

Shooting Stars

**A One-Round Mid-Rank Adventure for
Heroes of Rokugan: Spirit of Bushido
Month of Bayushi, 1303 (Fall)**

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When destruction threatens all of the Realms, including the Heavens, can an answer that will save everything be found in the stars?

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This module is written for the Legend of the Five Rings: Fourth Edition, published by Alderac Entertainment.

GM's Information

THIS SCENARIO SHOULD NOT BE RUN COLD!

Please read the scenario thoroughly before attempting to run it.

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

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

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in *bold italics*. It is strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text, instead of reading it aloud, as some of the text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters. All bulleted information is just that, pure information. Feed it to the players through an NPC when appropriate, as sometimes reading it straight just doesn't sound right.

Players will have Module Tracking Sheets that need to be filled out at the end of the game, which is to keep track of certain circumstances and events for future GM's to create a better roleplaying experience for the player. Important information to be included in the game will be listed at the beginning of the module, and information that needs to be recorded will be listed at the end of the module. Please fill out the GM tracking sheet attached to the end of this module and return it to the Campaign Coordinator. If you need an electronic version of the form, please contact the Campaign Administrator or Campaign Coordinator (e-mail addresses are available on the website).

Rokugan has a complex and rich culture that is different in many ways from modern Western civilization. The Legend of the Five Rings book details these numerous differences, but it is suggested that GMs keep a few specifics in mind.

- Family name precedes personal name for all characters; Akodo Toturi was a member of the Akodo family with the personal name of Toturi.

- Samurai do not commonly concern themselves with money or commerce; exchanges between samurai are treated as gifts, and payments are made to peasants as though humoring the lower orders petty ways.
- An event is not truly considered to have happened without samurai witness; even criminal investigations rely entirely upon eyewitness testimony.

Some events that occur within this module affect the storyline and may need to be reported by the Campaign Administrators. This module has an effective 'active' period which is 3 months after its release, and these events (listed at the end of the module) **MUST** be reported by the GM to the campaign administration before the end of the active period for them to take effect.

Glory and Honor Awards and Penalties

This adventure contains suggested Glory and Honor awards (and penalties) for dealing with the challenges presented herein. However, at times the players may take extra actions which the GM judges worthy of additional reward or punishment. **Please consult the Honor table on page 91 and the Glory table on page 93** of the Legend of the Five Rings Fourth Edition core sourcebook for more specific guidelines for Honor and Glory gains and losses. Specifically, be mindful of the performing PC's current Honor, Glory, and Infamy when meting out rewards and punishments.

Reminder

This module is intended for entertainment purposes; this means that the goal is to provide an enjoyable playing experience for the players. The events of the module should be challenging, so as to ensure the players have a sense of accomplishment, but the mechanics presented here are, ultimately, guidelines. If adjustments are necessary to adapt to the specific group of players, it is suggested that care should be taken to ensure the player characters do have a reasonable chance of achieving their goals (or at least of achieving an entertaining failure). Remember that the GM has the final word at the table, and use that power with both discretion and consideration.

Adjusting for Party Strength

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

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

Low End Party (most/all characters Rank 2): In the first combat, there is one less Lesser Shadowspawn, and all Lesser Shadowspawn have Reduction 2. Reduce the initial TN to convince Tohaku by 5, and the TNs of rolls made during the chase by 5. It takes two Rounds for the Shadowspawn to kill Ryoushi. The Chained Shadowspawn only has Reduction 5.

High End Party (most/all characters Rank 4): The Chained may make his Grapple/Knockdown as a Simple Action (though he will not hold more than one person in this fashion). There are two less kagakunin at the start of the fight, with a minimum of four.

Adventure Summary and Background

Working with the knowledge gained from the tsuno, Sezaru performs a divination to locate a sage capable of finding the corrupted dream in the infinity of Yume-do. He locates this person, Kitsuki Ryoushi, in a dream within Yume-do very distant from the one the PCs know. He sends this to this dream – known as “Emerald Stars” – and the PCs must navigate a distant future far beyond their understanding in a race against the minions of the Lying Darkness to find Ryoushi and bring her back to their home, along with her research into “n-dimensional quantum foam” to help them locate the disruption.

This module is intended to be fairly straightforward, pushing the PCs with the threat to their target while at the same time revealing some of the forces arrayed against them...

Character Notes

Check the PCs’ character sheets for the following:

- An origin in the Emerald Empire is obviously going to make a lot of the interactions in the Emerald Stars easier. No Owl PC can be from the specific world in question, but they may be from a world that has some resemblance to it.

Introduction

You are summoned before Sezaru, lord of the Owl Clan, atop the highest tower in Shiro no Fukurou. The winding stair deposits you on an undressed stone platform open on all four sides; a burning brazier rests on a shelf built into each of the four pillars that support the roof above, and a fountain bubbles around the granite pillar at the center of the space. Sezaru stands at the side furthest from the entrance, studying the plains below. He remains silent until all of you arrive, then, he turns and nods. “Good morning, my friends. Important matters require your assistance once again.” He sighs, and a vast weariness seems to come over him. “I can only hope that we are not already too late.” It lasts only a moment, and he shakes his head to clear it, going on in a brisk tone.

“I have been studying the information gained from the Tsuno. I believe I have done little more than scratch the surface of what it entails, but the important thing is that I have confirmed that the origin of the forces against us is a corrupted dream within Yume-do. Unfortunately, I have been unable to locate this dream myself.” His brow furrows. “I am unused to being unable to find an answer for a question regarding spiritual influences, but the Realm of Dreams is simply too vast. My wife Yanako did have a vision that gave me an idea, however, and with a costly divination, I was able to locate a dream where someone who understands the Spirit Realms more than I resides. They should be able to provide the answer I have searched for.”

A breeze flows through the tower top, stirring the flames in the braziers and swirling around the stone fountain in the middle. You feel a chill as Sezaru inhales, and he lifts a familiar shard of jade before him in his right hand; it glows with a faint luminescence for a moment, mirroring the red auras that surround you all. The glow fades, as does the chill, and Sezaru holds the jade out for you to take. “Put this in the hands of the sage we need. It cannot guide you to them, but it will return you, and them, here when you do. It is up to you to convince them to come with you, by whatever means you find necessary.”

The PC with the highest Status (a member of Sezaru’s family by preference) will be given the shard.

“Do you have any questions?”

Sezaru answers questions with a weary patience, but there is not a lot of information he can give. He does not know anything about the “dream” (world) that they will

be going to. He only suspects that the sage will be a human, and though he naturally assumes they will be a shugenja, he will admit he does not know. Sezarú sees no point to trying to provide travel papers or letters of introduction, as the dream they will find themselves in will not likely recognize any authority he could attempt to provide.

“Gather your equipment and return here. I want you on your way within the hour.”

The PCs are dismissed to gather their gear. It is important to keep track of which PC is carrying the jade shard, particularly when they are going into the final encounter.

Part One: All Alone in the Night

The air in front of Sezarú ripples, and his hands seem to grip the very fabric of reality itself as he opens a portal to the wider Realm of Yume-do. A field of light spreads in front of him like a pair of doors sliding apart, though slowly, as if the tracks were sticking. Silvery illumination ripples in the space, as though a pool of mist were standing on edge before you. Sezarú’s voice is strained as he commands, “Hurry! Get through!”

As you pass through, all senses but sight drop away. No sound, no pressure, no feeling of movement. Even your heartbeats seem to still, making it impossible to know how long you travel. The silvery ripples fall away into darkness, one by one, until only a single one remains in view. The blackness behind you seems to pulse in your peripheral vision, and something like an eye opens to regard your passing. A deeper shadow moves after you, a raw, empty darkness that clutches for your soul. Just before it reaches you, the final light spreads open, blinding you...

And you find yourself in a strange, wide hallway. The wooden floor feels strangely sturdy beneath your feet, with no flex to the boards and sanded so smooth to eliminate the grain. The walls, covered with what appears to be a uniform paper in wooden frames, nonetheless curves ahead of you, the arc moving up somehow. The ceiling seems fashioned from metal, with odd lanterns set into it regularly. There is a gasp from the dozen or so people in the hall, dressed in strange clothes – the mon on their short kimono the only recognizable things visible.

(This is a public corridor in a space station, which a PC from an “Emerald Stars” setting will readily recognize.)

Shadows explode from behind you, streaming down the corridor in both directions. There are several sharp crashes as they crawl over the glowing orbs in the ceiling, and the lights dim. The most solid of the forms, a hulking humanoid figure, bellows, “Kill the travelers! We will find the threat!” and a handful of smaller shadows rise up before you.

There is one Lesser Shadowspawn for every PC. Two will spend their first action breaking more lights, to give all of them the bonus for fighting in low-light conditions; clever PCs should be able to counter this (the GM should be flexible). Between the second and third Round of combat, an alarm goes off: strobing lights and a screaming klaxon causes a Fear 2 effect for anyone not from a modern setting. (This includes the Shadowspawn, however...) Using fire in a fashion that actually burns things will cause the deployment of fire-suppression systems – everyone must roll raw **Reflexes** (TN 15) or lose -1k0 on all attack rolls as their eyes are filled with white foam.

Through the fight, the PCs should also be able to hear the sounds of screams, alarms, and explosions from elsewhere in the station as the Shadowspawn spread through the habitat killing, sabotaging critical systems, and hijacking transports.

Lesser Shadowspawn

Air 4	Earth 2	Fire 2	Water 3	Void 3
Honor 0.1		Agility 4	Glory 0.0	
Status -10.0				

Armor TN: 25 **Reduction:** 6 (0 vs crystal)

Attack: 6k4 (claws, Complex) or 8k5 (in dim light) **Damage:** 5k3 (claws)

Initiative: 5k4

Shadow Rank: 3

Powers/Weaknesses: *Body of Shadow:* Takes half damage from (rounded down) from non-crystal weapons and non-Void spells or other magical effects not specifically intended to target minions of the Nothing.

Uncanny Speed: Swift 2

Shadowsight: Can see in shadows or dim light as easily as daylight, and gains 3 Free Raises on Contested Investigation rolls made to perceive characters using Stealth to hide in shadows

Shadowblend: Gains 3 Free Raises when using Stealth to conceal itself, and may move at full speed without penalty while using Stealth; also, gains +2k1 to attack rolls made in shadowy areas or dim lighting

Skills: Athletics 4, Jujutsu 2, Stealth 4

Wounds: 32: Dead

After the PCs defeat their opponents, a Doji Magistrate clad in armor with a slightly glowing blue pattern embossed on it approaches them, a hand on the hilt of his sword. He bows cautiously, looking over their, to him, strange garb, and speaks in a smooth, even voice: ***“I, ah, thank you for your assistance in dealing with these... things, samurai. I am Doji Tohaku, Emerald Magistrate of this station. May I see your transit chits?”*** He holds his other hand out expectantly.

It is reasonable to assume that he is looking for something along the lines of travel papers. Unfortunately, the PCs are completely lacking any form of authorization, futuristic or not. Tohaku will politely ask them to come with him. Obeying without arguing earns them appropriate courtesy – they will not be locked into a cell or threatened even obliquely. If they attempt to explain themselves, the magistrate will explain politely that they should speak with him in his office; insisting on arguing past this point requires a **Sincerity / Awareness** roll (TN 25) or else he will take them in as suspected criminals. Attempting to fight him will result in being stunned by internal defense systems belatedly manned by the magistrate’s yoriki.

Assuming that the PCs are reasonably polite, Tohaku will be courteous as he leads them to his office. Once there, he will interview the PCs. He does regard them as suspicious (mysterious arrival, lack of travel authorization, no financial accounts, strange mon, archaic clothes and weaponry) but will give them an opportunity to explain themselves. He will also answer reasonable questions about the nature of his world, though convincing him of the truth (or lying to him) will require some doing.

Tohaku’s office has a waiting room with relatively normal appointments as far as the PCs are concerned, though there is a lean Crab samurai standing behind a counter – tapping occasionally at a wide panel that appears to be made of black glass, with images and shapes dancing across its face, he gives a brief nod to the magistrate when the group enters.

Passing the yoriki, you find yourselves in a larger room; a pair of alcoves line the wall on the left, where an attractive woman laying on a shelf worked into the wall lounges. She gives you a friendly wave, and the magistrate an impish grin that he ignores. A writing desk sits in front of what appears to be a window showing a vast, starry expanse. Tohaku sits behind the desk, gesturing for you to take places on cushions across from it. The stars, in colors never seen in Rokugan’s sky, with swirling clouds and regular streaks of light or rainbow hues, dominates the view behind him. He rests his hands lightly on the desk, and

begins mildly. “Perhaps you should begin by introducing yourselves, and then tell me what those things were you were fighting.”

The magistrate will listen intently, only interrupting to ask questions when necessary to keep them on the subject. He should give the impression of making a list of questions for clarification, but ultimately this comes down to what the players wish to tell him.

The PCs should roll raw **Willpower** (TN 10) while they are speaking with Tohaku. Failure means that they will find it difficult to focus on anything but the vista behind him – this causes them a penalty of -2k0 to any Social Skill Rolls while the image is visible. (It also, however, serves to help convince Tohaku that they are not used to such sights, so the TN for the group to convince him of their sincerity is reduced by 5.)

Convincing Tohaku to either lend his assistance or let the PCs go on their way requires giving him a plausible story and succeeding at a **Sincerity (Honesty or Deceit) / Awareness** roll. The TN of this roll starts at 25. Every piece of information that makes their tale harder to believe increases the TN by 5, as follows:

- Claiming to be from another Realm
- Claiming to be from another time
- Claiming to be a member of a Minor Clan
- There are any non-human PCs present

If any of the PCs failed their roll to avoid being transfixed by the screen, it lends a little more credence to their story – decrease the TN by 5. (The image is a projection; an opening would endanger structural integrity and Tohaku can change this at a whim. Additionally, the direction of an outside view would be “down”...)

Success

If the PCs convince Tohaku that they are on a mission and that their tale of other worlds is plausible, he will decide that they are likely to be the best chance to track down the creatures that attacked his station and bring the “criminals” to justice. He will therefore give them a great deal of assistance, providing them with information on the setting and offering the use of his own ship.

The local year is 3122. The PCs are on Shiro no Kagetsu (Hypothesis Castle), an orbital station around the planet of Asahina’s Repose. The structure is nearly eight hundred years old, and predates the use of artificial gravity (thus the design that leads to curved hallways). Asahina’s Repose was one of the first planets claimed by the Crane, an idyllic, temperate world used as a place for retiring samurai to live out their lives in comfort. A large

number of the Crane's shugenja, kagakunin (scientists), scholars, and artisans live out their final days here, and those who can continue their work do so at their leisure.

Tohaku does not recognize the Shadowspawn for what they are; the Lying Darkness and its minions have not been seen for more than 1500 years in this Rokugan. (It is not known if the force was defeated or has just been biding its time, though the assumption is that it will never return...)

The magistrate informs the PCs that the Shadowspawn utterly destroyed a lab on the station first, killing all of the kagakunin (scientists) there, and spread out, sowing chaos as they went. Twenty-three samurai and more than fifty merchants and lower-class technicians were killed, between the direct assaults from the "monsters" and damage done when they hijacked four transport vessels and forced them to disconnect from the station without going through proper safety protocols. One was destroyed by the orbital defenses surrounding Asahina's *Repose* trying to land on the planet below, but the other three left the system entirely.

Tohaku will provide the PCs with healing (a Kitsue "medshug" with a scanning device will look them over, but ultimately her treatment involves nothing more exotic than *Regrow the Wound*), and will suggest that the group gets on their way as soon as possible.

Failure?

If the PCs cannot convince the Emerald Magistrate that they at least believe what they say, he will treat them like hostile witnesses. Tohaku will ask them to repeat their story; this does not allow another roll, as failure has convinced him that they are criminals (technically true, as they cannot avoid the charges of trespass without appropriate travel authorization) and probably involved with the Shadowspawn themselves. These repetitions will be tedious, exacting, constantly interrupted with questions, and take more than two hours as he tries to catch them in a lie and makes every effort to pick apart their story. After those hours have passed, however, an alarm will gain his attention:

Another shriek echoes through the chamber, and Tohaku taps a section of his glass desk with irritation. "Fusion core fault," he mutters to himself. "That's not good." He raises a hand to point at you, "Remain here. I will see what this is about. Consider your veracity carefully until I return." He stands hurriedly and crosses the room with quick, purposeful strides.

Barely is he out the door before the ronin woman in the alcove, who has been listening carefully, sits up to look

out the doorway. She calls out, "A-o-hei, samurai! C'mere!"

If they approach to see what she wants, she introduces herself as "Aoko", and claims to be the captain of an "unlicensed transport" brought in on some trumped-up charge (**Investigation / Awareness**, TN 20, will reveal that she is stretching the truth – she is, of course, a smuggler, but Tohaku did not yet have enough testimony against even a ronin).

*"BUT the important thing is that I believe you," she says with a grin. "Let me out, I'll get you wherever you need to go. If this ancient rustbucket of a station is having problems with its fusion core, we're probably way too close to a very exciting day. I don't want to be in the area if it decides to go boom." Suspicious PCs who succeed at another **Investigation / Awareness** roll (TN 25) will realize that she is telling the truth, though she is of course most interested in her freedom.*

While the PCs are hearing her out, another alarm rings out. Aoko identifies it as an evacuation notice (believable, as a computer voice is calmly speaking from the walls, saying "Evacuation Notice. Please remain calm and proceed to your nearest survival pod."), and quickly says, *"C'mon, let me out! I'll get you off-station, and where you need to go! Don't leave me here to die..."*

Tohaku will not return, busy fighting the Shadowspawn remaining on the station, so eventually the PCs will need to leave – Aoko represents their only real method of both escape and pursuing their quest.

In either case of success or failure, the Shadowspawn remaining on Shiro no Kagetsu will eventually sabotage it, necessitating evacuation and pushing the PCs out to try to find their target.

Part Two: Some Sort of Trek across the Stars?

Whoever the PCs get assistance from, they will need access to a ship to chase the Shadowspawn and beat them to their mutual target. Tohaku's Wakizashi-class light cruiser, *the Lady's Grace*, was provided to him by the Emerald Champion. It has a crew of four (Daidoji Yobu, helmsman, Daidoji Hoto, weapons, Ide Beko, navigator, and Asahina Giyoshi, engineer), and sports a fairly powerful engine for its size – giving it a surprising turn of speed. The accommodations are quite comfortable, with room for a dozen passengers, autofab systems capable of generating new clothes as well as replacement

parts for the ship, and supplies sufficient to last a journey far longer than the PCs will be on the ship.

Aoka's ship is a Atakebune-class light cruiser, much smaller, with a three-man crew (Toson, navigator, Koto, engineer, and Aoko herself); the accommodations are much tighter, far less comfortable, but even faster than the Emerald Magistrate's vessel.

Either ship can give PCs who have advanced technology an opportunity to recharge weapons or gadgets; PCs who wish to equip themselves will be disappointed when nothing that is not part of their Outfit returns with them to their home.

The Shadowspawn have a head start of only a few hours at most; it should not be difficult for either ship to narrow that lead in terms of travel speed, but the PCs will have to get clues as to their enemies' target. (The Shadowspawn have an instinctive understanding of what they are looking for to guide them.) Tohaku or Aoko will suggest ports of call that will allow the PCs to gather information on the nature of the sage they are looking for, and the intention of the Shadowspawn.

There are five major pieces of information that the PCs must find in order to progress. Each piece of information can be learned by asking around to discover what the Shadowspawn are looking for in pursuit in different locations. The following information will be discovered in order (with the locations that it leads the PCs to next):

- The sage that they are looking for is a kagakunin, a scientist of some sort. (the nearest research institutions are Shiro no Kessho, a Phoenix stellar observatory, and Yajinden's Redemption, an Asahina planet being recovered from a "black goo" event involving cultists and Tainted nanites)
- The sage is a specialist in something called Higher-Realm Mathematics. (close facilities that specialize in quantum mechanics include the Moshi research vessel *Blessing of Amaterasu* and Shiro no Kyo, an Asako facility studying boundary effects in close proximity to a black hole's event horizon)
- The Dragon Clan have the most kagakunin who study theoretical physics of this nature, as opposed to applied physics that occupy the Phoenix. (Kitsuki's Hand is the Dragon's border outpost, used for all of their interactions with the other clans; its governor, Kitsuki Jiroshi, knows many of the scientists of the clan.)
- The most advanced research labs the Dragon have are located in Agasha's Shelf, a mineral-rich system with a vast asteroid field but no planets. (Agasha's Shelf does have an administrative station that does

business with other clans and acts as a depot for the minerals mined from the asteroids.)

- The most widely-recognized expert in interactions between the Spirit Realms is named Kitsuki Ryoushi, who leads a research team there. (Ryoushi's Shiro in the asteroid field)

The PCs can learn these things by rolling any of several Social Skills, depending on the tactic they wish to take, or Investigation, usually paired with Awareness. The TN on these rolls is 30, but the PCs are able to either split up or work together (using Cooperative Skill Rolls). Once the PCs have successfully gained a piece of information from a location, they should be under pressure to move on to the next place. Splitting up will potentially allow them to gain more than one piece of information at a location.

The PCs could begin at Shiro no Kagetsu, and in fact successfully gaining the Emerald Magistrate's assistance counts as getting the first piece of information (based on the Shadowspawn's victims). Another roll can be made, though each time period spent to allow a roll to be made does impact how much time the PCs have at the end of the module (as noted in the final encounter).

If the PCs did not get Tohaku's assistance, Aoka will stop at the next-closest space station for refitting, allowing her to discover the fate of Shiro no Kagetsu.

Part Three: Striking Back, for the Empire

Agasha's Shelf is a system with no planetary bodies; instead, it has a vast asteroid field rich in mineral resources. The Dragon use it much like their original mines on the homeworld, providing rare ores for their own use and exporting them to the other clans. The exotic metals and rare earth kami they can manufacture allow them to build devices that help them explore the fundamental forces of the universe. Several orbital laboratories are scattered through the system, included Kitsuki Ryoushi's.

When the PCs arrive, Ryoushi's Shiro will be under attack. Depending on how far behind the PCs are, they may see a pair of transports sweep in to ram the station. Alarms will go off, and the station's residents send off distress signals. The PCs' ship docks; Tohaku will lead the PCs after him, treating them as informal yoriki, while Aoko simply wishes them good luck and promises to stay as long as possible.

NOTE: The GM should be certain which PC is carrying the jade shard before this encounter begins.

As soon as the ship's doors open, the PCs must make **Athletics / Reflexes** rolls (TN 20). Failure means that they are taken by surprise when they step out of the vessel's artificial gravity into a microgravity (zero-g) environment and take 2k1 damage from stumbling into a bulkhead.

Progress through the docking bay requires an **Athletics / Agility** roll (TN 20). Failure on this roll causes 2k2 damage as the character misjudges their positioning and slams into the ceiling.

Once they get into the hallway, they can clearly hear the sounds of combat and screaming from toward the center of the installation. As they hurry down the corridor, they must make raw **Perception** rolls (TN 10) to notice the sudden re-emergence of gravity in the next section; failure means that they must make an **Athletics / Reflexes** roll (TN 25) or take 3k2 damage from suddenly slamming to the deck.

Finally, closing the last distance to the main lab center requires an **Athletics / Strength** roll (TN 25). If a PC fails on this roll, they may allow the rest of the group to go ahead, causing them to miss the first round of combat.

Ryoushi is in the central lab on her station, with the members of her team. Her team originally had sixteen members. The Shadowspawn will have a certain lead based on how many stops the PCs had to make during their chase – one scientist will have been killed by the Shadowspawn before the PCs arrive at the combat for each separate roll the PCs made during the investigation in Part Two. In addition, every two failures on the above Athletics rolls will slow the PCs down, causing the death of another scientist. There are a minimum of six kagaku for the enemy to work through (giving the PCs three Rounds to save Ryoushi).

You step out into a large domed chamber, darkened with shadows and lit only by panels scattered around the walls showing twisting patterns. An inscrutable device floats in midair in the middle of the room, separated by railings and blocky equipment connected to the rails by loops of wire. Shadowspawn crawl over the ceiling, and bodies of kagakunin are scattered across the floor. The largest of the Shadowspawn, turning back from directing the carnage, snarls at you. "You are too late! We shall slaughter these fools, ending their threat to the darkness once and for all. If you interfere, we will rip your names from you: all that you were shall help to bring about the end of all

things!" Chains made from shadows drop from his sleeves to lash at the air as he readies for battle.

Fear 3

There are twice as many Shadowspawn as there are PCs, as well as the leader with his chains. The Lesser Shadowspawn will focus primarily on killing kagakunin, eliminating two every Round, with one attacking each front-line combatant among the PCs. When there are no kagakunin left, they will turn on Ryoushi, which should be obvious to the PCs within a few Rounds.

The Shadowspawn leader may Grapple and Knockdown a PC with a single Complex attack; this requires them to make a Void Roll (TN 15) or lose a Void Point; this should make the PC feel as though the Shadow is threatening their soul, but they will not actually gain any Shadow Points from this. Any Grapple the Chained Shadowspawn initiates in this fashion is automatically broken if he is successfully attacked twice in one Round.

The lighting begins dim enough to give the enemies their bonuses. If the scientists are warned, Ryoushi will bark orders in an authoritative voice, identifying her for the PCs as the leader. They will work frantically on a device they hope will save them otherwise (to little effect, unfortunately).

It is important to note that the PCs do not have to win this fight. As soon as they get the jade shard into Ryoushi's hands, Sezar's portal will take effect and pull them through automatically – even if they are unconscious. This is not an instantaneous process, however; if they wish to bring through Tohaku or Aoka (should they have convinced her to accompany them), they may do so. (Or they can leave them to die at the hands of the Lying Darkness' monsters. Samurai are prepared to die for their lord...) Ryoushi makes a point of snatching a loaded toolkit from a shelf as she fades away.

Chained Shadowspawn

Air 4 Earth 4 Fire 3 Water 4 Void 2
Agility 4
Honor 0.1 Status -10.0 Glory 0.0

Armor TN: 25

Reduction: 10 (0 vs crystal)

Attack: 8k4 (claws, Complex) or 9k4 (chains, Simple)
Damage: 6k3 (claws) or 9k2 (chain)

Initiative: 9k4(+10 in darkness) **Shadow Rank:** 4

Powers/Weaknesses:

- Fear 3
- *Body of Shadow:* Takes half damage (rounded down) from non-crystal weapons and non-Void

spells or other magical effects not specifically intended to target minions of the Nothing.

- *Uncanny Speed*: Swift 3
- *Shadow Walk*: Can take a Simple Action to step into a shadow large enough to contain it and emerge from another within 200 ft.; cannot pass through a solid object this way
- *Shadowsight*: Can see in complete darkness as easily as daylight, and automatically succeeds on Contested Investigation rolls made to perceive characters using Stealth to hide in shadows
- *Shadowblend*: Gains 4 Free Raises when using Stealth to conceal itself, and may move at full speed without penalty while using Stealth; also, gains +2k1 to attack rolls made in shadowy areas or dim lighting
- *Chain Mastery*: +4k0 to Contested Strength rolls for Knockdown, Grapple, or Disarm while in dim lighting; reduced to +2k0 while in light

Skills: Athletics 5, Battle 3, Chain Weapons 5, Jiujutsu 4, Stealth 4

Wounds: 64: Dead

Lesser Shadowspawn

Air 4 Earth 2 Fire 2 Water 3 Void 3

Honor 0.1 Agility 4 Status -10.0 Glory 0.0

Armor TN: 25 **Reduction**: 6 (0 vs crystal)

Attack: 6k4 (claws, Complex) or 8k5 (in dim light) **Damage**: 5k3 (claws)

Initiative: 5k4 **Shadow Rank**: 3

Powers/Weaknesses: *Body of Shadow*: Takes half damage from (rounded down) from non-crystal weapons and non-Void spells or other magical effects not specifically intended to target minions of the Nothing.

Uncanny Speed: Swift 2

Shadowsight: Can see in shadows or dim light as easily as daylight, and gains 3 Free Raises on Contested Investigation rolls made to perceive characters using Stealth to hide in shadows

Shadowblend: Gains 3 Free Raises when using Stealth to conceal itself, and may move at full speed without penalty while using Stealth; also, gains +2k1 to attack rolls made in shadowy areas or dim lighting

Skills: Athletics 4, Jiujutsu 2, Stealth 4

Wounds: 32: Dead

Conclusion

Kitsuki Ryoushi turns to the PCs once they have either dealt with the Shadowspawn or brought her through to their home. *“I must thank you for your timely assistance, though I don’t recognize any of you.*

Whatever those things were – anthropotropic manifestations of some sort? – they seemed to want nothing other than the death of my entire team. So much knowledge lost, intelligence wasted, data unrecoverable... Tragic.”

Ryoushi is an incredibly intelligent woman in her early forties (enhanced medical technologies leaves her looking like a woman in her prime, however) with an incredibly advanced vocabulary she rarely adjusts for less-technically or -scientifically minded audiences. She also possesses a boundless energy and drive to learn, and will leap at the chance to explore the “multiverse” with the full support and resources of an Empire. She is not a shugenja, simply having studied the forces of the universe with a dedication and intellect never before seen in the Emerald Empire.

Roughly a week after the PCs return to Shiro no Fukuro, Sezaru’s wife Yanako has a breakdown in court, wailing, *“The wolf is dead, the wolf is dead; the moon is overshadowed by blood, and my wolf is dead.”*

As Sezaru is often called “the Wolf”, none of the interpretations that anyone can see for this possible vision are good. In response, Sezaru goes into seclusion to meditate upon the possibilities.

The End

Rewards for Completing the Adventure

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

Experience Points

Surviving the adventure:	2XP
Good roleplaying:	+2XP
Finding Agasha’s Shelf:	+2P
Saving Ryoushi from the Shadowspawn:	+2XP

Total Possible Experience: **8XP**

Honor

Successfully completing the mission from their lord earns the PCs one point of Honor.

Glory

Bringing Ryoushi to the Owl castle gains three points of Glory for each PC.

Appendix #1: NPCs

Doji Tohaku

Tohaku is a diligent, dedicated magistrate who has worked his way up through the ranks to his current position. He is friendly and polite when he can be, but at heart views himself as a defender of order and will not stop as long as those responsible for causing chaos at his post are at large. Tohaku is of average height and fairly slight build, with a bit of premature gray at his temples lending him a certain dignity.

Air 4 Earth 3 Fire 3 Water 2 Void 2
Perception 4

Honor 6.7 Status 4.5 Glory 4.6

Initiative: 7k4 **Attack:** 8k3e (katana, Complex) or 8k4 (sidearm)

Armor TN: 34 (light armor) **Damage:** 6k2 (katana) or 3k3 (sidearms)

Reduction: 3

Wounds: 15 (+0), 21 (+3), 27 (+5), 33 (+10), 39 (+15), 45 (+20), 51 (Down, +40), 57 (Dead)

School/Rank: Doji Magistrate 3

Technique: *Temper Steel with Honor:* +Air Ring to Armor TN unless helpless or unaware; +1k0 to attack rolls when fighting with jitte or sasumata

Flowing Like Water: use opponent's Strength Rank instead of own when rolling to control Grapple or resolve Disarm

Breath of the Law: if successfully Grapple or Disarm an opponent, they are Dazed

Skills: Athletics 2, Calligraphy 3, Courtier 3 Defense 4, Driving 3, Etiquette 3, Firearms 4, Iaijutsu 3, Investigation 5, Jiujutsu 5, Kenjutsu 5, Knives (Jitte) 3, Lore: Law 4, Piloting 3, Polearms 2

Advantages/Disadvantages: Benten's Blessing / Unluck

Aoka

The daughter of a Mantis and a Scorpion, Aoka has been disavowed by both clans and is largely happy with that. She is uninterested in any responsibility greater than that required by her ship and crew. Aoka is tall and lean, with a ready, mischievous smile. A few scars mark her somewhat delicate features,

Air 3 Earth 3 Fire 3 Water 3 Void 2
Reflexes 4

Honor 2.8 Status 0 Glory 2.0

Initiative: 7k4 **Attack:** 8k4e (sidearm)

Armor TN: 25 **Damage:** 3k3 (sidearm)

Wounds: 15 (+0), 21 (+3), 27 (+5), 33 (+10), 39 (+15), 45 (+20), 51 (Down, +40), 57 (Dead)

School/Rank: none/Insight Rank 3

Skills: Athletics 5, Commerce 4, Defense 3, Firearms (Sidearms) 4, Investigation 3, Intimidation 3, Knives 5, Lore: Underworld 4, Piloting 5, Stealth 4

Advantages/Disadvantages: Dangerous Beauty / Contrary

Appendix #2: An Emerald Stars Primer

This section is intended to provide the GM with a basic understanding of the Emerald Stars setting, with hopefully enough information to allow them to give the players a good impression of the way that the world feels.

The year is 3122, and the Emerald Empire has expanded to encompass dozens of planets and stations throughout the galaxy. Using advanced magic and technology in conjunction, the samurai of Rokugan are capable of building starships that can exceed the speed of light, traveling physically through space to other planets (the term “world” has fallen out of favor as insufficiently precise to describe the difference between Spirit Realms and physical planets). These planets generally have an influence from other Spirit Realms, dictating their essential nature, and the clans of the Empire have claimed new lands and resources with astonishing fervor. The clans are largely unchanged, but their specific places are not terribly important for purposes of this module; it can be assumed they have similar roles as in less-advanced settings.

All of the clans hold a number of planets, though in recent generations, Imperial Edicts have come down that force newly-discovered systems to be shared amongst multiple clans to give smaller groups like the Minor Clans a chance to prosper. Most of the planets are named after the Realms that influence them, or in honor of historical figures of their clans. There are also hundreds of space stations, from the enormous stations referred to as Kyuden capable of docking entire fleets, to the smaller and nearly ubiquitous Shiro (that can generally only serve a single cruiser and a few transports). Cruisers are starships with offensive capabilities, with the Katana-class representing the best of the clans’ fleets. The Wakizashi-class is the most common cruiser, and modified according to each clan’s preferences and tastes (heavy armor and armament for the Crab, long-range exploration vessels for the Unicorn, etc).

Personal technology includes computers smaller than coins (comfortable display surfaces are more likely to determine the size of a device), communication devices that can connect planets with little to no lag, and quasi-awakened weaponry called “radiant” that comes in the form of energy weapons and armor designed to protect against them. Travel papers are now called “transit chits” and take the form of data encoded on crystals set in cards somewhat smaller than credit cards. They are often worn on lanyards like netsuke or even around the neck, and similar tokens are used to access an individual’s financial accounts or provide basic identification. Fashion largely consists of tighter-cut hakama, much like loose trousers, and short kimono roughly the length of a gi; samurai still bear the wakizashi as a symbol of rank, though most such blades also contain technological means of proving identity. Heraldry remains an important tool for advertising one’s person, though most of the mon have seen some alteration to somewhat more stylized forms.

The Empire is bounded now mostly by natural borders, regions of space with nothing but dead worlds or areas that are filled with anomalies that prevent or complicate travel. There are relatively few external pressures upon the Empire, so as always in their history, the samurai of Rokugan maintain their martial traditions by making war upon each other (with the usual oversight of the Imperial Throne). There are numerous alien races in the galaxy, most of them “pacified” by the samurai of the Empire; those unwilling to accept the rule of Rokugan have been entirely eliminated. Non-humans are generally regarded about as well as gaijin; though it is worth note that the gaijin of the Rokugani homeworld have also spread into space with far less luck than the Emerald Empire has enjoyed.

It will probably surprise most archaic samurai to discover that the peasantry enjoy a relatively easy existence compared to the traditional interpretation of the Celestial Order. As technology has progressed, it has become impossible to completely leave the lower orders in ignorance, and time has proven that peasants are far more efficient when they are well-treated and healthy.

Apart from this, however, there are surprisingly few changes to the core traditions of the Empire. Samurai remain the leaders of the Empire, in service to Emperor Iweko CXII, and though there are rumors of dark times approaching, Rokugan has prospered for generations and expects to continue doing so.