

# Prayers and Blessings

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

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Supernatural, Intrigue, Combat

When your Spirit calls to you, will you listen?

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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

A brief description of the background elements that lead to the events of the module goes here. A few relevant comments on the history of important people, or groups of people such as clans, may be important to set the context for the GM. Likewise, a mention of the primary locations to establish where the PCs will be going is helpful (though, of course, full descriptions should be located in those sections of the adventure where the characters actually go to those places).

From there, a rough description of what sort of events or circumstances bring the PCs together should be included. Most modules begin with the conceit that any given PC, as a samurai under the authority of their superiors, has been sent to further the interests of their lord (or potentially family or clan), though other motivations may be appropriate. In general, either some NPC will have a task to perform or the PCs are in a public venue and tasked with representing their group as appropriate to the occasion.

The next major data point is a brief discussion of the projected events of the module. If there are a large number of different choices available to the PCs, it will necessarily require the summary to be more vague, but providing a mention of the key scenes for the module will give the GM an idea of what will be the most important situations to focus on. This can help with pacing, and will ensure that the GM will have them in mind as they run the players through the establishing scenes.

A thumbnail description of the climax may be useful as a conclusion to the summary, again, simply to stress to the GM what the module will be building toward. Specifying the primary choice or challenge the PCs must face by the end will help the GM set the proper tone through the entirety of the slot.

**Credit where it is Due:** The Depiction of the O-Kumo in this module was heavily inspired by the works of Elizabeth Moon in the book "Oath of Gold." The author of this module heavily recommends that you read the trilogy "The Deed of Paksennarion" that the book is the third book of, as it is an exceptional work of Fantasy.

## 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. It is frequently helpful to have a list of specific mechanics that come up in the course of the module determined at the start of the module so the GM does not have to slow down play to check and see which parts apply to which PC. These can be Advantages, Disadvantages, Schools, Skills, or any other particularly relevant mechanics.

- The Disbeliever Disadvantage
- Blessed by/Cursed by Jurojin
- In addition to these notes: have PCs consider what item in their traveling pack has been the most iconic to their PC. A Bushi, for example, might say their katana or their primary weapon, whereas a shugenja may select their most iconic spell scroll or the prayer beads they have had since their gempukku. PCs may not select a living creature (horse, servant, lucky cricket, etc.)

### News from the Empire

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

### Inactivity

PCs lose 3 points of glory at the beginning of this module.

## Taint Progression

If a PC possesses the Shadowlands Taint, they will need to roll at the beginning of the module to see how much it has grown over the intervening time since the last module. The TN of this raw **Earth Roll** is  $15+(\text{Taint Rank} \times 5)$ . Failure on this roll causes the PC to gain a point of the Shadowlands Taint. If a character is growing close to being Lost (Shadowlands Taint Rank 4.5+) , it is recommended that the player have another PC ready to replace them.

## Crafting

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

## Preparation Techniques

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

## Ronin Survival

There is no roll for Ronin Survival for this Module..

## Experience Expenditure

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

# Introduction

The PCs have been spending the last three months at the recently renamed Hayaku Mura, honored by attending the first proper Winter Court to be held within the city since an attack by the Crab in the early 12th Century. With some of the excess funds from the Miya's Blessing, Doji Makibesu ordered the city to be rebuilt properly as one of his last acts as the Crane Clan Champion before stepping down in favor of his daughter.

The city square is alight with a grand parade. Crane singers and dancers parade the streets with an

excitement that would be unbecoming of Samurai in normal circumstances. But for these Crane, this moment, this culmination of over two centuries of suffering, is one worth answering any question of impropriety later.

The sound of drums suddenly stops as the procession ends at the gates of Hayaku Mura, and at their top a lone Crane stands tall, raising his arms. "Samurai of Rokugan! We thank you for joining us during this time of celebration, as we see the undoing of a great tragedy! It has been my honor to preside over the reconstruction of this city that was overseen by my Father, and his before him, and his before him, going back to its original naming of Hayaku Mura. As you leave to your normal duties, please take word of this accomplishment back to the rest of Rokugan, to stand as testament to the Endurance and Persistence of Samurai against even the worst of tragedies. Go in peace, Samurai."

With the Governor's speech concluded, the guests begin to walk out the gates of Hayaku Mura, and the PCs are dismissed to return to their duties.

However, a few hours into the PCs journey, a terrible snow storm threatens their journey:

Just a few hours ago, it was unseasonably warm and pleasant. In only a few minutes, however, the air cools considerably, and the wind begins to pick up. It is only moments later that a hard, driving snow begins to fall from a suddenly cloudy sky. It is suddenly nearly impossible to see more than a few feet in front of you.

**WHAT IS REALLY HAPPENING:** The Kami Jurojin has requested a favor of Miyuki, the Fortune of Snow. The snow storm is meant to force the PCs towards Nengoro Mura, where his follower is being assailed against his knowledge. The snow storm is not fatal to PCs, but it is also incredibly persistent: the PCs will not be able to leave until the issue in Nengoro Mura is resolved. This also means that there is no spell or shugenja technique that will be able to stop the storm. Barring a high ranking Shugenja deciding to leave through a teleportation spell, there is no way out of this storm. That said, there are consequences to taking such actions: a PC who leaves the module in this fashion gains 1 XP (for good role playing, but not for participation in the adventure... as they have not participated) and receive the Jurojin's Curse disadvantage.

If a Shugenja does try to Commune with the kami (most likely water or air, though there are some earth

kami who would be knowledgeable), the kami can only tell them that Miyuki has asked them to create the storm: they do not know why she has commanded it but they do not question the will of a Fortune and will not abate at a shugenja's request.

Any sensible PC will realize that they need to move quickly to find shelter from the storm. Have the PCs immediately make a TN 15 Raw Stamina roll. Failure means the PC suffers one rank of Fatigue. The Blood of Osano Wo advantage negates the need to make this roll.

As you begin to push through the snow storm, a single path is obvious to you: a small trail inexplicably visible through the thick snow. In the distance, you can see the light of what appears to be a small village, warm and welcoming against the blanketing snow.

So long as the PCs head towards the village, they may make Athletics (Running) / Strength rolls at TN 25. Failure on this roll causes the PC to suffer one rank of Fatigue (note that ranks of Fatigue stack on each other, so a PC who has failed both the stamina roll and the Athletics roll would be at +10 to all actions).

If a PC decides to trudge through the storm and avoid heading to the village, have them continue making Raw Stamina rolls, increasing the TN by 5 every time they make the roll. At this point, if a PC with Blood of Osano Wo is attempting to do so, have them start making the rolls as well, as the storm is magical in nature and even a Fortune's blood only provides so much protection. Once a PC fails 3 such rolls, the character will pass out with 3 ranks of exhaustion. The Fortune Miyuki will not leave them to die however, this is not her purpose with this storm, and will send one of her servants to collect the PC and take them to Nengoro Mura (feel free to describe a beautiful, if somewhat ethereal young woman approaching the PC as they are passing out, then describe them waking up in the hospital wing of the Temple to Jurojin).

## Part One: The Hospital

It is a curious sight as you reach the small village that seems to be the 'eye' of the Storm. It's layout is fairly simple: a circle of buildings surrounding a small square, a larger headmen's hut kept a few hundred feet outside the circle. But overlooking the small village is what truly catches your eye: a massive temple, easily the size of a small fort, watches over the village like a caring mother.

Unlike the fields you just escaped, it is comfortably warm within the village proper, and a light spring rain warms your face. The late afternoon has faded to early evening.

PCs might find this change in weather confusing, especially with the winter storm still raging past the village's border. Any sufficiently pious (3 or more ranks of theology) Samurai should sufficiently be able to work out that this is the work of a Fortune, though their intention could only be guessed at.

Any PC curious about the village can make a Lore: History / Intelligence roll:

- 10: Nengoro Mura is a fairly small village in northern Crane lands. It is mostly unremarkable, save for the large Temple to Jurojin, the Fortune of Longevity.
- 15: The Temple to Jurojin in Nengoro Mura is the largest in the Empire, save only for Jurojin Seido itself. The complex is built to double as a hospital, and sees a variety of maladies from all across the Empire.
- 20: The Temple was built in the Twelfth Century, commanded by the Head Sensei of the Kakita Dueling Academy at the time. It was said that she had long been cursed by Jurojin, and that this shrine was part of her final penance to the Fortune.

Before the PCs get too much time to explore, they are approached by one of the local peasants. The peasant will welcome them to the village. Assuming PCs ask to speak to a headman, they will lead them to the Temple of Jurojin: *"The local Governor chooses to reside there instead of having her own residence. The tradition goes back to the Founding of the Shrine, you see."* If a PC asks why the village even has a Samurai governor, they will simply explain that it is an old tradition that goes back to the founding of the Temple.

The front of the Temple is surprisingly tame. In contrast to the often glamorous tastes of the Crane, the entranceway is plain, with no hints of additional amenities or the like. As you step into the entrance hall, a tall, thin man in orange robes happens by, looking almost astonished as he sees you.

"Ah, forgive me, Samurai-samas! We were not expecting new visitors this early in spring. I am Asako Ichi. How can this humble temple help you?" He bows, but as he does, lets out a brief, light cough.

Ichi is more than happy to lead the PCs to Jinkei and Kiyoko, though he does not know anything about the storm. At this point, the PCs should have nothing really to suspect him on. He is outwardly, at least, friendly to the PCs at all times.

You are led into a large room, full of futons either rolled up in neat rows or set out with people laying on them. Sitting next to one of these people is an elder man, easily entering his sixtieth year. His face, however, is full of clear vigor, eyes alight with a surprising amount of youth. His clothes indicate him a member of the brotherhood of Shinsei, and as you approach he is in the process of carefully easing a liquid into the mouth of the lying person. Across the room, a young woman in the powder blue of the Crane dresses the wounds of a peasant man.

If a PC passed out due to failing too many stamina rolls earlier, they are the person that the monk is tending to.

This monk is Jinkei, the abbot of the Temple. He is actually the former governor of Nengoro Mura, not that he would ever admit that to the PCs. That said, he can offer the following information regarding the current situation:

- He does not know why the storm started. Truthfully, he wasn't aware that there was a snow storm. (PCs who listen will note that there are no sounds coming from outside the temple that they can hear)
- The two Samurai are both assigned to this temple. The Phoenix man is Asako Ichi, a shugenja and scholar who has been on pilgrimage. The second is Doji Kiyoko, the governor of Nengoro Mura.
- Life at the temple is generally full of quiet contemplation. Jinkei has never noticed anything particularly noteworthy happen before the past week, and certainly has never heard of a freak snowstorm covering the entire area save the village.
- Recently (within the past week), people have been coming to the temple with an unusual ailment. The ailment consists of a wracking cough, and heavy weakness. Jinkei has been assisting people as best as he can, but most patients have fallen into a comatose state within two days of arrival.
- There are roughly one dozen victims, and all of them exhibit the exact same signs.
- If a PC is curious and wishes to help, Jinkei will not deny them the chance.
- If a PC has passed out due to obtaining 3 ranks of fatigue, or notes that they are

exhausted or fatigued, Jinkei will offer them a drink of the liquid that he has been offering to the patients. A PC who drinks the entire cup offered incredibly refreshed and may remove 1 rank of fatigue. In addition, for the duration module, any PC with a physical disadvantage finds that the disadvantage does not bother them quite so much, allowing them to ignore any penalties related to that disadvantage for the remainder of the module (they still cannot hold a two handed sword if they have one hand, or other similarly impossible tasks).

After the PCs are done speaking with Jinkei, he and the two samurai leave to retire for the evening. As above, Jinkei will allow anyone with a medical background to study the patients.

The information below is general information that can be discovered about the patients. However it is ultimately disseminated is up to the GM, but as long as PCs are pursuing reasonable avenues, they should be able to discover this information.

#### Studying the Patients:

If a PC wishes to study the patients (at any time, not just during the evening), they can make a Medicine (Disease) / Intelligence roll:

- 5: They are absolutely fine. Honestly they probably just need some water splashed on their face.
- 10: They are not fine. Something seems to have placed them into sort of a comatose state. Their skin is almost pale as ivory, and they are sweating profusely.
- 20: As you study them, two small pricks on their neck become apparent, as if someone has poked them with a needle.
- 25: If left like this, even with the good care they have received from the Temple of Jurojin, these people are likely to waste away in three or four days unless something is done to heal them.
- 45: You think that with proper time and herbs, you could come up with a concoction that might revive them otherwise.

#### Information about the victims:

- The Victims range in age from very old to very young. There are four elderly, four children, and four ranging from young adults to middle age.

- All of the victims are peasants. None of the monks seem to be affected, and Ichi and Kiyoko are the only Samurai present in the village.
- The rate of infection spread has been odd. The four elderly were the first to report illness. Then the four children. And now the four adults.
- The first infected person was O-Atsu. She is the mother of the current village head, and first came down with the disease a week prior. People are concerned that she will die soon if a more permanent treatment is not provided (and, in fact, she will die overnight unless a PC casts Jurojin's Balm).

### The kami

Shugenja PCs may want to cast magic to try to rouse the spirits of or around the infected people.

- Fire: The Fire Kami can sense an imbalance, but cannot quite place what that imbalance is since it isn't fire.
- Water: The disease seems to be an overpowering of earth in their bodies, forcing their water into a stagnant state until it eventually stills completely.
- Earth: The earth in them is being encouraged to rise over all others, to the point where they become still as stone.
  - 2 Raises for clarity: The imbalance is not being created by something entirely natural. The earth do not see corruption in the victims, but sense that the infecting process is being done to them, instead of it being naturally occurring.
- Air: A trick was played on these people, then they fell asleep. (They specifically can say that a trick was played, not that they carried something to these people)

Regardless of if PCs examine patients tonight or not, most of the temple will have gone to bed shortly after their conversation with Jinkei, leaving them few avenues of inquiry if they are looking to start investigations now. When the PCs have gone to sleep, hand the PCs Player Handout #2: The Dream.

Once the PCs awaken, they will be invited to enjoy breakfast with Jinkei. The storm has not abated, and seems to have gotten worse since last night.

After a simple breakfast of tea and rice, Jinkei will speak.

“Samurai-samas. I hope that our hospitality has been sufficient for you. I know that our amenities are perhaps more humble than what many of you are used to.” He chuckles a bit, but his face then becomes as stone. “We had discussed the matter of the suffering of the people of this village in some detail yesterday. The people of this village are innocents, dedicated to helping this hospital as best they can. As such, it is beyond my belief that these effects are the will of the Fortunes. With that in mind, I was hoping you might be able to assist me in discovering why this curse has befallen Nengoro Mura, and putting a stop to it if at all possible.”

See the previous sections for information that Jinkei might have. If O-Atsu died in the night, then Jinkei will inform the PCs that the seriousness of this investigation has only been made greater with her death.

## **Investigation inside the Temple**

There are several places inside the temple where PCs might think to begin their investigations.

### Hospital Wing

The hospital wing is kept necessarily clean and sanitary, save the areas currently in use. Unfortunately, this does mean that unless the PCs are willing to go through the implements used by the monks and Samurai, there is not much that they will find. However, if they decide to do so, have them make Investigation (Search) / Perception rolls. If they make a TN 15, as they are searching through Doji Kiyoko's work area, they will find a pair of needles, not unlike those used for acupuncture, hidden in her work implements. A PC who is able to make a TN 40 (on the first attempt - they cannot make a second attempt to realize this using the Investigation masteries unless they failed to find the chopsticks in the first place) will realize that the way that these chopsticks were hidden seems to indicate that they were intentionally hidden in a way that they would be found.

### The Shrine

The room housing the statue of Jurojin is a large, sprawling room, all of the ostentation missing from the rest of the temple seeming to have made its way in here. Ornate decorations are everywhere, and yet somehow dwarfed by the two statues within the shrine. The first, filling much of the center of the room, is a large statue of Jurojin. Made from brilliant gold, the

wizened, bearded face looks down upon you with kind eyes while one hand reaches out as if to help you up.

To the side is a much smaller statue, a silver statue depicting a man and a woman looking up towards the main statue with pride. They embrace in such a way that suggests that they are likely to be lovers or spouses.

A Lore: History check at TN 25 can discern that the two Samurai depicted in the statue are the former head of the Kakita Dueling Academy and her husband. This statue was made after their deaths in commemoration of the work they had put into the creation of the shrine, and as a reminder of the rewards of endurance through hardship.

Beyond this, there is nothing of note to the investigation here in this place. However, a PC with Jurojin's Curse who prays at the shrine may make a Lore: Theology / Void roll at TN 30. On a success, they briefly feel the warm eyes of Jurojin upon them, as if he is smiling down on them. For the remainder of the module, they suffer no penalties related to having the Jurojin's curse disadvantage (including social penalties specifically notated for them).

#### The Abbot's Room

There is nothing of interest in the Abbot's room. He maintains a simple, well kept room and not even Ichi would try to pin his crimes on Jinkei.

#### Doji Kiyoko's Room

Especially after finding the acupuncture needles, a PC might be tempted to believe that Kiyoko is guilty of wrongdoing. If a PC searches their room, they may make an Investigation (Search) / Perception roll at TN 35. On a success, they find a little board has been partially pulled up and replaced, and under the board there are a number of netsuke and other minor effects. Sitting on top is a well folded piece of light pink paper, with the name 'Yue' written in fine Kanji on the outer fold.. If they choose to open it, what they find is a haiku:

“Under Pink Blossoms  
A smile is born as they fall  
My Heart Draws a Dream”

The remaining effects all seem to be minor gifts and the like that Kiyoko has received or plans to give.

#### Asako Ichi's Room

Ichi's room is as one would expect from a first glance. A simple bedroll, a writing desk, and a daisho stand carrying only a katana.

While there is nothing specifically incriminating in Ichi's room, a PC who investigates Ichi's desk will realize that it is entirely empty. Where one would expect unfinished correspondences, journals, or even a pen, they instead find a completely empty desk.

If the PCs make an investigation (Search) / Perception at TN 35 roll, they are able to find a set of floorboards that have been partially pulled up and replaced. Opening the floorboard will reveal a small number of papers. Reading them will uncover a very simple note:

“Some of the peasants mentioned a voice in the shed on the south side of the village. I promised I would investigate. If I don't return, please board it up and keep people away.

Ichi”

### **Interviewing Suspects in the Temple**

#### Jinkei

Jinkei only knows the information as highlighted in part one.

#### Asako Ichi

Ichi will be impatient with any interviews, but will answer any questions to the best of his ability. If someone catches him in one of the lies as noted below.

- Ichi has been at the temple for just under a year now. He came on pilgrimage to learn techniques that would better assist the Phoenix with their medicinal needs.
- He had not noticed the marks on the patients' necks while treating them. (this is technically true, as he did not look at their necks, but an Investigation (Interrogation) / Awareness roll at TN 45 by a suspicious PC will indicate that he was almost too specific in his wording).
- After the attack from the Great Sea Spider and the subsequent (as he sees) abuse from the Emerald Champion, Ichi had requested to stay on a bit longer so he could finish his studies with Jinkei.
- Ichi's cough started in the middle of winter and has never quite abated. He has discussed this matter with the kami, but does not believe himself to be in any danger.

- Ichi does not study acupuncture, but thought he had seen Kiyoko use it in the past. (Lie, TN 50 to pierce)
- If asked about the note under his floorboard, he will shrug and say that he investigated the shed and found nothing of note (Lie, TN 50 to pierce)
- If the PCs ask for a writing sample in any way, he will provide it. The writing sample is the same as the note.

### Doji Kiyoko

Kiyoko is similarly impatient to get back to patients, but does not let it show while she answers questions from the PCS.

- Kiyoko had not noticed the small prick marks from the needles.
- Kiyoko is concerned that Jinkei is working himself too hard and that his health may start to suffer if he can't find a solution to the plague soon.
- She does not recognize the Acupuncture needles. The hospital tends to focus on the more practical, so they largely eschew the use of things that they cannot find a clear use for.
- If presented with the needles, Kiyoko will adamantly deny knowing of them and knowing where they come from.
- If asked about Yue, Kiyoko will only say that they spend a lot of time discussing matters relating to the village. (An Investigation (Interrogation) / Awareness roll at TN 30 will allow PCs to realize that she is not being entirely truthful, but she adamantly will refuse to go into more detail, stating that it is unnecessary to their investigation)

### **Investigating the Village**

As you step out of the temple, the light spring rain is still warming the village, with the terrible snow storm still circling the outside. The peasants seem to acknowledge the storm, but are doing their best to focus on the things they can control in the meantime. As such, they move to follow their normal work as calmly as possible, one eye always moving towards the storm.

Just looking around the village proper is not likely to accomplish much. The PCs will need a specific direction to move on if they are hoping to learn anything within the village proper.

### Rumors

The following information is available with a Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness roll. A PC from the Crane or a Thousand Fortunes Monk receives a free raise on this roll. A PC with Jurojin's Blessing receives a free raise on this roll as well. As with all social rolls in this module, a PC with Jurojin's Curse or a Disbeliever suffers a +5 TN penalty to this roll.

- 5: This snow storm is very odd, is it not? What unusual weather patterns happen in spring!
- 10: Jinkei won't admit it being a monk, but I bet he is proud of his daughter.
- 15: Jinkei has been acting a bit unusual recently. Like he has not been as focused as he used to. That must explain why he hasn't healed the people who have fallen asleep, right?
- 20: Ichi must have done something to offend Jurojin Kami. That would explain why he has been coughing the last few weeks, but thank the kami that he has not fallen asleep like the others.
- 25: Kiyoko has been staying in the village head's residence instead of the temple the last few weeks, which is a bit unusual given the traditions of the village.

### The Village Head's House

The house belonging to the village head is larger than the other houses in the village, but still small by comparison to even most other village houses.

The person who opens the door, however, is a remarkably attractive young woman, especially by peasant's standard. She offers a weak smile to you. "Samurai-samas. Can I assist you with anything?"

The village head introduces herself as Yue. She will invite the PCs into her home to enjoy tea, and will offer to answer any questions. If O-Atsu died in the night, she clearly has been crying.

- O-Atsu had been fairly healthy before the sudden illness.
- Yue has not seen anyone come in that she would not have expected. She and her mother are the only ones who live here, though Kiyoko is here fairly often.
- Kiyoko and Yue work very closely together to govern the village. Since Kiyoko is often working in the temple, Yue does much of the normal administration and then she provides information to Kiyoko to make policy adjustments or governing decisions. (If a PC

asks any questions pointing towards their relationship, Yue will blush, look down, and will only admit that they work *\*very\** close together)

- Yue is of course happy to allow them to search the house.

If PCs do search the house:

- 20: Unrolling O-Atsu's bed roll will note two small bits of dried blood around where one would lay their head and neck.
- 35: (Reduced to 25 if a PC specifically notes studying the window): As one studies the window, they note scuff marks on the sill, as if someone had come in through the window.

While a PC might think to look outside for tracks, it's been too long since the occurrence happened, and any tracks will be long dissipated with time and wind. That said, if asked, Yue will be able to assist the PCs in finding the houses of other victims.

#### Other Victim's houses

Once the PCs start studying other PCs houses, they are able to largely determine the same information as within Yue's house. However, the house of the last victim has some notable changes:

Entering the victim's house, the first thing that is noticed is the table. The contents of the table has been pushed aside, as if someone had in frustration raked their arm across it. A pair of tea cups are broken on the floor, and it looks as if no morning preparations had been done.

While the PCs might be suspicious of the nature of the cups, the explanation is ultimately quite simple: when the victim realized he had contracted the disease, he in frustration cleared the table aggressively. But, most importantly, when one looks to the window sill, have them make investigation (Notice) / Perception rolls at TN 20. Success on the roll allows them to notice faint tracks leading to and from the house.

If PCs wish to follow these tracks, have them make Hunting (Tracking) / Perception at TN 25. Success will lead them to a small shed.

## **Part Two: Stay Outta my Shed**

As you approach the shed, nothing about it seems particularly odd. It is a small, single story structure made out of a sturdy, if not particularly attractive, wood.

Entering the structure, it seems every bit as mundane as the outside. Hay bales are set on the ground in neat rolls, and several tools are hung up in tidy rows.

As the PCs investigate, have them make Investigation (Search) / Perception rolls at TN 25. A PC completely obviates the need to roll if they specifically note that they are moving the hay bales. On a success, they will note a small indentation under one of the bales that seems to indicate a trap door. Moving the hay will indeed confirm the trap door.

As you open the door, it is impossible to see all the way down to it's bottom. Fairly new stairs lead down to a room of some form, a soft red glow emanating from the bottom.

#### The Kansen

As the PCs go down, and again as the PCs are closing in on the desk where the confession journal is hidden, a kansen will put visions in their head. Examples of the visions they may receive are marked below, but if none of the examples fit your table, feel free to make one up that does fit.

- Crab: (Towards a Lion PC) Look at them. They stand there on their pedestal. But remember. They promised they would help you. They promised that they would be friends. Allies. Of the Crab. And they *Lied*. Are you going to allow them to stay justified in their lies? I would hope not!
- Crane: (Towards an Owl PC) You were his friend. You offered the olive branch. Chose to be allies at a time that no one else would. And how did they repay you? They spit on your *face*. They dissolved their friendship with you for the first person who would promise to attack their enemies. Is this how you deserve to be repaid?!
- Dragon: (Towards a Unicorn PC) You were their friends. Their allies! And yes, a mistake was made. But did they see that mistake as it was? No! They assaulted your people, destroyed your army! Was this right? Was it fair?!
- Lion: (Towards a Crab PC) Look at them. Cowards, one and all. They balked at the chance to fight. We had to force their hand,

and still they resorted to dishonorable tactics just to preserve their victory. They tried to tarnish Shakato's legacy. Are you just going to let that stand?!

- Mantis: (Towards a Crab PC) Who was it who blamed you? When they failed to contain their own waters, they pointed the blame at you! And when it was proven to be *their* failures, did they accept responsibility? No, they acted as if it never happened as they always do! And are you to let them get away with this? No! No, they must not!
- Owl: (Towards a Scorpion PC) They have always hated you. Every one of them. And now they are trying to destroy you. For what? Daring to exist? Not sharing knowledge they shouldn't have? You must get them first. Destroy them before they destroy you!
- Phoenix: (Towards a Crane PC) Think of how much you have suffered. How much suffering has been caused because of *them*. They are the ones who took the blessing from you, the blessing that should have helped *your* people. This is your chance! Get your vengeance!
- Scorpion: (Towards an Owl PC) They have always stood smug in their glass houses. And when you demanded information that is *rightfully yours*, they held it from you. Should they be allowed to get away with that? No. They cannot hold secrets from the Clan of Secrets. Take it from them!
- Unicorn: (Towards a Dragon PC) They tried to kill her. Tried to kill Shinjo. And when you demanded satisfaction, they covered behind their mountains and their politics! Should they stand without consequence? No! This is your chance! Make them *pay*!

After receiving this vision, have that PC make a Raw Willpower Roll at TN 20. If that PC fails, they must immediately make an attack against the PC the voice railed against. They are not required to utilize any raises against the PC, but any techniques they possess will be used as normal. If the PC succeeds, for a brief moment, their hand moves to their weapon as they prepare to strike, only for them to snap out of it before they draw their weapon. Either way, the control stops immediately after.

The red light seems to get more intense as you continue to descend the stairs. As you reach the bottom, the stairs opens up into a small, square room. The candles glow an odd red glow, as if they were hidden by paper even though the candles are uncovered. Against the far wall is a writing desk, and

set in a perfect circle on the ground appears to be some form of ritual circle. The side wall has various farm implements: hoes, shovels, ritual knives, rakes.

As a PC approaches the desk, have someone experience a vision as above. Make sure to choose a different PC than from before.

#### The farming implements

The Farming implements are just that. While the knives are covered in blood, they are otherwise completely normal.

#### The Ritual Circle

As the PCs study the circle, they can roll Lore: Maho / Intelligence at TN 25 (Lore: Shadowlands can be substituted by increasing the TN by 5). On a success, the PCs realize that this is a summoning circle to summon an Oni.

#### The Desk

As the PCs study the desk, have them roll Investigation (Search) / Perception at TN 30. By the Light of the Moon allows the PCs to bypass this roll entirely. If the PC succeeds, they are able to find a journal hidden under a false bottom. Had the PCs **Player's Handout #3: Ichi's Journal**.

Once the players have found the journal, they doubtless will want to return to the temple to confront Ichi. However, before they can, they will find that they are not alone...

The door above you slams shut suddenly, as if from nowhere. The sound of feet coming down the stairs greets you, though it is not the clacking of sandals... but rather a series of clacks, like eight sharp points striking the stone.

"You're too late..." a hoarse whisper pierces from above, almost sickeningly sweet. "You are too late, and your slowness dooms this place and yourselves along with it!"

The face that peers from the shadows of the stairway is no human face. Thousands of eyes, each just smaller than a human's, peers from a face that clearly belongs to a Spider, albeit one whose dread mandibles could easily lift a horse. It's mandibles move, and that eerily sweet voice croaks through whatever passes as it's lips. "His kindness has been corrupted, and you cannot be allowed to interfere. Soon your place of Worship



**Initiative:** 6k5

**Attack:** 9k4 (Bite, Complex)

**Armor TN:** 30

**Damage:** 4k4 (Bite, Special)

**Reduction:** 5 (0 against Jade or Crystal)

**Wounds:** 19 (Dead)

**Taint Rank:** 6.0

**Skills:** Intimidation 6

**Special Abilities:**

- **Diseased Bite:** If the Oniling deals at least 20 wounds (after reduction, but before void spent for wound reduction) with it's bite attack, the victim must make a Raw Stamina roll at TN 20. If the PC fails, they immediately lose one rank of strength. Once per day, they make the TN 20 Stamina roll again, losing another rank of strength until they pass or until their strength hits 0. Once their strength hits 0, they fall into a coma, and cannot be revived until the source of the disease is removed (with a Medicine / Intelligence roll at TN 45 or by a mastery level 5 or higher spell that heals poisons.
- **Fear: 1**
- **Burrow:** An Oniling can attach itself to a helpless person as a complex action. After two rounds, the Oniling burrows completely into the creature. After three rounds, the Oniling eats the creature's heart, killing it instantly. Once inside, attacking an Oniling requires 3 raises for no other effect and all damage done is also done to the victim. An Oniling who kills a victim with Burrow bursts out of their body as a full kumo one hour later.

### Ichi no Oni

Plague Bringer

Air 4

Earth 6

Fire 3

Water 4

Agility 5

**Initiative:** 8k4

**Attack:** 10k5 (Claws, Simple\*), 10k8 (Bite, Complex)

**Armor TN:** 30

**Damage:** 6k3 (Claws), 5k5 (Bite, Special)

**Reduction:** 20 (0 against Jade or Crystal)

**Wounds:** 70 (+5) 100 (+10) 160 (Dead)

**Taint Rank:** 6.0

**Skills:** Intimidation 6

**Special Abilities:**

- **Diseased Bite:** If Ichi no Oni deals at least 20 wounds (after reduction, but before void spent for wound reduction) with it's bite attack, the victim must make a Raw Stamina roll at TN 20. If the PC fails, they immediately lose one rank of strength. Once per day, they make the TN 20 Stamina roll again, losing another rank of strength until they pass or until their strength hits 0. Once their strength hits 0, they fall into a coma, and cannot be revived until the source of the disease is removed (with a Medicine / Intelligence roll at TN 45 or by a mastery level 5 or higher spell that heals poisons.
- **Many Appendages:** For each simple action Ichi no Oni uses to attack with it's claws, it can make two attacks instead of one. Each of these attacks must target a different opponent.
- **Tainted Assault:** Every time Ichi no Oni wounds a target, the target must make a raw Earth roll at TN 20. On a failure, the target gains a point of taint.
- **Spellcasting:** Ichi no Oni can casts Earth spells as if he was a rank 4 earth Shugenja. He can cast any spell that he has the ability to.
- **Invulnerability**
- **Above the Elements:** Spells targeting Ichi no Oni have a +20 TN penalty.
- **Fear: 4**
- **Connected by the Plague:** Until the body of Ichi is destroyed, any attack that targets Ichi no Oni deals it's wounds and any other effects to a nearby plague victim (Ichi no Oni's invulnerability and reduction applies before the transfer). Asako Ichi's body glows faintly any time this happens.
- **Condition Immunity:** Ichi no Oni is immune to conditions.

The Onilings will prioritize attempting to burrow into the helpless peasants. Ichi no Oni will ignore the PCs to start, confident that they are not able to touch it. Instead, it's focus will be on Jinkei. On the Fourth turn of initiative, if the Onilings have not been dealt with, Ichi no Oni will rip Jinkei limb from limb. If this occurs, Ichi no Oni joins the fight on the fifth round of combat.

If the PCs defeat the Onilings in time:

Ichi no Oni pauses as the last Oniling is defeated, regarding you with what appears to be interest. It tosses Jinkei away, who slides unconscious against the

floor. “Well then,” the sickly voice muses. “Let us play, Mortals.”

At this point, the creature will focus it’s all into attacking the PCs, though it will not discriminate and prefer to spread it’s assault out instead of killing the PCs one at a time. As the PCs fight, allow them to make an Investigation (Notice) / Perception Roll at TN 25. A success will allow them to notice that the body of Asako Ichi glows faintly whenever the oni is struck, and that the wounds that would be dealt seem to appear on various victims. (Each victim has 38 wounds, and all wounds will appear on one victim until they die before transferring to the next).

In order to stop the connection, PCs will have to destroy the body of Asako Ichi. There are a few ways of doing so:

- Dismembering the body: This will require a weapon attack roll. The body has an ATN of 5, but will require a called shot: head (3 raises) in order to dismember sufficiently to sever the tie.
- Burning the body: Any fire spell will do to make this happen, though any rank 1 fire spell will require 2 raises called to ensure that the fire properly consumes the body.

### Running?

Some PCs may determine that the fight is unwinnable and try to flee. As they begin to leave, a voice will whisper inside their head, “*Endure.*” While PCs might be suspicious, inform them that the voice is the same from their dream the evening before.

Once Ichi’s body is destroyed AND the Onilings are dealt with:

The Oni roars in defiance as the body of Asako Ichi is destroyed. “It matters not! I am too powerful, you cannot hope to cut me with those weapons!”

It’s prideful boast is cut short by a bright golden glow from behind it. The offering hand of Jurojin glows brightly, the palm seeming to extend out to all of you at once. That voice, that kindly old man’s voice rings in your head. “The trials ahead will be greatly dangerous. But you need not face them alone. Take my hand, and the Heavens will offer what aid it may.” As you look, an item sits in the hand of the statue. Your most trusted weapon. The fan that accompanies you to court. Your armor. As you reach for it, the item seems to spring to you, instantly ready for use against this monster. The glow fades, and as the statue seems to

return to normal, you find a renewed vigor as you prepare to face the threat of the Oni.

At this point, the PCs must decide what item is iconic to them. That item awakens immediately, becoming a Nemuranai and equipping to them (armor seems to attach itself to them magically, weapons are unsheathed, etc.). In addition, all wounds the PCs have suffered are healed (though if a PC was killed, Jurojin’s power cannot bring them back to life) and they do not suffer penalties suffered through physical disadvantages for the remainder of the module. In addition, PCs who are blessed by Jurojin find that their weapons move even easier in their hands. Such PCs gain a free raise on all attack rolls against Ichi no Oni.

As the oni is defeated:

Ichi no Oni cries out in agony as the killing blow is made. Its body catches into spontaneous flame, and it screeches loud curses against you. But a moment later, the flames consume it utterly, leaving only you, the bodies of the dead monks, and those who survived the Oni’s assault.

The statue of Jurojin seems to watch you intently now, it’s face turned into a smile of clear appreciation.

## Conclusion

A few hours after Ichi no Oni is defeated, the spontaneous snow storm clears, and the Sun shines brightly overhead. The remaining villagers in Nengoro Mura are thankful for all you have done, and wish you blessings as you return to your duties.

If Jinkei is still alive, he is somber about the fate of Asako Ichi, but does not blame the PCs for protecting the village and its inhabitants. If PCs did not come up with a cure, he will be able to do so within a few days... though doubtless some of the older villagers will die first. He will offer prayers on the PCs behalf, and bring their names up to Jurojin in thanks... not that Jurojin needs to see them favorably.

### The End

## Rewards for Completing the Adventure

Surviving the Module:	1 XP
Good Roleplaying:	1 XP
Discovering that Ichi is the problem:	1 XP

Defeating Ichi no Oni: 1 XP

Total Possible Experience: 4 XP

### Favors

If the PCs defeat Ichi no Oni, they gain a favor.

### Honor

Saving the people in the shrine: H7

Working to specifically find a cure: H10 (Paragon of compassion gives a point of honor in this instance, regardless of the Samurai's Honor Rank)

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

While few like speaking of issues of the Shadowlands, Kiyoko will nonetheless publicly praise the PCs for helping protect her village. This will earn the PCs a G9 glory gain.

### Allies and Enemies

If the PCs stop Ichi no Oni, they gain Jinkei as an ally (Influence 0/Devotion 3).

### Other Rewards

A PC with Jurojin's Curse who assists with defeating the Oni may buy off the Jurojin's Curse disadvantage without paying favors. They still pay XP as normal.

A PC with a physical disadvantage may opt to utilize the assistance of the Temple of Jurojin in healing their disadvantage. This reduces the favor cost of buying off a single physical disadvantage to the advantage's cost, instead of 3x the disadvantage cost. This decision must be made before the next module the PC plays.

All PCs gain the "Awakened One" Cert.

### GM Reporting

1. Did Jinkei survive?
2. Did O-Atsu survive?
3. Did the PCs come up with a cure?

The GM must report this information by September 19, 2020 for it to have storyline effect

## Appendix #1: NPCs

If any NPCs require statblocks not listed elsewhere in the module

### Jinkei

Compassionate Monk

Air 4    Earth 3    Fire 2    Water    Void 4

2

Intelligence 5    Perception 3

Honor

Status

Glory

**Initiative:**

**Attack:**

**Armor TN:**

**Damage:**

**Reduction:**

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

**School/Rank:** Doji Courtier 2 / Thousand Fortunes Monk 2

**Techniques:**

**Skills:** Jiujutsu 1, Courtier 4, Medicine 8, Etiquette 6

**Mastery Abilities:**

**Advantages/Disadvantages:** Paragon: Compassion, Jurojin's Blessing / Gullible

**Outfit:**

### Asako Ichi

Corrupted shugenja

Air 5    Earth 2    Fire 2    Water    Void 2\*

2

Intelligence 4    Perception 3

Honor

Status

Glory

**Initiative:**

**Attack:**

**Armor TN:**

**Damage:**

- **Reduction:**
- **Wounds:** 10 (+0), 14 (+3), 18 (+5), 22 (+10), 26 (+15), 30 (+20), 34 (Down, +40), 38 (Dead)
- **School/Rank:** Isawa Shugenja (Air) 4
- **Techniques:**
- **Shadowlands Power:** Beside the Darkness
- **Spells:** Ichi can cast any spell that he'd be able to cast. In addition, he knows the Summon Oni Maho Spell
- **Skills:** Jiujutsu 1, Courtier 4, Medicine 5, Etiquette 6, Sincerity 5
- **Mastery Abilities:**
- **Advantages/Disadvantages:** Paragon: Compassion, Heart of Vengeance: Crane / Shadowlands Taint (Taint Rank: 4.9 [jumps to 5.0 on the second day]), Jurojin's Curse
- **Outfit:**

## **Player Handout #1: News from the Empire**

My friends, I hope that the winter months have treated you well! The Imperial Winter Court in the Castle of the Emerald Champion has proceeded well! I will admit that we were somewhat astonished earlier this winter when Doji Makibesu-sama announced that he was stepping down as Crane Clan Champion in favor of his daughter, Doji Koiso. After the shock wore off, however, the Winter Court proceeded well. I am glad to say that Koiso-sama has taken to this new role well! Makibesu does, of course, maintain the office of the Emerald Champion, and has said

The Office of the Imperial Herald has announced that peace talks are beginning between the Imperial families and the Unicorn. The Office is hopeful that violence can be prevented and that the Unicorn might be able to see a more peaceful path.

I wish I had better reports from Phoenix lands, but that situation becomes only more odd. The Phoenix have closed the borders to their lands, allowing none to enter or leave their lands. While reports have suggested that they well received Seppun Kazetora-sama, we've not been able to learn anything since. That there are so few representatives of the clan of Isawa and Shiba at this court is... concerning.

Meanwhile, information from the Crab has been far more forthcoming! The Crab's recent Twenty Goblin Winter has been very well attended. While of course it is too early to know how this drive of recruitment for the Crab has gone, we should all hope that this drive is very successful!

Lastly, it is my somber duty to report that the Shrine of the KiRin was recently attacked. Initial reports suggest that it was a gaijin attack, as several oddly shaped swords were found at the scene. The shrine was burned down, and all the monks inside were killed, leaving only speculation to guide us going forward. I offer my heartfelt prayers of blessing to those who have been affected by this tragedy.

Honor and Duty, Samurai.

-Otomo Yusuke

## **Player Handout #2: The Dream**

The morning dawn is clear. You sit alone, tending to your sword. Your armor. Cleaning your tools of artistry. It is, as you feel it, a normal day.

You almost didn't notice the old man walk up to you. Indeed, it seemed more that he just \*appeared\* there. A jovial, smiling man with a beard near as long as the rest of his body. "I am glad you could heed my request.

"The trials that come... you are not as of yet ready. Not for this one, nor the ones that come in your future. But soon, soon you can be."

The man's smile seems to widen, if such a thing were possible. He reaches out, holding an item of yours. Perhaps your katana... or perhaps your fan. An item that has been with you since you began your journey.

"Listen carefully. The spirit is calling to you, but you will only be able to hear once the moment is right."

"So listen.

"And when the time is right.

"Endure."

Your eyes open. You are in your futon. For but a moment, the shining of the Sun pierces through the window before the patter of rain pushes the rays away.

## **Player Handout #3: Ichi's Journal**

### 14th Day, Month of the Moon, 1342

The journey to Nengoro Mura was long, but I am glad to have made it here. Jinkei-san was most welcoming, and Kiyoko-sama has been most hospitable. I am looking forward to getting to work.

### 19th Day, Month of Akodo, 1342

The people here are rather lovely, and over these last couple of months have come to treat me as a member of this community. O-Atsu-sama brought me a pie this evening. I'll have to come up with something to thank her.

### 4th Day, Month of Doji, 1342

San broke his leg while trying to repair the roof. It was the first time I got to see just how strong that drink that Jinkei makes was. Didn't heal the break, mind you, but he was at least able to work without pain until it did heal. Impressive stuff, that.

### 13th Day, Month of Shiba, 1342

From what it sounds like, we were very lucky. The Great Sea Spider, risen from the depths of the Sea, passed Nengoro Mura over. My heart hurts for all those who have suffered and died to its destructive might. The temple has been busy helping the refugees and wounded. I only hope what little we are able to do is enough.

### 22nd Day, Month of Shiba, 1342

That bastard Makibesu. I have seen the devastation that the Crane suffered, and I feel for them, but... did he truly need to claim the blessing for the Crane? The stories I have heard from Phoenix lands have been horrible. I know it is not my place to doubt the Emerald Champion, but... could this not even have been discussed?

### 4th Day, Month of Togashi, 1342

Some of the peasants reported a voice of some form coming from the southern shed. I promised them I would take a look into it.

### 5th Day, Month of Togashi, 1342

The voice is just an overactive kami, I think. It does talk a lot, but it seems to just be wishing to offer advice. It's asked for a bit more room so it can teach, so I've had some of the servants create a small office under the shed. I didn't mention it to Jinkei or Kiyoko-sama, but I doubt they will care. The meditation techniques it has taught me are fantastic, I must make sure to notate them for future medicinal use.

### 20th Day, Month of Fu Leng, 1342

The kami has taught me so much! New healing techniques I never thought possible, much beyond the limits of Nengoro Mura! I can't show them to the people yet... it will take time for them to understand. And I don't think they ever can so long as Kiyoko is in charge. The kami thinks I need to be rid of her, but she is my friend...

21st Day, Month of the Tenth Kami, 1342

The kami taught me how to make a sickness that will doubtless be able to be blamed upon Kiyoko. If I can make it appear that Jurojin-kami is displeased with her administration, surely she would be reassigned. Then I can make them understand...

23rd Day, Month of the Tenth Kami, 1342

The illness spreads slowly, it seems, but the first has been infected. I am sorry that it had to be O-Atsu, but if she dies it will doubtless cause a rift between Kiyoko and Yue. The infection method seems to work well, and the kami are able to cloak me from detection.

1st Day, Month of the Sun, 1343

Why are there other Samurai here? No, this will not do... they must have been brought here by the storm. I will not be able to complete my work at this rate....

2nd Day, Month of the Sun, 1343

There is no other choice. If I cannot destroy her name, I will have to destroy this institution. And the kami has taught me exactly the ritual I need to do this...