

Delicate Negotiations

**A 1-Round Low-Rank Adventure for Heroes of
Rokugan: Spirit of Bushido**

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When influential courtiers meet, all others are simply stones on a go board.

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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 preceds 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 Low Rank adventure. Unlike most adventures in *Heroes of Rokugan*, there are no modifications for low-end or high-end parties.

Adventure Summary and Background

For several years, the influential and dedicated alliance of Minor Clans first built by Yoritomo in the years just before the Clan War has been crumbling. The decay began when the Mantis achieved their centuries-long goal of recognition as a Great Clan and brought the Wasp and Centipede Clans under their banners as the Tsuruchi and Moshi families; it accelerated when the Fox Clan became the first Minor Clan to withdraw from the Alliance four years ago, just before the Battle of Oblivion's Gate. Now the Alliance teeters on the edge of dissolution, as the Minor Clans who once supported Yoritomo seek to define an existence outside the shadow of the newest Great Clan.

Most in the Empire will not miss it, but there are those who still seek to strengthen, rather than dissolve, the ties that bind the Minor Clans together. The Mantis, of course, is one such group, but the Crane is another, and the political might of the children of Doji is not to be underestimated. Strong partners of the Mantis in the courts and traditional believers in the power of alliance to maintain peace in the Empire, the Crane are moving to rebuild what has been lost in the wake of Yoritomo's death. Led by a powerful Crane diplomat named Doji Menechan, they have laid before the Minor Clans a plan to fortify the economic and political ties between the Minor Clans, in hopes that increased contact and financial incentives will combine to bring the lesser Clans together once more.

Opposing them in this, however, is the Otomo family, who see Yoritomo's Alliance as a dangerous concentration of power in the hands of a single Clan – the exact circumstance against which their family has always worked. In the person of Otomo Saruko, the Imperial diplomat charged with handling Minor Clan affairs, the *seiyaku* seek to drive wedges between the Mantis and their Minor Clan clients, ending Yoritomo's Alliance once and for all.

The careful, behind the scenes maneuvering has at last reached a moment of decision. Crane negotiators throughout the Empire have laid the framework for a complex trade agreement that would include all seven of the Empire's Minor Clans, drawing in not only the Minor Clans of Yoritomo's Alliance but also those that

have stayed neutral or withdrawn from the Alliance already. Though most of the Minor Clans are skeptical of the trade framework, the promise of *koku* and political influence has caused all seven to agree to consider the proposal. The Otomo, of course, oppose the agreement, and have been equally dogged in their attempts to undermine it.

Throughout their years in the Empire's courts together, Doji Menechan and Otomo Saruko have developed a surprisingly close friendship; even as each suffered a political defeat or two at the hands of the other, they have treated their interactions as a game, one that parallels the frequent contests of Go they have shared. Both Menechan and Saruko are renowned, highly ranked players, and their matches have often served as highlighted entertainment during the winter courts they have attended.

As the final negotiations on the trade agreement reached their conclusions, Menechan and Saruko agreed to bring the Minor Clan envoys together to resolve the matter at last. Hosted by Saruko at her estate in Otosan Uchi, the putative reason for the gathering is a public Go match between the Doji and Otomo courtiers, but all involved understand the true purpose. By the time the nearly week-long event is concluded, the fate of the trade agreement will be determined.

By and large, the Great Clans profess little interest in the business of the Minor Clans, and on the whole, their disinterest is sincere. Nevertheless, the potential implications of the trade agreement, as well as the involvement of the Crane, Mantis and Imperials, have raised the profile of this particular piece of business high enough that some Great Clans have chosen to send representatives to the Go match as well. These representatives – the PCs – are not the movers and shakers of their Clans, as the Minor Clans are beneath the notice of those Great Clan worthies, but are nonetheless been sent to have such impact as they can manage. To that end, each Great Clan envoy has a gift or two to offer to the Minor Clan representatives, and their job will be to influence the Minor Clan ambassadors in line with their Clan's interests.

- **Mechanical Note:** PCs with the Advantage “Oath of Fealty: Shosuro Atsumori (Ryoko Province)” have the stipend of *koku* provided with their Outfit increased by 3 for this adventure.

How to Run This Module

The structure of this adventure is extremely loose, and GMing it can be a challenge. Other than Part One and Part Three, the events of the adventure take place over five days, but there is no strict order, and the players are free to interact with the various characters in whatever order they choose. Moreover, the various tactics the PCs might employ to persuade the ambassadors to their side can vary widely – the GM is encouraged to reward creativity, but to also keep in mind the rigid social strictures that permeate Rokugani culture. Losses of Glory, Honor and even Status are all possible, and players should be made aware of the heightened consequences of a misstep. Players who grossly violate the rules of etiquette, initiate violence or break the law should suffer immediate penalties, up to and including ejection from the adventure and loss of Clan status (i.e., being made ronin).

This adventure can be thought of as an “interactive in a box;” the nonlinear structure reflects the great potential the PCs have to affect the final outcome of the negotiations. It is important to make the players realize that the fate of the trade agreement is in their hands, and wherever possible, to reward well-played characters who work hard to accomplish their Clan’s goals, regardless of the end result of the adventure.

It is quite likely that the players will not be working all for the same side in these negotiations. It will be important to remind the players that their opposing positions are purely a matter of politics, and that the eyes of the Empire (in the person of Otomo Saruko in particular) are upon them. Disputes should be resolved in a rational and suitably courteous manner, lest the extreme disapproval of the Imperial families fall upon the offending character. To facilitate cooperation among the players on each side, we recommend having the players allied with each faction move to sit with one another around the table, both to allow them to communicate more easily with one another and to emphasize the relative positions of each player relative to the discussions.

Appendix Three presents all seven of the Minor Clan ambassadors. The presentation format is as follows:

Name: The character’s name, along with their Clan affiliation, School/Rank, Glory, Status and Honor.

Description: A basic description of the character, their usual appearance and dress, typical mannerisms, and so on.

Position: The character’s initial stance on the trade agreement (Strongly Opposed, Moderately Opposed, Neutral, Moderately Supportive, Strongly Supportive), with additional details as necessary.

Information: Various sources of information about the character, along with the needed dice rolls and TNs to actually gain anything from the listed source. Most characters will have a reputation that can be discovered through **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** rolls, but other avenues of investigation might also be available.

Access: What is required to gain an audience suitable for negotiation with the character. This can always be accomplished through **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** rolls, but other approaches might also intrigue the character enough to allow them to speak with a PC. If a PC gains an audience with the character, they may bring a number of “guests” to the meeting (i.e., other PCs) equal to their Status Rank. Regardless, gaining and attending such an audience requires an entire day (so a PC can only meet with a single ambassador on any given day).

Possible Leverage: Specific desires, fears, blackmail material, and so on that PCs might use to manipulate the character should they discover these resources. These are often the source of a particular gambit involving the character from Otomo Saruko or Doji Menechan, but can be potentially co-opted by the PCs as well. Unless otherwise stated, a given form of leverage can only be exploited once by a PC; later attempts to use the same tactic automatically fail. (The exception is the “Simple Persuasion” option, which can be reattempted, but every attempt adds a cumulative +5 TN to all subsequent attempts.) If the PC roleplays a convincing approach during these discussions, feel free to reward them with a Free Raise, but remember that a character may only take advantage of a Free Raise on a Skill roll if they actually possess at least one Rank in the Skill in question.

Relevant Traits: Rather than supply complete character sheets here, the most important dice pools and relevant Social and Mental Advantages and Disadvantages needed for the character are listed in this entry. If the dice pool lists one or more Emphases, the character possesses those Emphases – otherwise, they do not. If for some reason it becomes necessary to know about mechanical traits that are not listed, the GM is encouraged to use these traits as a guideline to make their own determination.

Gambits: Most of the Minor Clan representatives have been specifically targeted for manipulation by both Doji Menechan and Otomo Saruko. The specifics of each manipulation are listed here, along with the evening on which it occurs. If a PC discovers the same leverage on or before that day and uses it, then it has no further effect when Menechan or Saruko attempt to do so.

While running this adventure, keep track of two types of rolls: any PC who exceeds a TN 40 on a roll to gather information on an ambassador (make a note of which PC and which ambassador), and any time a PC

fails an Etiquette roll by more than 15 (such failures will result in eventual Glory loss) – note the specific PC and every time such a failure occurs.

Introduction

Each Great Clan PC begins the adventure by receiving a letter from their Clan (see Appendix One); ronin characters receive a letter from Doji Menechan, offering employment, while Imperial and Minor Clan characters are merely given orders to assist their respective ambassadors in an upcoming negotiation. They are then sent by their daimyo to the Otomo family compound in Otosan Uchi, to join the spectators watching the Go game between renowned courtiers and eighth-dan Go masters Otomo Saruko, the hostess, and Doji Menechan; as they arrive on the day before the game is to begin, they join the other prestigious visitors who have come to watch the rare public exhibition.

The spacious estates of the Otomo are used to hosting visitors of renown and events of high public spectacle, but they seem to be stretched to their limits to accommodate the large crowd of finely-dressed samurai that wanders through the outdoor pavilions and carefully sculpted gardens as you enter the grounds. A servant, face a perfect mask of courtesy, announces you in a ringing voice as you step within the gates, and hundreds of eyes flick toward you from behind a forest of fans before returning to whatever held their attention before. The Otomo enclave – several acres of finely appointed samurai residences, all safely secured away from the common bustle of the capital – has taken on some of the atmosphere of a festival, as entertainers wander the small, carefully maintained streets and paths, filling the air with music and bright colors, while servants offer sweet rolls and tea to passersby like food merchants hawking their wares.

The PCs have been given rooms in two different residences near the pavilion where the game is to take place. Crane, Mantis, and Unicorn characters, along with any ronin hired by Menechan and any Badger, Sparrow or Tortoise characters, are staying in a house belonging to Otomo Inui, a distant cousin of the Otomo daimyo, where Menechan himself is also staying. Any other characters are staying in the home of Otomo Saruko. Characters of Status Rank One or lower should be aware that these are accommodations beyond what their Status should likely deserve, and represent the special interest of their Clans in the matter of the trade agreement.

Once they settle in, the PCs have the afternoon to spend wandering the streets and paths of the Otomo estates, enjoying the beauty of Otosan Uchi until the welcoming feast is held that evening. The unusually warm autumn air is gentled by an occasional breeze from off of the Bay of the Golden Sun, and all the finery of the Imperial City is on display; on the other hand, if ostentation and the allure of the material hold no interest, small gardens and temples throughout the Otomo enclave beckon the contemplative.

The PCs should have an opportunity to meet with one another during this period, and may even be able to sound each other out on their goals for the negotiations. None of the major players in the negotiations are available at this time, however.

Part One: A Simple Meal

Eventually, a series of low booms, the ringing of a large gong, carry through the crowd, calling the guests to the residence of Otomo Saruko for the welcome feast.

Long tables of gleaming tile and lacquered cherry wood fill the central hall of Otomo Saruko's spacious estate. Finely woven cushions flank the tables, and beautifully painted paper screens line the walls as the crowd files in to begin the welcoming feast. At the farthest end of the room, a higher table sits perpendicular to the rest, allowing Otomo Saruko, your hostess, and her most important guests to overlook the rest of the gathering.

Once again, the PCs are seated much higher at the table than their Status deserves, though they are not at the highest table with Saruko, Menechan and the Minor Clan representatives, all of whom are talking quietly amongst themselves as the rest of the guests settle in.

As the room fills and the guests take their seats, Otomo Saruko rises from her cushion to address the hall. She is a small woman, with sharp features and a mix of grey and black in her precisely-sculpted hair, but her presence seems to fill much more space than she should occupy. With a broad smile, she calls out to the gathering: "Welcome, my friends, to my home. I am honored beyond words that so many of you would choose to share your evening with me; though I am deeply grateful, I can only attribute your attention to the presence of my other guests, to whom such respect is rightfully owed. I trust each of you will find my hospitality satisfactory, and I look forward to the chance to share the coming days with all of you." She pauses, and a twinkle appears in her eyes. "I also look forward to the experience of another victory

against my most worthy opponent, Doji Menechan-san, in full view of this honored gathering!”

A small ripple of laughter trails around the room, and the finely-dressed man in the colors of the Crane seated to Saruko’s left stands up in its wake. Doji Menechan also carries the weight of some years, and though his hair is the flawless white traditional of his Clan, his short beard and heavy eyebrows are the same slate gray as his eyes. A tall man by any standards, Menechan towers over his diminutive hostess, but they share a look of seemingly genuine respect and admiration before the Doji begins to speak.

“It is rude of any guest to so disappoint his hostess,” Menechan replies, “and yet I cannot help planning to do just that in this regard, Otomo-san. No doubt you will find the warmth of your beautiful home and the magnificent gardens that surround it an adequate comfort once you have admitted your defeat.” There is another laugh, and Menechan pauses to let it die down before continuing, turning to address the crowd. “I too would like to express my appreciation at the honor of your presence here. In particular, the presence of so many luminaries from the Minor Clans,” and here Menechan waves a hand to indicate the other guests seated alongside him at the high table, “is a strong reminder of the sometimes unheralded role these noble samurai play in our society. During our game, I invite all of you to consider the go stones themselves as samurai in service to their lords – each serves in its place, and no one can claim one is more noble than another.”

Saruko nods thoughtfully as Menechan sits back onto his cushion once more. “We are, both of us, grateful that you have come to enjoy this minor diversion in the coming days,” she says. “Our game will commence tomorrow morning, in the pavilion directly across the street. I hope you find the experience stimulating. Until then, please, enjoy yourselves, and be welcome in my home!”

The feast is, as one might expect, splendid, with finely prepared fish caught fresh in the Umi Yakamo that very morning, steamed vegetables both familiar and exotic, rice, and exquisite tea and sake in quantity. Conversation flows freely, and the PCs who wish may make **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** rolls to learn the state of affairs in the Imperial City and across Rokugan. The base TN is 5, which allows the character to learn one of the following pieces of information at random; for every 5 points by which the roll exceeds the TN, the character hears an additional piece of information.

- Toturi I has entered a period of seclusion to mourn his wife. This period will end shortly after Kaede’s state funeral; during this time, the Great Clans are maneuvering to determine who will be nominated to succeed Kakita Yoshi as Imperial Advisor.
- Otomo Mitsuhide has been appointed as Imperial Chancellor in recognition of his efforts in arranging a suitable funeral for Kaede. Little is known of him, other than that he is a returned spirit with a sharp eye for talent.
- Yoritomo Aramasu, Champion of the Mantis, recently survived an attack by a knife-wielding assassin in his bedchamber in Kyuden Yoritomo. The Mantis claim the assassin was a Scorpion, and although the Scorpion deny this, the Scorpion’s well-known desire for revenge against Aramasu (who was once a Scorpion himself) means that few the Empire believe their claims.
- Reports of armed peasant groups continue to spread across the Empire; several units of Imperial Legion troops have been sent to provinces in the Lion, Phoenix, Crane and Crab lands to try to address the problem, but it seems as though two new groups appear for every one that is wiped out.
- The Empire’s courts have been scandalized by reports of an illegal duel between Utaku Xanesha, a cousin of the Utaku family daimyo, and an Ikoma samurai that took place outside Kyuden Ikoma in the middle of the summer. There are conflicting stories, but the duel apparently began when Xanesha accused the Lion of harboring maho tsukai in the wake of Kitsu Okura’s corruption four years ago. Xanesha killed her opponent and has fled back to the Utaku lands, while the Ikoma seek permission to declare a blood feud.
- With the death of Kakita Kaiten, the Crane leadership has fractured; Kakita Yoshi, the former Imperial Advisor, has returned to his family to lead it, but Daidoji Uji has taken control of the Clan’s military affairs. It remains unclear how this divided leadership will function going forward.

If there are any Minor Clan PCs, Crane, Imperials, or ronin, a messenger arrives partway through the meal with a quiet summons. Imperials are asked to meet briefly with Saruko after the feast; Crane and ronin characters are asked to meet with Menechan once the feast is concluded; and Minor Clan characters are asked

to speak with their respective representatives before retiring.

Meeting with Saruko

Once the feast is over, Imperial PCs can speak briefly with Saruko in her office, one floor above the main hall. Unlike the careful ostentation of the feast, Saruko's office is clean and almost devoid of decoration – tall racks for scrolls stand against two walls, and a clean, organized desk stands in the middle of the floor, papers and writing kit ready to hand. Saruko is seated behind the desk on a well-worn cushion, and others are placed carefully across from her for the comfort of those she meets with. As the PCs enter, she is writing a letter in crisp, abrupt calligraphy, but she sets the paper aside even as she gestures the characters to a seat. Her earlier façade of good humor has been set aside, revealing a sharp expression of businesslike focus.

She greets the PCs briefly and with enough courtesy to avoid giving insult; she is uninterested in the pleasantries, however, and wants to move directly to the point of the discussion. As she is likely to greatly outrank the PCs, she intends to simply issue her orders and have them carried out – though she does not object to questions or suggestions, she has decades of political experience, and will generally believe that she knows best how to approach her objectives.

“We are going to destroy this agreement,” she says flatly. “The remnants of Yoritomo's Alliance will be wiped away by next week. You will help me see this accomplished.”

Her instructions are simple: “I have the means to... persuade... the Minor Clan representatives to agree to set aside the trade agreement. Each requires specific handling, but I am prepared for them all. Nevertheless, I wish you to search for additional approaches that might benefit our cause. Seek allies among the other guests if you feel it appropriate, but do not let them forget that we, as the closest to the Imperial throne, must take the lead in opposing this encroachment on the proper hierarchy of the Celestial Order.” If the PCs have already begun investigating the representatives, Saruko listens carefully to whatever they have discovered, congratulating them on beginning their work already, and commands that they put their information to use. She then dismisses the PCs curtly, returning to her letter-writing without further ado.

Note that, if at any point the PCs offer any insult, direct or indirect, to Doji Menechan, Saruko's expression becomes thunderous, and she snaps, “You will refrain

from such slanders of honorable samurai in my presence. Do not mistake a political disagreement for a personal one. You will not speak of such things again.” Any further statements made along similar lines in public, whether Saruko is present or not, eventually reach her ears, and the offending PC loses one point each of Status and Glory.

Meeting with Menechan

When the feast concludes, Crane and ronin PCs are expected to meet with Menechan in the rooms he has been given in the home of Otomo Inui. As they are guest quarters, the opulent décor says little about the man himself, and other than his clothes, the only thing in the room that seems to be a personal item is the go set that he is staring at when the PCs arrive. The board is carved from the rare gaijin substance called “aibori,” and the pieces are polished topaz and jet. The topaz stones seem to be in a far weaker position than the jet, and Menechan's eyes flick from one piece to another as he studies the arrangement for some time after the PCs enter. At last, he shakes his head slightly and turns to face his guests.

“I appreciate your promptness, samurai-sans,” Menechan says quietly, studying them with the same intensity that he had just directed at the go board. “I look forward to working with you during the next days, as we seek to strengthen ties that should never have been allowed to weaken. Though much of the game has already been played, the stones already on the board, we do not yet know how the endgame will unfold, and I intend to seek every advantage I can as we proceed. In that regard, I would like to call upon you to act as my agents for the purposes of these negotiations. Every set of eyes, ears, and mind that I can make use of I shall.” Menechan treats any ronin he has hired with unusual respect for one in his station, offering them two koku for their services as his agents during the event; as they will not have received a letter from their Clan, he also takes a moment to describe the outline of the negotiations and the major players involved.

If the PCs have already gained information on some of the representatives, Menechan listens intently, nodding and congratulating the PCs on their initiative when they finish. “Learn whatever you can, and use what you learn as you see fit. Keep me informed as well, in case there is more that I can use.” With a bow, Menechan dismisses the PCs once again, returning to his contemplation of the go board.

As with Saruko, Menechan has no patience with insults against his counterpart. “Courtesy is one of the

defining characteristics of a true samurai,” he will snap, “and I will expect nothing less from those who work with me.” After this warning, any insult made in public against Saruko will result in the loss of one point each of both Glory and Status.

Meeting with the Minor Clans

At some point that evening, any Minor Clan characters will be expected to meet with their representatives in their rooms. Each representative will discuss the trade agreement with the PC, establishing what the initial position of that Clan will be going into the negotiations and suggesting that the PC work to persuade the other representatives to pursue the same course. (See Appendix Three for personality notes and the initial positions of each Minor Clan member.) Note that, however, the position of each Minor Clan will change over the course of the negotiations, and Minor Clan PCs will be continually given new orders as to what the position of their Clan is and what position they should be arguing for.

The Trade Agreement

Once the PCs return to their rooms, they will discover that servants have delivered to each of them a copy of the trade agreement under negotiation. The text is lengthy and dense, and only through careful perusal and consideration are the details made clear. In order to grasp the fundamentals of the agreement, a **Lore: Law / Intelligence** roll or **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Intelligence** roll, TN 20, or a **Commerce / Intelligence** roll, TN 15, must be made. (Characters with access to Menechan or Saruko can simply ask; similarly, any Minor Clan characters can inquire of their representative and have it explained.)

The treaty is a complex web of economic agreements among the seven Minor Clans. The general outline is as follows: the Badger Clan will supply discounted iron from their mines to Dragonfly swordsmiths. The Badger lack the manpower to work the mines, however, so they will hire workers from the Sparrow to perform the labor. The Sparrow will not be paid in gold directly, however, but with rice purchased from the Fox at favorable rates. Once the Dragonfly have the iron, they will provide the blades to the Monkey and Hare at a discount, strengthening the military power of the two newest Minor Clans, while the Tortoise provide transport and protection for the goods throughout the process for a small (but cumulatively substantial) percentage. The increased economic activity can be expected to enhance the wealth of all the Minor Clans in the medium and long term, but will also increase

their mutual interdependence to sustain the improvements.

Part Two: A Complex Game

The go game begins as planned the following morning, shortly after dawn. The morning chill reminds the PCs that fall has arrived, but the crowd of bodies surrounding the pavilion helps to shield them from the bite in the air. The go board itself is a massive table, nearly eight feet on a side, and the stones are polished discs as wide as a man’s palm. Menechan selects one each of the white and black stones, turning away from Saruko; the large man’s hands conceal the pieces as he turns back. Saruko selects his left hand unhesitatingly, and Menechan opens it to reveal the black stone. Saruko smiles, and with a long-handled bowl, deftly scoops up one of the black stones and places it on the board. After only a moment’s pause, Menechan does the same with one of the white stones, some distance away from the black, and the game has begun.

As is traditional between high level masters, the go game’s pace is quite slow; no time limit is placed on each move, and the game is likely to take the full five days. After the first moves, the crowd begins to break up, the festival-like atmosphere returning and only a few bystanders remaining to watch how each player studies the board. Throughout the game, the passersby will stop and watch, sometimes for as long as an hour, sometimes for just a few minutes, before moving on again, making the pavilion a continually shifting mosaic of the various guests who have come to watch the spectacle.

The Negotiations Begin

Over the course of the next five days, the PCs can make arrangements to speak with the Minor Clan representatives in any order they choose. However, there is a substantial time commitment in doing so – speaking with a representative requires an entire day to meet the combination of etiquette requirements and scheduling needs, so no character can speak to more than one given representative each day. With a success on a TN 10 **Etiquette / Intelligence** roll, the PCs can realize that they only have two options for gaining access to the representatives: one, attempt to work through the proper channels, or two, find some way to interest the ambassadors enough to make them wish to speak with the PC instead. The PCs may make an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll (the TN for each ambassador is listed in Appendix Three) to make

the traditional arrangements to meet with the representative. If the PC prefers, options for ways to intrigue the representative enough to receive an invitation to meet with him or her are also listed in Appendix Three. Once the PC has been granted an audience, they may bring additional characters (as “guests”) equal to their Status Rank.

On the other hand, seeking out information that might be relevant to the negotiations can be done at any time, and should generally be abstracted to the relevant rolls (listed in the representative descriptions in Appendix Three). Learning information about a given representative through one particular source can only be attempted once per day, however. (In other words, if an information gathering roll fails, it cannot be reattempted until the following day.) As all the representatives can be investigated through multiple channels, it is worth noting that each avenue of research can be attempted once a day.

The ambassadors, despite their status as members of the Minor Clans, are ranking diplomats and therefore likely to hold higher Status than the PCs. Should a PC fail to treat them with the respect their positions deserve, the character should suffer a loss of one point of Glory, and characters of Honor Rank 5 or higher should also lose one point of Honor for their lack of Courtesy.

As stated in the descriptions of the representatives, gaining access to the ambassadors and then persuading them to change their positions can be done with a variety of rolls. Each Great Clan character has one or more gifts, supplied by their Clans, that can be used to smooth out the character’s interactions with the ambassadors. (If there are multiple PCs from the same Great Clan, they must “share” each gift – the benefits of offering a gift can only be obtained once, no matter how many PCs are from that faction. In the case of any disputes, characters with higher Status have first claim to the gifts.) Using a gift allows the giver to gain the benefits of a spending a Void Point on any roll made to either gain access to the representative or to use any kind of leverage on him or her. This can be either to add +1k1 to the roll or to temporarily gain 1 rank in a necessary skill, as the giver chooses. Techniques or other abilities that modify the use of Void Points do not apply to the use of gifts, but giving a gift does not prevent the giver from spending an actual Void Point on the roll as well. Certain gifts, noted in the descriptions of the ambassadors in Appendix Three, are especially valued by certain representatives; these gifts are worth two Void Points if given to the appropriate character.

Once a PC has met with a representative, it will be much more difficult to meet with the same representative a second time. Any rolls made to gain access to an ambassador with whom the character has already met require two Raises to be successful.

While the negotiations are occurring, a **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll, TN 15, can learn the position of all of the representatives relative to the agreement. This information is accurate as of the end of the previous day – actions taken on the current day will not have reached common knowledge at this point. By succeeding at a TN 25 **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll, a PC can learn the current, up-to-the-moment position of a single representative.

At the end of each day, Menechan and Saruko both attempt to pursue the gambits listed in the descriptions of the representatives. If these gambits are successful – and they will be as long as no PC has preempted the gambit by using the same leverage already – the position of the representative shifts one step closer to the position of the Doji or Otomo, as appropriate. These gambits will eventually negate one another, meaning that (absent PC involvement) the game will eventually end in a draw. As the gambits play out, they are reflected in the position of the go board. Each day’s gambits and the mirrored effects on the go board are as follows:

Day One – Menechan arranges for Masamune to study with the Kakita swordsmiths, “an aggressive push in the upper lefthand corner;” Saruko arranges for additional food supplies for the Sparrow, “a measured advance into the lower left corner”

Day Two – Saruko bribes Senriko, “closing an unexpected trap in the upper right;” Menechan offers to aid Torishei against the tsukai, “a series of expansions across the upper board”

Day Three – Menechan initiates recruitment among the Toku into Toturi’s Army, “targeted strikes at outlying stones;” Saruko gives Masamune poems for his marriage attempt, “an encirclement around the upper left corner”

Day Four – Saruko gives Choroihime information on Masamune, “rapidly constructing a wall of stones from lone points;” Menechan produces a cure for Nizou’s mother, “a wedge to drive apart the lower left stronghold”

Day Five – Saruko heightens Torishei’s paranoia, “an all-out assault on the upper center;” Menechan provides translations of Senriko’s books, “breaking out in the upper right”

If a particular gambit fails because it has been “blocked” by the actions of a PC, adjust the

corresponding description of the go game to reflect that this particular ploy failed. Only leverage used by a PC to oppose the gambit's architect will "block" the corresponding move on the game board.

The GM Cheat Sheet at the end of the module can be used to track the position of each representative at the end of each day.

Part Three: The Final Move

The go game and the gathering that surround it both come to an end on the evening of the fifth day. If no more than two representatives are opposed to the agreement and at least four support it, then Menechan wins a surprising, come-from-behind victory in the last set of exchanges. If no more than two representatives are in support of the agreement and at least four oppose it, Saruko wins a decisive victory, methodically eliminating the strongholds of her opponent. In any other situation, the game results in a draw. Both players are gracious in victory or defeat, far too skilled in the courts to allow their face to slip at such a key moment.

There is another feast to conclude the event, held in similar fashion to the feast that opened it. If she won, Saruko offers a short speech, thanking her opponent for the honor of his gameplay and expressing her appreciation for the presence of her many guests. If he won, Menechan offers a similar speech, though he is careful to once again single out the Minor Clan representatives for attention. In the event of a draw, Saruko publically challenges Menechan to a rematch at the Emperor's Winter Court, which he courteously accepts.

Once the meal is over, Saruko thanks her guests one last time for coming, and the event is concluded.

Conclusion

The Fall of the Alliance

If Saruko wins the go game, the inability of the Minor Clan to come together further isolates them from one another. As the Minor Clans each go their own way, it shortly becomes clear that the last remnants of Yoritomo's Alliance will soon be nothing but a swiftly-fading memory.

Alliance Reborn

On the other hand, should Menechan win the game, the new ties among the Minor Clans foster a shared sense of kinship, and while Yoritomo's Alliance is no longer lead by the man who gave it its name, there are signs that a new Alliance, with strong ties to the Mantis and Crane clans, may be in the offing.

From Nothing, Nothing Comes

In the event of a draw, the slow dissolution of the Alliance continues, as the Minor Clans continue to flirt with the concept of alliance while refusing to commit to it. The Crane Clan negotiators return to the Minor Clan courts, hoping to find a new deal better suited to strengthening the ties among the Minor Clans, but time is not on their side.

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.

If a PC has a Crafting cert, they may make a Crafting roll at this time.

Experience Points

Completing the adventure:	1XP
Good roleplaying:	+2XP
Successfully Persuading at Least One Representative (Regardless of the Representative's Final Stance):	+1XP
Total Possible Experience:	4XP

Glory

All PCs gain a single point of Glory.

A PC who failed an Etiquette roll by more than 15 at any point in the adventure loses one point of Glory per roll, to a maximum of 5 points lost.

If the PC's faction won the negotiation, PCs on that faction gain an additional point of Glory.

Other Awards/Penalties

If Saruko won the game, PCs aligned with her gain her as an Ally, with 2 points of Influence and 1 points of Devotion.

If Menechan won the game, PCs aligned with him gain him as an Ally, with 2 points of Influence and 1 points of Devotion.

If a single PC successfully persuaded at least three representatives, regardless of their final disposition, that PC earns 2 points of Status.

GM Reporting

- What was the result of the go game?
- Did Rinko get engaged (and to which Clan)?
- Did any Clan hire Badger mercenaries? Which one?
- Was Masamune's poisoning uncovered?
- Did any Crane apologize for the lethal duels?
- Did Torishei get access to any maho scrolls?
- On whom did Choroihime get blackmail?
- Was Nizou's hypocrisy pointed out to him?
- Did any PC speak out on behalf of democracy? Who?

GM must report this information BEFORE April 12, 2011, for it to have storyline effect

Appendix #1: Clan Letters

Crab

Honorable samurai,

I greet you in the name of our Champion, Hida O-Ushi. Know that your service to the Clan has not gone unnoticed, even as it now draws you away from the Wall. In three weeks' time, two courtiers, Doji Menechan and Otomo Saruko, will meet for a public go game in the Otomo estates in Ootosan Uchi. Though it may appear to be a simple board game, my contacts inform me that trade negotiations involving all the Minor Clans will be discussed at the same time. The game is simply an excuse to draw the players together.

The Minor Clans serve their purpose, and we have no objections to seeing them strengthened, but the terms of the agreement undercut Yasuki trade arrangements throughout the Empire. This agreement cannot be permitted to reach completion.

Go, then, to this public exhibition, and see to it that the negotiations fail. In order to facilitate your efforts, the Crab will have provided you a gift to offer in your search for allies: the Kaiu blade Seikou. Find one worthy to wield it, and make of him or her an ally of the Crab.

Go in the name of the Crab.

Yasuki Ryobe

Crane

Cousin,

I hope this missive finds you well. As you may have heard, our cousin, Doji Menechan-sama, has agreed to a challenge from renowned go master Otomo Saruko, hosted in her estates in Ootosan Uchi. Menechan's skill is justly famed, and I have no doubt he will prove victorious in this contest. Nevertheless, he has asked for assistance in a minor matter, to be handled discreetly during the interactions the public exhibition will afford, and I promptly thought of you.

As you know, our allies among the Mantis have held strong ties with the Minor Clans from which they arose for many years. It seems, however, that these bonds, which have contributed to the well-being of the Minor Clans and to the peace of the Empire have begun to weaken. The Crane believe in peace and prosperity, and we have taken it upon ourselves to shore up what has begun to crumble. Our trade representatives have scattered to the farthest corners of the Empire to build a fair and worthy trade agreement that will bind the Minor Clans more tightly to one another. Not all who serve the Emperor share our wisdom, however, and there are those who would turn away from the peace and affluence we are trying to build. I ask you to go to the go exhibition and aid Menechan-sama in persuading the Minor Clan's representatives to stand with us in aiding their own futures.

That you may do this, and to demonstrate the support of the Crane in your work, I am sending to you two gifts, to be used to build goodwill in those with whom you will deal. One is a painting by Kakita Hirohada, one of the finest ukiyo-e masters in the Empire; the other is a writ granting access to Doji Miusho, who is kimono-maker to the Imperial family, and guaranteeing one kimono made by her to the bearer's specifications. These gifts should move any cultured samurai, but the impact on a Minor Clan samurai should be most satisfactory. Use them well.

May the Fortunes bless your path.

Doji Shusaku

Dragon

Honored Brother,

I do not know where on your Path this letter finds you, but I trust that it finds you well. I write to you in expectation of worthy service to your Clan. It has come to my attention that the Crane have begun a program of diplomacy designed to bring the Minor Clans into closer ties with one another. The fruits of their labor have been brought to Otosan Uchi, where final negotiations will proceed behind the veneer of a public exhibition of go. The two players, Doji Menechan and Otomo Saruko, are the key figures in support and opposition to the framework the Crane have so studiously assembled.

While we wish for all the Empire's Clans to experience comfort and peace, it is the wisdom of the Dragon that this agreement represents more threat than boon to our interests. The close ties between the Dragonfly and the Dragon extend to the first days of our little cousins' existence, and it will not do to have them drawn away from us like this. Could the agreement function without them, we would gladly see it go forward, but the Crane have done their jobs too well – like the work of the master weavers they are, their tapestry unravels if you pull even a single thread.

I have little interest in fostering the insincere manipulations of the court, but a hunter who sets out with no arrows in his quiver is unlikely to return with his quarry. Thus, I have made arrangements with our allies in the Brotherhood of Shinsei to appoint an advisor from among their enlightened ranks to a representative of your choice. If those with whom you deal recognize the value of wisdom, let them find it through your words, but if not, perhaps such a gift will set them on the Path.

Fortunes' blessings upon you.

Kitsuki Harumi

Lion

Honored Samurai,

Sun Tao once wrote, "On deadly ground, fight," and as anyone who has entered that battleground can tell you, there are few grounds more deadly than the bower of an Otomo. Nevertheless, that is where I must command you to go, and I am sure you will be prepared for the fight you must wage when you reach it.

Otomo Saruko and Doji Menechan, two renowned courtiers, have agreed to a public go match in the Otomo estates. Normally such diversions, no matter how worthwhile, would be of little concern to me, but a good general knows to look beyond the obvious when his enemies move. I have learned that this meeting is intended to allow the gathering of several representatives of the Minor Clans in one place, so that a trade agreement binding them together can be concluded.

The business of the Minor Clans is of little concern to the Lion, but we have already seen once what happens when we permit them ambitions above their station. As the trade agreement is the work of Crane negotiators and Mantis conniving, we have all the reason we need to oppose it. Let the Minor Clans remain safely isolated from one another and keep to their places in the Celestial Order.

To better arm you as you enter this battle, I am also sending to you one of the finest copies available of Akodo's Leadership. Use this as a gift to an honorable samurai, that they may give heed to your words as a true follower of Akodo.

In our lord's name, go forth.

Ikoma Midori

Mantis

My good friend,

I send greetings from the Islands of Silk and Spice, as well as good tidings! Well I don't always have the best opinion of our fair-weather friends in the Crane, I must admit they've done us a good turn just now. Doji Menechan, one of their best courtiers and quite the go player to boot, is participating in a public go game against Otomo Saruko at the Otomo estates in Ootosan Uchi. While the glories of the Imperial city might well be enough reason to attend this show all by themselves, the truth is that the game is truly an excuse to bring together some of the most influential Minor Clan diplomats, in order to get some signatures on a trade agreement that will bind them all together.

I don't need to tell you, of course, that the Three Man Alliance and Yoritomo's Alliance were both the creations of our late, honored lord Yoritomo; it is both for his memory and our political strength that the Mantis would like to see this Minor Clan agreement completed as quickly as possible. Our little brothers will look to us for leadership as they once did, and we will guide them as they require. It's a win for all of us – as long as the Otomo don't manage to get in our way.

I wouldn't be so crass as to suggest you can buy your way into the good graces of these ambassadors, but a good gift goes a long way toward making a good friend, if you take my meaning. I've sent this message onboard the Song of Thunder, one of our finest kobune, suitable for sea and river travel. The kobune, minus the crew of course, can be offered as a gift to sway those who might not otherwise listen to your words. Use it well.

May the Thunder follow your steps.

Yoritomo Takafumi

Phoenix

Revered cousin,

I greet you in the spirit of kinship. Let the blessings of Isawa and Shiba fall upon you in your duties for our Clan.

I write to you this day with a heavy hand. It is said that the heart of a samurai is a heart of vengeance, but violent retribution has never been the Phoenix way. Sadly, there are those who believe our belief in peace is nothing but a sign of weakness, and chief among these are the detestable Mantis pirates. While we withheld our wrath out of respect for the harmony of the Empire, those who trespassed so bloodily against us have never yet faced justice for their crimes, and we will not allow this to continue forever.

I have recently learned that negotiators for the Crane have assembled a trade agreement that will bind the Minor Clans more tightly together in attempt to strengthen the remains of Yoritomo's Alliance. That such a butcher is remembered as a hero is an affront to every Phoenix, and it is for this reason that we will not permit this agreement to come to pass. The architect of the plan, Doji Menechan, will meet Otomo Saruko in a public go exhibition at Otomo-sama's estates in two weeks' time; the leading diplomats of the Minor Clans have been invited, and it is Menechan's intent to see the agreement completed there. It is the will of the Council that this not be.

To aid in your task, I have included with this letter a copy of the New Tao, annotated by Shiba Ningensama himself. Use it as a gift to open doors that might not otherwise be accessible to you, and may the Fortunes guide your path.

Asako Yasotaro

Scorpion

My trusted friend,

As a devoted servant of our Clan, I know quite well that you constantly await any opportunity to serve the Scorpion and the Empire. I am pleased to inform you that such an opportunity has presented itself.

Doji Menechan, one of the Crane's most respected negotiators, has assembled a trade framework that touches on all of the Minor Clans in one way or another. It is an oversimplification to suggest that whatever the Crane want we oppose, but there is certainly little for the Scorpion to gain by allowing the Crane to succeed in building such a comprehensive structure of alliances – at least, not without our assistance, at any rate. More importantly, however, because the agreement focuses specifically on the Minor Clans, it is likely to enhance the stature of Yoritomo's Alliance and thus the Mantis Clan. This, of course, we cannot permit. The followers of the traitor Aramasu will find no sanctuary, and every hand will be raised against them. This trade agreement must fail.

Menechan has been challenged to a public exhibition of go by Otomo Saruko, who is our ally in the current matter, inasmuch as we share the same goal. Menechan has invited the highest-ranking Minor Clan courtiers to attend the game, and plans to use it as a venue to conclude the negotiations. The game will be held at Saruko's estate in Otosan Uchi, and you are commanded to attend. Use what you have been taught to see that these negotiations do not succeed.

To make clear the importance of this matter to the Scorpion, I am also sending two items with you, to be used as gifts to sway those who require additional persuasion. The first is an invitation to this year's Winter Court at Kyuden Bayushi; the second is a potted specimen of a unique strain of the bijozakura flower, along with a guide to preparations made from it that have been found to have several antitoxic properties. Use these items well.

Bayushi Sugimi

Unicorn

Honored servant of the Khan,

I write to you today with a command from our Khan. While the Great Khan knows that the other Clans are rightfully wary of the steel and hooves of our armies, he also wishes to make it known to the Empire that we are not savages who cannot use the strength of our words just as well, should the situation require it. It is for this reason that I am bid to send you to Otosan Uchi, to the home of Otomo Saruko, a courtier of the Imperial families.

Otomo-sama has challenged Doji Menechan, a Crane diplomat, to a public game of go to be held at her estate. Though this may seem a minor matter, in truth there is far more happening than first appears. Menechan and his allies have spent the last several months building up the basis for a trade agreement among the Minor Clans, and he plans to try to complete these efforts during the game; high-ranking members of all the Minor Clans will be attending the event, and there will be much behind-the-scenes activity going on.

The position of the Khan is that the Empire as a whole would benefit from increased trade, and the Unicorn in particular will see increases in our excise revenues as the goods are moved through our territories. Moreover, we wish to make it known to the Empire that we stand alongside our Crane allies, as they have long stood beside us in the courts. Therefore, it is his will that the agreement be completed as Menechan-sama wishes. You will see to it that this occurs.

To aid your efforts, I have sent two of our finest riding horses, bred from ancient stocks brought from the Burning Sands. A stallion and a mare, they will be suitable for breeding, either with each other or, if necessary, lesser breeds elsewhere. Use these as a suitable gift to one of the ambassadors who will not otherwise heed your words. I remind you that the Utaku stablemasters will only permit this gift if the pair are given together – we do not wish to see our breeding stocks spread too far.

May the Four Winds carry you to glory.

Ide Yaichiro

Appendix #2: NPCs

Doji Menechan

Air 3 Earth 2 Fire 3 Water 2 Void 4
Awareness Willpower Intelligence Perception
5 4 5 3
Honor 7.3 Status 5.5 Glory 4.5

School/Rank: Doji Courtier 5

Techniques: Rank One: The Soul of Honor

Free Raise on all Courtier, Sincerity, and Etiquette rolls. By conversing with another person for a few minutes, make a Contested Roll of Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness against the target's Etiquette (Courtesy) / Awareness to learn whether they are in need of any favors or assistance.

Rank Two: Speaking in Silence

Cadence: roll Courtier / Intelligence at TN 15 to communicate simple ideas and instructions with any other Crane who is trained in the Doji Courtier School or who has at least 5 Ranks in the Courtier skill.

Rank 3: The Perfect Gift

Can roll Courtier / Awareness at TN 20 to come up with a suitable gift or a helpful political favor for someone else. If gift accepted, may immediately take target as an Ally (with 1 Devotion) for free.

Rank Four: Voice of Honor

In any debate or argument, may make a Contested Roll of Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness against the target's Etiquette (Courtesy) / Awareness to force the opponent to concede that his position conflicts with the demands of Honor and Bushido, and if he persists in his position, he has committed a breach of etiquette.

Rank 5: The Gift of the Lady

By conversing with someone for a few minutes, may make a Contested Roll of Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness against the target's Etiquette (Courtesy) / Willpower to shift the target's emotions in a favorable direction. (If the target is an Ally, gains a bonus of +5k0 to the total of this roll.)

Skills: Artisan: Origami 2, Artisan: Poetry 3, Calligraphy 5, Courtier 6 (Manipulation, Rhetoric), Etiquette (Conversation, Courtesy) 7, Games: Go 7, Games: Letters 4, Horsemanship 2, Investigation 3, Kenjutsu 2, Lore: Heraldry 5, Lore: History 3, Meditation 2, Perform: Oratory 5, Sincerity (Honesty) 5, Tea Ceremony 4

Advantages/Disadvantages: Allies (many), Benten's Blessing, Voice / Bad Eyesight

Otomo Saruko

Air 3 Earth 2 Fire 3 Water 2 Void 4
Awareness Willpower Intelligence Perception
5 3 5 4
Honor 5.8 Status 5.5 Glory 5.2

School/Rank: Otomo Courtier 5

Techniques: Rank One: The Voice of Heaven

Does not lose Honor for using the Intimidation (Control) Skill. May make a Contested Roll of Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness against Etiquette (Courtesy) / Awareness Any when in conversation with someone from one of the Clans (Great or Minor), to provoke a disagreement or argument between them and someone from another clan or faction of her choice.

Rank Two: Destiny Has No Secrets

May spend a Void point to roll Courtier / Awareness at TN 25 to learn one piece of critically useful information (if have time to consult contacts).

Rank Three: My Master's Voice

Complex Action: make a Contested Social Skill roll of Intimidation (Control) / Willpower against target's Etiquette (Courtesy) / Willpower to prevent target from taking any action that would obstruct or threaten the Otomo. (If the target sincerely believes they are acting honorably, they gain a Free Raise to this roll, and target must reverse the Emperor.)

Rank Four: The Emperor's Protection

May spend a Void point to make a Contested Roll of your Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness against target's Etiquette (Courtesy) / Awareness when in an argument or debate to force target to agree with Otomo position or immediately lose 5 points of Honor.

Rank Five: The Virtues of Command

Gains +5k0 when making a Contested Social Roll against someone who reveres Imperial authority.

Skills: Courtier (Gossip, Manipulation) 7, Defense 3, Etiquette (Conversation) 6, Games: Go 7, Intimidation (Control) 5, Investigation (Interrogation) 3, Sincerity (Deceit) 5, Tea Ceremony 2, Temptation 4

Advantages/Disadvantages: Blackmail (many), Dangerous Beauty, Voice / Small

Appendix #3: Minor Clan Representatives

Ichiro Rinko, Badger Clan

Ichiro Bushi 2, Glory 2.7, Status 3.2, Honor 6.4

Description: Rinko is a slight woman, not even topping 5 feet, with plain features, a quiet demeanor and a soft voice. She rarely displays much emotion, but is as difficult to bend as iron, stubbornly and calmly presenting her viewpoints on the situation is at hand.

Position: The trade agreement represents the greatest potential windfall for the Badger since they were assaulted by Oni no Hideo; Rinko is Strongly Supportive of it as a result.

Information: Court gossip (**Courtier [Gossip] / Awareness**):

- TN 15: Rinko is the only Badger Clan diplomat in the Empire outside her Clan's provinces.
- TN 20: Though she is not unfamiliar with the ways of court, most Great Clan courtiers consider her a country bumpkin playing at being a refined samurai.
- TN 25: She earned the respect of the Empire by revealing a lie, told by a Kuni magistrate, that stole the rightful glory of her father in destroying Oni no Hideo.
- TN 30: Rinko gave birth to a son two years ago. She is unmarried, however, and has never admitted the identity of the father.

Economic gossip (**Commerce or Lore: Underworld / Awareness**):

- TN 15: The Badger Clan was nearly wiped out by an oni attack a decade ago. They have been excluded from Imperial taxation ever since, as they have no meaningful wealth to collect.
- TN 20: To rebuild their lands, the Badger have become a Clan of mercenaries, hiring their few remaining bushi out to anyone with the koku to pay them. They are always looking for new patrons to aid in their rebuilding effort.

Jujitsu knowledge (**Jujitsu / Intelligence**):

- TN 15: The Badger are known for their unarmed combat skills.
- TN 20: Rinko in particular has often used sumai matches as a means of gaining the attention of the courts she has attended.

Access: Simple Request – a player may meet with Rinko by succeeding on an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll, TN 20.

Jujitsu Challenge – A character can challenge Rinko to a sumai match. Winning requires beating Rinko in a Contested **Jujitsu (Grappling) / Strength** roll, but as long as the PC makes a TN 20 on his or her

roll, even if Rinko wins she is sufficiently impressed to meet with the character.

Possible Leverage: Simple Persuasion – Rinko's stance on the agreement can be modified by making a **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** roll, TN 45.

Marriage Proposal – Rinko is not a woman of great beauty and has only moderate status, but her children will one day be the heirs of a Minor Clan Champion. A male character who succeeds in a **Sincerity / Awareness** roll against her **Etiquette (Courtesy) / Awareness** roll can persuade her to agree to open negotiations for marriage. Rinko gains two Free Raises on her roll unless the PC agrees to adopt her son as part of the marriage agreement. She will modify her position one step in the direction of her fiancé's choosing as part of the negotiations as well. Alternatively, a female PC with an established reputation as a matchmaker can offer to open marriage negotiations on Rinko's behalf; the same rolls and requirements apply.

Seduction – Rinko is a lonely woman, far from home. A male character who wishes to try to seduce her in return for changing her position may attempt a **Temptation (Seduction) / Awareness** roll, resisted by her **Etiquette (Courtesy) / Awareness** roll, to win her to bed (costing her suitor a number of Honor points equal to his current Honor Rank). Her Clear Thinker Advantage applies to her resistance roll. She will modify her position one step in direction of her lover's choice if the attempt succeeds.

Hiring Mercenaries – The Badger are constantly in need of sources of income, the largest reason why Rinko is so interested in the trade agreement. Agreeing to hire some of her fellow Badger for extended military contracts will change her position substantially. This requires an initial payment of 10 koku and the permanent reduction of 2 koku from a player's outfit. (If the cost is paid by multiple characters, the reduction may be similarly divided as the characters see fit.) A **Commerce / Intelligence** roll, TN 25, can reduce this to 8 koku and a permanent reduction of 1 koku. Signing this contract allows a character to modify her position by one step.

Gift – A Lion character who offers her the copy of Akodo's *Leadership* gains the benefits of two Void Points on the roll for which he or she chooses to use it.

Relevant Traits: **Etiquette / Awareness** 7k3, **Courtier / Awareness** 6k3, **Jujitsu (Grappling) / Strength** 6k4 (with one reroll); Willpower 4; Clear Thinker, Precise Memory.

Gambits: The strong position of Rinko in favor of the agreement means that neither Menechan nor Saruko

have prepared a gambit against her, preferring to focus their efforts elsewhere.

Tonbo Masamune, Dragonfly Clan

Shiba Bushi 2, Glory 3.4, Status 3.7, Honor 4.8

Description: Masamune is a strongly-built man with roughly callused hands, whose kimono always seems to not quite fit his massive frame correctly. He shaves his head in a monastic style, and tiny burn scars mar his skin in several places. Masamune is a brusque, harsh man, with a strong belief in his own unique talents, particularly where swordsmithing is concerned. Most of the time, others find him obnoxiously self-absorbed.

Position: Their ties to the Dragon and Phoenix Clans have always proved sufficient for the Dragonfly's needs; therefore, Masamune is Moderately Opposed to the trade agreement.

Information: Court gossip (**Courtier [Gossip] / Awareness**):

- TN 15: Masamune is better known as a duelist and swordsmith than as a courtier.
- TN 20: Sending him to the negotiations is a signal from the Dragonfly as to how they feel about the proposal. It is a subtle insult to the Crane.
- TN 25: Despite this, Masamune has been seeking a marriage with the Ashidaka family, the renowned swordsmithing vassal family of the Kakita. He plans to use the marriage to gain access to the techniques of the great Kakita swordsmithing masters.
- TN 30: The marriage negotiations aren't going very well; the bride, a noted patron of the arts, particularly poetry, apparently believes Masamune is lacking in social graces.

Underworld gossip (**Lore: Underworld / Awareness**):

- TN 30: Masamune's first three dueling victories were all the result of poison use against his opponents, though his more recent wins have been "clean." A character who learns about the poisoning may pay 1 koku in bribes to produce sworn testimony to the fact.

Access: Simple Request – A character may meet with Masamune by succeeding at an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll, TN 30.

Dueling Challenge – A character can challenge Masamune to a friendly iaijutsu contest. Winning requires beating Masamune in a Contested **Iaijutsu / Void** roll, but as long as the PC makes a TN 20 on his or her roll, even if Masamune wins he is sufficiently impressed to meet with the character.

Sword Lore – A PC can build a reputation at the gathering as an expert on sword lore. This requires a **Kenjutsu / Intelligence** roll, TN 25; if the character succeeds, Masamune invites him or her to meet with him.

Possible Leverage: Simple Persuasion – Masamune's attitude toward the agreement can be modified with a **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** roll, TN 40.

Roleplaying an approach that flatters Masamune should grant an extra Free Raise.

Craft Training – Masamune rightly feels that his swordsmithing skills are prodigious, but he is always looking for new techniques to add to his own. It is possible to arrange for Masamune to spend time studying with a Great Clan's master swordsmiths by expending three Favors from any Great Clans or Great Clan families, or by burning Allies with a combined Influence of at least 6. Alternatively, a non-Dragonfly character with at least 4 ranks of Craft: Weaponsmithing or Techniques that specifically relate to crafting may take a Minor Obligation to Masamune (for no character points) in order to teach him personally. In either case, Masamune's appreciation persuades him to shift his position one step in the direction of the character's choice.

Blackmail – A character who learns about Masamune's poison tricks can attempt to blackmail him with the knowledge. This requires an **Intimidation (Control) / Awareness** roll resisted by his **Etiquette (Courtesy) / Willpower** roll. If the attempt succeeds, Masamune will modify his position by one step in the direction of the blackmailer's choice. Regardless whether the attempt succeeds or fails, the blackmailer loses Honor equal to their current Honor Rank and gains Masamune as a Sworn Enemy.

Poetry – Masamune's attempts to woo his Ashidaka bride have been stymied by his lack of poetic skill. A character who can both keep a secret (convincing Masamune of this requires a TN 20 **Sincerity [Honesty] / Awareness** roll) and produce a set of worthy love poems on Masamune's behalf (requiring a TN 25 **Artisan: Poetry / Awareness** roll) earns his gratitude, pushing his position on the agreement one step in the direction of the character's choice.

Gift – A Crab character who offers him the Kaiu blade *Seikou* gains the benefits of two Void Points on the roll for which he or she chooses to use it.

Relevant Traits: **Etiquette / Awareness** 5k3, **Etiquette / Willpower** 5k3, **Courtier / Awareness** 6k3, **Iaijutsu / Void** 7k4; Willpower 3; Dark Secret, Overconfident

Gambits: On the first evening, Menechan arranges for Masamune to study with a Kakita swordsmith.

On the third evening, Saruko provides Masamune with a suitable set of love poems.

Kitsune Shu-Shen, Fox Clan

Kitsune Shugenja 3, Glory 3.9, Status 4.2, Honor 6.1

Description: Shu-Shen is a medium height woman with unusual, honey-colored hair and green eyes, though she shows no other signs of gaijin blood. She shows even more reluctance to make eye contact than most Rokugani, and whenever she finishes a long speech, she lets out a small sigh that sounds oddly like a horse's whicker.

Position: The Fox have little love for the Crane, little love for the Mantis, and little need for the economic windfall the agreement promises. The Fox policy of isolationism means that Shu-Shen is Strongly Opposed to the agreement.

Information: Court gossip (**Courtier [Gossip] / Awareness**):

- TN 10: Shu-Shen is a well-trusted advisor to Fox Clan Champion Kitsune Ryosei, with a reputation for extreme selflessness; she acts almost entirely without concern for her own interests, and solely as an instrument of her Clan.
- TN 15: She also has a reputation for being fascinated with horses, and some say she has a unique bond to the animals.
- TN 20: Ryosei has guided her Clan into a period of isolation, withdrawing not only from Yoritomo's Alliance but also from most other affairs of the Empire.
- TN 25: The reason for Ryosei's move is believed to be her vendetta against her father, who was transformed by one of the Black Scrolls into the Walking Horror of Fu Leng. She has sworn to destroy him and remove the stain on her family's honor.
- TN 30: Ryosei also still holds a grudge against the Crane, because the late Kakita Toshimoko, Grandmaster of the Kakita Dueling Academy, slew both her grandfather and her aunt in duels.

Dueling Knowledge (**Iaijutsu / Intelligence**):

- TN 20: Ryosei has a simmering grudge against the Crane, as the late Kakita Toshimoko, Grandmaster of the Kakita Dueling Academy, killed her grandfather and aunt in duels.
- TN 25: The Fox challenged Toshimoko in both instances, but Toshimoko killed Ryosei's grandfather in a duel that could have been only to first blood, and then killed his daughter, Ryosei's aunt, the woman he was attempting to woo for marriage, in a second duel over the results of the first.

Shadowlands Knowledge (**Lore: Shadowlands / Intelligence**):

- TN 20: Ryosei's father was transformed into the Walking Horror of Fu Leng by the fourth Black Scroll.

- TN 25: Ryosei has made inquiries to various Clans about using their libraries to research the Black Scrolls.

History (**Lore: History** or **Lore: Unicorn / Intelligence**):

- TN 20: Shu-Shen is known to have an interest in the shared legacy of the Fox and Ki-Rin (Unicorn) Clans.
- TN 25: She has been known to use this interest to argue for closer ties between the Fox and Unicorn.

Personal Interaction (**Investigation [Interrogation] / Awareness**; can only make this roll when a PC is directly interacting with her):

- TN 20: Shu-Shen carries an unusual air of innocence for someone in a court position.
- TN 30: She strikes you as extremely trusting of others, possibly to the point of allowing others to take advantage of her willingness to believe.

Access: Simple Request – A character may meet with Shu-Shen by succeeding on an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll, TN 30.

Horsemanship – A skilled rider or someone familiar with horses can intrigue Shu-Shen with a TN 25 **Horsemanship / Agility, Horsemanship / Awareness** or **Animal Handling (Horses) / Awareness** roll.

The Ki-Rin – Shu-Shen will speak to anyone who can make a TN 30 **Lore: History (Unicorn Clan)** or **Lore: Unicorn / Intelligence** roll to discuss the Ki-Rin and their kinship with the Fox.

Possible Leverage: Simple Persuasion – Shu-Shen's stance on the agreement can be modified by succeeding on a **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** roll, TN 30.

Overdue Apology – The Fox are still waiting for an apology from the Crane for the duels that took the lives of Kitsune Ryosei's grandfather and aunt. The Crane have refused to give such an apology because the Fox believe that courtly manipulations forced the duels where none were required. By making a **Courtier (Rhetoric) / Awareness** roll, TN 30, and delivering a heartfelt appeal to the Crane dignitaries present at the gathering, a PC may attempt to either persuade them or shame them into offering such an apology. Alternatively, a Crane PC may offer such an apology on his or her own, via a **Sincerity / Awareness** roll, TN 25. Arranging or delivering this apology moves Shu-Shen to adjust her position on the agreement one step in a direction of the PC's choice, but also incurs a Major Obligation to the Crane.

The Black Scrolls – Kitsune Ryosei has sworn to destroy the thing that was once her father, the Walking Horror of Fu Leng. As part of her preparations for the task, she has been researching the Black Scrolls, looking for more information on the process that

created the Walking Horror in the first place. The libraries of the Phoenix, Scorpion and Crab Clans hold some of the information she requires, and characters who could supply that information discreetly would earn the favor of the Fox Clan. By expending three Favors from Great Clans or Great Clan families, or burning three Allies with a total Influence of 6, the PCs can arrange for Ryosei to have access and suitable escort to the libraries of one of the three Clans. Making these arrangements allows the PC to adjust Shu-Shen's position on the negotiations by one step in either direction. Note: unlike most of the other types of leverage, this can be used up to three times, one each for the Scorpion, Phoenix and Crab Clans.

Simple Deceit – Shu-Shen's understanding of the trade agreement's specifics is extremely hazy, and she is relying on analysis from her superiors as to its benefits and effects. A character who wishes to confuse or mislead her about the agreement may roll **Sincerity (Deceit) / Awareness** against Shu-Shen's **Investigation (Interrogation) / Perception**, but Shu-Shen's Gullible Disadvantage grants the PC +1k1 to their roll. If the roll is successful, Shu-Shen adjusts her stance on the agreement one step in the direction of the PC's choice.

Gift – A Unicorn character who offers Shu-Shen the pair of gaijin riding horses gains the benefits of two Void Points on the roll for which he or she chooses to use it.

Relevant Traits: **Etiquette (Courtesy) / Awareness** 7k3, **Courtier / Awareness** 5k3, **Investigation / Perception** 5k4; Willpower 4; Irreproachable, Fascination: Horses, Gullible

Gambits: The strong position of Shu-Shen against the agreement means that neither Menechan nor Saruko have prepared a gambit against her, preferring to focus their efforts elsewhere.

Usagi Torishei, Hare Clan

Kitsu Shugenja 2, Glory 3.1, Infamy 2.2, Status 3.6, Honor 5.4

Description: Torishei's face is all sharp angles and unforgiving lines, his beady black eyes continually moving in a suspicious fashion. He is unforgiving and stern, conveying the impression that his endless hunt for maho tsukai in the Empire has burned most of the humanity out of him.

Position: The Hare have a strong independent streak and Torishei himself is more wary of those who claim to be allies than of his enemies; as a result, he is Moderately Opposed to the agreement.

Information: Court Gossip (**Courtier [Gossip] / Awareness**):

- TN 15: Torishei is one of the most respected, and most disliked, Hare in the Empire.
- TN 20: He has dedicated himself to hunting down and destroying maho tsukai throughout the Empire, but he has never received any official position or sanction for his activities. Much of the Empire considers him something of a vigilante.
- TN 25: Dark rumors have always swirled around Torishei's methods – whispers of torture personally performed, direct study of maho scrolls, and more.
- TN 30: He caused quite a scandal at a Bayushi court two years ago, when he publically accused one of the courtiers of maho practice. He was proved correct, but the embarrassment still clings to his Clan. Torishei seems not to care.

Maho Rumors (Lore: Maho or Lore: Shadowlands / Awareness):

- TN 20: Torishei has been offered an appointment into the Jade Magistrates, but turned it down, preferring to work alone. The lack of official support of his work has left him scrambling for adequate resources at times, however.
- TN 25: Torishei has occasionally been rumored to purchase maho scrolls from disreputable sources or to even loot them from the corpses of his fallen foes, though no one has ever accused Torishei of practicing the dark art himself.

Personal Interaction (Investigation [Interrogation] / Awareness; can only make this roll when a PC is directly interacting with him):

- TN 20: Torishei's wariness approaches – and may even exceed – the level of paranoia.
- TN 30: It would likely not be difficult to fan the flames of his paranoia if desired.

Access: Simple Request – A character may meet with Torishei by succeeding on an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll, TN 25.

Conspiracy Theorist – A character who is familiar enough with the shadows in which Torishei often works can gain his attention. A **Lore: Underworld /**

Awareness roll, TN 25, is enough to gain access to Torishei.

Maho Expert – A character who builds a reputation at the gathering as an expert in maho lore can also get access to Torishei. Building such a reputation requires a **Lore: Maho / Awareness** roll, TN 25, or a **Lore: Shadowlands or Spellcraft / Awareness** roll, TN 35.

Possible Leverage: Simple Persuasion – Torishei's stance on the agreement can be modified by succeeding on a **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** roll, TN 35.

Lure of the Forbidden – Torishei's search for maho tsukai has taken him into the dark realms of maho lore, though he is not himself a tsukai. A character with at least 3 ranks in **Lore: Maho** can take a Minor Obligation to Torishei to train him; alternatively, a PC can arrange for Torishei to have access to maho scrolls from their Clan's libraries or from an allied Clan's libraries via a **Lore: Maho / Awareness** roll, TN 25, or **Lore: Underworld / Awareness** roll, TN 35. In either case, Torishei's gratitude allows the PC to modify his stance on the agreement by one step.

Aid in the Hunt – Though Torishei does not himself believe he has any allies per se, he still needs resources – funds, travel papers, spell scrolls – to continue his one-man campaign. A character can agree to supply these resources by taking a Major Obligation to the Hare, in exchange for which Torishei will modify his stance on the agreement one step in the direction of the PC's choice.

Who Can You Trust – Torishei sees enemies anywhere and everywhere, and it is a fairly simple matter to fan the flames of his paranoia in a direction of a character's choice. A **Sincerity (Deceit) / Awareness** against his **Investigation (Interrogation) / Perception** can accomplish this, and the PC gains Free Raise in the process. If his paranoia is turned to the opposing faction, he adjusts his position in favor of the PC's faction by one step.

Gift – A Phoenix character who offers Torishei the annotated New Tao gains the benefits of two Void Points on the roll for which he or she chooses to use it.

Relevant Traits: **Etiquette / Awareness** 5k3, **Courtier / Awareness** 5k3, **Investigation (Interrogation, Search, Notice) / Perception** 7k4; Willpower 4; Clear Thinker, Driven, Fascination: Maho

Gambits: On the evening of the second day, Menechan offers the aid of the Crane against Torishei's maho tsukai foes.

On the evening of the fifth day, Saruko turns Torishei's paranoia against the Crane.

Toku Choroihime, Monkey Clan

Bayushi Courtier 3, Glory 3.4, Status 4.0, Honor 2.7 (4.7)

Description: Choroihime is a wide-eyed, seemingly innocent woman with a carefully cultivated air of harmlessness and naiveté. She is quite attractive, though it more an air of cuteness than sensuality, and her court kimono are entirely respectable, if slightly out of fashion. She giggles.

Position: Choroihime sees little of true advantage in the trade agreement, and thinks supporting the Monkey's Scorpion allies has more long-term value. She is Moderately Opposed to the agreement.

Information: Court Gossip: (**Courtier [Gossip] / Awareness**):

- TN 15: Choroihime is one of the most effective courtiers to have come out of her new Minor Clan
- TN 20: Despite having trained with the Scorpion, Choroihime has a reputation for forthright directness and susceptibility to influence.
- TN 25: Perhaps because she appears so non-threatening, Choroihime has a wide network of allies in several courts.
- TN 30: Some whisper that she is actually far more clever than she appears, as many of her seemingly accidental political moves have had substantial gains for herself and her Clan.

Military Knowledge (Battle / Intelligence):

- TN 20: The Monkey Clan have been attempting to strengthen their ties to the Toturi Dynasty through their history with Toturi's Army
- TN 25: The Wolf Legion, the last remains of the ronin organization that was once Toturi's Army, has reorganized itself under the leadership of the ronin Saigorei, and has been used by Toturi as a somewhat less official "private army" for intervening in military matters that are unsuitable for the Imperial Legions.
- TN 30: The Monkey are trying to recruit Wolf Legion samurai into the Monkey, in a move designed to strengthen the Monkey's military might and political power together.

Access: Simple Request – A character can arrange a meeting with Choroihime by succeeding at an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll, TN 30.

Ronin Contacts – The Monkey's history with the ronin of Toturi's Army means they are more closely tied with the ronin community than any other Minor Clan. A **Lore: Underworld / Awareness** roll, TN 25, will attract Choroihime's attention.

Possible Leverage: Simple Persuasion – Choroihime's stance on the agreement can be modified by succeeding on a **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** roll, TN 35.

Confide in Me – When the first PC meets with Choroihime, she will use her Rank 3 Bayushi Courtier School Technique, **Secrets are Birthmarks**, on the character. If the PC has at least one Social or Mental Disadvantage and she wins the contested roll, she gives that PC a Major Obligation to her through blackmail, but then volunteers to "trade" the information for shifting her stance one step in favor of the PC's faction (she plays it off as "you have trusted me with this information, I will repay your trust").

Information Gathering – Any character who has hit a TN 40 on an Information Gathering roll against another representative can share that information with her. She reciprocates by adjusting her position on the agreement one step in a direction that the PC requests.

Imperial Entanglements – The Toku want to essentially take over the Wolf Legion, and though arranging that is beyond the power of any but the Emperor, it is possible to arrange for incentives for the ronin of the Legion to join the Monkey Clan, giving the Monkey increased influence over the force. Completing these arrangements can be done by expending three Favors from any Great Clans or Great Clan families, or by burning Allies with a combined Influence of at least 6. Once this occurs, Choroihime will adjust her stance one step in the direction that the PC chooses.

Relevant Traits: **Etiquette (Bureaucracy, Courtesy) / Awareness** 8k4, **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** 8k4, **Sincerity (Deceit) / Awareness** 8k4; Willpower 3; Benten's Blessing, Perceived Honor
Gambits: On the evening of the third day, Menechan puts incentives into place to assist with recruitment from the Wolf Legion.

On the evening of the fourth day, Saruko offers information on Masamune to Choroihime.

Suzume Nizou, Sparrow Clan

Doji Courtier 2, Glory 2.6, Status 3.8, Honor 6.2

Description: Nizou is tall and lean, with somewhat sunken cheeks and a beak-like nose. His head is completely shaven, and his kimono is only barely of acceptable quality to be seen in public, let alone at a court function. He tends to tilt his head back just enough to look down his nose at people, and he is generally considers himself to be inherently morally superior to those around him, thanks to his asceticism and philosophical studies.

Note: Nizou's instinctive dislike of physical differences means that Access and Persuasion rolls against him suffer a +15 TN penalty when made by characters with unusual, visible physical Advantages or Disadvantages, including (but not limited to) Large, One Arm, One Eye, Bad Fortune (Evil Eye), Disturbing Countenance, and Blind. Small does not bother him, however.

Position: The Suzume are always in need of additional food, and the trade agreement seems likely to guarantee that for some time. Nizou is Moderately Supportive.

Information: Court Gossip (**Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness**):

- TN 15: Nizou is not a well-known courtier, though what little reputation he has developed is that he is effective but not well-liked. He is a known ascetic who projects an air of extreme piety.
- TN 20: Nizou tends to use his spirituality as a social defense, positioning himself in such a way as to leave his attackers apparently criticizing the Tao.
- TN 25: Nizou's mother, Suzume Tayami, was once a renowned courtier as well, but she abruptly disappeared from the court scene not long after Nizou's gempukku.
- TN 30: It is rumored that Tayami still lives in Nizou's house, sending letters to her contacts, but is never seen in public.

Medical Gossip (**Medicine [Disease] / Awareness**):

- TN 20: Nizou uses his stipend as a diplomat to fund herbalists who research treatments of disease.
- TN 30: In particular, he seems to be searching for a cure for leprosy.

Personal Interaction (**Investigation [Interrogation] / Awareness**; can only make this roll when a PC is directly interacting with him):

- TN 20: Nizou is very sensitive to personal appearance, in particular personal deformity.
- TN 30: His hatred of deformity is in serious conflict with his otherwise deeply-rooted disdain for the trappings of the material realm. This conflict would be very painful for him realize.

Economic Knowledge (**Commerce or Lore: Sparrow Clan / Intelligence**):

- TN 10: The Sparrow Clan are one of the poorest Clans in the Empire, inhabiting some of the least arable territory in Rokugan. They are constantly in need of food imported from other Clans.

Access: Simple Request – A character can speak with Nizou by making an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll, TN 30.

Medicine Lore – Nizou is searching for a cure for his mother's leprosy, and while such cures are only available through incredibly potent shugenja prayers or the intervention of kami or Fortunes, he continues his efforts regardless. A character who conveys an impression of medical skill through a **Medicine (Herbalism) / Awareness** roll, TN 30, will attract the attention of Nizou.

Possible Leverage: Simple Persuasion – Nizou's stance on the agreement can be modified by succeeding on a **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** roll, TN 35.

Cure for Relative – Though a cure for leprosy does not truly exist in the known realm of herbal treatments, there are rumors of certain rare herbs and secret acupuncture techniques that can cure it. Developing one of these "mystical and secret" – and almost certainly ineffective – treatments requires a successful roll of **Medicine (Herbalism or Disease) / Intelligence or Sincerity (Deceit) / Awareness** (with the accompanying honor loss), TN 40. Giving Nizou this cure is sufficient to adjust his attitude toward the agreement one step in the direction of the PC's choice.

Food for the Sparrow – The Sparrow Clan is in continual need of food supplies, and that is the strongest draw the Clan has toward the trade agreement. If a PC chooses to try to arrange for rice shipments to the Sparrow, he or she may do by expending 10 koku immediately, and permanently reducing his or her outfit by 2 koku going forward. (If the cost is paid by multiple characters, the reduction may be similarly divided as the characters see fit.) Nizou appreciates the gesture, and thus responds by shifting his position on the agreement one step in the direction of the PC's choice.

Cut Him Down – Nizou's self-image is strongly tied to his sense of self-righteousness, but his revulsion at physical deformity undermines this self-image. A character who realizes this can make a Contested **Intimidate (Control) / Awareness** roll against Nizou's **Etiquette (Courtesy) / Willpower** roll to break his self-image and point out his hypocrisy; if the character wins, his moment of weakness allows the PC to persuade him to change his viewpoint on the agreement by one step.

Gift – A Dragon character who offers to appoint a monk advisor to the Sparrow gains the benefits of two Void Points on the roll for which he or she chooses to use it.

Relevant Traits: **Etiquette (Bureaucracy, Courtesy) / Awareness 7k4** (plus Free Raise), **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness 8k4** (plus Free Raise), **Sincerity (Honesty) / Awareness 6k4, Etiquette (Bureaucracy, Courtesy) / Willpower 5k2** (plus Free Raise); Willpower 2; Ascetic, Insensitive

Gambits: On the evening of the first day, Saruko offers food supplies to the Sparrow.

On the evening of the fourth day, Menechan finds a “cure” for leprosy and offers it to Nizou.

Kasuga Senriko, Tortoise Clan

Kasuga Smuggler 2, Glory 2.7, Status 3.7, Honor 0.9

Description: Senriko is an attractive woman with unusually dark skin, the result of many days spent under the sun on the open sea. She wears the finest quality kimono available, but wears her hair in a peculiar style, a tight bun surrounded by short curls that frame her face. She is very direct in her speech and spends more time looking people in the eye than most Rokugani feel comfortable with.

Position: The trade agreement offers a great deal of potential wealth to the Tortoise, making Senriko Moderately Supportive of it.

Information: Court Gossip (**Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness**):

- TN 15: Senriko is a skilled courtier, but is not as well known in the courts as she might be, as she spends nearly half a year outside Rokugan, trading with gaijin.
- TN 20: Senriko is an extremely wealthy merchant patron, with interests in several Rokugani cities as well as her trading in foreign ports.
- TN 25: She collects gaijin books in particular, though she reportedly does not read several of the languages that she has collected books in
- TN 30: She has been whispered to have picked up some unusual gaijin beliefs, including the idea that there are no fundamental differences between peasants and samurai, and that people would be better off if they were allowed to choose their own leaders rather than following the Celestial Order. She generally does not discuss these beliefs in public, of course.

Economic Rumors (**Commerce or Lore: Underworld / Awareness**):

- TN 20: Senriko's loyalties are solely to her purse.
- TN 30: She has frequently allowed herself to be bribed by other merchants who wish exclusive access to her trade goods.

Access: Simple Request – A character can meet with Senriko by making an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll, TN 30.

Gaijin Expert – With a **Lore: Gaijin / Awareness** roll, TN 25, or a **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll, TN 35, the character can build for himself or herself a reputation at the gathering as an expert on gaijin culture. (A character making the Courtier roll gains a Free Raise if they speak or read any gaijin language.) Success intrigues Senriko enough to gain access to her.

Friend of the Peasantry – By making a **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll, TN 30, a character can persuade the gathering that he or she is a friend of the peasants and might therefore be sympathetic to Senriko's democratic ideals. The character gains a Free Raise if they are a Hero of the People, a Paragon of

Compassion, or carries Ebisu's Blessing (these Free Raises are cumulative). Success allows the PC to meet with Senriko.

Possible Leverage: Simple Persuasion – Senriko's stance on the agreement can be modified by succeeding on a **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** roll, TN 35.

Bribery – Senriko's position on the agreement is negotiable; negotiable, specifically, for the price of 15 koku. While a Contested **Commerce / Awareness** roll against her can reduce this amount by 1 koku for every 5 points by which the PC beats her roll, the price goes up by 1 koku for every 5 points by which Senriko beats the PC's roll. If the PC pays the bribe, she shifts her position one step in the direction that the PC specifies. Offering the bribe costs the PC Honor points equal to his or her Honor Rank minus 2.

Translate Book – Senriko reads several foreign languages, but not all that well. A PC who translates one of her books, through having the ability to read Senpet, Thrane or Ivory Kingdoms, may persuade her to shift her position one step. If the PC wishes to attempt a translation without speaking the language, he or she may attempt a **Calligraphy / Intelligence** roll, TN 40, treating it as an attempt to decipher a code.

Democratic Ideals – If a PC wishes to impress Senriko with a show of solidarity with her gaijin belief about self-rule and equality, he or she may make a **Courtier (Rhetoric) / Awareness** roll, TN 35, to offer a public defense of the topic. Making such a speech costs the PC a number of points of Honor equal to twice their Honor Rank, as well as half a Rank of Glory. Succeeding on the roll impresses Senriko enough to adjust her stance on the agreement by one step in a direction chosen by the character.

Gift – A Mantis character who offers the *Song of Thunder* to Senriko gains the benefits of two Void Points on the roll for which he or she chooses to use it.

Relevant Traits: **Etiquette / Awareness** 6k4, **Courtier / Awareness** 6k4, **Sincerity (Deceit) / Awareness** 7k4, **Commerce / Awareness** 8k4; Willpower 3; Wealthy, Greedy, Fascination: Gaijin

Gambits: On the evening of the second day, Saruko bribes her.

On the evening of the fifth day, Menechan translates several of her books.

GM Cheat Sheet

	Starting Position	Day One	Day Two	Day Three	Day Four	Day Five
Ichiro Rinko	Strongly Supportive					
Tonbo Masamune	Moderately Opposed					
Kitsune Shu-Shen	Strongly Opposed					
Usagi Torishei	Moderately Opposed					
Toku Choroihime	Moderately Opposed					
Suzume Nizou	Moderately Supportive					
Kasuga Senriko	Moderately Supportive					

Ichiro Rinko	Tactic:	Marriage Proposal	Seduction	Hiring Mercenaries
	Used By:			
Tonbo Masamune	Tactic:	Craft Training	Blackmail	Poetry
	Used By:			
Kitsune Shu-Shen	Tactic:	Overdue Apology	The Black Scrolls	Simple Deceit
	Used By:			
Usagi Torishei	Tactic:	Lure of the Forbidden	Aid in the Hunt	Who Can You Trust?
	Used By:			
Toku Choroihime	Tactic:	Confide in Me	Information Gathering	Imperial Entanglements
	Used By:			
Suzume Nizou	Tactic:	Cure for Relative	Food for the Sparrow	Cut Him Down
	Used By:			
Kasuga Senriko	Tactic:	Bribery	Translate Book	Democratic Ideals
	Used By:			