

Mantle of the Jade Champion

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A Mid-Rank Adventure for

Heroes of Rokugan: Champions of the Ivory Throne

Month of the Tiger, 1341 (Late Winter) (at release)

Month of the Rat (Early Winter), 1340 (if played in numerical order)

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Combat, Travel, Shadowlands

The worth of certain things cannot be measured, but still can be purchased with courage...and lives.

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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.

Note about Module Release Timing (IMPORTANT)

Due to circumstances, this module is being released in March of 2019, despite chronologically and numerically falling in order with modules that came out in November of 2017. Because of this, most players will be playing this module out of order. To best avoid too much confusion, a framing device has been included.

IF this module is being run for players out of numerical order, it works as written.

IF being run for players in module order, the first section should be skipped. Additionally, the difficulty should be dropped to Low in most cases.

Note about Tainted PCs (Also IMPORTANT)

The Crab Clan, at this time, have a strict policy against allowing identifiably Tainted persons (1.0 Rank or more of the Shadowlands Taint) from entering the Shadowlands, unless they are part of the Damned.

Because of this, **PCs who have reached this level of Taint may not play this module past the first few sections.**

If a given player has an alternate character of sufficient rank, they may of course play the module with that PC. If the person does not have an alt, or does not want the story disruption of having their main PC miss the module, the player may choose to either 1) sit the part of the mod they CAN play (up to the part in Part 2 where it will be explicitly stated they may go no further) or 2) Receive 2 XP and save themselves a time slot.

IF a player intends to try and play the entire module (by entering the Shadowlands without the Crab's permission), they may attempt it; however, they will NOT be given any jade or rations by the Crab and will have to successfully stay out of sight of any Crab (PC or NPCs) in the SL proper. **THIS IS AN EXTREMELY BAD IDEA AND IS LIKELY GOING TO END IN THE PC DYING AND/OR BEING LOST.** If a player tries and fails, the Admin Staff should be contacted for consequences.

Adventure Background and Summary

**** IF THE MOD IS PLAYED OUT OF ORDER****

Chise Sanako, a Jade Magistrate, has gathered the PCs in 1341 to collect the tale of just how the attempt to reclaim the Mantle of the Jade Champion from the Shadowlands took place. She is joined in this by her yoriki, a young Sodan-Senzo named Kitsu Orihime, who is responsible for warding the space where the testimony is gathered (And, if a PC died during the module, providing an explanation for how they can provide testimony – the sodan-senzo will have summoned their spirit from Meido.)

****FOR EVERYONE****

As the Winter Court in the lands of the Crab is coming to an end in 1340, a member of the Hiruma family returns from duty with a report of strange behaviors in a distant portion of the Shadowlands; for whatever reason, the usual patterns of passage that the denizens follow has been disrupted, forming a clear pattern of avoidance around a particular range of hills. The Crab leadership, all too aware that they have a war with the Lion coming in the spring, ultimately decide not to investigate further at this time. One of the Kuni, however, feels differently after some investigation and communion with the kami: he believes that the cause of this avoidance might well be a place of purity, too rare (and possibly strategically valuable) to be ignored. Using his position as a Jade Magistrate to draft volunteers (the PCs), he arranges for a scouting mission into the Shadowlands.

The PCs, accompanied by the original reporting Scout, Hiruma Hasegawa, will have a few days to supply and learn a bit about their planned route, and possible threats along it, before heading out. Inventory management will be important, so the GM should make sure the players have this all settled by this point.

Travel through the Shadowlands is dangerous; the land itself is against them, as are the denizens. Good planning can avoid some, but not all, of the

encounters; poor planning is likely to cause more. Jade tracking IS NECESSARY for this module. Throughout the journey, PC's will be presented with choices that typically involve a risk to themselves and their gear in the interest of time vs. a longer safer path that will jeopardize their jade supplies. While losing all jade does not automatically grant the Shadowlands Taint (they still get to roll against the regional TN each day), the fear of it should be played up by the GM.

Once the party reaches the ruin, they will find that the area is, in fact, not Tainted, having been protected by wards placed by the old Nezumi shaman before they fell to Tomorrow. These wards have been re-activated by the presence of the power of the Mantle of Jade, recovered by Free Ogre after the fall of the Emperor and his party. Reclaiming it will be possible by combat or by negotiation; returning after the Mantle is claimed will be relatively simple, given the protection the nemurani itself provides.

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 mechanics are relevant to the module:

- Ally: Any member of the Kuni or Hiruma families
- Sworn Enemy (any member of the Crab Clan)
- Sworn Enemy (Yasuki Chokin, from Mod 17)
- Obligation: Crab Clan
- Shadowlands Taint
- Yoritomo Shugenja
- Hiruma Bushi or Scout School

Inactivity

Time passes, and though the PCs' deeds will earn them a reputation, the Empire is a large place and lasting fame is a long-term goal not easy to achieve. **Each PC loses 2 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.

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 **15**. 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.

IF during this roll a PC crosses to Taint Rank of 1.0+, **REFER TO THE NOTE ON THE PRIOR PAGE!**

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 **20**. Failure on this roll gives the ronin the Permanent Wound Disadvantage for the duration of the module. Koku may be spent on this roll to gain a Free Raise for every koku spent before the roll is made, or one Free Raise for every two koku spent after the roll is made.

Experience Expenditure

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

Introduction

NOTE: If players are playing this in numerical mod order, skip to Part One

Because this module is 1) out of order and 2) innately dangerous, the setup starts ‘in the action’; this is to do the best possible job of explaining how PCs who may, ultimately, die in an adventure set in the past have gotten here.

The temple chamber where you have all been gathered glitters with the light from dozens of candles, set into gilded holders spaced among intricate chinked designs. Your party sits upon cushions in a semi-circle across from the ones who have called you here. One, a woman of middle years wears the white, cream, and brown robes of a priest of the Owl, sits foremost, leading the proceedings. The other, flame-haired and golden-eyed, and clad in the brown and gold of the Lion, remains kneeling in her place, hands folded and lips moving as she whispers unheard prayers without cease.

These two women are Chise Sanako, an Owl priestess and member of the Jade Magistrate’s Office, and her yoriki (for this task, at least), Kitsu Orihime. It is Sanako who has summoned the PCs to give this report, and who intends to enter the account they will give into the histories of the Owl and the Empire as a whole. Orihime, meanwhile, is a Sodan-Senzo, whose duty it is to ensure that no spiritual influences enter the conversation that were not invited; if anyone tries to determine what prayers she is casting via a **Spellcraft / Intelligence** roll at a TN of 25, they will identify Earth Dragon’s Ward as well as something else; this other spell, identifiable only by another from the Sodan-Senzo school, is the prayer that invites back any honored dead who have knowledge to share. (This is the explanation for any PC who dies over the course of the module being present to provide testimony.)

Cups are passed around to everyone in the circle, a delicate green tea with a kiss of mint and honey. Sanako tastes hers, nods once, and then sets the cup down before her. Taking up her writing materials, she gazes at each of you in turn. “Now, if you please, let us begin with the arrival of Hiruma Hasegawa in the final days of the Kuni’s Winter Court....”

Part One: A Report and a Mission

If playing in order, this is where the module actually starts

Any PC who was in attendance at the Interactive MWGF 2017 is presumed to have been an invited guest of the Kuni for their court, which is why they are present. Any PC who was not there is presumed to have been sent to the Crab to act as an honor escort for one of the ranking members of their Clan who was in attendance and are now on their way to new spring assignments. Ronin are likely here to look for commissions for the upcoming summer war with the Lion.

Kyuden Hida, while still crowded with busy Crab going about their regular duties, begins to feel strangely empty as the weather warms. Though Winter Court is nearly over, meals are still held with full pomp and ceremony at least once a day. On this day, the evening meal is well underway. Kuni Yuzumi, Daimyo of the Kuni, centers the head table, with her most prestigious remaining guests and clanmates arrayed around her. Samurai in their winter best sit around other tables, the talk changing from the active pursuit of seasonal goals to the anticipatory gossip of interesting events that are expected to happen in this new year.

Your table is shared with other visitors to the Shiro and one of your hosts, a Jade Magistrate by the name of Kuni Tokimasa.

Many PC’s will know Tokimasa (he was in CIT11: Ring of Air) and he will have greeted them warmly and invited them to sit with him. Any who don’t know him will still be welcomed, though with a bit more reserve. If any of the PCs haven’t met, this is the chance for them to mingle and so on before the module begins.

The lamps are burning low, and sake has already flowed for some time when the comfortable low murmurs of conversation are broken by a new sound beyond the doors of the dining hall: raised voices and many footfalls, heading in your direction.

The doors open, allowing the ingress of a single man, well-wrapped in winter garb with a visible, if mud-spattered, Hiruma mon on the sleeves. In the hallway behind him, several Crab bushi can be seen watching,

some clearly upset, others curious. Without pause, the man pushes past the tables and drops to a knee in front of the now-standing Kuni Daimyo.

“Kuni-dono, I bring news which cannot wait. The Enemy’s patterns have changed.”

Murmurs echo across the room as the guests lean in to each other. At your own table, Tokimasa sets down his cup, leaning forward, suddenly intent.

Yuzumi’s expression remains calm as she addresses the key point of importance to any Crab host. “Are they coming here?”

At the Hiruma’s swiftly shaken head, the Kuni nods and then resumes her seat.

“This will touch on Crab business.” Her glance drifts across her out-of-clan guests before falling on Matsu Yutsuko, who raises a brow in response. “Matsu-sama, I would consider it a personal favor if you would personally oversee the orderly return to the guest quarters of anyone who is unwilling to hear of matters that most samurai consider distasteful.”

For a moment, Lion and Crab lock gazes, before Yutsuko bows, quietly and quickly gathering together a handful of courtiers before escorting them quietly from the room.

At this point, if any of the PC’s are inclined to leave, Kuni Tokimasa will gesture for them to wait as long as they are someone he knows (He is an Ally to most PCs at this point).

Once all who would leave have done so, the scout makes his report. Many details, such as the names of landmarks or the identifiers for different known groups of enemies, require familiarity with the Enemy and the situation beyond the Wall. The heart of the matter, however, is clear: one of the hill regions, a non-insignificant expanse of the Shadowlands, has seen a noticeable thinning of population, with no easily identified cause.

After listening to the report, Yuzumi frowns, thinking on what she has heard for several minutes, ignoring the rising whispers from her fellow Crab. At last, however, she nods, decisively. “Very well. Your words are received, Hiruma-san. Thank you for your service in this matter. We cannot afford the resources to send you back out, but we can see the forces on the Wall reinforced.”

Beside you, Tokimasa utters an oath under his breath.

Yuzumi turns her attention to the rest of the room. “Honored guests, I know many of you were making ready to depart in the coming weeks. I suggest, strongly, you expedite those preparations. In the meantime, you must excuse me. I must consult the garrison commanders.” With a perfunctory bow, your host departs, leaving the dining hall to empty behind her.

As the scout rises to leave as well, Tokimasa rises as well. “I sense Ebisu’s hand in this. I hope that you will heed the call, if it comes. We will speak soon.”

With that, the Magistrate moves to the scout, and, after a few quiet words, leaves with him.

At this point, the halls are abuzz. This is the chance for the mod Rumor check – PCs may roll **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** to learn the following (Crab PCs receive a Free Raise on this roll):

- 15: The Crab here are already mobilizing; you overhear several conversations where bushi are discussing how this change in plan might affect the upcoming war.
- 15: The scout who intruded managed to get by the gate guards unseen; you hear them being berated by their superior officer as they get marched down the hall in disgrace.
- 20: Kuni Tokimasa is not usually stationed here, but came for the Winter Court in case a Jade Magistrate would be needed. As the official representative from the Jade Office, he has been granted a fair amount of freedom, including the right to speak with the kami at will.
- 20: The general opinion seems to be that Yuzumi is acting as she is not because she doesn’t want to investigate the strangeness but because she *can’t*; the Crab simply don’t have enough numbers between the possible risk of mobilization by the Shadowlands and the known mobilization of the Lion.
- 25: The scout, Hiruma Hasegawa, is a veteran held in in very high regard among his family, though he is relatively unknown outside the Hiruma. He has a reputation for his cartography and tracking work as well as for his prowess in training new scouts.
- 30: Though the need has arisen only a few times in his career, Tokimasa has been known to use (or ‘recruit’) resources with a great deal of flexibility in the past. He is a firm believer of ‘no coincidences’ and believes that the right people tend to be in the right place at the right time.

Meeting Tokimasa

The morning hour comes very early for you, with wakefulness coming by way of an apologetic young bushi of the Hida family, tapping on the door to your quarters. “The Jade Magistrate invites you to join him for breakfast, -sama. I am to conduct you to him.”

The request is not a veiled order, though it might appear to be one at first glance; the bushi has been sent because the Crab are on moderately high alert and are therefore offering all of the out-of-clan guests military escorts. The bushi, Hida Minawe, is in her first combat season after gempukku and can’t offer much information about what is going on, other than that Tokimasa asked for the PCs by name and already had a Hiruma sitting with him when she was sent out to fetch the PCs.

You eventually find yourselves in a small, tidy tea room on the floor reserved for foreign diplomats. Tokimasa and a Hiruma of near retirement age have already settled in with strong black tea and azuki buns and rise to greet you as you come in. Tokimasa grins at your arrival, his approval clear under the paint he wears. “Ah, good. Sit down, please, and help yourselves.” A gesture to the pot of tea and plate of buns follows. “Allow me to formally introduce Hiruma Hasegawa, our scout from yesterday evening.” The scout smiles a bit as he bows. “Samurai-sans, a pleasure. My belated apologies for disrupting your supper.”

After everyone has had the chance sit and to help themselves to refreshments, Tokimasa jumps right in.

“As you hear, Kuni-dono has decided that we can’t spare the resources to look into the anomaly that was found. I respect her reasons. Still, it intrigued me, and so I spent most of last evening getting more details from Hiruma-san and then from the kami.” For a moment, his hand rises, brushing over a heavy stone pendant at his throat. “Based on these conversations, I feel there is enough potential importance to utilize my position to investigate further. The Jade Office doesn’t have the same constraints the Crab Clan labors under, and after some discussion, Yuzumi-dono has agreed to allow me to take jurisdiction with the understanding that the Jade Office will supply or repay any needed resources.” Again, white teeth flash from behind painted lips as the shugenja grins at you. “I hoped that I might count you among those resources as a second mission back out to investigate more fully what Hiruma-san has found.”

At this point, it is expected that PCs will have questions either for Tokimasa or Hasegawa. Some expected ones and responses are as follows:

- *Why us?* Tokimasa’s smile appears again. “I believe that Ebisu-kami guides the hands of men in more cases than they realize. I choose to think that it was good fortune, or luck, if you prefer, that had you where you were, exactly when you were needed. We have worked together well in the past; I believe that you will serve me well again.”
- *Where will we be going?* “The outer edge of where I saw the activity was three or so days out of Shiro Hiruma.” Hasegawa frowns, thoughtfully. “That may have changed, by the time we get there. That region is usually stable, but...” He shrugs. “Nothing is certain in the Shadowlands, even geography. There were several good landmarks, though, we have an advantage in that at least.”
- *Will we be given supplies?* “Yes, though not as much as you might hope for.” The Magistrate sighs, growing somber. “The foodstuffs, standard gear...that’s easy enough. But Jade...that, my friends, is a rare resource indeed, especially given how much was expended in the conflict that took our last Emperor. I have been able to negotiate a finger for each of you, in addition to rations for a week, basics like lamps and oil, and, if you want to use it, the loan of scout’s armor from the armory. If you want more than that, though, you’re going to have to rely on your own resources.”
- *Should we expect combat?* “Always.” Though it is Tokimasa who answers, Hasegawa is nodding in fervent agreement. “All who go beyond the Wall go armed and armored for a reason. If you are fortunate, all you will face is a few bakemono, but the odds are high that you will face something. Possibly more than once.”
- *What do you want us to look for?* “The main reason I want you to go is knowledge. If you can bring back maps of the extent of the affected area or information about the source, so much the better. This sort of disturbance to the native denizens rarely happens without a cause. Sometimes, that cause is an enemy general gathering forces, but the reports suggest that the variety of creatures fleeing the region are too diverse for that. I am hoping, instead, that something is repelling them. I want to know what that thing is.”
- *What should we bring back?* “This is largely an investigatory exploration, but if good fortune smiles on you and you can gather more without undue risk, do so. Maps, illustrations of any

unique findings, that sort of thing. Just remember, your findings mean nothing if you can't bring them back, and protect your lives first among all."

Once the PC's have had the chance to ask and have answers, they will be dismissed to make whatever arrangements or preparations they wish for the day. Hasegawa asks the party to meet him after dinner that evening, explaining that they will want to go over the maps he has made and to discuss something of the route he plans to take before heading out the next morning.

Preparations

There are a number of roleplaying things that PC's may want to do, and they should be encouraged and supported in those tasks. Prayers to the ancestors and Fortunes are easy enough (Kyuden Hida, as a major holding, has temples to all of the major Fortunes; the temple of Bishamon in particular is vast, impressive, and very well utilized.) If the PC's want to go on a last bender, the Crab will direct them to one of several tea or sake houses and will quietly 'lose' the bill. Geisha will be the responsibility of the PC, but most other amusements will be provided without expense as a 'thank you' for what the PC's will be doing. Stabling and care for any mounts (or pets) will also be easily available, the PC's only need to ask for it.

If the PC's want supplies, the following guidelines apply. **NOTE: Anyone with a Sworn Enemy from the Crab Clan WILL NOT be allowed to acquire any spare equipment.**

Armor: The Crab will supply scout armor (Ashigaru Armor) to anyone who asks without question. It is special only in that it's colored to best fit in with the most typical Shadowlands terrain. It is expected to be returned after the journey ends (not that any sensible person will want to keep it, given it will be coated in Tainted dust at the very least). If a PC wants something more substantial than this, they can try to negotiate for it. A **Courtier** or **Commerce / Awareness** roll at TN 25 will convince the local quartermaster to provide Light Armor instead; no amount of persuasion will get any Heavy Armor or Riding Armor for anyone. Crab PCs can of course swap out their armor for whatever their starting School provides or make the above roll. If a PC wishes to do so, they may also use two Favors to permanently acquire armor instead.

Weapons: The Crab can provide the loan of many common weapons: Any Heavy Weapon, No-Dachi, Yumi, Willow Leaf Arrows (x20), Yari, and Bisento are all available for loan by request. Two Favors may

also be spent to permanently acquire any of these weapons.

Jade: Jade is a rare commodity. The PC's are getting one finger (which is worth 10 points, see Appendix) from the magistrate, but if they want more they will have to be persuasive and even then will ultimately have to return anything they do not use to Tokimasa (who is the one who is going to have to actually pay for these things when all is said and done).

- **Jade Finger:** If a PC has an Ally in the Crab Clan (besides Kuni Tokimasa) who is at least Influence 2/Devotion 2, they may use that goodwill to requisition an extra finger of Jade. This will drop the Devotion of that Ally by one. Alternatively, a person may make a **Commerce / Intelligence** or an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll at TN 30 to convince the quartermaster to offer a loan of a finger. **NO PC CAN ACQUIRE MORE THAN ONE SPARE FINGER OF JADE.**
- **Jade Oil:** A bottle of oil has five doses. Note that this jade cannot be used to protect a person's soul; it is only suitable for adding damage capability to weapons. Convincing the quartermaster to provide with a bottle requires rolling **Commerce** or **Etiquette (Bureaucracy)** or **Temptation (Bribery) / Awareness** (using a Low Skill causes a D2 Honor loss) at a TN 30. Koku can be used to add a static bonus to the Temptation roll on a 1:1 basis, but will NOT result in the Jade Oil being permanently added to the PC's inventory if it is not used.

Rations/Misc Supply: There should be no reason to need extra of this, as it is something the Crab have ample enough supplies of to give the PC's what they ask for as long as it is reasonable; any item from the Travel Pack will readily be provided, with the notable exception of alcohol (drinking beyond the Wall is very much to be avoided, after all) and living creatures.

Medicine Kits: One of these will be provided. If the PC's want more, they are able to requisition them without problems, with the understanding that they are to be returned if not used up.

Stabling/Animal Husbandry: One of the most urgent points that Hasegawa will stress is the risk that comes from bringing ordinary animals into the Shadowlands. The Crab are perfectly happy to take care of any pets or mounts that the party has brought with them while they are in the Shadowlands.

Horses: The Crab will strongly advise against bringing horses on this trip; if a PC (Unicorn for example) insists, they will have several different Crab issue them graphic dire warnings about the origin of Onikage (complete with a Kuni showing them detailed diagrams of the painful transformation process and all the ways the horse's natural form is transformed) throughout the day.

PC's will be solely responsible for supplying jade for such mounts; without this protection, the horse will be required to roll against the Taint based only on its Earth roll once per day. The TN is usually 10, but areas of greater concentration of evil might increase this number. A horse is officially Lost if it hits a full Rank of Taint and will immediately fall under control of the GM. ****NOTE THAT GMS WILL BE MAKING THESE ROLLS AND WILL NOT TELL THE PLAYER THE RESULT**** Also note that any horse lost in this fashion will NOT be replaced by the owner's Clan.

Shadowlands 101 with Hasegawa

Night falls and you once again gather for a meal, though in a far different setting than the night before. Hasegawa has called you all together not in the stately halls of Kyuden Hida but in a small, somewhat ramshackle playhouse, 'Inoue's'. Inside there are a number of tables of various sizes and one large stage. Hasegawa awaits you at one of the largest ones, already groaning under the weight of plates of age, udon, tempura, and roast fish on beds of grain.

"Sit. Eat. Learn something." Hasegawa smiles a bit grimly. "Then we'll have our planning session. I've already gotten Tanaka to agree to let us use the backstage once the performers are gone."

What follows is a tasty, if simple, meal, and a play the likes of which most samurai could never imagine. In this house, the Crab have eschewed the usual cultural niceties and pretty terms used to mask the horrors of what they face; instead, they amplify them, emphasizing both the horrors of the Shadowlands and the heroic tragedy of the (often martyred) heroes who withstand them. During the course of the hour, the initial band of four heroes faces a variety of foes, from simple bakemono to a massive, multi-limbed creature that slays two, followed by the inevitable rise of the slain to leave only one, who ultimately takes his own life instead of succumbing to the Taint.

While most of the costumes and effects are modest, the talents of the unseen narrator are not; by the end of the

night's presentation, more than one Crab in the audience has lost their On completely in rage, grief, or both.

Hasegawa unabashedly blots his own eyes before rising, indicating you should follow him. "Come. We must plan."

In the backstage area, many of the props are carefully stored, which makes for a disturbing place to talk. A table has been set up, which the Hiruma uses to lay out a number of maps. "We will go from here to Shiro Hiruma." He taps the lines of the supply route with one finger, tracing it. "That part is as safe as it's possible to get. The Kuni have done a good job ensuring the area stays fairly clear of kansen, and we'll be joining a patrol, so we'll have a military escort that far. We'll spend a night there and set out first light the day after, and that's when things will get tricky."

Hasegawa will take time, slowly and carefully outlining the terrain that you will cross, showing it on his maps.. The area nearest to the Shiro is a flat, barren plain, but soon gives way to a lower valley region which, he explains, is swampy marshland, dangerous and unpredictable to cross. "We'll have to chose our way carefully, depending on how things look. The Black Hand Marsh is one of the more changeable locales, so we can't plan much ahead. We'll be able to see the hills from most points, so that will help us know which direction to take, but getting across will be another thing all together. From there, we've a stretch of open field to cross before we get to the Hills themselves, which is about as far as I got before. I have a good starting point, a bone ridge, to aim for, but beyond that, it's unexplored and unmapped territory.

The PCs at this time are welcome to ask any questions they might have. Some expected ones and responses are as follows:

- *Why the play?* "For most of you, the Shadowlands are nothing more than a word, a threat used on children to make them behave. I wanted to give you a chance to see something of the reality before it's in front of you. You weren't trained for this, and there's no shame in realizing it if your training is ill suited. This seemed the safest way to let you make that choice."
- *What kind of enemies can we expect?* Hasegawa waves, indicating the many props and costumes. "Everything here is common enough that it's been made into a popular story. For every one creature you see, there are dozens that either haven't been documented or are too terrible to risk drawing attention to...or from."

- *What tactics work best?* “That’ll depend. Things that come in groups tend to be weaker and can be taken on with ordinary weapons. Things that only come in ones or twos...those are the ones where you usually want magic or jade or both. The environment it lives in can help, too...check the land and the water around something. Even in the Shadowlands, life abounds, and if there’s a sudden break in sound or a place that’s totally barren, that probably means something you’ll want to attack at range or avoid entirely.”
- *How will we camp?* “Bring tents, but don’t always expect to use them. Sometimes it’s better to be able to run in a hurry, and other times you’ll need to be out of what’s coming down. Weather beyond the Wall isn’t like in the Empire...you get snow and rain and dust storms like anywhere, but you also get fogs formed of noxious gases, acid falling from the sky, whirling firedevils, that sort of thing. Fire is also tricky; on the one hand, it’s easy to see, but on the other, lots of things out there hate it and won’t come near. We’ll just have to take that day by day. Watches are a must; we’ll have time on our first leg to decide whose got the best night vision of all of us and plan accordingly.”
- *How long will we look?* “Kuni-sama got us enough to safely be out for five days, assuming we don’t get into too much trouble. I can help stretch that, a bit...it’s a family talent. I’ll recommend when it’s time to go...but, if it comes to that and you lose me? Start back as soon as you can. You’ll have a harder time finding the way than you expect, and no one expects you to risk your soul for no certain gain.”
- *What do you think we’re going to find?* “I’ve never seen anything clear off the way the oni I spotted first moved. I’m no Kuni, but if you want my opinion, I think they were scared. I’ve only seen two things scare them like that: something bigger and badder than they were, or the approach of a hefty amount of jade. I think Kuni-sama’s hoping for something like the latter, but I want you all to try and prepare for the possibility of the former. If it comes to that, I want you to be ready to run.”

After the party asks all they want, Hasegawa will escort them back to the Shiro by way of the Wall, where he’ll show them the gate where he wants to meet them in the morning. He’ll pass along the papers they’ll need to be allowed to show up armed and armored and then wish them a good evening.

At dawn, both Hasegawa and Tokimasa await you in the shadows cast by the great Kaiu Kabe. Both men are solemn as they bow in greeting. As the Kuni passes out pendants of jade, he thanks you once again. “I appreciate the bravery you’re displaying in taking this on. For most of you, this is not a task you should ever have expected, but I commend each and every one of you for being willing to do so nonetheless. I hope what you find will help us to protect our Empire, either by knowledge of a coming threat or with knowledge of a new way to combat the ancient Enemy. Go with my blessing and may Ebisu-kami guide your steps.”

With one last look at each of you to assure himself you are as prepared as possible, Hiruma Hasegawa turns and then leads you through the mass of winding paths beneath the Wall and out into the barren, war-torn lands beyond.

The trip to Shiro Hiruma is uneventful, though it will offer spiritually apt people (shugenja and those like monks who have access to kiho) their first taste of what it is like to walk in a land where nearly all of the kami are absent and kansen always linger just out of earshot. Though the route itself has been purged repeatedly, kansen are curious and plentiful beyond the Wall and are always looking to make new ‘friends’. Shugenja will hear this as a constant high-pitched tittering on the edge of perception; other mystical people will feel it as a strange heaviness in the air (and, for Tattooed monks, as an itch on the inked skin)

Any Friendly Kami that PCs might have will retreat into their respective vessels and will be extremely hesitant to come out from this point; they can still offer their benefits to their shugenja, but a failed roll using them runs very real risk of having the Friendly Kami become a Friendly Kansen via corruption.

Upon reaching the shiro, there will be some scrutiny from the guards, but papers from the magistrate, paired with Hasegawa’s report, will get the group lodging and meals. They will all be expected to undergo one last test by the resident Kuni before they are let out into the Shadowlands proper; at this point, anyone with a full Rank of Taint or more will be forbidden from going further and, if they are newly diagnosed, will spend the rest of the time of the module being educated about their affliction, possible treatment options, and legal repercussions. Anyone who also decides not to subject their PC to further Shadowlands threat may also withdraw at this point; any PC who does not go further than this gets 2 XP.

Part Two: Crossing the Shadowlands

GM NOTE: Hiruma Hasegawa's Self Sacrifice: As mentioned in his write-up, Hasegawa will willingly sacrifice his life to preserve the lives of those he sees as his charges (and to protect the reputation of his Clan, which has suffered already due to the loss of the Emperor and his heir). In any instance where a PC would take a deadly blow when Hasegawa is in reasonable proximity, he will instead take the blow (or, in certain circumstances, sacrifice himself in another way which will be written into the encounter if needed). If Hasegawa dies, all Hunting and Navigation rolls going forward from that point have their TNs increased by 5 to reflect the loss of the guide. All benefits to the jade supply will also be lost.

The Black Hand Marsh

Though the lands immediately around Shiro Hiruma are easy enough, if bleak, to travel across, the dark, dismal nature of the Land of Evil makes itself known before the noon hour. The knowledge of the time is something that comes more from the feeling of thirst and hunger than from the path of Lord Sun; though there is light, its source is difficult to make out and seems to shift somewhat at random in ways against nature's plan.

At this point any PC with the Absolute Direction Advantage senses that north is up, which causes them a -5 on any Trailblazing or Navigation rolls here. Anyone with any 'Way of the Land' for anything in mainland Rokugan will feel a bit of vertigo, enough to notice but not to cause a penalty, each time they try to orient themselves.

Hiruma Hasegawa calls a halt on the edge of a ridge of rock, pulling his own rations from his pack. Gesturing downward, he says, "Here's the edge of the Marsh. It's high, this time." Grimly, Hasegawa shakes his head. "We have to make the choice now... We're going to have to go through, risking stepping into Kami knows what, or around... but that's going to add time to our journey. Maybe a lot of time, depending on our luck." He points out a black smudge on the southwest horizon, far across the marshy expanse below. "That's where we need to go... Watch, now. You should see the light reflect off the ridge."

Anyone who makes an **Investigation (Search) / Perception** roll at TN 25 will eventually be able to make out what Hasegawa is pointing out (a spyglass lowers this TN by 5): a ridge with what looks like a massive spinal column on one side of one of the lower hills in the range.

In the valley below you, wet patches of black water shimmer in the strange light, with hummocks of dry land weaving a maze between them. Some bubble; some seem to creep around the edges. One or two even change color as you watch, shimmering the deep crimson of heart's blood for a moment before becoming a dark, light-absorbing obsidian color. Even from where you stand, you can feel the hot, sticky humidity of the place, seeming to reach out as if it seeks to smother the breath from your lungs. Along the edges, just in your range of sight, it seems the land is a bit dryer, though not by much.

At this point, the party needs to decide if they are going to go around or go through.

- Going through is risky; Hasegawa explains that there are many nasty creatures that live in such places and the water itself is dangerous in the extreme, ranging from acidic to toxic and, always, heavily Tainted.
- Going around, meanwhile, will take at least two days (more if the party fails at their Navigation rolls). (Go to Page 11)

Going Through the Marsh: This option requires a combination of skills. For each failure, add to the tally that will be used to select the encounter that follows. Also add to the tally for any stupid behaviors, such as deliberately splashing around in the puddles or making unnecessary amounts of noise.

- One PC per table must be able to make a **Sailing (Navigation) or Hunting (Trailblazing) / Perception** at TN 30 to find a safe path through. It is important to note that Absolute Direction is not only ineffective here but actively hinders the person with it, adding five to their difficulty; the Shadowlands will convince the player that 'north' is in fact straight up in the air, causing constant disorientation that requires them to take a raise for no other effect than to ignore this pull. This roll may be made cooperatively and must be repeated until the roll succeeds. *Note:* Hasegawa's contribution to the roll is already factored in, do NOT add it a second time.
- Each PC must make an **Athletics / Agility** at TN 25, Raw **Agility** (by the horse) at TN 20 for mounted travel, OR **Hunting (Trailblazing) /**

Intelligence check at TN 20 (remember armor penalties apply for Athletics or Agility rolls) to weave their way between the puddles and lakelets and streams. Failing this roll will result in two things:

- Add a point to the encounter tally for every entity that fails (this means horse and rider count for two).
 - Damage to equipment from acidic waters. The player rolls a d10; on an even, they will damage their armor (losing 2 points of Armor TN bonus and 1 point of Reduction), and on an odd they will damage their primary weapon (losing 2k0 to its DR). If the person doesn't wear armor and rolls armor, they gain the Bad Health Disadvantage from an acid burn instead until they are either magically healed ten Wounds OR receive treatment from a successful Medicine (Wound Treatment) / Intelligence (TN 20) roll.
- If anyone catastrophically fails (Misses a TN by more than ten), they fall into a 'drowner' puddle.
- To get out, they must either be thrown a rope by someone who can make a raw **Strength** at TN 15 (TN 20 for Large PCs, TN 10 for Small) or make a successful **Athletics (Swimming) / Strength** roll at TN 20 (armor penalties apply).
 - For each round they are in the water, they will lose a point of jade.
- Each PC must make a successful **Athletics / Stamina** vs TN 15. Any time a PC fails, they are presumed to have had to stop and rest, falling behind, which will require them (and anyone who waits with them) to repeat rolls #2 and #3 a second time.

Based upon the number of failed roll attempts, total, from the above, the party will run into difficulties during the day:

0-1: Through skill and luck, the party safely reaches a wider expanse of dry land (a small island, more or less) upon which to camp. No further bad things happen.

2: Everyone in the party must make a **Defense / Reflexes** roll (armor penalties apply). Anyone who doesn't make TN 20 will be hit as the group crosses through a patch of Takesasu, a carnivorous plant which shoots paralytic barbs that dissolve flesh on impact. They take 2k2 Wounds (exploding), unless the person is wearing no armor, in which case it should be 3k3. That person will gain the **Lame Disadvantage**

until the damage taken (after void and reduction) is healed. This *does* count as a Tainted attack.

3: The party stumbles across an area strung with traps set by a pack of Trolls. Everyone in the party may roll **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** at TN 20; (the Wary Advantage applies). Anyone who fails will be caught in a snare trap; they may roll **Defense / Reflexes** at TN 20 to avoid taking 1k1 (exploding) damage, though they will still be caught. It requires a **Jiujutsu / Strength** roll, TN 15 to break out of the grapple (this counts as a Complex Action in combat). The trolls who set the traps will then attack, targeting trapped PCs first. There will be a number of trolls equal to {Party +1}.

Aquatic Trolls

Cunning but cowardly, aquatic trolls run in packs. They are around man height but much bulkier in build, with pebbly blue-green skin and ropes of green stringy hair that they weave through with bones and interesting bits of metal they happen to find.

Initiative: 5k3

Armor TN: 20

Reduction: 5

Wounds: 35 (+0), 45 (+5), 55 (+10), 65 (Dead)

Attack: 8k3 (Club, Complex)

Damage: 6k2 (Club)

Air 2

Earth 3

Fire 3

Water 4

Reflexes 3

Primary Skills: Heavy Weapons (Club) 5, Jiujutsu 2

Special Mechanics: *Cowardice:* Trolls always attack the weak first; they will also run away as soon as half their number have been killed. *Shadowlands Taint:* 2 Trolls are Tainted, and have a Fear effect of 2. They take half damage from normal weapons; fire and jade do full damage.

4+: The constant missteps of the party draw the attention of a Doro no Oni – an animate puddle of murderous mud possessed by an evil spirit. If one individual has been responsible for the majority of the failures, they should be targeted; otherwise, everyone rolls raw **Reflexes**; the person with the lowest roll will be the initial target. NOTE: If someone is on a horse, the horse rolls as well; subtract five from its total when judging who gets engulfed. The Doro no Oni does not require any rolls to continue to consume its victim once they have been chosen; it will inexorably flow up the victim's legs (Round 1), under their armor (Round 2), and into their orifices (Round 3) The victim can survive a number of extra Rounds after this equal to their Stamina. A **Lore: Shadowlands / Intelligence** roll at TN 20 can be made as a Simple Action to identify the following information:

- The creature is Invulnerable except against fire and jade.
- Attacks made with the Water element will actually heal the creature half the ‘damage’ instead of hurting it.
- All physical attacks (or magical attacks that involve impact such as jade boulders) must be made with 2 Raises or else half of the damage done by the attack will also be suffered by the person who is being engulfed.

To defeat the creature, the other PCs must do a total of 40 damage to it; lit torches (which must be in someone’s inventory) do 2k1 damage against the creature (Strength does not add to this DR, as it’s purely a matter of burning, not impact); Lighting a torch in hand is a Complex Action; drawing one from a pack is also a Complex Action. Attacks with them use the Staves (Jo) Skill; the TN is the targeted PC’s TN (no adjustments, if they are struggling, or base 5 + Armor TN if they stay still and don’t fight).

It is possible, though extremely difficult, to break free of the creature’s hold. This requires a **Jiu-jitsu (Grapple) / Strength** roll at TN 20, with the TN increasing by 5 for each Round that the creature has held on.

If a PC is killed, the Doro no Oni will retreat back into the earth, satisfied with its ‘meal’. It will leave behind any inorganic materials the unfortunate was carrying, covered in a thin coat of viscous mud.

Note that Hasegawa’s Self-Sacrifice absolutely can be used here. If a PC gets to Round 3 of being smothered the following will take place:

“No charge of mine will be taken by the Ninth!” With a decisive gesture, Hiruma Hasegawa tears the jade pendant at his throat away, tossing it to [nearby PC]. With his other hand, he reaches out and presses his hand into the oozing surface of mud that is slowly devouring [attacked PC]. The oni, sensing an easier meal, swarms up his arm and over the hapless Crab, covering him in moments. The man’s look of determination is the last thing you see of him before he disappears beneath the slimy, pulsating earthen mass.

No cries escape as the mound slowly, inexorably, retreats back into the swamp from which it rose. Soon all that remains of your guide are a few long, narrow shapes and unidentifiable lumps, all covered in blood-streaked muck.

If these items are cleaned off, they are revealed to be arrowheads, Hasegawa’s daisho, the metal bands and studs of his tetsubo, and a small netsuke (a stone turtle).

Going Around the Marsh: This option is much simpler, but takes a minimum of two days to complete (costing each person two points of jade.) The party must make a **Craft: Sailing (Navigation) / Intelligence** or **Hunting (Trailblazing) / Perception** roll at a TN 30 to keep their direction as they must follow the dry land in a circuitous route and will periodically lose sight of the distant peaks as the land dips and shifts. This is a Cooperative Roll; each failed roll adds a day of travel and deducts another point of jade.

If the party fails this roll twice, Hasegawa will recommend cutting through the swamp after all; if the party agrees, return to the “Going through the Marsh” section.

End of Swamp Night Encounter: Sneaky Thieves

The night that the party gets around or through the swamp, the following occurs.

When you finally reach the far side of the swamp, Hasegawa leads you to a small hill that has a significant divot dug out of one side. “I’ve used this spot before. It’s safe from flooding and rain, but the visibility isn’t the best, which is both good and bad.”

The party must decide if they want to set a fire or not and how they will handle watches. Three watches are standard; where the watchers decide to stand (on top of the hillock vs on the edge of camp) will also make a difference.

Swamp goblins, a small amphibious sub-species of bakemono, dwell in the Black Hand Marsh, and the lure of the PCs (and their many shiny items) proves be too much for them to resist. On Second Watch, a pair of the bolder goblins will make a go for an item from one of the the sleeping PCs. It should be something that would glitter in the dark: netsuke, jewelry, metal lanterns, metal weapons, etc. (with the exception of jade, unless someone has stated they string it on a metal chain instead of the cord that it comes on). PCs who are on watch should make **Investigation**

(Notice) / Perception rolls with TNs based on the situation:

- With fire:
 - If the PCs are on the hill, TN35
 - If the PCs are in the camp, TN 20
- Without fire:
 - If the PCs are on the hill, TN30
 - If the PCs are in the camp, TN25

If the PC's spot the thieves (there are two goblins, coming from opposite directions) and make anything even remotely resembling a threatening gesture (such as shouting, charging, drawing a weapon, etc.) the goblins will flee without further ado (they are essentially cowards). If the PC(s) choose to wait and watch, they can pretend not to have noticed with a **Perform: Acting / Awareness** roll at TN 15. If they allow the creatures to get close, the goblins will seize what they are after and attempt to run. They will immediately dart in opposite directions, back toward the swamp, at Water 3 Full Move on a 4k3 Initiative. PCs have one Round to catch them before they get into the water; following after them is an extremely bad idea, since the goblins can both see and breathe in the deceptively deep water where the PCs cannot. After a few feet, the bottom will quite literally drop away, plunging the PC(s) into water nearly fifty feet deep unless they make a raw **Reflexes** check at TN 20.

- To surface, they must make an **Athletics (Swimming) / Strength** at TN (15+armor value of the armor they are wearing). They cannot be helped with this part, as rope will not go under the water and will curl unnaturally on the surface if other PCs try. Note that if someone tries to go in after them with a rope tied around them, they will be 'stuck' at the surface by that same rope.
- To get out, they must make an **Athletics (Swimming) / Strength** at TN 20 (armor penalties apply) or else be pulled out by companions with a rope who can make a raw **Strength** roll of TN (10+Reduction value of armor). This can be made co-operatively.
- For each round they are in the water, they will lose a point of jade.
- For each round beyond their Stamina that they are submerged, they will take 1k1 damage as they begin to drown.

Killing the creatures if they catch them is (relatively) simple; The TN to hit a Swamp Goblin is only 20 and they have only 20 Wounds. Doing this will rile up the rest of the tribe, however, and they will go out of their way to make travel the next day harder; they will lay

traps for the party that require an **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** at TN 30 to spot; failing to do so will drop the group into another acidic pit. Each player rolls a d10; on an even, they will damage their armor (losing 2 points of Armor TN bonus and 1 point of Reduction), and on an odd they will damage their primary weapon (losing 2k0 to its DR). If the person doesn't wear armor and rolls armor, they gain the Bad Health Disadvantage from an acid burn instead until they are either magically healed ten Wounds or receive treatment with a successful **Medicine (wound treatment) / Intelligence** roll (TN 20).

If no-one spots the sneaks, then someone's item will not be with them in the morning. If the PCs insist on trying to track it down, it will take a **Hunting (Tracking) / Perception** roll at TN 30 to do so and will cost the party a full half day (during which they will need to repeat a round of Crossing the Marsh rolls above but with harder TNs due to the Weather conditions outlined below) before they can eventually come across the sleeping tribe of goblins, which they can easily frighten off before reclaiming their prize (along with a scattering of interestingly shaped rocks, a few very low-quality knives, and a small white (extremely cute and extremely Tainted) kitten (which will totally make friends if someone wants, but will also run away scared if someone threatens it, acting exactly like a real kitten would). (If they take the kitten, see Night 2. If they keep it, contact Admin Kay for a cert.)

This will also mean that the party will find the Lair the Night of Day 3, not Afternoon.

The Flatlands

The first hours of the day are spent climbing out of the swamp. Though there is a certain relief to be had from leaving the oppressive heat behind, what lies before you promises its own hardship. A massive rolling plain stretches out between you and the hills you seek. Even from here, you can see that much of the so-called ground is in fact mounds of bone and tattered flesh, a battlefield's aftermath that has never been cleared. To the west, a thick bank of fog obscures all, with only a few ruined structures breaking through here and there.

Hiruma Hasegawa looks over the field below for several minutes, muttering under his breath before turning to you.

“This wasn’t this bad when I was here last. There’s been a fight since then. Probably some of the things I saw fleeing came across one another and fought. Or perhaps the land shifted, bringing this here for reasons of its own. Regardless, I don’t like it. Going through places like that...well. Undead are a guarantee. We could go through the fogged region, but the chances of getting lost are much higher.”

The party can now choose to go through the Boneyard or through the Fog (pg. 14).

The Boneyard

This is the ‘fast’ route, and crossing through the Boneyard will take the PCs one day. It also exposes them to sickness and a fight.

With your first step, the soft crunch of bone sounds, seeming far louder than it should be. Clouds of bone dust rise with each footfall, swiftly coating your legs. The stench of rotting flesh seems to surround you, even though most of the bone you see is clean. Here and there, flashes of bright color break up the ivory. Sometimes it is the unnatural flesh of a beast not yet fully consumed; sometimes, it is silk or lacquered plate, a grim reminder that amongst the monsters, former samurai lie scattered, their bodies unshriven and their souls Lost.

Walking through a field of bones is not only dangerous but deeply unclean. PCs who lack proper protective clothing (such as monks who regularly expose large parts of their body) will lose a point of Honor for each day they spend in this region due to touching unclean, corrupt flesh. In addition, everyone (exposed or not) needs to make a Raw **Stamina** roll at TN 15 to avoid illness (Jurojin’s Blessing or Curse apply). Identifying this disease and its symptoms requires a **Medicine (Disease) / Intelligence** roll at TN 20.

Marrow Fever:

This disease is born of the inhalation of bone marrow, giving it its name. It is not contagious, but it can have permanent affects if left untreated.

- Incubation Period: 1 day
- Duration: Special (See Below)
- Effects: While an individual is infected, they will have a very high fever and a persistent dry cough. Mechanically, this lowers their effective Stamina by 1 (with the associated change to Wounds) and also adds a -10 penalty to all Stealth checks.
- Treatment: Curing the disease must occur within one week of infection and requires either a **Medicine (Disease) / Intelligence** roll at TN 20 (the TN increases by 10 if the PC does not have

the Emphasis), or magical means (such as Peace of the Kami). If the individual is not cured in that time, the reduction of Stamina becomes permanent, inflicting the Weakness (Stamina) Disadvantage on the PC.

GM NOTE: Unless the party loses two days somehow, they will make it back to Rokugan and healers without trouble, making the permanent results of this mostly an empty threat; naturally, this should not be shared with the players to increase tension.

As the dim light of the Shadowlands shifts from sickly yellow to blood red, the bones beneath your feet begin to shift and shudder. Moans and cries echo from the hundreds of skulls around you as several shapes pull themselves up from the pile.

The party will all need to roll **Reflexes** at TN 15 to stay upright in the tremor; armor penalties apply, but if they have Techniques which help with terrain penalties, such as Yoritomo Bushi, they gain a +5 to their roll. If they fail, they will start the combat Prone.

The party does get a chance to spot the ambush; they will need to roll **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** at TN 30 (the Wary Advantage applies) as the revenants rise up from the ground beneath them.

Undead Revenants

There are a number of Revenants equal to the PCs in the party plus one.

Air 0	Earth 3	Fire 1	Water 2
Reflexes 3		Agility 3	Strength 3

Initiative: 3k3
Armor TN: 20 **Reduction:** 5
Wounds: 72 (no Wound Penalties)
Attack: 5k3 **Damage:** 6k2 (Sword, Complex)

Primary Skills: Kenjutsu 2

Special Mechanics: Undead, Shadowlands Taint: 3, Fear 3

Decapitation: If a PC can make a Called Shot vs the head (three Raises) and do at least 18 Wounds, they can instantly destroy the revenant. Knowing this requires a **Lore: Shadowlands / Intelligence** roll at TN 20; this lore check is a Simple Action.

After the fight, the party will eventually come out of the field of bones into the remnants of a dead grove of trees. Move on to Night: It Came From Above

The Fog

This is the slower option and will ultimately take two days, possibly three if the party decides to stop and investigate the Crumbling Temple.

For a few moments, all you can see is white as you step into the wall of fog. It wraps around you, a palpable mist that sinks into your skin and swirls into your lungs. Then, impossibly, it clears. The sun, golden and full, shines down across a rippling green field, full of flowers and butterflies and dotted here and there with flowering trees. The air hums with the sounds of spring, busy insects and sweetly warbling songbirds seeming to drift just outside the line of vision. The line of distant hills you have been approaching is gone from the horizon, replaced by the shining walls of a distant city, very similar in grandeur to the distant capital of Rokugan. Some miles away, buildings of ancient style dot the landscape, glittering in the light. Even you yourself are changed; the clothes that you and your companions wear are of an archaic style, far different in cut and color from what is worn by samurai of the current age.

Hasegawa will immediately back out and try to drag the PC's with him so that they can have a quick discussion. He'll explain that the phenomenon, known as "The Ghost of the Land that Was", is an uncommon, but not unheard of, effect that the Kuni have decided to refer to as 'weather'. As far as anyone can tell, the illusory landscape does accurately reflect the land as it was before Fu Leng's Fall...to an extent. The centuries of erosion, plant growth, battles, and other shifts are not reflected, meaning that what one sees can be a rough guide but can't ultimately be trusted. It's a favored ground for ambushes, and also preys upon the mind if one stays in it for too long.

The PCs at this point need to make a choice. They can go back (going to the Boneyard section); they can proceed as they are, seeing what the Shadowlands shows them and possibly learning about the history that has literally been sent to Jigoku and which can't be observed any other way, or they can go blindfolded (which is what Hasegawa will do). **NOTE:** This is Weather, so the Yoritomo Shugenja Technique can be used to make this go away at the cost of three spell slots. If they do so, they will reveal a ruined, barren landscape devoid of any life. There are the desiccated ruins of old trees (which are petrified) and a few crumbled buildings, but nothing else of interest (other than the Crumbled Temple). They will be able to proceed through the area in one day, unless they stop to explore.

- PCs who go Blindfolded gain the Blinded Condition, per pg. 89 of the core rule book. Movement speed is halved, to avoid hazards.
- PCs who do not don blindfolds are Deceived by the Illusions; they have the option to either gain a rank of Lore: History (if they do not have the skill) or the 'Pre-Fall' Emphasis to Lore History skill (if they do not have it) from the observations that they are able to make. The imbalance between what the body feels and the mind sees costs them at least one Void Point; they will need to make a **Meditation / Void** roll at TN 20, if they fail, they will instead lose 2 Void Points. If a PC would drop below 0 Void Points, they are knocked unconscious for a day (and will suffer horrific nightmares about the experience of the Fall for the duration).

All PCs will need to make **Investigation (Notice) / Void** rolls at TN 25 to avoid things which they can't see (fallen trees, pits or crevices, etc.). For every 5 by which a PC fails (round down), they take 1k1 damage. If the PCs have things in their inventories like staff weapons or poles that they can feel around with, they gain a Free Raise.

After a few hours' travel, the PCs will attract the attention of a predator in the fog. Those who are blindfolded may roll **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** at a TN of 20 to spot the Ambush (Wary applies). Those who are seeing the Vision do not get to make this roll and are always Surprised; if the whole party goes without being Blindfold, OR if all Blindfolded PC's fail the Notice, then the Oni gets a free Simple action. Note that the Notice roll for those who are Blinded is dependent on sound; if any PC happens to be deaf, they do not get to make this roll.

Breaking the illusion while the oni attacks can be accomplished with strength of mind: a **Willpower** roll at TN 15 will allow a PC to see the creature FOR THAT ROUND; extra Rounds can be gained by calling Raises. This removes the penalties of being Blind but does require the PC to make a Fear check. Note that a clever use of spells that will dispel the fog (or cause a lot of wind to at least make it temporarily disperse) remove this requirement for their Duration.

Enenra no Oni

The Enenra no Oni is an entity of smoke that hunts in foggy mornings or areas afflicted with wildfires, where it delights in riding the smoke and taking people who might not be missed in the chaos. The best way to notice that it is anything more than a patch of fog is to look for the faint outline of the last entity the being consumed which will be a faint outline at the being's

center or by scenting the faint smell of burning flesh which clings to it.

The Enera no Oni is not naturally corporeal; when it attacks, it does so by extruding an embodied tentacle which it will use to hold and burn the target(s). While it is so embodied, it can be hit and damaged as normal, but is immune to physical damage until that time. If a PC wins a Contested Grapple Roll with it, they automatically Break the Grapple as a Free Action as it immediately turns that part of itself back into smoke.

Air 4 Earth 2 Fire 3 Water 1
Strength 3

Initiative: 4k4

Armor TN: 25 (15 when in Grapple) **Reduction:** Special (See below)

Wounds: 12: +5; 24: +10; 36: +15; 48: Dead

Attack: 8k3 (Simple, initiates Grapple)

Damage: 3k3 (initial hit); 4k2 (each Round, Grapple)

Primary Skills: Jujutsu (Grapple) 5

Special Mechanics: Shadowlands Taint 3; Fear 3;

Incorporeal: Unless it has successfully hit and grappled someone, the creature is immune to physical damage (unless a weapon has been coated with jade). Because it is a being of smoke, fire attacks do only half damage. **Grapple:** To hit it when it has someone in a grapple, an attacker must call two Raises to avoid hitting the person who is being held. **Extrusion:** The Enera no Oni can grapple as many people at one time as it has Taint; the additional numbers do not alter its Armor TN.

After the fight, the party will struggle on until evening, having come only half-way through the fog. The second day will be more of the same, complete with the navigation rolls and Void loss, unless the party fights their way up into the foothills early. This will add another day (for a total of three days and 3 jade lost) but will get them safely to the point where they hit Night: It Came From Above.

The Crumbled Temple

This is an optional encounter, only for those who have at least one person who is seeing the Illusion. Fully exploring it will add a day to the total, though thanks to the weird ‘weather’ it won’t appear to do so. (This section can be skipped if the session is running long.)

As a truly glorious sunset begins to paint the sky with crimson, purple, and rose hues, the fading light gleams off of a distant spire. As you draw nearer, the shape resolves into the tower of a small temple. The light is reflecting from a golden disk set at the top of the spire, rising benevolently over a small, tidy two-storied building made from white stone.

An **Engineering** or **Lore: History (Temples)** or **Lore: Theology / Intelligence** roll at TN 25 (Moshi PCs get a Free Raise) will identify the overall structure as a temple honoring Amaterasu, the original Lady Sun. This particular style of temple has not been in favor for centuries, though older buildings with similar shapes still exist scattered about in Rokugan to this day. Historically, they were known not only for being holy sites but for being great houses of knowledge as well.

Anyone with any sort of Compulsion related to old knowledge, or Consumed by Knowledge, should have to roll if/when this information is learned; if they fail, they will feel a pull to the that lingers as long as it is in view (which will be until Part 4). If they don’t visit, unless they are secured at night, they will sleepwalk toward the building every evening.

Hasegawa will be curious about the building but overall disinclined to visit the structure, though he does want to take the time to detail the general location on his map. If the party wants to use the building as shelter, he will ultimately go along with the consensus and will spend the time others spend exploring making a sketch, removing his blindfold to do so (and losing a Void).

For those who don’t wear blindfolds, the inside of the Temple appears to have been left unattended for some time, accumulating a faint coating of dust, but is otherwise undisturbed. Most of the cabinets with scrolls appear to be locked, but an **Investigation (Search) / Perception** roll at TN 25 will allow a PC to find one case that can be opened. Most of the scrolls within will crumble at the touch, but three will remain whole enough to be read: One is a map of the region (a province roughly the size of current Kuni holdings), one is a journal of someone named Ekitairo (which outlines a simple, monastic life, largely the same as that of any modern Brotherhood monk until the last several days, where it speaks of dark portents and then a flaming star which grows larger and soon can be seen even in the daytime), and one is seemingly a haiku (but is actually the maho spell Sinful Dreams, identifiable by a **Spellcraft (Maho) / Intelligence** roll at TN 20). If a PC wishes to keep the scroll, this should be noted for reporting purposes; the PC in question will not be considered to have ‘learned’ it until they spend the necessary XP to purchase the Forbidden Knowledge (Maho) Advantage (though finding the scroll does waive the cost in Favors).

For those who are blind, the building is largely fallen. There are only three walls still standing, with only one

of them more than seven feet high. The cabinets that appear locked to others don't even exist to touch for the blinded, though there are remnants of rotted wood and paper scattered in those places. The three scrolls that the others find still exist to the touch of the blind; the map is ragged cloth, the journal is some kind of paper made from an unfamiliar fiber, and the poetry is printed on some kind of preserved skin (**Medicine / Void** at TN 15 will identify it as such, though it isn't possible to confirm or deny if it's human skin or something else).

All three items will be destroyed if touched by jade directly; even exposure to the aura it projects (aka, being carried by someone wearing jade) will ultimately destroy the items within 48 hours.

The journal is in fact the lair of a unique creature called the Ekitairo no Oni, an oni which hides in two dimensions and which appears as nothing more than a doodle or smudge on paper until it seeks to attack. If a PC takes the journal and tucks it in with any other writing materials or surfaces for paint, the Oni will take the opportunity to move onto one of them. The only items safe from invasion are a priest's spell ofuda, which are blessed and thus inhospitable to the creature. When the PC returns to their notes/map/painting, they may make a Raw **Intelligence** or Raw **Perception** roll (Player choice) at TN 20 to notice that there is an alteration that they don't remember making; the Precise Memory Advantage provides its bonus.

The oni is not inherently dangerous; it can easily be gotten rid of by simply leaving behind the paper or object where it is currently housed. It will absorb all knowledge contained in the work which it dwells in, however, and it can, if it senses danger to itself (like the threat of the page being burned) break free of its container to attack. It can be contained to a single piece of media by drawing a circle around the doodle which it currently appears as; learning this requires a **Lore: Shadowlands (Oni) / Intelligence** roll at TN 25. If someone in the party figures this out and the party brings the oni (contained) back to the Crab, the party will gain G7 Glory and an extra Favor from the Crab, since this is the first time this particular creature has ever been discovered. It will also earn the person who bears the media "Noticed by: ??"

Night Encounter: It Came From Above

This night, you take shelter in the leafless remnants of once might once have been a lovely forest, full of old-growth trees. It isn't ideal, as it provides cover even as it offers it, but Hasegawa informs you that the

possibility of landslides and other hazards are just too great to allow for travel in the pitch-black darkness.

As before, PCs should choose watches and also must make the choice about fires. There is no fuel here to burn, they will quickly learn, but only petrified wood and more stone. The only way the party can have a fire is if they brought the materials with them.

In the dark, a dray of Nobusuma (a monstrous form of flying squirrels) will descend, with the only warning being a faint gleam of red from their eyes. Watchers should make an **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** roll at TN 25 to spot them. If no one spots them, they will descend upon the sleepers among the group and drain blood from them via painless bites, dealing 2k2 Wounds and inflicting a point of Taint (or destroying a point of jade) from each sleeper.

If the Nobusuma are spotted, they will attack and do their best to harvest at least some blood from the party before returning to their lairs in the trees.

Also note that if someone raided the Swamp Goblin Camp and brought the kitten back with them, it will begin to feed on its new 'owner' in the night. It will do this by siphoning blood through its tiny kitten claws during the act of 'kneading'; the act is painless but will drain 1 Wound from the target. Note that the kitten itself has a Shadowlands ability that makes it immune to jade or Taint detection (similar to a Pekkles).

Nobusuma

These creatures, the size of a large cat, are the Tainted versions of the much-beloved dwarf flying squirrel so often kept as pets in the northern forests of the Phoenix Clan. Instead of harmlessly consuming fruit for sustenance, they instead survive on the lifeblood of other creatures. Though they are stealth hunters, they can fight viciously if pressed; they will most often swoop in, bite, and then use their speed to dart away again before their targets can respond.

There are a number of Nobusuma equal to the PCs in the party plus one.

Air 4 Earth 2 Fire 3 Water 1
Reflexes 5 Agility 4 Perception 2

Initiative: 5k5

Armor TN: 35

Reduction: 0

Wounds: 20 (+0), 35 (+10), 55 (Dead)

Attack: 5k4 (Bite, Simple)

Damage: 4k1 (Bite)

Special Mechanics: Tiny, Shadowlands Taint 2, Flight (Move 4) *Painless Bite:* If the creature is not spotted, it will bite without causing pain to the target so it can feed in peace. Any wounds dealt by the Nobusuma will remain numb for six hours after the injury; the only benefit to this is that the person can ignore 5 points of wound penalties until the effect wears off.

Fear of Fire: Nobusuma are afraid of fire and will have their attacks reduced to 2k1 to attack anyone carrying a source of open fire. If more than three light sources are present in a group, they will leave the encounter.

Nobusuma Toxin: It is possible to harvest the salivary glands of a dead Nobusuma. This requires success against a TN 15 on a **Hunting / Intelligence** roll and will cause the loss of 1 point of Honor per creature. Each Nobusuma has two doses of toxin. When prepared correctly (with either a **Medicine** or **Craft: Poison / Intelligence** against TN 20), each dose can be used to make a potion that will allow the drinker to ignore 10 points of Wound Penalties for one Round (this will not allow the individual to ignore the penalties of Down or Out, however). This will also require two doses of a Medicine or Poisoners Kit per dose created. There is a downside, however; drinking the potion gives the user 2 points of the Shadowlands Taint (or removes two points of jade) for the first dose and 5 points for any subsequent doses taken in the next twenty-four hours. Drinking a potion is a Simple Action.

Part Three: Reclaiming the Mantle

The Obsidian Hills

The day dawns dismal and grey, with faint light seeming to feed the shadows, not chase them away. The foothills you seek rise up, the stone breaching the plain only a mile or so from your camp. The stone of the range is a flat, light-absorbing black, with only the occasional smear of crimson or pile of what looks to be massive bones breaking up the expanse of ebony stone.

From here, the landmark ridge the party has been heading toward is quite obvious and looks like it will be a few hours' hike to reach. The path up will show the PC's just how difficult tracking is going to be here; there is very little in the way of actual soil on most of the 'paths'...only blood smears and bone seem to make any permanent mark.

Once you reach the ridge, Hasegawa leads you to a lee of the massive bone structure and crouches down for a conference. "This is as far as I have come before, and my map goes no further."

GM Note: The Watchtower and the Mine are red herrings, so if the table is running long, the next bit of box text should be skipped, and the PCs should be guided toward The Nezumi Warren.

"There were fragments of map from before the first loss of Shiro Hiruma indicating there was once a watch tower in this range, as well as an old Nezumi warren. There was a mine, too, though it was one only the local denizens would seek to use. Any of these seem like likely places for something to hide, or to be hidden in. What do you think?"

As the party discusses where to go, Hasegawa has only a few opinions, which he will only offer if asked (or if the GM feels they need a nudge the right way).

- The Watchtower, left unmanned for centuries, is probably rubble at this point. While it might be useful as a high point as a place to look around, it's unlikely to have anything interesting of its own.
- The Mines were recorded as highly dangerous and inhabited by a number of Shadowlands creatures. Though its likely that most of them have left due to whatever it is that caused the disturbance, it's probable that anything that didn't leave is extremely strong.
- Nezumi were, before the disaster that befell their race, beings of magic who didn't fall to the Taint. If anything out here was to have somehow managed to create or find an artifact that would frighten oni, they seem the most likely to have done it.

Though the hills appear to be empty, there is a sense of something watching all the same. Hasegawa will recommend a 'subtle approach' and will proceed to creep around as carefully as possible. He has never been beyond the ridge and has reverted to full scout paranoia mode. Everyone in the party should roll **Stealth / Agility** each time they move between locations; if anyone fails to make a TN 15, the Free Ogre will be aware they are in the area and will be prepared when they ultimately invade his lair. The TN increases by 5 for each period of travel, and all armor penalties apply.

Finding the right location straight off will be required either an extremely high **Investigation (Search) / Perception** roll (35+) to identify the only set of

tracks headed back into the range, or else a Commune spell. The Earth in particular will be aware of ‘a strong cousin’ off to the south-west, and will be able to guide the party to the first area where they can track from. If the right tracks are found, the party will need to make a **Hunting (Tracking) / Perception** roll at TN 25 to follow it back to his lair, the Nezumi Ruins.

If the party is relying purely on Hasegawa’s mentions of where the landmarks should be, they instead need to make either an **Investigation (Search) / Perception** roll or a **Craft: Sailing (Navigation) / Perception** OR **Intelligence** roll at TN 25; this can be a Cooperative Roll. Any time the party fails to find a location, they lose a day in fruitless searching.

As you wind your way between the barren, bleak peaks, the edges seem to sharpen around you. The path you entered by has long since been left behind in a series of ascents and descents; markers that have been left seem to melt into the stone when you turn your back, disappearing in an instant. Every height seems to show a different vista, with the distances growing and shrinking at random. The only sound you hear is the sounds you and your companions make as you move across shifting gravel and long stretches of stone. Tracks, large, small, or inexplicable, are sparse, and grow less and less frequent the further you intrude into the range.

Every location the party visits will take a day to reach, search, and return to the ridge from. Though there are no more monsters (except Zecchou) in the area, there are hazards related to the land itself. Every time the party moves to a new location, they should roll a **Hunting (Survival) / Perception** (which can be cooperative). Compare the roll to the following chart:

- 30+: Nothing bad happens
- 25-29: The party comes across a slick patch of stone with no grip that they have to cross. If they are able to add texture somehow (either with magic or with tools, if they brought them), they can cross without trouble; if not, they need to make an **Athletics / Reflexes** roll at TN 20; failure causes them 1k1 damage.
- 20-24: The party reaches a crevasse that must be climbed or jumped across. If proper climbing equipment is available (rope and grapple), one PC can roll **Athletics (Climbing) / Strength** at TN 20 to get across and then help the rest; falling will deal that PC 2k2 Wounds. If they don’t have the equipment, or only have a rope, at least one person will have to make a jump with **Athletics / Agility** at TN 25 (Large Characters get a Free

Raise, and Small ones receive a -5 penalty). Remember armor penalties apply to this roll. Falling, again, causes 2k2 damage, but WILL result with the party coming out the other side.

- 15-19: The party triggers a rockslide. Everyone must make a **Reflexes** check at TN 15; failure causes them to take 3k3 (non-exploding) damage. If anyone takes more than 15 damage (after reduction and Void), that person gains the **Lame Disadvantage** until the amount of damage can be healed.
- <15: As above, but Hiruma Hasegawa and any horses are instantly killed as they are swept over the edge and down the crevasse, leaving a new red smeared stain on the stone that never goes away or dries. Also, the PC loses one piece of equipment (chosen by the GM) in the ensuing struggle not to go over the edge. GMs should choose something that will add to the challenge but not cripple the character’s ability to participate (Secondary weapons, favored hobby items or sentimental baubles, etc).

The Mines

As you approach the mines, your path begins to edge downwards. Where many similar structures in the Empire are carved into the sides of mountains and hills, this one is a descent into a gaping, maw-like hole from which no light emerges. A faint, low moaning emits from the depths, rising and falling with the fitful changes of the wind.

Descending into the mines requires 50’ of rope and independent light sources. At that depth, the tunnel becomes (barely) walkable, though it is more accurate to say it’s a very steep slide than any sort of actual tunnel. The sides of the cavern are rough in texture with frequent bone-colored braces that seem to support the walls from collapse.

If these are examined, it should become obvious that they are in fact bone; the so called ‘mine’ is in fact the desiccated remnants of a massive tunneling oni from whom lesser beings have been carving marrow and scale for use in crafting for centuries.

IF the party chooses to descend further, they will eventually reach the space where lungs once were; this area has been colonized, with many oddly shaped huts and dangling orbs hollowed out to make living structures. These will be empty of inhabitants but will still have the less important household goods that the denizens left in their hurry to leave the area.

The Watchtower

Strategically placed on the highest of the Obsidian Hills for at least twenty miles in any direction, the crumbled ruin of a tower stands no more than man high. The foundation that remains indicates a building of some size, likely once suited for housing a full platoon of men. Just who built it, and when, is impossible to determine; wind and weather have taken their toll and have weathered the stones to a dull gray.

There is very little of interest left at the ruin. A very determined person could wriggle their way through the crumbled doorway enough to find a trapdoor in what was once the base. If the party took the trouble to move the rocks to open the door (an effort that would take at least 3 Strength 3 samurai a full day), they would find a dusty, abandoned storage cellar. The vast majority of what is inside is foodstuffs, but there are a few tattered scrolls still in place. These crumble at the touch, unless first repaired using the Fire Spell 'The Raging Forge'. Dated the 8th day of the Serpent, 716, it is the final reports from a long-dead Hiruma outlining a tremendous stormfront gathering above the outpost. The writer, one Hiruma Mai, has taken care to list the names of all of her troops and their deeds; by the tone of the writing, she fully expected everyone in the tower to die to the last man and wished them to be remembered well. A **Lore: History (Crab Clan) / Intelligence** roll at TN 25 will identify this as the day prior to the massive storm which was the prelude to the Siege of Daylight by The Maw and its forces. Returning this to the Crab Clan will gain the PCs a G8 Glory gain.

The Nezumi Ruins

Following the trail leads to a softer series of hills, rounded where most have been sharp. The yawning dark of a cave entrance would be easy to miss, dark against a deeper dark, were it not for the grisly cairns that stand on either side. The yellow and cream of bones, of many shapes and sizes, are bright against the ebon stone, flashes of brighter color showing here and there throughout.

The two cairns are around seven feet high. Inspecting them with **Investigation (Search) / Perception** (or other skills as noted) reveals the following:

- TN 15 (also Medicine/Intelligence): The bones at the base of the pillar are actually much older than the ones at the upper half. Those are centuries old; most of the bones on the top half a decade old or less.

- TN 15: The color is from fabric; on the lower half the pillar, the fabric is ribbons or cords, but on the upper half substantial swaths of fabric, possibly whole garments, were used.
- TN 20: (also Lore Nonhumans or Medicine [Non-human]) The bones at the bottom are those of Nezumi, largely intact. The bones on the top are mostly skulls, or pieces of skulls, and encompass a broad mishmash of creatures, including horses (or onikage), humans, bakemono, and more monstrous forms.
- TN 20: There are remnants of decoration on the bottom part of the pillar. (Language: Nezumi only: Some of these are script, and mention that this is the warren of the Cracked Shinbone Tribe and appear to be invoking Names.)
- TN 20: There are remnants of decoration on the fabric in the upper half of the pillar. (Lore: Heraldry or Lore: History, if someone is brave/gross enough to dig some of these out: There are a few school mons on the newest fabric, which is closest to the top. Among these are the mons of the Seppun, the Hida, and the Matsu.
- TN 25: (also Medicine): None of the bones on the bottom half of the pile show damage, except that of time and the weight of what lies atop. The bones in the upper half show occasional signs of weapon damage and also show signs of having been boiled.
- TN 25: (also Engineering): Two different styles of construction are present here; the lower half used stone and a primitive cement to hold the bones in place; the upper half uses the fabric pieces and bone shape in a puzzle fashion to make a (much less stable) structure.
- TN 25: (also Artisan: Sculpture): The upper portions of the structure have a certain grisly symmetry to them that, in any other medium, might actually be pleasing to the eye. Whomever built this did so with artistic intent that was lacking in the lower part of the structure.

A Free Ogre has been adding its own trophies and 'art' on top of the existing Nezumi ward stones. Some of his contributions are the remnants of the NPCs who are part of the Last March of Toturi IX, with the noted absence of the gear of the Emperor, the Jade Champion, and the Crab Clan Champion. Those absences should absolutely be made known to anyone who hits a high TN and thinks to ask the question, but otherwise not volunteered.

There is also information available at the point of entry for anyone who is mystically inclined. Shugenja (or those who have enough mystical connection to have

kiho, such as Monks) should roll **Investigation (Notice) / Void**.

- TN 15: A faint energy is emanating from the pillars and seems to be focused on the cave itself. It is foreign to Rokugani (and Ivindi) mysticism.
- TN 25: The oppressive, heavy feeling associated with the Taint has lessened dramatically.
- (Shugenja Only, and Friendly Kami grants a Free Raise) TN 15: The low mutter of the kansen has almost disappeared...except for one strong voice.

There is one old kansen here (it had been the kami of the mountain range before the Fall and was strong enough to survive the disaster, though not to withstand the Taint). It is mostly in hiding from the powerful Earth kami that are contained within the Mantle, but it resents the intrusion and is eager to help anyone that (it hopes) will get the thing out of its land. It is very much the inverse reaction that a normal Earth kami has to the presence of Taint in its vicinity. Because of this, the Earth kansen will be delighted to help with what it knows and all Communes with it (if anyone dares) will have two Free Raises for clarity built in. Note that, in this case, the kansen is desperate enough that it *will* try to work with non-shugenja, if the slightest opportunity presents itself.

The older, Nezumi-built portion of the cairns contains the remnant of Name Magic which was used to purify the Warren. Enough of the wards remain active to be used by the powerful Earth kami that inhabits the Mantle, which has purified the region enough to drive away all but the strongest kansen and Tainted creatures. The Free Ogre inside is Tainted, but not so much that it is damaged by proximity. He considers the discomfort a fair exchange for being left alone.

Inside the Ogre's Lair:

As you prepare to enter the Ruin, Hasegawa stops. "I will guard the flank. If you need me, call out; if you do not return within a three turns of the glass, I will come in after you." So saying, the Hiruma salutes and then melts into the surrounding hillside.

The entry tunnel, dark and narrow, twists through a series of defensive turns before branching out in many directions. Finding the path from here is a simple matter: one series of tunnels has been carved out to raise the ceilings from barely man high to nearly eight feet.

If the party has not been bothering to hide themselves, or if the party has failed to make the needed Stealth rolls, the Free Ogre will be aware of them. If he is not

Aware, he will not have set any traps in the tunnels, only in the main chamber.

At one of the larger intersections, the Ogre has set up a simple, but well disguised, pit trap. Spotting it will take an **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** roll at TN 25; Wary applies. Anyone who fails this roll will fall in (this should only be the first person in the line). PC's should roll **Reflexes** at TN 15 (armor penalties apply); Success means they take only 1k1 (non-exploding) damage as they manage to fall without hitting the spikes; ailing this roll will cause the PC to take 2k2 damage (exploding). If this inflicts more than 10 Wounds (after Void and Reduction) the PC will effectively have the Missing Limb (non-dominant arm) Disadvantage until they are healed (magically or with Medicine) for the amount of damage taken. The party will have to get around the pit afterwards, but as long as they have reasonable equipment (such as ropes and grapples) this will be easy enough.

Eventually, the tunnel begins to widen. A breeze begins to brush across your faces, redolent with the scent of roasted meat and smoke. Light flickers before you, faint at first but growing brighter as you take the last few turns.

If someone wants to creep forward, they should do so; compare their **Stealth (Sneaking) / Agility** roll against Zecchou's Investigation roll (7k4). If he spots them, he will rise and move toward the platform behind the fire; if he does not, he will be found seated on the chair he has made for himself near the fire pit (and will take a Round to get to the platform where his trap triggers are). If someone manages to sneak around him to explore the chamber, they may roll **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** to spot the pulls and levers; (TN 25). Note that moving toward them will require another Stealth check for which Zecchou gets two Free Raises. If this is somehow accomplished, deactivating the traps requires an **Engineering / Intelligence** roll at TN 20.

The chamber you reach is vast, doubtless once the gathering hall of the Nezumi who once called this place home. Their decorations, unique patterns of paint and carving, still remain along the wall, but they are not what catch the eye. Nor is it the fire, nor the massive being resting near it. Instead, your eyes are drawn to a display set on a long table at the far side of the room. Several sculptures, if such a term can be used for creations made of bone and flesh and the ruin of armor and silk, are set in pride of place, arranged to catch the light. Ribcages and the long bones of arm and leg act as artful displays for daisho, polished and

shining. Draped through and around the displays is a elegant green swath of fabric, embroidered with gold. Though it is somewhat obscured, the mon of the Jade Champion is clear, centered as it is at the heart of the display.

When the PC's get the chance to examine the daisho further, they will observe that there are mons from the Seppun, the Matsu, and the Hida among them. The personal mons on the kimono, which are woven through the bone sculptures, make it clear that these are the remnants of those who participated in the Emperor's Last March.

GM Note: The Emperor's gear is notably absent. This should not be volunteered, but if the players ask, the absence is not difficult to discern.

The Ogre himself wears the armor, and the tetsubo, of the Crab Champion Emeritus (Father of the Crab Champion, Hida Oturi).

Zecchou, the Ogre, is able to converse with the PCs, though he doesn't have much to say other than 'get out'. If he's questioned about how he got the treasures, he will freely admit to having claimed them after delivering 'a second death' to the ones who wore it. He doesn't exactly know what the Mantle is, but he is well aware that his new clarity of thought, and rediscovered love of beauty, has come to him only after he collected it; he is unwilling to give it up because of this.

Claiming the Ogre's treasures can happen in a few ways:

- Because he is largely tired of fighting, there is a remote possibility of threatening the ogre for his treasures. This will take an **Intimidation / Willpower** roll at TN 30; GMs are free to adjust this based on good roleplaying.
- Challenge him to single combat; default will be to the Death, though a successful **Courtier Manipulation / Awareness** (TN 25) will allow for Down instead. If the challenge is met and failed and the rest of the party reneges on the agreement, all of the ones that do suffer Honor Loss of H0.
- A PC can offer an exchange for the articles that Zecchou has claimed with a **Commerce / Intelligence** roll at TN 25; he will only accept wakizashi in trade, however (they are the hardest thing for him to find on his own and he knows just enough about samurai to understand the value they represent), and he will only exchange one item at a time. Losing one's wakizashi in this fashion will result in the samurai in question

losing it from their kit permanently; it also earns them two full Ranks of Infamy (argained the physical embodiment of their Soul to a Monster). The wakizashi cannot be purchased again with the Extra Equipment Favor; instead, both ranks of Infamy (for a total of 4 points) must be bought off using the Favor table before the samurai's Lord will see fit to supply them with a replacement.

The PC's are likely to fight the Ogre; his stats are in the Appendix. He starts 50' from the PCs. He has access to a few traps he can trigger with a Free Action with a series of levers (remnants of the time of the Nezumi) and will use them as follows:

If Alert: Round 1; if not, Round 2: Grease Flow. From the sides of the floor, an oily substance will pour across the floor between himself and the PC's. It cause Unstable Terrain; it is also highly flammable, so if anyone has Fires of Purity, it will light up on contact.

The Next Round: Kick over the Brazier (if the oil isn't already burning from PC actions); This will cause 2k2 damage to anyone who has come into contact with the oil. This burns for 2 Rounds.

NOTE: If it looks likely a PC is going to die, have Hasegawa burst in to take the blow. He will have heard the commotion and come to protect his charges one last time.

Conclusion

Once the players have the Mantle, they can return untroubled to Shiro Hiruma. This will take three days, but the aura of the nemuranai will effectively remove the need to have Jade. They will be met there by Kuni Tokimasa, who will receive them warmly. IF they have the Mantle, they will be hosted as heroes; if they have returned with information about it, they will instead get to watch a recovery force assemble and march out the following morning.

IF THE MOD IS OUT OF ORDER:

As the tale is finished, Chise Sanako nods her satisfaction and puts down her brush. "Arigatou. It will be recorded. Thank you for your service."

Behind her, the Kitsu's voice finally dies and she slumps, weary, her duty done.

If any PC's died, they will now go back to wherever they were sent by Emma-O.

If any PC's hit Taint 1.0+, they will be provided a fresh dose of Jade Petal Tea and escorted, politely, out of the temple.

The End

Rewards for Completing the Adventure

Surviving the Module:	1 exp
Good Roleplaying:	+1 exp
Reclaimed the Jade Mantle:	+1 exp
Successfully Returned an Updated Map to the Crab:	+1 exp
Total Possible Experience:	4 exp

Favors

As long as the party returns with the location of the Mantle, if not the Mantle itself, they gain one Favor.

If the party successfully finds and contains the Oni in the Crumbled Temple and turns it in, they will gain a Favor.

Honor

There are no specific module Honor gains.

The GM may grant up to 2 extra points of Honor to a PC for actions not detailed in the module, though no PC should gain more than 2 points in this fashion.

Glory

Successfully returning the Mantle of the Jade Champion gains the PCs G10 Glory.

Returning with the knowledge of the Mantle but without engaging is G5.

Allies and Enemies

If the PC's return with the updated map and knowledge of the Mantle, they gain Kuni Tokimasa as an Ally (2 Inf/1 Dev). If they successfully return the Mantle itself, is Devotion is instead 2. If you already had him, Devotion goes up by 1.

GM Reporting

- 1) Did the party return the Mantle?
- 2) Did the party find the Ekitairo no Oni?
- 3) Did Hiruma Hasegawa survive?

The GM must report this information by 6/15/2019 for it to have storyline effect

Player Handout: Shadowlands Cheat Sheet

Hiruma Tech: Hiruma Bushi and Hiruma Scout techniques apply to ALL matters related to doubling the point value of jade except in matters of Jade Oil. If there are not enough Hiruma abilities to cover the whole party (a real possibility), the PCs need to designate which PCs are being assisted by said Hiruma. This can be changed once per day.

Jade: Each Finger of Jade is equal to 10 points.

Jade must be tracked carefully. If someone is out of jade, in any instance where the list below indicates a point being spent, the PC in question instead gains a point of Shadowlands Taint if they cannot make a Raw **Earth** roll vs the TN assigned (default 10).

- Jade Oil: A single 'point' of Jade makes one application of Jade Oil for a weapon.
 - Making Oil requires either a **Craft: Weaponsmithing, Medicine, or Craft: Poison / Intelligence** roll at TN 15 and ten minutes.
 - Application of Jade Oil to a weapon is a Complex Action.
 - Against a creature with Invulnerability, the first hit with a coated weapon does full damage; the second does half, the third does quarter, and after that the dose is gone.
 - Any unused dose of Jade Oil on a weapon which is not used by the end of combat is lost as soon as the weapon is properly put away, with the exception of Arrows.
- Taint Prevention
 - Simply being in the Shadowlands slowly eats through Jade. Each day spent in Tainted areas will use up one point.
 - Injuries in the Shadowlands, if caused by a Tainted being, can spread the affliction. Any injury which causes more than 10 points of damage (after Void and Reduction) uses up a point.
 - Properly prepared rations from the Empire are safe enough, but if supplies run out and one must scavenge, powdered jade can be used to purify water. Each meal uses a point.

Magic

- Rarity of kami: Because kami are so rare, casting any spells that are not maho costs a raise.
- Friendly Kami: Friendly kami are at risk of being corrupted, just like anything else. If a shugenja uses their assistance and fails the roll by 10 or more, the kami is turned into a kansen. This cannot be Honor rolled.
- Wrong spirit: Insufficient attention and focus may result in a shugenja inadvertently working with a kansen instead of a kami.
 - Any Spell Casting Roll that fails by 10 or more ALWAYS results in a Taint Roll; jade cannot prevent this.
 - A shugenja may choose to spend a point of jade to ensure the spirit they call is pure; this prevents any failure consequence. This MUST BE DECLARED BEFORE THE ROLL IS MADE.
- Maho: Anyone (not just shugenja) who dares to cast maho in the Shadowlands will have a very easy time.
 - All maho spellcasting rolls get two Free Raises.
 - Anyone can learn maho from the local kansen with a **Spellcraft / Void** roll at TN (15 + 5 x level of spell). Your maximum level of spell is determined by the Ring you wish to use. Taking this option will require notification to the Admins.
- Invulnerability: Many Shadowlands Creatures have various degrees of Invulnerability. This can be defeated by the following:
 - Direct magic damage ignores Invulnerability, unless otherwise stated.
 - Non-weapon nemuranai can be used as Improvised Weapons in a pinch; use the Jujutsu skill. They only do 1k1 damage and will be destroyed if they cause 20+ damage in a single hit (before Reduction)
- Meishodo: Amulet magic does not count as calling on the kami.
- Prepared Magic: Things like Tamori potions, Yogo Wards, and pre-cast spells like Silent Waters do not have the casting issues, unless cast/created in the Shadowlands.

Recovery

- Void and Spell slots do not automatically recover from sleep, though the former can be restored by Meditation.
- Natural Healing does not occur in the Shadowlands.