

Caught Among Thieves

by Alex Jacobs

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

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Investigation, Travel, Combat, Underworld
Part Two of “The Books of the Elements”

An ancient artifact is stolen as two criminal organizations feud.

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

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

Adventure Background and Summary

The module begins *in media res* with the players attacked by pirates while trapped in a storm at sea. During the battle the pirates capture a valuable artifact, the Book of Earth, and the players are tasked with retrieving it. Locating the Book requires them to delve into the underworld of a lawless port in the Islands of Silk and Spice in order to secure an invitation to a nefarious, underground martial arts tournament. At the tournament the players will make contact with a powerful but mysterious crime lord who is in fact the heir of a disgraced sect of tattooed monks. Hopefully the players will retrieve the Book of Earth but the monk escapes to continue his vile plans.

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, taking note of any of the following:

- Yoritomo Shugenja School
- PCs with a focus on unarmed combat – 5 or more Ranks of the Jujutsu Skill, Hands of Stone, or certain Schools (Togashi Tattooed Monk, Hida Pragmatist, etc.)

News from the Empire

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

Inactivity

Time passes, and though the PCs' deeds will earn them a reputation, the Empire is a large place and lasting fame is a long-term goal not easy to achieve. **Each PC loses one point 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 5 + (5x Taint Rank). If a character is growing close to being Lost (Shadowlands Taint Rank 4.5+), it is recommended that the player have another PC ready to replace them.

Crafting

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

Preparation Techniques

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

Ronin Survival

Life is difficult for ronin in the Empire at the best of times. PC ronin are no exception to this. At the start of the module, a PC ronin must roll **Hunting (Survival) / Stamina** at a TN of 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

The module begins in the middle of an action scene. As such, the GM may wish to have players introduce themselves prior to beginning the scene. This should be a brief character description and a summary of what shipboard travel with that character has been like.

The players are aboard the Crab vessel *Hachi's Favor*, traveling from an appointment in Crab lands to the Imperial City when they are caught in a storm. They have time for only brief actions before they make contact with the vessel ahead.

Thunder booms and waves crash. You're flung against the sides of the ship as the storm tosses your kobune to-and-fro across the sea. There is the groan of wood as the ship crests a wave then again crashes down into the trough below. Kaiu Tomatsu, the ship's captain, shouts orders to his men as they struggle to retain control of the vessel in the face of Suitengu's wrath. Rain beats into your face and over the sound of its tattoo you hear the watchmen shout, "Sails! Dead ahead!"

Hachi's Favor is a relatively small ship, especially compared to the larger craft used for the major crossing to the Ivory Kingdoms. Kobune generally stay within sight of land (though the storm has diminished visibility as well as moving the vessel away from the coast), and do not have decks "below" the surface as many players may assume. Instead, there is a quarterdeck at the aft of the ship used for storage of delicate cargo (and samurai passengers). This structure is not even remotely comfortable, but is somewhat better than sleeping on deck with the sailors. If any of the PCs are not on deck, the ship's captain will call for everyone to come out into the rain.

The storm makes many tasks more difficult. The GM should put Appendix 2: Weather Effects in the middle of the table for everyone to use as reference.

The approaching vessel is noticeably larger than Hachi's Favor, and its deck swarms with activity. The incessant wind and driving rain toss your ship, and the captain shouts from the helm, "I need all hands to keep this tub afloat! You'll need to handle that!" A sharp gust of wind slews the kobune about suddenly, and the Kaiu struggles to keep the craft from capsizing.

As the ship bears down on the PCs, they each have a chance to take a single action. Some examples may include:

Controlling the Weather: The storm is caused by Yoritomo Ieasu aboard the pirate ship bearing down on them. If the players have an ability to affect weather (i.e. a Yoritomo-trained shugenja in their number) they must make an opposed **School Rank / Water** roll against Ieasu. Success reduces the mechanical effects of the storm (reduce to Moderate Terrain) and reduces the TNs of environmental effects during the battle by 5.

Steadying the Ship: Assisting the ship's crew in sailing Hachi's Favor requires a **Sailing / Agility** rolls at TN 25 (storm penalty included). This may be done as a cooperative roll with other PCs assisting. If successful, all players gain a Free Raise on all rolls to resist any weather effects.

Brace for Impact: A player may use their action to steady themselves against the storm. No roll is required. The player gains a Free Raise to use against any one weather effect during the battle.

Observing the Other Ship: A PC who makes an **Investigation / Perception** roll (TN 20, storm penalty included) will see crewmen with weapons and boarding ropes ready aboard the ship. They do not display any flag, mon, or other identifying characteristic: pirates. If they roll a 30 or higher, they will see a robed figure standing at the prow of the enemy ship, head bowed in concentration – and a hulking figure standing nearby ready to guard them.

Signaling the Other Ship: The other ship does not respond to overtures.

Opening Fire: Though the other ship is too far away to hit accurately, a ranged attack with an appropriate Skill (at TN 20, storm penalty included) or spell will delay the enemy boarding party, giving all PCs a +5 bonus to Initiative for the combat. Raises may increase this bonus by +5 per Raise.

Gathering Weapons: PCs may gather weapons without a roll. It should be noted that most people would not carry their weapons (especially large, bulky, or valuable weapons) on an open deck, and that most sailors prefer to use weapons that can easily be replaced if they're lost.

Donning Armor: Unless the PC is already wearing their armor, they will not have it available; players who insist on it should be reminded that wearing armor during a sea voyage is not usually done by experienced sailors. (There is no roll to swim in armor; the roll is to get out of the armor before drowning.)

After each PC has a reasonable chance to react or prepare, the enemy ship engages.

The enemy vessel pulls alongside *Hachi's Favor* with a grinding of wood under strain. Several of their number jump across, carrying boarding lines to hold the two ships together, while others rush across the open deck toward the quarterdeck. Still a third group offers a loud bellow as they swing across, weapons bared, and the battle is joined!

Unnamed Pirates

Lanky and weather-worn, they are clad in little more than rough breeches and tattoos, but carry their kama with competence and move across the pitching deck with ease.

Air 2 Earth 2 Fire 2 Water 3 Void 2

Honor 1.2 Agility 3 Status 0 Glory 0

Initiative: 3k2 **Attack:** 6k3 (kama, Complex)

Armor TN: 15 (20 with weather penalty) **Damage:** 3k2 (kama)

Reduction: 0

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

School/Rank: none/1

Skills: Athletics 5, Battle 2, Commerce 1, Defense 3, Jiujutsu 3, Knives 3, Sailing 3

Mastery Abilities: ignore movement penalties from Terrain; +1k0 unarmed damage; no off-hand penalties for knives

NPC Tactics: The pirates will fight a holding action, keeping the ships together and the PCs at bay, until their comrades discover the Book of Earth, at which point they will bring it back to their ship and depart. Each group is detailed below:

Boarding Party

There is one pirate for each PC (including noncombatants). They will engage with the players and try to impede any player who attempts to go around them to free the ship or stop the search party. The pirates are not fighting to kill but to escape with their loot and their lives; a player who is not a threat (Injured or below) will be ignored in favor of more threatening PCs (unless the Injured PC proves to still be a threat).

Sailors

Six sailors (with the same stats, if needed) will hold the lines keeping their ship to *Hachi's Favor*. These sailors assume Defense Stance but will not engage in combat. If one of the sailors is killed, one of the Boarding Party pirates will leave combat to take up the line. If one of the boarding ropes is severed (TN 25, must inflict at least 5 damage with a slashing weapon) the sailor will instead join the boarding party as a combatant and attack whoever severed the rope.

Search Party

Six searchers (use stat blocks for pirates, if needed) race across the ship and into the hold looking for something. Keeping up with the search party will require an adjusted Water Ring of 3 (keeping in mind terrain penalties). A player who is able to stay with them and makes a roll using an appropriate Skill (TN 20) to impede their search gains G4 for demonstrating intelligent battle tactics. The search party will ultimately be successful, but the GM should let the player know that this will have a beneficial effect later in the module. These PCs automatically come to Otojiro's attention during the Island section.

If there are PCs in the quarterdeck, there should be extra searchers as well – at least one for each such PC. While they are primarily focused on searching for their target, they will defend themselves. Noncombatant PCs should be kept at bay, and will not be attacked

unless they provoke it. Combat in the cramped confines of the is difficult for most weapons – anyone using Medium-sized weapons adds +5 to the TN of their attacks, and anyone attempting to use Large weapons adds +10.

Pirate Vessel

Players may want to try to board the enemy vessel, where Yoritomo Ieasu is on the foredeck controlling the weather. A ranged attack on him will distract him from the weather but is not sufficient to end the storm. If a PC tries to jump over to the other vessel, a dark skinned man in strange clothing violently kicks them back to their own ship (this is Dhruv and he will reappear later in the module). They take 5k2 Wounds and are Prone on the deck of *Hachi's Favor*.

Weather And Other Effects

The environment presents a significant challenge during this fight; Player Handout #2 details the mechanics and should be available for the table to read. Additionally, during the Reactions Stage of each round, the GM may select (or roll a d10 to determine) and apply one of the following effects. Terrain penalties will apply to rolls. Alternately, if the PCs gain the upper hand particularly quickly, Ieasu can cripple *Hachi's Favor* before the Book of Earth is found (see “A Crippling Blow”, below).

1-2 – The Crash of Wood: The storm slams the two ships together. Everyone in the battle must make an **Athletics / Reflexes** roll (TN 15) or be knocked prone (core book, p. 89).

3-4 – Rising Waves: A large wave crashes against *Hachi's Favor*. All combatants must make a **[Weapon Skill] / Strength** roll (TN 15) or the weapon they're wielding is knocked loose and falls into the sea. If a player loses their katana or wakizashi they lose D2 Honor.

5-6 – Rain Slicked Deck: The deck is becoming slippery with rain and blood. All combatants must make an **Athletics / Reflexes** roll (TN 15) or suffer a -5 penalty to their Armor TN for this round.

7-8 – The Motion of the Ocean: The constant waves and tumultuous movement is becoming too much. All combatants must make an **Earth** roll (TN 10) or become nauseated (treat as Fatigued, core book, p.89) for the duration of the combat.

9-0 – Suitengu's Wrath: A near tsunami washes over the ship. All combatants must make an **Athletics / Agility** roll (TN 10) or be knocked over the side of the ship.

In the Drink:

If an NPC is knocked overboard (by the weather or a PC), they are removed from the combat. If a PC is knocked over they must make an **Athletics / Strength** roll (TN 20) to swim each round in the storm-tossed sea or start drowning (see core book p. 83). With a Raise on the roll the PC can get back to the boat, though climbing aboard requires another round and another roll to climb aboard. PCs may, of course, assist each other and the GM should adjudicate appropriate means of aid (tossing a rope, etc.) by giving appropriate bonuses. PCs in armor simply sink, but may cut themselves loose with a Complex Action and an **Athletics / Agility** roll (TN 15, 25 for heavy armor); it should be noted that they can only hold their breath for a number of Rounds equal to their Stamina before they start suffering the effects of drowning.

Knockback:

Throwing enemies over the side of the ship is treated as a Knockdown Maneuver (core book, p. 87) that sends the target back 5 feet instead of knocking them Prone. Additional Raises may be made to increase the distance (+5' per Raise).

A Crippling Blow

After three rounds (or when it seems like the players have the upper hand), the following event occurs:

The storm raging above the ships darkens, taking on a malevolent aura. A bolt of white light shatters the heavens, causing all but one robed figure standing at the prow of the enemy ship to flinch away from the fury of the heavens. A moment later, there is another crack as the mast of your kobune splinters and falls to the deck in a tangle of lines and sails.

All PCs on deck must make a **Defense / Reflexes** (TN 20) roll to dodge the falling mast and sail. Those who fail are Entangled (can take no actions other than a Strength roll at TN 15 to free themselves) by the lines and sails. If they do not roll a 15, they take 3k2 damage from the heavy wood of the spars as well. The penalties for the storm conditions are included, and a kind and generous GM may allow substitution of

Athletics for low-rank tables (or keep low dice on the damage roll). The purpose of this is to cover the pirates' retreat, after all, not to kill PCs.

The Close of Battle

Lightning flashes again, and you see one of the pirates coming up from below deck, clutching a small package to his chest. "We have it!" he shouts, jumping aboard his own ship. Then the sailors aboard the pirate vessel cut the lines holding the ships together; wind billows in the sail of the enemy ship and it begins to pull away, abandoning their comrades still in the fight.

The battle may continue for a few more rounds but the pirates aboard Hachi's Favor will have little heart for it and will accept an offer to surrender if it seems like the battle is lost.

Aftermath

As the pirate vessel disappears into the storm, the swirling clouds follow them and the maimed vessel the PCs are on breaks out into the sun once more. Unfortunately, the shore is out of sight, sending the sailors into a near panic at their loss of bearings or guiding landmarks.

Hachi's Favor is in no condition to pursue the pirates. A **Craft: Shipbuilding / Intelligence** check (TN 20) roll can be made by the PCs to help repair the *Hachi's Favor* (other skills, such as Craft: Carpentry or Craft: Engineering may be substituted at the GM's discretion but increase the TN by +5), but this is a task that takes a matter of hours, not minutes.. Failure means that the crew performs the task entirely themselves, but it takes an extra day.

The captain, Kaiu Tomatsu, gathers the PCs to explain the cargo that was being carried and request their assistance in its recovery:

The captain of *Hachi's Favor* is a burly man in his mid-forties, grizzled from a lifetime at sea but now bowed by a deep sense of shame. "Samurai-sans, I must ask your help. I was tasked with a great duty, bringing a sacred book that has been in my family for two hundred years to the Imperial City for study. Now I have shamed myself by allowing its capture."

Tomatsu will explain that the *Hachi's Pride* was carrying the Book of Earth, a sacred artifact from the reign of Toturi II. Players may make a **Lore:**

Elements / Intelligence or **Lore: History / Intelligence** roll (TN 25) to know about the book (Tomatsu does not know more than that the book was sacred and very important). In the mid-twelfth century, despite being the heir of Shinsei, the prophet Rosoku chose not leave the Empire as all his ancestors had done. Instead he issued a series of six challenges to spur the Empire towards enlightenment. The Book of Earth was awarded to "the smith who crafts a helmet that can shatter a thousand blades." This challenge was completed by Kaiu Sugimoto when he persuaded the Badger Clan to focus on an oni attack instead of launching a needless war against the Yobanjin who were also aligned against the oni. By using his own crafted helmet he shattered the map table where the officers planned their strategy. The Book had disappeared from the historical record since then, but apparently has stayed in the care of the Kaiu family.

Tomatsu was given the task of transporting the Book to Otsan Uchi by Kaiu Okasha, the Kaiu family daimyo. It was intended to be secret, but a handful of other Crab knew about it – as far as Tomatsu is aware, they should have been trustworthy, but he has no explanation for how the pirates knew about the Book. He will promise the PCs that they will have the gratitude of the Crab if they recover the Book so it can go to Otsan Uchi.

In addition to the chance to earn favor from the Crab, the players should realize they are honor-bound to retrieve the Book. Leaving it with the pirates is tantamount to blasphemy, and while they were not the Book's guardians the shame of its loss would still follow them. Players who refuse to help retrieve the book lose D0 Honor for failing the virtue of Duty, gain five points of Infamy, and are out of the rest of the module – they earn one experience point.

Tomatsu will set a course for the nearest safe harbor, which is Distant Turtle City. An appropriate **Lore** (Mantis, Tortoise, Gaijin Culture, Underworld, or even just Commerce) / **Intelligence** roll (TN 20), identifies Distant Turtle City as a Tortoise city but one that is largely controlled by the Mantis; located on an island just west of the Mantis isles, it is used as a way-point for merchant ships traveling to Balishnimpur in the Ivory Kingdoms and as such a great deal of strange material (read: contraband) often passes through it. PCs who have been to the Ivory Kingdoms likely have not been to this port, because its focus is entirely

commercial and almost no samurai travelers depart from it without compelling business reasons.

Any captured pirates are despondent about being abandoned by their ship. They will be reluctant to talk – they fully expect to be tortured and executed, and the best they dare hope for is a quick death – but they can provide some information. In general, they can be approached with compassion or intimidation. Soothing roleplay and **Sincerity** or **Courtier / Awareness** can get them to confess their crimes without torture, meaning that they can be given a painless execution; alternately, a brutal PC can browbeat them into giving details on their shipmates with **Intimidation / Willpower**. (The TN of these rolls is 20.) They will not lie to the PCs, but failure on the roll results in no information. They also don't have a lot of it to share:

- Their ship, the *Unnamed*, was hired by a man called Otojiro to steal a book the *Hachi's Favor* was carrying.
- They do not know how Otojiro found about the book and none of them have ever seen him – he only dealt with their captain, Yoshi.
- They had a description of what they were looking for, and were under orders to take nothing else to limit the chance of being caught later.
- Otojiro sent a pair of men with the ship to ensure the Book was taken, but neither of them were involved in the boarding party and the crew stayed away from them as much as possible. They can only describe them as “one was creepy and the other was big”, and indicate that the two seemed to feel like they were superior to the pirate crew.

It is worth note that the *Unnamed* is not part of the Bladed Hands, though the captain was hoping to join; the pirates have no knowledge of this, however.

Players may try to figure out where the pirates would go. Appropriate rolls (Battle / Intelligence to suss out a likely strategy, Sailing [Navigation] / Intelligence to know what's in the area) will suggest that the pirates would aim for a safe harbor where they could repair their ship and/or hand off the book. Distant Turtle City is the most likely option.

Part One: Distant Turtle City Or It Had to Be Pirates

Reaching Distant Turtle City

With the mast damaged, it will take three days to reach Distant Turtle City. If the players help make repairs on the ship, the time is reduced by a day. If the players can make a cooperative **Sailing (Navigation) / Intelligence** roll (TN 25) they can also reduce this time by a day.

After being nearly lost at sea the sight of land is welcome beyond belief. Distant Turtle City may not be one of the great coastal cities, but the harbor is active and the market district is a bustle of activity, visible even from the deck of the ship.

Hachi's Favor pulls up to a pier, as directed by a harbor pilot, to be greeted by a Tortoise samurai of some importance, judging by the quality of his clothes and the guards standing idly by. Captain Tomatsu and the harbormaster have a few words (an **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** roll at TN 20 allows the PC to notice a quick exchange of coins as the Crab pays extra for preferential treatment).

The Kaiu shipmaster gestures to you as you step off the ship. “This is Kasuga Yasashi, the harbormaster of Distant Turtle City. He wishes to explain some of the matters of the city to you, and will see to it that your chop is delivered to the city's governor.” Tomatsu's eyes, shadowed by strain, turn to his vessel. “I must tend to the *Pride*; I trust you to see to the matter at hand.” With a short nod, the captain leaves you with the somewhat bored Tortoise bureaucrat.

The harbormaster is a short, portly samurai with a noticeable limp (he uses a staff for support) who avoids bright light (he wears smoked lenses and a wide-brimmed jingasa to shield his eyes from the sun). He expresses no interest in what brought the PCs to the city, and somewhat perfunctorily explains that Distant Turtle City has a strict policy on violence. Weapons are prohibited in the city and must be left aboard ship, including daisho. Players may object that this is a violation of etiquette, which is entirely correct – Yasashi simply explains blandly that it is the custom of the city and order of the governor. (Curious PCs may roll **Investigation / Awareness** at a TN of 25

to realize this is a partial truth – Yasashi is telling the truth, but there is more to it.) The harbormaster does not gloat about it, nor particularly throw his weight around, but he can keep the PCs on the ship by dint of having guards at his disposal if they do not accede to the local custom in some fashion.

Players who do not want to leave their weapons have the following options:

A samurai's word: Yasashi will trust the word of any samurai who swears not to use the weapons they carry. He makes no distinction or excuse for self-defense, as no one else in the city has weapons to threaten them either. A samurai who breaks this promise loses D1 Honor.

Peace-Bonding: Swords and similar weapons may be tied to their saya with an elaborate knot. Untying or cutting through the knot will require a Complex Action and is tantamount to breaking one's word as above.

Concealment: Many weapons, such as knives, lend themselves to concealment. Players may make a Sleight of Hand / Agility roll (TN 25) to hide a Small weapon on their person. Failure results in Yasashi giving them a small smirk, but he will not raise an issue over knives or the like. Attempting to hide a larger weapon in some fashion raises the difficulty to 30, and will result in an objection from the harbormaster.

Yasashi will not make an issue over what counts as a weapon compared to a tool (i.e. walking staff, knives, etc.). He will be quite forgiving in this regard and reluctant to make an issue with unknown samurai, especially a samurai from a Great Clan.

If asked about pirates, Yasashi will reluctantly admit that there have been pirates operating out of the area, “a new group calling themselves the Bladed Hand.” He has not been able to stop them, but suggests that perhaps the local Emerald Magistrate, Tsuruchi Fumihiko, can help them. (If asked why a harbormaster would be involved in stopping pirates, he shrugs nonchalantly. “My position is one of great responsibility and importance to my clan, and I take it quite seriously.” This non-answer is as much as he will share until he is more certain of the PCs.)

At this time Yasashi will be polite but not particularly helpful. He does not know the PCs and is reluctant

to make enemies until he learns more. In fact, he is concerned that they may even be members of the Bladed Hand and working with Otojiro. PCs who are particularly concerned about his attitude may roll **Investigation / Awareness** (TN 20) to realize that he is wary of them and reserving judgment until he knows more.

Investigation

There are several ways the PCs may conduct their investigation. The most obvious are detailed below, but any reasonable avenue ought to be allowed to either gain information, direct them to one of the specified locations, or otherwise gain Yasashi's attention.

Ideally, this section should not take terribly long. The PCs need the opportunity to gather information, and their progress will bring them to Kasuga Yasashi's attention, which will allow them access to the pirates' island. This should give the players a chance to learn some things that can give them some context for what they will be facing, but ultimately, this part of the adventure is all about moving them on toward the next, more exciting part on the island.

Rumors

There is a certain tendency among cosmopolitan samurai like the PCs to begin any entry to a new city with inquiries among the locals. This is a fairly simple and straight-forward first step, though the information to be gained in this fashion will be determined as much by who the PCs choose to speak with as by how well they roll. The usual **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll applies to speaking with other samurai of the city – almost entirely Mantis, with a healthy minority of Tortoise. Asking among the merchants would be a **Commerce / Awareness** roll, and trying to speak with ronin or criminal elements requires **Lore: Underworld / Awareness** (note that this does involve using a Low Skill and will cost the PC D3 Honor). These rolls may be made Cooperative if the players wish, but each roll requires about four to six hours.

Courtier:

- **TN 10:** Distant Turtle City is a major commercial hub for trade with the Ivory Kingdoms, dealing with the lower-level, basic sort of deals that actually make it work. As such, it is largely ignored by the rest of the Empire

despite its wealth. Almost all of the samurai in the city are either Mantis or Tortoise, with barely a handful of Crab and Crane in residence.

- **TN 15:** There is a thriving black market economy in the city, dealing with various illegal goods to ports all over the Empire. Previous Emerald Magistrates have turned a blind eye to it, though the most recent appointee, Tsuruchi Fumihiro, has been somewhat more stringent. Even he has been unable to shut it all down due to its prevalence, and has chosen to focus on the more dangerous or violent crimes associated with the trade.
- **TN 20:** The PCs are not the only members of other clans how have arrived in the city recently. No one seems certain why, but a few Scorpion mon have been seen. There is even word that a Togashi tattooed monk has been helping the peasants.
- **TN 25:** Though not an official event, rumors have spread that a large martial arts tournament is going to be held in the area. The little information on it indicates that it might be somewhat less than savory, but aficionados of unarmed combat and gamblers alike have taken an interest.
- **TN 30:** Though the city is technically a Tortoise holding, most of its affairs are run by the Mantis due to their sheer numbers. However, the most powerful samurai in the city is actually the harbormaster, Kasuga Yasashi. He is said (though those who say it do so very carefully) to have contacts ranging from the leadership of his clan to the criminals of his city.

Commerce:

- **TN 10:** There is a thriving black market economy in Distant Turtle City. All manner of illicit goods make their way through the port, which sometimes causes problems with criminal elements trying to maximize their profits.
- **TN 15:** A local fireman gang runs the majority of illegal activities in the city, though they do manage to keep things generally peaceful. They are known to act swiftly when either fire or dangerous criminals threaten the safety of the city. There has been more violence in recent months, with the arrival of a rival gang of pirates. They operate out of a gambling house called the Lucky Cricket.

- **TN 20:** Word of a large martial arts tournament has been making its way around the markets. Wealthy merchants with an interest in gambling have been looking forward to the entertainment, and some are even talking about using it to look for guards. The organizer of the event, a mystery man named Otojiro, has been very careful about who has been invited, and tickets are at a premium – some have been sold for nearly a hundred koku!
- **TN 25:** Kasuga Yasashi keeps a close eye on the markets of the city, and each and every shipment that passes through the port is overseen by him. He has, as a result, gained a great deal of wealth and influence, and nearly all of the merchants work with him in order to ensure their goods arrive where they are supposed to.

Underworld:

- **TN 10:** The main trade of the city is smuggling, both illegal goods from the Ivory Kingdoms and domestic goods that are passing without excise taxes. A local fireman gang (the Hungry Moons, though most people just call them “the firemen gang”) controls most of it, though they’ve recently been fighting a new group trying to muscle in.
- **TN 15:** The new pirate gang is called the “Bladed Hand”, and their leader is a man named Otojiro. Word is that he is always recruiting, and has managed to gather a fairly large group. They are active along the shipping lanes, and most recently attacked a Crab ship (though whatever they took has not appeared on the black market).
- **TN 20:** Otojiro is sponsoring a tournament to be held at his gang’s island fortress. Distant Turtle City’s weapons-free policy has driven up interest in unarmed combat for years, and there are several rich merchants and even some worldly samurai who are involved.
- **TN 25:** Kasuga Yasashi is a powerful samurai in the city, and part of his power comes from the control he has over the Hungry Moons. Though not above a little intimidation or casual assault, he has mostly kept them working as a force for order in the city – to the benefit of everyone involved.
- **TN 30:** Otojiro is rumored to be something more than just a pirate lord, and has instilled an almost worshipful devotion in his followers. He is often

accompanied by a shugenja cast out of the Mantis and a large, dangerous gaijin warrior.

Seeking to pull on threads that are not detailed further (for example, looking for other clan samurai or trying to find specific merchants interested in the tournament) should just allow the players to make another roll that would provide more information. Doing so does involve spending more time, but does not increase the TN of the roll as they are approaching the problem from a more specific direction. The Dragon mentioned above is Togashi Inori, who will be on the ship with the PCs and her information can either wait until then or be presented to a particularly persistent PC at the GM's discretion.

Emerald Magistrate

The PCs may want to make contact with the local Emerald Magistrate, whether to report on the crime they witnessed, turn over prisoners, or to discover what information he may have on the pirates. Doing so does not require a great deal of effort; the magistrate can be found at his offices without significant effort.

Like much of the city, the offices of the Emerald Magistrate show signs of prosperity bordering on opulence. The chrysanthemum mon of Imperial service is blazoned everywhere in green splendor and the furnishings are quite comfortable. The magistrate himself proves to be a lean man in his early thirties, with prematurely graying hair tied into a topknot. "Welcome to Distant Turtle City... samurai." The almost imperceptible pause as his sharp eyes take in your mon and clothing is just short of an insult, though he accepts your status and moves on politely enough. "I am Tsuruchi Fumihoro, Emerald Magistrate of this city. What do you require of the Imperial Law?"

Tsuruchi Fumihoro is not what one would expect to find as a magistrate in a thriving commercial port city, but he is a very experienced investigator and a dedicated servant of the law. Though trained by his family, he has some experience on ship, and his recent appointment to Distant Turtle City was in response to the increased pirate activity in the area. Fumihoro is not usually inclined to turn a blind eye to smuggling, but has found himself dealing with the Bladed Hand too much to spare effort on cleaning up the "normal" corruption of the city. However, this

has made his relationship with Kasuga Yasashi very tense, and Fumihoro has had to deal with the harbormaster's political manipulations as well as Otojiro's deceptions enough in the last few months that he is not particularly welcoming of the PCs.

Tsuruchi Fumihoro is an established NPC, and PCs may have him as a Sworn Enemy or Ally. PCs who have him as an Ally will not be subject to suspicion of working for either of his enemies, while he will assume Sworn Enemies are – whether due to their own corruption or incompetence.

Fumihoro can provide useful information to the PCs, but will need to be convinced that the PCs are sincere in opposing both the firemen and the Bladed Hand. Doing so requires a **Sincerity / Awareness** roll; the TN for this is 20, but increases to 25 if they have already spoken with the Hungry Moons firemen gang (see the Gambling House, below). Either Sincerity or Deceit Emphasis will apply, depending on the player's story. Allies receive a Free Raise on this roll, and the TN is increased by 5 for Sworn Enemies.

Success gains the PCs information as though they had rolled a 25 on Lore: Underworld to learn about the criminal activities of the city. Fumihoro does not have any more specific information, though he does suggest that if they can get to the tournament, it would provide a good opportunity to approach the likeliest suspects to learn more.

Gambling House

The players may wish to see what they can learn from the firemen directly, if they have discovered that the gang uses the Lucky Cricket gambling house as their headquarters.

The sounds of rolling dice, of coins hitting the table, of the cries of winners' exultation and losers' despair, all of these wash over you as enter the Lucky Cricket, a gambling hall in the heart of Distant Turtle City. While you clearly don't fit in here, you don't attract any particular notice; everyone is too focused on the games and the coin they're winning and losing.

The people in here are all focused on their games. The PCs may roll **Games: Fortunes and Winds / Awareness** roll to gain information as though rolling Lore: Underworld; the gamblers will give the PCs information just so they will leave. Each roll costs 1

koku (though success returns the koku plus 1 additional) and failed rolls may be re-rolled so long as the PCs are willing to pay.

If the PCs want to speak with the firemen directly, they can look around or ask after them. Success on an **Investigation** or **Courtier / Awareness** roll (TN 20) will direct them to a corner booth with a trio of older, grizzled gangsters watch over the floor. The three men (Kaibun, Setsu, and Haru) were part of the Hungry Moons when they came to power nearly two decades ago and consolidated most of the city's crime under their watch. Their relationship with Kasuga Yasashi has served them (and him, and to be fair, the city) very well, and though they are wary of clan samurai, they are not as frightened of them or as aggressive as might be thought.

In fact, the trio of bosses will be fairly polite, for people that have no idea of actual manners. If the PCs are as accommodating, and indicate with a **Sincerity (Honesty) / Awareness** roll (TN 25), the leaders of the firemen will share all of the information in the Underworld and Commerce sections. (They will be careful in their description of their relationship with Yasashi, of course – they have no wish to implicate him in criminal undertakings and instead present it as “him directing us to trouble and away from samurai interests”, which is largely accurate.) Note that this is still consorting with criminals and highly-honorable PCs should feel a twinge of discomfort: D6 Honor loss.

They will also tell the PCs that they have been fighting the Bladed Hands as much because of the pirates' vicious business practices as due to concerns over territory. The Hungry Moons firemen gang is as much a neighborhood watch as a city-wide crime empire, and are invested in taking care of the peasants of the city in addition to making money off of them. They are still criminals (hence the above Honor loss) but they are relatively decent sorts for all that.

Naturally, they will inform the harbormaster of the PCs' interest...

Yasashi's Proposal

When the PCs have successfully beaten a TN of 25 on rolls to gain information at least three times (or spoke directly to the firemen bosses), they will be approached by Kasuga Yasashi, who will have

assessed them as useful and competent samurai he might be able to work with. (If, instead, they fail to uncover any leads and cannot move forward on their own, he will decide they would be excellent patsies that he can use.)

Yasashi is looking for someone capable who can help him take on Otojiro. While Yasashi's firemen and Otojiro's Bladed Hand have been fighting, Yasashi is not certain what Otojiro is up to. Is he a petty thug (who could be allied with), a master criminal (who would be a dangerous rival) or is he up to something far more nefarious? He will share his concerns with the PCs and explain that they have the opportunity to help him defend his city while recovering their stolen property. (Yasashi will have heard of the theft from rumors spread by the sailors on *Hachi's Pride*, and draw his own conclusions appropriately.)

If the PCs do not yet know about Otojiro's martial arts tournament, Yasashi will tell them about it. This will be a great opportunity to infiltrate the Bladed Hand's stronghold. Otojiro has given him permission to send a contingent to participate in and observe the tournament; Yasashi suspects this is Otojiro's way of both gauging his strength and creating an opportunity to undermine his supporters. If the players are willing to bring him whatever they can learn of Otojiro's plans, he can arrange for tickets and passage on one of the only vessels that knows the location of the base.

The event has been described as a tournament, so many bushi are interested in the glory that can accompany any martial endeavor. It is unarmed combat, which reduces the number of interested parties, but does not eliminate them all. Additionally, the prospect of gambling has attracted the interest of merchants and samurai who care about koku; and those who do not care where it comes from may well be looking to do business with Otojiro. Finally, Yasashi will mention that Otojiro is likely using the tournament to recruit followers that can operate in places like Distant Turtle City where weapons are not allowed or limited. (Ronin PCs would especially merit attention with this cover story in mind.)

While players may have reservations about consorting with criminals (and rightly so) nothing they're being asked to do is illegal or particularly dishonorable. Yasashi is not asking them to commit any crimes. The real test of honor, he points out, will be what they do once they discover what Otojiro is really up to. All but

the most idealistic samurai should find it acceptable to work with Yasashi, if it means recovering the Book of Earth.

If any of the PCs told the Emerald Magistrate that they wanted to work against the firemen, they will lose D6 Honor (only stringent adherence to bushido causes difficulties, as it is Fumihiro's duty and not specifically theirs).

Ultimately, while the PCs may be uncomfortable, they don't have a ready means of discovering the location of the island, and there is essentially no way to do so without putting Otojiro on alert. They need Yasashi's connections to get them on the trail of the Book of Earth, and while he is a selfish, venal samurai, his dedication to his duty and clan is as strong as his self-interest.

Part Two: Journey to the Island

Yasashi's sponsorship allows the players to travel aboard *Rinmaru's Dream*, a private pleasure boat, to the island of Futoji no Shima. The boat leaves from the main dock the next morning. It is a modestly-sized kobune in good repair. As with the city, weapons are discouraged; the captain, a jovial peasant named Juntaro, explains that they aren't appropriate for the celebration, but will be well-taken care of. Daisho are accepted, though expected to be peace-bound, but any other weapon must be concealed or left with a weaponsmith on the docks.

Several other competitors are traveling with the PCs:

Yasuki Kurao – A large sumai wrestler from the Crab. He is somewhat apprehensive around the PCs (though he will try to hide it) since he was the one who told Otojiro about the Book of Earth.

Togashi Inori – A Dragon monk with an Empire-wide reputation as a Hero of the People. She has previously appeared in CIT11: Ring of Air, and it is possible a PC may have her as an Ally or Sworn Enemy from character creation.

Shinzo – A ronin who works as muscle for anyone who will hire him. Shinzo is a dour, unpleasant man used to threatening others to get his way.

Yoritomo Tamaki – The Mantis samurai is already passed out on plum wine and is snoring openly on the side of the deck. She is actually a very skilled drunken boxer but has had a string of bad fortune lately and needs to rebuild her family's finances.

Once introductions are made the boat gets underway. The captain welcomes the everyone aboard and a crew member approaches with plum wine and sake for the players to enjoy. A samisen player provides music as the boat takes on a very festive atmosphere.

Inori's Attention

Shortly after the ship pulls away, Togashi Inori will approach the PCs, gathering them together away from the rest of the competitors if possible without attracting attention.

The tattooed woman, thin robes leaving her arms exposed to the ocean air, bows deeply to you. The designs swirling from her wrists to shoulders almost seem to move as she regards you with calm eyes. "I have a feeling you do not match the other... guests we are traveling with, samurai-samas. Something tells me that you are, like me, looking for more than a bit of material glory or wealth. Would you be willing to share your purpose with me?"

Inori is not suspicious of the PCs' motivations, and particularly if there are any high-Honor PCs, she will note that they seem quite different from what she expected to find. She is genuinely wanting to help the PCs out if what they are doing is worthy, and hopes to have their help in dealing with Otojiro. She has been looking into his affairs for some time now, having encountered tales of his deeds in the Crab lands, and has been hunting for a way to stop him.

If the PCs do not wish to work with her, she still thinks that they are likely doing something that will relate to her self-appointed task and

If the PCs are willing to work with her, she opens up to them a little:

"What they say of him rouses some instinct in me, that he needs to be opposed. I have heard claims that he has mystical abilities of some kind, and that he is a significant threat on his own. With a large force of ruthless criminals at his disposal, he could be a danger to more than just a few shipping lanes."

Inori genuinely does not know what has caught her attention in this regard, though she almost casually dismisses it as her affinity for being in the right place at the right time to stop terrible people from hurting others. Whether that is to do with her Dragon tattoos giving her a connection to a greater purpose or just sheer coincidence, she does not know (or particularly care).

Inori will be happy to train with any of the PCs who wish; she expects to compete in the tournament purely to justify her presence on the island while she investigates Otojiro, and does not care too much about victory. Doing so will give them a bonus of +5 to the total of their roll during the qualifying round of the tournament.

If there are no PCs with any significant skill at unarmed combat, Inori will offer to fight for them should they wish it. All she asks in exchange is to spend a bit of time in meditation with them on their own strength; interested PCs may make a Skill Roll using any Skill and their Void Ring to explain what it is that they do and why they do it. This can be another Bugei Skill, like Kenjutsu, or a Social Skill like Courtier; shugenja are likely to rely on Lore: Theology (though at a low-ranked table, a kind GM may allow Spellcraft instead for less-pious and more-direct shugenja). Success against a TN of 25 should be noted, and as many PCs as wish to participate may do so.

Clouds

The rest of the trip takes another day. Kuraō will try and assess what brought the players to the tournament (and where they are with their investigation). Tamaki, once she wakes, will try to figure out who among the PCs will be competing in the tournament and what their strengths and weaknesses are.

Dinner is an unusually luxurious affair for shipboard cuisine. It consists of rice balls with bits of meat, fruit, and nuts that have been wrapped in large tropical leaves before roasting. While it is served cold, it is far better than what most anyone would expect to eat at sea.

The next morning the sun dawns as the ship is sailing into a large fog bank:

Ahead of you is an enormous fog cloud, miles across. The sun, though almost a hand over the horizon, hasn't managed to burn off any of the mist. The captain, seeing your worried expression, just grins and orders more sail as the ship enters the the gray.

The fog is actually created by Yoritomo Ieasu, Otojiro's shugenja, to hide the island of Futoji no Shima. Though the fog makes the location obvious to anyone who cares to search, there are barely-submerged reefs and corals that can ground a ship that doesn't know the exact approach (to make matters worse, much of the aquatic life is fire coral that burns anyone who touches it so even swimming in is not an option).

Part Three: Welcome to Futoji no Shima

The fog proves to be an effective barrier for nearly an hour's sail through the reef-broken waters, before the ship breaks out into open waters once more a few hundred yards off a small tropical island.

As the ship settles into the docks there is a welcome reception to greet you. Scantly-clad women come forward with leis of flowers, while servants push cups of sweet plum wine into your hands. Men without weapons, but clearly guards, escort a woman in a richly-appointed kimono to the ship's gangway as you debark.

“Welcome to Futoji no Shima,” she announces. “I am Kasuga Chimei. Otojiro bids you welcome and asks you to accompany me to the palace. We have prepared a celebration in your honor.”

As the players are escorted to the palace they have an opportunity to observe the island. The “palace” is actually just a large, four-story mansion atop a cliff overlooking the ocean. The wall of fog is visible all around the island's waters, though it doesn't encroach upon the island itself. In addition to the palace, there is also a large dojo where several dozen students can be seen sparring outside practicing different jujutsu strikes, holds, and throws.

On the walk, Chimei explains the plan for the next few days. There is to be a welcome banquet tonight, after which everyone will have an opportunity to retire early in order to rest up for the next day's

events. The days will be filled with sparring matches and the most victorious competitors will be rewarded for their skills, including the opportunity to join the Bladed Hand. All they ask is that their guests do not wander around the island unescorted.

“After all,” says Kasuga Chimei, “we wouldn't want anything to happen to our honored guests.”

Where is the Book?

Many players will be very focused on immediately recovering the Book of Earth. Otojiro has the book in his rooms, where it is guarded at all times by at least six guards and Dhruv (if he is not fighting a match). Persistent players may be able to locate the book, but they should not be able to recover it at this point. \

Interrogating Kasuga Chimei will prove fruitless; she is acting as Otojiro's hatamoto, but is not involved with his criminal organization apart from being paid by it. Her duties are to take care of the domestic matters of the “palace” and greet guests like the PCs. She knows nothing about the Book of Earth.

Welcome Banquet

The players are given very posh rooms in the palace, each appointed with beautiful artwork (mostly fine porcelains and the like) and with balconies overlooking the sea. They are given some time to refresh themselves and are then escorted to the welcome banquet.

The festivities are already in full swing as you enter the banquet hall. Whatever pretensions Otojiro has, it is clear he does not style himself a true lord; the banquet is highly informal, with guests migrating among the low tables, chatting amiably with one another (though some are less cordial with each other).

Sake and plum wine flow freely as servants bring course after course: spicy soups, fresh sashimi, succulent seaweed salad, a rich crab broth, whole roasted fish, and more are all presented to you. In the corner, a trio of musicians struggles to be heard above the din but are drowned out by the revelry.

Kasuga Chimei plays the part of a gracious host, floating from table to table and laughing among the guests. She is followed by a brooding shadow of a man in strange gaijin clothing and dark, non-Rokugani skin.

Players who wish to investigate (**Investigation / Perception**, TN 20) may notice several things out of place. The servants are not typical Rokugani, with the dark skin and typical facial feature of the Ivindi; they are, in fact, natives of the Ivory Kingdoms (see: The Dungeons for more information). The porcelains that decorate the palace are also from the Ivory Kingdoms. The man following Kasuga Chimei is another Ivindi: Dhruv, Otojiro's personal bodyguard and the head sensei of his dojo. PCs who made 30 on an Investigation roll before the ship battle will recognize him from his posture (any PC knocked off the ship by him will need to see him in action for recognition to kick in).

There are a number of other contestants at the banquet, mostly rabble and thugs from Distant Turtle City, trying to work their way up the organization, but the GM may also wish to include martial artists the PCs may have met before (at least if it's likely those martial artists would affiliate with a criminal like Otojiro). Player Handout #3 lists the more significant competitors. They are generally here for the glory or the money offered as a prize, though the ronin are looking to join up with an effective gang (and the Scorpion, though he will say nothing to anyone other than Scorpion PCs, is trying to gain contacts in what may prove to be a growing threat; sadly, his skills are just not up to the challenge and he washes out early).

In addition to the combatants there are other guests, mostly important merchants and their samurai patrons from Distant Turtle City, trying to either get in with Otojiro or figure out what he's up to or who his allies are. One of them is Yoritomo Boto, a stoutly-build jisamurai. Boto is speculating on the upcoming matches and is organizing a betting pool (see: Gambling). For the most part, these other guests are here for a good time and are not interested in closely examining their life of luxury or worrying about its origin.

Otojiro is not in attendance for most of the banquet, but will make an appearance at the end of the meal.

Drinking Contest

As the wine and sake flows, the guests begin trying to outdo one another, quickly filling each others' cups and prompting immediate drinking with cries of “Kampai!” An impromptu drinking contest breaks

out, should any player wish to join in (or have Compulsions to do so).

The contest is resolved with a series of raw **Stamina** rolls. Any spell or ability that gives bonuses against poison applies (though the use of spells is obviously dishonorable – D2 Honor loss). The TN of the Stamina roll starts at 5, and goes up by 5 for every subsequent roll. If a character fails a roll, all subsequent TNs go up by an additional 2. If he fails by more than 5, he passes out, losing a point of Glory for public drunkenness and waking up the next morning in his room. The final toast will be at a TN of 30, plus any modifiers for previous failures, and the only NPC left standing at that point is Yoritomo Tamaki.

Any PC who is still conscious at the end of the contest has their tongue loosened by the sake. They must make a **Willpower** roll at TN 10, taking into account any penalties from the contest. If they fail they cannot help but be moved to a state of drunken confession, admitting some shameful aspects of their life (i.e. Dark Secret, or other unpleasant Disadvantages). This will cause a L-2 Glory loss, and if they don't have anything else to talk about, they should probably bring up their actual reason for being present. Other PCs may cover for them with appropriate Social Skill Rolls (Courtier or Sincerity / Awareness) but the TN for such rolls starts at 20.

After Dinner

As dishes are cleared a voice calls out from the entryway. Kasuga Chimei stands there, resplendent in fine silks that probably cost a village's ransom. "Friends," she announces, "and... others." A low, drunken chuckle passes through the room. "My master, Otojiro, thanks you for attending his tournament. He hopes that you have enjoyed this small sample of his generosity. So that you may thank him personally, allow me to present our host: the kind, the good, the beneficent Otojiro.

There is a murmur throughout the hall and then a figure steps through the doorway. He wears simple homespun robes of un-dyed cloth. A straw basket hat covers his head, and a deep baritone voice emerges from it. "Thank you for joining me. Over the next several days some of you will do battle for glory, for wealth, and for my favor. Those who excel may be offered a chance to join my school. I bid you all good fortune." He then departs in a swirl of cloth.

After dinner, the players are escorted to lavish rooms on the third floor of the mansion. They are politely but firmly asked not to leave their rooms until the morning meal. Assuming they comply, the evening passes quietly.

Sneaking About

Those wishing to investigate will quickly discover that there are guards on the hallways in positions to watch all the main stairways. Sneaking by them is difficult, but not impossible; the halls are largely devoid of cover, but the guards are not experts in this regard. **Stealth (Sneaking) / Agility** rolls (TN 20) are required for every stairway the PCs take. Failure on this roll attracts the guards' attention.

As long as they are only carrying their daisho, and the peace bonds are intact, the guards can be convinced that the PCs are harmlessly wandering. This still requires a **Sincerity / Awareness** roll, but the TN is only 15 on the first night. It increases to 20 on the second night, and 30 on the third. Success on this roll causes them to escort the PCs back to their rooms, while failure causes them to raise the alarm. Attempting anything other than talking the guards down after being discovered requires an Initiative Roll, in which case the guard (if still alive) will raise the alarm on their initiative. At best, however, a missing guard will cause the alarm to go up eventually; this increases the TN of the Stealth rolls to 25 and combat will begin immediately upon failure. Stats for the guards can be found in either Appendix #1 or "The Confrontation" section.

Togashi Inori is, herself, sneaking around, but skilled enough to do so successfully. If the PCs coordinate with her before retiring, she will suggest learning what can be learned before making a move. Otherwise, she will inform them of what she learns after the tournament, thinking that Otojiro will be less on guard then.

If the alarm is raised, the PCs will be faced with a pair of reinforcing guards every Round. The alarm will warn other PCs that something is going on, if they are not together, but it will take at least two Rounds for them to join the fight. After three Rounds, Inori will arrive and tell them to head up to the top floor while she frees the prisoners in the dungeon. "Otojiro is there, and I can distract the bulk of his men! It's your best chance! Hurry!"

Proceed to “The Confrontation”, in Part Five.

Exploring the Palace

Otojiro’s “palace” is an old samurai mansion built as a vacation home by a wealthy Mantis several centuries ago. It fell into ruin after its builder’s death, and Otojiro found it and rebuilt it a few months ago to serve as his base of operations. It is a four-story building built scenically along the edge of a cliff overlooking the water, mostly constructed of stone but with the usual interior wood panels sectioning off most rooms.

The top floor has Otojiro’s spartan quarters, with the Book of Earth under guard in an adjoining chamber. The third floor is guest rooms, where the PCs have quarters. The second is mostly meeting rooms, with storage closets and display chambers for art (currently being used as treasuries). The ground floor has the main hall, kitchens, staff quarters, and armory. There is a guard room on every floor, and reinforcements are never more than a shout away. Underneath all of this is the dungeons Otojiro has placed his prisoners in.

The Dungeons

The dungeons are not hidden; there are no secret passages for players to discover. Instead, there is a guarded hallway that leads to a stairwell down to the dungeons. There is also a tunnel (also guarded) from the dungeons to the beach so that goods, prisoners, and product can be brought to and from boats very easily.

Sneaking past the guards is more difficult here, as there is a pair of them. The TN is increased to 25, and they will not be talked out of raising the alarm if it is failed.

Flickering lamplight gives the area a dim, hazy quality that takes your eyes a moment to adjust. Long before you see anything, however, your other senses kick in. The first thing you notice is the stench as the scent of unwashed bodies assaults you. Then there are the moans of pain and the clanking of chains as prisoners shift to watch your arrival. Finally, your eyes adjust and you see what must be over a hundred prisoners. Most are locked up in cells, but others are chained to tables where they are painstakingly engaged in some alchemical task.

Though it's hard to see in the dim light (will not be apparent unless the players specifically ask) the prisoners all are all former citizens of the Ivory Kingdoms.

If the players examine the prisoners' work they can make a **Medicine** or **Lore: Underworld / Intelligence** roll at TN 20. The prisoners are crushing dried poppy seeds, a stage of refining them into opium.

The players may try to free the prisoners, in which case proceed to “Inori's Rebellion” in Part Five.

Part Four: Hajime!

The Tournament

The grand event is a tournament that lasts three days. PCs may or may not participate in the tournament. It is possible that the PCs will include dedicated martial artists who wish to compete themselves. It is also possible that no player will be significantly invested in unarmed combat, in which case Togashi Inori will offer to champion the PCs, using the mechanics presented in the “Journey to the Island” section.

The First Contests

The morning proceeds quietly. Breakfast is served to the players in their rooms (as is normal etiquette) and they are asked to make their way to the sparring grounds they saw yesterday.

Dozens of martial artists, all in new gi of shining white and dark black hakama, are lined up, practicing kata in unison. With each kiai shout they strike the air, perfecting their forms. Otojiro isn't just training enforcers; he's training an army. They are led by the dark gaijin man you saw at dinner last evening.

As the kata comes to its end, Otojiro appears again, climbing up to a platform set up to address the crowd. “My friends and guests, I hope you've enjoyed your evening,” he begins, his voice clear and audible despite the basket hat. “We will begin with a series of sparring matches to test you against each other.” A servant appears with a kabuto helm. Otojiro reaches in and pulls out a pair of chits.

“Let us begin.”

The following NPCs are in the tournament:

- Bayushi Masayuki
- Daidoji Akira
- Dhruv*
- Shinzo *
- Togashi Inori *
- Yasuki Kurao *
- Yoritomo Tamaki *

NPCs with a * are listed in Appendix #1.

For expedience's sake, all contestants make a single **Jiujutsu / Agility** roll to represent their progress in the tournament. Advantages, Techniques, and Mastery Abilities that affect unarmed combat and grappling add their bonus to this check (i.e. Hands of Stone would add +0k1 to the check, while Jiujutsu 5 would add a +1k0 and a Free Raise, and the rank 2 Togashi technique would award +2k2). If the PCs practiced with Inori, they add 5 to their total. A doctor is on hand to treat all wounds between matches. Void spent is gone for the days of the tournament, if things happen during the night.

If a PC rolls a 30, they will face Yasuki Kurao in the finals; if more than one PC does so, the higher of the two rolls goes to the finals. (Ties roll off again.)

There is a great deal of side action going on as well (see: Gambling).

The fighting is brutal and hard, though contestants are expected to bow out rather than be killed or crippled. For the matches where skill is roughly equal, there is little issue. However, one match in particular stands out:

“Daidoji Akira and Dhruv!”

The match is announced to murmuring from the crowd. A short, but heavily muscled Crane comes forward, as does the gaijin warrior. While the Daidoji looks on, the gaijin removes his gi and hakama, ignoring all propriety in order to leave himself unencumbered.

Dhruv towers over his opponent, but chooses not to press his advantage. Instead he waits, studying the Crane for several minutes as the Daidoji prepares himself to receive the inevitable attack.

When it does come, the gaijin moves as lightly as a tiger, leaping the distance between them. The Daidoji wisely tries to dodge, but takes by a jump kick to the throat. As he staggers back, Dhruv presses his advantage, seizing the Crane's arm and wrenching it back. There is a blur of strikes in rapid succession: a knuckle punch in the armpit that causes the arm to go limp, a sweep to the back of the knee, and a closed hand strike to the back of the neck.

The Daidoji crumples to the ground, and in just a few seconds after it started, the match is over.

Dhruv looks around dismissively. “These are your contestants, Otojiro-sama? Pathetic. I will not waste your time anymore. We both know that this tournament is not for me.”

Dhruv withdraws from the tournament.

The final match of the tournament will be either a PC (if one made the check to reach the final) or Togashi Inori against Yasuki Kurao. Kurao starts with only one remaining Void Point but no Wound penalties.

The Final Match

You take your position opposite the enormous Crab. He stomps his feet, sending reverberations through the earth. “I am Kurao of the Yasuki,” he intones. “Trained in the ways of the Hida sumai, ranked among the Ozeki of the Empire, friend of Otojiro,” His voice then drops to a whisper, so only you can hear, “and former guardian of the Book of Earth. You should not have come here.”

The match officially continues until at least one participant reaches the Down rank or is pinned (losing three consecutive Grapple checks), however Kurao will be fighting to kill the PC (or Inori if she is fighting for the players). The Bladed Hand, being a criminal organization, have very little interest in stopping what has turned into a death match, and indeed betting will likely increase.

Yasuki Kurao

Beset by debt, the wrestler betrayed his family’s legacy by turning their prized duty over to Otojiro for nothing more than money.

Air 3	Earth 3	Fire 2	Water 3	Void 3
		Agility 3	Strength 4	
Honor 0.8		Status 1.5		Glory 2.1

Initiative: 5k3

Attack: 8k3 (unarmed,
Complex)

Armor TN: 20

Damage: 5k1
(unarmed), 6k2
(damage in Grapple)

Reduction: 0

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

School/Rank: Yasuki Courtier 1/Crab Sumai

Techniques: *Way of the Carp* (Yasuki 1, not relevant)
Way of Sumai: +2k0 to Grapple control rolls, +1k1 damage when in a Grapple

Skills: Commerce (Merchant) 5, Courtier 3, Defense 3, Etiquette (Bureaucracy) 3, Investigation 1, Jiujutsu (Sumai) 5, Knives 2, Lore: Underworld 2, Sincerity (Deceit) 4, Stealth 2

Mastery Abilities: +1k0 unarmed damage

Advantages/Disadvantages: Daikoku's Blessing, Large / Greedy, Insensitive

Note: For high-rank tables, he should have Earth 3, increasing his Wounds.

Players may be tempted to cheat. There are no shugenja present to ensure that magic is not used or that other niceties are observed. Generally cheating should not be difficult to employ though the GM should award Honor penalties for such actions (D2 for things that benefit the combatant, D0 for those that impair an opponent).

The winner receives Glory for their success in competition: G6.

If Inori is fighting, she will lose unless the PCs have given her assistance. Her skill is not enough greater than Kurao's to account for his drive to prove himself to Otojiro; however, she will bow out within the first few exchanges, when she realizes he is fighting with lethal intent. If Inori did meditate with the PCs, she will draw upon their strength to give her victory. Though it means little enough to the PCs, her Devotion when awarded as an Ally at the end of the module will be 2 instead of 1.

Gambling

Many of those in attendance are there because they are friends and allies of Otojiro (or those he hopes to make into allies) and are enjoying the matches purely as a matter of entertainment.

A player may bet on anyone to win the tournament (if the GM wants to do separate rolls players may also bet on individual matches). There are no odds or

handicaps (though if a GM has time for that level of detail, they are encouraged to do so on their own). Koku wagered are either lost or a like amount earned.

A Fateful Meeting

After the tournament, the players will be summoned to a meeting with Otojiro. As Yasashi's guests, he intends to make them a better offer – though those who stand out with victory in the tournament, or who attract attention in other ways, will certainly be given due acknowledgment.

Otojiro's quarters are at the top of the mansion, where a lord would normally display their wealth and opulence. However, the room is bare of all but a few functional furnishings: a low table for guests, a writing desk in the corner, and a single tatami mat rolled into the corner. The window is open to display the rough waves and swirling fog of the island's defenses.

The leader of the Bladed Hands kneels with his back framed by the open window, shrouded in his all-concealing clothes. The hulking gaijin Dhruv stands in the corner of the room, massive arms folded across his chest. Otojiro inclines his head in a brief bow, "My friends, thank you for coming. I've been following you since your arrival with great interest."

Otojiro is obviously not comfortable with small talk, and will bluntly defer any questions about his identity for "later". He will ask the PCs about their experiences in Distant Turtle City, specifically their impressions of the crime and corruption present.

The players will no doubt ask about the Book of Earth. Again, Otojiro will put them off. "The book is in safe hands, I assure you." If the players press the point, he will promise to discuss the book at a later time but claim more interest in other matters for now. He is being honest; if the PCs were to join him, he would consider returning the book to them as they might be able to help him unlock its power. Pressing him on this point, especially without giving him a chance to make his pitch, will convince him the PCs are not going to be recruits after all, in which case he will coldly stand and call for his guards. Proceed to Part Five, "Confrontation".

If they are willing to hear him out, however:

“When I first came to these islands, I found them in terrible shape. They still are. Distant Turtle City is all but abandoned by its patrons; the Tortoise are simply too small and distant to manage it properly. The Mantis try and impose some order but lack the legal bearing to do so. Who can be surprised that criminal organizations would develop? Or that they thrive.”

Otojiro claims that Kasuga Yasashi is as much a problem as those he's trying to solve and that only the Bladed Hands can bring the crime in Distant Turtle City under control. If asked how, he will explain, “By giving it a purpose.”

It is obvious that Otojiro is trying to recruit the PCs, which should be offensive to all but the most selfish of ronin. His men are pirates and criminals, though he sees them as the start of something greater. Doing so requires resources, however, and he has entered the opium trade in order to increase his group's financial power.

Otojiro explains how he has brought slaves from the Ivory Kingdoms to do the work of refining the opium. His rationale is that this opium production is not illegal if not done by Rokugani. A **Lore: Law / Intelligence**, TN 20, roll indicates that this is a gray area of the law, the sort that would be debated in court and might even be decided by a duel if no peaceable accord was reached or Imperial ruling handed down.

Despite their strong caste system, Rokugani do not believe in slavery. The first Hantei gave duties to each caste, and while each caste serves the caste above it, they are all valued as having their place, from the highest Emperor to the lowest Eta. Slavery, which regards a person as a mere thing, has no place in the Celestial Order (see: *Legend of the Burning Sands*, p. 197 for more information on this attitude).

As long as the PCs do not immediately turn to hostilities, Otojiro is willing to give them some time to think on his offer, sending them back to their chambers to discuss it. If they do attack, play proceeds to Part Five, “The Confrontation”.

Hard Decisions

No Hero of Rokugan would willingly join Otojiro's Bladed Hands, especially in light of his opium ring. Nonetheless, some players may want to play along,

pretending to join Otojiro. The GM should allow this with appropriate **Sincerity (Deceit) / Awareness** rolls (TN 25) to convince Otojiro of their loyalty. A player who truly sides with Otojiro should play out the rest of the adventure and then retire his or her character; they are now a villain of Rokugan and no longer a PC. Regardless, play should proceed to Inori's Rebellion and the PCs encouraged to betray Otojiro at a suitably dramatic point.

The more-likely situation is that the players will (quite reasonably) decide that they can't join Otojiro and will need to make a stand against him. The problem, of course, is that they are heavily out-numbered. A **Battle / Perception** (TN 15) check suggests that the prisoners Otojiro bragged about could counter the numbers advantage of the Bladed Hands.

If the PCs have agreed to work with Togashi Inori (or if the players are just vacillating), she will appear during their discussion in order to inform them of the prisoners. “This madman must be stopped. He has more than a hundred innocent people trapped in his dungeons, and is putting them to work on his drugs. I will free them of their bonds. This should give you a chance to confront the leader of these vipers.”

Inori's Rebellion

Whenever the PCs move to confront Otojiro, Inori will arrange to distract the guards with a rebellion among the prisoners. (This works easiest if the PCs are actively working with her, of course, but even if not, her instincts will tell her the most opportune time to move.)

It is also possible for the PCs to start the rebellion themselves, though they will need to figure out a way to free the prisoners and convince the prisoners to fight with them. The prisoners are in fairly healthy condition, but they are not trained warriors and they do not have weapons. The PCs will need to inspire them with appropriate **Perform: Oratory / Awareness** (TN 25) or other inspirational rolls; nearly any Social Skill may qualify, at the GM's discretion, based on the PCs' approach. If the PCs fail this roll, they will have to face a squad of guards (twice as many enemies as there are PCs at the table) before they can confront Otojiro. Stats for the guards can be found in Appendix #1 or in Part Five, “The Confrontation”.

Either way:

The tranquility of the evening is broken by the sound of a hundred voices shouting murder and calling for Otojiro's head. A hundred men and women surge forth from another hallway, slamming into the guards and guests of the palace. At their head charges Togashi Inori, leading the prisoners into the crowd.

Part Five: The Confrontation

Confronting Otojiro

However the PCs manage it, when they do move against Otojiro, he will be found in his chambers. (The description of the room is repeated here, in case the PCs did not give him a chance to summon them for his proposal.)

Otojiro's quarters are at the top of the mansion, where a lord would normally display their wealth and opulence. However, the room is bare of all but a few functional furnishings: a low table pushed against one wall, a writing desk in the corner, and a single tatami mat rolled into the corner. The window is open to display the rough waves and swirling fog of the island's defenses.

Otojiro and Dhruv are together unless stated otherwise (during the single round of the tournament that the gaijin participates in, for example). If the PCs were able to take advantage of Inori's Rebellion before they make their move, there are only two Bladed Hand Guards guarding the door, with the ronin shugenja Ieasu in the next room keeping an eye on the Book. Otherwise, there are a full squad of guards (twice as many as there are PCs) in the room with Ieasu, who will enter the room as the PCs do.

Otojiro turns from the window, and though his basket hat hides his face, the sneer in his voice is unmistakable. "I had thought to offer you power, but you choose to oppose me. Be done with you, then." He makes a sharp gesture to the massive Dhruv, standing sentinel at his side, and the gaijin moves to protect him.

Otojiro will start the combat by using Chi Protection on Dhruv; this heals the gaijin warrior of 4 Wounds during the Reactions Phase of every Round (for five Rounds). Apart from that, he takes little part in the combat. His Armor TN is 40, and he has an Earth of 4; if a PC manages to hit him with a lethal attack or

spell effect, Dhruv will leap in the way, sacrificing his own life but knocking the leader out the window. Otojiro's Dark Fate will not allow him to fall so soon.

Dhruv stays close to his leader, viciously attacking anyone who nears. He will spend Void to increase his Armor TN in the first Round, and

Ieasu will focus on defensive effects for Dhruv and himself; he has no healing spells, and the only directly offensive spell he has is Tempest of Air (unless at a high rank table). His loyalty is not absolute, however, and he will break and flee if it looks hopeless.

The guards largely fight individually, with little idea of tactics. They will not coordinate their attacks well, and in general go after whoever seems to be the greatest threat to their leader. Once he leaves, however, they will surrender if given a chance or break and flee if the opportunity to escape presents itself.

Dhruv

A holy man in the Ivory Kingdoms before being afflicted with a vision of a great man in the east who would discover the secret to immortality, Dhruv has given his devotion to Otojiro and will lay down his life for his new master.

Air 4	Earth 4	Fire 3	Water 3	Void 4
		Agility 4	Strength 4	
	Integrity 6.2	Status 0	Glory 0	

Initiative: 8k4

Attack: 10k4

(unarmed, Simple)

Armor TN: 33

Damage: 5k3

(unarmed)

Reduction: 0

Wounds: 20 (+0), 28 (+3), 36 (+5), 44 (+10), 52 (+15), 60 (+20), 68 (Down, +40), 76 (Dead)

School/Rank: Sainika Fighter 4

Techniques: *Harmony:* +4 to Armor TN and +4k0 to rolls to Contested Social Rolls and Fear resistance

Vision: may spend a Void Point as a Simple Action to assess an opponent, getting +Xk0 to attack rolls against them (where X=the target's lowest Trait)

Understanding: +4k0 to all Perception-based rolls

Unity: Simple Action attacks with knives or unarmed

Skills: Athletics 3, Battle 2, Defense 5, Hand-to-Hand 7, Hunting 1, Investigation (Notice) 3, Knives 2, Lore: Theology (Ivory Kingdoms) 3, Medicine 2, Meditation 3, Stealth 3

Mastery Abilities: +1k1 unarmed damage

Kiho: Soul of the Four Winds (active and included)

Advantages/ Disadvantages: Hands of Stone, Languages (Rokugani), Large, Strength of the Earth / Ascetic, Disbeliever, Gaijin Name, Social Disadvantage: Gaijin

Note: For a low-rank table, reduce his Earth to 3

Ieasu (formerly Yoritomo)

Banished from the Mantis for choosing the wrong victims for his piracy, Ieasu was recruited easily by Otojiro.

Air 3 Earth 2 Fire 3 Water 3 Void 3
Perception 4
Honor 1.4 Status 0 Glory 0

Initiative: 4k3 **Attack:** 7k3 (unarmed, Complex)

Armor TN: 20 **Damage:** 4k1 (unarmed)

Reduction: 0

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

School/Rank: Yoritomo Shugenja 2

Skills: Athletics (Swimming) 3, Calligraphy 2, Defense 3, Investigation 1, Jiujutsu 3, Lore: Theology 1, Sailing 3, Sleight of Hand 2, Spellcraft 4, Stealth 2

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, Reversal of Fortunes, Sympathetic Energies, Wave-borne Speed, Cloak of Night, Tempest of Air (memorized), Way of Deception, Extinguish

Note: at a high-rank table, increase his Spellcraft to 5, giving him +1k0 to Spellcasting Rolls, and give him Strike of the Tsunami

Bladed Hand Guards

Little more than thugs, they have nonetheless been given enough training to be dangerous to themselves and others...

Air 1 Earth 2 Fire 2 Water 2 Void 1
Reflexes 3 Agility 3 Strength 3
Honor 2.1 Status 0 Glory 0

Initiative: 4k3 **Attack:** 7k3 (unarmed, Complex)

Armor TN: 20 **Damage:** 4k1 (unarmed)

Reduction: 0

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

School/Rank: none/1

Skills: Athletics 3, Defense 3, Investigation 1, Jiujutsu 4, Knives 2, Sailing 3, Stealth 2

Mastery Abilities: +1k0 unarmed damage

Once Dhruv is dropped, or it becomes obvious the PCs will be triumphant, Otojiro reveals himself and makes his escape.

“No. No!” Otojiro screams, tearing the straw hat from his head and the robes from his body. Black whorls cover his upper body, ebon tattoos etched into his flesh. “You will pay for this insult to the Kokujin.” The tattoos shift, and the inky wings of a hawk seem to spread under the skin of his back. He leaps out the window, plummeting into the rocky ocean water below.

If a PC wishes to follow, they must make an Athletics (Swimming) / Earth roll at a TN of 60; every point they fail by inflicts one Wound.

Players may make a **Lore: Dragon / Intelligence** (TN 15) or **Lore: Shadowlands / Intelligence** (TN 25) to recognize the name Kokujin. If they succeed, they learn that Togashi Kokujin was a monk in the eleventh century who defied the kami Togashi and sought to become a god himself. He led Mirumoto Hitomi to overthrow Togashi Hoshi, then led a rebellion against the Dragon Clan as a whole. He was infamous for tattooing his followers using his own Tainted blood. Supposedly he was killed and his entire order wiped out during the early years of the reign of Toturi II.

Conclusion

When the players return to the palace, Togashi Inori has led the prisoners to victory.

“We have done it. We’ve shattered the Blades. And then, ah...” She takes a breath, then lifts something out of her satchel: the Book of Earth.

Inori is holding the Book of Earth, which revealed itself to her after she and his followers defeated the Bladed Hands. She will cheerfully read a couple of passages, which is not considered possible for anyone other than the Book’s Keeper. Inori is surprised herself at this turn of events, but will gladly take passage with *Hachi’s Favor* and continue the Crab’s mission of taking the Book to Otosan Uchi.

The PCs are able to make their way back to Distant Turtle City with one of the ships in dock; the captains of those vessels, who brought the merchant and

samurai audience, are nothing more than hired hands and were never part of the pirate gang. It will then be possible to bring in authorities to deal with the Bladed Hands. It is very easy to get confessions out of them and dismantle the Bladed Hands' organization.

Of greater concern is what is to be done with the hundred Ivory Kingdoms prisoners. Kasuga Yasashi, as the de facto power of the city, must choose how to deal with them. His inclination is to simply leave them on Otojiro's island as a colony, out of sight and out of mind, while stepping up patrols to make sure they don't escape. This is a very Rokugani attitude (gaijin are an uncomfortable topic for most people and uncomfortable things are best ignored) but is not particularly compassionate; food sources are limited on the island and without supplies it is likely that they would die out.

A PC may make a **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** check at TN 30 to convince Yasashi to take another approach. Some approaches will require Raises. This may be Cooperative Roll and, if players have different approaches, may even be Contested.

- Send supplies to the island to the prisoners don't starve.
- 1 Raise – Bring the prisoners to Distant Turtle City and use them to train people traveling to Balishnimpur and prepare them for foreign conflicts.
- 2 Raises – Ship the prisoners back to the Ivory Kingdoms, despite the expense.
- 3 Raises – Allow the prisoners to settle in Rokugan.

Convincing Yasashi to take a more humane approach gives a reward of **H6** Honor for demonstrating the virtue of Compassion, plus 1 point per Raise (all PCs who take part in the Cooperative Roll gain the Honor bonus). If the prisoners are allowed to settle in Rokugan all the players lose **L0** Glory for this horrendous breach of social norms.

If any player has Sworn Enemy: Tsuruchi Fumihiro, the magistrate tries to implicate the PC in the Bladed Hand. Convincing Fumihiro otherwise will require a **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** roll (TN 30) or gain **I5** Infamy for associating with known criminals.

The End

Rewards for Completing the Adventure

Surviving the Module:	1 XP
Good Roleplaying:	+1 XP
Arrive at the Island:	+1 XP
Drive Otojiro Away and Recover the Book:	+1 XP
Total Possible Experience:	4 XP

Favors

If the PCs recover the Book of Earth, they gain one Favor.

Honor

Recovering the Book earns the PCs H5 Honor.

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

Recovering the Book earns the PCs G6 Glory.

Allies and Enemies

All PCs gain Sworn Enemy: Kokujin Otojiro (3 points).

If the PCs worked with Togashi Inori, they gain her as an Ally (1/1). If they meditated with her on the boat, her Devotion is 2 instead. If a PC already has her as an Ally, her Devotion is increased by 1.

Other Awards/Penalties

If the Book of Earth was recovered, the PCs gain the Book of Earth cert.

GM Reporting

- 1) Did the PCs recover the book?
- 2) Were the prisoners taken to Rokugan?

The GM must report this information by 10/28/2018 for it to have storyline effect.

Appendix #1: NPCs

Bladed Hand Guards

Little more than thugs, they have nonetheless been given enough training to be dangerous to themselves and others...

Air 1 Earth 2 Fire 2 Water 2 Void 1
Reflexes 3 Agility 3 Strength 3
Honor 2.1 Status 0 Glory 0
Initiative: 4k3 **Attack:** 7k3
(unarmed, Complex)
Armor TN: 20 **Damage:** 4k1
(unarmed)

Reduction: 0

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

School/Rank: none/1

Skills: Athletics 3, Defense 3, Investigation 1, Jujutsu 4, Knives 2, Sailing 3, Stealth 2

Mastery Abilities: +1k0 unarmed damage

Dhruv

A holy man in the Ivory Kingdoms before being afflicted with a vision of a great man in the east who would discover the secret to immortality, Dhruv has given his devotion to Otojiro and will lay down his life for his new master.

Air 4 Earth 4 Fire 3 Water 3 Void 4
Integrity 6.2 Agility 4 Strength 4
Status 0 Glory 0
Initiative: 8k4 **Attack:** 10k4
(unarmed, Simple)
Armor TN: 33 **Damage:** 5k3
(unarmed)

Reduction: 0

Wounds: 20 (+0), 28 (+3), 36 (+5), 44 (+10), 52 (+15), 60 (+20), 68 (Down, +40), 76 (Dead)

School/Rank: Sainika Fighter 4

Techniques: *Harmony:* +4 to Armor TN and +4k0 to rolls to Contested Social Rolls and Fear resistance

Vision: may spend a Void Point as a Simple Action to assess an opponent, getting +Xk0 to attack rolls against them (where X=the target's lowest Trait)

Understanding: +4k0 to all Perception-based rolls

Unity: Simple Action attacks with knives or unarmed

Skills: Athletics 3, Battle 2, Defense 5, Hand-to-Hand 7, Hunting 1, Investigation (Notice) 3, Knives 2, Lore:

Theology (Ivory Kingdoms) 3, Medicine 2, Meditation 3, Stealth 3

Mastery Abilities: +1k1 unarmed damage

Kiho: Soul of the Four Winds (active and included)

Advantages/ Disadvantages: Hands of Stone, Languages (Rokugani), Large, Strength of the Earth / Ascetic, Disbeliever, Gaijin Name, Social Disadvantage: Gaijin

Note: For a low-rank table, reduce his Earth to 3

Ieasu (formerly Yoritomo)

Banished from the Mantis for choosing the wrong victims for his piracy, Ieasu was recruited easily by Otojiro.

Air 3 Earth 2 Fire 3 Water 3 Void 3
Perception 4
Honor 1.4 Status 0 Glory 0
Initiative: 4k3 **Attack:** 7k3 (unarmed,
Complex)
Armor TN: 20 **Damage:** 4k1
(unarmed)

Reduction: 0

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

School/Rank: Yoritomo Shugenja 2

Skills: Athletics (Swimming) 3, Calligraphy 2, Defense 3, Investigation 1, Jujutsu 3, Lore: Theology 1, Sailing 3, Sleight of Hand 2, Spellcraft 4, Stealth 2

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, Reversal of Fortunes, Sympathetic Energies, Wave-borne Speed, Cloak of Night, Tempest of Air (memorized), Way of Deception, Extinguish

Note: at a high-rank table, increase his Spellcraft to 5, giving him +1k0 to Spellcasting Rolls, and give him Strike of the Tsunami

Player Handout #1: News From the Empire

Blessings come to the Empire, Samurai! The marriage of Toturi X to his new wife was a great success, despite some... oddities. Rumors of angry spirits were proven mostly unfounded as a most unfortunate Agasha was found to have some form of spiritual malady, which he cleansed from himself with Seppuku. The rest of the event went with little worry, and it is this one's great pleasure to announce that the Crab will be providing the leaders of the Empress' Guard here in the future. In addition, the Crane will be hosting the Empress during her traditional forty day period of seclusion, and the Phoenix will be providing her spiritual advisor.

On to other news, the Lion ever make their preparations for their conflict against the Crab. The First Akodo has begun to muster in Beiden, as they prepare to march down Scorpion lands, per the Emperor's orders. In addition, smaller legions from every Clan have begun preparing their maneuvers for the Summer. It is expected that, with this being the first conflict in many years, Legions from near every clan will wish to involve themselves in the upcoming proceedings.

Beyond these moments of joy and conflict, the Empire seems fairly quiet. The other Clans watch the conflict to come with interest, but there has been little other movement since...

-Otomo Yusuke

Player Handout #2: Weather Effects

The table below lists the effects of the storm, as well as common ways each effect may be negated. This is not an absolute list.

Effect	Source	Affected By
Water Ring reduced by 2 for movement purposes (cumulative)	Difficult Terrain (Storm)	Athletics 3 (reduces penalty to 1), Athletics 5 (negates), Yoritomo Bushi 1 (negates)
TN for all rolls involving Agility, Reflexes, and Perception increased by +5	Difficult Terrain (Storm)	
Water Ring reduced by 1 for movement purposes (cumulative)	Moderate Terrain (Ship)	Athletics 3+ (negates), Yoritomo Bushi 1 (negates)

In addition, the following conditions may occur during the storm:

Nauseated: (same as Fatigued) +5 TN to all Skill, physical Trait rolls, and Spell Casting Rolls. Cannot take Full Attack Stance.

Prone: -10 to Armor TN vs. melee attacks. Cannot use Move Actions. May only adopt Attack or Defense Stances. Cannot attack with Large weapons, -2k0 to attacks with Medium and Small weapons. Standing from Prone requires a Simple Action.

Player Handout #3: Contestants

In addition to a score or so ronin or heimin thugs, there are several contestants of note, whether due to clan affiliation or

- Bayushi Masayuki
- Daidoji Akira
- Dhruv
- Shinzo
- Togashi Inori
- Yasuki Kurao
- Yoritomo Tamaki