

One Moment, One Encounter

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**An Introductory Adventure for
Heroes of Rokugan: Champions of the Ivory Throne**

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Exploration, Investigation

The Empire's control over its furthest outpost may be in danger. But first, the city of Balishnimpur must deal with the troubles brewing within its walls.

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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

For the vast majority of the existence of the Empire, Rokugan has been an extremely insular and xenophobic society. The acquisition of the Ivory Kingdoms city of Balishnimpur two centuries ago prevented a Tainted invasion of the Empire, but has caused stresses through the fabric of the Empire's culture.

The contact between the cultures has reinforced the prejudices of traditionalist samurai, but in some cases, more flexible samurai have developed respect for and interest in the customs they have seen. The cyclical uprisings in the area, one of which is apparent in the near future, have supported the former's attitude, and those who are too vocal about the latter opinion frequently face consequences. One example of this was Yoritomo Darate, a promising student of the Mantis bushi who found some of the native fighting styles fascinating and decided to attempt to integrate them into the teachings of his family's school.

This did not go well for him.

Crippled and cast out of his clan following a disastrous confrontation with his sensei over the issue, Darate took the name "Hiroate" (meaning "bitter" or "broken") as a ronin and vowed to make the Yoritomo pay for their short-sighted prejudice. It did not take long for this desire for vengeance to include the other clans for the less-enlightened views espoused by the samurai caste. Finding like-minded followers among the ronin, he has returned to the Ivory Kingdoms to take revenge against the samurai of the city for his punishment. He has recruited and trained a group of ronin, and set them upon the samurai of the city with the goal of humiliating them and laying the blame at the feet of the Mantis (though mistakes from his followers have led to a wider scale to these attacks than he'd originally intended).

The PCs will arrive in Balishnimpur, but find the city not only under threat of attack by gaijin but also riven by tensions among the Great Clans. They will be escorted around the city, to introduce both the characters and the players to the details of the exotic location, and eventually one of the impartial Imperial authorities will ask their assistance in getting to the bottom of the conflicts between the clans.

There is no single defined avenue for their investigation, but several options are provided that should allow the PCs to eventually find and confront Hiroate and put an end to his gang's brutality.

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. The following things may have an impact on the story of this module

- PCs belonging to the Yoritomo Bushi School
- Allies or Enemies taken at character creation (not those earned through play)

News from the Empire

While the GM is looking over sheets, it's a good time to distribute the first player handout of the module.

Inactivity

Time passes, and though the PCs' deeds have earned them a reputation, the Empire is a large place and lasting fame is a long-term goal not easy to achieve.

Each PC loses 3 points of 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. (As an Introductory module, this cannot affect any brand-new character, and may be waived for PCs with fewer than four mods at the GM's discretion.)

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 10. 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 of 5. 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.

Note for the GM

This is an Introductory module, meaning that only Rank One PCs should be allowed to play it. However, due to the way that increasing Insight Rank is handled in L5R, this does not mean that only inexperienced PCs can play it. The GM should feel free to increase TNs for more experienced PCs, usually by 5. This is not about “punishing” experienced player or their characters, but meant to make sure that at mixed tables, brand-new characters are able to take part in the story and contribute in a meaningful fashion.

Introduction

The PCs begin with their arrival in Balishnimpur, having been sent by their lords in response to the reports of assembling army in the jungles to the north of the city.

Lord Sun is high in the vault of the heavens and beginning his journey toward the horizon when Balishnimpur comes into view over the rail of your ship. A vast, sprawling seaport, the gaijin city is more vast than any in the Empire (save, of course, for the unmatched glory of Ootosan Uchi, the seat of the Emperor Himself). A cool eastern wind blows at your backs, relieving some of the brutal heat while you wait for the vessel to dock. The gangplank finally drops to the pier after an interminable wait to allow you to disembark.

The dock the PCs find themselves at is obviously reserved for the use of passenger vessels for samurai, though as they are the first to respond to the call to arms, there are only a few other ships present.

A somewhat mismatched pair waits for you on the shore: a lovely young woman in the elaborate finery of an Imperial courtier with a small welcoming smile, and a plainly-garbed, grim-faced monk standing at her side and slightly behind her. The woman approaches you with a small bow and greets you pleasantly, “Greetings, samurai. I am Otomo Kireko, Assistant to the Liaison for Interclan Affairs in the Colonial Bureaucracy. I believe I have been expecting you.”

This is a good opportunity for the PCs to introduce themselves; while the PCs have spent several weeks on the same vessel, the players may not be aware of many details of the other characters. Kireko can prod this along, if necessary.

Kireko continues, “It is my honor and duty to provide you with a warm welcome to the city of Balishnimpur. With the influx of samurai over the last year, the Colonial Bureaucracy has developed a formal procedure for integrating new arrivals into the city. As you are the first arrivals, it will be our honor to provide you with hospitality for the next few days while your clans determine the best place to use your services.” As she pauses, the monk beside her steps forward with a deep bow, and she remarks off-handedly, “Oh, yes, and this is my advisor Tenro. We have put together a brief tour to familiarize you with the city, though for this evening you will undoubtedly wish to recover from the rigor of your journey. If you will follow me,

Tenro will ensure that your belongings make their way to the House of the Silken Swan.”

While she is polite and fairly friendly, it is obvious that Kireko expects the PCs to obey her requests. If a player insists on ignoring the provided hospitality or tour despite reasonable warnings from the GM, the PC will be ordered by their clan superiors to return to the Imperial welcome wagon (and they will lose 2 points of Glory as a minor slap on the wrist for inconveniencing the Otomo)

It is worth remembering that some PCs may have been in the city already, which should be acknowledged by the NPCs. This does not significantly change anything in terms of what is to happen; Kireko has her orders, and offending the Imperial Bureaucracy is something that any samurai should avoid.

While the monk departs with a low bow, Kireko will lead the PCs away.

Part One: Breaking the News

The PCs are now in the Docks District of the city, which Kireko will point out in an off-hand fashion as they walk westward. The city gives the immediate impression of readying itself for wartime footing, as most of the samurai that can be seen are wearing armor in Mantis colors and traveling in small groups.

“Since we will cross most of the eastern half of the city, I will give you a short orientation as we walk, so you will learn a bit about the area before you may be called upon to defend it.” Kireko speaks as you walk, in the cadences of one trying out a practiced speech for the first time. “This is, obviously, the Docks District, where many vessels come into port. Trade with the Empire and certain friendly city-states among the rest of the Ivory Kingdoms ensures that it is always busy. We will be passing through the Market District shortly, on our way to the quarters that have been arranged for you in the Noble District.” She pauses to gesture to the south-east. “And there you can see the Naval Shipyard, where the city’s defenses on the water are coordinated.”

The GM should be sure to make the point to the players that this in-character tour and description of the city’s major sites is intended to prepare them for the battle to come, and introduce them as players as much as the PCs. There is a fair amount of exposition, but it is intended to provide information that will allow

the PCs to make decisions easier in the latter part of the module and provide context for the coming battle. Once the tour is completed, there is a handout that provides some general information for the players.

Several warships are visible in dry-dock in the massive piers to the south. A high-walled fort rises above the waves on the tip of the peninsula, giving a commanding view of the bay. Even at this distance, the buzz of activity there is impressive.

Kireko continues, moving on again, “The Mantis are responsible for the administration and upkeep of these three districts; their expertise with both commercial and nautical matters makes them ideal for this task, and they have the more samurai in the city than any other single clan. Ultimately, these areas are not as important as those we will go to tomorrow, and of course there is no real point to passing across the river or past the city wall.”

The division between the Docks and the Market Districts is relatively subtle, though the buildings are better and nicer. Construction is more prevalent in the Market District, with buildings going up that do not seem to have much to do with defense. Even the newer structures have been influenced a great deal by the architecture of the native inhabitants, using more stone and arched breezeways than samurai are used to. The noise and bustle of the raucous (by Rokugani standards) merchants fills the air, as they attempt to make a few last sales while the afternoon winds down.

Your guide gestures to stalls and shops as you pass. “Goods from the Markets here are in great demand in the Empire, since the Emperor has raised interest in the Ivory Kingdoms. Spices, jewelry, and particularly silk have been in great demand in Rokugan. The patterns woven into the silk produced here have become the height of fashion in Crane courts” The Imperial courtier gives your group a curious look. “Are you interested in seeing what treasures you can find today, or would you rather wait for another day?”

If the PCs do wish to shop, now or later, they can find essentially anything in the core book’s equipment section (pg 198-207) at a mark-up of 10-100% in cost. (The GM should roll 1k1 and multiply the result by 10 to determine this increase.) PCs who wish to haggle may do so with **Commerce / Awareness** at a TN of 15, losing a point of Glory and reducing the mark-up by half if successful. Lower prices are allowed at the GM’s discretion for significant success, though never lower than the base cost in the book. It is worth note that jade is not available. Native works of art are

easy to come by, in whatever form, but more specialized equipment (spyglasses, weapons, armor) of gaijin make are better handled as the Gaijin Gear Advantage, available with Favor expenditure and beyond the scope of this module.

PCs interested in particularly refined wares will be directed to more upscale shops by their guide, with a smile of approval. “The portion of the Market District in the north is called the “Artisan District”, though this is an informal name. Those craftsmen and artists whose skills are more refined tend to gather there, due to the proximity to their samurai customers in the Noble District.”

Once any shopping is done, but at least an hour before sunset, Kiretiko will gather the PCs up once again. Even if the PCs did not wish to pause in the Market District, this is where Tenro will rejoin the group, indicating that he has already seen to their belongings. If questioned about his efficiency, he will simply shrug, but Kiretiko will defend him somewhat smugly as “far more capable than he appears”, causing him to roll his eyes.

Passing into the Noble District takes the PCs through an actual wall, guarded by Lion samurai in full armor. The guards are alert and carefully examining everyone passing through, though samurai only receive nods and are not stopped. (Mantis, Crane, and Unicorn do tend to receive stern looks, but nothing more.) Ronin without obvious business, peasants, and especially natives are being halted and questioned at length. Kireko ignores this blithely, though PCs who had been in the city previously would remember that the guards here were not commonly armored and were certainly not as stern.

The Noble District is about the most “Rokugani” of the areas of the city. Most of the original structures were destroyed over the course of the last two centuries, and have been replaced with buildings designed with the aesthetic of the Empire in mind. There are a few concessions to the heat and humidity, such as wider doorways and halls to carry breezes through the building, but the overall look is more comfortable for the resident samurai than elsewhere in the city.

The Noble District has rather more building going on than the Markets, and some of it is obviously preparations for the defense of the city. As this is the area that most of the samurai of the city make their homes, there are far more bushi visible on the streets – again, all of the bushi are wearing their armor and traveling in groups, even those not obviously on duty.

The House of the Silken Swan is an upscale establishment, easily as good as any the PCs have ever been in (and probably better). Standing on a busy street across from a sake house called “Sanzo’s Smile, it is a three-story building, with a small stable and a well-tended garden displaying mostly native plants in traditional Rokugani arrangements. Inside, it is the picture of tasteful luxury, with beautiful art on the walls and the quiet sound of soothing music playing through the sizable common room. The innkeeper gives Kireko an effusive greeting, and servants instantly arrive to provide cool cloths for the PCs to wipe their faces.

Kireko turns to you, and gestures to the host of waiting servants. “I should not like to keep you from your opportunity to rest and recover from your travels. I will see you in the morning, shall we say two hours after dawn?” Though a question, she does not await an answer before continuing, “I will be honored to show you the rest of the Noble District, the local temples, and the more-martial area known as Steeltown. Following that, my superior Miya Seiryō would like to meet you in the Inner City for a late lunch.”

With that, the Imperial courtier will leave the PCs to themselves for the evening. Tenro, however, pauses to warn the PCs against wandering out alone.

The grizzled monk pauses at the door. “If I may offer some advice, samurai-sama... It might be wise that you remain close to the inn for the night. You would not wish to feel less than your best tomorrow. If you do go out, I suggest you not do so alone; at least that way you will have someone else to help you back.” With that somewhat ominous advice, he bows deeply and departs himself.

The PCs have the evening to themselves at this point. For the most part, there is a limit to how much trouble they should feel free to get into; they do have to meet their Imperial guide in the morning. PCs who have been in the city before may have specific things they wish to revisit; this module does not provide information on those locations, but for the most part, the PCs should be able to acquire information as mentioned below.

PCs who stay at the inn will be pampered rather more than they are probably used to; even Crane or Imperial samurai should be impressed with the level of hospitality shown by the staff of the House of the Silken Swan.

PCs who leave the inn will most likely notice the tensions in the city. All of the Great Clan bushi in the streets are armored and traveling in groups made up exclusively of their own clan. Less-martial samurai are out and about as well, though they tend to keep in groups with other members of their clan as well. The PCs would be the only group of mixed-clan samurai to be seen, and the oddity will earn a few confused looks.

Learning about what is going on can be done in a few ways; the most basic is to go to a sake house or other communal establishment and inquire of the samurai there about the happenings of the city. The section on “Sanzo’s Smile” provides a sample location, and PCs looking for other venues should discover something similar.

Sanzo’s Smile

The sake house across the street is the closest and easiest option for any PCs looking for a bit of rowdy fun; it is a relatively informal place that caters predominantly to Mantis, Crab, and more boisterous members of the other clans. Ronin are not common customers there, though they are not forbidden. The sake is not cheap, but it is quite strong and comes in several varieties. They also have some native liquors, such as apo (rice wine), chuak (a rice beer with jackfruit and pineapple juices), and hariya (a lower-alcohol content rice beer).

Even here, the strife between the Great Clans is somewhat visible. The Mantis and Crab customers have claimed opposite sides of the common room, and there is no mixing between the groups. The few ronin who come in seem to take in the atmosphere, and move on after at most a single drink.

Wherever the PCs go, if they intend to gather information, it follows the same mechanical format. Note that what they can learn in the first night, when they are completely lacking in context for the issues, is somewhat limited. Most of this information can be discovered later without rolls, and additional information may be available later with additional rolls.

Rumors

The following information is available with a **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll. Success at the listed TN gains the appropriate information.

- **10:** There is some concern about the imminent attack by the gaijin army massing to the north. While no samurai wishes to admit to fear, the

uncertainty surrounding the forces arraying themselves against the city has many uneasy.

- **15:** There have been a series of fairly brutal attacks on samurai of the Great Clans, leaving them beaten and humiliated. All of the clans have claimed to be assaulted in this fashion, and every clan is accused by another of being responsible.
- **20:** The attacks have increased tension between the clans, and led to several open brawls during the daytime. While there have only been a handful of deaths from this violence, some worry that it could escalate even in the face of the greater threat to the city.
- **25:** The assaults that began this issue started about six weeks ago, and have mostly targeted younger samurai from the Great Clans who had recently arrived in the city.
- **30:** Three samurai have committed seppuku in the last six weeks. This is significantly more than would be expected in that time-frame, and there is a great deal of speculation as to why young Crane, Lion, and Unicorn samurai would all seek to cleanse their shame in such a drastic fashion.

Those who are specifically looking to speak with the ronin of the city, or similar representatives of the criminal class, may roll **Lore: Underworld / Awareness** instead of the above. This can provide the following information:

- **15:** There are more ronin in the city than anyone can remember in the past. They are obviously here to gain fortune and fame in battle with the gaijin, and some may even hope to distinguish themselves enough to be offered fealty.
- **20:** The clans have not been hiring as much as hoped; most of the ronin who have arrived recently are out of work.
- **25:** The infighting among the clans seems to be what is causing the lack of trust in ronin, as the clan samurai are wary of taking in rival agents. Many ronin are thinking of heading back to the Empire rather than
- **30:** Those ronin who have not been hired are developing their own agendas; word has it that a couple of otokodate are trying to form. The expanding infrastructure of the city has so far limited the competition among them, and allowed them to avoid conflict with the existing gangs.

Being Followed?

Any PC who is out and about may roll **Investigation (Notice) / Perception**; the one who rolls the highest will notice a small group of samurai ducking down an alley, with daisho at their hips and bokken in hand or

slung over their shoulders. Nothing specific can be determined about them, and they disappear into the alleyways immediately.

Even if time allows, it is not recommended that the GM put a solitary PC through an encounter with the Hiroate-gumi – this would tip the players off early, and potentially derail the planned tour for the next day. However, allowing the PCs to realize that there are groups skulking about in the night is useful to help reinforce (or introduce) the idea that something untoward is going on.

Tour: Noble District

The next morning, Kireko plans to start in the Noble District, for obvious reasons. At the appointed hour, she and Tenro arrive at the inn to gather the PCs.

When you enter the common room, Kireko offers an elegant bow and a small smile of welcome. “Konnichi-wa, my friends. I have taken the liberty of arranging our itinerary for this morning; we shall see a few of the sights of the Noble District before moving into the Temple District, that we may offer thanks for your safe arrival as you wish. Then, as the Imperial Legion will probably be of interest to some of you, I will show you the most important places in Steeltown. Finally, my superior Miya Seiryō-sama has requested the honor of your presence for a late lunch in the Inner City, at her offices in the Governor’s Palace.” Small, polite smile firmly fixed on her features, she bustles you out the door with an inexorable sort of enthusiasm.

During the morning, as samurai are leaving their homes and preparing for the day, the tensions between the clans become impossible to miss. Bushi travel in armor and groups, frequently eyeing other clans with suspicion. The PCs’ group gets attention for being made up of more than one clan, as well as their lack of armor; they are, in fact, the only such group visible. The guides largely seem oblivious to the issue, though whether it’s because they are trying to be polite or because they are not members of a Great Clan and as such are being ignored by the relevant samurai is impossible to say.

Ignoring the crowd that pulls back from her in respect for her Imperial mon, Kireko gestures gracefully toward some of the older buildings. “The samurai population of the city has more than tripled over the last year and a half following the Emperor’s directive that samurai of the Empire should experience the Ivory Kingdoms. The Empire’s presence in the city was originally intended as little more than an outpost to

support the Imperial Legion and diplomatic representatives sent to ensure peace with the other Ivory Kingdoms, but interest in the wealth and opportunities here has led to the city becoming larger than any in the Empire except for the capitol itself. The city is having a hard time keeping up with the increasing population, though the Noble District is exclusively populated by samurai now and the wealthier merchants are moving either into the market district or across the river.”

As the group continues through the Noble District, the clatter of wood on wood echoes out of a tall building with wide doors; a sign is posted above the doors proudly displays the Lion mon and proclaims it the “Dojo of the Righteous Blade”.

Nodding casually toward the school, your guide offers, “Much as the courtiers of the city meet in the city’s central court and shugenja congregate at the temples, **the bushi of the city have taken to using the dojo they practice at for socializing. Every Great Clan has a dojo**, though some are fairly small, and the Mantis have three. Be aware that the more traditional clans are less likely to be particularly welcoming of outsiders, and even the others probably have some sort of requirement if you wish to seek exercise with them.”

More information on this can be found in the “Dojo” section in Part Two.

As the tour moves south and west toward the Temple District, Kireko points out several gardens, a large library, and an old manor house converted to display works of art inspired by the Ivory Kingdoms. The wall to the Inner City is visible to the north as the group comes upon an unfortunate scene

Down a narrow side-passage, you see two groups of samurai exchanging insults. This sort of confrontation is not uncommon in the streets of the Empire, as the pride of samurai often prevents them from giving way to another they do not feel to be their superior. In this instance, it has escalated beyond propriety, and nearly to violence. A dozen Scorpion samurai face off against a trio of Owl samurai, each group the escort of a courtier most likely on their way to the Inner City for their duties. The Lion guards of the area, rather than interfering, chuckle and nudge each other in obvious amusement; it seems likely they will soon begin placing bets on the outcome.

The PCs can ignore the issue with relative impunity, Kireko will lead the group around the confrontation

with a stiff smile, trying to ignore the problem. The sound of violence will erupt behind them; the Lion guards will respond eventually, after the Scorpion have pushed through on the basis of their superior numbers, and the PCs will be detained as witnesses. This process will take about an hour, stressing out Kireko and causing her to hurry the tour along, leaving out the chance for the PCs to pay respects at the Temples.

If a PC wishes to interfere with the confrontation, they may do so without interference from Kireko (Tenro silently approves, and counsels her to allow it). There are several ways this could play out, depending on the PCs involved; in general, trying to talk the Scorpion and Owl into a peaceful resolution is fairly easy as long as the PCs give them a way to save face. A **Courtier** or **Etiquette / Awareness** roll at a TN of 15 will accomplish this. Trying to force one side or the other to back down requires **Intimidation / Willpower** (15 against the Owl, 20 against the Scorpion), and failure will make them more intransigent (increasing the TN for a peace-making roll by 5).

As the NPCs are wearing armor and fully armed, the PCs should be encouraged not to simply attack one side or the other. Doing so will cause a combat to occur, though only a single Round will elapse before Kireko orders the PCs to desist, and the chastened courtiers will call their guards back. Involving themselves in a street brawl will cost a PC three points of Glory; if they choose to ignore or argue with Kireko, they additionally gain three points of Infamy. Regardless, as soon as the Imperial makes her displeasure known, both the Scorpion and Owl will retreat and find alternate routes to their destination. (Statblocks for the Bayushi and Hantei Bushi can be found in Appendix #1.)

However the confrontation falls out, Kireko will sigh with resignation and admit that such scenes are becoming unfortunately common. “Tensions between the clans have increased significantly over the last few weeks. I’m not sure why, but there have been some instances of overt violence as well as several claims of night-time ambushes. No members of the Imperial families have been involved in this strife, and it appears to have avoided the Minor Clans and ronin as well, so I cannot say what is going on.”

Tour: Temple District

As befits a large city, there are a wide number of temples and shrines in Balishnimpur. The Ivindi are a very spiritual people, and their holy sites have been

taken over by priests and monks from Rokugan and rededicated to the Empire’s Fortunes and ancestors. The Seven Fortunes each have a temple, with Daikoku’s being obviously the largest and wealthiest; in addition, there are shrines to several dozen minor fortunes, particularly those most revered by the Scorpion and Mantis. Suitengu (Fortune of the Sea), Isora (Fortune of the Seashore), and Natsu-Togumara (Fortune of Travel and Experience) have particularly ornate shrines, though they are not quite full temples.

The construction of the buildings are generally Rokugani, though most of them are extended above the foundations of pre-existing Ivindi temples. Three structures rise over the district, defining the skyline: the Shrine to the Toturi, dedicated to the Imperial Family and honoring the Empress that brought the city under Rokugan’s sway with an enormous statue; the Temple to Daikoku, a golden spire reaching toward the Heavens and visible for miles out to sea on a clear day; and the Temple to Shinsei, surrounded by scaffolding as new structures are added on.

Provided she feels that the group has time, Kireko will allow the PCs to make offerings at a temple of their choice, and await them at the Temple to Shinsei. “It is one of the largest, and in recent months, the most popular temple in the city. I understand that a large number of natives have begun converting to follow the Tao of Shinsei. Something about the more peaceful doctrines resonates with their native religions, as I understand it.”

The Temple to Shinsei proves to be as popular as described, with a large number of people waiting to consult with the monks, seek healing, or leave offerings. Most of them are, in fact, native Ivindi, and more than a few of the monks circulating through the crowd are as well. Once the PCs have gathered together, they will be approached; the highest-Honor PC, or a particularly prideful samurai should be the immediate focus of his attention. (Failing that, a Mantis or Lion PC make good targets.)

One of the converts approaches you, a dry, withered old man with a frail form clad in the saffron robes of a Brotherhood monk despite the clear features of an Ivindi. In a clear, resonant voice unexpected from such a small frame, he declaims in broken Rokugani, “Rajdharma! The duty of kings! Know that those who rule are to be servants of the people. Know that your failures cause suffering beyond all sorrow! Rajdharma!” A bony finger waves in your face, scant inches from the end of your nose.

This is primarily a role-playing encounter. The monk is rebuking the PCs for the failures of the samurai class in general, and his foreign background and culture has led him to be more confrontational than monks normally are. At the same time, it is expected that monks in Rokugan are to provide spiritual and moral counsel to samurai, so the content of his complaint is not terribly out of bounds, while the way that he is choosing to express the sentiment is considerably out of bounds. Additionally, his poor command of the language is also getting in the way.

PCs who speak Ivindi have a particularly easy time of this, since he will easily switch into his native tongue to explain that the samurai who have recently arrived in the city have been causing any number of problems. “They are brutal, slaying those who offend them for as simple an insult as accidentally touching their sword, and they never face consequence for it. Hundreds of families have been forced to leave their homes, sent across the river to make room for the samurai and their favored servants. There is no respect for the ways of those different from themselves, even among their own caste. The violence of your ways comes around in a circle that will fall upon us again.”

PCs who do not speak Ivindi can attempt to understand his point of view, though it is a struggle with the language barrier. A **Lore: Theology / Intelligence** roll at a TN of 15 will give them the sense that what he is referring to is something along the lines of bushido’s tenet of “compassion”, though there is a rather more spiritual component to what he is saying. Making the effort to understand the monk without a common language, and resolving the situation peacefully, gains a PC H7 Honor (one point of Honor gained for every Rank of Honor a PC has lower than 7); a PC must be involved in the discussion to gain this reward.

Whether or not they speak the language, if a PC resorts to violence to move the monk out of their way, he will crumple to the ground without resistance, and the crowd will gasp in appalled amazement. Kireko flushes and hustles the group along, though the news will spread through the city soon enough, causing the loss of 2 points of Glory and a D1 Honor loss (one point of Honor lost for each Rank of Honor the PC has over 1).

Tour: Steeltown

Another wall separates Steeltown from the rest of the city, clearly serving as a line of defense as the fortifications are largely aimed to the north. The Crab bushi who guard this wall are, of course, clad in full

armor, and do not delay the procession (though they do give the mixed group searching looks). The ringing of hammer on anvil echoes over the district, as the forges and foundries of the area prepare for war. New barracks are under construction, as are garrison towers.

The main wall of the city is clearly visible above the other buildings of the district, and while nearly everyone in view has some important task they are engaged in, they often glance to the north before redoubling their efforts. Kireko seems to face the prospect with equanimity, focusing instead on her task:

“While the Crab are responsible for the district, and oversee various logistical operations, the Ivory Legion make up the bulk of troops stationed here. Ah, I apologize – the 11th Imperial Legion, permanently assigned to Balishnimpur, is called the ‘Ivory Legion’ locally, much as the Jade Champion’s 3rd Legion is called the ‘Jade Legion’. Regardless, the commander of the Legion, Ikoma Sho, has a reputation as a fierce warrior in the field, but has proven over the last few years that his greatest strength is the ability to make the best of his available resources. So far from the Empire, he has often been forced to make do with rather less than he would like.” Passing the compound of the Imperial Legion, she gestures gracefully with her fan toward where a stocky, weathered Lion watches over a small unit of cavalry going through their paces.

Moving on, Kireko clearly hesitates for a moment, looking to the north and the city’s wall. Questioning her merely gains an evasive answer about there being nothing of importance to the north; the PCs will have to specifically request a look at the Slums or she will move on. If the PCs do wish to see the worst area of the city, she will take them up to the top of the city wall to look out over the ramshackle structures built up outside. The Imperial Legions keep a clear field between the wall and the closest shanties, and the main road leading north into the jungle divides the slums in half. Kireko is dismissive of the area; no samurai go there unless there is specific reason, and that happens so rarely as to be immaterial.

Tour: Inner City

As your steps turn toward the Inner City, some of the tension seems to go out of your guide’s shoulders. Passing through the district’s walls, she actually lets a low sigh of relief escape her lips before brightly pointing out a few details of the area:

“The Inner City rises above the rest of the city atop a low hill and surrounded by a high wall dating back to before the city was taken by Rokugan. The buildings here have weathered the years without significant change. Originally houses belonging to the most influential and wealthiest nobles, they have largely been converted over into offices for the administrators of the city, and the primary embassies of the clans and Imperial Families. The Owl Clan is responsible for the upkeep and defense of the district, though as the Governor is a Scorpion and the majority of the city’s bureaucrats come from her clan, this puts the two rival clans in regular contact.”

The Governor’s Palace is a vast stone structure, renovated countless times over the centuries the city has stood here; wings have been added to wings, courtyards closed off and forgotten, and the passageways take regular unexpected turns. Whether this mazelike nature was welcomed by the Scorpion or not, they have at least made no effort in the last two hundred years to simplify the Palace’s floorplan.

Kireko leads the PCs through several halls, up a staircase, across a walkway over a courtyard that seems to have no other entry, and down two flights to a second-story office suite. Wide windows open out onto a beautiful view of the Temple District skyline and the ocean beyond it.

Miya Seiryō, Liaison for Interclan Affairs in the Colonial Bureaucracy, is a regal woman in her early fifties, with a calm air of quiet confidence. Though less energetic than Kireko, she nonetheless makes some effort to make you comfortable, exchanging pleasantries as servants bring refreshments.

Despite her relatively bland job title, Seiryō is a fairly influential courtier and responsible for overseeing and finalizing agreements that the clans come to, as well as arranging the integration of samurai fresh from the Empire into the day-to-day affairs of the city.

During the meal, the hostess will engage in small talk, refusing to discuss anything of significance. She will make mention of any unique Allies the PCs may have (those taken at character creation, rather than any earned in modules), giving the impression that she is personally familiar with any particularly high-ranking associates of the PCs. (This should be used as instruction for any new players as to the often-circuitous nature of Rokugani social interactions.)

After the meal is finished and the servants have whisked the last dishes away, leaving only tea or a light, weak sake, Seiryō will finally broach the topic that has caused her to summon the PCs in the first place:

“You are no doubt wondering why I wished to speak with you,” Seiryō murmurs, gracefully folding her fan and placing it on the table before her. “I am certain that you have noticed by now that there is a great deal of tension between the clans in the city. This is not something that we can afford, with an enemy on our very doorstep, but I am forced to admit that I do not understand its source. The suspicions and barriers that have sprung up separating the Great Clans here have prevented any real investigation from taking place. However, you are newly-arrived here, and therefore demonstrably cannot have had anything to do with the problems here. And, of course, since you are from different clans, you should be able to gather more information by approaching your kin. Perhaps your cooperation will allow you an insight denied to the clans here.”

Seiryō will share what information she has; unfortunately, this is not terribly specific, and much of it may have been picked up by the PCs already. As the Imperial Families have not been involved in any of the unrest, her news is second- or third-hand.

As far as Seiryō knows, the strife started about six weeks ago. Over the course of a week, several clans began complaining of attacks on their samurai; by the time another week had passed, every clan had raised a complaint, and every clan had been accused of this activity. These attacks have typically taken place at night, always targeting lone bushi; the victims are severely beaten and left on the side of the street. These attacks have not claimed any lives (at least directly), nor have there been reports of theft resulting from them. There have been reprisals – street brawls or fights in sake houses, particularly between clans already having poor relations. Though usually nonlethal, these have still resulted in a dozen fatalities among the Lion, Mantis, Phoenix, and Scorpion. The issue has also come up in court, with shifting alliances and accusations from courtiers seeking to claim injury from other clans without looking too weak. There have been three seppuku in the last month (Lion, Crane, Unicorn), with no reasons given, but speculation is rampant – the common theory is that they were involved in the attacks, whether as perpetrators or victims is uncertain. Though the Emerald Magistrate attempted look into the matter, no one wants to talk too openly of it with outsiders as it causes lost face.

Seiryō has no authority to begin an official investigation, and certainly no ability to sanction arrests, but she does not think it likely that the PCs will need such. She is asking for information as to the cause of the problem, but if they can stop it at its source, that would be excellent. Once they have gained as much information from her as they are willing to, they are free to go on their way.

Part Two: Breaking Tension

There are a few difficulties with the problem that have prevented the locals from solving it themselves: primarily, each clan thinks that they are under attack and does not trust the other clans. Additionally, the pride of individual samurai prevents them from being exceptionally forthcoming on the matter. However, there are several avenues of investigation open to the PCs.

Dojo

As the targets of the night-time attacks have all been bushi traveling alone, getting more information from the bushi of the city may occur to the PCs. Whether they wish just to get a basic feel for what the clans think about recent events, or if they want to try to speak with more specific individuals (like the victims of the attacks), going to the dojo mentioned by Kireko (or possibly Seiryō) is the easiest method of speaking with the bushi.

There are thousands of samurai in the city, and most of them are bushi. Each of the Great Clan's dojo will provide practice space and instruction for all of their basic bushi Schools. As a consequence of this, the more martial clans with more bushi Schools (Crab, Lion, Unicorn) have much larger dojo than clans who have only one or two Schools, or who are generally less well represented in the city (Owl, Dragon).

The dojo are listed here with their names, general location, the name of the head sensei, and any requirements for training, as well as the clans they have specific complaints against (in other words, the clans they think have attacked them). There is also a reason that each clan thinks they are being victimized in this fashion by the other clans; this attitude has contributed to the general lack of cooperation among the samurai of the city.

Note: "Training" in this context does not have any mechanical implications – neither Techniques nor kata are available for PCs due to this module. It is primarily

a role-playing experience, as well as an opportunity to gather information.

A PC may gain information from their clan's dojo without making any roll, but if they wish to question other clans, they must roll **Courtier**, **Etiquette**, or **Sincerity / Awareness** at a TN of 15. And, of course, any overt offense will result in the PC being thrown out. (With possibly a few bruises for their trouble.)

Information should be given to the players based on what questions they ask. The NPCs are not unwilling to share what they know, they are just uncomfortable talking about a shameful event and are not entirely certain what the PCs will want to know. They report that they were attacked after dark, generally while they were on their way home after going to the dojo.

Additional information available everywhere:

- They were dragged into an alley, threatened, and beaten by between three and eight samurai with bokken (reports vary as to numbers).
- The attackers used bokken, wore no armor, and had daisho but no other weapons on them.
- They did not recognize any of the individual samurai, and have not seen them since, but could identify their clan by their clothes and mon.
- Most of the victims were younger samurai, recently arrived in the city (generally within the last six months) and less than a year since their gempukku. This makes them roughly the same age as the PCs.
- Nothing was stolen from them.
- None of the victims of these attacks were killed.
- The attackers disappeared like they knew the area very well.
- They were definitely Rokugani, speaking without an accent and having none of the features of the native population.
- Shugenja have been unable to gain any more useful information by petitioning the kami.

It is worth noting that the attackers all use bokken (and the occasional fist or kick) despite carrying their daisho, disarming the target if they draw steel. Additionally, the attackers use a single, katana-style bokken even if the usual style of the clan they are ostensibly members of are more known for other weapons systems. ("Mantis" do not use peasant weapons, "Dragon" only use one bokken, "Crab" do not use or even carry heavy weapons, etc.) This fact has been entirely overlooked by the samurai involved,

due to their relative lack of experience with other clans and the current ill-feelings in the city.

Other violence has happened in retribution for these attacks, a few brawls and some skirmishes in the street, but all of the clans will agree that these assaults upon their youngest members were where things began.

Crab Dojo: The Whetstone

Steeltown

Sensei: Hida Sugimoto

Requirement: Earth 3

The Crab believe they have been attacked by Mantis, Crane, and Unicorn. They claim innocence of the attacks because they have no reason to waste efforts better directed at the greater enemy – a position the Crab are used to being in, after all. They believe they have been targeted because they are unable to retaliate in force with their position as the city's first line of defense (another situation the clan is accustomed to).

Crane Dojo: Dojo of the Floating Feather

Noble District

Sensei: Kakita Oyose

Does not accept non-Crane

The Crane believe they have been attacked by the Mantis, Phoenix, and Lion. They claim innocence because they would have resolved any conflicts openly in court, in a duel worthy of public attention. They believe they have been targeted because of their position as the most refined clan, focused on finer things but with less military power at their disposal.

The Crane who performed seppuku was a very young, very idealistic Kakita who could not accept the loss of face and honor they felt from their defeat at the hands of a group of "Mantis brigands". It was sanctioned, but not thought well of among the rest of the clan.

Dragon Dojo: The Distant Lesson

Noble District

Sensei: Mirumoto Yukihana

Requirement: Meditation

The Dragon believe they have been attacked by the Mantis, Phoenix, and Crab. They claim innocence due to the fact that there was nothing to be learned from such unenlightened actions, and believe that they have been targeted because the other clans have a very difficult time understanding them.

Lion Dojo: Dojo of the Righteous Blade

Noble District

Sensei: Akodo Seki

Does not accept non-Lion

The Lion believe they have been attacked by the Mantis, Crane, and Unicorn. They claim innocence

because these assaults are not honorable, and believe they have been targeted because the other clans know that they cannot face the might of the Lion openly.

The Lion who performed seppuku was a fairly young, very brash Ikoma who wished the clan to take up arms against the Crane and went through the three cuts in protest when his superiors denied his request to "cleansing the city of the duplicitous children of Doji".

Mantis Dojo: The Fury of Yoritomo; the Rolling Drunk Dojo; Ten Arrows Dojo

Market District, Docks District, Noble District

Sensei: Yoritomo Toyoaki, Yoritomo Ichibei, Tsuruchi Rikako

Requirement: 1 koku spent

The Mantis believe they have been attacked by Ronin*, Crab, Dragon, and Lion. They claim innocence of the attacks because this style of violence is nothing to brag about, and they are victims because the other clans are jealous of their power in the city and unable to directly attack the Mantis because of their numbers.

The Mantis, having more samurai in the city than any other clan, have three dojo, each with a slightly different focus. The Fury of Yoritomo is a fairly standard dojo of the clan, primarily geared to naval training. The Rolling Drunk Dojo is obviously less refined, popular with mercenaries or brawler. Ten Arrows Dojo is all about the unity of the clan, and bringing the disparate families together into a stronger collective.

The Mantis Clan is the only clan to have suffered an attack by ronin (the Hiroate-gumi's first attack was not in disguise). This particular attack was also the very first one in the city (the gang having decided to start disguising themselves after, to avoid a crack-down on ronin).

If the PCs have learned that Hiroate has a missing arm, the Mantis sensei will reveal to a Mantis PC (and only to a Mantis PC) that Yoritomo Darate was a promising student at Dojo Raiden who developed an unhealthy interest in the Ivory Kingdoms martial traditions and was cast out of the clan last fall. They lost track of him after that.

Owl Dojo: Dojo of the Heaven's Gift

Inner City

Sensei: Hantei Kiemon

Does not accept non-Owl

The Owl believe they have been attacked by the Mantis, Scorpion, and Dragon. They claim innocence because they are too few and too interested in remaining neutral to risk something of this nature. They believe they have been targeted because there are so few of them in the city, and they are not in a position to defend themselves easily from such overt attacks.

Phoenix Dojo: Shiba's Lesson

Noble District

Sensei: Shiba Chojiro

Does not accept non-Phoenix

The Phoenix believe that they have been attacked by the Mantis, Crab, and Dragon. They claim innocence of the deeds based on their known preference for peace, and believe that they are being targeted for the same reason – that those responsible think them a safe target.

Scorpion Dojo: Ivory Shadows

Inner City (part of the Governor's Palace complex)

Sensei: Bayushi Nozomi

Requirement: Obligation (Scorpion) – if a PC does not already have it, they can gain it to learn what the Scorpion know...

The Scorpion believe they have been attacked by the Mantis, Crane, and Owl, though they are less certain of the nature of their enemies. They claim innocence of these attacks because they have no need (and if they wished harm on a young bushi, there are better ways to go about it). They believe they are being targeted because they are the perennial “bad guy” of the Empire, and make convenient targets.

Because of their superior resources, the Scorpion have a little extra information: they know that the attacks started shortly after the first vessel of the year arrived from the Empire two months ago, and have studied all of the clan samurai on that vessel for a possible culprit. If the PCs point out the possibility of a ronin perpetrator, the Scorpion will point them at a one-armed ronin named “Hiroate”, who they believe was originally a Mantis.

Unicorn Dojo: School of the Western Wind

Steeltown

Sensei: Shinjo Mayu

Requirement: None (must be respectful, but no mechanical requirement)

The Unicorn believe they have been attacked by the Mantis, Crab, and Owl. They claim innocence because they are, though they cannot really provide a reason apart from their sincerity. They think they are being attacked because they are always viewed as gaijin outsider by the rest of the Empire.

The Unicorn who committed seppuku had nothing to do with the violence in the city; he was an Ide in love with an Utaku that married another, and gave up his life without actual approval. It was performed publicly enough, however, that the clan has chosen not to heap further shame on his family by denying it.

Temples

If a PC goes through the Temple District another time, looking specifically for new regarding the violence in the city, they may roll **Lore: Theology / Awareness** at a TN of 15. Even if they fail, they will learn that several samurai from the Great Clans have sought treatment for blunt-force trauma attacks – such as those inflicted by heavy bludgeoning strikes or unarmed attacks.

Success, however, also gives them the information that the monks and shugenja of the district have also provided some healing for various ronin of the city. Specifically, a new group calling itself the “Hiroate-gumi” has had a variety of what they called “training injuries”, mostly long cuts as from swords. The monks know little of the gang, apart from the fact that they live in the Docks District somewhere.

Merchants

If the PCs attempt to look into where a gang would acquire some of their more unusual supplies (such as bokken or cloth to be used for Great Clan samurai costumes), they may ask among the merchants in the Market District. This requires a roll of **Commerce** or **Investigation / Intelligence** at a TN of 20. Success informs them that the “Hiroate-gumi” have been purchasing a wide variety of things: a large number of bokken, cloth in many colors, a vast quantity of lamp oil, and three large wagons. The relevant merchants can also direct them to the Broken Blade sake house, a very low-quality establishment in the Docks District where the bills have been sent (and promptly paid).

If the PCs are specifically looking for weapon merchants doing business with one-armed ronin, they can find Tenzaro with a **Commerce** or **Craft: Weaponsmithing / Intelligence** roll at TN 15. Tenzaro is a heimin bladesmith, well-known to the Mantis for his abilities with practical tools, and quite good at repairs. He knew Darate before he was cast of the clan, and though he is utterly unaware of Hiroate's actions since. Tenzaro was the smith that made Hiroate's prosthetic katar, and has been repairing the katana that was broken when Darate was cast out. He doesn't know why Darate was punished as he was, but he doesn't spend a lot of time thinking about the business of samurai. He will share what little he knows, which is the location of the Broken Blade and the warehouse, and will even give the katana to the PCs if they ask. (It's been paid for, and what clan samurai would want to steal a ronin's blade?)

Hiroate's katana is a fine piece of work. While there are no mechanical benefits, it does have a well-sealed saya to keep moisture out, a ring for a tether on the kashira (the cap at the very end of the hilt), and particularly fine shark-skin covering the hilt. A successful roll of **Kenjutsu / Intelligence** (TN 20) will allow a PC to recognize these as hallmarks of Mantis katana construction, though there is no mon on the blade or saya. Mantis PCs automatically succeed at this roll.

Underworld

PCs who are willing to seek information among the lower orders and criminal underclass may roll **Lore: Underworld / Awareness** at a TN of 15. Failure tells them nothing but that the various criminal inhabitants of the city view the troubles the Great Clans are having with amusement. Success informs them that the established criminal organizations are not responsible, and do not know who is. However, since several new groups have risen in the last year, it is entirely possible that one of those are responsible.

If the PCs have the name of "Hiroate" or "Hiroate-gumi", they can get directions to the Broken Blade, a run-down sake house taken over by the gang about two months ago when it started up; the gang has been recruiting ronin out of the sake house. Success on another **Lore: Underworld / Awareness** roll (TN 15) will give them some more information: the gang has been specifically recruiting skilled ronin, and promising to provide them with additional martial instruction as well as money. They also have a warehouse next to the sake house that they have been using for storing some mysterious cargo of interest to the leader. If they roll a 25 or higher, they will learn that "Hiroate" appeared about two months ago, with a significant amount of money and quickly earned a reputation for ferocity despite a missing right hand.

Bait?

One of the more direct options a group of PCs may take is to have one of their own lure out the gang by pretending to be a target.

A solitary bushi PC wandering through the alleys will eventually be found by the Hiroate-gumi. Any waiting PCs must make **Stealth / Agility** rolls (TN 10) in order to avoid being noticed during the gang's approach, and scaring the ronin off. The "bait" PC must face the entire group of six ronin alone for an entire Round before the other PCs can engage.

Exceptions to this include ranged attacks or spells, but as soon as the ronin realize that they have been duped, they will scatter. It should be possible for the PCs to catch one of the ronin, provided they focus on a single target. Doing so gives them someone to interrogate and get information from.

Hiroate's henchmen are very loyal, and certain that they will be executed for daring to rise against clan samurai. A PC with ranks in the Lore: Law Skill, or one who can succeed at a **Lore: Law / Intelligence** roll at TN 15, will know that their fate is actually not so simple. As they have not yet killed anyone, their punishment from the Colonial Magistrate could be as light as house arrest (though he could exercise the right to have them put to death, as they are just ronin). They are more likely to have to worry about consequences from the clans they have offended, but that is not a legal issue so much as a practical one. Mentioning the possibility of leniency and offering a way out (perhaps with passage back to the Empire) will allow a PC to make a **Sincerity / Awareness** roll at a TN of 15 to get the location of the Broken Blade as their hideout.

If the PCs are a little more harsh in their approach, the prisoner will remain silent; even threats of torture are insufficient to sway them. While they may break eventually under torture, the PCs don't actually have any legal right to demand it – bringing a gang member before the magistrate will simply result in them being given permission to duel the ronin, to the death if they insist.

However, searching a prisoner (or any bodies) will let the PCs find a note assigning the bearer to an errand. *"Jiro – Run by Tenzaro's, on the Road of Bells. He should have a package for me. – Hiroate"* This should be enough to get them to Tenzaro's, to gain the information in the Merchant section.

Colonial Magistrate

Some PCs may attempt to involve a legal authority in what is obviously an inter-clan matter. Because Balishnimpur is an extraterritorial holding, the closest thing the city has to an Emerald Magistrate is Gennai Okusukai, the local Colonial Magistrate. He is a dedicated magistrate, very traditional in his approach to upholding the law and enforcing the peace. Unfortunately, this approach has been of limited utility in the current situation: he has been unable to acquire any testimony in regards to the assaults, as the victimized samurai are less than willing to speak of the matter. Okusukai has been more involved in dealing with the disorganized violence that has broken out

between the clans, placing some samurai under house arrest.

Unless the PCs have more concrete information indicating that the ronin gang is involved in a wide-scale plot or are planning to commit arson (in other words, unless they have been to the Broken Blade or the warehouse), the Colonial Magistrate is somewhat limited in what he can do or the assistance he can provide. He will take ronin into custody on the testimony of multiple samurai, but he will not order them tortured without some indication that there is a pressing need.

If, however, the PCs bring Okusukai information (or evidence) from the Broken Blade, he will gather his doshin and a squad from the Ivory Legion, and invite the PCs along to arrest the troublemakers.

Part Three: The Broken

Hiroate's Plan

Hiroate is a man driven by revenge. He believes that the Empire has benefited by its association with the Ivory Kingdoms, and the fact that Rokugan still treats all things gaijin as inherently inferior is a massive injustice. Tragically, in true samurai fashion, he has decided to demonstrate his opinion through violence.

After being cast out of his clan, he used his knowledge of Mantis trade to attack a few small shipments. This provided him with the capital to begin again in Balishnimpur, allowing him to recruit like-minded ronin and begin outfitting and training them.

Specifically angry with the Mantis, he originally hit upon the idea of turning the other clans against them by attacking the other clans while in Mantis colors. This ran into some difficulties with his men not quite understanding his instructions, and confusion ensued in the city from their sowing dissension among all the clans instead of focused on just the Mantis.

As this plan has failed to bring any major focus down on the Mantis, he has decided to be more straightforward and begun making preparations to simply burn down the Mantis dojo in the city. He has purchased wagons, lamp oil, and torches to simultaneously attack all three schools, and been storing these supplies at the warehouse. He is waiting for a good opportunity to enact this plan, though the PCs may force his hand.

Hiroate's Hideout

Hiroate used his plunder to purchase the Broken Blade sake house when he returned to Balishnimpur two months ago, and set it up as his headquarters. It is still open for business, though he has made some renovations to make room for recruiting and training his gang.

The ground floor of the Broken Blade is about what one would expect from a crappy sake house: a common room with low seating, a dirty bar, dim lanterns, and stains that do not bear examination (blood from brawls and vomit, essentially). There is a cellar for storage, with the wares for the business. The cellar also has an exterior access into the alley (to make deliveries easier), which can serve as a convenient entrance for sneaking PCs.

Upstairs, the original series of rooms has been largely cleared out, with the walls mostly removed to provide a single large room which serves as both a barracks and training floor. There are racks of practice weapons, tatami mats for both practice and sleeping, and low chests with the personal possessions of about a dozen men and women that have joined the gang. Additionally, there are two separate rooms. One is a personal room for Hiroate, with his sleeping roll and a writing desk (though he habitually burns his correspondence, so there is nothing to be found but blank paper and writing instruments). There is another room that serves as a storage closet; it holds clothes in various colors, sewing tools, and weapons. By rolling **Investigation (Search) / Perception (TN 15)**, the PCs will find temporary mon that were used for the gang's disguises, and Hiroate's sea-chest.

The chest has been heavily damaged, and three circular patches show where mon have been removed (the Mantis mon is faintly recognizable by the pattern faded paint, but a **Lore: Heraldry / Intelligence** roll at a TN of 25 is required to recognize one of the other as the mon of Dojo Raiden; rolling a 35 or higher allows them to recognize the third as Yoritomo Darate's personal mon). The chest contains money (about 120 koku), souvenirs from Hiroate's time at sea (a spyglass, a sextant, and a chart of the Islands of Silk and Spice), and a secret compartment that requires rolling a 30 on an **Investigation (Search) / Perception** roll to notice. Within the compartment is a pair of scrolls. Both of them are instructional manuals on fighting techniques; one, heavily defaced and in poor shape, is from the Yoritomo Bushi School. The other, much more recently written and definitely incomplete, depicts warriors using combinations of Rokugani and Ivindi weaponry.

It is possible for the PCs to discover any of the above evidence by searching the sake house. Doing so if the Hiroate-gumi is present requires a **Stealth (Sneaking) / Agility** roll; if the gang is present but unaware (sleeping, for instance), the TN is only 15. If they are conscious and aware, the TN is increased to 20. If they are noticed, they will have to deal with a number of Hiroate-gumi Toughs equal to the number of PCs at the table.

Hiroate's Warehouse

Hiroate originally planned to convert the small warehouse behind the Broken Blade into a permanent space for a dojo. Since he's had to change his plans (twice now), he has started storing the material he intends to use to burn down the Mantis dojo here.

If the PCs used the Bait option to learn Hiroate's location, he is certainly here, preparing to send his men to the Mantis dojo. If the PCs have gained any assistance, then the additional forces can go in the front and engage the bulk of the Hiroate-gumi, while Hiroate will leave out the back where the PCs can stop him.

Confronting Hiroate

Depending on exactly how the PCs found their way to the Broken Blade, they may have the option of trying to gather assistance. If they speak with the Colonial Magistrate, they will need something specific to tell him about the situation to gain his help, but no roll is required. If they wish to get help from one of the clans, it requires a **Sincerity / Awareness** roll at a TN of 20 to convince the bushi that they have found something worth investigating. A PC member of that clan making this roll gains a Free Raise. If the PCs approach the Mantis, and can refer specifically to Darate, they also gain a Free Raise (these can stack).

However they go about it, if the PCs have backup, their allies should deal with the bulk of the gang while Hiroate himself faces the PCs.

Hiroate should be faced without his gang in some fashion. Despite the fact that he outclasses any of the PCs individually, by working together they should be able to overwhelm him (he only has two attacks per round). The GM should feel free to assign penalties to him if it appears necessary. The goal of this combat is not to kill brand-new characters, but to demonstrate the way that the combat system works without utilizing a large number of combatants, and

specifically how having numbers on your side can make a huge difference.

The tall, lean ronin adjusts the strap of the long blade attached to the stump of his right arm. His eyes narrow, and he glances past you. A rough voice growls out, "Life is determined by what you do when you encounter hardship, samurai. One moment can change your life forever. Let me pass, lest someone's life be ended here."

Hiroate will fight to the death if he can manage it, but as he is alone, the PCs may have the option of taking him alive. It is worth note that he is not completely without honor; if, for example, he is challenged to a duel, he will probably accept if the terms allow him or his men to escape.

Conclusion

After the confrontation, the PCs may search the headquarters if they have not already done so; if they brought in assistance, they can involve themselves in it without difficulty. This might be their only chance to discover some more clues to explain things, but if the PCs are not interested in further answers, they may simply miss out on them.

If the PCs take Hiroate alive, he will eventually confess to the full scope of his plans, as well as the reasons behind them. As his beliefs so strongly conflict with the typical Rokugani attitudes toward outsiders, there is no particular blowback onto the Mantis Clan – they kicked him out, after all, which would have been the appropriate samurai thing to do.

If the PCs kill Hiroate during their confrontation, there will remain some question as to his true plans and identity. The survivors of his gang are not aware of his arson plot, and cannot really explain what was planned for the materials in the warehouse. They knew they were striking out against their betters, though, so in all likelihood the Colonial Magistrate will allow the clans to decide exactly what they wish to do with the renegade ronin.

In any event, as long as the PCs discovered what was truly going on, they will have earned the thanks of the Colonial Bureaucracy. If they put a stop to it, Miya Seiryō will speak of their prowess at the highest levels, and the PCs will be well on their way to earning a name for themselves.

The End

Rewards for Completing the Adventure

Surviving the Module:	1 exp
Good Roleplaying:	+1exp
Toured the City:	+1exp
Discovered the Hiroate-gumi's Guilt:	+1exp
Total Possible Experience:	4 exp

Favors

If the PCs provide an answer to the responsible party for Miya Seiryō, they gain 1 Favor.

If the PCs capture Hiroate and take him alive, they gain an additional Favor (total of 2).

If Hiroate dies, but the PCs find his notes and turn them over to the Mantis, they gain an additional Favor (total of 2).

IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO EARN MORE THAN TWO FAVORS IN THIS MODULE.

Honor

There are no automatic Honor gains or losses for this module, apart from those already mentioned in the text.

Glory

If the PCs confront Hiroate and end his plans, they gain G5 Glory.

If the PCs do not confront Hiroate, but are able to report to Seiryō that the tensions were caused by an outside source, they gain G3 Glory.

GM Reporting

- 1) Did the PCs take Hiroate alive?
- 2) Was Hiroate killed?
- 3) Were Hiroate's notes returned to the Mantis?

The GM must report this information by 11/18/2017 for it to have storyline effect

Player Handout #1: News From the Empire

“Oh, such troubling news, my friends! Reports from Balishnimpur say that a large force of gaijin warriors are gathering in the jungles to the north of the city, under the banner of their so-called ‘Maharaja’... Oh, you say you are about to take ship for the Ivory Kingdoms? Oh, my.

“Well, the good news is that the brave and glorious Ikoma Sho, Commander of the 11th Imperial Legion, has vowed that he will personally take the head of this gaijin pretender to the title of Maharaja.

“I will be joining our Emperor’s younger brother, Toturi Kazetora, in the Crab lands while you are away, it appears. Since the Emperor in his wisdom gave his brother the task of learning from the clans at his coronation, Kazetora-sama has decided to travel to each clan’s holdings that he may come to an understanding of their ways and customs. The Crab lands shall be the first stop on what sounds like it will be a tour of the entire Empire.

“We all hope that he takes great care. The Emperor is young and yet unwed, and Kazetora-sama remains the Imperial Heir. Perhaps a bride will be chosen soon for our inestimable ruler, that the line of the Toturi can be continued.

“Well, safe travels, my friends! I shall pray that you return soon, covered in glory for your gallant deeds!”

-Otomo Yusuke, Imperial shisha

Player Handout #2: Districts of the City

Inner City: The administrative seat of the Empire's overseas holdings, the Inner City is the main nerve-center of samurai control over Balishnimpur. While the majority of the members of the Governor's staff and Imperial Bureaucracy are either Scorpion Clan or Imperial samurai, the Owl Clan is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the District itself.

Noble District: The Noble District is a wealthy area that has grown in recent months as more samurai from the Empire have come to Balishnimpur. Those samurai who do not have barracks in Steeltown as members of the Imperial Legion generally reside in this District, whether in their own housing or in quarters assigned to them by their clan. The Lion Clan, taking their duties as the Right Hand of the Emperor to heart, see to the protection of the Noble District in order to insure they are the last line of defense for the Imperial servants in the Inner City.

Temple District: As one might expect from the pious Phoenix, they have taken the responsibility of tending to the temples and shrines of the city. While most of the structures here were once Ivindi temples, they have been refurbished to incorporate styles more comfortable to Rokugani sensibilities. Still, the local people (both native and from the Empire) are deeply spiritual; from the golden spire of the Temple of Daikoku to the enormous statue of Toturi II atop her shrine, the distinctive skyline of the Temple District reflects how important religion is in the city.

Steeltown: The section of town closest to the main city wall is known as "Steeltown" for its numerous foundries and smithies. While not all of this industry is dedicated to military materiel, most of the city's barracks are also located in this strategically important location. The Crab Clan oversees the operation of the district, putting their vast experience in defensive military planning to good use.

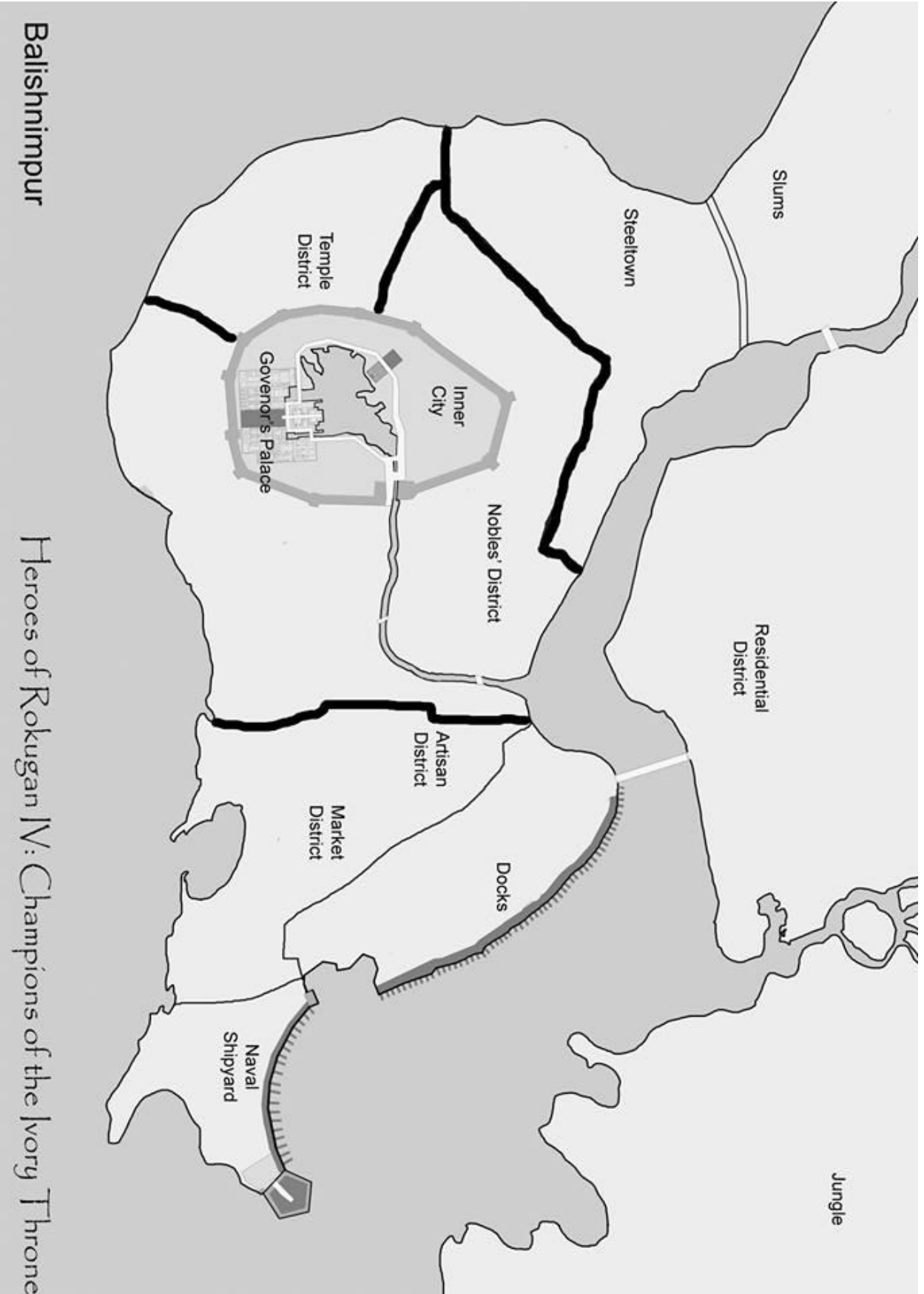
Slums: Not all of the city is considered important enough for an official title. The neighborhoods where the city's least fortunate residents make their homes and simply referred to as "the slums", and include both the poorest members of the native population and the local eta village. Hoping, perhaps, to improve the lives of these unfortunates, the Phoenix Clan is providing for the administration of this area.

Residential District: As more samurai have been sent to the city, many of the rest of the population has moved across the river to the Residential District. There are actually a wide variety of neighborhoods in this area, from well-to-do sections near the bay to more run-down places further upriver. The Dragon Clan, used to dealing with eclectic variety, has the responsibility of maintaining this area and seeing to the well-being of the local workforce (both native and Rokugani).

Docks District: The Docks District sees the bulk of trade from the various sea-routes that Balishnimpur commands. As such, it is the first place nearly everyone who comes to the city sees, though it is fairly unassuming. The wealth that passes through the warehouses and onto the ships here, or down the river to Steeltown, is largely out of sight. However, it has been a boon to the Mantis Clan for two centuries, and they are proud of their position as administrators of the area.

Market District: The mercantile district where fortunes are made and lost, it should be no surprise that the Mantis Clan has a strong interest here. Nearly anything imaginable, and many things most Rokugani can't imagine, can be found at the stalls and shops in this district. The "Artisan's District" neighborhood, an informal title for the northern quarter of the district, does excellent business with the samurai residents of the nearby Noble District by providing more refined goods.

Naval Shipyard: The defense of the city from the sea is overseen from a fort on the very tip of the peninsula the city sits on, and a series of dry-docks help maintain and expand the fleet of vessels necessary for this important duty. Few who do not have business in this area go here; while the Imperial Legion maintains military control over naval operations themselves, the Mantis Clan utilize their expertise with all things nautical to provide efficient administration of the district.



Balishnimpur

Heroes of Rokugan IV: Champions of the Ivory Throne