted while aiming, all benefits are lost.

Unicorn War-Dogs

Unicorn war-dogs are treated as Thugs, and can assist each others’ attacks in the normal manner as discussed in the Thug rules in the *Chapter of Earth*. If your war-dogs are killed, you receive replacements in the next session, subject to GM’s approval. (If there is no realistic way for your Character to get new war-dogs from the Unicorn lands in between play-sessions, the replacements will have to wait until you can.)

Air 2 Reflexes 3

Earth 2

Fire 1 Agility 3

Water 3

Skills: Hunting 3

Initiative Rank: 4

Attack Roll: 5k3

Defense TN: 20

Minor Clan Characters

The original seven Great Clans were all founded at the dawn of the Empire by the Kami who fell from Heaven. However, from almost the beginning of Rokugan’s history, the Emperor began to bestow Clan status on smaller groups of samurai who had performed great feats or who had somehow earned the special favor of the Son of Heaven. These groups are called Minor Clans; in fact, the modern Great Clan of the Mantis started out at a Minor Clan, and was finally elevated to Great Clan status after the Day of Thunder.

Once founded, a Minor Clan will claim a small piece of land (usually bestowed as part of the Clan's founding) and set about recruiting other samurai into its ranks. Ronin in particular will often try to swear fealty to a new Minor Clan and thus regain true samurai status. Typically a Minor Clan will have only one officially recognized family name, and some do not have such a family name at all.

In terms of game mechanics, a Character who belongs to a Minor Clan is created in the same way as a normal Character, but with the following modifications:

- The Character's Glory and Status both start at 0.5 instead of 1.0.
- The Character may or may not have a Family, depending on the particular Minor Clan. If the Character's Clan does not have an official Family name, their Stipend is listed with their School.
- The Character either has no School, or enrolls in his Minor Clan's School.
- If the Character takes the Different School Advantage, it will cost him +5 additional Experience Points to attend a different Minor Clan School, +10 to attend a different Great Clan School.

Note that the specific status and availability of certain Minor Clans can vary depending on what era of Rokugan's history is being used for a particular game. Some Minor Clans can trace their history back to the Empire's earliest centuries, such as the Fox, Badger, and Mantis, but others do not appear until much later – for example, the Monkey Clan is not founded until the Hidden Emperor era. There are also many Minor Clans that appear and depart without the chance to have much impact on the Empire's history at all, such as the Boar Clan which lasts barely fifty years and the semi-legendary Tanuki Clan. Given the ephemeral nature of many Minor Clans, the GM should feel free to modify the list of such Clans that exist in his campaign's version of Rokugan and to invent new ones as desired.

Note that the Mantis Clan, whose Families and Schools are in the *Chapter of Fire*, is a Minor Clan up until the Day of Thunder in the early twelfth century. The Wasp Clan – founded in the late eleventh century – and the Centipede Clan – founded in the eighth century – are incorporated into the Mantis during the subsequent Hidden Emperor era.

Minor Clans, Families, and Schools

Note that not every Minor Clan is granted a family name. Some of them gain a name many years after their founding, like the Mantis. (The game mechanics for the Mantis Clan family names are listed in the *Chapter of Fire*.) Some have “unofficial” names that they use within their own ranks but are not recognized by the Emperor. Some never get a family name at all.

The Badger Clan

In the dawn of the Empire, the Crab Champion orders one of his samurai, Hida Ichiro, to found a Minor Clan for the purpose of defending the Empire's northern passes against any possible gaijin attack. The Badger Clan carries out its task through all the subsequent centuries, twice surviving near-annihilation.

The Ichiro Family: +1 Strength, 1 koku

Ichiro Bushi School

Benefit: +1 Strength

Skills: Athletics, Defense 2, Jujutsu, Kenjutsu, Spears, any one Heavy Weapon, any one High skill

Honor: 1.0

Outfit: Light armor, rugged clothing, katana, wakizashi, and 2 weapons, traveling pack

Techniques:

Rank 1 – Transcend the Mountain.

Those who would strike a tenacious Badger samurai must be prepared to endure their own strike in return. At the start of any Round in a skirmish, you may lower your Initiative Rank for that Round by 3. In return, you gain a +1k1 bonus to your attacks made that Round against opponents with higher Initiative Ranks than you.

Rank 2 – Strength of the Badger.

The Badger, living isolated in the mountains, often entertain themselves with feats of strength. When rolling a Skill that uses the Strength Trait (including Heavy Weapon), you receive a Free Raise.

Rank 3 – Crashing Stones.

The Badger know that a truly crushing blow cannot be turned aside by mere flaps of metal and silken cord. Your opponents do not receive any Defense bonus from armor when defending against your attacks.

The Boar Clan

The Boar Clan was founded in the mid-fifth century by a Crab samurai, Hida Heichi, and were tasked by the Emperor with mining ore from the dangerous and isolated peaks of the Twilight Mountains. However, they existed barely over fifty years before the entire Clan mysteriously disappeared.

The Boar were noted for fighting with a unique polearm, the mai chong, which boasted a broad head with multiple spiked blades. The weapon is believed to have been originally developed by Heichi himself. Like the Boar themselves, the weapon was all but forgotten after the Clan's disappearance, but occasional examples have surfaced among ronin, including a few wave-men who have claimed to be actual descendents of the lost Minor Clan.

The Heichi Family: +1 Reflexes

Heichi Bushi School

Benefit: +1 Strength

Skills: Athletics, Craft: Mining, Defense, Hunting, Kenjutsu, Lore: Twilight Mountains, Polearms, any 1 Skill

Honor: 1.5

Outfit: Light or heavy armor, rugged clothing, katana, wakizashi, polearm ("Mai Chong"), traveling pack

Techniques:

Rank 1 – The Strength of Opposition.

The Heichi samurai learned to use Polearms – especially their favored Mai Chong design – with aggressive fury to snare and bewilder their foes. You may purchase the Polearms Path of Fire Kata for 3x Mastery instead of 4x Mastery. When fighting with a Polearm, you may use 2 Raises to inflict an Entanglement on your opponent which lasts until the end of his next Turn. If the Polearm is a Mai Chong, you may do this for only 1 Raise.

Rank 2 – The Fury of the Boar.

Like his namesake, the Boar bushi is dangerous even when he seems quiescent. While using the Full Defense Tactic, if you are wielding a Polearm you may still make one attack on your Turn, but this attack suffers a 2-die penalty and may not benefit from Raises.

The Centipede Clan

The Centipede Clan is founded in the fourth century when a Phoenix shugenja-ko, Isawa Moshi, was exploring the mountains to the south of the Phoenix lands and received a personal visitation from Amaterasu, the Goddess of the Sun. The Clan is dedicated to Amaterasu's worship and consequently is matriarchal, with only its women permitted to train as shugenja and to rule over the Clan.

In the early twelfth century, the Centipede join the Mantis-led Minor Clan Alliance, and during the Hidden Emperor era they official merge with the Mantis Clan (via a marriage between Yoritomo and Moshi Wakiza), becoming the Moshi family of that Clan.

The Moshi Family: +1 Intelligence, 2 koku

Moshi Shugenja School

[This is a 3-Rank School for most of its history, but after the Centipede join the Mantis Clan in the Hidden Emperor era, it becomes a 4-Rank School.]

Benefit: +1 Agility

Skills: Calligraphy, Defense, Lore: History, Lore: Theology, Meditation, Sincerity, Spellcraft, any one High Skill

Honor: 2.5

Outfit: Robes, wakizashi, knife, scroll satchel, calligraphy set, traveling pack

Favored Elements: Fire, Air

Starting Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, 3 Fire, 3 Air

The Dragonfly Clan

The Dragonfly are founded at the dawn of the eighth century when a Phoenix shugenja-ko marries (for love) a Dragon bushi, resulting in conflict with the Lion bushi who was her betrothed. The Dragon and Phoenix Clans intervened to protect the couple from the Lion wrath, and their sponsorship and protection led the founding a new Minor Clan, the Dragonfly, who act as gatekeepers to the Dragon lands. Samurai wishing to visit the remote mountains of the Dragon must first visit the Dragonfly and seek permission. The Lion Clan has never forgiven this insult and would destroy the Dragonfly if they could.

The Tonbo Family: +1 Perception, 1 koku

Dragonfly Shugenja School

[This School has 2 Ranks initially, attaining 3 Ranks by the eleventh century.]

Benefit: +1 Perception

Skills: Calligraphy, Courtier, Defense, Etiquette, Lore: Theology, Sincerity, Spellcraft, any 1 Lore Skill

Honor: 2.0

Outfit: Practical clothing, court robes, wakizashi, writing kit, scroll satchel, traveling pack

Favored Element: Water

Starting Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, 3 Water, 1 Air, 1 of any Element

The Falcon Clan

The Falcon Clan is created in the ninth century when a ronin, Hayabusa, saves the Emperor from an assassination attempt and is rewarded with the right to found a Minor Clan. His son Yotogi realized the assassin had been driven mad by a possessing spirit, and this led to the Clan becoming experts in the ways of finding and hunting ghosts, spirits, and other such threats.

The Falcon are a small Clan of modest resources, and their samurai have a Stipend of 1 koku. Falcon Clan samurai refer to themselves the "Toritaka" but this name does not receive

formal recognition until they are forced to join the Crab Clan at the end of the Hidden Emperor era. After that time they gain a family name and higher Stipend as listed in the *Chapter of Fire*, and their School becomes a Crab School.

Toritaka Bushi School

Benefit: +1 Willpower

Skills: Defense, Games: Falconry, Hunting, Kenjutsu, Kyujutsu, Lore: Spirits, Meditation, any 1 Skill

Honor: 2.0

Outfit: Light armor, rugged clothing, katana, wakizashi, bow with arrows, writing kit, traveling pack

Techniques:

Rank 1 – The Falcon’s Eyes.

The Toritaka’s training and meditations make them constantly aware of their surroundings, allowing them to notice the faint hints of supernatural forces. You gain a +1k0 bonus to Meditation Skill rolls and to all rolls using the Awareness Trait, and may use Awareness on any rolls that would normally use Perception.

Rank 2 – Vigilant and Strong.

With greater experience, a Falcon bushi’s training lets him detect the emanations of nearby spirits, whether friendly or hostile. You can take an Action to try to sense the presence of creatures from other spirit realms within Short Range, regardless of whether they are visible to mortal eyes. This is a Contested Roll of your Awareness against the spirit creature’s Air.

Rank 3 – Claws of the Falcon.

The true masters of the Toritaka School can emulate the fierce instinctive attacks of their namesake, the hunting falcon. You gain a Free Raise to all your attack rolls against Thugs; if you spend a Void Point on the attack, you gain a second Free Raise.

The Fox Clan

The Fox are descended from those of the Ki-Rin Clan who remained behind when Shinjo led most of their number into the Burning Sands. Within a few decades, however, they were attacked and driven out of their lands by the Lion Clan. Rather than allow the last of Shinjo’s followers to be destroyed, the Emperor proclaimed them to be the Minor Clan of the Fox and granted them new lands in the Kitsune Mori forest.

The Fox Clan has a shugenja tradition, but it should be noted that even within their modest ranks these shugenja are a minority of their total samurai. Most Fox samurai are bushi, but the Clan does not have a bushi School, so they are usually without a School unless they are fortunate enough to win a place in another Clan’s bushi School.

The Kitsune Family: +1 Awareness, 2 koku

Kitsune Shugenja School

[This is a 3-Rank School.]

Benefit: +1 Intelligence

Skills: Athletics, Calligraphy, Hunting, Kenjutsu, Lore: Nature, Medicine, Spellcraft, any one High or Merchant Skill

Honor: 2.0

Outfit: Practical clothing, wakizashi, and 1 weapon, scroll satchel, medical kit, traveling pack

Favored Element: Earth

Starting Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, 3 Earth, 1 Air, 1 Water

The Hare Clan

The Hare were founded by a ronin, Usagi, who helped the Empire defeat the Bloodspeaker Cult during the second attack of Iuchiban in the mid-eighth century. He was granted a family name and lands to the south of the Scorpion Clan to claim as his own. The Hare Clan quietly prospers until the very early twelfth century, when it is suddenly wiped out by the Scorpion, allegedly for killing one of their prominent courtiers. Surviving members of the Hare, living as ronin, eventually persuade the Toturi Dynasty to restore their Minor Clan status and lands in the year 1125.

The Usagi “family name” is used within the Clan but is not officially recognized by the Emperor. Hare samurai have a Stipend of 2 koku prior to their destruction by the Scorpion, 1 koku after their re-founding.

Usagi Bushi School

Benefit: +1 Agility

Skills: Athletics 2, Defense, Hunting, Jujutsu, Kenjutsu, Lore: Maho, any 1 High or Bugei Skill

Honor: 2.0

Outfit: Light armor, sturdy clothing, katana, wakizashi, any 1 other weapon, traveling pack

Techniques:

Rank 1 – Speed of the Hare.

Hare bushi are trained to incorporate astounding leaps and athletic stunts into their fighting style. You gain a +1k0 bonus to Athletics rolls. If you successfully use Athletics to boost an attack roll (as described in the Chapter of Earth), your benefit from it is +1k1. You can also use Athletics for defense in the same manner, adding +1k1 to your Defense rolls on that Round with a success.

Rank 2 – Swift as Lightning.

At this Rank the Usagi bushi can almost match the swift reflexes of the animal from which his Clan takes its name. You add +5 to your Initiative Rank.

Rank 3 – Kick of the Hare.

The most advanced Technique of the Hare Clan is also its most bizarre: the “Hop.” When attacking an opponent with Jujutsu (only), you may use 2 Raises to make a spring-kick off that foe (inflicting Wounds as normal) and spring away to another foe within Short Range, immediately making an attack against that opponent with either a weapon in your hand or with Jujutsu, as you choose. The second attack automatically gains the benefits of your Rank 1 Technique (+1k1 to the attack roll).

The Monkey Clan

The Monkey Clan is founded by Toku, a ronin hero and comrade of Toturi in the Clan Wars in the early twelfth century. During the Hidden Emperor era, Toku is granted a family name and gifted with lands between the Lion and Scorpion Clans to found his own Minor Clan.

The Toku Family: +1 Reflexes, 2 koku

Monkey Bushi School

Benefit: +1 Willpower

Skills: Athletics, Defense, Hunting, Kenjutsu, Kyujutsu, Lore: History, Sincerity, any 1 Bugei Skill

Honor: 2.5

Outfit: Light armor, simple clothing, katana, wakizashi, bow and arrows, 1 other weapon, traveling pack

Techniques:

Rank 1 – Toku’s Lesson.

Like their founder, the Monkey fight to prevail no matter what the odds. If you are outnumbered in a skirmish, you may add +1k0 to all your Skill Rolls and your die-penalties from Wounds are reduced by 1 die.

Rank 2 – Fortune Favors the Mortal Man.

The Toku bushi knows that mortal heroes, great and small, can defy fate. Once per skirmish, you may spend a Void Point to reroll any roll. You add +1k1 to the new roll and may choose to keep the result of the new roll or your original roll.

The Snake Clan

The Snake Clan is founded in the fourth century by the Imperial Magistrate Isawa Chuda, who saved the Emperor's life from a *maho* cult. The Clan he builds in the north of the Empire is dedicated to studying and defeating maho, but this continual investigation of such forbidden power proves its undoing – at the dawn of the fifth century, Clan Champion Chuda Tamihei succumbs to corruption and summons a terrifying demonic spirit, the Shuten Doji. In response, the Phoenix Clan wipes out the Snake Clan and in later centuries it is all but forgotten, its crimes erased from the Imperial histories.

The Chuda Family: +1 Intelligence, 1 koku

Chuda Shugenja School

[This is a 3-Rank School.]

Benefit: +1 Perception

Skills: Calligraphy, Defense, Investigation, Kenjutsu, Lore: Maho, Meditation, Sincerity, any one Skill

Honor: 1.5

Outfit: Robes, wakizashi, knife, scroll satchel, traveling pack

Favored Element: Earth

Starting Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, 3 Earth, 1 Fire, 1 Water

The Chuda Legacy

Although the Snake Clan is wiped out by the Phoenix Clan in order to end the threat from the Shuten Doji, a handful of its members survived in hiding, as did some of the Clan's secret writings. Ronin shugenja occasionally appear in later centuries claiming descent from the Chuda, and such men and woman often wind up following their ancestors down the dark path of *maho*.

The Sparrow Clan

Founded from a misunderstanding in court that unleashed an unexpected religious movement, the Sparrow Clan holds some of the poorest land in the Empire. Their samurai must work the fields alongside their peasants to grow enough food to survive, and their only entertainment is storytelling. Sparrow resources are so limited that their samurai do not all possess armor – the Clan has a limited amount which is issued to those bushi who must face combat.

The Suzume Family: +1 Awareness, 2 bu

Sparrow Bushi School

Benefit: +1 Willpower

Skills: Athletics, Calligraphy, Craft: Farming, Defense, Kenjutsu, Lore: History, Perform: Storytelling, Sincerity, any one Bugei Skill, any one High or Merchant Skill

Honor: 3.0

Outfit: Plain clothing, katana, wakizashi, spear or bo staff, traveling pack

Techniques:

Rank 1 – All Things in Time.

The Sparrow are legendary for their patience, even in the heat of combat. At the beginning of your Turn you may lower your Initiative Rank by 3 to add +1k1 to your Defense rolls until your next Turn. (You may not do this on a Round you use the Full Attack Tactic.) You gain a bonus of +1k0 to all your Lore Skill rolls and to your Perform: Storytelling rolls.

Rank 2 – Purity of Chi.

Experienced Sparrow bushi develop an aura of spiritual purity that can be as dangerous as any weapon. Any opponent with a lower Honor Rank (including enemies with no Honor Rank, such as Shadowlands creatures) suffers a 2-die penalty on both attack rolls and Defense rolls against you.

The Tortoise Clan

Founded in the aftermath of the Battle of White Stag in the mid-fifth century, the Tortoise Clan is tasked with watching the overseas *gaijin* – including maintaining covert trade with them – in order to keep the Emperor apprised of any renewed danger from those foreign peoples.

In game terms, Tortoise Clan behavior and reputation is so shameful that all Tortoise Characters start play with the Infamy Disadvantage for no Experience Points; only the direct protection of the Emperor prevents the rest of Rokugan from wiping out the Tortoise. However, all Tortoise receive one free purchase of the Gaijin Languages Advantage.

The Tortoise call themselves “Kasuga” after their founder but do not have an officially recognized family name. Their shameful activities do, however, bring them great wealth. They have a Stipend of 10 koku.

Kasuga Smuggler School

Benefit: +1 Perception

Skills: Athletics, Commerce, Defense, Jiu-jitsu, Lore: Gaijin, Sailing, Staves, any 2 Bugei or Merchant Skills

Honor: 1.5

Outfit: Peasant clothing, plain rugged samurai clothing, knife, pair of tonfa, any 1 other weapon (can be a katana), abacus, traveling pack

Techniques:

Rank 1 – Way of the Tortoise.

The Tortoise not only routinely visit foreign ports but also, even within Rokugan, consort with the lowest levels of society. You gain +1k0 to your Skill rolls when fighting with “peasant” weapons, and do not lose Honor for using Low Skills in the service of your Clan. You gain a +2k0 bonus to all Social Skill Rolls made with heimin or hinin (peasants, merchants, eta, criminals, etc).

Rank 2 – The Eyes of the Emperor.

All samurai know that the Tortoise have the Emperor's blessing and protection (though most resent it). Any clan or Imperial samurai who attacks or openly slanders you without provocation (GM's discretion) loses Honor and Glory as though committing a Major Breach of Etiquette.

Rank 3 – The Tortoise Smiles.

Tortoise samurai understand that honor must sometimes be sacrificed for the greater good. When making a Skill roll, you may opt to lose 3 pips of Honor to gain a +2k2 bonus to the roll.

The Wasp Clan

The Wasp Clan is founded in the early twelfth century by Tsuruchi, a man born from a Scorpion and a Lion and betrayed by both Clans. After being driven out of the castle he had rightfully

inherited, Tsuruchi broke his sword, proclaiming he would no longer be bound by the rules of bushido, and thereafter relied on the bow. He and his followers retook his castle and subsequently were proclaimed a Minor Clan through the favor of the Emerald Champion. The new Clan is granted a special Imperial charter to act as bounty hunters throughout Rokugan, hunting down criminals of all kinds.

Wasp have a Stipend of 2 koku during their time as an independent Minor Clan. During the Clan War era, the Wasp Clan joins the Mantis-led “Yoritomo’s Alliance” and officially merges with the Mantis Clan in the subsequent Hidden Emperor era, with the Toturi Dynasty recognizing the Tsuruchi family name and their Stipend increasing, as listed in the *Chapter of Fire*.

Wasp (later Tsuruchi) Archer School

Trait: +1 Perception

Starting Honor: 2.5

School Skills: Athletics, Defense, Hunting, Investigation, Kyujutsu 2, Lore: Law, Lore: Underworld, any one other Merchant or Bugei Skill

Outfit: Light or ashigaru armor, rugged clothing, bow and arrows, knife, any 1 other weapon, Imperial bounty hunter’s badge, traveling pack

Techniques:

Rank One: Always be Ready.

Wasp archers are taught to always be prepared for danger, trusting their instincts. You add your Perception to your Initiative Rank. You may string a bow without needing to use an Action. You gain a Free Raise on the results of your Kyujutsu Skill rolls which can only be used for the Called Shot Maneuver. When firing a bow at Long Range, your die penalty is only 1 die instead of 3.

Rank Two: The Wasp’s Sting.

When fighting Thugs with Kyujutsu, you gain a Free Raise to your Skill rolls. When fighting Characters with Kyujutsu, you inflict 1 extra Wound.

Rank Three: The Arrow Knows the Way.

Once per skirmish you may spend a Void Point to make a Short Range or Long Range Kyujutsu attack automatically succeed (no Skill roll); this cannot be combined with other Techniques, inflicts only basic damage, and cannot be used to perform Maneuvers. Also, you may perform archery attacks at Extreme range, but such attacks are subject to a 5-die penalty.

Rank Four: Tsuruchi’s Eye

[This Technique is developed in the post-Clan Wars era]

When fighting Thugs with Kyujutsu, you gain a Free Raise to your Skill rolls. This stacks with the Raise from your Rank 2 Technique. When fighting Characters with Kyujutsu, you may apply your Kyujutsu roll against two opponents so long as they are both within Short Range.

The Way of the Wolf: Ronin Characters

Samurai who do not belong to any recognized Clan or family are known as *ronin*, and are forced to wander the Empire seeking food, money, and work anywhere they can find them. Many ronin fall into banditry or other criminal activities, earning a bad reputation for their fellows, and it is common for ronin everywhere to face suspicion, prejudice, and outright hostility. From the standpoint of Rokugan’s social system and hierarchy, ronin are contemptible creatures – men and women without Honor, without families and lords, often without homes. However, some Players find the idea of playing such lone-wolf outsiders and underdogs to be appealing, and samurai fiction is full of tales about heroic ronin (such as Kurosawa’s film *Seven Samurai*).

There are two types of ronin: “Clan ronin” and “true ronin.” The two types are distinguished both socially and through game mechanics.

Clan ronin are samurai who were born into a Clan but have been cast out of it – most likely due to some great disgrace or crime from them, their family, or their lord. More rarely, the samurai may have chosen such exile instead of accepting a more honorable *seppuku*. There are also instances in which a lord dies or is removed from office, and no other lord is willing to accept the fealty of that lord's samurai. A Clan ronin will have the basic School training of his Clan, but will be unable to advance further in his School – as a disgraced exile, he is forbidden from ever returning.

True ronin are born into their station. They may be the illegitimate children of Clan samurai, or they may be born to a *ronin* parent. They may even be peasants who found swords on a battlefield and now claim to be ronin. True ronin have no School at all, and must get by on their Skills and whatever Kata they manage to scrounge up.

There are a handful of ronin groups and unique individuals who have managed to develop their own individual Techniques. A ronin band which has created a Technique will find it easy to attract additional members, growing in strength as other wave-men seek to learn their Technique, and in this way such discoveries can sometimes be passed down through generations. More often, however, these Techniques do not survive past a single generation.

True ronin shugenja are extremely rare. Not only is the gift of speaking with the spirits quite scarce outside of the shugenja-family bloodlines, but many Clans – especially the Phoenix – make a policy of seeking out such exceptional individuals and recruiting them into their ranks. Moreover, true ronin shugenja who remain outside the Clans have a very hard time finding anyone willing to teach them how to use their gifts, much less teach them any spells. Most commonly, a true ronin shugenja will be taught by another ronin shugenja (whether Clan or true ronin) who stumbles across them and takes them as a student.

Creating a Clan Ronin Character

- Create a normal clan samurai
- Lower the Character's Status to 0.0
- The Character starts with the normal Outfit for his School and the amount of money for his family's Stipend, but the Stipend will never be paid again.
- The Player and GM should decide together how the Character became a ronin. This may lead to taking certain Disadvantages (such as Infamy, Driven, or Sworn Enemy).
- The Character may not learn any more Techniques in his School; likewise if he is a shugenja he cannot gain any more spells from advancing in Insight Rank.

Creating a True Ronin Bushi Character

- The Character gains no family Trait bonus and has no School; in return, he gains an additional 25 Experience Points.
- The Character's Status starts at 0.0
- The Character's starting Honor is 1.5
- The Character begins with 1 Rank each in the following Skills (representing life experiences): Athletics, Defense, Hunting, Kenjutsu, any two Bugei Skills
- The Character begins with the following Outfit: Ashigaru or light armor, tattered clothing, katana, one other weapon, traveling pack, 2 koku. He has no Stipend.

Creating a True Ronin Shugenja Character

- The Character gains no family Trait bonus and has no School; in return, he gains an additional 25 Experience Points.
- The Character's Status starts at 0.0
- The Character's starting Honor is 1.5

- The Character begins with 1 Rank each in the following Skills (representing life experiences): Calligraphy, Defense, Spellcraft, any one Lore Skill, any two Bugei Skills
- The Character has no Favored Element. He begins play knowing Sense, Commune, Summon, and 5 Common spells of Mastery Rank 1.
- The Character begins with the following Outfit: Tattered clothing, one weapon, scroll satchel, traveling pack, 2 koku. He has no Stipend.

A Sample Ronin Bushi Technique: The Forest Killers

The Forest Killers are perhaps the most ruthless and fearsome bandit organization in the history of the Empire. For centuries they exploited the superstitions surrounding the Shinomen Mori by hiding within its depths. They were eventually eradicated by the Emerald Champion, but their demise proved short-lived, and within a few years a new group of Forest Killers was plaguing the lands around the Shinomen once more.

Technique Rank: 1

Technique: Strength of the Forest.

The Forest Killers are a formidable group who recruit only the toughest and most durable of warriors to join their band and put them through rigorous training. You may take 1 additional Wound before reaching Death's Door.

Ronin Shugenja and Spells

Ronin shugenja, whether Clan ronin or true ronin, cannot gain any more spells from advancing in Insight Rank. This does not mean they are entirely without options, however.

Common spell-scrolls are not ciphered. Thus, a ronin shugenja can use any Common spell-scroll he can manage to acquire. There are both honorable ways to do this – through friendship with other shugenja, or winning the favor of Clan samurai – and dishonorable ways – theft, murder, and looting the dead.

Clan secret spells are a different matter. It is extremely unlikely that a ronin shugenja would ever be allowed access to such spells unless he wins the chance to swear fealty to that Clan and join their School. Dishonorable methods can still be used, but the ronin must contend with the problem of the Clan ciphers that protect these spells. Breaking such a cipher is a Calligraphy/Intelligence roll at a TN determined by the GM – typically at least 25 for lower-Mastery or less-prized spells, and potentially as high as 40 for Mastery Rank 5 spells. Moreover, if any samurai from that Clan realizes the ronin is using one of their secret spells, the ronin will be marked as an enemy and the Clan will do everything in its power to hunt down and execute the thief.

The Way of War: Mass Battle

Rokugan is a civilization ruled by the warrior elite of the samurai, and the samurai Clans – Great and Minor – regularly fight wars against each other. For much of the Empire's history, the scale of these wars is limited by Imperial decree, forcing the Clans to fight with relatively small armies – hundreds or at best a few thousand on a side – to limit the destruction created by their quarrels; it is these limits which cause historians to refer grandiosely to “a thousand years of peace” under the rule of the Hantei dynasty. However, during periods of crisis or upheaval such as the rise of the Bloodspeaker, the return of the Unicorn, or the Clan Wars, these limits on warfare tend to quickly go by the wayside, with wars escalating into massive battles with tens of thousands of bushi on a side. After the Day of Thunder brings an end to the Hantei Dynasty, the new Toturi Dynasty is never able to truly restore the constraints of the Hantei era, and large wars between Clans remain commonplace throughout the rest of the twelfth century.

What all this means in game terms is that Player Characters are quite likely to find themselves in a battle at some point, whether a modest one of a few hundred to a side or an epic clash of Great Clans' entire strength. Fighting in such a huge conflict cannot be resolved in the same manner as a normal Skirmish – the scale of the clash is simply too big. Accordingly, these events are presented in a more abstract manner using the Mass Battle rules and the accompanying Mass Battle Table (located at the end of this section).

The Mass Battle “Round”

A Mass Battle is resolved in a series of “rounds” that each represent a significant amount of time – typically a half-hour to an hour, although a round could represent a longer period of time in a battle that is slow to develop, or that involves a siege. (In the case of a siege, the GM may opt to have each round represent a day or even a week, depending on the circumstances.)

The total number of rounds in a battle will depend on how quickly (or slowly) one side can manage to win. An overwhelming victory for one side will take only three rounds, but a see-saw struggle between closely-matched forces could rage for many rounds and even conclude without a clear winner if nightfall brings an end to the fighting. (The Rokugani generally do not try to fight battles at night due to the extreme difficulty of maintaining control of soldiers who cannot see their army's banners and signals.)

At the start of each round of Mass Battle, the GM determines which side (if any) is winning, which will affect what column of the Mass Battle Table the Characters will use to determine their individual fates.

Who's Winning?

The GM can choose to pre-determine the course of a Mass Battle beforehand – especially if one side has a huge advantage – but it is much more interesting to let the winds of chance, the skills of the commanders, and the actions of the Characters determine the outcome.

At the beginning of each Mass Battle round, the commanders of the two sides make a Contested Roll of Battle/Intelligence. These rolls can be modified by the circumstances of the battle, the strength of the respective sides, the current weather conditions, the actions of the Player Characters, and many other factors. The GM should adjudicate such modifiers and conditions based on the nature of the specific battle, but the following list can serve as a guideline:

- Commander has managed to surprise/ambush the other army: +2k2 on the first Mass Battle round only
- Commander's army has a numerical advantage: +1k0 to +2k2, depending on how strongly they outnumber the other side
- Commander's army has superior training/morale: +1k0 to +2k2
- Commander's army has advantageous terrain (attacking/defending at higher elevation, defensive fortifications, enemy must advance through rough ground or across a river, etc): +1k0 to +2k2
- Commander's army is defending a fortress/castle: +3k3
- Commander's army has superiority in magic (more/better shugenja): +1k1 to +3k3
- Commander has superior intelligence on the enemy (spies/scouts): +1k0 to +2k2
- Successful Heroic Opportunities performed by Characters in the commander's army during the previous Mass Battle round: +1k0 per typical Opportunity, +1k1 for exceptional/legendary Opportunities
- Failed Heroic Opportunities by Characters in the opposing army during the previous Mass Battle round: +1k0 per typical Opportunity, +1k1 for exceptional/legendary Opportunities

If one of the commanders wins the Contested Roll by 10 or more, that side is currently Winning the battle and the opposing side is currently Losing. If neither commander can beat the other by a margin of 10 or more, the battle is currently a Stalemate.

The Mass Battle Table

Your Army Is:				Level of Engagement:		
Winning	Reserves	Disengaged	Engaged	Heavily Engaged		
Stalemate	Reserves		Disengaged	Engaged	Heavily Engaged	
Losing			Reserves	Disengaged	Engaged	Heavily Engaged
1-3	4 Wounds	6 Wounds	8 Wounds	9 Wounds	10 Wounds	12 Wounds
				Heroic Opportunity		
4-6	4 Wounds	6 Wounds	7 Wounds	8 Wounds	9 Wounds	11 Wounds
				Heroic Opportunity		
7-9	3 Wounds	6 Wounds	7 Wounds	8 Wounds	9 Wounds	11 Wounds
				Heroic Opportunity Heroic Opportunity		
10-12	3 Wounds	5 Wounds	6 Wounds	7 Wounds	8 Wounds	10 Wounds
				Heroic Opportunity Heroic Opportunity Heroic Opportunity Heroic Opportunity Heroic Opportunity		
13-15	2 Wounds	5 Wounds	6 Wounds	7 Wounds	8 Wounds	10 Wounds
				Heroic Opportunity Heroic Opportunity Heroic Opportunity Heroic Opportunity		
16-18	2 Wounds	4 Wounds	5 Wounds	6 Wounds	7 Wounds	9 Wounds
				Heroic Opportunity Heroic Opportunity Heroic Opportunity Heroic Opportunity		
19-21	1 Wound	4 Wounds	5 Wounds	6 Wounds	7 Wounds	9 Wounds
				Heroic Opportunity Heroic Opportunity Heroic Opportunity Heroic Opportunity		
22-24	1 Wound	3 Wounds	4 Wounds	5 Wounds	6 Wounds	8 Wounds
				Heroic Opportunity Heroic Opportunity Heroic Opportunity Heroic Opportunity		
25+	0 Wounds	3 Wounds	4 Wounds	5 Wounds	6 Wounds	8 Wounds
				Heroic Opportunity Heroic Opportunity Heroic Opportunity Heroic Opportunity		

Characters in Mass Battle

A Character in a Mass Battle can be at one of four levels of engagement in the action: **Reserves**, **Disengaged**, **Engaged**, or **Heavily Engaged**. The higher the level of engagement, the more dangerous the battle becomes but the more likely the Character is to find Heroic Opportunities that can win Glory and influence the overall outcome of the battle.

On the first round of Mass Battle, the Characters can normally choose whatever level of engagement they wish (although in some situations the GM may rule that a superior officer has ordered them to fight at a specific level). On subsequent rounds, the Characters can opt to change their level of engagement by one – for example, a Character at Disengaged could move to Reserves or Engaged, but not all the way to Heavily Engaged. (Some Heroic Opportunities will bypass this constraint, and the GM may also choose to override this rule if specific circumstances of play support it.)

Each round of Mass Battle, all the participating Characters must make a roll of 1k1, adding their Water Rank and their Battle Skill Rank to the roll. Characters with the Tactician Advantage roll 2k1 instead, and the GM may award other bonuses (or penalties) to the roll to reflect the circumstances of the particular battle. The dice can explode in the normal manner. The final result is cross-indexed on the Mass Battle Table with the Character's level of engagement (and whether the Character's army is winning, stalemated, or losing) to determine what happens to the Character in that round.

Each result on the Mass Battle Table includes a certain number of Wounds inflicted on the Character. However, the Characters can reduce these Wounds in several ways:

- All Characters subtract their Defense Skill Rank from the Wounds they suffer.
- Characters in Heavy Armor subtract an additional Wound.
- Characters can spend a Void Point in the usual manner to negate one Wound.

- Shugenja Characters may reduce their Wounds by one, due to all Rokugani armies making an effort to protect their shugenja.

At the GM's discretion, additional factors could apply to the reduction of Wounds. For example, if the Characters are defending a castle, the protection afforded by the fortifications could reduce their Wounds.

If a Character goes to Death's Door in Mass Battle, they cannot "Stand Up and Fight" due to Mass Battle rounds representing far longer stretches of time than Skirmish Rounds. They also cannot change their engagement level on their own. As a result, it is highly likely they will die in subsequent Mass Battle rounds. However, a downed Character (Player Character or NPC) can, at the GM's option, be healed or even rescued (carried out of the battle) by another Character who gets a Heroic Opportunity and is within one engagement level of the fallen Character's level.

Heroic Opportunities

Many results on the Mass Battle table include the outcome "Heroic Opportunity." These represent unique events that can happen to Characters in a battle, events that give them the chance to do something noteworthy that can affect both their own status and the course of the larger battle (by providing favorable modifiers to the commander's Contested Roll). However, failing a Heroic Opportunity instead awards a favorable modifier to the enemy commander.

Heroic Opportunities can be dangerous, but are (generally) not mandatory. A Character can choose to decline an Opportunity, passing up on the chance to impact the battle but also avoiding the risk. If they do accept the Opportunity, however, they must play out the event with the GM, facing the consequences.

In general, Heroic Opportunities should not be overly complex and should not take too long to play out. They represent brief dramatic events rather than whole adventures. That being said, Heroic Opportunities can cover a great range of possible events; the following list provides an assortment of "general" Heroic Opportunities that are applicable to most Clan-on-Clan battles in Rokugan:

- **A Clear Shot.** *Through the chaos of the battle-lines you momentarily have a clear view of the enemy general.* The PC may attempt an archery attack (or spell) at Long range against the opposing commander. Any Wounds inflicted on the enemy commander will, of course, impact his Battle roll on the next round. If the commander is actually killed by this attack, his army may suffer a collapse of morale or outright rout.
- **Attack the Archers/Attack the Shugenja.** *A gap in the fighting exposes the archers/shugenja in the enemy's second line.* The GM can resolve this Heroic Opportunity as a skirmish, or if that would slow down the game too much, have the Character make a Battle/Awareness Skill Roll at a suitable TN (25 is a good starting point) to organize a charge against the enemy's vulnerable troops. The Character should probably take additional Wounds from carrying out this maneuver.
- **Be Prepared to Dig Two Graves.** *An enemy samurai cuts down one of your comrades. You have a chance to pursue him and seek vengeance.* The Character must match the enemy samurai's level of engagement and succeed at a Battle/Perception roll (at a TN chosen by the GM) to confront him. If successful, the Character can choose to issue a challenge to a duel or simply fight a skirmish.
- **Break the Line.** *Your unit is ordered to charge the enemy's front and break through.* The Character is immediately moved to Heavily Engaged and his Wounds from the Battle Table this round are increased by 1k1.
- **Duel.** *A samurai in the enemy army issues a personal challenge to you.* Refusing the duel is dishonorable and will result in a loss of both Honor and Glory. If the Character accepts

- the challenge, this is resolved as an Iaijutsu duel. The GM should decide whether the enemy samurai is weaker, roughly equal, or superior to the Character in Insight Rank.
- **Few Against Many.** *An allied samurai is cut off and surrounded. You can try to rescue him.* This can be resolved as a skirmish against a number of enemy Thugs equal to 5x the Character's Insight Rank, or abstracted with additional Wounds as with Break the Line above. If the Character succeeds he can potentially gain the rescued samurai as an Ally, or win a Favor with his faction.
 - **Hold This Ground!** *Your unit is ordered to hold a key position, regardless of cost, against an overwhelming enemy attack.* The Character is immediately moved to Heavily Engaged and all Wounds from the Mass Battle Table are increased by +4. The Character must remain here in each subsequent Mass Battle round until the battle ends, taking the additional Wounds and gaining the benefits of a Heroic Opportunity each round; failure to do so loses a crucial position, granting a +1k1 bonus to the enemy commander on the next round.
 - **Join the Battle.** *From your position in the rear you see a flaw in the enemy deployments, creating a weakness which your own commander has not spotted.* This Opportunity is for Characters in the Reserves (or Disengaged, if the GM chooses). If the Character takes the Opportunity, he immediately moves to Engaged and takes the higher number of Wounds.
 - **Pick Up the Banner.** *The samurai carrying your army's banner falls. You can catch and hold it up yourself to prevent a collapse of morale.* A Character who accepts the burden of carrying the army's banner – making himself a target – will take an additional 1k1 Battle Table Wounds each round, but gets credit for a successful Heroic Opportunity each round he remains standing. Falling to Wounds while holding the banner is not considered a failed Heroic Opportunity, but abandoning the banner *is* considered a failure.
 - **Protect the General.** *Your army's commander has lost his personal guard. The general commands you to stand at his side and protect him.* The GM now controls the Character's level of engagement, as he must follow the general wherever he goes. (Some generals are more courageous than others.) The Character takes additional Wounds each round – 1 extra Wound in Reserves or Disengaged, 2 extra Wounds at Engaged, 3 extra Wounds at Heavily Engaged – and gets credit for a successful Heroic Opportunity every round he remains standing. If the Character falls to his Wounds, it is considered a failed Heroic Opportunity on that round.
 - **Rally the Archers.** *Your army's archers are in disarray, unable to strike effectively.* The Character can roll Battle/Awareness at a TN chosen by the GM to rally the archers and deliver effective fire on the enemy.
 - **Save a Wounded Samurai.** *You come across a famed samurai who has been brought down by his wounds but is still breathing.* If the Character carries his wounded comrade to the rear, he is immediately moved to Reserves and starts the next Mass Battle round there. In return, the rescued samurai becomes an Ally or even – if role-play justifies it – a True Friend. Alternatively, the wounded samurai could be from the enemy army, in which case a less-honorable (or soft-hearted) Character can save him and gain an Obligation from him.
 - **Seppuku.** *A crippled samurai, wounded beyond hope of recovery, is attempting to perform ritual suicide but his injuries make it impossible for him to complete the act on his own.* The wounded samurai may be an ally or an enemy, and may be a stranger or someone known to the Character – whatever the GM considers the most interesting option. If the Character assists the samurai in dying honorably, he should gain Honor for upholding the ideals of Bushido.

The Heroic Opportunities presented here are for a “typical” land battle between samurai armies. GMs should feel free to develop different or unique Opportunities to match the nature of different or unusual battles, such as engagements on water or against Shadowlands or gaijin enemies. (Battles against the forces of the Shadowlands, in particular, should entail different and darker sorts of Heroic Opportunities.)

The Battle’s Outcome

In order to win a battle, a commander must be Winning (win the Contested Battle/Intelligence roll by 10 or more) for three successive Mass Battle rounds. The GM can of course modify this requirement if there are unusual circumstances to a specific battle, such as one side having a major advantage.

Once one side wins the overall battle, the defeated army will either break off the fight and try to retreat, or simply collapse into rout; the GM should adjudicate this based on how disciplined and well-led the losing army is. Character on the losing side of a battle may find it difficult to escape a rout – the GM can play this out as an adventure, or abstract it by requiring the Characters to survive one more round on the Mass Battle table.

The Shadowlands Taint

Mechanically, infection by the Shadowlands Taint is represented by Ranks and pips in a similar manner to Honor and Glory, with each Rank divided into 10 pips. When a Character accumulates 10 pips of Taint, he advances to the next Rank. Taint generally only goes in one direction: up.

Any time a Character is exposed to Taint, he must make an Earth roll to resist it. The TN of this roll depends on the severity of the exposure. If the Character fails one of these rolls, he immediately gains 1 pip of Taint.

- Traveling in the Shadowlands without jade (per day): TN 10
- Injured while in the Shadowlands, per instance: TN 10
- Exposed to Tainted blood/ichor, per instance: TN 10
- Physical proximity/contact with a heavily Tainted creature: TN 10
- Injured (bitten/stung/clawed) by a Tainted creature, per instance: TN 15
- Struck with a Tainted weapon, per instance: TN 15
- Bearing an Oni Mark, per week: TN 15
- Submerged in Tainted liquid (water or otherwise), per instance: TN 15
- Eating/drinking Tainted food or water, per instance: TN 20
- Using a Shadowlands Power: TN 20
- Swallowed alive by an Oni: TN 30

Once a Character has the Taint, it will attempt to grow. A character who is Tainted (has at least 1 Rank of Taint) must make an Earth roll at the end of each session to see whether his Taint has managed to grow. The stronger the Taint, the more difficult it becomes to resist – the TN starts at 10 and increases by 5 for each additional Rank of Taint the Character has.

Most samurai who are found to be Tainted are either ordered to commit *seppuku* or are forced to retire to special monasteries, administered by the Brotherhood of Shinsei and supervised by Kuni Witch-Hunters, where they can live pure and simple lives, drink their Jade Petal Tea, and hopefully die without succumbing. In game terms, a Character who is drinking Jade Petal Tea on a daily basis gains a +2k2 bonus to these Earth rolls. Living a life of strict piety, meditation, and moral and physical purity can also make it easier to resist the Taint’s growth, awarding anywhere from a +1k0 to a +3k0 bonus to the Earth rolls as the GM chooses.

Note that Character can only gain legal access to Jade Petal Tea if he admits he is Tainted. It is not actually illegal to be Tainted, merely so shameful and dangerous that retirement or seppuku are the only options which superiors will permit. However, it *is* illegal to conceal (“harbor”) the Taint, and anyone who known to possess Jade Petal Tea while claiming to not be Tainted will fall under instant suspicion of violating this law.

Protection From the Taint

The chief protection against the Taint is jade. A Character who carries a piece of jade gains a +1k1 bonus to his Earth rolls to resist gaining the Taint. Even just touching jade to a Tainted wound within a minute of the injury will afford a lesser boost, a +1k0 bonus, to the roll resist being Tainted by the injury. However, jade does not protect against the growth of Taint the Character already has. Furthermore, over time as jade absorbs more of the Taint its protective qualities will fade. It turns soft and brittle, discolors, and finally becomes corrupt and foul, eventually dissolving into black sludge.

Crab bushi who go into the Shadowlands normally carry small pieces of jade to protect themselves and their food and drink from the realm’s background Taint. These are referred to colloquially as “fingers of jade” and are considered standard issue equipment for anyone venturing into the Shadowlands. A finger of jade will normally last for a week. Multiple fingers of jade can extend the time, but since both are absorbing the Taint at the same time, they do not extend the duration by a full week each. Ultimately, there is about a three-week upper limit on how long jade can protect someone in the Shadowlands.

The Crab Damned

“There is no law here. The Crab would pluck the very stars from the sky if they could burn the Fallen God with them.”

The Crab Clan’s millennia-long war against the Shadowlands has caused them to adopt a more pragmatic attitude toward the Taint, particularly since they long ago realized that those marked by the Shadowlands exhibited greater strength and resilience.

Thus, while in all other Clans a samurai who is found to be Tainted is sent to live out his life in isolated meditation, in the Crab Clan these samurai are placed in a special military unit known as “the Damned.” There, under the supervision of the Kuni, they are permitted to drink Jade Petal Tea... and to fight on against the Shadowlands, using the power of the Taint against Fu Leng’s minions.

In game terms, a Damned Crab is probably going to become an NPC, since he will no longer be permitted to leave the Crab lands or to do anything other than carry on the Clan’s war against the Shadowlands. However, the Crab will sometimes permit Tainted samurai from other Clans to join the ranks of the Damned, so a creative GM can potentially run an “all-Damned campaign” focused on the war against Fu Leng.

Levels of Corruption

The Taint always spreads violence, hate, terror, pain, and destruction; it twists and mutates everything it touches, perverts every urge and desire into the worst imaginable outcome, destroys life and empowers death. Living creatures who are Tainted gradually exhibit unpleasant mutations – skin turns pale, hair falls out or becomes coarse or greasy, and worse. Likewise, the Tainted feel violent and sickening urges, hear voices in their heads urging them to evil and destruction, and become emotionally erratic and paranoid. Eventually the Taint will wholly consume its victims, turning them into terrible monsters. In game terms, the more Ranks of Taint a Character has, the worse the effects:

- **“Seeds of Darkness.”** A Character who only has a few pips (less than 1 full Rank) of Taint is not actually considered to be Tainted. There are no symptoms and the Taint cannot be detected by any outside means, not even a *Jade Strike*.
- **“Passive Infection.”** A Character who has at least 1 full Rank of Taint is considered Tainted for game-mechanic purposes, and begins to show some modest symptoms – occasional nightmares, sickly or tired feelings, bad temper, etc.
- **“Active Infection.”** Once a Character has Rank 2 or higher Taint, he will begin to experience severe nightmares, nausea and vomiting, muscle tremors, and mild hallucinations. Skin may become pale, he may experience sudden sweats or chills, or he may develop excessive body odor. He gains one Shadowlands Power of the GM’s choice (typically Minor, but can be Major if the GM prefers).
- **“Consuming.”** When a Character’s Taint Rank reaches Rank 4 or higher, the Taint begins to consume and transform his identity and nature. The Character is now able to spread the Taint to others through contact or even just sustained proximity. All earlier symptoms worsen significantly, and the Character begins hearing whispering voices urging him to unnatural or violent acts, causing him to gain 1 Rank of Stress per session. Physical symptoms expand to include infected gums, bad vision, hair turning coarse or starting to fall out, thick horny fingernails, and so forth. The Character now suffers a 1-die penalty to all social Skill rolls, and gains both a Shadowlands mutation and an additional Shadowlands Power (Minor or Major), all of the GM’s choice.
- **“Deadly.”** At Taint Rank 5 or higher, Jigoku has nearly claimed the Character. He develops unnatural and blasphemous tastes, such as cannibalism or necrophilia, and begins to feel a powerful urge to travel to the Shadowlands. Physical symptoms become much worse and can include blackened gums, deeply sunken eyes, coughing blood, and worse. The maddening voices of *kansen* fill his mind continually and he gains 1 Rank of Stress *every day*. The penalty to Social Skill rolls increases to 3 dice, he can no longer spend Honor Points, and his available Void Points per session are reduced by 1. The Character gains one additional Shadowlands mutation and two more Shadowlands powers, as chosen by the GM. It is extremely likely that the Character’s Taint will be discovered at this point, resulting in *seppuku* or execution.
- **“Lost.”** A Character fully succumbs to the Taint when their Taint Rank reaches Rank 6 or, if they one of those rare individuals who have a Ring at Rank 6, when their Taint Rank reaches Rank 7. A Lost Character becomes an NPC, controlled by the GM.

Benefits of the Taint

A Tainted Character may spend “Taint Points” in the same manner as Void or Honor Points (e.g. each session the Character has a number of Taint Points equal to his Taint Rank). A Taint Point can be used to enhance Skill rolls, awarding a +3k3 bonus to a roll. It can also be spent to negate 1 Wound or to Stand Up and Fight without a roll, just like a Void Point. However, every time a Character spends a Taint Point, the Character automatically gains 1 pip of Taint.

Note that this “calling on the Taint” is not necessarily a conscious act – the Character simply senses some new source of strength and reaches for it instinctively.

Mutations and Powers

As noted previously, those who become Tainted exhibit increasingly-grotesque mutations but also gain strange and otherworldly abilities. The lists below are intended as a guideline to such things, but are not exhaustive – the GM can and should create new and unique mutations and powers according to the needs of the game.

Shadowlands Mutations:

- **Albinism:** Your skin and hair become deathly pale or stark white. You suffer a 1-die penalty to Social Skill rolls.
- **Beast of Fu Leng:** The most terrible of mutations, this causes you to completely lose human form, distorting into a bestial or monstrous body – typically a quadruped or a bloated, ogre-ish humanoid. This severe deformity cannot be hidden, and causes a Fear 5 effect in anyone who sees it.
- **Demonic Eyes:** Your eyes glow when you are in darkness, deep shadow, or smoke/fog. This cannot be concealed, but it does let you see through such darkness and concealment.
- **Discolored Skin:** Your skin turns an unnatural dark shade, though you might be able to explain this away as the result of an outdoor life. You suffer a 1-die penalty to all Social Skill rolls.
- **Distorted Limbs:** One of your arms or legs becomes misshapen or twisted, rendering it useless. In game terms this is the Missing Limb Disadvantage, or possibly Lame for a mutated leg.
- **Extra Digit:** You sprout an additional finger or toe, an obvious deformity (though not one that automatically indicates the Taint to strangers). If you cut it off, it will re-grow by the next session. Those who notice the extra digit are put off by you, causing you to suffer a 1-die penalty to all Social Skill rolls.
- **Extra Eye:** An additional eye sprouts somewhere on your body. This grants you +1k0 to all rolls using Perception whenever it is uncovered (and thus visible to others).
- **Extra Limb:** Your character sprouts an additional arm or leg that is obviously Tainted, with discolored skin, claw-like nails, etc. At the GM's option, the limb may be non-functional, in which case the resulting obstruction and clumsiness causes a 2-die penalty on all rolls using Agility and Reflexes.
- **Forked Tongue:** Your tongue becomes long and forked, like a snake's tongue. Concealing this mutation while speaking or eating requires a roll of Disguise/Awareness at TN 20.
- **Foul Odor:** You manifest a putrid and disgusting body odor, impossible to ignore. No amount of bathing or perfume can suppress it. You suffer a 2-die penalty to all Social Skill rolls.
- **Jigoku's Blood:** Your blood becomes black and foul-smelling, an obvious symptom of the Taint.
- **Tentacles:** You sprout one or more tentacles which you are able to partially control. You can use them to pick up small objects or to make attacks with Small weapons.
- **Tough Hide:** Your skin becomes rough and leathery, making you look unnatural or diseased. This inflicts a 2-die penalty to all Social Skill rolls, but grants you 1 Rank of Carapace.
- **Undead Visage:** You appear outwardly corpse-like – deathly gray skin, visible decay, hair falling out, deeply sunken eyes, etc. This hideous deformity cannot be concealed and causes a Fear 6 effect on anyone who sees it.
- **Vile Teeth:** Your teeth become distorted, discolored, or even outright inhuman – they might turn pointed or jagged or fanged, become brown or sickly yellow, etc. Concealing your grotesque teeth while talking or eating is difficult, requiring a roll of Disguise/Awareness at TN 25.

Shadowlands Powers:

- **Above the Elements:** You are resistant to normal elemental magic. Spells which target you or could affect you suffer a 2-die penalty to the Spellcraft roll. However, maho spells

gain a Free Raise against you. Any shugenja who casts Sense within Short Range of you will notice a distinct absence of kami around you.

- **Beside the Darkness:** You have the ability to temporarily suppress your Taint, making it impossible to detect and rendering you immune to Taint-targeting magic such as Jade Strike. Activating this power requires a Meditation/Willpower roll at TN 20, and the effect lasts for the rest of the session. (This does not suppress physical mutations, however.)
- **Blackened Claws:** You have claws of obsidian concealed within your fingertips and can extend them instantly. The claws make your Jujutsu attacks equal to a Heavy Weapon and are obsidian (thus bypassing Invulnerability). However, the urge to fight with these weapons is very powerful – if you want to use any other weapon in a skirmish you must roll Willpower at TN 10 (TN 15 if your Taint is Rank 5 or higher).
- **Blessing of the Dark One:** You have an unnatural resistance to pain and physical harm. You may take an additional Wound and do not suffer a die-penalty for that Wound. You may gain this Power multiple times.
- **Blood Domination:** Your blood carries your will, and any creature who drinks it falls under your sway. You may make a Contested Insight/Willpower roll against such a target to force them to obey your commands for a number of hours equal to your Taint Rank. You cannot order them to commit suicide but all other commands must be obeyed. If you fail the roll, the target is immune to this power to the end of the session and will be aware that something tried to control them.
- **Blood Knows Blood:** You may continually sense the location of any portion of your blood or flesh (anything but hair and fingernails), no matter where they may be. If you also possess the Blood Domination power (see above), you can track the location of any creature that has consumed your blood.
- **Child of Darkness:** The power of the Taint protects you from other servants of Jigoku. Shadowlands creatures will not attack you (unless you attack them first) and might obey your commands if you seem powerful or persuasive (GM's judgment).
- **Chosen of Fu Leng:** The Taint grants you an unnatural strength of will. Any attempt to influence you with Social skills or Techniques, or to control your mind through spells, will automatically fail.
- **Drawing Out the Darkness:** You can spread the Taint to others by touching them. This requires a Contested Willpower roll; if you win, the target gains a number of pips of Taint equal to your current Taint Rank.
- **Father of Lies:** The Taint thrives on deception. You may add +XkX (where X is your Taint Rank) to your Temptation and Intimidation rolls, and to any Sincerity rolls made to tell lies.
- **Feeding on Flesh:** The Taint draws strength from unnatural acts. You may use an Action to feed on a helpless (bound, unconscious, too many die-penalties to roll Defense) person or creature. This kills the target and heals you a number of Wounds equal to your Taint Rank.
- **Jade Sense:** You automatically detect the presence of all jade within Short Range and can roll Perception at TN 15 to sense crystal and obsidian.
- **Maho-Bujin:** The Taint empowers you to grow stronger from spilling your enemies' blood. Any time you inflict Wounds on an enemy with a melee attack, you instantly half that many Wounds (rounded up). If you are at full health, you instead inflict those additional Wounds on your opponent.
- **Master of Shadows:** You have an unnatural affinity for darkness and shadows. You add +Xk0 to your Stealth rolls, where X is your Taint Rank. You gain the Discolored Skin mutation if you do not already have it.

- **Master of Sorcery:** The *kansen* are your allies. You can cast *maho* spells for one less Wound than normally required, and the amount of Taint you gain from casting *maho* spells is reduced by your Earth (to a minimum of 1 pip of Taint). Any normal (non-*maho*) spells you cast are at a 2-die penalty.
- **Monstrous Strength:** The Taint suffuses your muscles, giving you a swollen, unnatural build that unsettles those who meet you. You suffer a 1-die penalty to all Social Skill rolls, but add +Xk0 (where X is your Taint Rank) to all rolls you make using Strength.
- **Protection of the Dark:** You gain Invulnerability.
- **Thy Master's Will:** The Taint will not allow you to truly die – you are too useful to Jigoku's purposes. If you are killed, you will eventually return as an intelligent undead creature. You retain all Rings, Traits, abilities, School techniques, and Skills, but no longer have a Void Ring.
- **Uncanny Speed:** The Taint grants you superhuman speed, as though you move through gaps in reality itself. You may take two Actions (of any kind) each Round and you add your Taint Rank to your Initiative Rank.
- **Unearthly Regeneration:** The Taint infuses your body with a horrible vitality. You heal 1 Wound at the start of your Turn during a skirmish. Lost limbs can be re-attached if held in place for a few minutes. Your healed injuries leave no scars behind.
- **Unholy Beauty:** You do not suffer any outward visible effects of the Taint, and any physical mutations you already possess will fade away. However, your body mutates internally to compensate for the lack of external change, exhibiting redundant or distorted organs, cancerous tumors, and other distortions.
- **Unholy Stamina:** You no longer need to sleep, and do not suffer Fatigue from a lack of rest. You still need to eat/drink but only gain a Rank of Fatigue every three days (instead of every day) if you go without.

Fate of the Lost

Once someone becomes Lost, their soul belongs to Jigoku; if they die, their soul is sent to the Realm of Evil to be tortured and probably devoured by oni.

Those who are Lost sometimes physically disintegrate, the Taint mutations literally unmaking their flesh. The body gruesomely and agonizingly warps and fissures, turning into a mass of twitching, distorting flesh, and finally ending as a puddle of lifeless sludge.

More often, the Lost become screaming madman, bestial formerly-human things which attack everyone near them. Mechanically, such creatures are Thugs; all their mental Traits are reduced to Rank 1 and they no longer have a Void Ring. Due to their mindlessness, they can no longer call on the Taint, though they sometimes retain the Shadowlands Powers they previously acquired (GM's judgment).

More rarely, Jigoku will allow a Lost person to retain their memories and knowledge. These creatures – called *Akutsukai*, or “servants of evil” – can still present a counterfeit of normal human behavior and often remain within Rokugan or repeatedly return to it, infiltrating, subverting, and corrupting. Although they possess intelligence and self-awareness, they do not truly have free will – their desires, beliefs, and intentions are completely controlled by Jigoku and they can only serve its evil goals. Mechanically, they retain their Void Ring but no longer possess any Void Points. Their Taint no longer grows and they can no longer spend Taint Points to boost their Skill rolls, but they can still spend Taint Points to reduce their Wounds or to Stand Up and Fight. They also gain additional Shadowlands Powers and mutations as the GM chooses.

Very rarely, the most powerful and unique of *Akutsukai* are permitted to directly ingest the blood of Fu Leng or to bathe in the very essence of Jigoku. Such beings “ascend” (if that is the right term) to the highest ranks of Jigoku's servants, become the immortal *Akutenshi*, the “evil angels.” Thankfully, such terrifying beings are supremely rare – the number of them known

to Rokugan throughout its twelve-century history can be counted on one's hands. Akutenshi all have unique Shadowlands powers that set them far above the rest of their kind; the GM should devise the powers of an Akutenshi specifically to match the individual being.

Jade Powder

The Crab Clan gets around the scarcity of actual jade and crystal weapons with “jade powder,” a mixture of ground-up jade and a simple paste to make it adhere to weapons. It is usually carried in one-dose pouches. Smearing this powder on a weapon (which requires an Action) allows that weapon to function as jade and inflict full damage on an Invulnerable creature for one hit. Much of the powder is lost after the first hit – the second hit will inflict only 1 Wound, regardless of the weapon type or any Raises. After the second hit, the dose of powder is gone and a new dose must be applied.

Maho (Blood Magic)

Maho is a dark reflection of normal Rokugani magic. Normal magic persuades the elemental kami through prayer and ritual, but maho invokes the dark, corrupt *kansen* spirits with blood sacrifice. And whereas normal magic can only be performed by those born with the ability to speak with the kami, *maho* can be used by anyone, samurai or peasant or even *eta*, who learns the incantations and spills a little blood. This dark magic is used by cultists hiding in the Empire (especially the Bloodspeaker Cult), by the Lost and the creatures of the Shadowlands, and by individual *maho-tsukai* (blood sorcerers) in Rokugan who stumble across its secrets.

Learning *Maho*

Maho is illegal – learning or using it is an Imperial crime – but nonetheless is spread throughout the Empire, and Characters may encounter it in many ways. They may discover an ancient scroll hidden in a library or a cultist stronghold. They may encounter a corrupted sensei who tempts them with hidden secrets. A cult may try to recruit them, or a “helpful” *kansen* may even whisper the spells directly into their ears. The lure of *maho* is obvious, offering quick and easy power to anyone... in exchange for eventual Taint and damnation.

Using *Maho*

Unlike normal spells, anyone can cast a *maho* spell if they have learned one. Although the spells are usually written down on scrolls, they are easier to recite than the elaborate rituals of elemental magic, and once a Character has acquired a *maho* spell he can memorize it with a simple Intelligence roll (TN of 5, 10, or 15 for Mastery Rank 1, 2, or 3 spells.)

Casting a *maho* spell does not require the Spellcraft Skill. Instead, the Character rolls Insight/[Ring] at a TN of 5 + (5x Mastery Rank). However, there is one important limit on casting *maho*: Blood.

The blood of a living and intelligent creature must be spilled to appease the *kansen* who are invoked by a *maho* spell. The caster must spill blood in Wounds equal to the Mastery Rank of the spell. Note, however, that the caster need not spill his own blood! Experienced *maho-tsukai* make a point of surrounding themselves with servants, gullible cultists, or other “allies” who can be wounded or killed to power their spells, and of course sacrificial victims can also be tapped to supply the needed blood.

Note that blood must be spilled as part of the casting process, so the Wounds are lost even if the spell fails. However, spilling more blood than is needed will please the *kansen* and produce a better effect – in game terms, a *maho-tsukai* gains a +1k1 bonus to the spell-casting roll

for each additional amount of blood (equal to the required amount) he spills. Thus for a Mastery 1 spell the caster gets +1k1 for each additional Wound of blood.

Maho is ultimately powered by Jigoku and carries its Taint (though many maho-tsukai try to pretend otherwise). Each time a Character successfully casts a maho spell, he automatically gains a number of pips of Taint equal to the Mastery Rank of the spell.

Maho Spells, Mastery Rank 1

Bleeding

Ring/Mastery: Fire 1

Range: Short

This spell inflicts a malignant kansen on a wounded person (the target of the spell must already have at least 1 Wound). The injury begins bleeding, inflicting an additional 1 Wound per Round on the maho-tsukai's Turn. This bleeding can only be stopped with medical treatment (Medicine/Intelligence at TN 25) or healing magic.

Raises: The caster can Raise to target an additional victim.

Blood Rite

Ring/Mastery: Earth 1

Range: Touch

A deceptive spell which allows maho-tsukai to masquerade as noble priests healing the injured. This spell causes kansen to flow into the target, stimulating his flesh to heal and filling his body with borrowed strength. The target immediately heals Wounds equal to his Earth Rank, and for the rest of the day one of his physical Traits (chosen by the caster) is 1 Rank higher. However, the target immediately gains 1k1 pips of Shadowlands Taint.

Blood and Darkness

Ring/Mastery: Air 1

Range: Short

This spell fills the air around the caster with kansen who cover the eyes of everyone else within Short Range at the moment of casting, allowing them to see only pitch black or dark blood-red emptiness, imposing the Blind Disadvantage on them until the spell expires. The effect lasts ten minutes or to the end of the skirmish, whichever comes first.

Raises: The caster can Raise to exclude allies from the spell's effect, at the rate of 1 ally per Raise.

Caress of Fu Leng

Ring/Mastery: Earth 1

Range: Short

This spell summons dark kansen to consume and destroy the substance most inimical to them – jade. The caster may target any one jade item, weapon, or object he can see within Short range. The jade is instantly corrupted, its blessed properties annihilated by an overwhelming saturation of Taint. Only a foul black slime is left behind.

This spell cannot affect *nemuranai* (magical relics) that contain jade.

Curse of Weakness

Ring/Mastery: Water 1

Range: Short

This spell inflicts a barrage of angry Water kansen on the target, flowing through his body and causing headache, weakness, fatigue, and muscle tremors. For the next hour, the target is at a 3-die penalty to all Skill rolls.

Raises: The caster can Raise to add additional targets (1 per Raise) or to extend the duration (1 additional hour per Raise).

Inspire Fear

Ring/Mastery: Air 1

Range: Short

This maho spell fills the target's mind with a shrieking terror of something in their immediate vicinity (vindictive maho-tsukai are fond of making a samurai fear his own weapons). The target suffers a Fear effect from the chosen source, with a Rank equal to the caster's Air + Taint.

Raises: The caster can Raise to affect additional targets, at the rate of 1 per Raise.

Legacy of the Dark One

Ring/Mastery: Air 1

Range: Short

This maho spell causes distracting kansen to cluster around the target, disrupting his connection to the true Void. The target immediately loses all Void Points. (They can be regained normally.)

Raises: The caster may affect additional targets at the rate of 1 target per Raise.

Sinful Dreams

Ring/Mastery: Air 1

Range: Long

This subtle and sinister spell causes the target to experience dreams of committing dark and dishonorable acts. It can only be cast on targets who are sleeping or could easily fall asleep (resting, meditating, etc). The caster need not know exactly where the target is located – so long as the target is within Long Range, the spell will succeed.

The dreams make the target vulnerable to future manipulation by the caster. The day after the spell, the caster gains +1k1 on all Temptation and Intimidation rolls against the victim.

Raises: The caster may use Raises increase the bonus awarded, at the rate of +1k1 per Raise.

Puppet Master

Ring/Mastery: Fire 1

Range: Long

This spell allows a maho-tsukai to exert his will against any undead creatures in the area, taking control of them and forcing them to obey his will. If the spell targets mindless creatures such as zombies, the caster takes control of them automatically. If the spell targets free-willed undead such as a pennagalon, the caster must succeed in a Contested Willpower roll against the individual creatures; if the spell targets undead creatures controlled by someone else (another maho-tsukai, Oni lord, etc), the caster must instead succeed in a Contested Willpower roll against the controller.

Once controlled, the undead will obey the caster's commands until the end of the session, after which they revert to their previous status. Also, their obedience is subject to the limits of the creature's intelligence – zombies will only be able to comprehend the most basic of orders ("kill him," etc).

Summon Undead Champion

Ring/Mastery: Earth 1

Range: Long

This spell is used by maho-tsukai to quickly bring forth undead warriors to protect themselves or slaughter their enemies. It must be cast on a corpse which is within the spell's range – it cannot target a living creature. The corpse will be animated by a kansen, rising up and serving the caster as best it can. Mechanically, the animated corpse is considered a zombie (as in the Creatures section later in this chapter) and will obey any simple commands (such as “kill them” or “wait here”) from the maho-tsukai who summoned it. If the zombie remains animate until the next dawn, the kansen will depart and it will revert to a mere corpse.

Raises: The caster can Raise to animate additional corpses, at the rate of 1 corpse per Raise.

Written in Blood

Ring/Mastery: Fire 1

Range: Touch

Maho-tsukai use this spell to leave hidden messages, either to communicate with each other or to intimidate others. The message is written in blood onto any flat surface; the blood sinks into the surface and disappears, reappearing later when a condition set by the caster is fulfilled.

Conditions for the message's reappearance can be as simple or as complex as the caster might desire, so long as they are conditions the kansen can perceive (GM's judgment). Until the message reappears it is physically undetectable, although its presence may be noticed with abilities that sense the Taint or with spells such as *By the Light of the Moon*. If the message is not triggered within a month, the kansen will grow bored and depart, and the hidden blood will reappear without forming a message.

Maho Spells, Mastery Rank 2

Armor of Obsidian

Ring/Mastery: Fire 2

Range: Touch

This spell surrounds the target with an invisible shield of kansen that lasts until the end of the session. The first time the target is struck or affected by a spell that specifically targets the Taint (such as *Jade Strike* or *Ward of Purity*), the kansen negate the effect. This negation is visually spectacular – the target is briefly wreathed in black, soundless fire which absorbs the spell.

Raises: The caster can summon enough kansen to negate multiple spells, adding 1 additional spell's worth of protection per Raise.

Hate's Heart

Ring/Mastery: Air 2

Range: Short

The target of this spell is infused with Air kansen which cause him to suffer a sudden, violent, murderous rage against whoever he is looking at or speaking with when the spell takes effect. As a result, he immediately gains 5 Ranks of Stress; if he succumbs to his Stress, he will do everything in his power to kill the object of his hatred. This lasts until he kills the target or until the target is no longer within Long Range, whichever comes first.

Chains of Jigoku

Ring/Mastery: Earth 2

Range: Short

A dark counterpoint to the binding spells practiced by Earth shugenja, this spell summons manacles of blackened rusty iron that burst from the ground and ensnare a single non-Huge living

target. The target is rendered immobile and helpless, unable to take any physical Actions other than trying to break free. Escaping the chains is a Contested Roll of the target's Strength against the maho-tsukai's Earth. The spell lasts for ten minutes or until the chains are broken, after which the manacles melt away into a disgusting black ooze.

Raises: The caster can Raise to ensnare additional targets, at the rate of 1 target per Raise, and to enhance his Earth roll to keep the targets trapped, at the rate of +1k1 per Raise.

Pain

Ring/Mastery: Earth 2

Range: Short

This spell wracks a single living target with horrible, debilitating physical pain. The target falls to the ground helpless, gains 1 Rank of Stress, and cannot act on his next Turn, after which the pain recedes. If the target fails to resist his Stress he will cry aloud from the pain, causing Honor and Glory loss for a Minor Breach of Etiquette.

Spreading the Darkness

Ring/Mastery: Earth 2

Range: Short

Maho-tsukai use this spell both to control their own Taint and to spread the gift of Jigoku to others. The spell targets two people within Short Range, at least one of whom must have the Shadowlands Taint. The Tainted individual (the caster chooses if both are Tainted) passes some of their Taint to the other – the maximum amount is pips equal to the caster's Earth + Insight Rank. However, this spell can never remove the last pip of Taint from the target.

Truth is a Scourge

Ring/Mastery: Air 2

Range: Short

This spell distorts the target's thoughts, making it impossible for him to lie for one week or until the end of the session, whichever comes first. He will find himself telling the truth no matter what his intent might be and no matter how damaging that truth might be to himself, his family and Lord, or his Clan.

Summon Oni

Ring/Mastery: Earth 2

Range: Short

This dangerous spell summons forth an oni from Jigoku. The oni appears anywhere the caster desires within Short Range, and must immediately be given a name – either the caster's own name or the name of another person closely connected to the caster (a good friend, immediate blood relative, or someone who owes the caster their life). Without a name, the oni will not be able to remain in the mortal realm and will simply depart back to Jigoku. A name, however, anchors the oni into Ningen-do.

Once the caster has given the oni a name, he must engage in a Contested Willpower roll against it. If the caster gave the oni his own name, he gains a +3k2 bonus to this roll. The GM should determine the Willpower of the oni – the more powerful the oni, the higher its Willpower. If the caster wins the roll, the oni will obey his commands... for now. If the oni wins the roll, however, it is free of control and typically runs amok until it is destroyed.

Naming an oni is a perilous business, for the oni will try to steal the name away and thereby become an Oni Lord, monstrously powerful and able to spawn lesser copies of itself. Any person who shares their name with an oni will acquire an Oni Mark, a small discoloration on the skin. Every day, the bearer of an Oni Mark must make an Earth roll to resist gaining the

Shadowlands Taint (as listed in the Taint rules). Each week, they must make a Contested Willpower Roll against the oni in order to avoid surrendering their name to it; the oni gains +1k1 to this roll for each Rank of Shadowlands Taint the Mark has inflicted on its bearer. However, if the name-bearer is the same person who summoned the oni, he continues to gain the +3k2 bonus to the roll (and any bonuses from Raises on the original spell). If the oni ever wins this Willpower roll, it steals the victim's name and becomes an Oni Lord, freeing itself from any control by its summoner (even if that person is different from the one with the Oni Mark). The now-nameless victim of the Oni Mark becomes the slave of the oni and must obey its commands.

If the oni is destroyed or otherwise banished back to Jigoku, it loses its connection to the person with its name, and the Oni Mark will disappear.

Summon Oni may be cast as a ritual, with several maho-tsukai working together to invoke and control very powerful oni. In order for this to be effective, all of the maho-tsukai participating will have to successfully cast the spell – including spilling blood and gaining Taint. All of the maho-tsukai who successfully cast the spell can then make a single combined Willpower roll to control the oni once it appears. (It must still be named.)

Raises: The caster may Raise to boost his Contested Willpower roll (+1k1 per Raise) and to get a more powerful oni (GM's judgment).

Dealing with Summoned Oni

GMs and Players should realize that summoning an oni to destroy your foes is an extremely hazardous venture. Why bring forth an oni that might steal your name, turn you into its slave, and thus become an immensely powerful Oni Lord, a scourge on the world? The answer is usually arrogance and lust for power, or more rarely, desperation. An oni is an immensely powerful servitor, and a skilled maho-tsukai can maintain control for a considerable time. Many maho-tsukai are also overconfident in their abilities, or ignorant of the full consequences of invoking such a creature.

If an oni is physically killed, it is banished back to Jigoku, freeing the person who bears its Mark. Truly powerful maho-tsukai, strong enough to defeat an oni on their own, will often deliberately summon oni in order to bestow Oni Marks on others, using this as a means of control and blackmail. Conversely, a desperate maho-tsukai may summon an oni and unleash it in a suicidal attack, counting on the oni's eventual destruction to free him from the Mark.

Maho Spells, Mastery Rank 3

Death Beyond Life

Ring/Mastery: Earth 3

Range: Touch

This spell is among the deepest secrets of the Bloodspeaker cult, and is quite rare among maho-tsukai outside of that elite group. It allows the caster to literally cheat death, for himself or another person. The spell must be cast on its target while still alive, and its protective effect normally lasts 24 hours, although skilled spellcasters can extend it. If the target dies within the duration of the spell, powerful kansen will carry his soul away, preventing it from passing on to Meido for judgment. Exactly eight hours after death, they will bring back the soul and re-infuse it into the body; the target rises from the dead, with enough Wounds to be just short of Death's Door. Returning from the dead in this way inflicts a full Rank of Taint on the target.

This blasphemous resurrection will work even if the corpse has been dismembered – it will reassemble itself when the kansen return. The only way to prevent the resurrection is to burn the corpse to ashes before the kansen bring back the soul.

Raises: The time-window for cheating death may be extended, adding another 24 hours for each Raise.

No Pure Breaths

Ring/Mastery: Air 3

Range: Short

One of the more fearsome *maho* spells, No Pure Breaths instantly turns the air inside the target's lungs to Tainted kansen which violently erupt out of the body, ravaging the lungs and airways, leaving the victim bleeding from the nose, mouth, and ears. The spell inflicts Wounds equal to the victim's Air Ring, and in the aftermath of the spell breathing itself is intensely painful and distracting, inflicting a 2-die penalty to all Skill Rolls. This effect cannot be ended naturally, even if the Wounds themselves are healed – however, magical healing will restore the lungs and end the die-penalty.

Raises: The caster can Raise to affect additional targets, at the rate of 1 target per Raise.

Possession

Ring/Mastery: Air 3

Range: Long

This fearsome spell allows a maho-tsukai to take direct possession of another person, forcing his soul into the victim's body and controlling it like a puppet. The caster must know the name of his chosen victim and must also have either a drop of blood or a piece of hair from the target. Once the spell is cast, the maho-tsukai makes a Contested Willpower Roll against the target. If the caster wins the roll, he takes complete possession of the victim's body and may use it as he sees fit for one week. He does not gain any of the possessed body's memories, knowledge, or instincts. In mechanical terms, the possessed body retains its physical Traits and Advantages, but now has the mental Traits, mental/spiritual Advantages, School Techniques, and Skills of the possessing maho-tsukai.

The spell's victim experiences what is happening to him in an eerie, dream-like manner. When the spell ends, the caster's soul returns to his own body and the victim regains control of himself – and must face the consequences of what he did while possessed.

While the possession lasts, the caster's body is in a comatose state, and if it is killed the caster will have no place to return and dies when the spell expires. However, the caster can end the possession early and return to his own body at will. He also returns to his own body if the body he is possessing is killed.

Raises: The caster may enhance his Willpower roll against the victim (at the rate of +1k1 per Raise) and extend the length of the possession (+1 week per Raise).

Stealing the Soul

Ring/Mastery: Earth 3

Range: Extreme

Unlike most *maho* spells, this one can be cast as a ritual, allowing multiple casters to participate. The Bloodspeaker Cult is especially infamous for using this spell to weaken and cripple their enemies. In order to cast this spell, a maho-tsukai must possess some kind of fetish or token of the intended target – a lock of hair, drop of blood, a personal item, etc.

The spell inflicts a hostile and predatory kansen on the target, forcibly draining away his mental and physical abilities. The victim loses 1 Rank from any two Traits of the caster's choice. (This cannot reduce a Trait to Rank 0.) For each additional maho-tsukai participating in the spell, an additional Trait can be drained by the same amount.

Raises: Additional Ranks may be drained by taking Raises (1 Rank/Trait per Raise) although this can never reduce a Trait to Rank 0.

Strength of Darkness

Ring/Mastery: Fire 3

Range: Touch

This spell infuses the target (who can be the caster) with the unnatural strength of the Taint, enhancing his physical prowess to superhuman levels for a short time. For ten minutes or the duration of the skirmish (whichever is less), the spell's target gains +2 Ranks to his Earth Ring and to his other three physical Traits. He also gains the ability to see through any sort of visual impairment – fog, smoke, or even complete darkness. The physical effects of the spell are obvious and grotesque – unnaturally swollen flesh, blood-red eyes, etc.

When the spell expires, the Rings and Traits return to normal, which may prove lethal if the target has taken more Wounds than he can normally sustain.

Touch of Death

Ring/Mastery: Earth 3

Range: Short

Among the most dreaded of all maho spells, the Touch of Death ages, blackens, and blights the target. Skin and flesh shrivel and blacken, hair turns gray and falls out, and shattering pains wrack the body. The victim physically ages by 10 years and suffers Wounds equal to 2x the caster's Earth Rank. The Wounds can be healed normally, but the aging cannot be reversed.

Raises: The caster can Raise to strike additional targets with the Touch of Death, at the rate of 1 target per Raise.

The Lying Darkness

The ancient force known variously as the Shadow, the Lying Darkness, or the Living Darkness is a very different sort of foe than the Shadowlands. In the earliest days of creation, when the Sun and Moon named all the parts of reality, one small piece of primordial Nothing was left unnamed and hid itself in Shadow. This entity, this last remnant of nothingness, has endured and grown ever since, slowly spreading, devouring the names and forms of others, trying to become strong enough to unmake creation itself and return to its original solitude. After the Day of Thunder it encountered the wounded Shosuro, the last of the Seven Thunders, and saved her life in exchange for her promise of alliance; Shosuro herself was eventually claimed by the Darkness, and for the next thousand years her descendents would maintain their secret agreement. As a result, the minions of the Darkness would become dark reflections of the “ninja” myth which the Shosuro and Soshi created.

The Nothing is a very different threat from the Shadowlands Taint. The Nothing is subtle, deceptive, manipulative, relying on fear and trickery and its own un-real nature to slowly wear away at its victims' memories and identity, gradually stealing everything from them until they become faceless and nameless. It cannot be sensed like the Taint, or killed like an oni – its minions are expendable and replaceable. Where the Taint can be understood and fought, the Nothing cannot truly be comprehended at all – indeed, to learn too much about it is to be consumed by it. There is a very good reason why the journal of Kitsuki Kaagi, one of the few men to truly understand the Shadow, begins with the words: *Do not read this book!*

For most of the Empire's history, the only people with any knowledge of the Darkness are a few members of the Scorpion Clan, and due to Shosuro's bargain they neither understand what they are facing nor fight against it. This begins to change in the eighth century with the return of the Unicorn, who had encountered the Shadow during their journeys through the Burning Sands and refer to it as the “Lying Darkness.” Finally, in the early twelfth century – as the Shadow's power grows strong enough to finally threaten reality itself – knowledge of the Darkness and its danger begins to spread among the rest of the Rokugani.

In game terms, the only true defenses against the Darkness are Void – the unity of everything standing directly opposed to the Darkness' non-existence – and sacred crystal, whose

infusion with the essence of the Sun makes it inimical to the Shadow. Crystal weapons can destroy the Shadow's minions with a touch, Void magic can disperse them, and a high Void Ring can protect against Shadow Corruption. Everything else is, at best, a temporary measure.

Shadow Corruption

Corruption by the Nothing is a subtle and insidious process. In game terms, this is reflected by the acquisition of Shadow Ranks. Any normal living creature has 0 Shadow Ranks; acquiring the first Rank will usually happen either from an encounter with one of the Shadow's minions or due to the Shadow deliberately seeking to insinuate itself into the Character through deception and manipulation. Thus, role-play will always figure strongly in any such scenario. It cannot be emphasized enough that the Nothing is a devious entity, even compared to the Shadowlands Taint, and will never "play fair."

A Character who succumbs to the Shadow's manipulations, or who is directly exposed to its essence in a fight or crisis, can still resist by rolling Void. A typical TN will be 15, although a weak or minor attack could be only TN 10 and a strong one will be TN 20 or even TN 25. Failure indicates contamination, causing the Character to gain 1 Shadow Rank.

Scorpion Characters who have *kage yakiin* – Shadow Brands – are being directly exposed to a somewhat attenuated form of the Darkness. They automatically gain 1 Shadow Rank for every two Shadow Brands they acquire. Characters who reach Rank 5 in the Shosuro Assassin School are also touched by the Shadow and gain 1 Shadow Rank.

Gaining Shadow Ranks is not without benefit – in fact, the Darkness grants the Character significant new abilities. However, once a Character has Shadow Corruption, it will relentlessly attempt to grow, slowly consuming the Character's identity. In game terms, the Character must make a Void roll at the end of every play-session; the base TN of this roll is 10, but it goes up by 5 for each additional Shadow Rank the Character has (beyond 1). Failing the roll means the Character acquires another Shadow Rank.

- **Shadow Rank 1:** The Character can see through darkness as easily as into normal light. (Smoke and fog will still obscure his vision and impair his ability to fight in the normal manner, as described in the *Chapter of Earth*.) Moreover, the Character finds he can move more easily and quickly when in deep shadow or darkness, gaining a +1k0 bonus on any attack rolls and Defense Skill Rolls made in those circumstances.
- **Shadow Rank 2:** As the Darkness takes hold, the Character gain the ability to blend himself into shadows with unnatural ease, as though the darkness actively cooperates in hiding him. He gains a +1k1 bonus on any Stealth rolls when hiding in shadows or darkness. His combat bonuses for fighting in darkness increase to +2k0. Due to the Darkness' growing presence, the Character now experiences noticeable discomfort any time his skin touches crystal. (Willpower TN 10 to avoid wincing, drawing back, or otherwise showing discomfort.)
- **Shadow Rank 3:** At this Rank, the Character can use a Move Action to disappear into a shadow and reappear somewhere else within Short Range, instantly transitioning from one pool of darkness to another so long as this does not require him to move through a solid object. The bonus to Stealth rolls now increases to +2k1 and his combat bonuses increase to +2k1. At this rank, direct skin-contact with crystal will cause serious pain that cannot be concealed. The Character also begins to show signs of fading identity, his facial features slowly losing their distinctive features. In game terms, he gains the Bland Advantage if he does not already have it.
- **Shadow Rank 4:** The Character's identity crumbles and his physical form becomes mutable. He may use an Action to assume the features and shape of any person he knows well (GM's discretion), though this mimicry is not completely perfect – those who know

the real person well may notice the difference, based on role-play or potentially an Investigation/Perception roll. The Character's darkness bonus to Stealth and combat Skill rolls is now +2k2, and he now gains Carapace 2 against any non-crystal weapon. Direct contact with crystal inflicts 1 Wound. Once per session, the Lying Darkness can try to take control of the Character (making them an NPC) for up to an hour of game time; the Character must roll Void at TN 20 to resist.

If a Character ever reaches Shadow Rank 5, the Darkness consumes him and he becomes a *Goju*, controlled by the GM.

The Time of Unmaking

In the canon L5R timeline, the Shadow took a millennium to become strong enough to try to unmake reality, and makes its final push for victory during the Hidden Emperor era – the first years of the Toturi Dynasty, when the Empire is still chaotic and unsettled from the recent Clan Wars. However, the GM does not have to do the same in his own campaign. The Shadow can just as easily make its push for victory earlier or later, or the GM can just leave the Shadow in the background as a subtle but not imminent threat. The Darkness is, after all, infinitely patient.

Minions of Shadow: The Goju

Those who are consumed by the Shadow become “Goju,” taking their non-name from an ancient individual called Goju Adorai who encountered the Darkness and was driven mad by it, writing a blasphemous document called *Celestial Agonies* before he was consumed.

Goju have no identity of their own and in their “true” form seem to be only vague approximations of people, with blank featureless faces that nonetheless seem to smile. However, they can take on the appearance of any general, average human, as well as the specific appearance, voice, and characteristics of their own formerly-human identity. They can change their form at will, can vanish into shadow or darkness and reappear wherever they wish, and can distort and squeeze their mutable bodies through narrow spaces and small openings. When wounded, they bleed darkness that fizzles away into the air. They can be “killed” but the death is not permanent unless it is inflicted with a crystal weapon – otherwise they can be reformed by the Darkness after a week or two.

Goju [Thug]

Air 2 Reflexes 3

Earth 2

Fire 2 Agility 3

Water 2

Skills: Disguise 5, Stealth 3

Attack Roll: 3k3

Defense TN: 15

Initiative Rank: 5

Special Abilities:

- **Carapace 2** (bypassed by crystal)
- **Shadow Bolt:** Goju have the ability to hurl concentrated bolts of Nothing at enemies. This may be done once per skirmish. The Shadow Bolt automatically hits any one target within Short range, and inflicts 3 Wounds. The target must roll Void at TN 20 or instantly gain a Rank of Shadow Corruption.
- **Shadow Jump:** A Goju can use a Move Action to move between any two areas of shadow/darkness within Short Range, and can also use a Move Action to vanish into

darkness, reappearing from another Shadow within Long Range on any subsequent Round.

- **Shapeshifter:** A Goju can take the physical form of any human who has been consumed by the Shadow and can pass its body through small openings and narrow spaces.
- **Tough:** Due to their unnatural nature, Goju must be hit twice (with blows that get Wounds through their Carapace) in order to kill them.

Animals, Creatures, and Monsters

During an L5R adventure, the Player Characters may encounter a variety of enemies, not just other samurai but also dangerous animals, Shadowlands monsters, and otherworldly spirit-creatures. Broadly speaking, all such GM-controlled enemies are classified in the same manner as human NPCs: either Thugs or Characters, conforming to the rules from the *Chapter of Earth*. However, creatures have a number of additional properties beyond the basic rules for humans, and many of them have special abilities which humans cannot possess.

A full listing of every possible creature would be impossible, but the following section presents stats and rules for a variety of the most common non-human creatures and enemies that could appear in an L5R campaign. The GM can use these as examples to extrapolate other creatures as required.

Creatures have Rings and Traits in the same manner as human Characters, and often have Skills as well. However, a creature's attacks, defenses, and Initiative Rank are not necessarily derived solely from their Rings, Traits, and Skills, since many creatures fight instinctively or have unusual physical or supernatural abilities that enhance their talents. Accordingly, each creature has its Initiative Rank, its Attack Roll, and its Defense Roll (for Characters) or Defense TN (for Thugs) listed separately from their Skills. Also, most non-human creatures do not have a Void Ring, due to either their lack of intelligence and self-awareness (in the case of animals) or their lack of connection and harmony with the elements (in the case of Shadowlands creatures, undead, etc).

Many creatures also have special abilities. Some of these are unique to a specific creature and explained in that creature's listing, but a few are widespread enough to be presented here as general standardized abilities:

- **Carapace.** As noted in the *Chapter of Earth*, the Carapace ability reduces the Wounds the creature takes from any direct physical attack, though it normally will not protect against damage from magic or from "elemental" attacks such as being set on fire. If a Thug creature has Carapace, any hit on it must get at least 1 Wound through the Carapace in order to "count" for taking it down.
- **Fear.** Many creatures exude a terrifying aura, or are inherently frightening to the Rokugani due to their nature (e.g. undead). The Fear effect generally applies only at the beginning of an encounter with the creature, unless specifically noted otherwise.
- **Flying.** A creature with this ability can fly (either magically or with wings), and when doing so can take a number of Move Actions per turn equal to its Air Rank in addition to its normal Action. Such creatures can also be difficult for earthbound Characters to attack with melee weapons, since the only chance to strike at them is if they fly low enough to attack.
- **Huge.** A creature that is significantly larger than a human. The Knockdown maneuver is difficult or impossible to execute against such creatures, as the GM adjudicates. At a minimum, a Knockdown should require at least 2 more Raises.

- **Invulnerability.** A creature with the Invulnerable ability is resistant to damage from normal mundane weapons. Such creatures can only be harmed by the three sacred substances (jade, crystal, and obsidian), by magical spells, and by nemuranai. Some creatures may have a less powerful or more powerful form of Invulnerability, in which case the differences will be noted under the ability.
- **Resilience.** A creature Character with the Resilience ability does not suffer from the effects of Death's Door. It will continue to fight until its Wounds exceed its Earth x3 and it dies.

Natural Animals

Ape [Thug]

Apes are common in the jungles of the Isles of Silk and Spice, and occasionally appear on Rokugan's mainland. They are not overtly aggressive, but defend their territory and will fight ferociously against any perceived threat.

Air 1 Reflexes 3

Earth 2 Stamina 4

Fire 1 Agility 4

Water 2 Strength 5

Skills: Athletics 3

Attack Roll: 5k4

Defense TN: 20

Initiative Rank: 4

Special Abilities:

- **Huge**

Bear [Thug]

Bears inhabit forests throughout the Empire's central and northern regions. They are omnivorous and often aggressive, sometimes attacking humans who enter their territory (or who disturb their hibernation in winter).

Air 1 Reflexes 3

Earth 4

Fire 1 Agility 4

Water 3 Strength 6

Attack Roll: 6k4

Defense TN: 20

Initiative Rank: 6

Special Abilities:

- **Carapace** 2
- **Huge**
- **Strong:** A bear inflicts 2 Wounds with each hit.
- **Tough:** Bears are extremely resilient. A bear must be hit three times (by attacks that get Wounds through the Carapace) to kill it.

Boar [Thug]

Wild boar may be found throughout Rokugan, though they are most common in forested regions.

They are notoriously ill-tempered and will attack anyone who approaches them. Samurai consider hunting boar to be a fine sport, made better by the animals' ferocity and resilience.

Air 1 Reflexes 3

Earth 4

Fire 1 Agility 3

Water 2 Strength 4

Attack Roll: 6k3

Defense TN: 20

Initiative Rank: 5

Special Abilities:

- **Carapace** 1
- **Huge**
- **Tough** – A boar must be hit twice (with attacks that inflict Wounds past its Carapace) to kill it.

Ox [Thug]

Common folk in Rokugan rely on oxen to pull carts, drag plows, and perform other such tasks. Most Rokugani villages have an ox-pen holding two or three of these strong, stubborn, dull-witted animals.

Air 1 Reflexes 2

Earth 3 Stamina 4

Fire 1 Agility 2

Water 2 Strength 4

Attack Roll: 3k2

Defense TN: 15

Initiative Rank: 2

Special Abilities:

- **Huge**

Shark [Thug]

Sharks inhabit the oceans off Rokugan's coast; they are more common to the south but may be encountered anywhere. They do not attack humans by preference but will do so if attracted by blood in the water.

Air 1 Reflexes 3

Earth 2

Fire 1 Agility 3

Water 2

Attack Roll: 4k3

Defense TN: 15

Initiative Rank: 5

Special Abilities:

- **Aquatic:** Sharks cannot leave the water.
- **Huge**

Snake, Constrictor [Character]

Constrictor snakes are large beasts, eight to fifteen feet long, who inhabit the Mantis Isles and the southern coastal swamps of Rokugan. They are stealthy and solitary predators, lurking in trees, streams, or marshes until their prey comes close enough to seize and constrict. They are willing to attack humans, but prefer smaller prey.

Air 1 Reflexes 4

Earth 3 Stamina 4

Fire 1 Agility 4

Water 2 Strength 5

Skills: Stealth 4

Attack Roll: Coils 7k4, Medium

Defense Roll: 5k4

Initiative Rank: 6

Special Abilities:

- **Amphibious.** Constrictor snakes swim in water as easily as they move on land.
- **Constriction.** A constrictor snake's Coils attack ignores any Armor benefits to its target's Defense rolls. If the Coils attack hits, the target is Entangled and will continue to take Wounds every Round (on the snake's Turn) until it is killed, the snake is killed, or the target escapes the Entangle with a Contested Strength roll.
- **Resilience**

Snake, Poisonous [Thug]

Poisonous snakes are found throughout Rokugan but are most common in the central and southern regions. They are solitary hunters but will sometimes nest together in large groups. Snakes are generally small, two or three feet long, and are not inherently aggressive; however, they will bite if they are angered or frightened.

Air 1 Reflexes 3

Earth 1

Fire 1 Agility 3

Water 1 Perception 2

Skills: Stealth 3

Attack Roll: 3k3

Defense TN: 15

Initiative Rank: 3

Special Abilities:

- **Venom:** Snake venom can be either Debilitating or Lethal, and at a variety of levels of threat, depending on the breed of snake.

Squid/Octopi, Giant [Character]

Normal squid and octopi are much prized by the Rokugani as food, and coastal fishermen bring in net-fuls of them every day. However, these creatures can occasionally grow much larger, becoming threats to humans. Giant octopi can reach a size of fourteen to twenty feet long, while giant squid can grow even larger, up to thirty or forty feet long. Giant octopi are usually cautious animals that will flee rather than fight, but will defend their lairs; giant squid are aggressive predators and much more dangerous to those who stumble across them.

Air 2 Reflexes 4

Earth 4

Fire 2 Agility 4

Water 2 Strength 4

Skills: Stealth 3

Attack Roll: Tentacles 6k4 Light, Beak 4k4 Medium

Defense Roll: 6k4

Initiative Rank: 7

Special Abilities:

- **Aquatic.** Octopi and squid are underwater creatures and cannot go on land.

- **Color Change (Octopus only):** The octopus' natural ability to change its color allows it to blend into the sea bottom. It can take an Action to conceal itself in this way, gaining +2k2 to its Stealth Skill roll.
- **Ink.** An octopus can squirt ink to cover a retreat. This will create a visual obscurement throughout Short Range.
- **Jet Propulsion:** A squid or octopus can fire a jet of water to generate a brief burst of speed, allowing them to take an extra Move Action in a Round in addition to their normal Action. This can be done every other Round.
- **Poison Bite:** The beak attack of a squid or octopus (delivered preferentially to enemies already Entangled with the creatures' tentacles) contains a Debilitating Poison, of a strength chosen by the GM. (The larger the creature, the stronger its venom.)
- **Resilience**
- **Tentacles:** An octopus or squid can attack with two of its tentacles with a single Attack Action. If both tentacles hit the same target, that target is Entangled.

Tiger [Character]

Tigers are found in two different varieties in Rokugan – orange-patterned ones which stalk the Islands of Silk and Spice in the far south, and silver-coated ones who infiltrate the Empire's northern regions by migrating through the Great Wall of the North Mountains. Unlike other predator animals, tigers are man-eaters and will hunt humans intentionally, stalking and striking by surprise.

Air 2 Reflexes 4

Earth 3

Fire 2 Agility 4

Water 3 Strength 4

Skills: Athletics 4, Defense 3, Hunting 5, Stealth 4

Attack Roll: 7k4 Medium

Defense Roll: 7k4

Initiative Rank: 7

Special Abilities:

- **Huge**
- **Fear** 3

Wolf [Thug]

Wolves are found all over the Empire, but prefer mountains and forests. They are pack animals and usually hunt other animals such as deer, but will attack humans if they are starving or protecting their territory.

Air 1 Reflexes 3

Earth 2

Fire 1 Agility 3

Water 3

Skills: Hunting 4, Stealth 2

Attack Roll: 4k3

Defense TN: 15

Initiative Rank: 5

Creatures and Spirits

Bog Hag [Character]

Bog Hags resemble an ancient human woman with green skin, stringy matted hair, sagging or bloated flesh, monstrously ugly facial features, and sharp jagged teeth and claws. They are solitary creatures who prefer to eat human flesh, especially women and children. As their name implies, they usually dwell in marshes or stagnant riverbanks, but also infiltrate human society by stripping and wearing the skins of beautiful young women, allowing them to take on the appearance of their victims. (They can wear other skins, including those of men, but always prefer young women.) As a result, bog hags are often able to infiltrate Rokugani society rather than remaining within the Shadowlands. Their power varies, strengthening the longer they live – the example depicted below is an older and more potent one.

Air 3

Earth 3

Fire 2 Agility 3

Water 2 Strength 4

Skills: Athletics 3, Defense 3, Disguise 4, Stealth 3

Attack Roll: Claws 6k3 Medium

Defense Roll: 6k3

Initiative Rank: 7

Special Abilities:

- **Amphibious:** Bog hags swim in water as easily as they move on land.
- **Disease:** Anyone wounded by a bog hag's vile, encrusted claws must make a Stamina roll at TN 15 or contract a foul wasting disease that causes skin boils, blisters, and weakness. The disease prevents all natural healing and reduces the victim's Stamina by 1 Rank per week (with death at 0 Stamina). It can be cured with magic or with a successful Medicine / Intelligence roll at TN 30.
- **Invulnerable** (weaker bog hags do not always have this ability).
- **Resilience**
- **Skin Wearing:** A bog hag who wears the skin of her victim appears exactly like that victim in life, and acquires the victim's memories and one Rank in each Skill she possessed. Skins last a number of weeks equal to the victim's Earth before they begin to rot away, exposing the monster beneath.

Dark Moto [Character]

Among the most terrifying of the Lost *akutstukai* are the so-called "Dark Moto," the members of the Moto family who fell to the Taint in the ninth century. Under the leadership of their fallen daimyo Moto Tsume, the Dark Moto are the elite cavalry of the Shadowlands, sweeping out to raid and ambush and murder. Individually they are already among the more powerful denizens of Fu Leng's realm, but their ability to work together with organized tactics makes them a truly deadly threat.

The abilities and strength of any specific Dark Moto will vary, but the following may be considered an "average" member of their ranks for the GM to use as a template.

Air 3 Reflexes 4

Earth 4

Fire 3 Agility 4

Water 4

Skills: Athletics 3, Defense 4, Horsemanship 5, Hunting 4, Jiujutsu 2, Kenjutsu 4, Kyujutsu 4, Spears 4

Attack Roll: Katana 8k4

Defense Roll: 8k4

Initiative Rank: 14

Special Abilities:

- **Blood Hunting:** Dark Moto can smell the faintest hint of spilled blood on the dark winds of the Shadowlands. If any mortal blood is spilled in the Shadowlands within five miles of a Dark Moto, it will know the direction and approximate distance of the blood.
- **Invulnerable**
- **Resilient**
- **Shadowlands Powers:** Child of Darkness, Maho-Bujin, Uncanny Speed, Unholy Stamina
- **Steed.** All Dark Moto have Onikage as their personal steeds.

Dokufu, the Mountain Spider [Character]

Dokufu are bloated, seven-eyed spiders the size of small houses, with slobbering toothless mouths, sharp claws at the ends of their eight legs, and a rocky and jagged outer shell. Even worse, they are shape-shifters, and often entice the Empire to seek out human flesh and hosts for their eggs. They always take the form of a woman, the same woman no matter how many times they shapechange, and the woman always appears as old as the monster really is – as a result, they are most often ancient crones.

Dokufu reproduce by forcing their eggs into the bellies of trapped human victims, then swallowing the victims, who suffer a slow and agonizing death in the monster's belly while the egg grows and hatches. The young mature very slowly and remain inside their parent's belly until they do so, attached by black umbilicals; in battle, a dokufu will often vomit forth its immature spawn to help defend it.

Air 3

Earth 8

Fire 3 Agility 4

Water 3 Strength 9

Skills: While in human form, a Dokufu has Athletics 2, Defense 3, Disguise 1, Etiquette 2, Jujutsu 2, Sincerity 3

Attack Roll: Claws 8k4 Heavy, Webs 8k3

Defense Roll: 6k3

Initiative Rank: 6

Special Abilities:

- **Carapace** 3
- **Fear** 5
- **Huge**
- **Multiple Limbs:** A dokufu can make its Claw attack three times with one Action.
- **Resilience**
- **Shapeshift:** A dokufu can turn into its human form or back into its true form with an Action.
- **Vomit Spawn:** A dokufu can vomit out 1k1 (non-exploding) spawn as an Action.
- **Web:** A dokufu in both human and monstrous form can shoot webs (as an Action) at a target in Short Range. If the webs hit, the target is Entangled.

Dokufu Spawn [Thug]

Air 1 Reflexes 2

Earth 2

Fire 1 Agility 3

Water 2

Attack Roll: 3k3

Defense TN: 15

Initiative Rank: 3

Gaki [Thug]

Gaki, sometimes called “hungry dead,” are spirits from the realm of Gaki-do who have entered the mortal world. Some Gaki are native to that realm, but many of them are actually the souls of humans who led extremely sinful lives but did not succumb to the Taint. Such souls are often condemned to Gaki-do, spending decades or centuries as one of the hungry dead so their karma can be cleansed.

The typical Rokugani often has difficulty telling a gaki apart from a true ghost (see the Ghosts entry) and indeed many Rokugani regard gaki as simply a form of ghost. Only those with deep knowledge of the spirit realms or who have made a detailed study of ghosts (such as the Toritaka family) understand the difference.

There are actually many different types of gaki, depending on what sort of soul formed them. The unifying nature of all gaki is their relentless urge to feed on something – most typically either an impure physical substance like blood or human flesh, or an impure emotion like cruelty or pain.

The most commonly encountered gaki is the Shozai-Gaki, created from the souls of greedy and sinful humans and condemned to feed on an impure physical substance: blood, sweat, bile, flesh, etc. Each shozai-gaki will feed on only one particular substance of this sort, and if it cannot feed it will suffer agonizing pain. Physically, Shozai-Gaki appear to be grotesque, slightly translucent humanoid creatures with clawed hands and demonic features, often with a vaguely insectoid caste.

Many other types of gaki exist, such as the Shikko-gaki who appear as hulking humanoids with gray skin, or the Kwaku-shin-gaki who resemble humans with flaming cauldrons for stomachs. However, the mechanical differences between different gaki are relatively modest, and the GM can represent them easily enough by making changes to the basic Shozai-Gaki statistics presented here.

Air 1 Reflexes 3

Earth 2 Willpower 3

Fire 2 Agility 3

Water 2 Perception 4

Skills: Hunting 3, Stealth 3

Attack Roll: 4k3

Defense TN: 15

Initiative Rank: 6

Special Abilities:

- **Fear** 6.
- **Immortality:** Gaki cannot actually be killed, and if their physical form is destroyed, they are banished to Gaki-do and slowly reform there.
- **Invisibility:** A gaki may become invisible as an Action, and while invisible may pass through walls and other solid inanimate objects.
- **Shapeshifting:** All gaki can take the form of a normal insect as an Action. Regaining their true form likewise requires an Action.
- **Invulnerability:** In addition to the normal benefits of Invulnerability, Gaki are immune to all Air spells.
- **Possession:** A gaki can possess a mortal by winning a Contested Willpower roll. This possession causes the victim to suffer high fever and wracking chills, losing 1 Wound per day as the gaki feeds directly on their essence. The gaki can be driven out of its victim

with an exorcism ritual (see Kuni Exorcists elsewhere in this chapter) or with the spell *Bonds of Ningen-do*.

Ghosts (*Yorei*)

Rokugan is a superstitious land, and its myths and legends are replete with ghost stories. Although these stories vary widely in nature and contents, they share a general theme: ghosts are human souls who for whatever reason have remained in the mortal realm rather than traveling on to their next place on the Celestial Wheel. Typically this is due to some powerful emotion – love, anger, regret, duty, revenge – drawing the soul back to Ningen-do when it should instead be traveling to Meido to accept the judgment of the Fortune of Death, Emma-O.

Souls remaining in the mortal world due to some need, frustration, anger, or desire are collectively referred to as *Yorei* or “yearning ghosts.” There are several different sub-types of *Yorei*. For example, *Goryo* (“vengeful ghosts”) are the souls of those murdered, kept in the mortal realm by their anger and need for vengeance. Another well-known type of ghost is the *Ubume* (“mourning woman”), ghosts of women who died in pregnancy or childbirth.

Ghosts are not always malignant, but even the least malign types can be dangerous. They often have negative effects on those around them, such as causing nightmares or sickness, blighting crops, etc. They can also be more directly dangerous to mortals – *Goryo*, for example, will sometimes attack anyone they meet, unable to distinguish between their murderer and other mortals they encounter.

Physically, ghosts usually look as they did in life, or as they did at the moment of death. Sometimes (though not always) a ghost’s feet are translucent or absent, and the lack of feet is commonly regarded in Rokugani superstition as a sure-fire way to spot a ghost.

Individual ghosts vary widely in their specific nature and abilities. However, they all share a few basic traits: All ghosts have the ability to pass through solid objects at will, or to sink into the earth, and they cannot be touched if they do not wish it. Ghosts have the same Rings, Traits, Skills, and other knowledge and abilities they had in life, but no longer have a Void Ring or Void Points. They can interact with physical objects and use weapons. The three sacred substances (jade, crystal, and obsidian) do have some power to harm ghosts, but cannot actually kill them – a *Yorei* which is “killed” with these weapons will simply disappear for a time, probably returning later in anger to wreck vengeance on the one who hurt it. Likewise, warding magic (such as *Ward of Purity* or *Yogo wards*) can drive ghosts away temporarily but cannot permanently defeat them. Dealing with a ghost usually involves either figuring out what it wants so it can be appeased, or praying and entreating it to depart for Meido – a matter of religion and conviction, not combat.

Goblin [Thug]

Goblins are among the most numerous and pervasive denizens of the Shadowlands. They are deceptively small creatures, typically only about three feet tall, but vicious and sadistic. They are dim-witted and impulsive, aggressive when they have superior numbers but quick to run when things go against them. They often wind up as followers to more powerful Shadowlands creatures such as ogres and oni.

The goblin depicted here represents the “average” in terms of stats and attacks, but individual goblins will sometimes focus on a particular tactic such as throwing rocks (“Chuckers”) or stealthy ambushes (“Sneaks”). This can be represented by the GM through changes to their Skill list, e.g. “Sneaks” will have Stealth of 3 or 4 instead of 1.

Air 1 Reflexes 2

Earth 1 Stamina 2

Fire 1 Agility 2

Water 2

Skills: Defense 1, Hunting 2, Kenjutsu 2, Kyujutsu 2, Stealth 1
Attack Roll: 4k3
Defense TN: 15
Initiative Rank: 4

Goblin Fanatic [Thug]

Some goblins have adopted an extremely bizarre and unique tactic: they cover themselves in a black, tarry, pitch-like substance that occasionally bubbles to the surface of the Shadowlands, which they refer to as “magic mud.” Thus covered, they set themselves on fire and rush madly toward their enemies, seeking to embrace them in flaming death. Such attacks are often quite difficult to stop, since the goblins will not stop trying to burn their foes until they are completely dead.

Air 1 Reflexes 3
Earth 1 Stamina 2
Fire 1 Agility 3
Water 2
Attack Roll: 5k5
Defense TN: 20
Initiative Rank: 7
Special Abilities:

- **Magic Mud:** Once a fanatic sets himself alight, he has 4 Rounds before the flames kill him. However, within that time limit, his attacks ignore any of his target’s Armor boosts to Defense, and a successful hit sets the target afire. The searing, sticky magic mud inflicts 2 Wounds per Round until the fire is extinguished.
- **Tough:** The goblin fanatics’ single-minded determination to embrace and burn their foes means they do not stop until they are truly dead. It takes 2 hits to kill a fanatic.

Goblin Shaman [Character]

Some goblins are clever enough to figure out how to cast maho, either on their own or by imitating Lost or Oni. They like to surround themselves with sycophantic “apprentices” they can cut open for blood to power their spells.

The shaman depicted here is “typical” but some exceptional goblins may become more powerful, with higher Traits, Skills, and more potent spells.

Air 2
Earth 2
Fire 2
Water 2
Skills: Defense 2, Knives 3, Spellcraft 2
Attack Roll: 5k2 Light
Defense Roll: 4k2
Initiative Rank: 4
Special Abilities:

- **Minions:** A goblin shaman is accompanied by 5 to 10 slavishly devoted “apprentices.”
- **Spellcasting:** A goblin shaman will know 1 to 4 maho spells, all of Mastery Rank 1.

Goblin Warmonger [Character]

Occasionally, a goblin will live long enough to become larger, stronger, and even slightly more intelligent than its fellows. These creatures become war-leaders, gathering hordes of ordinary goblins and directing them against the Empire.

Just as with Goblin Shamans, the stats presented here are for a “typical” Warmonger, but individual ones can be stronger, with higher Traits and Skills and a greater number of minions.

Air 1 Reflexes 3

Earth 2 Stamina 3

Fire 2 Agility 3

Water 3

Skills: Battle 2, Defense 3, Hunting 2, Kenjutsu 3, Kyujutsu 3, Stealth 1

Attack Roll: 6k3

Defense Roll: 6k3

Initiative Rank: 6

Special Abilities:

- **Minions:** A goblin warmonger will always be accompanied by a large number of ordinary goblins, at least 5x his Willpower and often higher.

Hanemuri [Thug]

Hanemuri are crow-sized reptilian flying creatures with scrawny, bony bodies, bat-like wings, and oversized jaws full of needle-like teeth. They dwell in the Shadowlands, where they lurk in high places like treetops and cliff-sides. They are cowardly when alone but turn wildly aggressive when they swarm in large numbers.

Air 1 Reflexes 4

Earth 1

Fire 1 Agility 4

Water 1

Attack Roll: 4k4

Defense TN: 10

Initiative Rank: 2

Special Abilities:

- **Flying**

Harionago [Character]

Harionago are undead creatures spawned from women whose violent deaths leave a legacy of wrath and vengeance so intense it attracts Tainted spirits to possess and re-animate their corpses. They are solitary predators, dwelling near roads in remote areas and preferentially hunting lone travelers, especially anyone who reminds them of their murderer; they generally avoid conflict with larger groups and will flee from an outnumbered fight.

When a Harionago is hunting it appears as a beautiful woman, often dressed like a peasant and playing the role of a simple, frightened maiden looking for help. Her most notable feature is her long and lustrous hair, adorned with small metal ornaments – which are actually hooks.

A Harionago will try to lure its prey into conversation and companionship, only to suddenly attack when the target says or does something that connects to the creature’s distorted memories of its former mortal life and murder. At that point it is revealed as a hideous undead creature which uses its barbed hair as a weapon. Those it kills are devoured down to the bone, the skeleton buried so as not to warn other targets. However, if its chosen prey rejects its approaches, it will eventually give up and vanish, leaving the near-victim wondering what happened.

Air 3

Earth 3 Willpower 5

Fire 3 Agility 4

Water 3 Perception 4

Skills: Athletics 2, Defense 3, Disguise 3, Etiquette 2, Hunting 3, Temptation 3

Attack Roll: Claws 5k4 Medium, Hair 4k4 Light

Defense Roll: 6k3

Initiative Rank: 6

Special Abilities:

- **Carapace 2**
- **Hooked Hair:** If a Harionago hits someone with its hair, the target is Entangled. Any attempt to break free the Entanglement, whether successful or not, inflicts 1 Wound from the hooks snaring and tearing.
- **Undead Resilience:** A Harionago does not suffer any Wound penalties of *any* kind until its Wounds exceed its Earth x3, at which point it dies.

Kappa [Character]

Kappa are strange malicious spirit-creatures encountered in rivers and streams. They appear as vaguely frog-like or turtle-like humanoids whose hands and feet are clawed and webbed, allowing them to swim easily. They have a beak-like mouth, a turtle's shell on their back, and a distinctive bowl-shaped depression full of water atop their heads.

Kappa are malignant tricksters, often playing "pranks" that cause serious injury or death, and their otherworldly spiritual nature makes them extremely difficult to harm. They feed on human and animal blood, but sometimes offer their prey the chance to escape if they can best the kappa at a puzzle or a test of wits. Even if a kappa is not hungry, it will often engage passers-by in contests of wits to humiliate them and prove its own cleverness.

Legends claim the water in the kappa's bowl-like head is the source of its power: if the water is spilled, the creature is rendered powerless. A kappa which has lost its water is weak and vulnerable, and must retreat into the water for a full day to replenish itself.

Air 3 Reflexes 4

Earth 3

Fire 3

Water 3 Perception 4

Skills: Athletics 4, Defense 4, Intimidation 3, Stealth 3

Attack Roll: Claws 6k3 Medium

Defense Roll: 8k4

Initiative Rank: 7

Special Abilities:

- **Amphibious:** Kappa swim in water as easily as they move on land.
- **Invulnerable**
- **Trickery:** A kappa can create visual illusions (visual only, no sound or scent) within Short Range up to three times a day (more for an unusually powerful kappa).
- **Water of Life:** If the water in a kappa's head-bowl is spilled, the kappa loses Invulnerability and all of its Rings and Traits become 1 until it spends a full day underwater replenishing itself.

Kumo [Character]

The Kumo are a race of shape-shifting spirit-creatures whose natural form is giant spiders with an unsettling, malicious intelligence in their six eyes. They are typically four to six feet long and stand about three feet high. Kumo are stealthy predators and good swimmers, and prefer to dwell in marshes, coastlines, and forests; the Shinomen forest is known to hide several nests of them. The Kumo, much like the Pekkle no Oni (see the Oni section), were once independent creatures but were seduced by Fu Leng's promises of power and human flesh, becoming Tainted. As a result they have largely lost their former shapeshifting powers, and can only take the form of a wizened old man or woman.

Kumo are cunning and cautious predators, using their human guises to size up their prey and only attacking when they believe they can win. However, when they do have a decisive advantage they are ruthless and cruel. They prefer to weaken their victims with webs and poison before closing in for the kill, and they like to keep prey alive in their lairs for later consumption.

Air 3 Reflexes 4

Earth 3

Fire 3 Agility 4

Water 3 Strength 4

Skills: Hunting 3, Sincerity 3, Stealth 4

Attack Roll: Bite 7k4 Medium (plus poison)

Defense Roll: 5k4

Initiative Rank: 7

Special Abilities:

- **Camouflage:** Kumo can change their coloration with an Action to match their surroundings, granting them a +1k1 bonus to their Stealth rolls.
- **Fear** 3
- **Shapeshifting:** A kumo may use an Action to take the form of an elderly, decrepit human of the same gender. Returning to spider form is instantaneous (does not require an Action).
- **Venom:** A kumo's bite is poisonous, inflicting Debilitating Poison that imposes a 3-die penalty on the target. The effects are cumulative from multiple bites. The victim can roll Stamina at TN 20 to reduce the penalty by 1 die. The effect lasts for eight hours.
- **Web:** A kumo may shoot webbing at opponents within Short Range as an Action. The webbing has an Attack Roll of 6k4 and ignores armor bonuses to Defense rolls. A hit means the victim is Entangled.

Ogre [Character]

Ogres are huge, bestial humanoid creatures, eight feet tall or more, with massive limbs, tusk-like fangs, and thick, dirty hair. They dwell within the Shadowlands but sometimes wander into the Empire. Ogres are actually intelligent and once had a civilization of their own, but Fu Leng enslaved them at the dawn of the Empire, turning them into bestial creatures controlled by Jigoku's urges. They often serve as shock troops for powerful creatures such as Lost and Oni, and in turn often lead groups of lesser Shadowlands creatures like goblins. They usually fight with huge clubs, or with Heavy Weapons looted from dead samurai, but are not above ripping their enemies limb-from-limb with their bare hands.

In the post-Clan-War eras, some of the less-Tainted ogres began to regain their will and intellect, becoming so-called "Free Ogres," but the majority of the race remained brutal Tainted monsters.

Air 1 Reflexes 2

Earth 4

Fire 2 Agility 4

Water 2 Strength 4

Skills: Athletics 2, Defense 3, Heavy Weapon 3, Intimidation 4, Jujutsu 3

Attack Roll: 7k4 Heavy (with weapon) or Medium (with bare hands)

Defense Roll: 5k2

Initiative Rank: 5

Special Abilities:

- **Carapace** 1
- **Huge**
- **Resilience**

Onikage [Character]

Horses that die in the Shadowlands or that fall to the Taint are reborn as onikage – “demon steeds.” Some of them appear as zombie horses, while others are more demonic in nature, with scaled skin, forked tongues, and spines for manes. All have glowing eyes, clawed hooves, and fanged mouths, and feed on flesh. They usually live wild in the Shadowlands, but can be tamed and used like normal horses, and are often employed as mounts by the Lost – especially the fallen Moto.

Air 0 Reflexes 3

Earth 4

Fire 1 Agility 3

Water 3 Strength 5

Skills: Hunting 3

Attack Roll: 4k3

Defense Roll: 4k3

Initiative Rank: 6

Special Abilities:

- **Carapace** 1
- **Huge**
- **Resilience**
- **Unnatural Swiftiness:** Onikage are extremely fast despite their low Air, and can take an extra Move Action every Round.

Penanggalan [Character]

A penanggalan is a form of vampiric free-willed undead, created by some unknown curse or possibly by Shadowlands corruption – the Kuni have never been able to learn the truth of their origins. They roam secretly through Rokugan, feeding on human prey. They are intelligent and cunning, retaining the memories and knowledge of their former mortal lives, and during daylight hours appear to be normal humans with no obvious evidence of their true nature. At night, the creature’s head and internal organs rise out of its body and float free, seeking victims to ensnare and strangle in its entrails before feasting on their blood. A penanggalan’s organs will swell and bloat after it feasts, and the creatures use vinegar to shrink the swelling and return to their bodies; for this reason, they often masquerade as cooks or, even better, as traveling vinegar peddlers.

A penanggalan must return to its body by daylight – if it is caught in the Sun’s rays while outside of its body, it falls to the ground helpless, unable to move and losing its defensive Carapace until nightfall. For this reason, the creatures are cautious hunters with a strong sense of self-preservation, and will retreat from losing battles where possible.

A pananggalan does not have to stay with its original body – it can claim the body of one of its victims by spending an hour or so to remove the head and organs. If a penanggalan’s current body is destroyed while it is out hunting, it will do everything possible to claim a new body before daylight. If the body is attacked/destroyed while the penanggalan is hiding inside, the body is treated as Earth 2 for how much damage it can take, but the penanggalan itself will not be harmed (and can pull out and flee if the body is destroyed) unless the attackers use the Called Shot Maneuver to specifically strike the head.

Air 3 Reflexes 4

Earth 3

Fire 2 Agility 4

Water

Skills: Defense 3, Disguise 3, Etiquette 2, Intimidation 2, Sincerity 3, Stealth 3, up to three Weapon Skills at Rank 1-3. Note that many of these Skills can only be used when the

penanggalan is hiding inside a body.

Attack Roll: Entrails 7k4 Light (or by weapon/Skill when hiding in a body)

Defense Roll: 7k4

Initiative Rank: 8

Special Abilities:

- **Carapace 2**
- **Ensnaring Entrails:** A pananggalan's entrail attack will Entangle its target, and on subsequent Rounds the creature will automatically feast on the victim's blood (at the rate of 2 Wounds per Round) until the victim breaks free (Contested Strength), is rescued, or dies.
- **Fear 6** (when in its true form)
- **Flying**
- **Spellcasting:** Older and more cunning penanggalans will sometimes learn *maho* spells.
- **Undead Resilience:** A pananggalan does not suffer any Wound penalties of any kind until its Wounds exceed its Earth x3, at which point it dies.

Ratling (*Nezumi*) [Thug]

The ratlings are a race of intelligent bipedal rats who dwell in the Shadowlands. They are immune to the Taint and highly resistant to disease as well, allowing them to live and even, after a manner, to thrive in that bleak domain. The ratlings claim to have once had a great civilization that was destroyed when Fu Leng fell from the sky, but in modern times they are primitive tribal creatures, notorious for their short attention spans and lack of long-term memory. Rokugani compare the typical ratling to a hyperactive six-year-old human child. Ratlings' traditions and knowledge are maintained by a small caste known as Rememberers, who use special sticks as mnemonic devices.

Ratlings are often seen as cowardly by the Rokugani, since they readily flee from superior force and employ stealth and ambush without shame. However, ratlings are capable of fighting ferociously at need – they simply don't see the need nearly so often as humans, and prioritize survival of the tribe above all.

Ratling tribes can be anything from a dozen members to several hundred. Most are located in the Shadowlands but several are found outside that realm, in the Shinomen Forest or even Rokugan itself. Their relations with humans are generally poor – most Rokugani regard them as troublesome vermin at best – but the Crab Clan have long seen the ratlings as useful allies in the fight against the Shadowlands.

Ratlings have their own language, composed of a mixture of words, squeaks, and clicks. Many of them also speak a pidgin form of Rokugani, characterized by simple sentences and a tendency to repeat words. (“You come this way, man-man!”)

The “default” ratling depicted here is mechanically a Thug. However, there are small numbers of ratlings with significantly greater skills and strength who would mechanically be considered as Characters.

Air 2 Reflexes 3

Earth 2

Fire 1 Agility 3

Water 2 Perception 3

Skills: Athletics 3, Stealth 3

Attack Roll: 4k3

Defense TN: 20

Initiative Rank: 5

Special Abilities:

- **Name:** Ratlings attach great importance to names, and the “stronger” a ratling's name is, the more potent and lucky he will be. In game terms, powerful ratlings (those who

mechanically qualify as Characters) will have a “Name” trait which functions like the Void Ring, allowing the ratling to spend “Name Points” for the same effects humans get from Void Points.

- **Taint Immunity:** Ratlings cannot gain the Shadowlands Taint from any source, and cannot cast *maho* spells.
- **Tough:** Ratling Thugs require 2 hits to kill.
- **Tunneling:** Ratlings can chew and dig through earth and wood very quickly (several feet in a minute), and can squeeze their bodies through any space that their head can fit.

Sanshu Denki (Muck Monster) [Character]

Sanshu denki dwell in the marshes of the Shadowlands. They resemble huge salamanders, thirty or more feet long, with slimy skin in a mottled green and black pattern. Their large heads are shaped like a clamshell, with a vast toothy mouth that can open wide enough to swallow a man whole. They are blind, relying on hearing and feel to find prey. Their preferred hunting tactic is to lie in wait underwater, then surge out to swallow prey that gets too close. Their touch can sometimes deliver a shocking jolt in the manner of certain breeds of eel, leading the Kuni to speculate that they are the descendents of eels who became Tainted centuries ago.

Air 2 Reflexes 4

Earth 3

Fire 1 Agility 3

Water 4

Skills: Stealth 3

Attack Roll: Bite 7k3 Heavy

Defense Roll: 5k4

Initiative Rank: 6

Special Abilities:

- **Amphibious.** Sanshu denki swim in water as easily as they move on land.
- **Blind Hunter:** Sanshu denki are naturally blind and rely on their other senses. They do not suffer any penalties or effects from visual concealment, darkness, etc.
- **Huge**
- **Resilience**
- **Shock:** Anyone who touches the sanshu denki with bare flesh or metal objects suffers a shocking jolt and is Dazed for 1 Round.
- **Swallow Whole:** A sanshu denki can use 2 Raises on its Bite attack to swallow its target whole. The victim takes 1 Wound per Round while inside the monster’s stomach, is considered Entangled, and can only get out if the creature is killed.

Shadowlands Madman [Thug]

The majority of those mortals who become Lost – consumed by the Taint – are reduced to murderous lunatics who attack everyone near them. Although these former people are without any capacity for thought or planning, they are nonetheless dangerous due to their extreme ferocity and the Taint which strengthens their warped bodies.

Air 1 Reflexes 4

Earth 1 Stamina 4

Fire 1 Agility 4

Water 1 Strength 4

Attack Roll: 6k4

Defense TN: 20

Initiative Rank: 6

Special Abilities:

- **Shadowlands Powers:** Some madmen will have Shadowlands Powers, as selected by the GM.
- **Strong:** Shadowlands Madmen inflict 2 Wounds with a successful hit.
- **Tough:** Shadowlands Madmen must be hit 2 times to kill them.

Skull Tide [Thug]

The Skull Tide is a literal sea of skulls, a collective entity that dwells in the Tainted waters near the Shadowlands, attacking ships and devouring sailors. Those who are killed by the swarming attacks of the skulls become new skulls in the Tide. Thankfully, the Tide seldom leaves the waters near the Shadowlands. In game terms, the individual skulls function as thugs, swarming and overrunning their prey.

Air 1 Reflexes 3

Earth 1 Stamina 5

Fire 1 Agility 3

Water 2 Strength 4

Attack Roll: 3k3

Defense TN: 15

Initiative Rank: 3

Special Abilities:

- **Aquatic:** The Skull Tide as a whole cannot leave the water, though individual skulls can emerge from the water to attack people on ships or the coastline.
- **Fear 7** (the Fear effect is created by the Skull Tide's dreadful chatter, is triggered as soon as the clamor is heard in the distance, and continues to take effect every minute so long as the Tide can be heard)
- **Huge**

Troll [Thug]

Like ogres, trolls were once an independent race but were corrupted by Fu Leng. They are green-skinned and flabby-bodied, lacking the bloated muscles of ogres, and stand six to seven feet in height. Their legs are short for their frames and their arms abnormally long, which combined with their bloated bellies gives them a severely misshapen look. They tend to live in marshes and swamps, and are less aggressive than ogres unless their territory is invaded. Like ogres, they dwell primarily in the Shadowlands but occasionally small groups will migrate into Rokugan.

Air 1 Reflexes 3

Earth 3 Stamina 4

Fire 3

Water 3 Strength 5

Skills: Athletics 3, Hunting 3

Attack Roll: 6k3

Defense TN: 15

Initiative Rank: 5

Special Abilities:

- **Amphibious:** Trolls swim in the water as easily as they move on land.
- **Carapace** 2
- **Strong:** Trolls inflict 2 Wounds when they hit.
- **Tough:** Trolls must be hit twice (by hits that get Wounds through their Carapace) to kill them.

Zombie [Thug]

Corpses can be re-animated as undead either due to the Taint – which will turn any dead body into a zombie within an hour or two – or by *maho* spells or artifacts.

Air 0 Reflexes 2

Earth 0 Stamina 3

Fire 0 Agility 2

Water 1 Strength 3

Skills: Hunting 2

Attack Roll: 3k2

Defense TN: 10

Initiative: 1

Special Abilities:

- **Carapace** 4. Zombies are extremely difficult to destroy due to their nature as animated corpses, so their Carapace applies to all types of attacks except those using fire.
- **Fear** 4 individually. A large group of zombies will create a stronger Fear effect.
- **Undead Toughness.** Zombies have no Earth due to their mindlessness, but their shuffling bodies nonetheless can take tremendous damage and must be literally smashed or cut to pieces to stop them. Thus, zombies must be hit twice (with hits that get Wounds through their Carapace) to destroy them.
- **Unique Vulnerability.** Zombies have one weakness – beheading. A successful Called Shot to the head will instantly destroy a zombie, ignoring both its Carapace and its Undead Toughness.

Oni

Oni are the demons of Jigoku, deadly and terrifying creatures of pure malice and evil. They can enter Ningen-do through physical portals from Jigoku – most infamously the Festering Pit of Fu Leng at the center of the Shadowlands – and can also be summoned by *maho* spells. Once in the mortal realm, an oni can spawn lesser versions of itself, many of which will eventually grow to be as strong as their “parent.” In this way entire races of oni can come into existence.

Physically, oni vary so widely that making any blanket statement about them is impossible. Some are humanoid, some bestial or even formless. Some are intelligent, others little more than mindless engines of destruction. Regardless of the details, however, Oni always seek to corrupt, control, or destroy everything around them, and often enslave packs of lesser Shadowlands creatures or even Lost into their service.

Summoned Oni who manage to steal a mortal name become Oni Lords, immensely powerful unique beings whose own spawn are more potent than most other Oni. Thankfully, this has happened only four known times in the Empire’s history. (Some believe the legendary Oni known simply as “the Maw” may have been a fifth.)

The GM can create any sort of Oni that a story might need, but the following section lists a variety of the more prominent and notorious types.

Mechanically, all Oni are Characters.

Akuma no Oni

The spawn of the oldest and most powerful Oni Lord are rare but deadly. They resemble huge vaguely-humanoid demons, easily fifteen feet tall, with a long tail and clawed hands. Their body is covered with spines and armored plates and their horned heads sport three yellow eyes and three long tongues covered in burning saliva. In addition to their immense physical power, Akuma no Oni are also skilled at manipulating and controlling other denizens of the Shadowlands, using them as pawns.

Air 4 Reflexes 5

Earth 5

Fire 4 Intelligence 5

Water 5

Skills: Battle 3, Intimidation 3, Temptation 3

Attack Roll: Claws 8k4 Heavy, Tongues 8k4 Light

Defense Roll: 9k5

Initiative Rank: 10

Special Abilities:

- **Burning Saliva:** Any successful attack by the Akuma no Oni's tongues leaves burning saliva in the wounds, touch flesh, they leave burning saliva in the wound. The target will take 1 Wound on each subsequent Round (on the Oni's Turn) until the saliva is washed away, which requires vinegar or alcohol.
- **Carapace** 2
- **Fear** 7
- **Huge**
- **Invulnerable**
- **Multiple Attacks:** An Akuma no Oni can attack with its claws and all three of its tongues in a single Action (four attack rolls).
- **Oni Toughness:** Akuma no Oni ignores 3 out of 4 die-penalties for its Wounds.
- **Resilience**

Oni Lord Akuma

The oldest true Oni Lord, summoned by a misguided Phoenix shugenja named Isawa Akuma. This demon hates all of mankind and seeks the complete destruction of Rokugan. It is able to rally huge armies of lesser oni and Shadowlands beasts and has launched repeated assaults on the Crab lands in the centuries since its creation. Physically, Akuma no Oni is nearly thirty feet high, a bipedal monster with strange joints, massive three-fingered claws, a trio of glowing yellow eyes, and three burning tongues that slaver constantly from its gigantic toothy maw. It enjoys feasting on human flesh and torturing those mortals who fall into its merciless clutches.

Air 6 Reflexes 7

Earth 8

Fire 6 Intelligence 8

Water 6 Strength 7

Skills: Battle 5, Intimidation 5, Temptation 5

Attack Roll: Claws 10k6 Heavy, Tongues 10k6 Medium

Defense Roll: 10k8

Initiative Rank: 15

Special Abilities:

- **Burning Saliva:** Any successful attack by Oni Lord Akuma leaves burning saliva in the wounds, touch flesh, they leave burning saliva in the wound. The target will take 2 Wound on each subsequent Round (on Lord Akuma's Turn) until the saliva is washed away, which requires vinegar or alcohol.
- **Carapace** 3
- **Fear** 10
- **Huge**
- **Invulnerable**
- **Magical Immunity:** So powerful is Akuma no Oni that damage-dealing spells of Mastery 3 or less inflict only 1 Wound upon it (zero Wounds if they are Fire spells).

- **Multiple Attacks:** Oni Lord Akuma can attack with both of its claws and all three of its tongues in a single Action (five attack rolls).
- **Oni Toughness:** Oni Lord Akuma ignores 4 out of 5 die-penalties for its Wounds.
- **Resilience**
- **Shadowlands Power:** Child of Darkness.
- **Spell Casting:** Akuma no Oni stole the name of a Phoenix shugenja and as a result can cast any Common Fire spell, casting them with a single Action regardless of Mastery Level.

Byoki no Oni

These disgusting Oni are infested with virulent diseases. Byoki no Oni are tall thin humanoids, almost skeletal, but details are obscured by the boils, lesions, and pustules that cover their entire bodies and constantly swell, break, drain, and swell anew, leaving grotesque fluids and pus everywhere they go. They are extremely difficult to fight effectively, since any blow to their bodies unleashes a spray of hideous disease-carrying vileness.

Air 2

Earth 3

Fire 2 Agility 4

Water 3

Attack Roll: Claws 4k4 Medium

Defense Roll: 4k2

Initiative Rank: 5

Special Abilities:

- **Fear** 5
- **Plague Bearer:** Any time Byoki no Oni strikes a target, the victim must make a Stamina roll at TN 20 or contract a hideous disease. The illness imposes a permanent Fatigued state and over time the victim will begin to waste away; each session/week (whichever is shorter), the victim must roll Stamina at TN 15 or lose 1 Rank from all physical Traits. This continues until the victim dies (from Earth reaching Rank 0) or recovers (by making three successful Stamina rolls in a row).
- **Resilience**
- **Splatter:** Any physical attack which strikes Byoki no Oni will unleash a disgusting splatter that covers the attacker and anyone else currently fighting the Oni in melee. All those splattered must make Stamina rolls as though the Oni had struck them.

Genso no Oni

The Genso no Oni is an extremely rare but infamous Oni, possibly even unique. It is an eight-foot-tall humanoid, incredibly well muscled, completely hairless and with dark red skin, its wide grinning mouth full of needle-like teeth and its skull boasting two short horns. It always dresses like a traveling samurai warrior, wearing a hakama and carrying a daisho (katana and wakizashi), and deliberately behaves in the manner of a samurai, challenging those it meets and mercilessly mocking their skills, courage, and honor if they refuse. If they do accept its challenge, Genso no Oni will take sadistic pleasure in defeating them, mocking their failures and mistakes.

Air 4 Reflexes 5

Earth 4

Fire 4

Water 4

Skills: Defense 5, Iaijutsu 5, Intimidation 5, Kenjutsu 5

Attack Roll: 9k4 Medium

Defense Roll: 9k4

Initiative Rank: 9

Special Abilities:

- **Carapace** 1
- **Fear** 4
- **Duelist:** Oni no Genso will engage in iaijutsu duels if it sees this as the best way to humiliate its enemies. Despite lacking a Void Ring it nonetheless rolls 9k4 for Assessment, Focus, and Strike.
- **Merciless Taunts:** Genso no Oni constantly mocks its opponents, attacking their honor and values, deriding faith, human decency, and the Code of Bushido. On his Turn during a skirmish (or at each step of an Iaijutsu duel), Genso no Oni makes a Contested Roll of his Intimidation/Willpower against his opponent's Honor/Willpower. If Genso wins, the opponent gains 1 Rank of Stress. An opponent who suffers a Loss of Face during a fight against Genso is so shaken that they lose the use of their School Techniques and Kata until the end of the skirmish/duel.
- **Obsidian Daisho:** Genso no Oni's swords are crafted from obsidian, and seem to be mystically connected to the creature – they cannot be broken while it lives, but if it dies the blades instantly crumble to dust. If someone is so foolish as to steal one or both blades while the Oni is alive, Genso no Oni will hunt for them without cease, and will always know where they are.
- **Oni Toughness:** Genso no Oni ignores 1 out of 2 die-penalties for its Wounds.
- **Resilience**

Ianwa no Oni

Ianwa no Oni are quite rare and some of the Kuni believe there may only be one of them. They are far subtler than most Oni but also, uniquely for such creatures, somewhat cowardly, fleeing immediately from any foe who shows the ability to damage them.

Ianwa no Oni are fairly small – smaller than most adult humans – and have long, slug-like bodies surmounted by two small arms and a grotesque head. They cannot speak, but can communicate telepathically with other creatures and as a result are far better than most Oni at understanding and manipulating humans. They sometimes seem to float above the ground rather than crawling along it, and are able to vanish and appear vast distances apart seemingly at will. Most importantly, they have the ability to project an overwhelming aura of terror on their chosen victims (who they always approach alone), and use this terror to intimidate and dominate them. An Ianwa no Oni will use its aura of terror to demand its victim perform sinful and dishonorable acts – small ones at first, then gradually escalating as the victim's resistance breaks down and they become Tainted. Eventually the victim either dies – through suicide or disgrace – or falls to the Taint, and Ianwa moves on to a new target. However, if anyone (victim or otherwise) manages to injure the Ianwa during this process, its underlying cowardice will take over and it will flee, abandoning its victim in favor of less-dangerous prey.

Air 3 Awareness 5

Earth 3 Willpower 4

Fire 2 Intelligence 5

Water 2 Perception 5

Skills: Intimidation 5, Temptation 5

Attack Roll: Claw 4k2 Light

Defense Roll: 4k3

Initiative Rank: 5

Special Abilities:

- **Fear** 5
- **Invulnerable**

- **Teleport:** As an Action, Ianwa no Oni can disappear into a swirl of darkness and reappear anywhere else in Rokugan or the Shadowlands. Warding magic can block this travel but otherwise it cannot be obstructed.
- **Terror:** When facing a lone mortal, Ianwa no Oni can project an aura of intense terror that is treated as Fear 10. If the target fails to resist the Fear effect, Ianwa will make a demand and the target must spend a Void Point to refuse. (If the target suffers a Loss of Face from Stress, he cannot refuse that demand.) Each time the target obeys a demand, he gains 1-5 pips of Taint and 1 additional Rank of Stress.

Kamu no Oni

The Kamu no Oni are among the more notorious types of Oni due to their distinctive appearance and terrible ferocity. They appear as a powerfully-built but headless torso, eight or more feet tall, split at the top into a massive maw. A full-grown Kamu no Oni can slaughter and consume an entire Crab patrol in less than a minute.

Air 2 Reflexes 3

Earth 5

Fire 2 Agility 4

Water 3 Strength 6

Attack Roll: Claw 7k4 Medium

Defense Roll: 5k3

Initiative Rank: 5

Special Abilities:

- **Carapace** 3
- **Devour:** If a Kamu no Oni hits a non-Huge target with a Claw attack, it can make a Contested Strength roll against the target to immediately stuff them into its gigantic maw. The victim is Entangled and on each subsequent Round on the Oni's Turn it chews on the victim for 3 Wounds, swallowing them once they are dead. (The Oni can only Devour one target at a time.)
- **Fear** 5
- **Huge**
- **Invulnerable**
- **Oni Toughness:** Kamu no Oni ignores 2 out of 3 die-penalties for its Wounds.
- **Resilience**

Kyoso no Oni

The Kyoso no Oni are perhaps the most 'human' of the Oni, often taking time to talk to their victims before killing them. They have an upper torso and head resembling a naked four-armed human woman with red skin and demonic features, while their lower body resembles a huge snake with spines along its back. Their faces would almost be beautiful were it not for the fanged teeth, the black pits of their eyes, and the writhing tentacles in place of their hair. They fight by hurling bolts of black fire from their clawed hands, though they can also simply rip their victims asunder. They also cast spells, a very unusual trait for an Oni.

Air 4 Reflexes 5

Earth 4

Fire 4

Water 4 Strength 5

Attack Roll: Black Fire 9k4 (see Special Abilities), Claws 9k4 Medium

Defense Roll: 6k5

Initiative Rank: 8

Special Abilities:

- **Black Fire:** Kyoso no Oni's fire may be hurled out to Long Range and ignores any bonuses from armor to the target's Defense rolls. (The fire also ignores Carapace if applicable.) Those struck by the fire take 2 Wounds and lose 1 Void Point. If the target loses their last Void Point from this, they fall unconscious until they recover at least 1 Void point.
- **Carapace 1**
- **Fear 5**
- **Huge**
- **Invulnerable**
- **Multiple Arms:** Kyoso no Oni can attack with all four of its arms as a single Action (1 Action, 4 attack rolls), using either Black Fire, physical Claw attacks, or a combination of both as it pleases.
- **Oni Toughness:** Kyoso no Oni ignores 1 out of 3 die-penalties for its Wounds.
- **Resilience**
- **Spell Casting:** Kyoso no Oni can cast Common Fire and Earth spells (but not spells that evoke Jade effects or otherwise oppose the Taint) of up to Mastery Rank 2, without any need to roll Spellcraft and using only a single Action regardless of Mastery Rank.

Oni Lord Kyoso

Kyoso no Oni is unique among the Oni Lords for being an actual amalgam of Oni and human. The original Agasha Kyoso was a powerful Dragon Clan shugenja-ko who fell in love with the Asahina family daimyo. Their planned marriage was derailed by a rival, and the heartbroken Kyoso summoned an Oni, gave it her name, and then merged with it so she could achieve her vengeance personally. After ravaging the Crane lands, the new Oni Lord Kyoso went into the Shadowlands and has plagued the Empire ever since.

Kyoso appears to be a twenty-foot-high nude woman with bright red skin, four breasts, four clawed arms, and several antler-like horns protruding from her head. Her lower body is a massive scaled serpent. She has the same powers as her spawn, but at far higher levels; she is also known to be both willful and highly intelligent, using her human memories and knowledge against both her Shadowlands rivals and the Empire.

Air 6 Reflexes 7

Earth 6

Fire 6

Water 5 Strength 6

Skills: Battle 3, Intimidation 4, Sincerity 3, Temptation 4

Attack Roll: Black Fire 10k6 (see Special Abilities), Claws 10k6 Heavy

Defense Roll: 8k7

Initiative Rank: 12

Special Abilities:

- **Black Fire:** Oni Lord Kyoso's fire may be hurled out to Extreme Range and ignores any bonuses from armor to the target's Defense rolls. (The fire also ignores Carapace if applicable.) Those struck by the fire take 3 Wounds and lose 1 Void Point. If the target loses their last Void Point from this, they fall unconscious until they recover at least 1 Void point.
- **Carapace 2**
- **Fear 7**
- **Feed Upon the Soul:** If Oni Lord Kyoso kills a human foe with her Black Fire, she steals and devours a portion of the victim's soul, instantly healing herself of a number of Wounds equal to the victim's Insight Rank.
- **Huge**

- **Invulnerable**
- **Multiple Arms:** Oni Lord Kyoso can attack with all four of her arms as a single Action (1 Action, 4 attack rolls), using either Black Fire, physical Claw attacks, or a combination of both as she pleases.
- **Oni Toughness:** Oni Lord Kyoso ignores 1 out of 2 die-penalties for her Wounds.
- **Resilience**
- **Spell Casting:** Oni Lord Kyoso cast Common Fire and Earth spells (but not spells that evoke Jade effects or otherwise oppose the Taint) of up to Mastery Rank 4, without any need to roll Spellcraft and using only a single Action regardless of Mastery Rank.

Pekkle no Oni

“Aren’t you a darling! Who’s your mother, little one?”

Pekkle no Oni are infiltrators, deceivers, and tricksters, capable of maintaining elaborate deceptions for months or years without a hint of their true nature. The origins of these creatures is mysterious; a few Kuni scholars believe they were originally trickster spirits, but were corrupted by Fu Leng during the First War. Whatever their original nature, the Pekkle no Oni are cruel and dangerous creatures, whether operating on their own or serving powerful Shadowlands leaders as spies and saboteurs.

Pekkle no Oni are shapeshifters and always take the form of slim, short-statured, attractive humans, usually young adults or children (though they are capable of taking on the appearance of a mature adult if they so wish). They spread confusion, discord, and the Taint wherever they go, avoiding detection as much as possible. If they are unmasked, they prefer to flee so they take on a new identity and work more evil in the future.

Air 4 Awareness 5

Earth 3 Willpower 5

Fire 2 Intelligence 5

Water 2 Perception 4

Skills: Courtier 3, Disguise 5, Etiquette 3, Sincerity 5, Temptation 4, other High or Merchant Skills as useful for their infiltration activities

Attack Roll: Claws 4k2 Heavy

Defense Roll: 6k4

Initiative Rank: 7

Special Abilities:

- **Hidden Darkness:** A Pekkle no Oni’s Taint cannot be detected by any method, spell, or Technique other than directly attacking it with a targeted anti-Taint spell (e.g. *Jade Strike* or *Tomb of Jade*). However, a Pekkle’s blood is inky black, so any physical injury will expose its nature.
- **Retributive Taint:** If a Pekkle no Oni is killed, it explodes in a burst of inky black foulness. Everyone within Short Range must roll Earth at TN 20 or gain 1k1 pips of Taint.
- **Shadowlands Power:** Blackened Claws.
- **Shapeshifting:** Pekkle no Oni can change their human form with an Action. They cannot imitate others’ specific appearance and cannot be taller than the average Rokugani, but otherwise are free to appear as either gender, attractive or ugly as they please (though they prefer attractive), and any age from a child to a middle-aged adult. (They cannot look elderly.)

Shikibu no Oni

Shikibu no Oni resemble small misshapen dwarves with sharp nails and mouths full of even sharper teeth. They have dark orange skin and deep blue hair that always looks as if it is being stirred by invisible winds. They are less physically threatening than most Oni, but if they are

physically killed they reveal their true threat – the spirit of the Oni leaves its body and seeks out the corpse of a human. It then inhabits that corpse, restoring it to life and gaining the memories of the previous resident. Over time the Shikibu no Oni reshapes the new body into its own form, a process that takes several weeks, while using the body's memories to wreak havoc among the people nearby.

The only way to truly destroy these Oni is to slay them when there is no human corpse nearby, leaving the evil spirit with nowhere to go and causing it to gradually fade from existence. For this reason, experienced Shikibu no Oni will often keep several corpses in their lair, ready for future inhabitation.

Air 3 Reflexes 4

Earth 3 Willpower 5

Fire 4

Water 3

Attack Roll: Claws 6k4 Medium

Defense Roll: 5k4

Initiative Rank: 6

Special Abilities:

- **Corpse Inhabitation:** If a Shikibu no Oni is killed, its spirit separates from its body and can inhabit any human corpse within Short Range, returning to life inside that corpse. (Once in a corpse it takes three Rounds for the Shikibu no Oni to fully take control of the new body.) If there are no corpses within Short Range, the Shikibu's spirit will Move to try to find a corpse within Long Range, but if it does not find a corpse within a number of Rounds equal to its Willpower x5 it will dissipate. After a Shikibu no Oni takes control of a corpse, it restores the body to full health (no Wounds) and gains the body's physical Traits, Advantages, and Disadvantages, along with its memories and up to 2 Ranks in any former Skills. Over a period of three weeks the corpse will be reshaped into the normal form of a Shikibu no Oni and the stolen memories are lost.
- **Fear** 3
- **Oni Toughness:** Shikibu no Oni ignore 1 out of 4 die-penalties for its Wounds.
- **Preserve Corpse:** Shikibu no Oni will often preserve corpses for later inhabitation, infusing the bodies with small amounts of their own demonic essence. This preserves the corpse for up to a month and also shortens the time needed to inhabit it to 1 Round.
- **Resilience**

Oni Lord Shikibu

The original Oni no Shikibu was summoned by a demented Crab, Hiruma Shikibu, who wanted to bring his beloved wife back from the dead. The Oni took the wife's body just long enough to consume Shikibu's name, then took his body in turn, wrecking havoc and eventually escaping to the Shadowlands. Oni Lord Shikibu is shaped like a squat, bloated humanoid, but is larger and more fearsome-looking than its spawn, with a wide fanged mouth, prominent horns, a bright blue beard, and piercing green eyes. Like its spawn, it is able to stay alive by inhabiting human corpses and turning them into new bodies; the Crab have believed several times that it was killed forever only to see it return once more.

Air 4 Reflexes 5

Earth 5 Willpower 6

Fire 5

Water 4

Attack Roll: Claws 7k5 Medium

Defense Roll: 6k5

Initiative Rank: 8

Special Abilities:

- **Carapace 2**
- **Corpse Inhabitation:** If Oni Lord Shikibu is physically killed, its spirit separates from its body and can inhabit any human corpse within Short Range, returning to life inside that corpse. (Once in a corpse it takes 2 Rounds for the the Oni Lord to fully take control of the new body.) If there are no corpses within Short Range, the Oni Lord's spirit will Move to try to find a corpse within Long Range, but if it does not find a corpse within a number of Rounds equal to its Willpower x5 it will dissipate. After Oni Lord Shikibu takes control of a corpse, it restores the body to full health (no Wounds) and gains the body's physical Traits, Advantages, and Disadvantages, along with its memories and up to 2 Ranks in any former Skills. Over a period of three weeks the corpse will be reshaped into the Oni Lord's normal form and the stolen memories are lost.
- **Fear 5**
- **Oni Toughness:** Oni Lord Shikibu ignores 1 out of 3 die-penalties for its Wounds.
- **Preserve Corpse:** Oni Lord Shikibu will often preserve corpses for later inhabitation, infusing the bodies with small amounts of its own demonic essence. This preserves the corpse for up to three months and also eliminates any time needed to inhabit the corpse – the Oni Lord takes control of prepared corpses instantly.
- **Resilience**

Tsuburu no Oni

The enormous, bloated Tsuburu no Oni are forever hungry, devouring anything their claws can reach. They resemble twelve-foot-tall, enormously fat naked humans with livid pink-purple skin, greasy black hair, and a mouth as wide as their head. They move slowly on their grossly fat legs, wobbling as if they cannot catch their balance, but have the ability to warp themselves through space to reach their prey. Anyone devoured by a Tsuburu no Oni loses their soul as well, which appears as a face-like boil on the Oni's back or belly. Once a Tsuburu no Oni has captured an abundance of souls it travels back to its Oni Lord and feeds them to it.

Air 1

Earth 7

Fire 2 **Agility** 3

Water 1 **Strength** 7

Attack Roll: Claw 8k3 Medium (and Swallow)

Defense Roll: 2k2

Initiative Rank: 3

Special Abilities:

- **Carapace 3**
- **Fear 5**
- **Huge**
- **Invulnerable**
- **Oni Toughness:** Tsuburu no Oni ignores 1 out of 3 die-penalties for its Wounds.
- **Resilience**
- **Swallow Whole:** If a Tsuburu no Oni hits a non-Huge enemy with a Claw attack, the target is Entangled by the Oni's claws and on the Tsuburu's next Turn it may make a Contested Strength roll to swallow the target whole. Swallowed prey are helpless to do anything but scream, and suffer 2 Wounds and gain 1 pip of Taint per Round until they die or the Oni is slain. (Fortunately, Tsuburu no Oni can only swallow one victim at a time.) The souls of those who die within a Tsuburu no Oni's stomach become one of the many face-like pustules and lesions dotting its back and belly.

- **Teleport:** Tsuburu no Oni can take an Action to teleport to any location within Long Range that they can see.

Oni Lord Tsuburu

Originally summoned by an extremely foolish Kuni shugenja, the “Lord of Gluttony” has laired for centuries in a desolate volcanic plains on the eastern edge of the Shadowlands, sending forth its spawn to harvest human souls to feed its endless hunger. It generally chooses to remain there rather than approach the Empire. Those few mortals who visit it received cryptic advice and mad prophecies before the Oni Lord devours them.

Oni Lord Tsuburu is half-again larger than its spawn: an eighteen-foot-high bloated purple-pink humanoid with greasy black hair – often worn, mockingly, in a samurai topknot – hugely muscular clawed arms, and a mouth as wide as a man. Its body is covered in boils and sores, each one marking a human soul it has consumed; the unfortunate Kuni Tsuburu is one of them.

Air 2

Earth 8

Fire 4 Agility 5

Water 3 Strength 10

Attack Roll: Claw 10k6 Heavy (and Swallow)

Defense Roll: 3k3

Initiative Rank: 5

Special Abilities:

- **Carapace** 4
- **Fear** 7
- **Huge**
- **Invulnerable**
- **Oni Toughness:** Oni Lord Tsuburu ignores 1 out of 2 die-penalties for its Wounds.
- **Resilience**
- **Swallow Whole:** If Oni Lord Tsuburu hits a non-Huge enemy with a Claw attack, it can immediately make a Contested Strength roll to swallow the target whole. Swallowed prey are helpless to do anything but scream, and suffer 3 Wounds and gain 1 pip of Taint per Round until they die or the Oni Lord is slain. Oni Lord Tsuburu can swallow up to three victims at the same time, and the souls of those who die within its stomach become one of the innumerable face-like pustules and lesions dotting its back and belly.
- **Teleport:** Oni Lord Tsuburu can take an Action to teleport to any location within Extreme Range that it can see.

Ugulu No Oni

Ugulu no Oni is a thirteen foot tall humanoid with a swollen, grotesquely muscular body, as if its purple skin can hardly contain the muscles beneath. Its hands sport claws as long as wakizashi, its demonic head is surmounted by a pair of large curving horns, and a long tongue lolls past the fangs of its great mouth.

Air 1 Reflexes 3

Earth 6

Fire 2 Agility 4

Water 2 Strength 7

Attack Roll: Claws 7k4 Heavy

Defense Roll: 4k3

Initiative Rank: 5

Special Abilities:

- **Carapace 2** (4 against ranged attacks)
- **Fear 4**
- **Huge**
- **Invulnerable**
- **Oni Toughness:** Ugulu no Oni ignore 1 out of 3 die-penalties for their Wounds.
- **Resilience**
- **Spell Immunity:** All Ugulu no Oni are immune to two shugenja spells, although the specific spells vary from one Ugulu to the next.

Wakeru no Oni

Wakeru no Oni, the “Demons of the Endless Horde,” do not at first seem particularly dangerous. They are humanoid creatures of the same height as a man, with gaunt, shrunken-down bodies and over-long arms that hang almost to the ground. They move with a slouching, almost lazy gait, and do not seem particularly aggressive – until a fight begins, when they fly into a berserk rage and attack in a whirlwind of claws. Even worse, if a Wakeru no Oni is killed, it splits into two smaller versions of itself that continue to fight, with the smaller versions doing the same until the creatures finally become small enough to be slain. If they are not slain, they will eventually – over a period of weeks – grow into full-sized versions of the Oni.

Air 2 Reflexes 5

Earth 5

Fire 2 Agility 5

Water 2 Strength 5

Attack Roll: Claws 6k5 Medium

Defense Roll: 6k5

Initiative Rank: 6

Special Abilities:

- **Carapace 1**
- **Fear 3**
- **Endless Horde:** When a Wakeru no Oni takes enough Wounds to kill it, it splits into two healthy smaller versions of itself which act on its next Turn. The smaller Wakeru no Oni reduce all their physical traits by 1 Rank and lose their Carapace, but retain the same Initiative Rank and initially retain the same Attack and Defense Rolls as well. Each subsequent split imposes a 1-die penalty on those rolls as well as continuing to reduce the physical Traits by 1 each time. The Wakeru continues to split at death in this manner until its physical Traits become 1, at which point the individual copies can be killed.
- **Headless Rage:** A Wakeru no Oni always uses the Full Attack Tactic.
- **Resilience**