

Bleak Portents

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

Month of the Tiger, 1341 (Late Winter)

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Investigation, Supernatural, Travel, Combat
Part 4 of Shifting Sands

A climb's end

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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

Four months ago, during the kurultai to determine the khan of the Moto, Tonbo Kiyoshi used a gaijin weapon to strike down Shinjo Hazumi. The relic's power was such that Hazumi has not yet awoken and her wound resists treatment.

Hazumi's condition deteriorates every day despite the best efforts of the Iuchi, attending doctors, and local monks. The malady is spiritual in nature; the gaijin knife stole a portion of her soul and she will not awaken until it is free.

Bayushi Tenno, a newly appointed Emerald Magistrate, has been tasked by the Emerald Champion with seeing this matter resolved before it devolves into open warfare between the Dragon and Unicorn. Tenno, aware of the delicate political nature of the situation, intends to call upon samurai from many clans to lend credibility to his investigation and immunize himself and the Emerald Office from accusations of unfairness.

First, Tenno and the PCs must pick up the assassin's trail, starting at Kyuden Tonbo. Several of the denizens of the castle aided Tonbo Kiyoshi in his plan in some way or another and could be arrested for their actions by the PCs and Tenno. Ultimately, they should realize that his father, Tonbo Koryado, approved of his plan and aided him. After confronting and dealing with Koryado, they will learn that Kiyoshi is travelling to Tamori's Furnace with the dagger.

The PCs will need to pursue him deep into the Dragon Lands. They will eventually find him collapsed within the Kami's Wrath volcano, on the doorstep of Tamori's Furnace. He will surrender, turn over the knife, and explain that it must be cast into a volcano to destroy it.

Throwing the knife into Tamori's Furnace will allow Shinjo Hazumi's soul to reach Tengoku, though it will assuredly kill her. There is however a complication; the Lords of Death will appear, and offer to retrieve Shinjo's soul from the dagger and release it, reviving her. Doing so risks carrying the knife's evil back with it, in addition to the terrible prophecy. Which is exactly what the Lords of Death intend, as it will afford them an opportunity to gain vengeance upon their old foe.

Either is perilous and Hazumi's time grows short. The PCs will need to decide what to do with the dagger, overcome either the volcano's guardians or the dagger's and save the Unicorn Clan Champion, one way or another.

Upkeep

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

Character Notes

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

- Sworn Enemy: Bayushi Tenno
- Inner Gift (Lesser Prophecy)
- Languages: Yobanjin
- Hero of the People

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

All PC's suffer an L3 glory loss.

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 Earth roll is 20.

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 this 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 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

Give the players **Handout 2** and give them time to read it.

Winter's grasp has just begun to slip from the foothills of the Dragon Mountains and the peaceful valley as you enter the stately inn and teahouse. The proprietor bows low to you; a thin man with a goatee and a bald head featuring a large white bird tattooed on the crown.

"Welcome, samurai-sama, to the House of the White Crow! My name is Sho. If there is anything at all I can get you, please, let me know. Your rooms upstairs are ready, the bath springs are ready in the back, and the good Scorpion-sama is at work in the east dining room. He has... umm... been using it for an office. Please excuse the mess."

With a bow, the innkeeper retreats to his desk and begins writing in a large ledger book.

The teahouse and inn are of the highest quality, but the common room is completely empty. If the innkeeper is asked, he will inform the PCs that Bayushi Tenno has reserved the entire inn and ordered that no one else be allowed in besides the PCs and anyone that wish to bring in for questioning. The inn has a fine stable, delicious tea, a bath house fed by a natural hot spring, spacious rooms more than adequate for the party, multiple dining areas, and a skilled chef.

Once the PCs decide to speak with Bayushi Tenno:

As you enter, a handsome Scorpion man of average height wearing a black bird mask across his face sets down his pen and looks up from a large stack of papers. A cane leans against the side of the table, and a cinnamon stick smolders in a dish, making the room smell delightful.

"Ah, you have arrived, excellent. Thank you for coming so quickly. I realize that the winter snows have not yet entirely fled from the Empire's roads, but haste is critical in this matter. But, before we discuss the matter at hand, we should eat, as is traditional."

Bayushi Tenno takes a bite from a small piece of bread sitting nearby, then sips his tea. He immediately continues, "Now that we have eaten and had tea, we can discuss business. As you may be aware, Shinjo Hazumi was attacked last fall by a member of the Dragon clan. There is no question as to the identity of the assailant; it is Tonbo Kiyoshi, the son and heir to the Tonbo daimyo. It is our duty to find and arrest him, as well as any accomplices he may have had, and any other connected crimes we may discover."

Tenno lifts a stack of papers from his desk with his right hand, and gestures to the other papers with his left. “I have received a great deal of... assistance from samurai of the Empire. Tonbo Kiyoshi was spotted in Dragon lands. And Scorpion Lands. And Crab Lands. And somehow in the Ivory Kingdoms. Most of these leads are useless. But I have received a few tips which seem to corroborate each other indicating that Tonbo Kiyoshi spent the winter here in Kyuden Tonbo. I want you to investigate; find where he stayed, who harbored him, and where he has gone.” He takes a moment to tap his left leg with the cane that had been leaning against the desk. “I apologize for not accompanying you, but someone must sort through these papers, as well as write the reports that the Emerald Champion, Dragon clan Champion, and Ide Daimyo have all demanded.”

Tenno pauses to take a sip of his tea and give you all a hard look, “Solving this crime is of the highest importance to the Emerald Champion. We must do so swiftly, before the situation spirals out of hand. Many eyes are upon us. Do you have questions?”

Questions the PCs may have:

Can we wear armor?

Bayushi Tenno chuckles, “Yes. We may do anything we wish. Well, I may do anything I wish. And if you wish, I shall allow you to wear armor, if you feel it necessary. Bear in mind, we are here representing the Emerald Champion. If our conduct reflects poorly upon him and his office, well, I need not elaborate.” Give the players **Handout 3** if you have not already done so.

Do we need to get an Order of Appearance to question samurai? / Who can we question? / What authority do we have?

Tenno smiles, “We act on the direct mandate of the Emerald Champion and the Emperor. We may question anyone we wish and detain anyone we wish.” Give the players **Handout 3** if you have not already done so.

Where might you suggest starting the investigation?

“His friends or family might have information about him. Places he may have spent time; the dojo, temples, or libraries. Ask around. Investigate.”

What about the palace? Can we question his father?

“I have asked, but the guards have told me that Tonbo Koryado is unwell and unable to entertain visitors. I have not yet made a forceful request. Such a thing,

without good cause, would be impolite and reflect poorly upon the office of the Emerald Champion.”

What do we do if we want to arrest or question someone?

“Come talk to me, and I will write you the paperwork you need, presuming you have a good enough reason to be questioning or arresting that person”

How is your health / your leg?

Tenno taps the cane which leans against the table. “I can’t say I have fully recovered yet from last summer’s ordeal. Travel is somewhat difficult for me, but it is getting better.

If there are other questions, Tenno will do his best to answer them. He can provide basic background on previous modules in the series, the political situation (the Unicorn, Dragon, and Scorpion are all allied), or general news from the Empire. He doesn’t know much about the city; he has been sorting through leads and writing reports since he arrived two days ago.

Part One: Burying the Leads

The PCs should investigate Kyuden Tonbo to find out more about the assassin and discover leads on where he might have gone. In doing so, they should discover people that aided Tonbo Kiyoshi, knowingly or otherwise. The PCs will need Bayushi Tenno’s permission to execute arrests, but he will write them the appropriate papers to do so if they can make a reasonable case for the arrest.

Eventually they should realize that someone within Kyuden Tonbo proper aided Kiyoshi. Bayushi Tenno will want to have at least two reliable sources of testimony before he’s willing to serve orders of appearance within the castle itself. If the PCs have at least two sources, and are ready to move on to the castle, proceed to Part Two.

If a PC knowingly lies to Bayushi Tenno in order to obtain an order of arrest or appearance and Tenno detects their lie (the PC fails the Sincerity roll), he will not confront the PC in question, however, they will gain him as a **Sworn Enemy** upon conclusion of the module.

The NPCs and their knowledge are presented here as a guideline; feel free to add extra details to what each NPC knows or how they might react to the PC’s questioning.

Asking around town, especially the markets, will provide easy access to gossip. A **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll will reveal a wealth of information from the locals.

Rumors

The following information is available with a Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness roll.

- 10: Do you think the Unicorn are going to attack? They've said they won't, but I think they might.
- 15: Some units from the Mirumoto army passed through three weeks ago, coming down from the mountains.
- 20: I heard Tonbo Koryado has only left Kyuden Tonbo four times in his life, and each time only at the command of the Emperor.
- 25: I heard Tonbo Kiyoshi spoke with his father right before he left to visit the Unicorn.
- 30: Tonbo Kiyoshi used to spend a lot of time at the shrines in the city. I was hoping to see him there this winter to ask him to bless my fields for the year, but I guess I missed him. Wait, he did what? Nevermind!
- 35: I saw Tonbo Kiyoshi leave town two weeks ago through the northern gate. He was talking to an old man before he left, who was leaning on a cane. The old man headed back into town.

The PCs may also wish to question peasants and other locals more aggressively (or if they seem uncertain of where to start on their own). Doing so is either Intimidation / Willpower or Investigation (Interrogation) / Awareness. A roll of 20 on either will result in a towns person or guard relaying that they didn't know Tonbo Kiyoshi personally, but that he spent a good deal of his time in the local shugenja dojo, and a pair of shrines. If the PCs seem exceptionally lost as to where to investigate, the peasant could also suggest that someone in the market or a guard at the city gates might know more.

The Market

The market is large for a dragon city, and merchant stalls and carts line the street, forming lanes between two rows of wood-sided shops. The scene would not be out of place in a smaller Crane or Unicorn city; merchants and a few samurai from all over the empire wander up and down the aisles. Notably, there are an above average number of shops advertising jewelry and goldsmiths, and a few notable stores that are clearly fronts for commodity goods and metals.

Delicious smells waft up into the air from a noodle shop on the corner, and street vendors shout over the din, hawking various foods and treats.

Goods from all over the empire are available in the market; anything (other than jade) from the base book can be purchased, subject to normal campaign restrictions. Prices are as in the base book, except for gold items, which are at a 10 percent discount.

If the PCs wish to ask around if anyone in the market has seen, associated with, or knows Tonbo Kiyoshi, they will find most merchants quite tight-lipped. Shaking information loose requires **Investigation (Interrogation)** or **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** at TN 25. A peasant will quietly mention that he saw Tonbo Kiyoshi visit a shop named The First Step a couple times last fall. If the PC happened to roll a 35 or higher, the peasant will add with Tonbo Kiyoshi was once seen going into Daikoku's Alley, but that's not a place where obedient peasants go.

The noodle shop is named The Smiling Bowl and has delicious noodle bowls available for one zeni. If the PCs purchase any food, the merchant Cho will happily relay any rumors they failed to roll high enough to obtain earlier. If they buy noodles, and ask about Tonbo Kiyoshi, the roll above is made at +5.

The First Step

The First Step is a large building, constructed of heavy wood slats. The door slides open and reveals a massive warehouse-like shop full of rows upon rows of clothing, sealed barrels marked with kanji, strange leather and metal gear, and a few oddly-designed cloth structures which vaguely resemble large tents.

A large, slightly overweight man with a massive beard and mustache and a deep voice appears from around a corner. "Good afternoon! Welcome to The First Step! Hmmm... what a strong looking group of samurai. Planning an expedition? If so, you have certainly come to the right place. I am Mirumoto Toki, how can I assist you today?"

The proprietor is a gregarious, middle aged, slightly overweight Mirumoto samurai. Mirumoto Toki's store sells mountaineering equipment, a great deal of which might be considered exotic or esoteric by the empire at large, but it is all exceptionally functional. The sealed barrels contain various forms of provisions and foodstuffs, such as dried fish, rice, preserved vegetables, dried biscuits, and other nutritious but easy

to carry staples. The clothes are various forms of winter weather gear, all well made and waterproof, and the strange leather and metal contraptions are gaijin-inspired climbing harnesses. Toki will happily explain all his wares.

If asked about Tonbo Kiyoshi, Toki's friendly demeanor will instantly vanish. "I don't have anything to say about him" is his most likely response. If the PCs present their status as magistrates, he will admit "Yes, that man came into my shop last fall. What more do you want?" then cross his arms gruffly.

He will refuse to answer any further questions unless the players obtain an order of appearance from Bayushi Tenno (Tenno doesn't require convincing to write it), or they can make an appropriate argument that he should assist them (**Courtier [Manipulation] / Awareness** at TN 20) or they simply threaten him (**Intimidation [Bullying] / Willpower** at TN 25). At that point, he will answer questions, but won't actively volunteer information. He knows the following:

- Tonbo Kiyoshi came into his shop twice, once in the fall to arrange supplies for an expedition into the mountains, including food, climbing gear, and winter clothing, and once in the middle of the winter to retrieve it.
- Toki knew that Kiyoshi had attacked Shinjo when he sold him goods.
- Toki reported his meeting with Kiyoshi to one of the castle guards after the Tonbo picked up the equipment. He doesn't know if they did anything about it.
- He surmises that Kiyoshi intends to go into the Dragon mountains but doesn't know why. Kiyoshi only bought enough supplies for one person, which in Toki's opinion is a bad idea; climbing alone is dangerous.

Reaction to being accused: Mirumoto Toki will become angry and blustery. It is not illegal to sell goods, and moreover he reported Kiyoshi to the guards. It is not his fault if the guards didn't arrest him.

If Toki admits to aiding Kiyoshi and the PCs wish to arrest him, Bayushi Tenno will write an arrest warrant for Toki and take him into custody. If Toki doesn't admit to aiding Kiyoshi, Tenno will not write an order to arrest him.

Daikoku's Alley

The street named Daikoku's Alley is not well marked, and finding it takes some time. After the second wrong turn because yet another peasant gave you incorrect directions, you come upon a discarded wooden pallet laying across a narrow opening between two large wooden buildings. Clearly, another wrong turn. But then you hear it, the sounds of commerce. Slipping past the blockade, you emerge into a large open square, surrounded by the backs of shops and warehouses.

The stalls and merchants are dirtier than in the market, and the only clan samurai in sight are a Yasuki and a shifty looking Dragon samurai wearing the mon of the Kitsuki, who are clearly haggling over something. As you enter, an old woman sitting nearby waves you over, "Ah, samurai, welcome. Hmmm... perhaps you took a wrong turn. Maybe this is not the place you intended to be? This may not be a place for fine upstanding samurai, you would not wish to sully your hands with commerce, of course."

The old woman's name is Imani, if the PCs ask. She will politely inform them this is perhaps not a place for honorable samurai, if any PC looks particularly high honor. Otherwise, she will welcome them to the market. She will demure if asked to name the merchants in the market, suggesting the PCs look around for themselves. She herself has a stall full of 'lucky' trinkets.

Staying in the market is a D6 honor loss, as it is clearly full of dubiously-legal goods and shady transactions. Any goods from the core book can be acquired here at a 20 percent discount (other than Jade) if the samurai are willing to not ask any questions about where they can from. For the most part, the goods themselves are mundane and boring. Just of questionable origin; no true contraband or gaijin equipment is present.

The samurai present are Kitsuki Nikaru and Yasuki Hideyoshi. If the PCs approach them, they immediately cease their discussion, and Nikaru will wander off attempting to ignore the new samurai, while Yasuki will smile politely and greet them.

Yasuki Hideyoshi is in town looking to acquire a lost relic, the katana of a Mirumoto. It was lost in the battle of Oosan Uchi almost two hundred years ago. Kitsuki Nikaru has agreed to get it for him, and they were haggling over details. He will readily acknowledge this if the PCs ask.

He is a collector of interesting artifacts, principally weapons, but he is willing to buy anything Awakened. If a PC has a Nemuranai keyworded item, Yasuki Hideyoshi will offer to buy it for 50 koku. He knows nothing about Tonbo Kiyoshi; he arrived in town last week looking to complete a business deal, and there's nothing illegal about shopping.

Kitsuki Nikaru will do his best to evade the PCs; he would rather not speak with them if he can help it. Finding him in the market requires an Investigation (Search) or Hunting (Tracking) / Perception roll at TN 20. If the PC's stop to talk to Hideyoshi first, the TN increases to 25. Nikaru is well aware that the PCs are in town as yoriki to an Emerald Magistrate, and would prefer not to get arrested, since he knows his actions are questionably legal at best.

If the PCs corner him, he will be minimally polite. If the PCs question him about his transactions with Yasukki Hideyoshi, he'll insist it is entirely legal. If they ask about Tonbo Kiyoshi, he will immediately respond with "I ain't answerin' no questions about him unless you give me your word I won't be arrested." If they agree, he'll cooperate, otherwise, he will refuse to speak any further about Kiyoshi. Nikaru knows the following:

- He met Tonbo Kiyoshi last summer, who paid him to locate an artifact called the Knife of the Generous Trader.
- He gave Tonbo Kiyoshi the location of the knife, as well as a list of its safeguards in the fall. It was being held in a secure vault in Shiro Moto. He did give Kiyoshi some advice on how to enter the moto vaults without getting seen by the guards.
- He doesn't know how Tonbo Kiyoshi got the knife from the Moto. It was well guarded, but he speculates that Kiyoshi likely used magic to bypass a great deal of the Moto's precautions.
- He doesn't know how Kiyoshi found out about the knife, but he wasn't paid to worry about such things, he was paid to locate the knife.
- He is pretty sure he saw Tonbo Kiyoshi standing on a balcony of the castle over the winter. He didn't report it to anyone.

Reaction to being accused: If the PCs agreed not to arrest him, Nikaru will smile and agree that he probably violated the laws, if only because he didn't have travel papers when he visited Unicorn lands. However, he will remind the PCs they agreed not to arrest him, and he has been entirely cooperative.

If the PCs did not agree not to arrest him, Nikaru will cite that he has technically committed no crimes nor

admitted to any and they have no grounds for arresting him.

Absent the players lying to him, Bayushi Tenno has no interest in writing an order to question or arrest Yasuki Hideyoshi. Convincing Tenno to order questioning of Nikaru is difficult, since the PCs don't technically have evidence Nikaru violated any laws; if the PCs make a convincing argument (**Courtier [Manipulation] / Awareness** at TN 25) or simply lie (**Sincerity [Deceit] / Awareness** at TN 35), Tenno will write the order to question Nikaru.

Questioning Nikaru will be fruitless, as he refuses to answer any questions unless the PCs agree to release him without charges or he is tortured (which the PCs can legally do, if they have an order to question). If so, he will answer as above. If Nikaru admits to having seen Kiyoshi without reporting it and providing Kiyoshi with information on how to obtain the knife, Tenno will agree to write an arrest warrant for him, otherwise Tenno will not. If the PCs gave their word not to arrest Nikaru, doing so anyway is a D0 honor loss.

The Dojo

The principle dojo of the Tonbo Shugenja school is an unassuming structure at first glance; it appears to be little more than a small temple and an enclosed yard. You are welcomed inside by a young man in the iridescent robes of an acolyte, who bows low to you as you arrive. "Greetings, samurai-sama. I am Tonbo Cho. Please, be welcome in our temple. If you will follow me, the abbot is expecting you."

Cho leads the PCs inside the building, which is filled with fountains and sculptures, before emerging into a beautiful rock garden, complete with a small waterfall and reflecting pool. Seated beside the pool is a middle aged samurai-ko in the colors and iconography of the Tonbo. She smiles as you approach, while Cho bows low and leaves.

"Ah, good day, yoriki-sama. It is wonderful to see you. Please, sit with me. I am Tonbo Megumi, how can I help you walk your path? Perhaps some time spent contemplating the waterfall, a perfect example of the water and earth kami working in concert."

The PCs maybe curious why the abbot was expecting them; if they ask, she will just smile, laugh, and tell them not to worry about such things. If they insist, she will explain that a messenger saw them coming and informed her.

The City Gates

Tonbo Megumi has been the head sensei of the Tonbo Shugenja school for the past 15 years, though she will readily admit that Tonbo Koryado easily exceeds her ability to speak to the kami. She is a jovial woman who will happily engage the PCs in small talk or spiritual discussions.

If the PCs bring up Tonbo Kiyoshi, she sighs deeply and shakes her head, “He has walked an unfortunate path. His choices reflect poorly upon all of us. I tried to counsel him, but I do not think he has heeded my advice.”

Megumi will not be evasive or dishonest but is quite convinced she did nothing wrong. She knows the following:

- Tonbo Kiyoshi studied at the academy but would frequently surprise his sensei with new techniques that he learned from his father between lessons, much to the consternation of his instructors.
- Kiyoshi is considered a master of the Tonbo Shugenja school (rank 5).
- Kiyoshi last came in for lessons during the fall, before the assassination. He is an exceptionally capable shugenja, easily her equal, and inferior in power perhaps only to his father.
- Kiyoshi is an exceptionally skilled diviner. Megumi suspects he might have some minor prophetic ability.
- During their last lesson together, Kiyoshi asked if she knew anything about how to destroy nemuranai. Nemuranai aren't her area of expertise and she was unable to advise him.
- If asked directly about when she last saw Tonbo Kiyoshi, she will tell the PCs he came to visit during the winter. He was having trouble calling upon the kami and wanted help. She told him that the elements were likely offended by his actions and that he should atone for his misdeeds. She did not report this meeting to the guards or any other authorities.

Reaction to being accused: Megumi will be upset if accused; she advised Kiyoshi to turn himself in to balance his karma, but it is not her place to do more than that. It is his responsibility to choose his own path, for better or for worse. He has made mistakes, but they are his mistakes, not hers.

If the PCs wish to arrest her, Bayushi Tenno will be somewhat incredulous. If the PCs are insistent, especially if they mention that she should have reported a meeting with the criminal, he will relent and write the arrest order.

The walls that encircle the city of Kyuden Tonbo are high and well-fortified, with two massive gates allowing access to the rest of the valley and one obviously less fortified gate leading up into the mountains. Guards walk their patrols along the wide battlements atop the wall, constantly watching the valley. Groups of bushi wearing the mons of the Mirumoto school and the Tonbo family stop every traveler and caravan as they enter the city, checking papers and inspecting wagons.

The gate leading up into the mountains is even more watchfully guarded; a captain checks each traveler's permission papers, only allowing those with the express permission of the Dragon to enter the Dragon Mountains proper.

The thoroughness of the guards would please even the most ardent Lion samurai and the organization would earn the approval of the Kaiu. Kyuden Tonbo fulfills its function as gatekeeper of the Dragon exceedingly well, even with the influx of post-winter travelers swarming the city.

The city has a very large number of guards. Talking to them all is impractical at best. The attitude of the guards in general is best summarized as 'incredulous'. They are not strictly uncooperative or hostile, but neither are they interested in volunteering any extra information to the PCs. If the PCs insist on questioning or hassling individual guards, they will all politely but firmly refer them to the current captain on duty, Tonbo Shige.

There are three captains who rotate duties coordinating the other guards shifts, assignments, and who personally supervise the gate which leads into the Dragon mountains. They are Tonbo Atsushi, Tonbo Shige, and Tonbo Jiro.

Tonbo Shige is currently on duty watching the northern gate which leads into the Dragon mountains proper. Tonbo Shige is a young man, in his late 20's, short, and severe looking. He is curt but takes the PCs very seriously. He will leave another guard in charge of the gate, and step away to answer the PCs questions immediately.

Tonbo Shige knows the following:

- The other two guard captains are Tonbo Atsushi and Tonbo Jiro. Jiro is the senior captain, and Atsushi is the second most senior. Shige is the newest of the three.

- Atsushi is exceptionally dedicated to training and preparedness, both his own and for the entire guard corp. Atsushi has doubled the required training time for all guards since the incident this fall. Shige speculates that Atsushi is concerned given the political climate.
- Tonbo Shige has never met Tonbo Kiyoshi.
- He heard rumors that Kiyoshi was in the city over the winter and tried to locate him but was unsuccessful. Tonbo Jiro decided this was a waste of time and suspended the investigation.
- Shige guards the north gate most often of the three captains and does not recall seeing any specifically unusual travelers or ronin leaving the city.
- Shige thinks Kiyoshi's actions were inexcusable and he should be apprehended and punished.

Reaction if accused: Shige will calmly reiterate that he has never met Tonbo Kiyoshi, tried to investigate rumors that he was in town, and will aid the PCs in any way they require. But he was not involved, and if the PCs are insistent, will demand an order of appearance before answering any further questions.

Tonbo Atsushi is currently in the guard dojo, practicing his techniques. Tonbo Atsushi is tall, lanky, and has a nose that has obviously been broken multiple times. He will be mildly annoyed at the PCs for interrupting his lessons and will initially be somewhat out of breath while speaking with them. He will give the PCs only the minimum answers necessary, volunteering no details they didn't specifically ask. While Atsushi suspects that Jiro knows something, he will not lie to cover for Jiro; however, he doesn't intend to volunteer these opinions if the investigators don't specifically ask.

Tonbo Atsushi knows the following:

- Tonbo Atsushi suspects the Unicorn will soon seek revenge for Kiyoshi's actions, and has begun subtly preparing the guards for an attack. Shige and Jiro are much less concerned about the Unicorn and this worries Atsushi.
- The other two guard captains are Tonbo Shige and Tonbo Jiro. Tonbo Jiro is the senior captain, but Tonbo Atsushi does most of the day to day work
- Tonbo Atsushi has only met Tonbo Kiyoshi twice, and has no real opinion on the man, other than as the daimyo's son he deserves respect.
- Tonbo Atsushi heard rumors that Tonbo Kiyoshi was in the city over the winter, but Tonbo Jiro dismissed the idea of investigating. Atsushi is convinced that Kiyoshi was in the city.
- Tonbo Atsushi is suspicious that Jiro knows something about Tonbo Kiyoshi; during the late

winter Jiro took all the evening shifts at the north gate, then suddenly went back to his normal morning shifts about two weeks ago.

Reaction if accused: Tonbo Atsushi will cross his arms, and politely but firmly ask the PCs to leave and come back with an order of appearance or order of arrest before he will speak with them further. If they have one, he will continue to answer questions as above.

Tonbo Jiro is currently eating his dinner in the guard barracks and preparing to go to sleep. His rotation is in the morning, so has finished with his duty for today. He is genial and will invite the PCs to sit and eat with him. He is a handsome man in his late 30's, with a short but excellently manicured beard. He will be jovial and friendly with the PCs as they question him, until they accuse him of something. He will also outright lie to the PCs about some topics, as indicated below. **Investigation (Interrogation) / Awareness** at TN 25 to realize any given statement is a lie.

Tonbo Jiro knows the following:

- Jiro is the senior captain of the three. Shige is young and idealistic, while Atsushi is politically savvy and meticulously prepared. Jiro appreciates both for their unique skills. He thinks the three make a good team.
- Jiro has met Tonbo Kiyoshi many times and considered him a friend.
- Jiro doesn't know why Tonbo Kiyoshi attacked Shinjo Hazumi.
- **Lie:** Jiro believes that Tonbo Kiyoshi likely fled from Rokugan into the Burning Sands after attacking Shinjo, or possibly into Scorpion lands. Coming back to a place where many people could recognize him would be foolish. **Truth:** Jiro knew Tonbo Kiyoshi was in the city during the winter and was staying at the castle.
- **Lie:** Jiro hasn't seen Tonbo Kiyoshi since the fall. **Truth:** Jiro was on guard duty when Tonbo Kiyoshi left the city two weeks ago through the Northern Gate, on the road leading into the Dragon Mountains. An old man was with him when he left the city.
- **Lie:** Tonbo Kiyoshi spent a great deal of time at the Tonbo Shugenja dojo, and often confided in his sensei and asked her advice on critical matters. **Truth:** Kiyoshi idolized his father and turned to him for advice on most matters.

Reaction if accused: Tonbo Jiro will immediately take offense if the PCs accuse him of wrongdoing, and

demand a duel be scheduled. Obviously, that will take time and permission from lords will need to be acquired. Unless tortured, he will refuse to answer any further questions. Any PC with ranks in Lore: Law, or that can pass a **Lore: Law / Intelligence** roll at TN 25 knows that a challenge is not a legal pretext to avoid answering questions and can be considered noncooperation (which would normally result in the use of torture to compel answers).

Bayushi Tenno will issue orders of appearance for any of the three guard captains if the PCs request it. However, Bayushi Tenno has no interest in issuing arrest warrants for either Tonbo Shige or Tonbo Atsushi, unless the PCs decide to lie to him about their involvement, in which case their **Sincerity (Deceit) / Awareness** must beat his **Investigation (Interrogation) / Awareness**.

Tenno will not take much convincing at all to write an order of appearance or arrest for Tonbo Jiro. If a PC has accepted a duel from Jiro, Tenno will point out that legal proceedings take precedence over duels, and that his authorization papers give him the discretion to sanction, or dismiss, any challenge in the name of the Emerald Champion.

Tenno will insist on all going in together, in case the PCs suggest splitting the party.

The Infinite Lotus

One of two primary shrines in the city, the Infinite Lotus stands at the center of an intricate rock garden, with looping and spiraling paths radiating from the building, twisting and turning back on themselves, wending their way through immaculately manicured stones, plants, and small ponds. Individuals and groups of samurai from all clans wander throughout the garden as you approach the central building.

Picking your way through the paths to the shrine, you step into a large pagoda-roofed building, lined with plinths holding depictions of the seven Fortunes. The hall is long and wide, and the smell of incense wafts through the air. Samurai and commoners alike pray in front of the statues of many fortunes, while the sound of offerings clink into plates.

A monk, a tall lanky man, wearing the green of the Dragon clan and with a body covered in tattoos approaches as you step across the threshold. "Greetings, samurai, greetings. I am Togashi Iwao, and I maintain this shrine. Here, some incense, and if there's anything you need, do not hesitate to ask." He

presses a stick of incense into your hand, then turns and swiftly walks away to tend to a nearby parishioner.

There are no monks present other than Togashi Iwao. Given the size of the shrine, this is unusual. Iwao makes liberal use of his tattoos to assist him in the maintenance of the shrine, though usually not when parishioners could see him do so and will not mention this unless directly asked.

Most of the parishioners here are from out of town and will not be any help with the case, though they are another source of the gossip from earlier in this section.

If Togashi Iwao is questioned, he will genially answer questions, but a perceptive samurai (Investigation (Interrogation) / Awareness at TN 30) will notice that he is nervous about something while answering.

Togashi Iwao knows the following:

- He has known Tonbo Kiyoshi for years. Kiyoshi used to come in frequently and they'd have philosophical debates.
- He considered Kiyoshi a friend.
- One night last summer, Kiyoshi came to the temple and began asking strange questions. Iwao could tell that Kiyoshi felt conflicted about something but wasn't able to get him to say what. (Iwao will avoid talking about these if possible)
- Before he left for Unicorn lands, Kiyoshi visited the temple and told Iwao his plan. He said that he had a vision, a vision of doom for the Empire, and asked Iwao what he would do. Iwao thought about it and answered that saving the Empire was always the most important thing, even if that meant lying or committing crimes. It's what Togashi-kami would have done.
- Tonbo Kiyoshi returned to city after attacking Shinjo Hazumi, and Iwao let him stay in the temple for the first few days. After that Kiyoshi left and Iwao hasn't seen him since.

Reaction to being accused: Togashi Iwao will attempt to flee. He'll activate his Centipede tattoo and run. He'll take a Round to clear the temple during which the PCs can easily attack him without much concern for range, but after that he will be exceptionally difficult to catch as he moves 300 feet per round. If the players have clever ways to capture him, they should be given a reasonable chance to succeed; Iwao's escape should not be assured sooner than the second round of combat. If he's dropped to the Injured rank or below, he will immediately

surrender. Once he surrenders, he will answer any and all questions.

Bayushi Tenno will be hesitant to issue an order of appearance for the monk, since serving monks with legal documents is always politically fraught. However, if the PCs are insistent, he will acquiesce and do so, especially if they have a compelling reason. If the PCs uncover that Iwao sheltered Kiyoshi after the crime or if Iwao attempts to flee, Tenno will write an arrest warrant for him, otherwise he will not.

Shrine to Thunder

The largest shrine in the city is a strange sight. The building is a great structure of stone and wood, with a huge stone dragon carved into the frieze. The massive wooden doors stand shut, no petitioners enter, and no monks emerge. The only soul in sight of the large building is a single emaciated elderly beggar, who sits slumped against the building, brown robes pulled around himself, with a ceramic plate sitting at his feet as he sleeps.

As you approach the temple, the old man starts and awakens.

“Greetings samurai-sama! I... uhh... welcome to the Shrine to the Dragon of Thunder! I am sorry, but I think it’s closed. This one is Eichi, perhaps he can help?” With a cough, the old man pushes his plate towards the assembled samurai.

Eichi is an elderly peasant and not a monk. He knows that all the monks left at the end of the fall, before winter set in. The temple has been empty, so he has been living in a shack behind the temple and taking care of the grounds. He has no idea why the monks left. He doesn’t know where they went.

If the PCs are feeling particularly lost as to where to investigate, Eichi could helpfully tell them the Infinite Spiral is a tourist trap and not to trust the monk who runs it. He also has strong opinions about the guards, though he won’t badmouth them to a clan samurai under normal circumstances. If there is a ronin, monk, or a samurai with Hero of the People, Eichi will helpfully inform them that of the three guard captains, Tonbo Shige is nice, Tonbo Atsushi is uptight but respectable, and that Tonbo Jiro is a complete asshole who can’t be trusted. Lastly, there is a semi-legal market called Daikoku’s Alley that he stays far away from; unsavory types congregate there.

Eichi has no idea who Tonbo Kiyoshi is and has never met him. Bayushi Tenno has no interest in ordering Eichi questioned or arrested.

If the PCs wish to investigate the temple proper, it’s not locked but trespassing is a minor breach of etiquette. The shrine is empty and has begun to accumulate dust. There is a large statue of the Thunder Dragon and sitting in front of the statue is a jade statue of Tonbo Toryu, the first oracle of Thunder.

The Castle of Kyuden Tonbo

The Castle of Kyuden Tonbo is more a compound of buildings than a true castle, but the tiered pagoda-topped tower rising from the center is none-the-less impressive. In the sun it sparkles with all the colors of the rainbow. Imperious guards stand in front of the closed doors, and no one enters or leaves, aside from the occasional servant on an errand or delivery.

As the PCs approach, a guard wearing shining green and gold armor holds out a hand, “I apologize, samurai, but the lord of the house is quite busy today. Tonbo-dono apologizes. Perhaps if you come back tomorrow, he will have time to see you.”

Kyuden Tonbo is essentially closed to the players until they are ready to proceed to Part Two. The guards will absolutely deny them entry, and the castle is warded by powerful magic. Infiltration is effectively impossible.

Bayushi Tenno certainly has the authority to demand entry but doing so is both a violation of Courtesy and incredibly politically fraught.

If the PCs have significant evidence (testimony from three or more samurai, Jiro’s admissions counting as two) Tenno will agree that investigation of the castle proper is warranted, and the PCs may move on to Part Two. Once they enter the castle, further investigation of the town will be difficult, so give them a chance to finish any investigation they wish to do in the city before they proceed as a group to the castle.

Part Two: Father Knows Best

Bayushi Tenno, with immaculate calligraphy, finishes drafting the Order of Appearance.

“Yoriki, you have done well so far, but I must stress the gravity of what we are about to do. Serving an order to the daimyo of a great clan family is not

something taken lightly. Be careful, for you represent the Emerald Champion directly, for good or for ill.”

With a sigh, Tenno stamps the document with his seal, and hands it to you. “Do not delay, one way or another I suspect we will not be welcome in the city much longer. I will begin packing our things.”

The Castle of Kyuden Tonbo is more a compound of buildings than a true castle, but the tiered pagoda-topped tower rising from the center is none-the-less impressive. In the sun it sparkles with all the colors of the rainbow. Imperious guards stand in front of the closed doors and no one enters or leaves aside from the occasional servant.

After a moment reading your papers and a hasty conference, the guards open the gates and escort you into the tower proper. You climb five sets of stairs winding your way up the tower before emerging into an audience chamber. The walls are lined with statues of the fortunes. At the head of the chamber is a small dais. An elderly man sits flanked by a squad of bushi in brilliant green armor. He beckons you forwards with a wheeze and a cough.

“I am Tonbo Koryado, and you are in my home.” He gestures to the man standing at his side, “This is my son Takeshi. I know why you are here, so speak your piece and ask your questions.”

Tonbo Koryado is old and very sick, but his mind is still sharp. It is obvious to him that the samurai are in the city searching for his son and intend to arrest him. Koryado will not lie to the PCs, but also does not intend to allow them to apprehend his son.

Here are some sample answers that Koryado might give to questions. Tonbo Kiyoshi discussed his plan with his father and his father approved because it was necessary to protect the Empire. Koryado is not proud or pleased with Kiyoshi’s but is grimly resigned to their necessity.

Where is your son: “My son Tonbo Takeshi is right here. But I presume you mean Kiyoshi. He is on his way to Tamori’s Furnace.”

Why is he going to Tamori’s Furnace: Koryado gives you a wry smile, “I don’t know, I didn’t ask. He said it was the next step along his path.”

Was your son here this winter? “Yes, of course.”

Did you know your son was going to attack Shinjo Hazumi? “Yes. He told me of his vision and his plan.”

Why did Tonbo Kiyoshi attack Shinjo Hazumi?

“He saw a vision, a terrible vision. A future where Shinjo Hazumi’s actions plunge the empire into darkness. Stopping her was the only way to save the empire.”

Why didn’t you stop him? Tonbo Kiyoshi smiles sadly, “We each have our own paths to walk, samurai. Sometimes, saving the Empire requires doing things we are not proud of. But in the end, all that matters is that the Empire is safe.”

What he did was illegal! “Shinjo’s choices would doom the Empire. We are all servants of the Emperor, and it is never illegal to save him from a threat.”

What was this vision? “A great dark cloud rises in the south, roiling and churning. The cloud cries out in pain and anger, and Shinjo Hazumi sheds a tear for it. The cloud reaches for her, and she opens the door for it, allowing it into the Empire. Then the Empire burns as the cloud consumes everything.”

How did he get the Knife of the Generous Trader? “The what?” (if explained to him, the answer is “I don’t know”)

If a PC happens to ask about Tonbo Takeshi’s reaction during the questioning, he is becoming more and more uncomfortable with his father’s responses as the discussion goes on and is clearly not in favor of his father’s choices.

If the PC’s attempt to arrest Tonbo Koryado, formally accuse him, or move to leave without accusing or attempting to arrest Koryado:

Koryado coughs, and then gestures to the Mirumoto at his side: “I apologize, yoriki, but I cannot let you stop my son. His task is crucial to the survival of the empire. The Emerald Champion is in this matter mistaken. Guards, stop them.”

The guards step forward to surround you, then Tonbo Takeshi steps away from his father. “No, father, this is wrong. We must obey the Emerald Champion. Guards, let them go.”

A moment of confusion passes between the guards. Some continue forwards towards you and draw their weapons, one looks back and forth between Takeshi and Koryado then drops to his knees and pulls his wakizashi, and a few others interpose themselves between you and the advancing guards.

The room dissolves almost instantly into a swirling chaotic melee.

Tonbo Koryado and Tonbo Takeshi do not meaningfully participate in the combat. If the PCs mass-debuff the Mirumoto, Tonbo Koryado will act on Initiative 0 to Banish the debuff.

Tonbo Bushi equal to the number of combat capable PCs engage them directly. If the average rank of PCs is 3 or higher use the [high-rank] Tonbo Bushi instead.

Tonbo Bushi

School/Rank: Mirumoto Bushi 2

Initiative: 5k3

Armor TN: 29 (light armor) **Reduction:** 3

Wounds: 15 (+0), 21 (+3), 27 (+5), 33 (+10), 39 (+15), 45 (+20), 51 (Down, +40), 57 (Out)

Attack: 8k3 (Katana, Complex)

Damage: 6k2 (Katana)

Air 3 Earth 3 Fire 3 Water 2 Void 2

Honor: 4.5 Status: 2.0 Glory: 2.0

Primary Skills: Kenjutsu 5, Jiujutsu 2

Special Mechanics: Can raise or lower the TN of spells targeting them by 5.

[High-Rank] Tonbo Bushi

School/Rank: Mirumoto Bushi 3

Initiative: 6k3

Armor TN: 31 (light armor) **Reduction:** 3

Wounds: 15 (+0), 21 (+3), 27 (+5), 33 (+10), 39 (+15), 45 (+20), 51 (Down, +40), 57 (Out)

Attack: 9k4 (Katana, Simple)

Damage: 7k2 (Katana)

Air 3 Earth 3 Fire 4 Water 3 Void 3

Honor: 4.5 Status: 2.0 Glory: 2.5

Primary Skills: Kenjutsu (Katana) 5, Jiujutsu 3

Special Mechanics: Can raise or lower the TN of spells targeting them by 5.

After the combat is finished:

As the chaos in the audience chamber subsides, Tonbo Koryado bows his head, as his son looms over him. "Father, you must surrender to these samurai."

Koryado wordlessly nods, rises, and leaning heavily upon his cane is escorted from the room by a pair of bushi.

Tonbo Takeshi bows to you, "I am sorry, samurai. I will ensure you have whatever provisions you need for the next stage of your investigation, and that the guards will allow you into the mountains. If you mean to

apprehend my brother, then you must move quickly. Good luck."

With a bow, you are escorted out of the castle and back to the Inn. Bayushi Tenno waits, leaning heavily on his cane, while a group of peasants load your horses as well as a wagon full of cold weather gear and mountaineering provisions. Tenno raises an eyebrow at you and your escort of Tonbo bushi, then allows a peasant to help him into the wagon.

"I expect you have something of an interesting report. Especially since these helpful dragon peasants arrived with provisions just a few minutes ago."

Once the PCs have had a chance to deliver a report to Bayushi Tenno, move on to Part Three. Tenno will insist on haste, so spending further time in the city is impossible, though peasants will be happy to retrieve any specific provisions that the PCs request.

If the PCs wish to carry out sentence on Tonbo Koryado, they can do so if they wish.

Part Three: The Great Climb

The trip into the Dragon mountains is easy at first, the road between Kyuden Tonbo and Shiro Kitsuki is wide and well-travelled. Even this early in the spring caravans have begun to travel both into the dragon mountains with food and down into the empire laden with metals. The Dragon samurai are accommodating, especially after seeing Bayushi Tenno's papers. He changes horses twice as you travel, in order to press on ever faster.

The road continues north to Water Hammer City, and snow is an ever more regular sight alongside it. After you pass Water Hammer City, the road narrows and heads directly into the foothills surrounding the ancient volcano.

Within the week, you arrive at the foot of the massive mountain known as the Wrath of the Kami. The peak and slopes are still covered in snow, winter unwilling to relinquish its grip upon the volcano or the road. A single set of foot prints, perhaps a day or two old, are the only signs of travel on the road.

Bayushi Tenno holds up a hand, and the peasant driving the wagon stops. "Samurai, I am afraid this is far as I dare go. Having a hobbled man and a wagon would only slow your climb. I have prepared an order

of arrest and travel papers for you. Good luck, I shall await your return. Do you have any final questions?"

If the PCs have any final questions for Bayushi Tenno, he will answer them now.

Take horses up the mountain is possible but could be dangerous. What provisions the players wish to take with them up the mountain is largely up to them; Bayushi Tenno has stocked the wagon for this eventuality, so he should be able to accommodate any **reasonable** request (no jade, no gaijin gear, etc). Once the PCs begin their way up the mountain, Tenno turn the wagon to return to the Inn that was a couple of hours back down the road.

Tracking Tonbo Kiyoshi up the mountain from here is relatively easy; the snow is fresh, and he has made no effort to disguise his footprints.

Once the players are ready to head up the mountain:

You begin to trudge up the snow-covered road, your feet sinking in as you walk, leaving deep footprints behind.

By the end of the first hour the effort of climbing through the snow keeps you warm against the chill mountain air. By the end of the second, you are mildly fatigued, but resolute. By the end of the third, the wear of walking through shin deep snow begins to set in, and the wind bites at your face and any exposed skin.

Everyone should make a Raw **Stamina** roll at TN 15, anyone that fails is Fatigued until Part Five. Clever ways to avoid either the cold (such as exceptionally warm clothing) or to mitigate the trudging (walking in eachothers tracks, snow shoes, etc) should earn a Free Raise.

In the fourth hour of your climb, the sun begins to drop low in the sky, and the wind picks up. You round a bend in the road, and before you is a solid sheet of ice; a frozen river. An old grey wooden bridge crosses it, though the bridge is coated with snow and ice, and the timbers have clearly split in places. An intricate spiderweb of cracks traces the surface of the river, with water visible and flowing beneath, then shortly tumbling over a waterfall perhaps thirty feet beyond you.

Tellingly, there is a place where the bridge is missing a rail, and below that is a hole in the ice. The tracks end at the section of missing rail, then resume from the hole, and proceed up the mountain.

The wind picks up, an icy breeze assaulting you as you regard the bridge.

Obviously, magic can get the PCs across the icy bridge easily. The kami in the area are angry and resistant to entreaties, though this has no effect on spell casting TN's. Alternatively, a Summon (Water or Air) with four Raises could placate the kami directly and make rolls to cross the bridge unnecessary. The spell slots of any spells used to circumvent or resolve the bridge situation are expended for the remaining duration of the module.

Alternatively, PCs might come up with a clever way to either bridge the river themselves (fashioning a bridge from nearby trees would be **Engineering / Intelligence** at TN 20) or otherwise mitigate the hazards due to ice and wind.

If a PC wishes to just walk across the bridge, it's a **Reflexes** roll at TN 15 to avoid falling into the river (they might slip, or a timber of the bridge might break or the wind could suddenly throw them off balance, etc), or a **Horsemanship / Reflexes** roll at TN 25 to avoid falling in if they are mounted. A PC that is walking their horse across must roll for themselves, but the horse will pass automatically.

If a PC slips off the bridge and falls, they crash through the thin ice of the river and end up in the frigid water below. They take 5 damage and have to pull themselves out before they impact the rocks at the mouth of the water fall. They can either pull themselves out with a Raw **Strength** at TN 15 or someone else can do so. A rope or similarly clever device should give a Free Raise. Use your judgement. On a success, they pull themselves out. On a failure, they impact the rocks then must climb out from there, taking 15 damage.

If a PC doesn't do something to get immediately warm (building a fire, changing clothes, etc) after falling into the water, they will suffer mild hypothermia, and be Fatigued for the rest of the module.

Only one PC at the most will fall into the river; the conditions at the bridge are caused by the anger of the air and water kami in the area, and they will only knock at most one samurai into the water.

If the PCs have questions about the tracks, a **Hunting (Tracking) / Perception** Roll at TN 15 will tell them that their quarry clearly rested for some time on the far side of the river, and that they're gaining on whomever made the tracks.

After another hour of travel, the sun begins to sink low into the sky. You round a bend in the road as it traces the mountain, and the wind disappears as you step out onto a plateau directly in the lee of the volcano. Before you is the entirety of the Emerald Empire, shaded by the glowing yellow of Lord Sun as he prepares to set in the west.

You take a moment to rest and drink in the view as Lord Sun slips from the sky. High above you, a small ominous cloud billows from the peak of the volcano, then for a second the ground beneath your feet seems to shake and the sounds of crashing and grinding just barely reach your ears from far off on the mountain.

Pushing on further up the mountain at night is basically suicide, absent magic or techniques to see in the dark and deal with the rising winds and dropping temperatures. If the PCs decide to press on, use your judgement as to the hazards the cold and the wind present, but they should be harsh until the PCs decide to camp.

This plateau is an ideal place to camp for the night. There are no threats during the night, though the PCs shouldn't realize that. If they have questions about the area, emphasize the natural beauty but danger of the mountain.

If the PCs have questions about the tracks, a **Hunting (Tracking) / Perception** Roll at TN 15 will tell them that their quarry did not stop at this plateau, but the tracks are exceptionally fresh and were clearly made within the last two days or so.

After breaking camp, you resume your trek up the mountain road, with the wind soon resuming its howl, whipping the snow into your faces, and biting at your skin. It threatens to obliterate what remains of the trail, so you are forced to hasten your pace, until you encounter a fork. The right branch goes straight up the mountain, towards the dojo that you know is situated on the rim of the volcano. The left branch turns and heads around the side of the mountain, without changing elevation.

There is a small clearing in the snow, where someone obviously spent time, including a ring of stones, brushed clean ground, and disturbed snow leading to the tree line.

This is a campsite where Tonbo Kiyoshi spent the night two days ago. There are a few items of interest here:

The Campsite / Ring of stones:

A ring of stones has been hastily arranged at the edge of the fork, and there is cleared snow and many tracks surrounding it.

Investigation (Search) / Perception at TN 20:

Someone stayed here for the night, built this improvised firepit themselves, and made a fire. They also spent a good deal of time pacing back and forth near the fire, trampling down the snow. The tracks are large and show a strange clear cross-hatch pattern, rather than a normal footprint from a boot or sandal.

Disturbed snow:

A large area of snow adjacent to the trail has been disturbed. There is clear evidence that someone walked far enough off the trail to reach the nearby tree line.

Hunting or Investigation (Search) / Perception at TN 20:

You hunt through the trees and find a cast-off sack in the snow underneath a small fallen fir tree branch. Opening it, there is a large cloak coated in ice, a high-quality kimono in the green of the Dragon, and a rougher brown kimono with no clan markings.

There have been several branches snapped off the trees, most small, that were dragged back towards the campsite.

Tracks:

A single set of tracks heads along the left branch of the trail. There are no visible tracks heading up the right path.

Hunting (Tracking) / Perception at TN 15: The tracks are fresh, made within the last day or so. Following them is easy.

Calling upon the Kami:

As before, the Kami in this area are very angry, so any spells slots expended to call upon them will not be refunded during the module.

The kami can answer any question above, as well as providing some context. Two nights ago, Tonbo Kiyoshi camped here, and spent the time either huddled around the fire, or pacing up around at the fork. He was suffering from an imbalance of Fire and Water in his body (he was suffering from hypothermia and frostbite). He left after spending the night here to continue along the right trail and is not too far away. The Kami are very mad at Kiyoshi specifically.

If the PCs choose to defy logic and continue up the right-hand branch: It is obvious there are no tracks on this road, and they will make it approximately an hour before encountering a rock slide that forces them to turn back. Increase the TNs of any fatigue rolls by 5 for the rest of the module.

Presuming the PCs continue along the left-hand branch:

Part Four: Out of the Frying Pan

You follow the tracks along the side of the mountain, pulling your cloaks close around you against the bitter cold. You travel for an hour, and as you do so you notice the trail becomes increasingly strewn with loose rocks and small debris.

The road begins a series of switchbacks as it winds up a sharp face of the mountain. The road is shielded from the wind and is consequently largely snow-free and you can see a gully deep below full of ice and rocks. It does not take long before your goal comes into sight; far above you is a yawning entrance, a well-built archway leading into the mountain itself.

A few minutes later, the ground beneath your feet lurches. It lasts perhaps a second and a few loose bits of gravel fall from the peak far above you, scattering along the trail. Then a second lurch, slightly stronger and slightly longer.

Redoubling your pace, you make for the gateway, hoping to reach your destination before nightfall and before anything comes of the mountain's rumbling.

An hour later, with the gateway nearly before you, the rumbling resumes, one shake is quiet, and small rocks bounce across the trail, but the second is far more severe, lasting seconds. You struggle to keep your footing, and a crashing noise comes from far above you. The mountain itself seems to rain down, as large rocks and boulders bounce down the slopes towards you.

The PCs have a few options here:

Run for the tunnel: The PC makes a break for the gateway. **Athletics (Running) / Water** at TN 25 to make it into the shelter of the mountain before a rock hits them. Failure results in taking 1k1 damage plus 1k0 for every 5 they failed the roll.

Dodge the rocks: The PC attempts to avoid the boulders as they fall, dodging out of the way. **Defense / Reflexes** at TN 25. Failure results in damage equal to 1k1 plus the amount the check is failed by.

Shelter: You hunker down, hoping to outlast the boulders and mitigate the worst of the rockslide. Raw **Stamina** at TN 20. The PC takes damage equal to the amount they fail the roll by, if they do.

If the PCs come up with a clever or inventive way to avoid the falling boulders, allow them to make a check at an appropriate skill.

The earthquake subsides after the initial slew of boulders bombards the PCs. As before, magic used to avoid or mitigate the rock slide should work, but any slots used to do so are expended for the remainder of the module. If the PCs wish, they can take a few minutes to prepare before going into the volcano.

The yawning maw of the mountain opens into darkness. Along the edge of the tunnel sit unlit braziers and a sack of torches. With a crack of flint, the torches sputter to life, glowing warmly in the chill air and casting flickering shadows on the walls of the tunnel.

The path twists down through the mountain, and sparkles of gold and iron reflect off the walls and ceiling as you walk. The air grows ever slightly warmer while you travel and seems to push against your face. It is not long before you encounter the first fork in the trail, and without the benefit of tracks in the snow, it is not entirely clear which way is down. Near each passageway, cut deep into the stone wall, is a set of strange symbols.

The symbols are contained in **Player Handout 4**.

If a player has Languages: Yobanjin, they can simply read the symbols: They are Air, Earth, and Fire.

The path marked Fire leads towards the volcano and is the correct one. The others also lead to the Furnace, but contain traps constructed long ago by Tamori himself.

The PCs might try a variety of approaches to figure out which way Tonbo Kiyoshi went. If they come up with something inventive, give them an appropriate skill roll.

Some possible approaches:

Tracking Kiyoshi's footsteps: Hunting (Tracking) / Perception at TN 25. Failure by less than 10 is inconclusive, failure by more than 10 suggests the Earth path.

Looking for which path is most worn: Investigation (Notice) or Hunting (Trailblazing)

/ Perception at TN 30. Failure by more than 10 suggests the Air path.

Checking which path heads down sharpest: Engineering / Perception at TN 25. Failure by more than 10 suggests the Earth path.

Deciphering the symbols: Lore: Gaijin or Lore: Languages / Intelligence at TN 30. Failure is inconclusive. Alternatively, **Games: Puzzles / Intelligence** at TN 35 might succeed.

Asking the Kami: A Commune with 2 Raises for clarity is required, but the Kami can identify that he took the Fire path. Spell slots expended are not recovered for the duration of the module, as before.

Fire: (right)

Continue to Part Five.

Air: (left)

The trigger mechanism for this trap is air magic, in case a PC has a specific immunity to Wards or other mechanical effect that interacts with them. If so, give them an appropriate roll to detect or defeat the trap. Otherwise, this trap is quite invisible and there is no useful way to detect. Use your judgement.

The path continues, first at a somewhat level grade, then beginning a sharp series of switchbacks as it descends rapidly before leveling off once-more. You emerge into a slightly more open, almost round area of the path, with a ceiling rising above you. The air in front of you smells slightly of rotten eggs for a moment, and as the first of you is about to leave the chamber, the smell surges, and nausea threatens to overtake you.

Whoever is in front and whoever is in back gain a free raise. If the PCs didn't declare it, choose at your discretion.

Everyone must roll Raw **Stamina** at TN 15. Everyone that fails is Fatigued for the rest of the module.

Continue to Part Five.

Earth: (center)

The path continues its gentle downward slope, beginning a sharp series of switchbacks as it descends before leveling off. You emerge into a slightly wider portion of corridor, with obvious worked stone on both

sides of you. The area of the path, with a ceiling rising above you. The air in front of you smells slightly of rotten eggs for a moment, and as the first of you is about to leave the chamber, the smell surges, and nausea threatens to overtake all of you.

The trigger mechanism for this trap is quite mundane; the tunnel floor is held up by a break-away slat. If a PC has a specific advantage or technique that gives a bonus against traps, it should apply here. Also, anyone with Engineering 5 or higher gains a Free Raise.

Everyone makes **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** rolls at TN 20. If multiple people fail, whomever rolls lowest triggers the trap. If everyone passes, move on to Part Five, as the PCs carefully skirt the trapped area of floor.

If a PC triggers the trap:

The sound of snapping wood is the only warning you have as an instant later a segment of the tunnel floor falls away underneath your feet. The sudden gap threatens to plunge you a dozen feet towards a pile of jagged rocks.

The triggering PC should roll Raw **Reflexes** to slow their descent and avoid the worst of the rocks, or **one** other PC may attempt to catch them. Only one may be attempted, either way it's TN 20. Failure causes the PC to fall into the rocks below them and take 2k2 Wounds.

Continue to Part Five.

Part Five: Delusion

The path travels downward for a few hours, spiraling and turning back on itself a few times, the air growing warmer as you walk. Eventually you encounter another set of forks, but two of the three paths noticeably travel back upwards the way you came, and only one further down.

You continue forwards and round a turn, then almost slip as the texture of the floor changes. The passage ahead is full of loose rocks. Most are small, no bigger than your fist, but a few are as large as a grown samurai. You carefully pick your way through the detritus, careful not to fall in the darkness of the mountain.

As you make your way around a boulder, you smell it. Sweat, fear, and desperation. Just beyond you is a man,

his legs pinned beneath a rock, wearing the bright green of the Dragon.

He looks up at you and his eyes seem to glow a pale blue. Tonbo Kiyoshi holds up a hand to shelter his eyes from your torches, his face a mix of relief and recognition, but his voice is full of strain and feverishness.

“Samurai! Thank the kami you’ve come. I know, I know. But that can come later. I must...” he pauses, letting out a raspy ragged cough. “I must destroy this thing. Please, help me... or at least take the knife. It must be done!”

Kiyoshi is severely injured, unable to cast any spells, and suffering from hypothermia and frostbite. He is in no condition to physically contend with the PCs in any form. He will answer their questions as best as he is able; his mental state is a combination of desperation and conviction.

The PCs can easily shift the rocks off him. He is seriously injured but will not die if given even the most basic of medical attention. Magical healing will have no effect on him; the kami refuse to heal him.

Some answers Kiyoshi might have for questions the PCs have:

What do you need to destroy: “The knife. The only way is to throw it into Tamori’s Furnace.

Why do you need to destroy the knife: “It has Shinjo’s soul. That’s what the knife does; it takes the souls of whoever it kills. If I destroy it, all the souls inside can move on. If I throw it into the volcano then Shinjo’s soul will move on to Tengoku.”

Does it have to be you that throws it in: “No, anyone can do it. It just has to be cast into the fire.”

What happens to Shinjo Hazumi if we throw the knife into the volcano: “She will die. Her soul will pass on safely to Tengoku.”

How do you destroy the knife: “Throw it into Tamori’s Furnace. The Mirumoto have been doing it for years; taking dangerous nemuranai to the volcano to unmake them.”

Why is Shinjo Hazumi still alive? / Shinjo Hazumi isn’t dead: “Her soul is... strong. Too strong for the knife to kill outright. But she can’t fight the knife’s power forever, and I don’t know what will happen if she dies before I can destroy it.”

Why did you stab Shinjo Hazumi: “I saw a vision of things to come. Her choices would doom the empire. I couldn’t let that happen, and this is the only way to stop her. I must finish my task. This weapon has to be destroyed.”

How did you escape Unicorn lands: “The aid of the kami.”

What was the vision: “A great dark cloud rises in the south, roiling and churning. The cloud cried out in pain and anger, and Shinjo Hazumi shed a tear for it. The cloud reached for her, and she opened the door for it, allowing it into the Empire. Then the Empire burnt as the cloud consumed everything.”

What does that mean: “I’m not sure. She’ll do something, make a choice. Take pity or show mercy to something. <pained noises> Her choice will threaten the entire empire.”

How did you get the Blade of the Generous Trader: I stole it from the Moto. It wasn’t difficult; I used magic to bypass the guards by going through the floor.

You committed a crime: “Maybe. But saving the empire is the only thing that matters, so it had to be done. Wouldn’t you do the same?”

You are under arrest: “Fine, but this thing still has to be destroyed. Help me take it to the furnace, and throw it in, and I will submit to whatever you ask.”

Why are you under that rock: “The ceiling of the cave collapsed, it caught me off guard. This boulder fell on me. I’ve been stuck since ... this morning? I’m not sure how long it’s been. I tried to ask the kami to move it, but they were silent.”

Can you use magic: “No. Calling on the kami grew more and more difficult over the winter, and now they’ve abandoned me entirely.”

How do we get to Tamori’s Furnace from here: “It is not far. Perhaps an hour or two further down this tunnel.”

Give the PCs a few minutes to have an initial back and forth with Tonbo Kiyoshi before the Lords of Death appear. They should probably appear before the PCs are completely done questioning Kiyoshi (gods like to interrupt) but not before the PCs have at least had a chance to get a sense of what is going on. If possible, they should interrupt immediately after the Kiyoshi answers why the dagger needs to be destroyed.

The light from your torches gutters and dims casting the tunnel into deep shadow. Around you ten pinpricks of light flare into being, burning in the tunnel air for a moment before expanding into ten emaciated, nearly skeletal, old men wearing fine robes, lavish jewelry, and crowns. The ten seem to speak with a single, raspy voice.

“There is another way. Take the blade to Tamori’s Furnace. Place it upon the anvil you find there. Destroy it. Free Shinjo’s Soul, and we will guide it back to her body. She will awaken. But beware the darkness within the blade.”

Tonbo Kiyoshi will be resolute and unmoved by the appearance of the Lords of Death.

If any PC has the Inner Gift (Lesser Prophecy) advantage, they are struck by a vision. Give them **Handout 5**.

The Lords of Death will remain in a circle around Tonbo Kiyoshi and the PCs until they have finished with their questions, then disappear. They will answer very basic questions only; if the PCs ask a question not immediately relevant to the current situation, they will stand silently and not answer. Tonbo Kiyoshi will continue answering questions as above if the PCs want to ask them.

If the PCs ask Tonbo Kiyoshi about the Lords of Death: “We must... we must ignore them. Freeing Shinjo Hazumi would doom the Empire and the Lords don’t care if that happens. They Sjust want revenge on the Soul of Shinjo.”

Questions the Lords of Death are willing to answer:

How do we restore Shinjo Hazumi: “Place the knife upon the Anvil within the volcano and smash it. We will ensure her soul makes its way back to her body.”

Where is the Anvil: “Not much further. You are almost to the chamber.”

Why would you restore Shinjo Hazumi: “Her destiny was stolen from her. We wish to restore it.”

Do you want revenge on Shinjo: “Yes. She wronged us. She must answer for her transgressions.”

What darkness within the blade: “All the lives that dagger has claimed, those souls wait within. How would your soul fare after a lifetime entombed in such

an object, samurai? They will call to other spirits, just as lost as themselves.”

What is this anvil: “An old thing. Smash the dagger upon it, and we will ensure Shinjo’s Soul returns to her body.” (If the PCs ask Tonbo Kiyoshi about the anvil, he doesn’t know anything about it either)

If the PCs elect to pray to the Lords of Death in their presence, or otherwise specifically ask for their blessing: The Lords of Death smile, “Remember samurai, all who transgress the laws of the Iron Book deserve punishment. There is no mercy for the guilty.”

It is up to the PCs whether they wish to simply kill Tonbo Kiyoshi here, arrest him, or simply leave him under the rock. If they execute him, the Lords of Death smile but make no other commentary. If they pull Kiyoshi out from under the rock or leave the area the Lords of Death will vanish. If the PCs insult the Lords of Death or begin to ask insulting questions, they disappear.

If the PCs decide to leave the mountain without destroying the dagger, for whatever reason, proceed to **Conclusion – Neither**.

If a PC takes possession of the dagger, they will be unable to cast any spells or benefit from any beneficial magic (the kami are still happy to harm them) while carrying it. The dagger offends the kami.

Part Six: Into the Fire

You resume your journey down the tunnel, and it soon grows windy, making constant turns and you can’t shake the feeling that you’re walking downwards, descending towards something. After an hour, you can perceive a light, something besides your torches, coming from far down the tunnel. Another 30 minutes, and the road expands into a massive archway.

A wave of heat washes over you as you emerge from the tunnels into a large chamber. A deep red glow lights the cavern from below and smoke rises towards the opening in the ceiling far above. Huge veins of jade are visible in the walls, and seem to glow ever so slightly, dimming and then darkening, as though the heart of the mountain itself is beating. Shadows dance through the smoke, forming shapes which throw patches of darkness onto the walls of the chamber before dissolving, never themselves touching the walls.

The plateau is wide and flat, with ritual circles inlaid into the floor in white stone and glowing green jade. To the side, against the edge of the chamber is an old anvil, with a ribbon of rust running across the face, and a discarded hammer sitting alongside it.

You cannot shake the feeling that something, or someone, is watching you.

It is up to the PCs what to do here. They can throw the knife into the volcano or smash it upon the anvil. There are no mechanics for this choice.

Ideally the party will come to a consensus about how to handle the knife, but it is in the end up to them who is carrying it and how the situation gets handled. Hopefully without it coming to physical violence.

If the PCs ask the kami about the anvil, they will say it is made of old dark Earth. Jade will not register the anvil as directly tainted.

If the PC's throw the dagger into the volcano:

You fling the dagger down into churning molten heart of the volcano far below you. The dagger lands in the glowing magma with a hiss, and for a second it floats, then begins to sink. Within a minute it has vanished from sight.

Nothing happens.

Just long enough for a few breaths and a moment of doubt. A howling rush of wind fills the chamber, and a hundred pinpricks of light flood upwards from the magma, spiraling upwards towards the dark smoke above. One of them the lights hovers before you, glowing a deep purple, then it flies up to join the rest.

The smoke closes in upon the lights, and the dark shadows dance ever closer to them. Then in a flash, the shadows are pushed away and the smoke itself lands heavy around you on the plateau as the lights streak upwards into the sky.

For a moment, there is relief. Then the dark shapes in the smoke reform. With hungry ember eyes they regard you. Massive forms of smoke, ash, and swirling dust close in around you, bearing weapons made of soot and black glass.

There is one Greater Nemuranai Spirit, plus one for each rank 4 PC at the table. There are enough Lesser Nemuranai Spirits to bring the total number of foes up to the quantity of PCs at the table.

If the PC's smash the dagger upon the anvil:

The hammer is far heavier than it looks. It takes all your strength to heft it, but you do. You lift the hammer high above your head, and then bring it down upon the accursed dagger. It shatters into a hundred pieces, shards flying everywhere.

Nothing happens.

Just long enough for a few breaths and a moment of doubt. A howling rush of wind fills the chamber, and a hundred pinpricks of light flood upwards from the broken shards, spiraling upwards towards the dark smoke above. One of the lights hovers before you, glowing a deep purple. Then ten swirling motes of fire form around it, and together they go flying out of the cavern, back up the tunnel by which you entered.

The rest of the lights hover in the air far above you, spiraling in the smoke. The smoke itself seems to close in upon the lights, and the dark shadows dance ever closer to them. Then in a flash, the shadows are pushed away and the smoke itself lands heavy around you on the plateau as the lights streak upwards into the sky.

For a moment, there is relief. Then the dark shapes in the smoke reform. With hungry ember eyes they regard you. Massive forms of smoke, ash, and swirling dust close in around you, bearing weapons made of soot and black glass.

There is one Greater Nemuranai Spirit, plus one for each rank 4 PC at the table, to a limit of the total number of PCs at the table. There are enough Lesser Nemuranai Spirits to bring the total number of foes up to the quantity of PCs at the table.

Greater Nemuranai Spirit

Tainted spirit

School/Rank: None (Insight Rank 4)

Initiative: 8k4

Armor TN: 28

Reduction: 6

Wounds: 76 (Dead)

Attack: 9k4

(Obsidian blades or natural weapons, Simple)

Damage: 8k3

Air 4 Earth 4 Fire 4 Water 3

Honor: 1.0 Taint 4.0

Primary Skills: Kenjutsu 5, Jujutsu 5

Advantages/Disadvantages: Magic Resistance 3

Special Mechanics: Can't be grappled (it's smoke).

If the greater nemuranai spirit does more than 15 damage with an Obsidian blade attack, the target must either spend a Void point or make a Raw **Earth** roll at

TN 10 to avoid gaining a point of Taint (this does not count against the one Void per Round limit).

Lesser Nemurani Spirits

Hungry spirit

School/Rank: None (Insight Rank 3)

Initiative: 6k3

Armor TN: 25

Reduction: 5

Wounds: 57 (Dead)

Attack: 9k4

(Obsidian blades or natural weapons, Simple)

Damage: 7k2

Air 3 Earth 3 Fire 4 Water 3

Honor: 2.0 Taint: 0.0

Primary Skills: Kenjutsu 5, Jujutsu 5

Advantages/Disadvantages: Magic Resistance 2

Special Mechanics: Can't be grappled (it's smoke).

If a PC steals their weapons, the spirit's obsidian weapons ignore their Reduction, but shatter into useless pieces once the spirits are defeated.

If a PC attacks a spirit with the hammer, it attacks the spirits with a +3k0 bonus on the attack, does damage as a Dai Tsuchi, and ignores their Reduction.

Part Seven: The Escape

For a long moment, all is quiet. The smoke and shadowy forms in the caldera retreat, vanishing into the walls of the chamber. Then the crimson pool deep below you begins to bubble and froth. The ground under your feet and the walls around you start to shake, softly at first, then increasing in intensity with every moment.

Rocks break free from the lip of the volcano, some falling down the outside slope out of sight, and some inwards towards you.

You do the only thing you can; you turn, and you run, heading back into the tunnels of the volcano. The walls shake as you run, flying half-blind as the rumbling increases with every second, the heat around you rises, and the smell of sulphur fills your nose.

You run for hours, or maybe just a few minutes, before emerging panting into the sunlight. Just soon enough to watch an eruption of lava come spewing from the volcano and roll down the far side of the mountain. The warmth from the eruption at least makes your trip back down the mountain a little less frigid.

If Tonbo Kiyoshi was with the PCs, he disappears in the confusion, but is waiting for them outside. He smiles slightly, "The Kami have returned to me."

Kiyoshi will surrender to the PCs without resistance if they wish to arrest him and will accompany them back down the mountain. If they threw the dagger into the volcano, he will be pleased. If they destroyed it upon the anvil, he will be despondent but cooperative.

If the PCs destroyed the dagger on Tamori's Anvil, then proceed to Conclusion – Lords of Death. If the PCs destroyed the dagger by throwing it into the volcano, proceed to Conclusion – The Wrath of the Kami. If the PCs for some reason decided not to destroy the dagger, move on to Conclusion – Neither.

Conclusion – The Wrath of the Kami

You make your way back down the mountain, and Bayushi Tenno receives your report gravely. “You have apprehended the criminal. I will make my report accordingly. Well done, samurai. You are dismissed.”

As you reach Kyuden Tonbo, you hear surprising news. Over the winter the Dragon army was encamped near Yamasura, adjacent the Unicorn border in preparation for possible reprisal. It was somehow set upon by the Baraunghar. The Dragon army never stood a chance. The surprise was total; the Dragon army was routed and suffered grievous losses.

Over the next few days, news filters in from the Unicorn provinces; Shinjo Hazumi has passed away peacefully. The Unicorn daimyo have begun debating who will next lead the clan.

Priests from across the Empire report a rash of good omens for the year ahead.

Conclusion – Neither

You make your way back down the mountain, and Bayushi Tenno receives your report gravely. “You have apprehended the criminal. I will make my report accordingly. Well done, samurai. You are dismissed.”

As you reach Kyuden Tonbo, you hear surprising news. Over the winter the Dragon army was encamped near Yamasura, adjacent the Unicorn border in preparation for possible reprisal. It was somehow set upon by the Baraunghar. The Dragon army never stood a chance. The surprise was total; the Dragon army was routed and suffered grievous losses.

As you make your way back to your own lands, news filters in from the Unicorn provinces. First that Shinjo Hazumi’s condition has suddenly begun to worsen, and then a few weeks later that Shinjo Hazumi has perished. Priests from all over the empire report a rash of ill omens.

The Unicorn daimyo reportedly begin debating who will next lead the clan.

Conclusion – Lords of Death

You make your way back down the mountain, and Bayushi Tenno receives your report gravely. “You have apprehended the criminal. I will make my report accordingly. Well done, samurai. You are dismissed.”

As you reach Kyuden Tonbo, you hear surprising news. Over the winter the Dragon army was encamped near Yamasura, adjacent the Unicorn border in preparation for possible reprisal. It was somehow set upon by the Baraunghar. The Dragon army never stood a chance. The surprise was total; the dragon army was routed and suffered grievous losses.

As you make your way back to your own lands, news filters in from the Unicorn provinces; Shinjo Hazumi has awakened. Reports say that she is still weak from her ordeal, but the Unicorn daimyo are all overjoyed that she has recovered. Supposedly, they look forward to her renewed leadership, especially in united action against the Dragon.

The End

Note: If played at WIR, remind the players that the results of this module are not 'final' until the end of the Reporting Window, so other players may have different experiences about whether or not Shinjo has been revived.

Rewards for Completing the Adventure

Surviving the Module:	1 XP
Good Roleplaying:	1 XP
Arresting at least one person in Part One:	1 XP
Apprehending or killing Tonbo Kiyoshi:	1 XP
Destroying the Knife:	1 XP

Total Possible Experience: 5 XP

Favors

If Shinjo was revived or her soul moved on to Tengoku, the PCs receive a Favor. In the former case, from the Unicorn and the latter from the Emerald Office.

Honor

Reviving Shinjo Hazumi:	H10
Allowing Shinjo's Soul to move on:	H12
Apprehending Tonbo Kiyoshi:	H8

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

Reviving Shinjo Hazumi:	G12
Throwing the knife into Amaterasu's Furnace:	G8

Allies and Enemies

If the PCs revived Shinjo Hazumi, they gain Noticed – Shinjo Hazumi.

If the PCs allowed Shinjo's soul to move on, they gain Noticed – Moto Sartaq.

If the PCs destroyed the dagger, any PC who does not have Bayushi Tenno as a Sworn Enemy gains him as an Ally; he is Devotion 2, Influence 2.

Other Awards/Penalties

If a PC lied in order to obtain an order of appearance or arrest, and Bayushi Tenno detected the lie (the PC failed the sincerity roll), then that PC gains **Sworn Enemy: Bayushi Tenno**.

If a PC has **Sworn Enemy: Bayushi Tenno**, and the PCs fail to apprehend Tonbo Kiyoshi:

The responsibility for the investigation's failure falls squarely upon whichever PC (or PCs) have Bayushi Tenno as a Sworn Enemy. Their seppuku is commanded immediately. The only alternative is to completely renounce their names, become ronin, and flee with the knowledge they can never admit their failures or identity. Doing so reduces that PC's Honor to 0.

GM Reporting

- 1) Was Shinjo Hazumi revived?
- 2) Were any of the following Dragon arrested:
 - a. Tonbo Koryado
 - b. Tonbo Megumi
 - c. Mirumoto Toki
 - d. Togashi Iwao
 - e. Kitsuki Nikaru
 - f. Tonbo Jiro
- 3) Did any PCs sell nemuranai to Yasuki Hideyoshi? (If so, please include what nemuranai in the GM notes of the mod report)

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

Appendix #1: NPCs

Bayushi Tenno

Emerald Magistrate

School/Rank: Bayushi Bushi 5

Initiative: 10k6

Armor TN: 30 (35 in armor) **Reduction:** 0 or 3

Wounds: 15 (+0), 21 (+3), 27 (+5), 33 (+10), 39 (+15), 45 (+20), 51 (Down, +40), 57 (Out)

Attack: 10k4+5 (Katana, Simple)

Damage: 8k2 (Katana)

Air 5 Earth 3 Fire 4 Water 4 Void 4
Will 4

Honor: 4.5 Status: 5.0 Glory: 6.5

Primary Skills: Kenjutsu 6, Iaijutsu 5, Lore: Law 6, Courtier 5, Sincerity (Deceit) 4, Etiquette 5, Investigation (Interrogation) 5

Advantages/Disadvantages: Dangerous Beauty, Clear Thinker, Lame (temporary)

Special Mechanics: Bayushi Bushi 1-5 (see Core)

Significant Dice Pools: Investigation (Interrogation) / Awareness: 10k6

Togashi Iwao

An evasive monk

School/Rank: Tattoo Monk 3

Initiative: 6k3

Armor TN: 26 (Defense stance) **Reduction:** 0

Wounds: 15 (+0), 21 (+3), 27 (+5), 33 (+10), 39 (+15), 45 (+20), 51 (Down, +40), 57 (Out)

Attack: 10k5 (Unarmed, Complex)

Damage: 5k3 (Unarmed)

Air 3 Earth 3 Fire 4 Water 3 Void 3

Honor: 2.5 Status: 2.5 Glory: 1.5

Primary Skills: Jujitsu 5, Defense 3

Special Mechanics: Centipede Tattoo, Hawk Tattoo, Ocean Tattoo, Blaze Tattoo

Tonbo Jiro

Guard Captain

School/Rank: Mirumoto Bushi 4

Initiative: 7k3

Armor TN: 20 (25 in armor) **Reduction:** 0 or 3

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

Attack: 10k4 (Katana, Simple)

Damage: 7k2 (Katana)

Air 3 Earth 4 Fire 4 Water 3 Void 4

Honor: 3.0 Status: 3.0 Glory: 2.5

Primary Skills: Kenjutsu 6, Iaijutsu 5

Special Mechanics: During Reactions, choose an opponent who attempted to made or attempted to attack you. Next turn +3k0 on attack rolls against chosen opponent.

Significant Dice Pools:

Assessment: 9k4 + 6 (voids on the roll, else 8k3+6)

Focus: 10k5+10

Strike: 8k3 + 6, uses stance bonus for damage (1k1+4).

Player Handout #1: News from the Empire

Samurai of the Empire,

Dreaded news from the Unicorn Lands. I am afraid we still have not received any word of the lady Shinjo Hazumi having woken up. While her body still lives, not even the most potent of water magics have been able to rouse her from her slumber. Speculation is rampant, but the Unicorn leadership have turned inward to figure out what to do to lead the clan going into the Winter. The Unicorn have stated that they are deliberating on what to do about this matter, as the attempted assassin is the son of the Tonbo daimyo, but one might pray that cooler heads will prevail with the Dragon and Unicorn being allies.

Not all news is unpleasant, of course. The impending birth of an Imperial Heir is blessed news in these times. One might expect that our lady the Empress will give birth as the snow thaws, and this Courtier looks greatly forward to hearing of her successful birth.

Oh! A note of interest. The new temple to Shōan, the Fortune of Orphans, is under construction in the Dragon city of Yasamura. In the wake of the tragedy of Shinden Horiuchi, that we can undo some of this tragedy is only a blessing.

-Otomo Yusuke

Gift Notes:

The Mantis are Favored by Military due to gifts received at GenCon, granting all Mantis PCs a +1k1 bonus to a damage roll once during this module

The Crane are Favored by Court due to gifts received at GenCon, granting all Crane PCs a single Free Raise during this module that can only be used on a Social roll. This Free Raise can be spent after the roll is made.

Player Handout #2: A Letter from Bayushi Tenno

Samurai-san,

On behalf of the Emerald Champion and the Emperor, your assistance as yoriki is compelled in the investigation and resolution of a criminal matter, arising under the jurisdiction of the Office of the Emerald Magistrates, in accordance with that charter.

You are to present yourselves at the House of the White Crow, in the city of Kyuden Tonbo, in the Shinpi province of the Dragon Lands, as soon as the roads have cleared sufficiently to allow travel.

[Seal of the Emerald Magistrates]

Bayushi Tenno, Emerald Magistrate, formerly Chief Magistrate of the City of Beiden

Written on the back of the letter:

If you have not heard the news, allow me. Last fall, a dragon clan samurai named Tonbo Kiyoshi attempted to assassinate Shinjo Hazumi, champion of the Unicorn clan. He failed, in that she still lives, but I am told that she lingers on the edge of death regardless of the healing efforts of the *luchi*.

We must apprehend the would-be assassin. Complicating matters, Tonbo Kiyoshi is the eldest son and designated heir of Tonbo Koryado, daimyo of the Tonbo family.

The Unicorn have not yet taken action against the Dragon but in my opinion, it is only a matter of time before they do.

Player Handout #3: Authorization from the Emerald Office

Citizens of the Empire,

Know that Bayushi Tenno, who carries this letter, acts in the name of the Son of Heaven in pursuit of His justice.

You shall grant the bearer any assistance or succor he requires.

Under no circumstance shall you impede or delay him or his assistants in the pursuit of justice.

They may travel wherever they wish in the course of their investigation, crossing any border or boundary without delay, question, or inspection.

All shall submit to questioning, appearance, and arrest as the bearer deems fit for any offense of which they may be guilty. All judgments made by the bearer are made in the name of the Emperor, unquestioned and absolute.

Heed and Obey.

[Chop of Doji Makibesu, Emerald Champion]

Player Handout #4: Symbols

Left hand passage:

대기

Center passage:

지구

Right hand passage:

불

Player Handout #5: Vision

Suddenly, your eyes grow clouded, and the tunnel around you fades away. For a moment, all you can see is grey. You look around, and there's nothing but grey and white. Looking down, far below you, is the entirety of the Emerald Empire.

From the far north of the Phoenix and Dragon lands, and to the far south of the Crab lands. All around, smoke. Dark black sooty smoke. It rises from the lands in the south and then encircles all Rokugan, roiling and churning.

Below you, a single purple spark shines in the Northwest, a brilliant lavender light. A woman, watching the smoke from inside a small house. She sheds a single tear, and slides open a paper doorway.

The smoke rushes in, filling the house, and then billowing out until Rokugan is blanketed by it and the land itself dissolves. Your eyes sting and begin to water as the acrid smell fills your nose. You blink away the tears, and the vision is gone. You are back within the tunnels beneath the Wrath of the Kami.