

Celestial Unrest

by Jim Spell and Jared DeRemer

**A Low-Rank Adventure for
Heroes of Rokugan: Champions of the Ivory Throne**

Month of the Horse, 1339 (early summer)

**Module Number: CIT06
Release Date: 03/17/2017**

Investigation, intrigue, combat

A hotter-than-typical summer heat has put the city of Balishnimpur on the edge of a knife. Just one push in the wrong direction...

LEGEND OF THE FIVE RINGS is a registered trademark of Fantasy Flight Games. Scenario detail copyright 2017 by the author and Fantasy Flight Games. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. This scenario is intended for tournament use only and may not be reproduced without permission.

This module is written for the Legends of the Five Rings Roleplaying Game Fourth Edition, originally published by Alderac Entertainment Group.

Please refer to the *Heroes of Rokugan 4: Champions of the Ivory Throne Campaign Primer* for information on how to run official campaign modules. In addition to the basic setting information and house rules for this campaign, it details the various administrative necessities of the living campaign. GM reporting is crucial to players' ability to engage with the setting and to increase their characters' influence.

Adventure Background and Summary

The massive city of Balishnimpur is in a state of unrest. The carefully-held détente between the Rokugani and Invindi residents, held together for the last two hundred years by a loose agreement toward peaceful cohabitation, is threatening to unwind in the worst of ways due to extreme summer heat and the actions of an uncaring samurai populace. The PCs will have time to explore the city some, but will soon be invited to speak to the head abbot at the Temple of Ebisu, the Fortune of Honest Work, about a "small matter." Of course, these things are never small.

The Fortune of Honest Work is very angry, and it will be up to the PCs to determine why. Careful search shows that one of the monks has stolen money from the temple and gambled it away- both things that Ebisu hates. The PCs must track down the monk in a way acceptable to the enraged Fortune, in a way that helps him learn his lesson and return to the fold, even if he did these things with good intentions.

However, such things are not as easy or as straightforward as they appear. The monk has been spending time with a local gang of street thugs, led by an infamous bandit from the Forest Killers. The monk has been steadily influencing the gang of toughs, moving them toward helping the peasantry instead of being burdens upon society, but still: they are gangsters. Though not the target of their quest, this troublemaker does have a substantial bounty on his head, due to his possession of incriminating information regarding both the Lion and Crane-information that could spread the fires of war throughout the Empire.

There is the potential for dangerous conflict with the gang in their lair, this can also be resolved in a wholly peaceful manner.

Upkeep

The events of the modules are certainly of primary importance in the lives of the characters, but many of them will have been working on a variety of tasks in the times between modules. At the beginning of the module, several things will need to take place (though some are obviously dependent on the actual needs of the PCs at the table).

Character Notes

While checking the character sheets to get a feel for the table, look for the following advantages and disadvantages:

- Hero of the People
- Seven Fortune's Blessing (notably Ebisu)
- Wealthy
- Infamy
- Seven Fortune's Curse (notably Ebisu)
- Greedy
- Compulsion: Gambling

News from the Empire

While the GM is looking over sheets, it's a good time to distribute the first player handout of most modules. The News of the Empire is an overview of the recent events of the Empire in a fashion that shares the ongoing story with the playerbase without requiring a Skill Roll or interfering with the actual plot of the module. Any plot-relevant Rumors will belong in the appropriate section of the module to be learned during play.

Inactivity

Time passes, and though the PCs' deeds will earn them a reputation, the Empire is a large place and lasting fame is a long-term goal not easy to achieve. The Inactivity Loss for Glory for this module is **-1** Glory. This cannot reduce a PC's Glory Rank to less than their Insight Rank, and the Fame Advantage increases their Insight Rank by one for these purposes.

Taint Progression

If a PC possesses the Shadowlands Taint, they will need to roll at the beginning of the module to see how much it has grown over the intervening time since the last module. The TN of this raw **Earth Roll** will vary depending on the timeframe. If a character is growing close to being Lost (Shadowlands Taint Rank 4.5+), it is recommended that the player have another PC ready to replace them.

Crafting

The Crafting rules are detailed in the Campaign Primer, based largely on the Crafting rules in the core book (page 258). Unless explicitly indicated otherwise, a PC may only make one Crafting Roll per module, and any Void Points or other character resources (spell slots, Luck, etc) spent on the roll do not refresh for the duration of the module. Any successful roll is noted on the provided sheet with the description.

Preparation Techniques

Techniques like the Agasha Shugenja or Yogo Wards do not quite fall under Crafting, but still can benefit from pre-planning and the Upkeep is a good opportunity. However, unlike Crafting, this is not the only time these Techniques may be used during a module – this is just a chance for the GM to remind the players and get it out of the way.

Ronin Survival

Life is difficult for ronin in the Empire at the best of times. PC ronin are no exception to this. At the start of the module, a PC ronin must roll **Hunting (Survival) / Stamina** at a TN determined by the module. (Difficulties should range from 5-30, possibly higher for High Rank modules). Failure on this roll gives the ronin the Permanent Wound Disadvantage for the duration of the module. Koku may be spent on this roll to gain a Free Raise for every koku spent before the roll is made, or one Free Raise for every two koku spent after the roll is made.

Experience Expenditure

Finally, the players should be given one last chance to spend any experience they wish before the module begins. Unless the module specifically allows it, experience may not be spent during the adventure.

Introduction

The PCs find themselves in the distant city of Balishnimpur, having arrived six months earlier (during Crossing the Forbidden Sea), staying around the city as their clan, status, wealth, and other factors dictate.

Those with Rank 2 or Status 2 (or higher) are in the Noble's District, either at their clan's embassy, as a guest at a private estate, or at a well-appointed inn facing the cool ocean breeze, high above the expansive city itself, eating a lovely and refreshing breakfast, watching a picturesque sunrise.

Lower-ranked PCs are housed in smaller inns in the Merchant's district. While the PCs are treated fairly nicely because of their duty effectively being on direct orders of the Emperor, there simply is not enough room at the embassy to house them with the normal staff that has standard duties within the city. They must deal with the overcrowding in the merchant's district in particular- heimen, ji-samurai, and the occasional (re: very rare) gaijin trying their best not to bump elbows.

It is very, very early in the morning and the sun has just begun to arise, but already the summer weather promises to be... hot. Not a dry heat either, but a thick and swampy morass; grimy, dirty, and muggy in ways that even the daily afternoon rain cannot cleanse, hinting at the monsoons to come. The only thing more oppressive than the clinging heat is the omnipresent droning of cicadas.

Despite this, the bustling semi-foreign port never stops moving.

Part One: Things to do and see in Balishnimpur

The PCs are free to explore the city for the moment, doing whatever they wish to do as to best serve their clans. There are markets, temples and gardens, in both Invindi and Rokugani fashion all throughout the city for them to explore. The most notable are listed here but this is far from extensive due to the size of the city. The GM should feel free to ad-lib with other details, but not get too sidetracked.

Rumors

Courtier / Awareness (Gossip): Due to the population size, the PC must specify to whom they are speaking.

Samurai and monk gossip:

- **5** - There was a minor fire about a month ago. In more pleasant news, the summer's joy orchids at the Temple of Inari are in bloom.
- **10** - The summer heat has lead a number of people to collapse due to dehydration; inevitably there are a number of deaths of traditionally-minded samurai who insist upon wearing heavy silken kimono instead of the local cotton yukata.

- **15** - Some whisper about a hidden temple in Balishnimpur, operated by the ise zumi of the Dragon clan, as a place for those blessed by the Moon without having to make the impossibly dangerous trip back to the High House of Light on their own. “The Climb” to get there is supposedly a scavenger hunt through the city devised by the Kitsuki, but so far, all attempts to pursue it have begun and ended at a Dragon-run tea house in the temple district.

Scorpion-only: “The Climb” is a nothing but clever marketing campaign by the tea-shop owner selling trinkets to remind samurai of home.

Dragon-only: “The Climb” is certainly real and so far has helped about a dozen Invindi-born ise-zumi join the clan in the last ten years (who were safely and privately transported back to the Dragon provinces). It is unknown how many moon-touched samurai were lost before its development (typically, they would run north into the tainted swamps of the Southern Shadowlands). The temple at the end of the route is indeed hidden, even from other members of the Dragon, to maintain its effectiveness.

- **20** – Courtiers (from a variety of clans) are making vindictive jokes about a fat, awkward ronin who visited the local dance dojo about two weeks ago. They ran him off before he could offend Doji Sakura-sensei with his stench.

PCs who wish to have been a part of that group may do so, and gain one point of Glory for the action. Write down who chooses this- it will be important later.

- **25** - The Crane and the Lion both have competing bounties for a member of the Forest Killers rumored to be in the city. The Mantis and Scorpion are searching for this person of interest as well...

Peasant and merchant gossip:

- **5** - The recent fire was quite bad, leaving many homeless and destitute. Help from the governing samurai has been... sparse.

- **10** - There are many unemployed craftsmen looking for work in the market district, edging in on the spaces for the existing merchants.
- **15** - Tensions in the city are high, especially between the local Invindi residents and the samurai who lord over them. Rumors of revolt circulate, but often with conflicting details.
- **20** - The Temple of Ebisu monks have been out rebuilding the city, working tirelessly to help the peasantry. They’re easy to spot because they wear short orange yukata, which are easier to work in than traditional robes.
- **25** - Petty crime has increased due to there simply not being enough magistrates to patrol the entire city, and there have been many territorial battles between the local yakuza.
- **30** - A local yakuza gang was out the fighting the fires and are now working to help the local heimin regain their feet (especially where the local samurai have not even bothered). This has made them quite popular.

Underworld and magistrate gossip:

PCs must have at least one rank in Lore: Underworld to make this **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll (Sage does not count). Free Raises may be purchased with koku.

“You didn’t hear it from me, but...”

- **10**- The recent fire was really bad, damaging a large section of the city and leaving many homeless and destitute, causing petty crime to increase. The magistrates are currently overworked and understaffed, and the local gangs have been on edge, attempting to keep their turf “safe.”
- **15**- Food prices have been steadily going up, which many blame on samurai and merchant hoarding. Many grain storage warehouses have been raided, exacerbating the problem (though no one knows by whom).
- **20**- There was a big yakuza brawl over in the slums about a week ago, which left almost a

dozen dead. This led to a strong rise in influence for the *Crimson Asuras* gang.

PC speaks Invindi will know that “Asura” are supernatural spirits similar to Oni or Kami.

The most interesting parts of the city at this time of day are the Temple District, the Nobles District, and the Market. Other districts not only smell terrible and are oppressively hot, but vibe of the districts feel downright hostile toward any samurai.

Temple District

Though there are temples and shrines throughout the city, the great majority of them are located in the Temple District, on the western side between the Inner City and the floodwalls, and between the peasant district known as Steeltown and the Noble’s district.

PCs, especially obviously wealthy ones, will encounter homeless beggars, gently and respectfully pleading for scraps and spare change.

The Temple of Ebisu

The Temple of Ebisu is currently closed for renovations. Please come back tomorrow.

Investigation (Notice) / Perception:

- **10** - There are currently no signs of construction materials to explain renovations, and there are no workers coming or going. The doors are locked.
- **15** - Chanting emanates from within the main hall, but with no discernable details due to the background noise of the city.

The Hanging Gardens of Inari

The Hanging Gardens of Inari is one of the largest temples in the district, comprised of ancient stone terraces, colonnades, and pools surrounded by lush trees, with each ring rising above the other around the center temple. The vegetation here is dense and lush as water spills from one terrace to the next, collecting in verdant, shimmering pools. The crash of waterfalls and the tittering of insects among the trees and flowers all but drown away the noise of the city.

Engineering / Intelligence TN10: The many koi ponds in the temple appear retrofitted from pre-

existing structures: this was once a colossal bathhouse with sweeping views of the ocean.

Lore: Invindi / Intelligence TN10 (May be substituted for Lore: History at +5 TN): The Fortune of Rice has not always made its home here, but came to rest after the invasion 200 years ago. Traditionalist Ivindi are still bitter over this hostile takeover (this was once a temple of Ganesh).

PCs who wish to pick flowers (for ikebana, gifts, etc.) may do so with an **Artisan: Gardening / Intelligence** roll TN10. With a small donation, the PCs may also take rare seeds home to cultivate on their own, or for a larger donation (2+ koku), take a delicately potted exotic rainforest violet of their choice (with care instructions, of course).

On one of the middle terraces, the PCs have the opportunity to witness a robust debate between a Brahmin guru (Esu) and a tattooed monk (Togashi Kano)- what should be a polite discussion about reincarnation is about to turn ugly. A **Lore: Theology / Intelligence** roll TN 15 will let the PC know that they are both wrong (fish are not on the celestial wheel at all and are thus not reincarnated). However, expressing this requires an **Etiquette (Sincerity) / Awareness** roll TN 20 (-5TN penalties for Brash, Contrary, etc., +5 bonus for Clear Thinker, Balanced, etc.). Failure means the PC is thrown over the terrace edge and into the koi pond below (these NPCs each roll 10k5e on their grapple rolls if the PC insists upon dice, and they will work together to do so).

If this happens, one of the Inari monks will shoo the troublemakers (including the PC) out, threatening to call the magistrates on them and have them arrested for disrupting the harmony of the temple. This is a **G-3 Glory** loss to start, but can escalate if the PC gets belligerent.

Success means the PC diffuses the argumentative holy men, who do indeed tone it down after blaming their sour moods on the heat, inviting the PC to a small nearby shop, the Mountain Retreat, for more polite philosophy discussions and a glass of lightly sweetened iced tea, where they will be seated on an upper balcony to enjoy a cool ocean breeze. The teahouse owner, Tonbo Fujiko, cools the tea by calming the fire spirits in the beverage. Neither she nor Kano will admit to knowing anything of “the climb” if asked (though she will give a knowing wink to Dragon PCs), but with an **Investigation / Void** roll TN 15, the PC to spot a mountain-themed mural on a distant alley wall; there is a long trail of similar

clues, but after about an hour the PC will find themselves once again at the Mountain Retreat.

GM note: do not let the PCs become too invested in this scene- it has the potential to become a red herring to the main storyline. Fujiko will boot them from the store if they get pushy.

Nobles District

The Nobles District is where those of means call home: the roads are wide and spacious, shaded by tall trees and cooled by gentle ocean breezes. The architecture is a curious blend of Invindi and Rokugani, but all are recognizable for their wealth and taste. Many of the clan embassies are located here as well, each in a style reflective of their clan's values. Though the residents are mostly Rokugani, there are some Kshatriya Invindi families here as well.

There are a number of tea houses, upscale vendors, and small theatres available in this district. Unlike the rest of the city there are no beggars, but there are street performers (all of whom have paperwork from the Magistrates, of course), as well as a few (respectably presentable and clean) Brotherhood monks (though no Invindi monks) out in the early day. Unlike the rest of the city, everything is orderly and proper here.

There are shops here that sell high-quality goods but the prices are 3-5x higher. "The House of Red Leaves" sells high-fashion (and thus quite revealing) summer court yukata are available for 3 koku and up (or for a Favor).

PCs with traditional (heavy) kimono will actually garner a lot of positive attention in this district. Not only will they receive complements on their dress, but they will be invited into every tea house they pass and offered cool drinks, and a light umbrella to shield them from the sun if they don't have one already. A **Medicine / Awareness** roll TN 10 will inform them that the shopkeepers and other residents aren't just being polite: they are actively trying to keep the traditionalist PC from dying due to heat exposure- not an uncommon problem in the heat.

There are wanted posters by both the Lion and the Crane for a fugitive named Ono-ichi (with a 100-koku reward), who is wanted for murder, banditry, theft, tax evasion, and resisting arrest.

Market/Artisan District

Unlike the elegant and controlled Noble's District, the Market and Artisan District is a cacophony of action. Vendors hawk their wares from shop displays of all types: canopied storefronts, ornate tents, wooden carts, even loose merchandise spread out over tattered rugs.

There are also a great deal of beggars and thieves in the market: a gang of dozen children (ages 5-7) will swarm whichever PC looks wealthiest, begging for change. An **Investigation (Notice) / Reflexes** roll vs **Sleight of Hand (Pickpocketing) / Agility** (4k2e) will determine if the PC's purse is stolen or not, and the children will scatter in every direction afterward regardless of success (making it impossible to catch them).

Curious PCs can find a great variety of pretty much anything here, from the traditional to the wildly gaijin (except for illegal substances like gunpowder, poisons, or slaves, of course). However, even a cursory glance will show that the prices for traditional goods are quite high: 2-3x the typical back in Rokugan, due to shipping costs. However, a **Commerce / Perception** roll TN 10 can allow the PCs to find similar items made from local resources for normal costs (loose cotton yukata instead of silk, paper made from pressed reeds instead of mulberry bark, etc.). One can find strange musical instruments (drums, large flutes, sitars, etc), curious trinkets, and even exotic woods and materials (enough for most artistic projects) with ease, but larger quantities are not available- the PCs must speak to the Mantis.

One notable vendor is Aarush, a filthy vendor with holy ivory netsuke carved in the shapes of elephants to glorify Ganesh (A *gaijin* Fortune of Wisdom) for sale, spread out on a tattered blanket. He speaks *extremely* limited Rokugani and mostly communicates in hand gestures, but those who speak Invindi will discover that he is an ascetic Brahmin acolyte, and the funds of the sales are helping to rebuild a remote village near his temple, about 50 miles away. These cost 3 koku, though more is appreciated.

PCs may roll **Lore: Invindi / Intelligence** TN 10 to know that Sacred Ivory has properties similar to jade in regard to Shadow corruption.

PCs may hire a rickshaw driver for 2 zeni per trip or 1 koku for the day.

There are also wanted posters for Ono-ichi's capture on announcement boards, but the 120-koku rewards are offered alternatingly from the Mantis and the Scorpion.

Part Two: Investigating the Temple

While the PCs eat a light brunch after completing their morning errands, a note finds its way to them. The letter is a very polite summons to the Temple of Ebisu, signed by the abbot, Cho.

It is mid-morning, and as you exit into the streets you are greeted by a blast of hot, thick air, one which causes sweat to immediately bead on your forehead. There is not a cloud in the sky and the sun is bearing down upon the ground with vigor. The streets toward the temple district are functionally deserted, and the few peasants present are resting under the shade, fanning themselves with straw hats for lack of a breeze.

From the rear entrance to the temple, you can hear soft chanting emanating from within, as the elderly abbot exits and closes the door behind him. With a deep bow, he speaks: "Thank you for coming so quickly, Samurai-samas. I am Cho, the abbot. I have a pressing matter and am in desperate need of help. It... forgive me, I am at a loss for words, so I suppose I should just show you. Please, this way..."

Even a passing examination shows the abbot is clearly distraught about something important, his hands visibly shaking as he opens the door.

The room inside, an austere space attached to the kitchen, is full of collapsed, grief-stricken monks. Some stare helplessly at the floor, some openly and unabashedly weeping, all in various states of utter despair.

Cho can only look at the ground in front of him as he quickly leads you to the main hall. The sounds of sobbing soon give way to fervent chants.

"Soft Hearted" and "Paragon of Compassion" PCs in the presence of the sobbing monks must make a **Raw Willpower** roll TN 10, lest their own On crack, creating a D5 Honor loss.

The inside of the main space is dark and heavy with incense. Anemic candles illuminate parts of the floor while thin beams of light peek through the shuttered

windows. A dozen monks sit facing the main altar, chanting fervently. Cho, his head down in shame and remorse, leads you to the center of the room before falling to his knees in supplication, his own chest heaving.

The PCs will have to create some sort of light (invocation of the spirits, holding up a candle or lantern, etc.) to get a better look. Once the room is better illuminated, the PCs will see the great golden statue of Ebisu...

Looking up, you meet the eyes of a **FURIOUS** Kami, pointing at you accusingly with a great golden finger.

Lore: Theology / Intelligence TN 10 will inform them that Ebisu is the Fortune of Honest Labor, and his traditional depictions are jovial, gentle, and content. However, a TN 15 will inform the PCs that every Fortune has a wrathful aspect... and this is his.

Each PC with "Seven Fortune's Curse" or "Greedy" will see the deity *looking directly at them* with **absolute hatred**, triggering a **Fear 3** roll (**Fear 4** if they are a Disbeliever). Any PC who wishes to test this by moving around will see that the great golden statue is absolutely still and immobile... until the PC blinks, after which the statue will be glaring at them once again (triggering a **Fear 5** roll; those continuing to taunt the Fortune gain a rank in "Unlucky" for their efforts: Ebisu will find some ironic way to smite them for their insolence). PCs who fail this roll feel the giant, spacious hall suddenly feel cramped and claustrophobic, forcing them blindly out into the back room with the other monks. PCs who roll 10 or less gain "Phobia: Statues of the Kami" as their orderly world comes crumbling down...

PCs with "Seven Fortune's Blessing" will see him as less angry, but just very, very disappointed.

PCs *not* supplicating themselves and immediately offering prayer to the enraged Kami lose **DO Honor**. If they do not know the proper prayers (ie have no ranks in Lore: Theology), a nearby monk will guide them through the rituals.

An **Investigation (Notice) / Awareness** roll TN 10 will show the PC that in the alcoves along the walls of the temple, the statues of the Bodhisatva's and

revered ancestors of the temple have all turned away in shame.

After collecting himself, Cho hurriedly ushers the PCs to his office. "The statues were found this morning. Between this and the heat outside, I can only surmise that the Fortune is not happy with our worship; we have redoubled our efforts to regain his favor, but... we are at a loss here. Please, samurai-samas, I ask that you assist in this matter. The temple is yours to look around; speak with the monks here. Please help us find what is wrong."

Cho does not have more information (none of them are thinking clearly), but he and the others are very eager to assist the PCs in their search- Cho will suggest they start within the temple and will have someone bring tea.

If asked why he brought in outsiders:

"My brothers and sisters are in no state for clear thought. We need help, and Toritaka Tochigare suggested we speak to you."

There are a number of opportunities and paths for the PCs to investigate.

Interrogating the Monks

Interrogating the monks is a fairly simple matter: the monks *who are present* are very quick to admit their sins, which will run the range of incredibly mundane: mumbling their way through their prayers, skipping or half-assing chores, pocketing a few zeni for sweets, oversleeping, and so on. They will *insist* upon punishment, which may cause Glory loss issues for Softhearted PCs (around LO as a baseline). Cho will handle the details of that (though he himself is not wholly innocent either- he drinks on occasion).

The major issue with interrogation is that not all the monks are present: three are currently out working among the peasantry: Ansha, Daiko, and San. If the PCs don't ask about this, another monk will suggest it.

An **Investigation (Interrogation) / Awareness** roll TN 15 will allow the PCs to piece together that Daiko is a temple matriarch out teaching basket-weaving classes by the river; Ansha helps peasants and craftspeople find jobs around town; and San... well,

they do not know where San is. A **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll TN 15 will point to him being a good kid, but TN 20 will inform the PC that though young, San is a reformed gangster.

Investigation

There are three areas for the PCs to investigate: Cho's office, the main room, and the cloisters- dorms for the monks and nuns.

Cho's office

Cho's office is a small, loosely-organized space, decorated by a simple desk and a scroll, lit by a small north-facing window. An **Investigation / Perception** roll TN 15 will find a small safe behind the sutra scroll and Cho's ledger (though he will also provide these if asked). The safe is not locked and has a surprisingly light purse in it (about 35 koku, when there should be significantly more).

While reading the ledger, a **Commerce / Intelligence** roll TN 15 will show that the money from donations is spent... loosely. There seems to be a modest amount unaccounted for each month. The abbot will sheepishly admit that he does not keep the best records (he does not run a tight ship here). He also will admit that the monks here are free to take what they need, as long as they tell him and it goes towards something "worthy of Ebisu." He will also admit that he does not actually have a key for the safe. It's just money, after all.

However, according to the books, 350 koku are currently missing.

The Main Hall

Investigating the Main Hall must be conducted under the baleful eye of Ebisu and amidst the heavy incense, which adds a +10 TN penalty to all non-prayer rolls by those who do not have "Seven Fortune's Blessing."

An **Investigation / Perception** roll TN 10 will show the PC that the donation box has scratches on the keyhole, but that the lock is functional. If asked, Cho will laugh- "*well whoever it was, those lazy bums will have to work harder for their reward!*" There is about 8 koku worth of small coins inside- not out of the ordinary.

PCs speaking to the Kami in the main room will not find whatever kami they attempt to reach, but one of the statues on the sides will address them with a polite cough. A small plaque on the alcove describes the spirit as Bodhisattva O-han, who wrote the “Sutra for Oxen” in the 4th century. A **Lore: Theology (Fortunes) / Intelligence** roll TN 15 will inform the PC that this is a simply-written and straight-forward work praising the sublime and peaceful joys of diligent farm work.

“Ah, shugenja-sama. Good day. Lord Ebisu-dono is... unavailable right now, but perhaps I may help?”

Although O-han is not a kami per se, the same rules apply for Communing with him (ie raises are required). O-han does know why Ebisu is upset, but he will not say (“*If I told you, you wouldn’t have to work for it!*”); however, he will explain that Ebisu’s wrath was triggered by one of the monks. If raises for clarity are made, this should be communicated as Ebisu’s disappointment stemming from one of his favored followers straying from the path of righteous and honest work.

The Cloisters

An **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** roll will allow the PCs to find various clues in the Cloisters:

- **10-** One of the nuns (Daiko) has a scandalously illustrated pillow book hidden among some sutras: “*The Bath House Duelist vol. 6*”, a story about Umehime (the “Plum” Princess) of the Swallow Clan, who defeats her enemies using her school’s “offered hand” technique. In this particular episode, *The Stroke of the Sword*, she takes on a greedy merchant of the Tsu Clan and his band of grotesque pirates... in graphic detail.
- **15-** Ansha’s room has a ledger in it, with a list of names and amounts owed. This list contains pretty much all of the most prominent samurai and merchants in Balishnimpur.
- **20-** Ansha’s ledger shows that she has placed many (mostly young, female) servants into the estates of many high-ranking samurai within Balishnimpur, and that those samurai have paid her a great deal for this. There is also a fair amount of (recent) correspondence letters from the servants.
- **25-** In San’s room, in a secret compartment under the desk, is a pile of gambling receipts stamped with a red gaijin-oni face. Many of them are in

the negative- a quick tally puts it at about 150 koku owed. There are also a handful of affectionate letters from his sister, Seicho, who works as a geisha at The Lotus Leaf, under... trying conditions.

PCs possessing any ranks in **Lore: Invindi** or who speak Invindi, will know that the “gaijin oni” is an Asura.

A **Lore: Theology / Intelligence** roll TN 10 will inform the PC that Ebisu *detests* gambling as well as theft- neither are “honest work.”

If presented with this information, Cho will admit to knowing that Ansha keeps separate records, because she is just simply better at it than him and that her work placing servants is, as far as he can tell, on the level.

Cho will frown at the pillow book if it is presented and quietly put it away so that all involved can save Face, clearly embarrassed (Daiko is almost 80 years old and one of the matriarchs of the Temple).

As for San’s gambling receipts...

“San... was a young gangster we rescued from a life of crime, but he’s turned a new leaf. Do you think he’s in trouble? I’ll bet Daiko or Ansha know what’s going on...”

The other monks do not know where San is either, but will vouch that he’s “a good kid”, and that Daiko and Ansha often look after him.

This should be enough to put the PCs on the right track. If the PCs failed the rolls, a random monk can “remember” that they should probably go find Daiko or Ansha first, or Cho will suggest it.

Part Three: Finding the Monks

GM note: Much of the information is listed as either gossip rolls or bullet points, but those formats are interchangeable- if the PCs would rather roleplay than roll dice (or vice versa), let them control the format- as long as they can seamlessly get the information necessary to advance the story, it doesn’t matter.

Though the players will likely wish to search for San first, it is up to the GM to smoothly route them through the points listed below- very little gossip can be found about San specifically. For example: “In your search, you come across Daiko/Ansha/etc. Maybe they know something?”

The afternoon air is steamy and thick, setting everyone on edge. Most people are taking their repose, but there are still some out and the heat has made them very grouchy, to put it lightly. The overwhelming buzz of the cicadas still has not relented, but seems to have gotten somehow worse with the midday sun.

PCs with Brash, Contrary, etc. get +5 TN penalties to social rolls while out in the heat.

The PCs may choose to rest through the afternoon (with enough time to meditate if they choose), or they may push onward. Those out in the heat must make a **Raw Earth** roll TN 15 or take 2k2 damage from the oppressive sun (sunburn, sunstroke, etc., depending on the wounds suffered). Blood of Osano Wo, using a rickshaw instead of walking, taking proper precautions such as an umbrella, and drinking a lot of water can give a free raise on the roll, while traditional heavy kimono or armor cause -5 TN penalties.

The author assumes the PCs will not rest. If they do, some of the scene descriptions must be modified by the GM to maintain continuity. Resting also means that the peasants become surlier as the curse of Ebisu spreads through the city (+5-10 TN penalties on all social rolls, at GM discretion).

Daiko – Teaching Class

Following the clues given will lead the PCs to the northern waterfront, where Daiko is sitting under a tree, teaching young Invindi and Rokugani peasants to weave baskets from reeds. The PCs are invited to sit and participate, and Daiko will speak to them as long as they are polite.

The PCs may roll **Gossip (Courtier) / Awareness** to speak with Daiko and the young workers here.

- **10-** “The samurai have made the lives of Invindi peasants quite difficult, but they are able to scrounge a living together as best they can. In times like this, it seems like only the monks hold the city together.”

- **15** – “San? That little rascal has been supporting his older sister Seicho, who works at the Lotus Leaf geisha house. He wants to buy her contract and get her away from the lecherous owner, Bayushi Ako.”
- **20** – “Kuma, the big fella over at the *Dancing Bear Tavern*, is such a sweetheart. It’s a shame how those other samurai at the dance school treated him. He’s far more talented than they are anyway.”
- **25** – “That new gang in town, the *Crimson Asuras*, gave us a basket full of food this morning. Apparently they’re gonna rebuild some houses next week.”

If the PCs did not diffuse the fight between Esu and Togashi Kano: the students will be gossiping about it- it was *spectacular* but burned much of the Gardens (Kano taking the brunt of the blame for burning the flowers).

PCs bringing up Daiko’s pillowbook will lose **D4 Honor** as the young workers titter with embarrassed laughter (it’s a surprisingly popular series). Daiko maintains her *On*, because at 80 she is not ashamed of a damned thing anymore, and will tease the PC about their interest in the infamous series. The GM should feel free to ad lib titles and topics for Umehime’s misadventures, as long as those topics embarrass a great clan and the PC in question (e.g. “Stung from Behind”, “The Spearmaiden’s Winter Ride”, “The Geisha Tattoo”, etc.).

Ansha

An **Investigation (Search) / Awareness** roll TN 15 will find Ansha in *The Mountain Retreat*, enjoying a cool glass of tea while interviewing peasant laborers for a re-construction project in Steeltown. The peasants will be rather surly about the interruption, but buying a round of iced tea will cool their heads- 2 koku, total; not doing this creates a +5 TN penalty as Ansha is distracted. The more trustworthy the PC appears (a **Sincerity / Awareness** TN15, for example), the more likely she will share information.

Though well into her 60s, Ansha is still incredibly beautiful, even with the shaved head. She is an ex-Scorpion courtier (with the Loyalty tattoo on her wrist, though only Scorpion would recognize it for what it is) who works exclusively for her daughter, the Governess, keeping her finger on the pulse of the city. A **Lore: Heraldry / Intelligence** roll TN 25 (with a

Free Raise for Scorpion and Imperials) will allow the PC to recognize her as the Governess' retired mother. Though retired from Scorpion clan business, other courtiers pay good money to keep in her good graces due to her relation with the Governess, money she uses to keep the Temple running.

- *Of course* Ansha keeps separate records from Cho. He's terrible at bookkeeping. It's a blessing that the temple itself hasn't fallen apart already.
- *Of course* Ansha keeps in contact with the girls she places. She has to make sure they stay safe, after all. It keeps their masters honest.
- San is a good kid, even if he's rather gullible. He does his best to look after his sister, Seicho, who works as a geisha at the Lotus Leaf. Perhaps she knows where he is?
- San has been spending time with the *Crimson Asuras* gang, trying to convince them to give up their lawless ways. Bless his heart...

Lore: Underworld – The Fighting Pit

Through a variety of contacts, a **Lore: Underworld / Awareness** roll TN10 will allow a PC to gain entry to an unnamed *Asura*-controlled cockfighting ring near the docks, but it's mostly empty right now. Here they will hear further gossip about various things from the old-timers based on this roll (with koku for free raises, of course):

- **5** – “Them sam'rai hoard all of the good stuff and export the rest to Rokugan. It's a Horse an' Sparrow world, bud- they eat the grain, we're left pickin' through the shit. No you though, of course...”
- **10** – “The *Crimson Asuras* have gathered a lot of support from the heimin: delivering food to the needy, helping shops rebuild, put out fires, you know. They don't have a clan behind them though, which is odd, 'specially after their fight with the Scorpion's *White Lotus*.”
- **15** – “The *Asuras* front a tavern named the 'Dancing Bear' in the northern peasant district, just across the Bridge. Don't let the name of place fool you though... there ain't no bear. Just a big fat guy. Helluva dancer though.”
- **20** – “That Ono-ichi fella must have some kinda dirt on the Lion and Crane, because they have a high bounty on him. Prolly discovered someone's bastard kid or something.”
- **25** – “You should come back tomorra' night. I hear one of them Disciples of Thunder is gonna

throw down with a Berserker. That'll be a fight to see fer sure!”

If pressed for information, the Disciples of Thunder are a group of monks who worship Yoritomo, but the peasant doesn't know more than that; they're very strong and skilled fighters, if rather cruel to their opponents.

If the PCs did not diffuse the fight between Esu and Togashi Kano earlier in the day, the layabouts here will be gossiping about that battle, wishing they could have bet on it- it was *spectacular* but burned much of the Gardens' prize orchids (“that tattooed jackass done burnt up my grandma's favorite flowers. Why I'd love to give him a piece of my mind!”).

Magistrates – The Bureaucracy Route

Should the PCs feel inclined, they do have the option of inquiring with the local samurai in the Noble's District, such as when asking about the bounties posted around the city.

Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness TN 15 will grant the PCs audience with a magistrate of suitable rank, such as Ikoma Hitsuke or Bayushi Tonaka. A Free Raise can be given for PCs seeking audience with their own clan.

Asking about Ono-ichi's bounty will inform the PC that Ono-ichi is a wanted fugitive from the mainland; the Crane and Lion want him for murder, theft, banditry, and other related crimes, while the Mantis and Scorpion likely want to catch him to embarrass the Crane and Lion- if those clans want him that badly, he certainly has some valuable secrets. However, mentioning the *Crimson Asuras* will make the magistrate suspicious of the PC until a valid reason is given- normal samurai do not talk about underclass gangs.

- Shipments of resources were stolen from various warehouses, intended for the palace or export to Rokugan.
- The magistrates have all been very busy, but rest assured, they have everything under control.
- They suspect the recent fire to be an intentional act by criminal elements of the city. If not, they're certainly capitalizing on it to rally the common folk away from the Governess and the Rightful Order.

- The *Crimson Asuras Gang* seem to be gaining strength in the peasant districts, with suspicion being cast upon the *Lotus Leaf* geisha house as a recent addition to their territory and the *Dancing Bear Tavern* on a pier over the bay. They have not caused much trouble yet, except for a brawl against another gang a bit ago.

The Lotus Leaf – Geisha House

The Lotus Leaf is a tall, tastefully appointed geisha house located on the edge of the Noble’s District, toward the bridge that leads north across the bay. The well-tended gardens of the house hold many private corners and shady balconies, making it surprisingly quiet inside.

There are very few patrons present, and the geisha are gossiping with each other in the common room, fanning themselves. Given that they are in their loose summer yukata, any lecherous PCs will have an additional +5 penalty to social rolls (due to almost-scandalous amounts of skin on display), in addition to any penalty from the heat.

Getting information will require a small amount of coin (around 2 koku) or a suitable gift (such as a flower from the Hanging Gardens, cool tea, pretty baubles, entertaining them with music, etc.), and a **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll. Failure means the geisha tease the PC with empty promises, wasting their time.

- **5** – Seicho-kun’s brother, a young monk named San, visits regularly in an attempt to convince the girls to take up a more honest trade. It’s cute in a naïve way, but he’s kind of gullible, even for a 12-year-old kid.
- **10** – Seicho-kun is the most beautiful and popular girl here, but the owner Ako-chan, has a massive crush on her, much to San’s consternation. There was talk of San wanting to buy her contract, but no one’s sure just how a poor monk will get the money (they estimate it at around 400 koku).
- **15** - Seicho-kun and San were arguing about something late last night, most likely money again. Both stormed off in opposite directions. Seicho-kun went to Bayushi Ako’s (and didn’t return), but the girls don’t know where San went.
- **20** – “The leader of the *Crimson Asuras* is a tough-as-nails guy with a moon-shaped scar on his eye, Ono-ichi. Spends a lot of time over at The Dancing Bear with Kuma.”

- **25** – “Seicho-kun left a letter for San! One moment...”

Other information:

Like San, Seicho is half-Invindi, but she has Dangerous Beauty and can pass for Rokugani, especially with traditional geisha makeup.

The letter for san is sealed, but the PCs can open (and reseal) it with a **Forgery / Agility** roll TN 10, but this does incur a **D3 Honor loss** for using a low skill:

Little Brother,

I know your intentions were pure and noble, but you should not have taken money from the Temple. Your place there is too important, and I cannot ask you to risk your soul for me in such a way. Therefore, I have gone to Ako’s to sell myself as a concubine to pay your debt. I shall bring the money to Cho tomorrow evening, if I am successful.

I love you, San-kun. Please be better.

Your loving sister,

Seicho

The elderly madam of the house, Umeko, will ask the PCs not to meddle: Ako-sama doesn’t know about the gangsters- such things are beneath her, of course. Why are *you* asking, anyway? No, they can’t search Seicho’s room.

The samurai owner, Bayushi Ako, is *not* available- she lives in the Nobles’ District with her family and is currently “negotiating the contract” with Seicho, who went to her to acquire enough money to bail San out of debt late last night. Ako and Seicho will not entertain guests for *any* reason.

Scorpion contacts

Scorpion PCs looking to find information from within their own clan, who succeed at an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll TN 15, find themselves sitting in a quiet room in “Lotus Leaf” geisha house, speaking with Bayushi Tonaka, a thin man with a wiry smile and a golden silk mask.

- If there is an issue at the Temple of Ebisu, perhaps they should speak to Ansha, the Governess' retired mother, who has retired there.
- The clan does not have contact with the *Crimson Asuras Gang*; in fact, they recently pushed out a Scorpion-backed *White Lotus Society*.
- Yes, the clan is aware that the Lotus Leaf is in *Asura* territory now. Tonaka does know they operate a gambling den behind the "Dancing Bear Tavern". Any information on them would be very helpful.
- The bandit Ono-ichi was once a ronin who worked for the Ikoma before taking up with the Forest Killers. Apparently he has some information that would seriously hurt the Crane and Lion. If you can find out what that is, let the Governess know.
- The local magistrates are not going to pursue the matter either- the gang has greased the right palms.
- A young monk from the Ebisu temple was spotted in the middle of an *Asura* brawl with the *White Lotus*. Perhaps it has to do with his sister Seicho, who works at the Lotus Leaf.
- Bayushi Ako's business with Seicho is her own; as long as it does not cause a problem for the family, no one cares.

At this point, the players should have a solid grasp on where to go and how to find San.

Part Four: Confrontation with the Gang

At this point in the investigation, the PCs should be making their way to The Dancing Bear Tavern, located in the shadow of the Bridge, on stilts over the northern bank of the bay. Directions are easy to find for anyone who asks. However, there is trouble before they reach the great bridge over the Ranma Sang Bay:

The densely packed street is hot, crowded, loud, and stinks of too many people in too small a space. Just ahead of you, an Invindi heimin trips on a cobblestone, stumbles forward, and grabs the kimono of a Lion samurai... who spins on his heel, draws his sword, and strikes the head of the peasant clear off with an enraged shout.

The street freezes as the body falls, the head rolling to a table of Kshatriya warriors sitting at a nearby cafe.

They stand up, hands on their blades.

The Lion samurai, watching them, exhales calmly and falls into a center stance as the crowd around you all explodes in anger.

An **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** roll will allow the PCs to take in the scene:

- **10** - The Rokugani peasants are all moving back and away, but the Invindi peasants hold their position with furious anger in their eyes. Some are picking up loose cobblestones.
- **15** - There are PC-2 Kshatriya warriors, about 20 feet away.
- **20** - PC-3 Invindi thugs emerge from the alley, wearing black armbands with a white lotus flower on them. They survey the scene and draw large knives.
- **25** - The Lion samurai has a magistrate's badge hanging from his obi. This is Ikoma Hitsuke if the PCs spoke to him earlier.

It is clear that a serious fight is imminent, and if the PCs wish to diffuse it, they can certainly try (by whatever means they feel appropriate), with a TN 35. If the PCs did not diffuse the fight between Esu and Togashi Kano earlier in the day, the TN will be +20, but they will get a free raise if they speak Invindi and one for prominently wearing an ivory Ganesh netsuke. However, Ikoma Hitsuke will not apologize- he is well within his right to kill the offending peasant, but the Invindi warriors will not accept this. The peasants between them and the PCs clear out of the way.

If the roll succeeds, one of the Kshatriya will step forward, announce himself as Rama Singh, and challenge Hitsuke to a duel to the death. However, during the Focus stage, someone in the crowd will throw a rock at a PC (bushi, preferably Lion) but it will miss, flying past their head. The rock it will strike Singh instead, hitting him in the shoulder- this affects his stance and causes Hitsuke to strike for 20 damage. However, the other Invindi warriors will look toward the offending PC as the one who interrupted the duel, draw their swords, and charge (calling the PCs "cheating dogs" in Invindi).

If the roll fails, the Invindi warriors will draw their weapons in unison and advance, initiating combat. Rama Singh will charge Ikoma Hitsuke.

Either way, Hitsuke will kill Singh in round 2 but will be injured, and then will be cut down in round 3 if any Kshatriya warrior is free to do so.

If the diffusion roll failed, the Invindi crowd will begin throwing rocks and bottles at the end of each round. This is represented by one attack roll of 3k2 against all PCs, for 2k1 damage given to whomever fails, and any individual Invindi peasant will run away if challenged by a PC.

The Invindi warriors will attack directly while the White Lotus gangsters will try to sneak through the crowd, each attacking a (non-Scorpion) PC from the rear, which will involve contested **Stealth / Agility** (5k3) vs their target PCs' **Investigation (Notice) / Perception**, where the PCs' failure means the gangster gets a free raise for his first attack.

Kshatriya Warrior

A proud Invindi warrior with a curved, one-handed sword.

School/Rank: Kshatriya 1

Initiative: 4k3

Armor TN: 20

Reduction: 0

Wounds: 15 (+0), 21 (+3), 27 (+5), 33 (+10), 39 (+15), 45 (+20), 51 (Down, +40), 58 (Dead)

Attack: 6k3 (Talwar, Complex)

Damage: 7k2 (Talwar)

Air 2 Earth 3 Fire 2 Water 2 Void 2
Ref 3 Agi 3 Str 3

Integrity: 5.0 Status: 0 (Gaijin) Glory: 1.0

Primary Skills: Swordsmanship (Talwar) 3, Hand to hand 2, Defense 2, Dueling (Focus) 3

Advantages/Disadvantages: Social Disadvantage (Gaijin)

Special Mechanics: +1k0 sword damage, +1k1 vs Fear.

White Lotus Gangster

A sneering ne'er-do-well with a black and white *White Lotus* armband.

Initiative: 3k2

Armor TN: 15

Reduction: 0

Wounds: 10 (+0), 14 (+3), 18 (+5), 22 (+10), 26 (+15), 30 (+20), 34 (Down, +40), 38 (Dead)

Attack: 5k3e (Kukri, Complex)

Damage: 3k1 (Kukri)

Air 1 Earth 2 Fire 1 Water 2 Void 1
Ref 2 Agi 3

Integrity: 0 Status: -10 Glory: 0.0

Primary Skills: Knives (kukri) 2, Jujitsu (Improvised weapons) 2, Athletics (thrown weapon) 2, Stealth 2

Advantages/Disadvantages: Social Disadvantage (Peasant, Gangster, gaijin); Major Obligation: Scorpion Clan

After four rounds PC-3 City Guards will arrive, scattering the peasants and any remaining gangsters, with more following after a few minutes. As key witnesses, the PCs will be asked to give immediate testimony and sent on their way.

If there was a duel, a **Lore: Law / Intelligence** roll TN 10 will inform PC that the Kshatriya were in their legal right to attack, *but only if one discounts their gaijin status*: the thrown rock interfered with a legal duel. It is up to the PCs to decide if they wish to communicate this or not, without a roll; if they do, the dead warriors will be treated with respect.

If there was not a duel, then a **Lore: Law / Intelligence** roll TN 10 will inform the PC that the Kshatriya warriors were in the wrong to attack a magistrate. PCs may press for respect for the warriors if they wish, requiring a **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** roll, TN 15 to convince the guards.

If they succeed, the Kshatriya dead will be treated with honor befitting samurai, and if not, they will be left in the street like common criminals.

Treating the Kshatriya with respect is a **H6 Honor Gain** at the cost of **L-1 Glory**.

The Dancing Bear Tavern

When the PCs get to the Dancing Bear, they will find it closed for the afternoon- the tavern doesn't open until sundown (especially in this heat). An **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** roll or **Lore: Underworld / Perception** roll TN 10 will allow the PC to see that a number of (Invindi and Rokugani) peasants milling about or lounging in the shade are wearing white armbands with a red *gaijin-oni* (Asura) face on it. PCs with Precise Memory will remember that it is the same logo from San's gambling receipts. There is a noodle-vendor (Doki) handing out food to a hungry crowd from a nearby cart.

PCs who wish to speak to the gangsters may use either **Etiquette (Conversation) / Awareness, Lore: Underworld / Awareness, Intimidation (Bullying) / Willpower**, or whatever else they feel appropriate, with raises or penalties depending on the

nature of the PC, tone of roleplaying, and so on. Penalties for the heat, the PCs prior interactions with peasants, and so on absolutely apply, and the gangsters are quick to fight if they sense weakness.

- **5** – “Yeah, we know San. He’s all right.”
- **10** – “That boy has a gambling problem, mostly because he’s just really bad at it. They’ve heard about his sister and why he wants the money, but well, debts are debts, ya know?”
- **15** – San was the one who talked them into helping out around the town and stuff, which they all agree has been good for the gang’s reputation.
- **20** – “San came by really late last night, desperate about something. Not sure what. He’s still in there, I think, probably trying to win back his losses.”
- **25** – San is taking responsibility for the debt, which is admirable and all, but... that’s a lot of money for a kid who doesn’t even have a pot to piss in. Not sure how the boss is going to handle it.
- **30** – “You can talk to the boss when the Bear opens. He and Kuma need their beauty sleep, so don’t go tryin’ to disturb ‘em. Why don’t you get some noodles from Doki over there in the meantime? On the house.”

The PCs may choose to come back later if they wish (just after dusk), or they can attempt a contested **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** or **Intimidation (Bullying) / Willpower** against the thugs, who *collectively* roll 7k3+3e (with 1 koku for free raises). If the PC uses tactics that allow the gangsters to save *Face* in front of the crowd, they can get a free raise on their roll, but being loud and disrespectful creates a +5 penalty. There are PC+1 peasant gangsters, plus about two dozen peasant workers to back them up, making them braver than usual.

Though they prefer not to attack clan samurai, failure *may* lead to violence if the PCs instigate too much or are too rude, but this will start as nonlethal (fists, sticks, etc) and the gangsters will let off when the PCs get to crippled... unless the PCs escalate. This will likely last no more than two rounds, but if it goes on too long, a PC draws a sword, or if a gangster dies, see the “Violent Confrontation” section.

Though the tone of the following encounters will depend on the PCs’ actions, success means the

gangsters acquiesce and let them inside, directing them to the back gambling room.

If they wait until later, go to the “Balishnimpur Night Life” section on page 16 and modify the following scene to fit the dynamics. The place will be packed with people and the gambling hall will be full, with San still at the table, losing.

The Dancing Bear Tavern is a musty establishment, held together with rusting nails and pure willpower on a long pier over the bay. Thin beams of light illuminate the dim space and the floorboards squeak in protest as you walk. The main room is empty except for a few workers, futilely scrubbing at the grime and years of accumulated pipe-smoke.

The gambling room is down a narrow hallway and through a loose red curtain. It is dim and empty, except for one young man in orange and an elderly tattooed gangster who looks up at you as you enter.

Even to an untrained eye, San is losing terribly.

PCs who attempt to sit or interfere will be politely told by the bowing dealer: **“So sorry, but we are closed and this is a private table. Please come back later, after we open for the evening. Thank you.”**

Before the PCs can interact with San, the tavern’s manager, a stocky ronin named Shu, will come to discuss matters (with PC-2 ronin bodyguards). **“Can you please tell me WHY you’ve pushed your way into our fine establishment, samurai-samas?”**

This is set up as mainly a roleplaying challenge, but may need to be adapted on the fly to fit the PCs actions. If the PCs wish to roll, Shu resists with 7k3e (see below).

Conversation with Shu the Pit Boss:

- Yes, San came in last night with a large sum of money to pay off his gambling debts, which they appreciate. The rest was lost at the table, because San is a terrible gambler.
- San has been a very positive influence on the gang and is responsible for convincing them to help the peasantry instead of maintaining the traditional gangster’s lifestyle. Not that they aren’t out drinking and whoring of course, but still- his idealism is infectious.

- The gang didn't know the money was stolen from the Temple, though they do know why he gambles (to buy his sister's contract from the Lotus Leaf).
- San is currently... [10xPC] koku in the hole now. He's really, really bad at this, but if they don't let him gamble, he'll just do it elsewhere with people who're less forgiving (aka they would probably start cutting off fingers, or just kill him).
- Much of the money from the Temple has already been spent. The noodle cart outside, for example, and a few other related stuff. They've already bought supplies to rebuild a row of peasant houses later in the week. If pressed Shu will admit that a fair bit will go to cheap geisha and even cheaper booze, and some of it went to magisterial bribes, but he's trying to put on a good Face for the fancy samurai.
- The PCs can take him if they can convince him to leave, but he still owes the gang for his losses.
- Shu can't absolve San's debt, and Ono-ichi isn't available right now. The PCs can come back tonight if they wish to speak to him, but he's likely to say no. A debt is a debt, after all.

Confronting San

After the PCs speak to Shu he will give a nod to the dealer and space at the table is made for them. San will bow politely, but he is in the middle of a hand of Fortunes and Winds... which he quickly loses (of course).

- San is a skinny 12-year-old boy in a hand-me-down robe, rather wide-eyed about dealing with clan samurai (especially PCs with Large or Dangerous Beauty), but he insists that he's doing this for good reasons.
- He knows he should not be gambling or have taken the Temple's money, but he didn't think Cho would mind. He's gonna give it back once he wins more...
- His sister needs him! She's not safe, especially having to constantly dodge that lech Ako. She's not safe and he's just GOTTA get her out of there! You understand, right? He does not know his sister sold herself to Ako to pay for his debts and will be heartbroken to hear of it, fighting to hide his tears.
- Being Honorable means paying debts, right?
- He knows he's not very good at Fortunes and Winds, but...
- Ono-ichi isn't going to let him off the hook for the debt- Honor demands he hold to his word. He's gotta get it back somehow...

For reference, San's disadvantages are Gullible, Idealistic, True Love: Seicho, and Compulsion: Gambling. PCs who can sense spiritual effects (such as Kitsu shugenja) can feel Ebisu's Curse hanging on him (a perpetual "Unlucky", specifically at gambling).

If the PCs talk to San about absolving his debt with Ono-ichi, San will insist on coming along when they do, because he feels he should be a part of the conversation.

If a PC wishes to gamble, they can buy chips and/or take out loans from the house, and whatever they bet will be doubled if they win. This is a contested **Games: Fortunes and Winds / Awareness** roll vs the dealer's 9k4- he won't cheat, but he's not going to go easy on non-monk PCs. He will keep mid to low dice against monks, out of respect.

Shu will cut them off if they get beyond 350 for the Temple (plus San's current debt). If the PCs end up owing money, they must take "Obligation: Owes the *Crimson Asuras Gang X koku*:" one "Major Obligation" for each 50 koku owed, rounding up, plus any appropriate Honor losses as necessary. *As a favor to San* they'll let the PCs pay them back in installments (from their stipend at the beginning of each mod as an upkeep cost), and they won't even charge interest because they're *such good fellas*. Brotherhood (non-samurai monk) PCs who take on debt obligations may owe one generic "Minor Obligation" to the gang instead, at the cost of D0 Honor.

PCs who chose not to pay this debt suffer a D0 Honor loss at the beginning of each mod in which they choose not to pay, and gain "*Sworn Enemy: Crimson Asuras Gang*."

The issue at hand however is not the money or even spending time with gangsters, *but San's gambling and theft*; it is critical he learns his lesson regarding this issue. This will require good roleplaying, as well as a **Contested Roll** (using whatever appropriate skill the PC wishes) against San's pure stubbornness and True Love for his sister- **Raw Willpower** (3k3+5). Reinforcing the harm San has caused can create 1-3 free raises (for example, presenting him with his sister's letter), while gambling to win the money back creates penalties regardless of whether the PCs win or lose: 1 +5 TN penalty for each round spent gambling (regardless of which PC gambled). He's not about to listen to hypocrites about morality, because regardless

of whether they won or lost, *they still gambled*. If they do it, why can't he?

If they can convince San to leave he will do so on his own, but will ask to meet with them when they go to speak to Ono-ichi later. He feels he should be there.

If they cannot convince San to leave peacefully, the PCs will physically have to carry him back (which will only require contested **Raw Strength** TN 10 rolls for Small PCs). This won't be pretty (San fights the whole way, but he's only 12) and offending PC(s) gain 1 *rank* of Infamy for manhandling a monk in such a public manner, as well as an D-6 Honor Loss for a **Blasphemous Breach of Etiquette**. There will be jeers of "put that boy down!" all along the way.

If San must be carried, the last PC out the door can make a **Raw Perception** roll TN 10 to hear the Dealer whisper "He'll be back..." to Shu.

Conversation with Shu regarding Ono-ichi:

This interaction is significantly more reserved: Shu is simply not willing to talk about his boss to strangers, let alone clan samurai- they will have to convince him that Ono-ichi is not in danger with a **Sincerity (Honesty or Deceit) / Awareness** vs his **Investigation (Notice) / Perception (7k3e)** first. Other options are available, such as Intimidation (Control), but Shu's dice are the same to resist regardless of the roll chosen. Shu does have 20 points of disadvantages for the Bayushi courtier skills (mostly involving being a ronin gangster).

- Ono-ichi was once a member of the Forest Killers, but fled that group to come here. He didn't say why and they aren't going to ask.
- Yeah, Ono-ichi and Kuma are a thing. So? Ain't our business and it ain't yours. They're good for each other, and that's what matters.
- Yeah, the gang knows there's a stiff price on his head. They ain't rats.
- Nah, the magistrates will not come looking for the gang- they've got the proper permits, and the magistrates have bigger things to worry about right now (and the ones in this district have been paid off anyway, but he's not going to say that openly).
- Did they steal some food from a fat samurai's warehouse and distribute it to the hungry peasants? Well I don't know nothin' about any of that...

- "Why should we trust you?"

Shu is still withholding information however, which can be determined with an **Investigation (Interrogation) / Perception** roll TN 20, but whether he reveals this or not depends on the tone of the conversation. He won't reveal it if the PCs are belligerent:

"Well... he did get really shit-faced once and went on a rant about... what was it... smuggler conspiracies, I think? Hell, I don't remember, that was a while ago and I was very, very drunk too."

This will certainly intrigue Rumormonger PCs, but Shu can't elaborate further.

Violent Confrontation:

At any given point there are 4xPC peasant gangsters in or around the Dancing Bear Tavern, 2xPC ronin gangsters (including Shu and the Dealer), plus Ono-ichi and Kuma. The fight will start with whoever is in the room, but 1k1 other fighters will join the melee per round, armed with fists, clubs, knives, and hand axes (masakari), depending on the PCs own tactics. The more lethal the PCs' actions, the more lethal the gang will be, but if it gets too intense the gangsters (even Ono-ichi) may just flee.

Stats for the gangsters are at the end of the module.

San and Kuma will sue for peace but if pushed they will fight on behalf of their friends in the gang, even throwing themselves in front of a killing blow to save someone else (Kuma in particular will defend Ono-ichi).

Balishnimpur Night Life:

PCs who come back later will find the "Dancing Bear" jumping and lively- it is a full house waiting to watch Kuma. PCs can find Shu easily working the front of the house, and will be directed to the front of the room. The PCs may wish to push to speak to Onoichi, but Shu will ask them to wait until Kuma's first performance is over.

If the PCs were polite and convinced San to leave peacefully, the first round of drinks will be on the house- a "Doji's Delight": a light blue sake and fruit drink with a small parasol, which would taste great

with better quality alcohol. There are a few other clan samurai up front- mostly Mantis and Crab, but the bulk of the crowd is peasants.

The PCs can make a **Courtier / Perception** roll:

- **TN 10** - If he is alive, Ikoma Hitsuke is at the bar. He'll buy the PCs a round of drinks e.
- **TN 15** - The magistrate seems overly friendly with the bartender and some of the gangsters, especially Shu.
- **TN 20** - There's a rumor going around about Ono-ichi and Kuma being an item, and that they're good for each other. It's different, but the patrons don't seem to care.

If the PCs speak to Ikoma Hitsuke about Ono-ichi, he cannot introduce them directly (because he's a magistrate), but he can introduce them to Kuma. He does think the fight earlier was likely due to the heat, but he does not regret his actions. If the PCs wish to question him about fraternizing with gangsters, he'll reply that he's off duty.

Shu can be spotted managing the room too. If the PCs speak to him, he will also suggest they speak to Kuma after the show to get to Ono-ichi.

There is currently a small ronin band on stage, "The River Otter Boys", banging out a lively, raucous tune about a geisha, *Lazy-Eyed Suki*, much to the enjoyment of the crowd. The GM should feel free to substitute the name of a feminine PC instead of Suki if it sounds funny.

PCs who wish to perform may certainly do so with whatever Perform skill they wish (TN 20): there is only one slot though, so they will have to cooperate. The crowd typically prefers more lively entertainment, but raises will change their reaction. They will gain 2 points of **Glory** for the performance, +1 for each successful raise, and lose that many for failure. Success also gains free drinks for the evening.

Eventually the lights dim and a hush falls over the crowd. A perfectly coiffed matron stands on the stage. "Welcome, friends to the Dancing Bear. Tonight's performance is 'Three Summers, Two Winters, and a Day' by Yasuki Kojo. Thank you."

The PCs may roll **Courtier / Intelligence** TN 20 (with a free raise for each rank in Perform: Dance) to

know that this is an infamously difficult performance piece about a poor farmer's wife whose husband has gone to fight on the Wall.

A lamenting flute echoes through the dim room as Kuma takes the spotlight. At first it is shocking to such a large bearded man in a traditionally women's role, but that quickly evaporates as he gracefully and gently falls into the role of a dutiful housewife going through her chores for the day, occasionally stopping to look out the window for her love to return... as she has done each day for the past two and a half years. No letters have come, for neither can read nor write.

As such, she moves through the day, carrying the love that remains for one who has gone, possibly never to return... and once again, she must tell her young children to wait, just one more day...

PCs with "True Love", "Lost Love" (or who have experienced great familial loss) will need to roll an **Etiquette / Willpower** TN 25 to not cry openly. However, they will not be alone- much of the room is achingly silent and in a similar position (there is no **Glory** loss: no one is paying attention to them at all).

As the sun sets and hope once again fades from the humble home, the drum sounds a quiet knock on the door- once, twice, three times. The flute jumps and races with each beat- is it him, or is it someone else, like so many times before?

Silence.

Heartbreak hangs in her eyes ...

...

...

It is him! He's home! My Love has returned at last!

The lights fade as her family embraces. After a short moment, the room erupts in wild applause.

As the lights return, Kuma once again returns to the stage to take a bow with the matron singer and the musicians (Kuma was the only dancer). After a long moment of applause, the River Otter Boys return to the stage, but most of the crowd (especially the other samurai) have to go outside for some fresh air and to

regain their *On*, watching the moon rise over the glowing city, it's light reflected on the water of the bay.

If the Kshatriya warriors' integrity was not respected, fire and smoke can be seen in the Noble's District.

Afterward, the PCs will have an opportunity to speak with and impress Kuma, who can bring them to meet Ono-ichi, introduced by either Shu or Hitsuke.

Wherever the PCs are (inside or outside), Kuma will come out after a moment to speak with the cheerful crowd, towering over them (he's at least a foot taller than the peasants and just as broad), but if any clan PCs (especially Crane) go to speak to him, the massive man will visibly wilt, making himself smaller. A **Raw Awareness** roll TN 15 means the PC will notice him nervously wringing his yukata in his giant hands.

Kuma is a gentle man with an innocent child's heart. He is very emotive, and if the PCs talk to him directly, he communicates in body language as much as words. If the PCs talk to someone else about him, they will find that the patrons are *very* protective of him and his well-being (almost all of the patrons refer to him as Kuma-kun).

Kuma will patently avoid any PCs who chose to be a part of the group that heckled him at the beginning of the mod. He is not subtle about it, and the patrons of the Bear *will* notice (which causes a change in the atmosphere from joyful to defensive, raising any TNs as necessary). However, this can be alleviated with a *sincere* apology by the offending PCs.

Conversation points for roleplaying:

- Kuma once auditioned for noble patronage, but... *they rejected him because he's big*. A group of Crane, Mantis and (insulting PC's clan) courtiers laughed him out of the building and he just *can't* bring himself to go back.
- He thought about joining the Crab, but... the Twenty Goblin Winter? Not really a good idea.
- Ono-ichi was the one who encouraged him to get back on stage, and Kuma helped Ono-ichi find a place where he belongs. They really do make a good team, and Kuma will blush furiously whenever "Ichi-kun" is brought up.
- Mentioning Ono-ichi's bounty will make Kuma incredibly wary of the PC. He knows about it and does not want Ichi-kun to get hurt.

- PCs who suggest supporting his art will depend on who the PCs are and how they approach it. He is incredibly leery of the clans mentioned above (*especially* Crane) and any offending PCs (regardless of their apology), given how badly they hurt his feelings regarding his size, but this can be overcome with good roleplaying.

Sponsoring Kuma

Sponsoring Kuma requires using favors to get him an audience with someone of high rank (the Clan Ambassador, the Governess, etc.), but such promises cost 1 favor per rank of status the target possesses, divided by two, rounded down (Sensei: 1; Head Delegate: 2; Governess' Court Member: 3; Governess: 4), as well as an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy / Awareness)** roll TN = Status x5 +5, with each called raise reduces the number of favors by one. Of course, this assumes the PC is a clan samurai in good standing (less than one rank of Infamy). Having those NPCs as allies halves the favor cost again, rounding down, to a minimum of 1. This action technically occurs off screen on another day, but is presented here for continuity.

The PCs will have an opportunity to make an **Etiquette (Conversation) or Sincerity (Honesty or Deceit) / Awareness** roll, with free raises or penalties depending on roleplaying, against his **Investigation (Notice) / Awareness** 8k5 (Kuma will take low dice if he likes the PCs). Success will convince Kuma to introduce the PC to Ono-ichi. Sponsoring Kuma also gives the PC a free raise against Kuma for each Favor spent.

Speaking with Ono-ichi

Ono-ichi's office is down a dim hallway, past the gambling room. If San was physically removed earlier in the day and not brought with the PCs, he will be gambling at a table and the PCs will have to deal with him at some point. This will at least give them another chance to convince him to leave peacefully at some point.

Ono-ichi's office is not particularly large, but neither is it small; there are two doors in and out of it- one to the hallway, the other behind his desk to his own room (and a private balcony). Mismatched rugs cover the protesting floorboards, and the PCs are invited to the center of the room and offered cushions to sit upon, as

well as tea. A small desk sits between them and Ono-ichi. The River Otter Boys can be heard from the main room, banging out a raucous up-tempo version of the Yasuki classic “The Tetsubo Boogie.” There are PC-2 ronin in the room, half flanking Ono-ichi and the rest along the back wall.

How Ono-ichi and the gangsters receive the PCs is dependent on their actions throughout the mod. After making blushing introductions, Kuma will take his leave to prepare for the next act.

An **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** roll can be made against Ono-ichi’s **Craft: Traps / Intelligence** 7k4, with a free raise for “Wary” PCs. Success means the PC realizes that the large red rug beneath them is probably a trap door.

If Ikoma Hitsuke survived the fight with the Kshatriya, PCs speaking with Ono-ichi gain one free raise to use against him on a contested roll.

PCs sponsoring Kuma gain a free raise for each favor spent to use against Ono-ichi.

Regarding San’s debts

This is mostly a roleplaying challenge, because there are a great many ways the confrontation can go down. The GM will need to ad lib as necessary.

- Debts are debts, right? If we don’t pay back our obligations, what kind of men would we be?
- They can’t give the money back to the Temple because they’ve spent most of it on upcoming construction projects, but they can be convinced to make it up in other ways (ie helping out around the city more).
- Threatening to contact the magistrates or call the guard will elicit a response of “please feel free. We’ve got the right permits. He lost the money, fair and square.”

Successfully getting Ono-ichi to absolve San’s obligations to the gang requires roleplaying (“*why should we do that?*”), plus a **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** or **Intimidation (Control) / Willpower** roll against his **Etiquette (Courtesy) / Awareness (or Willpower)**, 9k3e. The PCs may gain free raises depending on their tones, their talking points, and whatever else feels relevant; belligerence also creates 1-3 +5 TN penalties for the PC, especially if the PCs words or actions cause the

gang leader to lose face. Sponsoring Kuma or the gang itself (see pg 21) can create additional free raises.

Failure at this *may* mean Ono-ichi uses **Intimidation (Bullying) / Willpower** (8k3e+5) against the rude PC to extract concessions from them (in the form of a Minor Obligation). Ono-ichi has 30 points of social disadvantages for the Bayushi courtier rank 1 technique as well.

PCs taking responsibility for San’s debt (20xPC koku) also creates 2 Free Raises on their roll per Major Obligation, but the gang will not absolve the PC of their own debt (even if they sponsor the gang later on).

If the PCs succeed in convincing Ono-ichi, he’ll absolve San’s debt. Otherwise, it will stand and he’ll have to “work it off” somehow. Ono-ichi won’t commit to how, but suffice to say it will likely be dishonorable.

Other points of conversation:

- Unlike other groups around the city, the gang does not have a clan sponsor at the moment (see p21), though that could certainly change if someone makes a good offer...
- The *White Lotus Society* had it coming- they were too greedy and pushed the people too hard.
- Yes, Ono-ichi was part of the Forest Killers, but he left and wants nothing to do with them anymore. He came here to build a new life.
- Things are good for him here, especially with Kuma. He’s got something to fight for now.
- About the bounty: yes, he did some of the things the Crane and Lion accuse him of, but it’s more complicated than it appears and he doesn’t really want to open up about it.

Ono-ichi needs to know he can trust the PCs before opening up to them; specifically that they will not start a fight or try to arrest him. The PCs can make one more roll to convince him that they’re either on the gang’s side, or at least not opposing them, with a free raise for each previous roll they made and for convincing, nonthreatening roleplaying: **Sincerity (Honesty or Deceit) / Awareness** vs. Ono-ichi’s **Investigation (Notice) / Perception**, 7k3e, plus bonuses for positive treatment of the gang, San, and so on.

Success:

“All right, samurai-samas, I’m going to lay all my cards on the table here. Back in Rokugan, I worked at the House of the Morning Dew, a geisha house in the City of Honor’s Sacrifice in Lion lands. One evening, I overheard Ikoma Kaido, an Imperial diplomat, talking about following the trail of a Crane smuggler, one Daidoji O’Shiri, and hiring some ronin to ambush him. I went on that mission; we killed him, and took a small mountain of stuff back. Fake relics, questionable medicine, counterfeit art, forged documents, you name it.

Again, I listened in on them.

It turns out that Kaido and the others were distributing these illicit goods throughout the empire on the black market, using his connections in Ootosan Uchi. Ironically, they ended up selling a lot of it back to the Crane, but the rest went... well, everywhere.

So here I am, presented with the two pillars of Honor in the Empire using very dishonorable means. What would you do? I don’t rightly know what possessed me, but one night I went through that office, pulled the most incriminating documents I could find, changed my name, and ran for the hills.”

Ono-ichi takes a moment to breathe and center himself.

“A bit later I ran into the Forest Killers, but that didn’t last long, so I hopped the first boat I could catch and ended up here.”

How Ono-ichi responds to questions will greatly depend on the PCs and their approach:

- If the Lion and Crane do it, what’s to say the others aren’t as well? If every clan does this, why bother with the façade at all?
- If Ono-ichi is arrested or killed, the documents will be exposed (along with a confession using his previous name, which he will not reveal).
- He really does not want trouble, does not actually want to embarrass anyone, and just wants to be left in peace- he has a happy life here and wants to keep it that way. This is his insurance policy.
- Giving the documents to the Lion or the Crane only ensures that one will use it against the other, and he will still be targeted.
- If either the Lion or Crane want to clean their own houses, well, that’s up to them, isn’t it? They don’t need his information to do it.

- He does not really trust the Mantis or the Scorpion, especially since they also have bounties on his head, but they’re traditionally more amenable.

At this point, it is up to the PCs to decide what to do and how to proceed:

Attack!

“If that’s the way you want to play it...”

If the PCs choose combat, in a surprise round Ono-ichi will pull the lever on the trap door, which the PCs can roll **Athletics / Reflexes** TN 20 to avoid (with two free raises if they noticed it beforehand). Failure means they are dumped into a foot of filthy water and three feet of filthier mud under the Tavern (the tide is out and the mud *stinks*), which counts as Extremely Difficult terrain. If the majority of the PCs fall, the gang will laugh at them while Ono-ichi bows and thanks them for stopping by (before closing the hatch). By the time they get free (requiring at least one **Athletics / Strength** TN 20 roll), Ono-ichi will be gone; the PCs will probably lose their sandals climbing out, too, and it should be noted that the tide is coming in. Present them with the fear of drowning, though they will eventually be rescued by local peasants if they can’t make it out on their own.

Being seen in public that disgustingly filthy is a L-4 **Glory** penalty. This can be halved if they hired a rickshaw instead of shamefully walking home.

Those who avoid the trap will have to contend with Ono-ichi and PC-2 ronin, assuming they still want to fight (if not, they will be politely but firmly escorted out, unless they can very cleverly roleplay their way out of this position). Those who do fight may be kicked down the hole in the floor, too.

Negotiation!

The PCs can negotiate obtaining the documents, but this too will be troublesome- if there are Lion or Crane present, or inter-clan arguments about the fate of the documents, Ono-ichi will politely refuse and suggest they return to watching Kuma perform.

However, unified PCs can press for the documents by offering some kind of substantial reward instead, specifically for his own personal safety- removal of

the bounty is good but not enough, given the likely impact of the documents. This is a contested roll between the PC's **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** vs. Ono-ichi's **Etiquette (Courtesy) / Willpower**, 9k3e. Direct bribery is not enough.

Given the nature of the information, Crane and Lion PCs have +10 penalties- he just doesn't trust them. Just like before though, there are ways the PCs can gain free raises:

Sponsoring the Crimson Asuras

Though the roll for this may occur in the scene, the actual events occur later on, away from the eyes of other clans (so as to not create intra-party conflict or honor losses).

Dishonorable PCs may also offer to have their clan covertly sponsor the *Crimson Asuras Gang* if they wish, but this costs 5 favors, D-1 Honor, and a **Temptation (Bribery) / Awareness** roll with whoever is in charge of such things within their clan. The TNs are between 20-50, depending on who the PC can reach within the clan- lowest for Mantis, Scorpion, and Yasuki; highest for Crane (excluding Daidoji Trading Council), Lion (excluding Lion's Shadow), Dragon, Phoenix, Imperials (excluding Otomo), and so on. PCs who successfully take this approach gain "Dark Secret: Mob Boss- *Crimson Asuras Gang*."

Either of these options creates one free raise per favor spent on the above-mentioned contested rolls to gain access to the information or to have San's debt absolved.

Obtaining Ono-ichi's evidence

Successful PCs are told to go speak to Ansha in the Temple of Ebisu and tell her "*the crimson flowers are soon to blossom*". After about an hour's wait, she will give them a medium-sized dirt-crusted box of paperwork.

Reading the documents inside requires either the Crane or Lion cipher- both sets of documents are encoded differently. Possessing the standard "cipher" emphasis is enough to get basic information though; meaning *the roll cannot be made without the emphasis*. Translating the documents requires a **Calligraphy (Cipher) / Intelligence** roll TN 25, which will give the PC enough information to obtain

Blackmail on Ikoma Kaido (and information that would seriously dishonor Daidoji O'Shiri's memory). Failure means the documents look innocuous- gardening directions, receipts, and so on. What they choose to do with the documents is up to them, but regardless of their translation, those who turn this into their clan gain the advantage "Noticed by the (Their Family) Daimyo" (or "Noticed by the Governess" if they give it to her). However, this requires an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll TN 20 first, otherwise they are forced to hand the information off to an intermediary and that person takes credit for their work.

If the PC keeps the files but cannot read them, they can write down "Ono-ichi's Evidence (untranslated)" on their character sheets.

If the PCs successfully use violence to coerce Ono-ichi to turn over the documents, he will tell them the phrase "*white flowers are soon to blossom*" instead. In which case, Ansha will leave to get the materials and not return (she will give the box to the Governess). As an ex-Scorpion, the PCs will not be able to follow her.

If the PCs fail, Ono-ichi will politely decline their offer and thank them for their time. They can stay and watch Kuma's next performance if they wish, "Golden Leaves, Carried by the Wind", an equally difficult play about the life and death of Toku Miyako, Empress Toturi II's handmaiden who nobly sacrificed herself so that her best friend could live.

After that, they will have to take San back to the temple.

Conclusion

There are a number of variables for how this module concludes:

San returns peacefully, free of debt

Cool ocean breezes carry over the city, and the mood in the temple has lightened immensely by the time you return with the wayward young man. The front doors are once again stand open. Cho, Daiko, and Ansha bow deeply to you before a smiling and peaceful Ebisu.

“Well San... did you learn your lesson?” Cho asks with a fatherly smile.

“Yes sir.”

“Excellent! Go get to work, your chores are waiting.” As the boy goes, the elders of the Temple bow deeply once again. “Thank you, for everything. If you ever need anything, please do not hesitate. You are always welcome here.”

As the PCs turn to leave, they can see the statues of Bodhisatvas lining the Great Hall all bow from the corner of their eye, but this is fleeting: the statues look normal when observed directly (except for O-Han, if he was summoned, he will wave). Those with Seven Fortune’s Blessing will see Ebisu smiling at them.

As they exit, a lone geisha bows politely as they pass before entering the Temple herself, one who looks strikingly similar to San...

San does not return peacefully, or does so with debt unabsolved.

The main doors are still barred, but you are led in through the back, into the deserted Temple. San collapses before the angered Fortune, crying, as Cho sighs heavily. “Thank you, Samurai-samas, for all your efforts. We shall handle it from here...”

As they exit, a lone geisha bows politely as they pass before entering herself, one who looks strikingly similar to San...

San dies

If San dies, the PCs will return to find the Temple District in the midst of a lawless riot, with the Temple of Ebisu itself a raging inferno. Through the flames, they can see the great golden statue of Ebisu holding a massive axe...

Amidst the confusion and chaos, a beautiful geisha’s corpse lies on the temple’s steps, dead from a stab to the neck with the bloody knife still in her hand... (Seicho committed Jigai upon the loss of her brother).

Ono-ichi or Kuma dies

If Ono-ichi dies during the course of the mod, Kuma will end up hanging himself. This information will quickly reach the PCs through gossip... as well as rumors of significant civil unrest, and even targeted killings of samurai by peasants (notably against the clan of whichever PC landed the killing blow).

The End

Rewards for Completing the Adventure

Surviving the adventure:	1XP
Good roleplaying:	+1XP
Returning San to the Temple:	+1XP
Showing San the error of his ways:	+1XP

Total Possible Experience: 4XP

Favors

If the PCs peacefully return San, they gain one Favor.

Honor

Returning San peacefully, without debt, gains the PC +.1 Honor.

Glory

All PCs gain G2 Glory, so long as they return San peacefully.

PCs who chose to make fun of Kuma at the beginning of the module *and also* fell through the trapdoor are gossiped about by their rumormongering “friends”, in the form of the disadvantage “Infamous: [bad nickname]”. This will have a general “mud” theme, such as below, but the GM should feel free to get creative.

Crane or Phoenix: Mudbird
Crab, Mantis, or Scorpion: Mudbug
Dragon: Earthworm

Allies and Enemies

The PCs may gain *either* Cho (2I/ 2D) or Ansha (2I / 1D) as an ally. Those who successfully promoted Kuma to a superior may take him as a 0I / 4D Ally.

Kuma's allies may call on him for a dance performance at any time while they are in Balishnimpur, up to once per module.

Ansha's allies may gain a servant per the rulebook, as long as they are not for violent or sexual purposes (no budoka, sohei, concubines, whores, etc. Geisha are *not* whores). This requires favors equal to XP spent per the standard rules. Given that this is *Heroes of Rokugan*, any mistreatment will cause the Servant to either run away, steal the PCs things (including swords and chop), or even flat-out kill the offender in their sleep with a hatchet, regardless of how historically accurate such things might be.

All servants obtained through Ansha will have some measure of Invindi ancestry.

Other Awards/Penalties

If San is successfully returned, any ronin or Brotherhood PCs may sleep in the Temple of Ebisu during their stay in Balishnimpur, as long as they help out with the chores. This gives them a free raise on their upkeep rolls.

GM Reporting

- 1) Was Ebisu appeased?
- 2) Were the Invindi treated with honor?
- 3) Were the incriminating documents given to a larger group (a great clan, Imperials, Magistrates, etc.?)

The GM must report this information by (date three months after release) for it to have storyline effect

Appendix #1: NPCs

San, the wayward monk

A skinny young monk in a hand-me-down orange yukata.

School/Rank: None/1

Initiative: 5k3

Armor TN: 15

Reduction: 0

Wounds: 10 (+0), 14 (+3), 18 (+5), 22 (+10), 26 (+15), 30 (+20), 34 (Down, +40), 38 (Dead)

Attack: 6k3 (unarmed, Complex)

Damage: 4k1 (unarmed)

Air 2 Earth 2 Fire 2 Water 2 Void 2
Will 3 Agi 3

Honor: 2.0 Status: 0.0 Glory: 0.0

Primary Skills: Jujitsu 3, Athletics 2, Lore: Theology 2, Game: Fortunes and Winds 2, Sincerity (Honesty) 2

Advantages/Disadvantages: Seven Fortune's Blessing (Ebisu), True Love (Seicho), Compulsion: Gambling, Gullible, Doubt: Gambling

Special Mechanics: +1k0 unarmed damage

Ronin Gangster

A sneering ne'er-do-well with a white and red *Crimson Asuras* armband and a sword.

School/Rank: Ronin/1

Initiative: 4k3

Armor TN: 20

Reduction: 0

Wounds: 15 (+0), 21 (+3), 27 (+5), 33 (+10), 39 (+15),

45 (+20), 51 (Down, +40), 58 (Dead)

Attack: 6k3 (Katana, Complex)

Damage: 7k2 (Katana)

Air 2 Earth 3 Fire 2 Water 2 Void 2
Ref 3 Agi 3 Str 3

Honor: 2.0 Status: -10 Glory: 0.0

Primary Skills: Knives 3, Kenjutsu 3, Heavy Weapons 3 (Masakari)

Advantages/Disadvantages: Social Disadvantage (Ronin, Gangster)

Special Mechanics: +1k0 sword damage

Ono-ichi

Once an honorable ronin, Ono-ichi has built a formidable reputation as an axe fighting gangster, but after a few years of life on the run, he has finally a reason to settle down.

School/Rank: True Ronin/Forest Killer/3

Initiative: 6k3

Armor TN: 23

Reduction: 0

Wounds: 18 (+0), 27 (+0), 36 (+2), 45 (+7), 54 (+12), 63 (+17), 72 (Down, +37), 82 (Dead)

Attack: 8k3 (Masakari, Complex)

Damage: 6k3+3 (Masakari)

Air 3 Earth Fire 3 Water Void 3
3 3

Str 4

Honor: 4.0 Status: -10 (gang leader) Infamy: 5.0

Primary Skills: Heavy Weapons (Masakari) 5, Kenjutsu (katana) 3, Knives 3, Athletics (Throwing) 5, Investigation (Notice) 3, Craft: Traps 3, Jujitsu (Improvised Weapons) 3, Defense 1, Hunting (Traps) 3, Intimidation (Control, Bullying) 5, Etiquette 5, Commerce 3

Advantages/Disadvantages: Hero of the People, Kharmic Tie (Kuma), Strength of the Earth, Infamous (Bandit), Social Disadvantage (Ronin, Gangster, Bandit)

Special Mechanics: Ignore off-hand penalties when dual wielding with knives, Ignore 2 reduction from armor when using heavy weapons, One free raise towards the use of knockdown when using heavy weapons, Difficult terrain does not impede movement.

Way of the Axe: Can throw a small axe as a complex action (he carries a spare for this purpose).

Peasant Gangster

A sneering ne'er-do-well with a white and red *Crimson Asuras* armband.

Initiative: 3k2

Armor TN: 15

Reduction: 0

Wounds: 10 (+0), 14 (+3), 18 (+5), 22 (+10), 26 (+15), 30 (+20), 34 (Down, +40), 38 (Dead)

Attack: 5k3 (Knife or club, Complex)

Damage: 2k2 (club) or 3k1 (knife)

Air 1 Earth 2 Fire 1 Water 2 Void 1
Ref 2 Agi 3

Honor: 1 Status: -10 Glory: 0.0

Primary Skills: Knives 2, Jujitsu (Improvised weapons) 2

Advantages/Disadvantages: Social Disadvantage (Peasant, Gangster)

Kuma

A large, bearded man who carries his gentle innocence on his sleeve. In another life, he may have been a Doji Innocent...

School/Rank: True Ronin/2

Initiative: 5k3

Armor TN: 30

Reduction: 0

Wounds: 10 (+0), 14 (+3), 18 (+5), 22 (+10), 26 (+15), 30 (+20), 34 (Down, +40), 38 (Dead)45 (+20), 51 (Down, +40), 58 (Dead)

Attack: 4k3 (Slap, Complex)

Damage: 4k1 (Slap)

Air 3 Earth 2 Fire 3 Water 2 Void 3

Awa. 5

Str 4

Honor: 4.5 Status: 0.0 Glory: 3.0

Primary Skills: Perform: Dance 5, Juijutsu (Sumai) 2

Advantages/Disadvantages: Large, Kharmic Tie 1 (Ono-Ichi), Sensation, Doubt: Juijutsu, Soft-Hearted, Social Disadvantage (Ronin), Great Potential: Perform: Dance

Player Handout #1: News From the Empire

“Blessed tidings, Samurai! I have heard that the summer months have been particularly harsh in Balishnimpur, but the news from the Homelands are anything but! In fact, I would say that this has been a prosperous time indeed for the Empire.

“Early indications suggest that the harvest season is going to be one of the more productive ones in years. This is excellent news for all of the Empire, and especially the Crab, who will not have to make up as much stores as they do on a typical year.

“Toturi Kazetora is reportedly going to begin his tour of the various clans lands in the Spring, starting with an event at Kyuden Seppun which will culminate in the marriage of Hiruma Miraiko’s daughter to Kakita Yushihiro’s son. Most certainly, this shall be a rather auspicious event, as the Clan champions from every clan have been invited to attend this event. Should all of them join, this would be the first time that all of the Clan Champions have been together since the coronation of Toturi X!

There is little else, admittedly, to report. The Clans again avoid war this year, with minor skirmishes being the only thing of martial interest... though the Lion and Unicorn have avoided any skirmishes this year, and instead both have individually skirmished the Dragon around their borders.”

-Otomo Yusuke