

Winter Court: Shiro Ide

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

Month of Hida, 1339 (Winter)

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Court, Intrigue
Part 1 of Shifting Sands

The house of Ide welcomes all with an open hand.

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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

As is tradition, the Ide family of the Unicorn is hosting a winter court at their ancestral palace. Since Ide Ekuan is attending the Imperial Winter Court in Kyuden Doji along with the other family daimyo of the Unicorn and the Clan Champion, hosting the court of the Ide falls to his hatamoto Ide Akio.

Ide Akio, at the orders of the Khan Moto Sartaq, intends to impress upon his guests the ability of the Unicorn to integrate the more traditional aspects of Rokugani culture. To this end, he has invited younger samurai from across the empire to visit the home of the Ide, in the hope that they will be free from preconceived ideas about the Unicorn and will return home to tell of the Unicorn's adherence to Rokugani customs.

Ide Akio intends to give a boon from the Unicorn clan to whichever clan's courtiers impress him the most. To this end a variety of contests will be held - both traditional contests of the court and contests designed to highlight the unique skills and teachings of the Ide.

Unfortunately, a group of Gaijin traders will take the opportunity to gain revenge for a Unicorn trader's betrayal. They will attack and kill a Unicorn during one of the celebratory contests. While only a minor disruption to the court overall, he will be forced to moved quickly to resolve the situation.

As an appropriate magistrate is unavailable an agent of the Treasurer will investigate the attack. Otomo Katsuo intends to call upon the PC's to assist him.

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

The GM should take a few minutes to examine the players' character sheets in order to have an idea of the nature of the PCs at the table.

Check the PCs character sheets for the following:

- Ally (Ide Ekuan), Ally (Doji Hanako) Languages (Senpet), Way of the Land (Ide or Garanto Province)
- Sworn Enemy (Doji Hanako), Cast Out, Wrath of the Kami: Fire, Phobia: Fire, Disbeliever, Gaijin Name.

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

PCs lose L0 glory at the beginning of this module.

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 is (5*Taint rank) + 10.

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

As this module occurs within a court where all accommodations are provided no survival roll is necessary.

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 month of Hida has come to Rokugan and a cool wind blows steadily from the north, across miles of unbroken Unicorn plains. A caravan of samurai from many clans travels to the northwestern lands of Rokugan to attend the Unicorn Clan's Winter Court at Shiro Ide. Clan and Imperial PCs have received personal invitations to be guests of the Ide family for the winter. This is highly unusual, but is both a great honor and is impossible to politely decline for samurai of relatively low station. Any Ronin PCs have been hired by Otomo Katsuo, an officer of the Imperial Treasurer, to provide security for the annual tax assessment to be transported to the imperial capital after the winter. In return they will be housed for the winter, fed, and be paid one koku.

The winds whip around the promontory of Shiro Ide. The stone walls stand tall above the plain, though perhaps not quite as tall as a normal Rokugani castle. The main gate stands wide, draped in massive purple banners, with bushi in purple and white at attention on either side.

A woman in the colors and mon of the Ide rushes to meet your caravan, and gives a short bow as she stops in front of you. She withdraws a scroll from her hip satchel, and gives a scrutinizing glance over the assembled samurai.

“Welcome to Shiro Ide, samurai-samas!”

She greets the PC’s by name without having been told, making marks upon her scroll as she does so.

“Please, come in and take your ease. Rooms have been prepared for you within the castle. The servants will

escort you inside. We hope your stay here is comfortable, enjoyable, and enlightening.” She gives another short bow, and rushes off to meet the next group of arrivals – a large wagon with the mon of the Otomo.

A servant ushers the PC’s into the castle. They are led to individual well-appointed rooms. Upon each PC’s bed is a note from Ide Akio (see Player Handout 1). Unicorn PC’s will also find a set of traditionally rokugani garments waiting for them. They are well tailored and appropriate for a traditional winter court. If any Unicorn PC’s do not take the hint, they can roll **Etiquette / Awareness** at TN 10 to realize these garments are a not-so-subtle suggestion from their host.

The servants can answer any basic questions the PC’s may have about the layout of the castle or the town below, but samurai gossip and samurai-specific topics are either beyond them or they are simply not willing to weigh on matters concerning their betters.

The PC’s will have time to bathe and change clothes before dinner, but not much time beyond that to explore the castle or surrounding city.

Part One: Dinner and a Movie

High above the castle gardens the wind howl and the tops of the tallest trees sway. However, through some trick of architecture the gardens of the Ide are completely sheltered. A double line of candles and lanterns illuminates the pathways and dinner tables set for a large gathering. As the samurai assemble and take their seats, Ide Akio stands at the front table.

“Greetings, samurai-sans and samas. My lord, Ide Ekuan, bids you welcome to the lands and house of the Ide. I hope you find your time here comfortable, peaceful, and enlightening. The dojo of the Ide have prepared a series of demonstrations and competitions that I hope will prove interesting.”

“Also, my lord has prepared a gift. A boon from the Unicorn, to be given to one of the clans.” With a gesture to the three samurai seated at his side he continues, “Whomever can most impress our august guests of honor shall be awarded a special gift at the end of the winter.”

He smiles broadly, “Court will convene in the grand hall in the morning. Tonight, please enjoy the dinner we have prepared for you. From the lands of the Scorpion, the Silken Breath will be favoring us with a performance of the seminal work, ‘Winter Wind’s Promise’.”

With a bow, Akio resumes his seat and a swarm of servants flow out from the castle bearing dishes of finely prepared rice, fish, sushi, vegetables, miso soup, and tofu.

A competition will run the length of the winter. Each clan will earn points based on their performance in the individual events. The clan with the most points at the end of the winner will be granted a boon from the Ide family.

Any of the NPCs in Appendix 2 who do not have a PC of their clan present can be lobbied to back another clan. The TN and method for doing is listed with the NPC in question. Each NPC also has **Lore: Heraldry / Awareness** TNs listed – this roll can discern what types of influence (skills) would be most effective at swaying them

Once an NPC’s support has been secured it can be swayed again. To do so, the new clan must *exceed* the previous high roll to lobby them. For the sake of time, after an NPC has been lobbied once it is recommended that the GM skip further RP for the lobbying and go straight to the roll.

A given PC can only lobby one NPC per event (denoted as Parts in this module). NPCs can be sway up until the Go tournament, at which point they are ‘locked in’. Add any points they would score to the lobbying clan at the **end** of the winter.

Appendix 5 contains a useful table for tracking each clan’s score.

As this is a court, gossip is nigh-omnipresent. Give any PC interested in gossiping the handout in Appendix 3, which contains all the freely available gossip about each NPC. No roll is required to attain this gossip.

Additionally, rumors will abound about the ‘unorthodox’ and ‘unfortunate’ nature of any PC with the gaijin name disadvantage. All such PC’s lose one point of glory.

If any PC chooses to wear non-traditional garb to this event, they will lose 1 point of Glory.

Rumors

There is more specific gossip available for any PC that wishes to roll **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness**.

- 5: Ide Ekuan is a good friend of the Khan, Moto Sartaq. The two have known each other for many years and it is commonly thought likely that they worked together to plan this winter court.
- 10: Moto Noritoshi, the Khan’s eldest son and chosen heir, was sent to this court. Sources disagree on whether he is to be the Khan’s representative, to give the young man exposure to winter court in a friendly setting, or because of the longstanding friendship between Ekuan and Sartaq.
- 15: A Kitsuki investigator was in the city recently asking many questions about Ide Ekuan’s grandfather. He apparently kept the Emerald Magistrate quite busy with requests for records.
- 20: The Kakita are reportedly unhappy that Shiba Kaito decided to unveil his latest work in the Scorpion lands instead of presenting it in Shiro Sano Kakita. The Kakita daimyo was supposedly looking forward to viewing his work.
- 25: Some murmur that the Khan’s cousin was not actually invited to this court; he simply showed up unannounced. The Ide, being gracious hosts, have nonetheless welcomed him to the court.
(This rumour was started by Moto Noritoshi, which can be found out with a Courtier / Awareness roll at TN 20. It is also false.)

All the NPC’s described in Appendix 2 are present and will speak with any PC that demonstrates an interest in speaking with them. The NPC’s will be around the castle throughout the court and available to converse with the PCs if anyone wants to speak with them again later.

Once the PC's have finished talking amongst themselves or speaking with whichever NPC's interest them, the Scorpion theater troupe will commence their performance.

As twilight fades servants move silently up the center aisle, extinguishing the lanterns and leaving only the row of candles to illuminate the walkways and tables.

A hush falls over the room as a large lantern is lit in the center of the stage. A man in voluminous robes strides onto the stage. His moderate voice is at once both quiet and fills the entire garden as he begins to speak, "My friends, welcome, to the inn of Cherry Blossom Snow..."

The play, a brilliant piece of Noh theater, depicts a Yuki no Onna, a snowmaiden, and her doomed love for an honorable yojimbo of the Shiba family. By the end, many eyes in the audience are moist.

As the lamps on the stage are extinguished, the guests file out silently along the darkened path, and one or two quiet snuffles or sobs can be heard

Part Two: Peaceful Blades

The first few weeks of court fly by. The courtiers of the Ide are friendly and the swirl of court begins in earnest as the representatives of the clans begin the first stages of deal making and relationship building. Ide Akio's presence seems to have something of a calming effect on the court, and there are no hints of scandal or other unsavory goings-on.

The air is still warm, unusual for this late in the year, as the court gathers in enclosed courtyard of the Single Strike Dojo, a small school standing on the banks of the Chrysanthemum Petal Lake, just a short walk from the castle.

A tall thin man in his late 40's, with a neatly trimmed black goatee and a traditional topknot, steps forward to greet the assembled courtiers and guests.

"Konnichiwa, honored guests. This one is Ide Gokin, and he bids you welcome to his school." He pauses and bows to the group. "Akio-sama has asked me to provide a demonstration of our school's techniques."

With a nod and a short gesture from Gokin, two men in the deep purple of the Unicorn step into the dueling ring inscribed on the ground. They bow to each other and assume a very traditional dueling stance, one that would not be out of place in the courts of the Lion or Scorpion. After a minute of mutual inspection, one

steps forward swiftly, his blade flying free of its saya. With a snap, the flat of his blade impacts the other man's wrist, knocking his half-drawn katana onto the ground. The two men bow, the duel having finished wordlessly and bloodlessly.

Gokin nods to both men, and addresses the gathered courtiers, "If any of you wish, I would invite you to participate in a small competition of the art of Iaijutsu, in the ways of our school."

If any PC chooses to wear non-traditional garb to this event, they will suffer an L0 Glory Loss. Unicorn PCs will suffer an L-1 Glory Loss. Moto Ogedei is notably absent.

The first contest is one of Iaijutsu. Any PC's that wish to may participate in this contest. A few of the present NPC's will participate as well, though not all the bushi seem eager to do so. If a PC who does not carry a katana wishes to participate, they will be loaned one.

Each competitor will have a chrysanthemum pinned to their haori. The objective is to either remove the opponent's chrysanthemum without drawing blood or to disarm them without drawing blood.

If only one or two PC's wish to participate, you can run this competition as a set of single-elimination duels, but in the interest of time it is advised that the competition be abstracted as follows:

All competitors make a **Iaijutsu (Focus) / Void** roll, with the normal benefits from Center Stance. Do not apply any bonus from Assessment, though techniques which apply to the focus roll of a duel should work normally.

The NPCs roll as follows:

Ikoma Taro - 21

Kitsuki Oda - 31

Hiruma Izumi - 33

Moto Noritoshi - 37

The highest two rolls should face off in the final duel, whether that is two PC's, two NPC's, or a PC and Moto Noritoshi. Noritoshi's dueling stats are in Appendix 2 if he duels a PC. Noritoshi will attempt to strike the flower on their Haori, unless they have Sworn Enemy (Moto Sartaq). If they have that disadvantage and Noritoshi beats the PC with 2 or more free raises from Focus, he will perform a called shot, leaving a disfiguring scar on their face. This does not confer any mechanical disadvantage, but should be noted on the player's mod sheet.

A PC may attempt to strike their opponent's flower at the normal TN for a strike roll, or attempt as Disarm as the maneuver. If a PC hits the Disarm but fails to cause their opponent to drop their weapon, they are considered to have missed for the purposes of resolving the duel and their opponent may attempt to strike.

If a PC decides to strike normally (ignoring the flower or the disarm), it is a significant breach of etiquette – a D4 honor loss. They will still be considered the winner of the competition, but will gain no glory from the module.

If no PC is in the highest two rolls, the final duel will be between Moto Noritoshi and Hiruma Izumi. Moto Noritoshi will draw first and flick the flower from Izumi's vest, winning the duel.

If the victor wins with a 'peaceful' method (Disarm or attacking the flower):

Gokin gives a bow and a ready smile to the winning duelist.

"Well done! Though our methods require a bit more finesse than the traditional approach, you seem to be grasping it quite quickly. By concentrating on duels of a non-lethal variety, we aim to defuse conflict rather than increase it."

Turning, he addresses the entire crowd, "Thank you all for your time, and I hope you have learned something today about the Unicorn and the Ide. This one appreciates your kindness and time for visiting our humble dojo."

Ide Akio steps forward from behind the beaming Unicorn sensei, and gives a short bow to the sensei. "Thank you, Gokin-san, for demonstrating the techniques of your dojo." He turns slightly to address the crowd, "Thank you all for joining me here to see our ways. Now, if you will return with me to the castle, I think the servants will have dinner ready shortly."

The winner's clan earns 2 points. If the second-place duelist is from a different clan then that clan earns 1 point. Otherwise, go down the list until a different clan is found, and that clan earns 1 point.

If the victor wins via the normal dueling style – drawing blood:

Ide Gokin gives a nod to the final duelists, but doesn't repress a frown.

"You have emerged victorious [clan]-san. Your strike was quite ... swift." The disappointment in the elder man's voice is palpable. For a moment, he shifts his weight from one foot to another, as if uncertain of what to do.

Ide Akio quickly steps forward from behind the Unicorn sensei, and bows low to the guests, "Thank you, Gokin-san, for showing us the techniques and style of the Calm Heart dojo. I feel we have *all* learned a great deal today. If you will join me in the castle, I think servants will have dinner ready quite shortly..."

The winner's clan earns no points. If the second-place duelist is from a different clan then that clan earns 1 point. Otherwise, go down the list until a different clan is found, and that clan earns 1 point.

Part Three: Alcohol and Poetry

Over the next few weeks the days begin to fade into one another and the business of court begins to settle into a steady rhythm. Events of the past year discussed, deals made, marriages arranged, hostilities papered over and friendships renewed.

On an evening where the wind is silent and bright fires burn to warm the cool night air the guests of Shiro Ide gather around a small stream in the gardens.

At the end of the stream, near a small pond, Ide Akio stands. "My friends, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the Winding Water Banquet. Please, seat yourselves where you feel most appropriate and take part."

With a flourish, Ide Akio sits near the pond, and servants begin to place small cups upon slats of wood, fill them with sake, then float them down the river.

Moto Noritoshi takes the first cup, drinks, and in a clear voice announces, "From time to time / to those who behold the moon / the clouds give rest".

The courtiers politely applaud and Noritoshi resumes his seat. More cups begin to float down the stream, and the assembled guests follow his example.

If any PC chooses to wear non-traditional garb to this event, they will suffer an L0 Glory Loss. Unicorn PCs will suffer an L-1 Glory Loss.

Participation is mandatory. All PC's must drink at least one cup of sake and recite a poem. Failure to do so is a major breach of etiquette, and consequently a D2 honor loss.

Poems do not have to be original compositions and most are not; any PC with ranks in an appropriate skill will recognize that Noritoshi's poem was written by the famous poet Matsu Basho.

To successfully recite a poem, a PC must succeed at a TN 10 **Artisan: Poetry / Awareness** or **Perform: Oratory / Awareness** roll. Award a free raise to any player that composes an appropriate haiku. Failing to deliver a poem properly results in a minor loss of face, a G2 glory loss

Any PC with Doji Hanako as a Sworn Enemy will find the court very critical of all their attempts at poetry. All their presentation TN's are increased by 15 and the penalty for failure increases to G4, as each misspoken syllable is noted by everyone present.

Conversely, any PC with Doji Hanako as an Ally has their TN's reduced by 10 as the court fawns over their superb choices and enunciation, and suffers no glory loss if they fail as the courts attention immediately turns elsewhere.

After offering a poem any PC can keep their cup and be done. However, as this is a contest, PCs that wish to continue may attempt a **raw Stamina** roll at TN 5. Failure raises their subsequent TN's by 10, while success raises them by 5. They then repeat the poetry and stamina rolls until only one poet remains, due to concession or failure to deliver their poems appropriately.

Any PC's that stop before the third round, for any reason, will notice something out of the ordinary:

Motshi Atsuko seems to be feeling the effects of the alcohol rather severely. She was sitting in the back so thankfully her poor enunciation of her poem was not clear to most, but any further poetry will lead to certain embarrassment for her.

This is a roleplaying challenge for any PC that decides to render her assistance. She will give mild resistance to any suggestion that she is inebriated or otherwise impaired, but a reasonable approach to convincing her to stop should succeed.

If no PC does, during the third round:

Moshi Atsuko fumbles slightly for a sake cap, nearly spilling its contents into the stream. She downs the cup in a single gulp then speaks loudly and with a slight

slur, "The peace of the ocean / Suitengu's finest blessing / No Lion on our boats."

The entire court goes silent for a long moment. Then, Ikoma Taro's loud laughter breaks the awkward tension.

Realizing what she's done, Moshi Atsuko turns bright red then rushes out of the garden. Gossip in the courts in the follow days confirms that she has departed the court for the remainder of the winter.

Moshi Atsuko will flee from court out of embarrassment. The Mantis, or whichever clan was persuaded to support, will lose the base one point Atsuko possessed..

Once a winner has been determined:

The court claps approvingly for the final poem, and in a sweet voice Doji Hanako calls out "Masterfully delivered, [family]-san. An excellent poem." She taps her fan to her chin for a moment, feigning deep thought, "I would like to present you this gift." She picks up a small plant which had been sitting beside her.

"A tree, grown from a seed of the Great Pine at Kyuden Doji, which has sat upon the cliffs since it was planted by Doji-kami."

The winner is expected to make 2 appropriate refusals. Presuming they do so, the winning PC gains G4 glory, a small bonsai tree, and their clan receives 2 points. If they are unable to properly refuse the gift twice, Doji Hanako will politely cover for them, but they will receive no glory and their clan will receive no points. The second highest placing clan (not necessarily the second-place character) receives 1 point.

Example offerings: "Poetry is a seed which grows from a tree Lady Doji planted, so too should you accept this tree."

"Surely a samurai skilled of one art form must be skilled in others; please, accept this gift and show us what you can create of it."

Part Four: How many dinners are we going to have

About a week after the first contest, each PC will receive a note. It reads as follows:

Dear samurai-san,

I would be very grateful if you would do me the honor of joining me and some friends for dinner.

I have not had the pleasure of meeting you before this winter, and was hoping we could speak and get to know one another.

If you can find the time, please join me for dinner in the side hall this evening.

Otomo Katsuo

PC's are not necessarily compelled to attend, and there is no punishment for not doing so.

The PC's enter a large dining room, tastefully decorated, full of very fine and expensive small touches. Seated at the head of the table is a man in the colors and mon of the Otomo, Otomo Katsuo. To his immediate right is a handsome man in the colors of the Bayushi, wearing a mask that vaguely resembles a black bird.

The Otomo stands and smiles, beckoning you into the room.

"Ah, please, come in, and take your ease. I am Otomo Katsuo, imperial investigator. It is a pleasure to meet all of you. Thank you for being so kind as to join me for dinner."

An elaborate traditional rokugani dinner is brought in, and it is extremely delicious.

Throughout the meal, Otomo Katsuo will ask the PC's about their adventures and time in the Ivory Kingdoms. He is sizing them up and trying to estimate their capabilities. He will ask follow-up questions on any stories they tell, both encouraging them to brag and to go into detail about specific puzzles they have solved or specific feats they accomplished.

Bayushi Tenno will sit quietly, nod at appropriate moments, and good natured laugh at any jokes the PCs make. If someone engages him in conversation, he will

skillfully turn the conversation back to being about the PCs.

If the PCs seem hesitant to brag and discuss their accomplishments, Katsuo will instead begin asking them about clan politics, with an eye towards sparking conflict or discussion between the PCs. Katsuo's aim is to get the PCs to talk to one another about politics, rather than arguing with him. Feel free to improvise questions that will spark disagreement or argument of a non-personal nature between the PCs.

Example questions:

"So, I hear the Scorpion did not come to an agreement of friendship with any other clan lately, but the Crane did with two. That bodes ill for the Scorpion in the courts, does it not?"

"Hmmm... I heard that Lion and the Crab have come to something of an accord lately. Perhaps the Crab are seeing to cover their military losses. Do you think they are likely to attack someone? Perhaps the [insert clan of a PC here]?"

"Given all the announcements of friendship lately, it strikes me as odd that the Mantis are standing alone. Perhaps they are looking to sell to all sides. Or perhaps they are afraid to commit an army?"

"So, it was announced that the Phoenix are seeking alliance with the Lion and the Crab. Odd that the Phoenix would throw their lot in with two warlike clans. I wonder what pacifism means in this era then? The Owl remain neutral, perhaps they are now the beacon of peace in the Empire?"

"The Unicorn and Dragon have declared that they are working alongside each other. After the recent fighting along that border this seems interesting. The Dragon must be quick to forgive. Or perhaps they are looking to wipe away the memory of military defeats?"

"While the other clans negotiated friendship and alliance, the Owl refused to treat with anyone. A principled position or a dangerous position? What do you think? Better to stand alone and take all who come, or better to find friends and band together?"

After an appropriate amount of the PC's bragging about themselves or talking about politics Otomo Katsuo will ask the PC's a final question.

"This morning Tenno-san and I were having a discussion. He put a question to me and I was not sure how to answer it. Perhaps you could share your thoughts on it with me?"

"If your lord asked you to do something you knew was dishonorable but was critical to the Empire, what would you do?"

Each PC is expected to answer for themselves, and Katsuo will carefully consider each answer.

If they answer that they would act dishonorably Bayushi Tenno will probe their answer, extolling the virtues of Honor and asking why they would sacrifice what it means to be a samurai. If they state that they would act honorably instead Otomo Katsuo will follow up, asking why they would not prevent serious disaster to the Empire.

After everyone has answered, Bayushi Tenno will nod meaningfully to Otomo Katsuo, then bow to him and the assembled PC's before speaking in a low melodious voice, "Thank you all for an interesting and enlightening dinner."

He leaves, and the Otomo bows to the PCs before doing the same.

The clan of any PC that answered Katsuo's question, either in the affirmative or negative, earns 1 point (max 1 point, regardless of the number of PCs from each clan). No points are earned if a PC demurs or refuses to answer.

Part Five: Unveiled Sculpture

On the night before midwinter, the guests are led by a string of candles to a temple, just outside the castle. With a bowed head, a priest in the robes of the Unicorn, wearing the mon of the Ide and the Iuchi greets the assembled court. A monk stands alongside her in the saffron robes of the Brotherhood

"My friends, welcome, to the Falling Leaf Dojo, the home of the priests of the Ide. I am Ide Kaoru, and this is Yasahiro." With a nod, she indicates the monk at her side.

"Welcome to the shrine to the Fortune Uzume. Please, enter." She swings the door wide, and two blazing

bonfires with a small path between them light a courtyard. At the far side, a statue of a laughing young woman stands inside an enclosure, alongside a large object with a cloth draped over it.

If any PC has the Cast Out disadvantage, regardless of sect, Yasahiro will stop that PC as they attempt to enter. In full view of the court he will place himself between the PC and the entryway and state in a strong voice, "Samurai-san, you are not welcome here." The monk will ignore any entreaties to the contrary, and the courtiers will immediately begin to buzz with gossip. The offending PC will lose half a rank of glory and be forced to watch this scene from the entryway.

Ide Kaoru stands before the bonfire, faces the statue, and proclaims in a loud voice, "Yakamo-sama, please look kindly upon us and give good health to our families."

With that, she removes her sandals and walks barefoot between the bonfires until she reaches the shrine to the fortune of dance. Yasahiro steps up next, bows his head and asks, "Yakamo-sama, remove from our souls the impurities of this year" and then in a whirling dance pirouettes between the fires to the shrine.

Each PC should be encouraged to ask the Sun for a blessing then walk barefoot between the fires. If they don't have Disbeliever, Wrath of the Elements: Fire, or Phobia: Fire, this is a simple task and requires no roll. However, for those unfortunate characters with any of those disadvantages, a Raw Willpower roll is required at TN 15 to walk between the roaring bonfires. Any that fail either can't bring themselves to do it (Phobia) and suffer a minor breach of etiquette or as they walk find the flames licking out towards them, inflicting sudden burns (causing 2k2 wounds).

Last through the fire is Moto Ogedei. He looks pensive as he stares at it, then in a loud voice proclaims, "May the Shi-Tien Yen-Wang find my actions Just." Everyone else does their best to ignore the Moto's strange invocation.

With all assembled within the shrine Shiba Kaito steps forward and bows the Ide, then to the monks, and then to the assembled courtiers. "My honored hosts, enlightened monk-samas, and my friends. I thank you all for the invitation. I wish to show my appreciation to the Ide and to the Fortunes who bless us."

He pulls the cloth away, revealing a sculpture of a kite gliding in the air with a single flower attached to its panels.

Any PC with 2 ranks in Lore: Theology can recognize the symbols of Komoku, Fortune of the West Wind.

Doji Hanako steps forward, and regards the statue thoughtfully, tapping her fan against her chin.

“Shiba Kaito-san, this is a most excellent statue for the Fortune of Dance. Truly, it is well placed within this temple.”

Bayushi Tenno smiles slightly behind his mask, “Oh, my apologies Hanako-sama, but I believe that is a statue to Komoku, Fortune of the West Wind. You can see by this interesting and innovative representation of a kite. Truly, no artist before has chosen to render a kite in quite this fashion.”

Hanako laughs slightly, “Ah, my mistake. I misunderstood which fortune Shiba-san was attempting to represent.” Her voice dripping with sarcasm she adds, “I have never seen a statue equal to this one.”

Tenno turns to the assembled PCs, “What do you think of this particular piece?”

This is an invitation to join an impromptu game of Sadane.

Any PC can join in by making a roll of **Games: Sadane / Awareness**. If a PC does not have that skill, they may roll Perform: Oratory at a 5 TN penalty, or Courtier at a 10 TN penalty instead. Voice applies regardless of the skill rolled, if the PC has that advantage.

PCs may also opt to defend Shiba Kaito’s work. They can do with the skills listed above.

Any PC that roleplays a particularly clever insult or defense should be awarded a free raise.

If a PC with Bayushi Tenno as a sworn enemy is present, he will call upon them by name to ‘play’ first, even if they do otherwise do not wish to.

If such a PC does not wish to play or fails to roll above a 20, he will give them ‘friendly pointers’ on Sadane and how it is a game in which ‘all true scorpions should be versed’. Such a PC suffers a G-1 glory loss for the sudden negative attention from the famous scorpion.

If a PC with Doji Hanako as a sworn enemy is present and chooses to defend Kaito, she will turn her insults upon that PC personally as well.

Doji Hanako rolls a 38 on her **Games: Sadane / Awareness** roll.

The clan of the PC with the highest roll receives one point. If that PC also outrolls Doji Hanako their clan receives an additional point. If Doji Hanako is insulting a PC and they did not outroll her, they suffer a G1 glory loss.

If no PC defends Kaito:

Shiba Kaito’s barely maintained On shatters. Sobbing uncontrollably, he flees the room at a run. Everyone present does their best not to acknowledge the sudden outburst, though a small smile momentarily graces Doji Hanako’s lips.

The next day his room is empty, and rumors begin to circulate that he left the court to return to Phoenix lands.

Kaito will flee from court out of embarrassment. The Phoenix will lose the base one point Kaito possessed. If another clan had persuaded Shiba Kaito to support them all the points gained from his support go to 0.

If at least one PC defends Kaito:

Shiba Kaito very carefully maintains his On, not speaking a single word while the courtiers debate the merits of his creation.

Once all have finished, he gives a single nod to the host Ide Akio, then retreats from the shrine, his eyes slightly red. Doji Hanako smiles pleasantly as he leaves.

If any PC brings up the Lords of Death, or asks why Shi-Tien Yen-Wang don’t have a shrine in the temple:

Moto Noritoshi quietly but audibly interjects, “These are shrines to the Fortunes of *Rokugan*.”

Ogedei whirls towards him, fury plainly visible upon his face. “The Shi-Tien Yen-Wang are our gods and Fortunes of Rokugan both. You would do well to remember that.”

The PCs should attempt to diffuse this confrontation. If a PC is notably taking one side the other man will push back – Noritoshi will claim that it is important for the Unicorn to follow the traditional and proper Fortunes of the Empire, while Ogedei will maintain

that the Lords of Death are the traditions of the Moto and so it would be wrong for the Moto to turn their backs upon them. Any reasonable good-faith effort to separate the two or mediate their beliefs should ultimately succeed.

If any PCs actively encourages the conflict, they can do so. In such a case of conflict, the GM should have all PCs participating in the discussion roll **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness**. Award up to 1 free raise for any arguments that are particularly eloquent. Whichever side has the highest single roll carries the day.

If at least one PC attempts to mediate and no one encourages the conflict, or if the PC attempting to mediate rolls higher:

The two men continue to glare at one another for a long moment. Moto Noritoshi seems like he is about to say something further to Ogedei, then pauses, apparently having thought better of it. With no further comment, he turns on his heel and walks back over to the statue to the fortune of dance. He spends the rest of the evening pointedly ignoring Moto Ogedei.

If no PC attempts to mediate, or PCs encouraging conflict end up rolling higher:

Noritoshi will glare at Ogedei and proclaim, “The Fortunes are the proper gods of Rokugan, as they have always been, and the Lords of Death have no place among them.”

Ogedei will silently regard Noritoshi for a moment, then with a lightning movement slap him across the face, knocking him to the ground.

“The Moto remember where we come from. You seem to have forgotten.”

With that, Ogedei turns on his heel and leaves the shrine as a silence falls over the guests.

Part Six: Tea Time

On a cold afternoon, a week after midwinter, the PCs are each delivered an invitation to join Bayushi Tenno for tea.

Any PC may decline; there is direct penalty for doing so.

If any PC chooses to wear non-traditional garb to this event, they will suffer an L0 Glory Loss. Unicorn PCs will suffer an L-1 Glory Loss.

On a large balcony overlooking the plains of the Ide provinces, a large table has been prepared. Warm coals heat the otherwise chill winter air to a quite pleasant temperature.

A scroll with the kanji for Rebirth hangs upon the mantle.

As his guests enter, Bayushi Tenno rises from his seat, “Ah, welcome my friends. Please, join me for some tea. This court has certainly been... interesting so far. What do you think of it so far?”

Bayushi Tenno wishes to discuss the events of the court. He is keenly interested in who the PCs have convinced to support each of their clans, but is also an inveterate gossip so is easily sidetracked.

Some questions he might ask are:

“So, I hear you have convinced [NPC] to support you. How did you manage that?”

“I wonder why Doji Hanako took such offense at Shiba Kaito’s statue. Do you happen to know?”

“What do you think of Moto Ogedei? He and Noritoshi don’t seem to get along. I wonder why that is. They are related, after all.”

“So, your poem won the water poetry competition. Tell me, what inspired you? What was the meaning behind it?”

If the PCs wish to question him about the events of the court, he can tell them the following:

What is the meaning of that scroll?

Well, each new year is an opportunity to reinvent ourselves, is it not? A time of new beginnings, new opportunities. Clearly, the Ide are seizing upon this theme. What do you think this next year will hold?

What do you mean the Ide are seizing upon this theme? Have you not noticed that all the games and events of this court have been staunchly traditional? I have seen barely a single unicorn wearing leather or fur. It seems to me that the Ide are trying to put forward a new face for the Unicorn. I wonder whose idea that was...

Who is winning?

Bayushi Tenno, as one of the judges, is quite familiar with the current standings, and will happily inform the PCs which clan is currently in first place.

How do you know who is winning?

Oh, Ide Akio has been asking Doji Hanako, Otomo Katsue, and I for advice. He can't be everywhere at once of course, so as experienced samurai our opinion can be quite... influential.

Will you help my clan win / How can my clan win?
We should discuss this at another time.

What do you think about [NPC]?
Otomo Katsuo - very competent as an investigator, he has a sharp mind

Doji Hanako – She concentrates entirely on the goals of the crane, or what she thinks the goals of the crane might be

Moto Noritoshi – He is young and overestimates his skills. It will get him into trouble one day.

Moto Ogedei – He used to be a skilled general. I wonder why he retired to administrate a province.

Hiruma Izumi – The Crab send a bushi to do a courtier's job. Then again, I suppose I should be thankful as she is personable enough.

Kitsuki Oda – I respect his investigative skills. I have seen him wandering the halls at night, which seems strange to me.

Ikoma Taro – He is friendly enough, though I take most of his stories for what they are worth. He is a quite adept Shogi player though.

Moshi Atsuko – I do not know why the Mantis sent her to court, she seems more at home on a boat than in an audience hall.

Shiba Kaito – He seems like a skilled sculptor; he presented a sculpture last year in Kyuden Bayushi that was extremely well received. I wonder why Doji Hanako seems to hate him so.

Hantei Ganji – Ganji? Ganji is best avoided; a man with a poor temper and the power to act on it is a friend to none.

Ide Akio – I have known Akio for a few years, he is a good man. A bit over his head hosting a winter court without his lord, but he is trying hard.

After an appropriate amount of conversation:

The paneled door to the castle slides open, and a servant enters bearing a tea pot, a small brazier, and a set of tea preparation utensils.

Bayushi Tenno leans back slightly, “Thank you samurai-sans for some most exquisite company, I apologize for having taken up so much of your time. Now then, it is time for the tea ceremony. I trust you all are well aware of the particulars of such an occasion.”

If any PC has Doubt: Tea Ceremony or Sworn Enemy: Bayushi Tenno, Bayushi Tenno will ask them to perform the ceremony:

The paneled door to the castle slides open and a servant enters bearing a teapot and a set of utensils. Bayushi Tenno smiles slightly, “Thank you samurai-sans for your most exquisite company. I apologize for having taken up so much of your time.” He stands, accepting the pot and utensils from the servant with a bow. He hesitates for a moment, then places them in front of [PC]. “Now then, it is time for the tea ceremony. I trust you are well acquainted of the particulars of such an occasion? Please, favor us with a demonstration of your skills.”

He will place the items for the ceremony in front of the offending PC. If more than one PC has Doubt or Sworn Enemy, he will prefer Doubt over Sworn Enemy. If multiple PCs have Doubt, he will give the utensils to whomever has the highest glory. If the PC chooses to walk out instead of performing the ceremony, that is a Major breach of etiquette and a H2 honor loss.

Otherwise, the PC must attempt a **Tea Ceremony / Void** roll at a TN of 40. If the PC fails, they have committed a Minor breach of etiquette and suffer an H4 honor loss. They also lose 4 points of glory.

Bayushi Tenno will smile, and do his best to paper over the failure, “Ah, let me assist you, samurai-san. I can pour the tea for you.”

If they succeed, Bayushi Tenno will nod approvingly, “Well done, Samurai-san. A masterful demonstration.”

If no PC has those disadvantages, Bayushi Tenno will perform the ceremony himself:

Bayushi Tenno rises, and begins by ritually purifying each tea preparation utensil. He carefully brews the tea, then ritually serves it to each guest. The ritual is quite long and every motion within it for both host and guest are carefully proscribed. Bayushi Tenno completes each motion smoothly.

Participation in a tea ceremony is both a mark of refinement, and a test of patience and rigid adherence to tradition. It is not a trivial task for some samurai.

To successfully play their part in this exceptionally formal tea ceremony, each samurai must make two rolls: First, **Etiquette (Courtesy) / Willpower**. Second, **Tea Ceremony / Awareness**.

Once the rolls are made, combine the total. Any PC that fails to make a combined 30 has in some way failed to observe the strict behaviors of the ritual. As this is a minor breach of etiquette, they lose one point of honor.

Whichever PC rolled the highest (combined) is praised by Bayushi Tenno. "Ah, truly a refined soul."

Their clan receives one point. Also, whichever clan is currently in last place receives one point. If a PC is called upon to perform the ceremony, they are not eligible for a point, regardless of their roll.

With the ceremony finished, Bayushi Tenno bows to his guests and departs.

After this ceremony is the final opportunity for PCs to influence the various NPCs to gain support for their clans.

Part Seven: Go On

The third contest is hosted outside, on the shores of Chrysanthemum Petal Lake.

If any PC chooses to wear non-traditional garb to this event, they will suffer an L0 Glory Loss. Unicorn PCs will suffer an L-1 Glory Loss.

A small raised platform has been assembled on the shore of the lake, along with several small tables, and a set of wooden benches with soft cushions placed facing the stage and the tables.

The guests of the court, many curious and murmuring quietly, fill in the benches quickly. Once all are seated, Ide Akio walks onto the platform and gives a bow to the assembled samurai.

"My guests! Thank you all for coming. I would like to ask you all to join me for a game." He takes a moment to flash a winning smile, with a bit of mischievous twinkle to the guests. "As is traditional, I would like to invite anyone that wishes to join me for a game of Go."

He fans his hands out to the tables as attendants deliver bowls of stones to each.

"Anyone that wishes to play, please, take a seat at one of the tables". Most of the courtiers and guests take seats, largely at random, and begin to play. Notably, Moto Ogedei sits by himself at one of the tables and sets the Go stones aside, then draws a small wooden board from his bag.

The games are organized into a small tournament. This is abstracted as a roll of Games: Go / Intelligence. PCs that don't have Games: Go may substitute Battle at a -5 penalty.

The NPC's roll as follows:
Shiba Kaito (If he is still present) – 10
Moshi Atsuko (If she is still present) – 15
Hantei Ganji - 18
Hiruma Izumi – 20
Ikoma Taro – 25
Moto Noritoshi – 26
Kitsuki Oda – 28

The top two rolls should make a contested **Games: Go / Intelligence** (unless both are NPCs, in which case Kitsuki Oda wins and Moto Noritoshi takes second)

The highest placing clan receives 2 points, and the second placing clan receives 1 point.

If any PC wishes to play Moto Ogedei, he is waiting off to the side with a Shogi set. He will smile if a PC expresses interest in playing Shogi and explain it is a traditional game of the Unicorn, brought back from their time in the Burning Sands. He rolls 9k4 on Games: Shogi / Intelligence. He will ask any PC who plays him what they think of the Unicorn, and listen intently to their answer. If they give him an honest answer, even if negative, he will nod and thank them, then give them his shogi set.

When the games are finished, Ide Akio rises from his seat, and is handed a shining Go board by one of his attendants. "I am so glad that you all joined me this beautiful afternoon."

He turns to the winning competitor, "Congratulations to you, [clan]-san. You are most skilled at the game of Go. Please, I would like you to have this..." as the Ide extends the ornate Go board with both hands.

Suddenly, in the road behind the audience, far across from the stage, a loud voice shouts in a strange language. (Any PC that speaks Senpet can understand the words "Lying Thief!")

Ide Akio's eyes go wide, and most in the audience turn to see a man wearing a strange white head covering and a long flowing black cloth garment, sitting on a massive brown steed, looming over a surprised looking Unicorn samurai. The man swings a large blade and the Unicorn samurai crumbles. The horseman, along with two others dressed similarly to him, turn and flee in the direction of town.

The guards at the edges of the stage and audience benches spring forwards, moving to protect Ide Akio and the guests. A pair attempt to run after three horsemen, but are unable to keep up as the horseman dash into the markets.

Ide Akio quickly regains his composure, and speaks in a commanding voice.

"My guests. I apologize for this disruption. I must regretfully ask that you return to the castle while the guards see to this matter."

Sweeping down off the platform, with his guards close around him, Akio leads the group back to the castle in silence.

Part Eight: Recruits

An hour after being returning to the castle, the PCs all receive a messenger at their rooms, asking them please come at once to speak with Otomo Katsuo.

When they arrive Katsuo is standing over a map, looking intently at a diagram of some hills.

"Ah, please, come in. I pray that you indulge me, I have some small need of your assistance. More accurately, the investigative office of the imperial treasury, under the authority of the emerald magistrates, has some small need of your assistance."

He gives each of the samurai an appraising glance.

"I apologize for the short notice, but the Emerald Magistrate and his yoriki are all currently occupied. They were called out of town some days ago, and will likely not return soon. Accordingly, the duty of tracking the gaijin criminals who murdered a samurai earlier today has fallen to me. Now, as a member of the investigative office but not the magistrates proper I do not have the authority to levy troops or commandeer the castle guards. So, being capable samurai who are loyal to your emperor and emerald champion..." he pauses, giving each of the PCs a significant look, "I am sure that you are all more than happy to lend assistance in this matter. Yes? Do you have any questions?"

I am a courtier or other non-combatant?

I understand. If you feel you can be useful in the search for the criminals you are welcome to assist with that matter. If not, well, then I understand.

Where are we going?

I received word from the guards at the northern gate that the gaijin promptly fled the city.

There are only two or three places in the surrounding plains where they could have set up camp. We must figure out where they are, and apprehend them.

How do we find the Gaijin?

We must track the gaijin. We know they left from the northern, so we should start there. Alternatively, I suppose we could simple search all the reasonable sites where they have made camp, but that would be much slower.

Who did they kill?

A merchant patron named Moto Aram. He was a trader who commonly travelled between Shiro Ide, Shiro Moto, and the lands of the gaijin.

Do we know why they killed him?

These gaijin had been engaged in trade with Moto Haram for at least the past few months. I suspect they were unhappy with the results of those dealings.

Are you an Emerald Magistrate?

No, I am an investigator and assessor for the office of the Treasurer. However, these gaijin were clearly engaged in some form of financial business with the victim, and since the office of the Imperial Treasurer is a sub-office of the Emerald Magistrate, investigation here is appropriate. (Any PC with ranks in Lore: Law, or a Lore: Law / Intelligence roll at TN 20 will reveal that this justification is technically permissible but is quite clearly a stretch of authority)

What do you normally investigate?

Financial crimes and tax fraud.

Are we Yoriki and can we wear armor?

For the purposes of this investigation, yes.

After the PCs have finished asking any question they have of Otomo Katsuo, Moto Ogedei will storm into the room, offended that the matter is not being handled by the Unicorn.

Suddenly, the door to the room slams open. Looking aggrieved, Moto Ogedei strides through it and into the room.

“Otomo Katsuo-san. Ide Akio has informed me that you are investigating the murder of my kinsman. My horseman and I will handle this. Your assistance is not required.”

Otomo Katsuo’s face is perfectly calm as he regards the towering Moto. “Ah. Akio-sama has made this decision then?”

Ogedei’s face begins to turn red as he bellows, “No, but his opinion is irrelevant. This is a Unicorn matter. We will handle it.”

Katsuo shakes his head slightly, but smiles broadly, “Ogedei-sama, your offer of assistance is appreciated, but unnecessary.” He gestures to the assembled PCs, “As you can see, I have these fine samurai to assist me. And this matter is officially under the jurisdiction of the Emerald Office, and I’d hate for there to be any misunderstandings in the matter.”

Ogedei’s face turns further red, and he raises a finger, but then seems to think better of whatever he was about to say. Without a further word, he turns and storms out of the room, slamming the door behind him.

What was that about?

I don’t know.

Could we have Ogedei join us?

Not after that inappropriate outburst. Besides, I hear he is a man of poor character. We would not want such a person accompanying us.

Do you and Ogedei have any quarrels?

None that I am aware of.

What do you know about Ogedei?

He is a former general in the Unicorn armies and became a provincial daimyo when his father died. As far as I am aware, all his service has been exemplary.

Do you think he is in league with the murders?

I have no reason to suspect so, but his behavior is certainly strange.

Any PCs whom do not wish to assist Otomo Katsuo do not have to do so, but any combat-capable PCs will be the subject of unfortunate gossip resulting in a G0 glory loss, and they will not receive any favors if the investigation succeeds.

Part Nine: The Chase

Otomo Katsuo will give the PC’s a few minutes to gather whatever things they need, then lead the group out of the castle by way of the stables. Any PC’s who do not own a horse will have one provided for them, temporarily.

The party travels quickly to the north gate of the city. From there, the group has two options. They may investigate every potential campsite, or attempt to track the Gaijin.

Tracking the Gaijin:

The gaijin left a relatively clear trail as they headed off into the grassy plains and then the hilly lands to the north.

After an hour of travel the trail begins to grow slightly fainter. A **Hunting (Tracking) / Perception** roll must be made to continue following the trail at TN 20. If any PC has Way of The Land (Ide Family lands) they receive a free raise, if they have Way of the Land (Garanto province) they automatically succeed.

If the PC’s succeed, they arrive swiftly at the gaijin camp, and will catch them unawares.

If the roll is failed by less than five, the gaijin are not surprised. If the rolls is failed by more than five, one additional gaijin trader is present. If the roll is failed by more than 10, there are two additional gaijin traders present.

Investigating every campsite:

Otomo Katsuo believes that the gaijin would make their camp somewhere far from the patrol routes of the Ide and with obstructed sightlines so that no one would be able to see their camp from far away nor be likely to stumble across them accidentally.

There are three such sites and investigating all three is a relatively simple, if time consuming, matter.

At the third such site the group will find the gaijin camp. However, they will be on alert and there will be one additional gaijin trader present.

If the PCs surprise the gaijin:

Cresting a rise in the unending plains a hollow below holds four tents, a small campfire, and a set of horses. Men in black cloth robes sit around it, unaware of the danger drawing around them. As the samurai rush to attack, the gaijin draw weapons awkwardly, one spilling his bowl of food onto himself as he stands up.

The gaijin are surprised and suffer a -20 initiative penalty in the first round of combat.

If the PCs do not surprise the gaijin:

Cresting a rise in the interminable plains, a depression holds four tents, a small campfire, and a set of horses. Men in black cloth robes stand around it, then in a moment realize they are being watched, draw weapons, and charge.

Basil Abd Al-Karim, the gaijin leader, is present along with gaijin traders equal to the combat-capable PCs. The gaijin will fight to the death, accepting no quarter. They will however offer quarter under certain circumstances (see below). Otomo Katsuo will remain in the back during the fight, in the defense stance. The gaijin will ignore him.

If all bushi PCs are incapacitated the gaijin will accept the surrender of any shugenja, monks, and / or courtiers that offer it. In such a case the gaijin will tie up those that surrender and leave. The tied-up samurai will be able to make their way back to Shiro Ide by morning.

Assuming the PCs are victorious, a simple search of the gaijin's tents will reveal a set of documents in a foreign tongue which appear to be ledgers and trade agreements of some form.

Any PC with ranks of commerce will realize that these are ledgers and trade agreements with Unicorn samurai, mostly with the deceased Moto Aram. Examination of the ledgers will show that Aram was cheating the gaijin. If no PC realizes this, Otomo Katsuo do so.

However, some entries are enciphered and most are in Senpet.

Katsuo will ultimately confiscate the documents as evidence, along with the belongings of the gaijin.

Presumably the PCs will return to Shiro Ide with the documents. Katsuo will thank the PCs for their assistance and depart, eager to begin deciphering the trade ledgers.

Conclusion

Shortly after the gaijin are brought to justice word filters through the court that Moto Ogedei has left abruptly and without explanation.

A scarce week after the confrontation with the gaijin, Ide Akio calls the court together. Beaming from the dais, he spreads his hands.

“My friends, I thank you so very much for your participation in our little contests and demonstrations.

You have been most excellent guests, and I am so pleased with the honor you have given to our traditions and customs.”

“In acknowledgment of your deeds and skill, I would like to present a gift to the [winning clan] clan!”

The court erupts into applause.

Any PC representatives of the winning clan receive G2 glory.

The final days of Winter Court pass without incident, with the weather in the unicorn provinces quickly turning warm. The assembled samurai are wished well by Ide Akio, and dismissed to return to their lords.

The End

Rewards for Completing the Adventure

Surviving the Module:	1 XP
Good Roleplaying:	1 XP
Participated in at least two competitions:	1 XP
Basil Abd Al-Karim was killed:	1 XP
Total Possible Experience:	4 XP

Favors

If the PCs successfully dispatch the gaijin and return with their documents, they gain one favor.

Honor

Honor gains and losses are noted in their respective scenes.

Glory

Dispatching or capturing the gaijin criminals: G3.

Winning contests awards glory as described in each contest.

Refusing to aid Katsuo results in a glory penalty as described in Part Seven.

Other Awards / Penalties

If a PC won the Winding Water Banquet competition and they did not have Doji Hanako as a sworn enemy, give them the Small Bonsai Tree cert. If they do have her as a sworn enemy, give them the Ugly Bonsai Tree cert.

If Moto Noritoshi does not win the iaijutsu content, whomever does gains him as a Sworn Enemy (4 points).

Any PC who declines to have tea with Bayushi Tenno gains him as a Sworn Enemy (5 points).

Module Tracking Sheets

Note any PC who received a shogi set from Moto Ogedei.

Note any PC who received the go board from Ide Akio. Note any non-courtier PC who refused to accompany Otomo Katsuo to hunt he gaijin.

Note if a PC received a scar from Moto Noritoshi.

GM Reporting

- 1) Did Otomo Katsuo return with the gaijin documents?
- 2) Which clan won the boon?
- 3) Did Moto Ogedei slap Moto Noritoshi in the temple to the Fortune of Dance?

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

Appendix #1: NPCs

Gaijin Traders

School/Rank: Merchant / 1

Initiative: 3k2

Armor TN: 15 (18 in armor) **Reduction:** 1

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

Attack: 5k3 (Scimitar, Complex)

Damage: 4k3 (Scimitar)

Air 2 Earth 2 Fire 3 Water 2 Void 0

Honor: 1.0 Status: 0 Glory: 0.5

Primary Skills: Swords 2, Commerce 3, Sincerity 2, Temptation 2, Etiquette 1, Horsemanship 2

Advantages/Disadvantages: Languages (Rokugani) / Social Disadvantage (Gaijin)

Techniques: +2k0 to Commerce rolls, +1k0 to Sincerity and Temptation rolls.

Otomo Katsuo

School/Rank: Otomo Courtier / 3

Initiative: 6k3

Armor TN: 20 (25 in defense) **Reduction:** 0

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

Attack: 5k3 (Wakizashi, Complex)

Damage: 5k2 (Wakizashi)

Air 3 Earth 2 Fire 3 Water 2 Void 2
Will 3 Int 4 Per 3

Honor: Status: Glory:

Primary Skills: Hunting 2, Intimidation (Control) 4, Kenjutsu 2, Defense 2

Advantages/Disadvantages: Overconfident

Basil Abd Al-Karim

School/Rank: City Guard / 2

Initiative: 6k3

Armor TN: 20 (23 in armor) **Reduction:** 1

Wounds: 15 (+0), 21 (+1), 27 (+3), 33 (+8), 39 (+13), 45 (+18), 61 (Down, +38), 57 (Out)

Attack: 6k3 (Weapon, Complex)

Damage: 6k3 (Weapon)

Air 3 Earth 3 Fire 3 Water 3 Void 1

Honor: 0.5 Status: 0 Glory: 1.0

Primary Skills: Swords 3, Commerce 4, Etiquette 2, Lore: Law 2, Stealth 2, Horsemanship 3

Advantages/Disadvantages: Languages (Rokugani, Yodotai) / Social Disadvantage (Gaijin)

Techniques:

Trained for War – Reduce wound penalties by 2. 2k1 when voiding on school skills.

Strike with Fury – 1k0 to Initiative. 1k0 to Attack while in **Full Attack**.

Appendix #2: GM's Aid – Important NPCs

Hiruma Izumi – Hiruma Bushi 2

Hiruma Izumi was a scout for the crab clan and has ventured into the Shadowlands seven times without ever being detected by the forces of the ninth kami. However, her career as a scout was ended when a spiked pit trap mangled her right foot during the war against the Crane. She was assigned to the courts so that she could still be of value to the clan and has shown herself a reasonably adept courtier. She blames the Crane clan personally for her injury and their 'dishonorable battle tactics'.

She is doing her best to acclimate to her new role, and other than an incident involving the use of elbows in Kemari has succeeded at this. She is looking for friends at this court and contacts that will help her increase the influence of the Crab. She feels that the other clans do not always take the Crab's duty seriously, and wishes more understood the peril they face every day.

Gaining Support: (Lore: Heraldry TN 15)

Hiruma Izumi appreciates games, tales of adventure beyond the wall, and stories of saving the empire from non-human creatures. She dislikes Iaijutsu but has resigned herself to having to learn it, so appreciates anyone that has a higher skill than her offering lessons.

She hates the Crane, and any Crane samurai attempting to influence her will have their TN increased by 5.

Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness: TN 25

Games (Any) / Agility: TN 20

Perform: Storytelling / Awareness: TN 10

Ads / Disads: Silent / Lamé

Traits: Awareness 3, Reflexes 3, Void 3.

Skills: Courtier 2, Etiquette 3, Sincerity 1, Iaijutsu 3, Artisan: Origami 2, Games: Kemari 3.

Status: 1.5

Doji Hanako – Doji Courtier 4

A familiar face in all of the major courts of Rokugan, Doji Hanako represents the interests of the Crane with grace and dignity. A soft word from her has brought an end to several incipient conflicts (to the chagrin of those who wished to make their reputation in war), though it is rumored that she is more willing than most of her family to use sterner measures when required.

On the orders of the daimyo of the Kakita, she will be subtly expressing the displeasure of the Crane at Shiba Kaito's choices to favor the Scorpion with his artwork. Where reasonable, she will critique his work and convince others to do so as well.

Gaining Support: (Lore: Heraldry TN 25)

Doji Hanako appreciates art, refinement, and things that gain advantage for the Crane clan. An offering of art, a clever and refined gift, or a promise of assistance to the crane clan will make swaying her substantially easier.

A thoughtful gift gives one free raise to any other roll.

Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness: TN 30

Artisan (Any) / Awareness: TN 15.

A favor: 1 favor will secure Hanako's aid and no other player will be able to sway her for the rest of the module.

Ads / Disads: Benten's Blessing, Voice, Allies (Many)

Traits: Awareness 4, Willpower 3, Perception 4, Void 3

Skills: Courtier (Manipulation, Gossip) 5, Etiquette (Courtesy) 5, Sincerity (Honesty) 5, Games: Sadane 4, Artisan:

Poetry 3, Perform: Oratory 3.

Status: 4.0

Kitsuki Oda – Kitsuki Investigator 2

An aspiring investigator, Oda's career has seen 3 successful criminal investigations so far, one of which was the murder of a samurai. He idolizes his uncle, Kitsuki Hisashi, one of the greatest living investigators. He is quite polite and knows his way around court but longs to be out 'on the road' solving crimes. If anyone speaks to him at length he will invariably turn the conversation to topics of law, and would be very interested in any legal investigations the players have been involved in.

He is also an avid Go player, and would happily play any PC who wishes to do so.

He has a bad reputation for 'jumping at shadows' and being a little too quick to conclude that a crime has been committed. He also has trouble sleeping and tends to spend the late evening hours wandering the castle. If any other PC is out of their room at night, it is likely they will accidentally run into Oda.

Gaining Support: (Lore: Heraldry TN 20)

Kitsuki Oda loves the law, investigations, and Go. He is most likely to be convinced to help another clan if they can engage him in a novel discussion of an aspect of the law, or if they can beat him at a game of Go. Alternatively, if they are exceedingly clever they may realize that he is in need of something to help him sleep; an herbal sedative would be greatly appreciated.

Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness: TN 25.

Lore: Law / Intelligence: TN 10.

Games: Go / Intelligence: TN 15.

Medicine / Intelligence: 20.

Ads / Disads: Wary / Curse of Yume-Do

Traits: Awareness 3, Reflexes 3, Perception 3, Void 2

Stats: Courtier 3, Etiquette (Courtesy) 3, Sincerity 2, Investigation 4, Iaijutsu 2, Lore: Law 3, Games: Go 3.

Status: 2.0

Ikoma Taro – Ikoma Omoidasu 3

A direct servant of Ikoma Shabiko, Taro is a very friendly man. He is tall, and slightly heavier than average, but still strong. His voice is deep and his laugh is quick. He is nearing his 40th year but none know if he intends to retire or just keep on serving in the courts until he dies. He has been sent to this court to verify the report that Shabiko received which stated the Unicorn were attempting to integrate culturally. He will subtly ask PCs what they think of their hosts and the games going on.

He will regale anyone that will listen with fanciful but amusing stories about things that happened back in his day (most of which verifiably did not happen). If called on his falsehoods he will laugh and explain that they were parables.

He is also a skilled Shogi player and will play matches against anyone that wishes.

Gaining Support: (Lore: Heraldry TN 10)

Taro loves stories, true or not, if they're interesting or amusing. He also loves games of Shogi.

Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness: TN 25.

Perform: Storytelling or Oratory / Awareness: TN 20.

Games: Shogi / Awareness: TN 15.

Ads / Disads: Precise Memory

Traits: Awareness 4

Skills: Courtier 4, Etiquette (Courtesy) 4, Sincerity 3, Perform Storytelling 5, Perform Oratory 3.

Status: 2.5

Moshi Atsuko – Yoritomo Shugenja 2

If one did not know her name you would swear that Moshi Atsuko is a member of the Yoritomo family. Having been raised with them since she was a young child, Atsuko has adopted the mannerisms common to the Yoritomo and their sailors. Rather than spending her formative years studying in a dojo she was learning from a veteran Yoritomo shugenja and navigator sailing the open seas on a massive kobune.

Her smile is open and friendly to those she considers allies and friends. She will invite any she considers friends (Mantis, Crab, and non-courtly bushi) to sit with her, drink, and share tales during the opening dinner. However, she has a problem handling her alcohol, and if encouraged by the PCs will drink to excess. This will not become a problem during the opening dinner (because she will sneak out during the performance), but may become so during the Winding Water Banquet.

Gaining Support: (Lore: Heraldry TN 10)

She has no agenda at this court, and is simply enjoying the new experiences of court. She enjoys stories of sailing and boats, and will consider any PC who discusses adventures in the Ivory Kingdoms a friend.

Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness: TN 25.

Craft: Sailing / Awareness: TN 20.

Lore: Ivory Kingdoms or Lore: Gaijin / Awareness: TN 10.

Ads / Disads: Blood of Osano Wo / Jurojin's Curse.

Traits: Awareness 2, Perception 4, Stamina 2.

Skills: Courtier 1, Etiquette 2, Sincerity 1, Sailing 3

Status: 1.5

Shiba Kaito – Shiba Artisan 2

A sculptor of moderate renown, Kaito is tall and handsome. He is friendly and open, and loves to talk about art. He is primarily a sculptor, but also enjoys origami, bonsai, and kite building. He is a polite conversationalist, but his knowledge is limited outside his chosen art – he has devoted his life to sculpting and attempting to portray the fortunes and the natural world.

However, he is easily flustered and somewhat out of his depth in non-friendly social interactions. He is very non-confrontational and does not handle it well when others are. If a PC pressures him in a hostile fashion, he is likely to find the first available excuse to leave.

He recently unveiled a sculpture in the Scorpion lands titled “Freedom of Autumn”. It received high praise from his hosts. However, the choice to unveil the statue in the Scorpion lands rather than in the lands of the Crane has earned him the ire of the Kakita daimyo, who wished to display it in her courts. Kaito is not aware of this. Doji Hanako will subtly express the displeasure of the Kakita daimyo by taking the opportunity when possible to politely critique Kaito and find faults with his works.

Gaining Support: (Lore: Heraldry TN 15)

Shiba Kaito loves sculpture, art in any form, and is easily flattered.

Ads / Disads: Benten's Blessing, Sensation / Sworn Enemy (Kakita Yushihiro)

Traits: Awareness 3, Willpower 2

Skills: Artisan: Sculpting (Marble) 5, Etiquette 3, Courtier 1, Sincerity 3.

Status: 2.5

Hantei Ganji – Hantei Diplomat 3

A courtier from the Owl, a man with a perpetually dour expression and a nearly bald head. He is rumored to have the favor of the lord of the Owl, Hantei Kujaru, and so is not crossed trivially. Unfortunately, his temper is said to match his constant expression, so avoiding crossing him is much easier said than done.

Ganji is the descendent of a famous courtier within the Owl, and his father before him was an exceptional negotiator. Everyone expects that he will follow in his father's footsteps and become a famous courtier. However, he does not want to be a courtier. He covets the life of a bushi and has spent a good deal of time training with a sword, learning the game of Go, and studying strategy. If the conversation moves towards more martial topics, his dour demeanor immediately lightens and he becomes very interested and pleasant.

Gaining Support: (Lore: Heraldry TN 25)

Ganji is interested in all things martial. A game of Go, a lesson in kenjutsu, an offer to spar, or even a discussion of strategy or historical battles will swiftly gain his favor.

Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness: TN 25.

Games: Go / Intelligence: TN 20

Lore: History or Battle / Intelligence: TN 15.

Kenjutsu / Agility: TN 10.

Ads / Disads: Social Position (Diplomat) / Doubt: Sincerity

Traits: Awareness 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Agility 4

Skills: Courtier 4, Sincerity 2, Kenjutsu 4, Games: Go 1, Battle 2.

Status: 3.0

Bayushi Tenno – Bayushi Bushi 5

The chief magistrate of the city of Beiden, Tenno is a man with a reputation for never failing to solve a crime, and as a polite and genial guest who is welcome in any court. Tenno is the exemplar of all that people like about the Scorpion, - a good friend, an effective magistrate, and a predictable traditionalist. In his late 20's, he has the dark beauty common to Scorpion men, but has no reputation for wielding it as a weapon. His mask takes the form of a black bird, with wings outstretched across his forehead and the tail running along his nose.

He is not as self-important as his name would suggest; if asked about it he will laugh and cite 'the mistakes of youth'. However, his reputation as a magistrate is sterling and so far, has done nothing (publicly) to give his enemies avenue to yield it as a weapon against him.

Gaining Support: (Lore: Heraldry TN 10)

Tenno enjoys discussions of the law and morality puzzles; his favorite are tough theoretical questions where honor and the law or honor and 'what is right' are put in opposition. He is also an inveterate gossip and a juicy piece of information is sure to interest him. Alternatively, he is willing to accept obligations to the Scorpion in exchange for his assistance, but that is less 'fun' for him.

Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness: TN 25.

Lore: Law / Awareness: TN 20.

Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness: TN 15.

Obligation: Taking a Minor Obligation to the Scorpion will secure Tenno's aid and no other player will be able to sway him for the rest of the module. It is also worth two points rather than just one, as Tenno bends the ears of others in the PC's favor.

Ads / Disads: Social Position (Clan Magistrate), Dangerous Beauty, Ally (Otomo Katsuo)

Traits: Awareness 5, Reflexes 5, Intelligence 4, Void 4.

Skills: Kenjutsu 5, Iaijutsu 5, Lore: Law 4, Courtier 5, Sincerity (Deceit) 3, Etiquette 5

Status: 3.5

Ide Akio – Ide Courtier 4

The hatamoto to Ide Ekuan. He is a thin man with a short well-kept goatee. He dresses in very traditional Rokugani garb. His voice is a steady baritone and quite calming. He virtually never raises his voice or speaks in anger. He loves to be helpful, and will endeavor to find win-win solutions to any situation that is brought before him. He is not willing to compromise his contest however, but will route inquiries about support to other courtiers that seem like good fits.

He is devoted to his lord Ide Ekuan and is a personal friend of the Khan of the Moto. He strongly believes in the Khan's goal of showing that the Unicorn can integrate into the cultural fabric of the Empire. He will conduct himself in a traditional rokugani fashion whenever possible, and attempt to paint the Unicorn in the best possible light.

However, he will go out of his way to suppress and punish any displays from Unicorn that he considers out of line with the Khan's goals.

Gaining Support:

As Ide Akio is presiding over the court, he is not willing to directly support any of the contestants.

Ads / Disads: Voice.

Traits: Awareness 4, Willpower 4

Skills: Courtier 5, Etiquette (Courtesy) 5, Sincerity (Honesty) 4.

Status: 5.0

Moto Ogedei – Moto Bushi 5 / White Guard 1

The daimyo of Enkaku province. He is a strong man of slightly above average height. He wears a vest of leather dyed a deep purple and a loose kimono of purple and white. He walks with the slightly bowed legs of a man that has spent most of his life on horseback. His voice is loud at the quietest, and nigh-thunderous when he is angered. However, he is slow to anger and will brush off most insults with a boisterous laugh and an inappropriate comment (example: Ha, I have heard better insults from my horse.)

He is happy to discuss tactics, battles, the traditions of the unicorn, the lords of death, or horsemanship. The lords of death, or Shi-Tien Yen-Wang, are a set of 10 gods of death that were revered by the ancient Moto. After hunting the Moto for generations, peace was made and a bargain struck 200 years ago. They are now minor fortunes in the Rokugani cosmology and assistants to Emma-O. They determine punishments for souls that Emma-O deems unworthy, and are associated with the concepts of Justice.

He disagrees with the Khan's goal of showing that the Unicorn can adopt the traditions of Rokugan and prefers to honor the traditions of his ancestors dating back to the time when the Moto inhabited the burning sands. If a PC truly pushes him, he will wrinkle his nose with a look of disdain and dismiss the PC in question with a wave of his hand, effectively standing on his status.

With one notable exception: If a PC brings up Maho in his presence, he will give them a single gravelly warning in an uncharacteristically quiet voice to cease speaking. If the PC does not immediately desist and they are not a Unicorn he will back hand them, knocking them flying to the floor. If the PC is a Unicorn and fails to desist, he will draw his blade and strike their head from their shoulders then pronounce the 'Tsukai' dead.

Gaining Support:

While technically the highest status Unicorn present, Ogedei has no interest in Akio's competition. He will dismiss any such questions with a wave and a suggestion that the questioner talk to Noritoshi, "That boy takes after his mother's clan, I'm sure he would be more interested in such things."

Ads / Disads: Tactician, Strategist, Social Position (Provincial Daimyo) / Driven (Maintain Moto Customs)

Traits: Awareness 3, Agility 5, Void 5.

Skills: Courtier 2, Etiquette 3, Sincerity 2, Horsemanship 7, Lore: Theology 5.

Status: 6.0

Moto Noritoshi – Kakita Bushi 2

The Khagan of the Moto, eldest son of Khan Moto Sartaq. Noritoshi is a man of average build, slightly below average height, and has quite pale skin for a Moto. He completed his gempukku two autumns ago and to the surprise of many took the name of one of his mother's ancestors. He carries a katana instead of a scimitar and dresses in a very conservative Rokugani style, showing no elements of traditional moto garb.

Noritoshi has a dismissive attitude towards most other samurai, owing both to the high station of his birth and to his own estimation of his skills. He is rabidly loyal to his father and his father's goals. He is exceedingly dismissive of Moto Ogedei and considers him backwards.

He will talk up himself, the Unicorn, and the Crane. He loves Iaijutsu and fancies himself an excellent duelist. He has some talent, but overrates his skills and it could easily get him in trouble. He is susceptible to flattery, and will happily converse at length upon things that 'traditional' samurai like, such as haiku, iaijutsu, origami, or calligraphy.

Gaining Support: (Lore: Heraldry TN 15)

Noritoshi likes winning, flattery, and art. Any PC approaching him that flatters him or the Unicorn clan gains a free raise.

Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness: TN 20

Perform: Oratory / Awareness: TN 10, but only if used to brag about how great Moto Noritoshi is.

Artisan: Any / Awareness: TN 15

Ads / Disads: Social Position (Khagan of the Moto) / Overconfident

Traits: Awareness 3, Reflexes 3, Void 3.

Skills: Courtier 2, Etiquette 3, Sincerity (Deceit) 2, Iaijutsu 4, Artisan: Poetry 1.

Status: 4.0

Otomo Katsuo – Otomo Courtier 3

Otomo Katsuo is an imperial investigator, serving the Treasurer. He has been one of the most productive investigators in recent years, rooting out tax frauds and cheats across the empire. He is also an accomplished courtier, but seldom gets the chance to exercise those skills. He enjoys his job immensely, but is looking forward to not having to deal with taxes at least until the spring.

He is well connected, as most Otomo are, and is concerned by recent news that a number of Great Clans are making overtures of friendship; the Crane, Dragon, and Unicorn have been moving closer to alliance, as have the Crab, Phoenix, and Lion. If the opportunity presents itself to cause discord between those clans he will certainly take it, but will not go out of his way to do so.

He considers Bayushi Tenno a friend and comrade, having worked together with him to catch a particularly elusive tax cheat.

Gaining Support: (Lore: Heraldry TN 20)

Katsuo is a traditionalist, and his only passion is for the law. He is happy to discuss its inner workings for hours.

Mantis, Scorpion, and Owl samurai get a free raise to influence him.

Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness: TN 30

Lore: Law / Intelligence: TN 25

Ads / Disads: Blackmail (many), Allies (The Imperial Treasurer, Bayushi Tenno, and numerous others), Languages (Ivindi, Senpet) / Bad Fortune (Unknown Enemy), Overconfident

Traits: Awareness 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Willpower 3.

Skills: Hunting 2, Investigation (Interrogation) 4, Courtier (Manipulation) 5, Intimidation (Control) 4, Etiquette (Courtesy) 5, Sincerity 3, Kenjutsu 2, Games: Sadane 3, Commerce 4.

Status: 3.5

Appendix #3: GM's Aid – Point Tracking

Clan	Base	Duel	Poetry	Dinner	Sadane	Tea	Go	Bandits	Other Clans	Total
Crab	1									
Crane	1									
Dragon	1									
Lion	1									
Mantis	1									
Owl	1									
Phoenix	1									
Scorpion	1									
Unicorn	1									
Minor	0									
Imperials	0									

Reminders / Cheat Sheet:

Dueling: 2 points for the victor's clan, 1 point for the next highest clan.

Poetry: 2 points for the victor's clan, 1 point for the next highest clan.

Dinner: 1 point for any clan who has a PC that answers Katsuo's question, either affirmatively or negatively. No points for demurring, taking the middle ground, or attempting to 'have it both ways'. (1-point max for any clan, regardless of the number of PCs that answer)

Sadane: 1 point for the highest rolling PCs clan. An additional point if they roll higher than Doji Hanako.

Tea Ceremony: 1 point for the highest rolling PCs clan. 1 point for whichever clan has the currently lowest score.

Go: 2 points for the victor's clan, 1 point for the next highest clan.

Bandits: 1 point for any clan that has a PC participate or has a courtier who declines based on lack of combat ability. -2 points for any clan that has a non-courtier PC who refuses to participate, -4 points for any clan that has a bushi PC refuse to participate.

If a clan has no PC present, the courtier NPC from that clan can be persuaded to give their support (and any points they earn) to another clan. If a clan has PCs present, their NPC representative will not be willing to support another clan.

NPC:	Currently supporting:	High roll:
Hiruma Izumi		
Doji Hanako		
Kitsuki Oda		
Ikoma Taro		
Moshi Atsuko		
Hantei Ganji		
Shiba Kaito		
Bayushi Tenno		
Moto Noritoshi		
Otomo Katsuo		

Player Handout #1: News From the Empire

“Samurai,

“Word from the South is that the Crab will be using their newfound treasures to renovate the Wall. Surely such a thing is blessed news indeed, and this one bows to the Crab for their profound wisdom on this matter. From what I have heard, the repairs and improvements are anticipated to be enough to prevent any major incursions for a generation. Should we be so Fortunate, I for one would be grateful.

“The Miya have received the funds for the Second Miya’s Blessing from the Crane. From what I have heard, they plan to hold it for the time being, as they wish to ensure that it is sent to a clan in a time of true crisis. It is not, perhaps, how I would have chosen, but it is not my responsibility to editorialize, only report.

“There is not much else in the way of new news, unfortunately. I shall be at the Imperial Winter Court this year, and of course will be sure to bring a report from there once it is finished.”

- Otomo Yusuke

Player Handout #2: Important NPCs

Crab:

Hiruma Izumi – Izumi is a former Crab scout now assigned to the courts. She walks with a pronounced limp, but has a very open and friendly attitude. Unless a Crane is around. She was at Kyuden Bayushi last year and almost won the kemari contest. Pretty good for someone that can barely walk! Though there was a minor scandal when she caught the ball with her elbow. Elbows in Kemari, who would even think of such a thing?

Crane:

Doji Hanako - A familiar face in all of the major courts of Rokugan, Doji Hanako represents the interests of the Crane with grace and dignity. A soft word from her has brought an end to several incipient conflicts (to the chagrin of those who wished to make their reputation in war), though it is rumored that she is more willing than most of her family to use sterner measures when required. She is supposedly a patron and great appreciator of all forms of artistry.

Dragon:

Kitsuki Oda – A junior investigator and courtier from the Kitsuki. I heard that he solved a murder last spring! A Crane killed a Dragon. Or was it a Dragon that killed a Crane? I'm not sure, I've heard both. But I am quite certain he solved a murder. Someone saw him wandering the halls of the court late last night, I wonder what he was looking for?

Lion:

Ikoma Taro – He told me that his uncle caught a Crane samurai trying to sneak away with Lion maps 25 years ago, and chased him for 22 miles to get them back. He says he ran alongside even though he was only 15 at the time, but gave up after 21 miles because he got tired. That can't be true, nobody runs that far.

Mantis:

Moshi Atsuko – A priest from the Moshi family, she seems really friendly. She was talking about her time on a Kobune the other day, and was trying to get people to sing 'sea shanties'. They seemed a bit odd, but she was a pretty good singer!

Owl:

Hantei Ganji – Ganji has a man with a perpetually dour expression and a haircut to match. I heard he has the favor of the lord of the Owl. Unfortunately, his temper matches constant expression. I'd avoid crossing him if I were you, but that's easier said than done.

Phoenix:

Shiba Kaito – A sculptor of moderate renown, Kaito is tall and handsome. He recently unveiled a sculpture in the Scorpion lands titled "Freedom of Autumn" and gifted it to the local lord. It received high praise from his hosts. I hope he has another sculpture to show off this year. They say he's the best. Well, the Crane don't, but other people do.

Scorpion:

Bayushi Tenno – He's sooo dreamy. And such a nice scorpion, I've never heard anything bad about him. He's a magistrate you know, catches criminals. They say nobody gets away from him. Isn't that great!

Unicorn:

Ide Akio – He's Ekuan's hatamoto. He's very traditional. Hard to talk to though, always seems busy with something or other. I hear he hates it when people wear fur, I heard him say once that it 'makes the Unicorn look backwards'.

Moto Ogedei – A daimyo and a general. He's a little... standoffish though, if you know what I mean. A bit odd. With all that fur, and the leather jacket. Who wears that to court? How droll. Still, seems like an honorable fellow.

Moto Noritoshi – The eldest son of the Khan, and Khogun of the Moto. Noritoshi is a young handsome man who is only two summers past his gempuku. People say he’s more of a Crane than a Unicorn. I guess he takes after his mother’s family. She was a Crane, you know. An important one. Too bad about her death.

Imperial:

Otomo Katsuo – An imperial tax investigator, how odd. I heard he wasn’t actually invited, and he’s just here to inspect the tax records. No, wait, I heard he was definitely invited, and that he’s friends with Akio and Tenno. Well, he seems like a nice fellow. A little odd.

Player Handout #3: Welcome Letter

My dear friends,

On behalf of my lord, Ide Ekuan, welcome to Shiro Ide. I hope your trip across our lands was pleasant and I thank you for travelling doubtless a great distance to join me here in the seat of the lands of my family.

The court shall open tonight and I would be greatly pleased if you would join me for dinner and a play. To celebrate the gathering of so many esteemed samurai, the renowned theater troupe the Silken Breath will be performing 'Wind's Promise,' the seminal work of the playwright Kakita Shoji.

While you are visiting us, I hope that you will take the opportunity to participate in some of the activities that we have prepared. The four schools of the Ide will be sponsoring events, in addition to the standard courtly fare, and I believe you will find them enlightening and entertaining.

If there is anything you require during your stay, please alert any of the servants and your needs will be attended to.

Your host,
Ide Akio