

Memories of the Lost

by Alex Jacobs

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

[Rokugani Month], 1343 (Late Spring)

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Supernatural, Roleplaying, Intrigue
Part 3 of The Books of the Elements

An ancient battle has modern consequences.

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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 groups 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.

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.

- Ally/Sworn Enemy (Matsu Teruyo): NPC is present throughout the mod. Various effects.
- Ally/Sworn Enemy (Shosuro Retsuko): NPC is present throughout the mod. Various effects.
- Cursed by the Realm: Gaki-do: keeps an extra die of damage if hit by the ghost ninja during The Summoning.
- Inner Gift (Lesser Prophecy): Gives 2 Free Raises
- Paragon (any): Gives Free Raise on Dream Roll (2 Free Raises if Duty).
- Precise Memory: The player may keep the description of each dream.
- Lost Love: Gives Free Raise on Dream Roll
- True Love: Gives Free Raise on Dream Roll

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. At the start of the module, PCs lose **3 points of glory**. This cannot reduce a PC's Glory Rank to less than their

Insight Rank, and the Fame Advantage increases their Insight Rank by one for these purposes.

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 $15+(\text{taint rank}*5)$.

Crafting

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

Preparation Techniques

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

Ronin Survival

Life is difficult for ronin in the Empire at the best of times. PC ronin are no exception to this. At the start of the module, a Ronin PC spends half of their koku. This cannot bring them below their insight rank in bu. Any koku received by the wealth advantage does not count for this expenditure.

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.

The Dream Roll

Matsu Yasuo's ghost will try to communicate through dreams. At several points throughout the module, all PCs will be asked to make a Dream roll. This is a Meditation / Air roll at TN 15. Some players may get Free Raises based on their Advantages.

After the Dreams are read to players, the GM should collect the dream handouts back. A player with Precise Memory may keep the handout.

NOTE: Groups may find other sources for the dreams. For example, if a PC meditates to try to contact Yasuo's ghost the GM may decide that she should receive the next dream. A PC who spends a great deal of time in the libraries may read about the castle's attack and should receive the next dream. Feel free to give out the next dream whenever player actions seem appropriate.

Acknowledgements

This module would not have been possible without the inspiration and assistance of many others. Much of this module is based on the first-edition adventure, "The Silence Within Sound" by Patrick Kapera which detailed the history of Kenson Gakka and included the original Festival of the Humble Turtle. The story of Matsu Yasuo and Matsu Saburo was inspired by Marc Olden's fantastic pulp novel *Dai-Sho*. The summoning scene was inspired by the *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* episode "I Only Have Eyes For You," written by Marti Noxon. Finally, a big thanks to Kain Dietz for his invaluable advice and discussions, without which this module would not have been possible.

Warning to Players

Though this is not a combat module, there is a significant possibility of PC death. For the most part, this is independent of PC stats and depends almost entirely on player decisions. You have been warned.

Introduction

Have all PCs make a Dream roll (Meditation / Air, TN 15, with Raises as described at the beginning). Anyone who passes receives Dream #1, then proceed. Note whoever rolled highest.

The bright sunlight coming through the windows wakes you as the memory of last night's dream fades. Blinking sleep from your eyes, you rise from your bed and set about your day: a quick breakfast provided by the innkeeper, your usual morning rituals, and once more you are on the road.

It is the month of the [, late summer, in the year of 1343, reign of Toturi X. Taking a break from the many duties that are, of course, the responsibility of all samurai, your lord has assigned you a rather pleasant task: to journey to Kenson Gakka in the lands of the Matsu, where you will take part in the Festival of the Humble Turtle and bear witness to a most joyful occasion: the wedding between Matsu Teruyo and Shosuro Katsurou.

The festival promises many opportunities for glorious competition and the wedding will no doubt be a peaceful and beautiful respite from the troubles that have so recently plagued the Empire.

Clan, Imperial, and monk PCs are attending the festival and/or wedding on behalf of their lords or order. Ronin have been hired as guards for Great Clan samurai at a rate of **1 koku**. As the PCs are presumed to have been traveling to Kenson Gakka together, they should have an opportunity to introduce and describe their characters.

Players may make a Lore: History or Lore: Lion / Intelligence check, with one Raise permitted (base TN 20 or 15 respectively) to determine what their characters know about Kenson Gakka (see: Appendix 4).

Grim Tidings

As you make your way down the road you see a common sight: a wandering monk taking shelter from the bright morning sun in the shade of a maple tree, the overhanging branches offering a pleasant moment's respite from the summer heat.

The monk identifies himself by the name Koan, a name some characters may recognize (if they make a Lore: Theology or Lore: History / Intelligence check, TN 20) as one shared by many monks and ronin shugenja throughout the Empire's history. He appears to be a short, portly man in his late 50's and, if asked, will reply (honestly) that he is wandering the Empire hoping to inspire Enlightenment. He will ask the players if they can spare anything and in response (as a gift if they are kind and generous or as a curse if they are rude and insulting) will speak: *“There is a presence,” he shudders. “A pain, a longing. You must help or death will cover the land. Open yourself fully and seek the false blade. No, I don't know what it means; please don't ask me again.”* His message delivered, Koan will find an excuse to leave (i.e. “I dare not travel alongside one with your fate.”).

Arrival at Kenson Gakka

The module assumes players report directly to the castle upon arrival. If PCs wish to investigate the surrounding village (Kenson Mura), allow them to do so, but the plot will wait for them in the castle. If players are concerned about bringing gifts, reassure them that their own lords have provided gifts for them to present.

Kenson Gakka stands before you. The castle is enormous, flanked by a large moat. Though ducks and geese swim lazily across it, any army would have a far more difficult time. Archery towers provide overlapping fields of fire, while the enormous gate and drawbridge stand ready to discharge an army to harass any force that tries to simply bypass the castle.

Fortunately, you come in peace. The Lion guards stand at attention as you pass and in no time you are ushered into the castle proper.

After arriving at the castle, the PCs are given the opportunity to retire to their rooms, clean themselves, etc. All the rooms are comfortable, if somewhat sparse, although a PC with Sworn Enemy: Matsu Teruyo has an awful room close to the stables so that the noise and smell of the horses is a constant irritant; the poor rest that comes with such a room means that for the duration of the mod that PC cannot regain Void Points through sleep (though they may be regained through meditation or tea ceremony). On the other hand, a PC with her as an Ally has a beautifully and tastefully appointed room fit for a visiting member of the Imperial families; the clear favoritism awards that PC a +1k0 to all social rolls for the duration of the module.

When one of the PCs (whoever rolled highest on the first Dream Roll) arrives in her room there is a beautiful and intricate flower arrangement in the otherwise empty room. Players may make an Artisan: Ikebana / Intelligence check calling Raises (base TN 10) to identify one of the flowers and its meaning (each Raise identifies one additional flowers).

Rokugani Name	English Name	Meaning
Tsubaki	Camellia (Red)	In Love, Perishing with grace
Kuroyuri	Fritillaria camtschatsensis	Love, curse
Higanbana / Manjushage	Red Spider Lily	Never to meet again/Lost memory/Abandonment
Bara	Rose (White)	Innocence/Silence/Devotion

If questioned, no one knows who placed the flowers. The servants sincerely deny all knowledge

and any samurai with knowledge of ikebana denies having created it.

The Baths

The players have an opportunity to use the house baths to clean themselves before the evening's welcome banquet. This is strongly recommended given the distances they've journeyed and the strain of travel. The castle has baths for both men and women (separated of course).

The heat and steam hits you as soon as you pass through the door. The castle's baths are a sprawling operation, luxurious by the standards of most military fortifications and even beyond that of some palaces. Though there is no hot spring, large wooden tubs – each sized to hold a dozen samurai – have been constructed over metal plates that servants on the floor below heat with smoldering fires. The result is as comfortable and luxurious as any natural spring, and far better-smelling, though also much more resource and labor-intensive.

Soldiers of the Lion, and even a few of their Scorpion guests, lounge about in the water allowing the heat to soak out the stress of duty.

The baths are a wonderful place to learn about the area. PCs may make a Courtier (gossip) / Awareness check, calling Raises (base TN 15). With success they learn one piece of information listed below plus one piece per Raise.

- 15: The castle's shugenja, Kitsu Rinji, committed seppuku last night.
- 20: Actually, Rinji committed suicide. Though she went through the motions of seppuku, she neither asked for nor received her lord's permission. No one knows why.
- 25: Actually, Rinji's suicide was a murder-suicide. She killed her servant in the process.
- 30: Learn about any one of the contests.
- 35: Learn one piece of the castle's history (may only be chosen a single time).

The steam and heat from the baths also feels overwhelmingly familiar to the PCs. Have all PCs at the baths make a Dream roll (Meditation / Air roll, TN 15, with Raises as described at the beginning). Anyone who passes receives Dream #2.

The Welcome Banquet

After bathing, PCs are all invited to the welcome banquet in the castle's great hall that evening. Seating is very unusual – all the PCs are seated at the head table along with Matsu Teruyo, her betrothed Shosuro Katsurou, Ikoma Shabiko, and Shosuro Retsuko. The PC with the lowest Status is seated at the head of the table (if tied, the PC with the lowest Glory, then a minor clan, ronin, monk, and finally a random PC other than a Lion or Scorpion) and gains **G7** for the distinction.

The meal is of good quality but not particularly noteworthy. The scene provides players a chance to meet the main NPCs: Matsu Teruyo, Ikoma Shabiko, Shosuro Retsuko, and Shosuro Katsurou.

Ikoma Shabiko

Ikoma Shabiko will want to discuss recent events in the Empire. If any of the players participated in the events of CIT-09 Essence of Fire or **CIT-22** Caught Among Thieves he will want to hear about it from them. If any of them admit they heard the new Elemental Keepers read from the Books (the players have the Book of... certs) Shabiko will be beside himself.

If the PCs are open to sharing their experiences with in those Books he will be visibly delighted – as an Ikoma he rarely bothers hiding his emotions – and will use it as an excuse to talk about the Books. *“What do you know of the history of the Books of the Elements? Oh forget it. It's a good tale, let me tell it.*

“After the Second Day of Thunder, the hooded ronin – Shinsei's descendent, as you well know – departed from the Empire. We don't know what happened to him, but I like to think he lived out his life, then died as an old man somewhere well-hidden, surrounded by family and loved ones. We do know, however, that he died with doubts, wondering if he perhaps the Empire would have suffered as greatly as it had in the subsequent years had he not withdrawn as his ancestor had. As he died, he drew a promise from his son, Rosoku, not to let Shinei's guidance vanish from the Empire forever.

“Rosoku was left with a dilemma. He knew that it was of critical importance that his line continue so that Shinsei's spirit can guide future heroes on the next Day of Thunder, but he could not deny his father's dying wish to insure that his family's wisdom guide the Toturi Dynasty. How could he remain in hiding, yet continue to provide guidance? The answer was simple: he had to find someone else worthy.

“To that end, Rosoku assembled a collection of wisdom, observations penned by his enlightened ancestors during their centuries of seclusion. These scrolls were organized into five books, each named after a particular element. Appearing before the Emperor, Rosoku offered to grant each of the books to whoever could meet his challenges.

Shabiko can go on about these books at length though we don't have enough space here to include everything he knows about them. The books are discussed more thoroughly in the *Book of...* series from AEG, but if the GM does not have access to those books she can reference the L5R wiki entry at http://l5r.wikia.com/wiki/Challenges_of_Enlightenment

Shabiko is not ready to draw conclusions about what the books' reappearance in the Empire means. This encounter is primarily to give information to players who may not be familiar with this portion of Rokugani history. He will, however, speculate on how the Books' challenges tended to be completed in metaphor and that seems to be the case now.

Shosuro Retsuko

Shosuro Retsuko wastes no time promoting her troupe, actors whom she claims are masters of both the kabuki and noh styles. In honor of the festive occasion, she announces that they will be performing *Mottomo Kōun'na Senshu* (“The Most Fortunate Tailor”). Anyone who makes an Acting / Intelligence check (TN 15) knows it is a humorous farce about a young samurai who only wants to be a tailor but is frequently confused for a great warrior. The comical situations with which he is forced to defend himself are matched only by the over-the-top fight scenes; it is even whispered that early mizu-do was developed to meet the demands of the play's fight scenes and that special prop weapons were invented to perform it safely. If the PCs express interest Retsuko invites them to come tour the theater with her at a later time.

Spider

As the dishes are cleared between the third and fourth course, a servant lifts one of the bowls. Hidden underneath is an enormous spider! Immediately it starts to scurry out of sight under the table.

Do not give players time to think or ask questions; they have to decide how they react immediately before the spider runs out of sight. If a player wants to squish the spider they may do so without a check. If multiple players try to squish the spider have them each make

an Initiative check to see who does it first. Note whomever squished the spider.

Afterward, a PC may make a Divination (omens) / Intelligence check or Lore: Omens / Intelligence check (TN 20). PCs with the “Spider's Mark” advantage receive a free raise on this roll. If successful, they learn that during the day spiders are considered signs of good luck. In the evening, however, spiders are signs of bad luck and should be killed as quickly as possible.

Part One: Joyful Celebrations

After players conclude the evening, have all PCs make a Dream roll (Meditation / Air roll, TN 15, with Raises as described at the beginning). Anyone who passes receives Dream #3.

The next day begins the contests that comprise the Festival of the Humble Turtle.

Contests

You awaken refreshed and eager to begin the festival. Today will be a day of contests in honor of the stalwart defenders of Kenson Gakka and promises the opportunity to win honor and accolades for your clan. Today's contests will focus on martial skills: yabusama is a horse archery competition, yarijutsu tests one's speed and accuracy with a spear, and sumai of course is a test of unarmed combat.

Players may make a Lore: History / Intelligence TN 25 or Lore: Lion / Intelligence TN 15 check to know that the contests of the festival have changed drastically from previous years. Where they once focused on basic military skills, they now embrace a variety of aspects from a soldier's life. In fact, the only two original contests are those of yabusama and sumai.

Contests

Yabusama: Mounted archery against stationary targets. Each player makes a combined Horsemanship / Agility and Kyujutsu / Reflexes roll, adding the two together. The highest NPC result is Matsu Goro no Korihome with a combined 65. The highest score wins.

Yarijutsu: A speed contest to strike a target as many times as possible in under a minute. Each player makes a Spears / Reflexes or Polearms / Reflexes check (this counts as an attack roll). The highest NPC

result is Matsu Roshu with a 45. The highest score wins.

The winner of each contests receives a ribbon at the end of the competition (see: Conclusion).

Unarmed Combat: Wrestling in full armor, requiring one to gauge where one's opponent will strike. Each player makes an Jiujutsu / Awareness and Jiujutsu / Strength roll (this is both a social roll and an attack roll). The highest NPC result is Akodo Akira with 65 but before announcing the winner proceed with “A Disturbance” below.

A Disturbance

As the last of the preliminary matches ends you cheer as a Lion and Scorpion maneuver around each other. The Scorpion nimbly dodges the Lion's leaping tackle – to the cheers of encouragement from the Scorpion observers – when all of a sudden the Lion draws a blade. He holds it high as he shouts, “We shall not fall, ninja! Samurai to me! For Shiro no Meiyo! For Matsu Saburo!”

The audience is stunned. If the PCs do not act, the Lion will kill his Scorpion opponent. Players may use whatever means they want to interrupt the match and will be successful (no rolls required).

Afterward, the Lion – a middle-aged gunso named Akodo Akira – is as confused as anyone else. He remembers trying to kill the Scorpion but not why nor why he thought the Scorpion was a ninja. He has no idea what Shiro no Meiyo is or who Matsu Saburo is (PCs who learned about the castle's history may be able to tell him). Nor does Akira know why he drew his katana (in fact, once he thinks about it he wasn't wearing his daisho into the match at all). If players search for the katana, it has vanished.

Akira surrenders himself to the castle guards who take him away. The highest-scoring PC is the winner by default but this is not celebratory.

A Request for Aid

The day ends on a dark note. The Scorpion are outraged by Akodo Akira's attack and the Lion are shamed by his actions. Matsu Teruyo requests a meeting with the PCs in the castle's dojo (this will even include Sworn Enemies).

You enter the dojo to the sound of a kiai and a rhythmic *thwack!* Matsu Teruyo stands clad in gi and hakama before a rolled tatami mat, striking it repeatedly with a bokken. When she sees you she breaks off her attack and wipes the sweat from her

brow. “This is normally done with a katana,” she explains, “but then it would have ended much too quickly. Thank you for coming. I understand you were present at the sumai match earlier today.”

Teruyo asks the PCs for their take on what happened – she needs opinions from people other than her own samurai or the Scorpion delegation (Lion and Scorpion PCs' views are still valued because they are not direct vassals of Teruyo or the Scorpion delegation).

After hearing their impressions continue:

Teruyo sighs. “I do not know what to make of this. Akodo Akira has always been an honorable man. The shame of his unprovoked attack is beyond belief. He has asked for my permission to commit seppuku and I see no choice but to grant it. I have but this to ask.” She clears her throat. “Please, find out why this happened. Akodo-san offers no defense but I cannot believe that he simply decided to commit murder.”

Players are not obligated to accept and the module will continue, but they may have trouble involving themselves. Nonetheless, most PCs should not find this burdensome. It would give them an opportunity to earn favor from both the Lion and the Scorpion, quite the coup. Lion and Scorpion PCs should feel a particular duty to resolve the matter so that the wedding can proceed without further disruption.

As part of their investigation, Teruyo gives the PCs permission to use any reasonable methods. The castle's personnel are open to them, though they are asked to be polite to guests. They have permission to carry weapons and wear armor, and shugenja may invoke the kami.

It is likely that many PCs will feel the investigation is more important than the tournament, in which case they may politely excuse themselves from the remaining contests.

Back Stage Tour

After meeting with Matsu Teruyo the PCs receive a message from Shosuro Retsuko inviting them to tour the theater.

Retsuko and the Scorpion have constructed a beautiful theater in the castle courtyard. A portable stage, bench seating, free-standing silk walls, and artfully arranged lanterns have turned the otherwise spartan, martial space into an oasis of beauty and culture.

Retsuko leads you through the traveling theater setup, explaining how it can be configured for kabuki, noh, or even bunraku performances. She then takes you back stage and takes clear delight in showing off the theater's extensive collection of props and costumes.

Retsuko will use this opportunity to interrogate the PCs about what happened. She's especially interested in whether they think Akira would truly have killed the Scorpion or whether it was posturing. Whenever the conversation grows too intense she will turn the conversation back to the props.

"These," she says gesturing to a table of what appear to be weapons, "are indispensable. For instance..." she takes a wakizashi from the table, draws it, then pushes the tip of the blade with her bare palm. Instead of cutting her, the blade retracts into the hilt. "Makes performances much more believable," she explains. Next she picks up a katana which, when she strikes it against her arm, hinges where the blade and hilt meet preventing even a bruise.

Retsuko's point is that the violence could have been faked. What she can't understand is what the Lion would have to gain from such deception.

Interrogating Akira

The PCs will have full access to Akira, but he cannot offer much in the way of help.

"I don't know what happened, samurai-sans. One moment we were in the ring and I was trying to maneuver for a shi-honage that would have won the match. And then... I don't know why but all of a sudden I saw him as if he were all in black and with a sword in hand. I thought he was trying to kill me and my lord and everything depended on killing him. So I drew my sword and then..."

Akira truly does not remember more than this, nor does he know where the sword came from. If anyone thinks to examine the sword, it has since disappeared. If anyone has some way of examining it (a spell to view the past, the Precise Memory advantage, etc.) they recall a blade of very antique style. Akira is completely sincere in his lack of memory or understanding but still regards the actions as his own fault. He has requested seppuku and will complete it at dawn.

The ghost that possessed Akira is completely departed and so checking him for hauntings (i.e. Kitsu technique) or trying to banish a spirit from him (i.e. Toritaka Exorcist technique) will not reveal or accomplish anything

Part Two: A Grey Dawn

As the PCs sleep have all PCs make a Dream roll (Meditation / Air roll, TN 15, with Raises as described at the beginning). Anyone who passes receives Dream #4.

You wake to a dreary, overcast day. The castle is somber as people gather in the courtyard to witness Akira's seppuku.

It is quite likely that the PCs will interrupt at some point during the seppuku. Despite this being presented as box text, allow PCs to interrupt. It is unlikely, though possible, that the PCs may be able to prevent Akira's seppuku. Though it is almost certain they don't have enough evidence or testimony to prevent his seppuku entirely (testimony about the dreams is not enough) it is possible that with good roleplaying and social checks they may be able to get the seppuku delayed until they can complete their investigation.

It is much more likely, however, that Akira will commit seppuku and the PCs will interrupt Matsu Teruyo's attempt to follow him. If the PCs don't interrupt Teruyo then her guards will, but players should have the first opportunity to intervene.

The rest of this scene and the module in general assumes that Akira's seppuku is completed but the GM should be prepared to adjust accordingly. Likewise, the fact that he committed seppuku does not end the PCs' investigation. They are to investigate the truth of what happened and Akira's death does not change that.

The seppuku would normally take place in the castle's bare courtyard, but because the Scorpion have set up their theater in the courtyard, the seppuku will take place there.

Akodo Akira sits astride the stage, clad in white, kneeling in front of a writing desk. A bowl of sake rests on the desk alongside a sheet of clean white paper, brush, and inkstone. Akira deftly picks up the brush and quickly writes his final poem. Next, he takes the bowl of sake and finishes it in four measured sips, four being the number that represents death. As he sets the bowl down, Matsu Teruyo moves behind him to act as Akira's second, her katana already drawn.

"Straighten your sandals," she says impassively. Akira blushes slightly but he does so. It

wouldn't do for him to die with his sandals loose. One should be as dignified in death as in life.

"I am sorry for- I regret this ending," Akira says. There is a brief fluttering of fans at the break in convention. Seppuku is supposed to be a solemn, silent affair. "I should have listened to you about the Scorpion."

Teruyo gives a half smile. "You were the best lord you could be," she replies. "And I served the best master I had." She looks around at the assemblage. "We'd best get this over with. I don't want to keep the Scorpion waiting."

Akira reaches for his wakizashi, his hand shaking. He hesitates, the hand held suspended over the hilt. Before he can shame himself, Teruyo's katana flashes. Akira's head tumbles forward, cut perfectly across the throat but still held on by the skin at the back of his neck.

The courtyard is silent as Akira's death washes over everyone, and the kindness of Teruyo's mercy in ensuring that Akira did not suffer. No one speaks as she takes a ladle of water and washes the blade of her katana before drying it and re-sheathing the sword.

The eta stand ready to take the body away, but Teruyo does not exit the stage. Instead she kneels on the other side of Akira's desk, facing his corpse. She takes the brush he'd set down and adds a few lines to the bottom of the page. Then she draws her own wakizashi, placing the tip at her stomach.

Give the PCs a chance to react. If they do not, continue.

As Teruyo prepares to plunge the short blade into her stomach, one of the guards rushes forward. "My Lady, what are you doing?" he shouts, pulling the blade out of her grasp.

Matsu Teruyo stares around blinking. "What... what happened?" she asks.

Matsu Teruyo is hurriedly rushed away but sends for the players shortly. If players try to collect his death poem (which includes the lines Teruyo wrote) it has mysteriously vanished.

Contests Continue

After yesterday's affront during the sumai competition and the morning's debacle, the afternoon's contests

have taken on a sombre tone. It's as if many of the samurai present are simply going through the motions.

Some PCs – perhaps even all PCs – may choose to ignore the contests in order to conduct their investigation. This is fine and the players should not be forced to participate in the contests if they consider their investigation paramount. Other players may want to continue the contests and the GM should provide justification for them to do so (i.e. you are supposed to make sure the event proceeds smoothly and participating in the contests will create a sense of normalcy).

Saikoro ("Dice"): Each participant makes a Games: Fortunes and Winds / Awareness roll. The highest NPC result is Bayushi Eizan with 28.

Tako ("Kites"): PCs may work individually or in teams. Each team makes a cooperative Craft: Kitemaking / Awareness or Artisan: Kitemaking / Awareness check, that is added to *one* of team member's Games: Kite Fighting / Reflexes check. Any team with a cumulative score of 60 or higher is considered a winner and receives a ribbon at the end of the competition (see below).

Taiko ("Drumming"): Each participant must make a Perform: Percussion / Awareness check. The highest NPC result is Shosuro Namika with 26.

The winner of each contests receives a ribbon at the end of the competition (see: Conclusion).

A Visit to the Libraries

As the day's contests die down, or after the PCs have had a chance to investigate, they receive a message from Ikoma Shabiko asking to meet them in the castle library. Any PCs who attend have the following experience with him.

The Ikoma daimyo is hunched over a yellowed scroll, fragile-looking and starting to crack and tear in a few locations. He looks up at you clearly delighted at your arrival. "Ah, samurai-sans. Thank you for joining me.

Shabiko is understandably concerned about the wedding falling apart, which would be a great strategic loss for the Lion and, if things deteriorate further and go to war, could destabilize travel and thus the economy of the entire Empire. He will urge the PCs to help solve the mystery.

Depending on how they roleplay, Shabiko can reveal the next two pieces of history the PCs don't already know. He is happy to discuss any theories the PCs

have about what is happening. If the players suggest supernatural theories (“The ghosts of Lion samurai are upset that Scorpion are now being allowed in the castle again!”) he will consider the theory quite credible but will point out that ghosts usually have more specific motivations. They will need to discover what these beings want.

If the players use the castle's library to research they can make an Investigation (search) / Intelligence check, calling Raises, to locate useful information. This has a TN of 20 to reveal the next piece of information, plus one additional piece per Raise (max of 3).

Part Three: Danger in a Play

That evening as they sleep, have all PCs make a Dream roll (Meditation / Air roll, TN 15, with Raises as described at the beginning). Anyone who passes receives Dream #5.

Arrayed before the castle are two enormous armies: one in Lion brown and yellow, the other in Scorpion red and black. Though the arms and armors are not real, there is a deadly serious air to the event. The castle has just seen recent death and it is clear the tensions are ready to boil over.

The final event is a re-creation of the first Battle of Kenson Gakka. The PCs may portray either Lions or Scorpions during the recreation (members of those clans are expected to join their kinsmen), and will be given false armor with the mon of the proper clan. The Scorpion have also provided prop weapons from their theater.

Anyone who participates makes a Battle / Air roll to play the part of a soldier (Air to represent both the acting and physical aspects of the performance). Anyone who rolls 25 or higher receives a ribbon at the end of the competition.

In the haze of the battle, have all PCs make a Dream roll (Meditation / Air roll, TN 15, with Raises as described at the beginning). Anyone who passes receives Dream #6 as a vision.

The Play

The air in the castle that evening is tense as people gather in the courtyard in the traveling theater set up by Shosuro Retsuko's acting troupe. Though no one says anything, there are more than a few pointed glances towards the stage where, just the previous day,

Akodo Akira committed seppuku and Matsu Teruyo seemed on the verge of joining him.

At last the play starts and the kabuki performance is a welcome distraction; the light-hearted farce is exactly what everyone needs.

The performance is extraordinarily well-done and the Shosuro pull out all the stops. The highlight is a fight scene in which the titular tailor is forced to defend himself first with a pair of shears, then a measuring tape, and at last a newly sewn hakama which requires him to strip halfway through the scene revealing a ludicrously over-sized fundoshi (loin cloth) festooned with drawings of a popular children's story character.

Any PC who makes an Investigation (notice) / Awareness check TN 15, calling Raises, is able to see the tension leave the audience. They laugh at the farce, cheer at the stunts, and boo and hiss at the villain. It's low-brow humor and behavior but anyone with at least 1 rank of Etiquette knows this is acceptable under the circumstances.

Anyone who made the check with at least 1 Raise notices that Matsu Teruyo and Shosuro Katsuro are getting particularly caught up in the play, laughing as openly as Ikoma Shabiko (the Ikoma, of course, is being over-the-top with his appreciation of the play). It appears the two betrothed samurai have something in common beyond their military lifestyle.

The play will continue but, like previous box text, PCs may interrupt at any point and the GM should adjudicate their actions appropriately.

At last the play comes to its climax: Genji, the young tailor, has driven off the forces besieging his father's castle and proven himself a valiant warrior. Finding courage in battle, he finds the courage to tell his father the truth: that he doesn't want to be a warrior.

Genji kneels before his father, his arms and armaments at last gone. “Father,” he begins.

“Straighten your sandals,” his father replies. Genji blushes.

“I am sorry for- I regret this ending,” Genji says as he adjusts his sandals. There is a fluttering of fans from the audience. “I should have listened to you about the Scorpion.”

Players may make an Acting / Intelligence check or Lore: literature / Intelligence check at TN 15. Anyone

who passes knows that this dialogue is not from the play. Additionally, players may make a raw Intelligence check at TN 15 (any player with Precise Memory receive a Free Raise). If they pass, they recall that these were the exact words Akodo Akira and Matsu Teruyo said at the seppuku yesterday.

The actor playing Genji's father gives a half smile. "You were the best lord you could be," he says. "And I served the best master I had." He looks around at the audience. "We'd best get this over with. I don't want to keep the Scorpion waiting."

Genji reaches down to his belt where a wakizashi would rest while the other actor towers over him. Though neither of them were armed at the start of the scene, the father reaches down to his obi, looking for a katana. When he doesn't find one a look of confusion crosses his face and then a full daisho materializes in Genji's obi. He draws the blade and holds it over Genji's head.

Genji reaches toward his wakizashi, his hand shaking. He hesitates, his hand held over the hilt, then the katana flashes. Genji's head tumbles forward, cut perfectly across the throat but still held on by the skin at the back of his neck.

The theater audience screams in confusion and revulsion at the horrific sight. The surviving actor ignores them and simply takes a ladle of water as he washes the blade of his katana before drying it and re-sheathing the sword. Next, he kneels on the other side of Genji's corpse where a desk has now appeared with a brush, the actor adds a few lines to the bottom of a page sitting on the desk. Then he draws his wakizashi, places the tip at his stomach, and plunges it in.

If the players do not intervene the theater is in chaos. Matsu Teruyo and Shosuro Katsuro are quickly hurried out by their delegations and yojimbo to the security of their own quarters. Guards are trying to establish order but are having a very difficult time of it. No one can understand what just happened.

If they do intervene and prevent one or both of the deaths the results are not much better, though the actors will still be alive. As before, both can remember what they did but not why. Neither knows where the weapons came from and by now all the weapons, the desk, and the paper have vanished.

The Lion and Scorpion are tearing into each other, verbally at the moment but it seems close to getting physical. Even getting the crowd's attention will be difficult and requires a Perform: Oratory / Awareness

or similar check at TN 20. Once the players have the crowd's attention, defusing the situation will require good roleplaying and an appropriate social check at TN 25.

If no one succeeds, the samurai begin rioting. All players take 2k2 damage before the guards can restore order.

A Meeting with Shosuro

As the players leave the theater (hopefully a calm theater) Shosuro Retsuko asks to speak with them. She brings the PCs backstage and begins.

"Things are breaking down. Shosuro Katsuro is threatening to call off the marriage. If that happens the Lion will take offense at their insult and our two regions will almost certainly go to war. The slight could easily draw in the entirety of both families and maybe even the clans. We need to stop this before a war breaks out that will devastate both clans."

Retsuko is being quite sincere; she wants the Scorpion in a strong peace, not bleeding in a pointless war.

If the players ask her for advice she will be reluctant to share her ideas since it seems quite silly to her. Getting her to open up will require a Courtier (manipulation) / Awareness check at TN 25. Allies pass the check automatically while anyone with Retsuko as a Sworn Enemy must make 3 Raises to get her to share her thoughts.

To Retsuko, the attempted seppuku reminded her of an obscure play, *Mon no Teki* ("Enemy at the Gates"). The incidents of the play line up very well with what she's learned about the history of Kenson Gakka and some of the lines are identical with what the actors said last night... and what Akodo Akira and Matsu Teruyo said yesterday.

Retsuko brings out a copy of the script (give players the first page of the play). She brought it with her to study but knew far better than to perform such a play. Players may make an Acting / Intelligence check, calling Raises, at TN 5 to review the script and learn more about the castle's history. As usual, Raises apply but there is no limit to how much information they can learn.

While reading the play, *all* of the players experience dream #7, no roll needed.

If the players do not suggest it, Retsuko will theorize that the castle is being haunted by the ghosts of Matsu

Yasuo and Matsu Saburo. The best thing to do would be to exorcise them.

Part Four: An Exorism

At some point players should realize that this is a supernatural problem and may want to try and exorcise the spirits responsible from the castle. Exorcising the entire castle is a lengthy ritual and requires hours of preparation involving chanting, incense, placing wards, reciting holy texts, and praying to the kami which will take them well into the night regardless of when they start

At the ritual's conclusion have the players make a cooperative Lore: Theology / Void check at TN 20. If they fail, nothing happens. If they pass, things become far worse.

As you conclude your chanting the drums and gongs go silent. For a moment the night is peaceful and still, but then you hear it: a scratching, as if a thousand fingernails were clawing at the paper walls of the castle.

You look towards the source of the sound and see it. You see them. A wave, a tide rushing towards you. Thousands – millions! – of scorpions, a tidal wave of insectoid creatures rushing towards you! Almost as one people begin running, pushing and shoving past each other to escape the horde of scorpion that are overwhelming Kenson Gakka. Samurai and heimin alike are fleeing the castle.

The tide is relentless and unending. With their sheer number there is no way to fight the scorpions, save perhaps by burning the castle down. Remind players there is no Honor Loss for running. They are not running from a powerful enemy but a force of nature; it is no more shameful than trying to outrun a forest fire.

All the players must make an Athletics / Water check (TN 20) to outrun the scorpion. Anyone who fails suffers the effects of venom, reducing their physical Traits by 1 (do not reduce Wound totals). Recovery rules are in the core rule book, p. 333, but will not be possible for the rest of the mod.

At last you burst through a doorway and into an open space. You've escaped the tide but only too late you realize where you've escaped too. You stand in the castle courtyard, surrounded on all sides by scorpion-filled hallways that prevent your escape.

The theater still stands in the courtyard, though the benches are overturned and props are strewn everywhere. The actors must have fled in a panic with everyone else. Other than that, though, the castle is silent. You are alone, trapped.

The Summoning

This scene assumes PCs are attempting to summon the ghosts themselves, but it is possible they will try and recruit NPC actors to assist from the theater troupe; they will defer unless a PC has Shosuro Retsuko as an ally in which case she rolls 8k3 on her Acting / Air check and has an Earth of 3. The summoning will require a copy of the play; if PCs don't already have it they may search the theater for it (Investigation (search) / Perception TN 20) or they will have to improvise based on what they've already heard (raw Intelligence TN 20. Precise Memory applies).

Two PCs must volunteer to be the hosts. Begin by having the them read the first part of the Play (see: Appendix 5) as if it were a performance. As they start, however, something happens.

There is a glimpse of movement out of the corner of your eye. You move without thought and your weapon strikes a man about to ambush you. He is dressed in midnight-blue clothing that obscures his face, wielding a short, straight blade. As you cut him, he crumples to the ground, dissolving into mist.

Screams come from the surrounding castle, now under attack by the ghostly-invaders. Servants run in panic and many of the castle's inhabitants are fleeing. You look around and realize there are more of these ghostly figures moving towards you.

Mechanics: Each round the two hosts must make a cumulative Acting / Awareness roll with a TN 15 threshold (rolls must be 15 or higher in order to add to the total. Wound penalties do *not* reduce the roll but *will* increase the threshold TN). If they read the play exceptionally well, anyone with the Acting Skill receives a Free Raise on each check, while anyone without the Skill will not suffer untrained penalties.

The ghosts will attack the hosts just like they are attacking everyone in the castle. They attack incredibly quickly and driving them back requires a Defense / Reflexes roll, calling Raises (TN 25). A PC may instead attempt to protect one of the actors, rolling an Athletics / Reflexes at TN 25.

The ghosts have a base damage of 5, plus 5 damage for each PC. Each round the ghost ninja do damage to *all* PCs, but each successful defense roll reduces the

damage by 5; a PC with Cursed by the Realm: Gaki-Do adds 5 damage. Reduction from armor does not apply but magical Reduction and Reduction from Techniques will apply. A PC who killed the spider during dinner has blocked bad luck from harming him and has Reduction 5 against any damage that gets through. If a PC successfully rolled Athletics / Reflexes, they take the damage that the actor would have taken.

The hosts must reach a cumulative total of 200 on their Acting / Awareness rolls (or 300, if both actors have either acting 5 or awareness 5).

Failure: If the PCs decide to flee before completing the possession summoning can do so. If the scorpions are present they can force their way through the scorpions. The scorpion venom stays in them, however, and each PC must make a raw Earth roll TN 20 (do not apply venom Penalties) or permanently gain the Bad Health Disadvantage.

Any PC who takes enough Wounds from the ghosts to be killed is rendered unconscious but does not die; instead they permanently gain one of the following Disadvantages (start at the top of the list and continue down if the PC already has that Disadvantage):

- Cursed by the Realm: Gaki-do
- Frail Mind
- Epilepsy
- Unlucky (+1 rank)

If all PCs flee or are reduced to unconsciousness proceed with “A Meeting of Two Houses.” (assume someone goes back to rescue the unconscious PCs)

Success: The actors summon the spirits of Yasuo and Saburo into them. The ghost attacks abruptly stop. The player possessed by Yasuo automatically strikes the player possessed by Saburo with a katana. If the players have replaced their blades with the prop blades, the attacks do no damage.

If the players have not replaced “Yasuo”s wakizashi and katana with the stage blades, things are worse. Only replacing her blades with the stage blades will work; if the PCs' weapons are removed but not substituted, the ghosts will summon their old blades. Treat this attack as automatically successful and inflicts damage as if the maximum possible number of Raises had been called (each adding +1k0 to damage) *and* a Void Point had been spent on damage. Void may *not* be used to reduce damage. “Yasuo” will then strike herself with her own wakizashi in the same fashion.

If the hosts do not survive or are unable to continue, proceed with Failure as above but the damage they take is real and may kill them. Otherwise, give them Appendix 6: Death Poems, which they have written out and have them read the second page of the play.

Afterward:

There is a rushing sound and suddenly the castle is clear, the night is quiet, and Lady Moon shines down from above. Slowly, people re-enter the castle.

If the PCs look at the death poems they observe that the first three lines are in a different hand than the last two. Any player with at least 1 rank of Artisan: poetry recognizes the poem as a tanka. The 5-7-5-7-7 structure is more formal than a haiku and is generally unsuited to death poems. It is common, however, for samurai to write haiku for others to complete as tanka, or to take it upon themselves to “finish” the haiku that others have written.

A Meeting of Two Houses

This scene may take place in the castle after the PCs have successfully pacified the spirits of Yasuo and Saburo, or it may take place outside the castle the Matsu have been forced to abandon. Modify it appropriately.

“This is outrageous!” shouts Shosuro Katsurou. “Are the Lion really so incompetent that they cannot hold onto their own palace or is it simply that your entire line is cursed?”

“Watch your words, 'beloved,' ” taunts Matsu Teruyo, “before you regret them.”

“My only regret,” the Shosuro responds, “is that I entertained the thought of tying my family to yours! I suppose we all know the value of Matsu blood now!”

From the side Ikoma Shabiko and Shosuro Retsuko try in vain to soothe the tempers of the two soldiers, but its clear this betrothal is quickly falling apart.

The PCs cannot reconcile the two sides but they can support Shabiko and Retsuko. A PC may make a Courtier (manipulation) / Awareness roll to try and get the two sides to listen to the Shabiko and Retsuko (or potentially use another skill). If the PCs have brought the spirits to rest their words have a great deal of weight and the TN is 25. If not, they have a hard time being heard and the TN is 60.

If the PCs have the death poems they may give them to Ikoma Shabiko to reinforce his argument. This will award them a Free Raise on their check.

If they fail *or* the spirits were not laid to rest, proceed to the Awards Ceremony and the appropriate Conclusion. If the players succeed *and* they laid Saburo and Yasuo's spirits to rest, the specific resolution below occurs.

Your words have a profound affect on Teruyo and Saburo. You can see they want to take back their harsh words but they're not sure how. Ikoma Shabiko takes advantage of the pause as he sees a piece of paper you hold. "May I have that?" the Ikoma daimyo asks. Without waiting for a reply he takes it and holds it forth.

"Listen to these samurai," Ikoma Shabiko implores. "We have seen the results when samurai allow prejudice to blind them." He holds your poem forth. "In the sixth century, nearly a thousand years ago, two samurai committed seppuku in this very castle. This poem is the last testament to their tragedy. Let us not fall prey to the mistrust that resulted in their death; instead, let us learn from them."

Teruyo and Katsuro are quite touched and both cease posturing and recommit to tomorrow's wedding.

Awards Ceremony

This scene may either be a joyful celebration or a bitter conclusion to the events of the past several days. The GM should modify the text accordingly.

The following morning the festival concludes. Beginning in Kenson Mura, or "Humble Village," the finest Matsu units all don their armor and line up in formation, each soldier bearing a sashimono with the mon of the Lion. As one they march to the castle in perfect lock step, a testament to Lion military power and discipline.

On the steps of Kenson Gakka, they stand at attention as the tournament's victors are called forth. One by one, each contest is announced: yabusama, yarijutsu, sumai, saikoro, tako, and taiko. Each winner is brought before the Lion daimyo, Matsu Teruyo and Ikoma Shabiko, who places a ribbon around your neck to signify your victory.

As the last ribbon is awarded the Matsu set their banners in the earth in a perfect upright row, snapping in the breeze.

Every PC who won a contest receives a ribbon that awards the PC **G6**. If the PC won more than one contest, increase their Glory award by 1 for each additional contest.

Conclusion

If the PCs were not able to lay the spirits to rest and the marriage is called off: The Scorpion depart the next morning under dark storm clouds. Over the coming weeks Kitsu shugenja are summoned to cleanse the castle, which is only done at great difficulty. Immediately the Lion begin to fortify Kenson Gakka in preparation for a Scorpion assault while the Scorpion begin hastily reinforcing their side of the border. War is almost certainly inevitable.

If the PCs were not able to lay the spirits to rest but the marriage proceeds: The marriage is a somber affair, conducted in an almost perfunctory manner outside the castle. The Scorpion offer to send their shugenja to cleanse it but the Lion still don't trust them. As soon as the wedding is complete, Shosuro (now Matsu) Katsuro accepts a petition to join the Imperial Legions, a result which will take him far from his wife. Though war has been averted for the time being, the border families have not been united for future generations.

If the PCs were able to lay the spirits to rest but the marriage is called off: The Scorpion depart the next morning under dark storm clouds. The Lion reinforce the castle but avoid making an overt show of force; it's *possible* that if cooler heads prevail war may still be averted.

If the PCs lay the spirits to rest and the marriage proceeds: The marriage is a joyous affair. After the debacle of the tournament it seems that everyone can use a good celebration. Matsu Teruyo and the new Matsu Katsuro make a stunning couple, two stalwart warriors joined together rather than pitted against one another. The entire Gakka province turns out to congratulate the new couple.

Ikoma Shabiko is ecstatic as he takes the PCs aside to share another discovery with them. After their speech, when he shared the death poems with Teruyo and Katsuro, he returned to his rooms and found a strange book, bound like a gaijin tome, waiting for him. It was titled simply, "The Book of Air," and if they wish, he would share its wisdom with them...

The End

Rewards for Completing the Adventure

Surviving the Module:	1
Good Roleplaying:	1
Laid Yasuo and Saburo to rest:	1
Teruyo and Katsuro were Married:	1

Total Possible Experience:

Favors

If the marriage took place, each PC gains 1 Favor

Honor

If the marriage took place, each PC gains **H8** for fulfilling their duty.

If Yasuo and Saburo were laid to rest, each PC gains **H7** for their compassion.

Glory

If the PCs stop the ghosts attacking, Ikoma Shabiko praises their exploits publicly. All PCs gain G11 Glory.

Allies and Enemies

If the marriage took place, each PC may either take Matsu Teruyo or Shosuro Retsuko as an Ally (both have Influence 2, Devotion 1). Alternatively, if the PC already has one of them as a Sworn Enemy they may instead choose to remove Sworn Enemy (one cannot be both an Ally and Sworn Enemy). Finally, if the PC already had one of them as an Ally they may instead increase the Devotion by 1.

Other Awards/Penalties

If Ikoma Shabiko discovered the Book of Air, each PC gets the Book of Air cert as Shabiko shares its lessons.

GM Reporting

- 1) Were Yasuo and Saburo laid to rest?
- 2) Were Teruyo and Katsuro married?
- 3) Did Ikoma Shabiko discover the Book of Air?

The GM must report this information by 4/12/2021 for it to have storyline effect

Appendix 1: Alternative Clues

It is highly likely that players will go through the mod in their own order, investigating things in ways we cannot predict. These are events that provide information and give ideas on how to compensate when the players deviate. For example, if the PCs don't get the script of the play from Shosuro Retsuko, perhaps Ikoma Shabiko can find it in the library. These are not the only alternatives but exist to give inspiration.

What Happens	Why it Matters	When it Happens	Alternatives
PCs have dreams of Matsu Yasuo and Matsu Saburo	Reveals the history of the castle and the ghosts. This gives clues to the hauntings and dramatic weight.	Throughout the module with various cues (i.e. dreams at night, walking into the baths, etc.).	A PC could attempt to channel one of the spirits with meditation or divination. Reading a history in the library or hearing a tale from Ikoma Shabiko might prompt a dream.
PCs learn about the history of Kenson Gakka.	Allows the players to understand the ghosts' motivations and ultimately lay them to rest.	Throughout the module.	PCs can research in the library, ask NPCs (Ikoma Shabiko and Shosuro Retsuko are particularly knowledgeable), could make Lore checks, invoke spirits, or use any other viable source of information.
Shosuro Retsuko shows the prop blades to the PCs.	The PCs need harmless blades to act out the scene that will summon Saburo and Retsuko without killing themselves.	Day 2, after Akodo Akira's attack.	Ikoma Shabiko asks the PCs to accompany him on a visit to the theater where the PCs can spot it with an Investigation check. The PCs are invited to keep one of the props from the mock battle.
Akodo Akira botches his seppuku.	It shows that he has been possessed and that the ghosts are reenacting the past.	Day 3.	The PCs can find other records of botched seppukus throughout the castle's history, saying the same words. They can invoke the kami to watch Kitsu Rinji's seppuku.
Shosuro Retsuko gives the players the script of a play.	Following the script allows the PCs to channel the spirits of Yasuo and Saburo.	Day 4, after the botched Scorpion play.	Ikoma Shabiko finds a copy in the library. The PCs find the script on their own. The ghosts themselves lead the players to find it ("You see an ethereal light in the courtyard theater...").
Ikoma Shabiko presents Yasuo and Saburo's death poems.	It fulfills the prophecy to be proclaimed the new Keeper of Air (and keeps a PC from an overpowered position).	After the ghosts have been laid to rest.	Shabiko is more overt about getting the poem from the PCs. Their appeal to Matsu Teruyo and Shosuro Katsuro prompts Shabiko (keep the focus on the PCs).

Appendix 2: What's Really Going On?

Due to the nature of investigation mods, it's quite probable PCs will ask questions out of order or that are not directly answered in the mod. The GM should keep this appendix handy in order to answer those questions; the GM is encouraged to draw her own inferences based on the information presented here.

If the PCs go looking for ghosts or supernatural influence they have a variety of tools at their disposal. Certain spells, Techniques, and Skills, combined with boundless player ingenuity, can potentially reveal the following information. The TN should be determined by the investigation method, but should generally be 20 or higher.

- There is the presence of a *yorei*, a ghost. With additional Raises the player may note that there are actually two yorei.
- The yorei are trying to communicate with each other. With additional Raises the player may note that they can only communicate when in physical form.
- The yorei take physical form by possessing someone. Unfortunately this causes them reenact their deaths each time, resulting in a dual-seppuku.
- Laying a yorei to rest is not a matter of combat; whatever is holding them back must be resolved in order for them to move on to Meido and Emma-O's judgment.
- The two yorei are Matsu Saburo and Matsu Yasuo. Saburo is being held back by the sin of regret; he blames himself for dismissing Yasuo's warnings which caused the castle. Yasuo could move on at any point but her sense of loyalty and duty compels her to stay with Saburo until he can move on.
- Saburo wants to apologize, which will let him move on. In order to do so they must be able to move past the dual seppuku when they possess people.
- The best chance of bringing peace to Saburo and Yasuo is for the PCs to allow themselves to be possessed, but that will cause them to reenact the death scene which would result in their committing seppuku.
- Kitsu Rinji and her servant were possessed by the spirits of Matsu Saburo and Matsu Yasuo, and re-enacted their deaths. If players use forensic techniques or magic they will discover a scene much like the others.

Appendix 3: NPCs

Matsu Teruyo

Teruyo is a bold and gregarious woman. She relishes battle though she does not provoke it needlessly. She is a veteran of military actions against nearly all of them herself, having deliberately sought the most likely postings throughout her career. She combines the typical Matsu eagerness for battle with a keen interest in the methods of war used by the other clans, and studies their ways intently. It is possible that some players may have met Matsu Teruyo in CIT-11: The Ring of Air, in which case she will respond accordingly.

Ikoma Shabiko

Shabiko is the Ikoma family daimyo and the highest-ranking samurai at the wedding; his presence is a great honor to Matsu Teruyo and Shosuro Katsurou. PCs may have met Shabiko in CIT-00: Festival of Coronation as part of their quest to locate the Fortunes, or at exclusive convention modules / interactives. Shabiko will urge all PCs, especially Lion PCs, to work towards peace between the Lion and Scorpion.

Shabiko is rather calm compared to many Ikoma. He is fascinated by stories and tales of courage and bushido and will be extremely keen to help the PCs learn the history of the castle and unearth the tale of Matsu Saburo and Matsu Yasuo. As a knowledgeable historian, the GM can use Shabiko to give hints to players, help them discover additional pieces of the castle's history, or even suggest how to bring the ghosts to rest if the PCs are stuck.

Shosuro Retsuko

Retsuko is renowned for her performances in every major court of the Empire. Though she does not have the classic dark beauty of her clan, this has actually furthered her career on the stage as it has given her a breadth of roles few other actors can match. She is generally charming and pleasant – Retsuko believes it is far better to make a friend who can help you than to immediately try to gain advantage over everyone she meets – and is thoroughly cultured and trained for high society. She is thoroughly committed to forging peace between the Scorpion and Lion and will ensure that any other Scorpion work towards that end.

Retsuko can be used to aid PCs. Her knowledge of literature, and theater in particular, is unparalleled. She can introduce players to the prop blades they will need to safely summon the spirits of Yasuo and Saburo and she can give them the play that they will need to even attempt the summoning.

Shosuro Katsurou

Katsurou is a taisei among the Scorpion. A renowned tactician and accomplished courtier in his own right, he is willing to sacrifice his position among his clan in order to ensure border stability. He has never met his betrothed before but respects Teruyo based on her reputation. He will be receptive to overtures from the PCs but there is little he can do to help them in the module; he simply doesn't know anything about the Scorpion's previous assaults on Kenson Gakka or what became of any of the inhabitants.

Appendix 4: The History of Kenson Gakka

The history of Kenson Gakka should be gradually revealed throughout the module. A number of pieces are provided here, which should generally be revealed one at a time, and in the order listed. Raises may be made to learn additional information, but limits will often be in place.

It should be noted that Kenson Gakka was originally introduced in the 1st edition module, *The Silence Within Sound*. The events and descriptions of that module are somewhat contradicted by the 4th edition supplement *Atlas of Rokugan*. In the event of contradictions (and player knowledge) information in those sources should be considered common misconceptions. In all such cases, the information presented within this module should take precedence.

- Kenson Gakka was originally called Shiro no Meiyo, the Castle of Honor, and was built at the dawn of the Empire to watch over the passes through the Spine of the World mountains to Scorpion lands (including Beiden Pass).
- Shiro no Meiyo was captured by the Scorpion in the early 6th century. The Lion retook it several years later and renamed it Kenson Gakka (“Humility’s Lesson”).
- It took the Lion fifteen years to retake Kenson Gakka and required an all-out assault on the castle with overwhelming force. The battle was violent and the Lion slew every man, woman, and child in the castle and the surrounding town.
- The Scorpion did not contest Kenson Gakka again for centuries, until 1120. During the Festival of the Humble Turtle that year, they infiltrated the castle and used their agents to sow discord and confusion. It was only due to the intervention of foreign samurai attending the festival that the Scorpion plot was revealed and the castle saved.
- The 12th century attack was very similar to the original 6th century attack. Two armies and (some say) Shinobi all attacked simultaneously and the castle fell in a single night.
- When Kenson Gakka fell in the 6th century, the castle’s Lord, a man named Matsu Saburo, committed seppuku rather than allow himself to be captured.
- Matsu Saburo’s yojimbo, a member of the Lion’s Pride named Matsu Yasuo, acted as his second and followed his seppuku with her own. It is said that before she took her life, she slew over a dozen of the attackers.
- One of the great tragedies of the castle is that Matsu Saburo and Matsu Yasuo’s death poems were never recovered.
- Ever since the Lion re-took the castle there have been an extraordinarily high number of samurai who have committed seppuku there.
- The Scorpion wrote a play about the fall of the castle called *Mon no Teki* (“Enemy at the Gates”). The play is rarely performed outside of Scorpion lands as it tends to offend most Lion which is usually a poor decision.

Appendix 5: The Dreams

Dream 1

“Hyah!”

You give a loud cry as you step forward, bringing your bokken down with a sharp crack on Saiko's wrist. She drops the wooden blade as she steps back, cradling her arm. The sensei turns to you with pride.

“Congratulations, Matsu-san. We would be honored if you would take your place with us.”

Beaming, you look around at the samurai-ko – your new sisters, you remind yourself – who are now your pride. The Lion's pride. You can scarcely believe it.

You look to the sensei. “Are you sure? Others have said-”

She silences you with a glance. “Matsu Yasuo, you are a daughter of the Matsu and you have proven yourself in arms. You will take your place with us. I have no further questions and no one else will either. Is that clear?”

Eagerly you nod. A woman of the Matsu. You still can't believe it.

On the far side of the dojo you see Matsu Saburo, your daimyo, watching. You beam at him but he turns away, smiling at Kiko. She is a peasant girl, no more than sixteen. She is also the Matsu lord's concubine. She laughs at some joke he tells but, as the two of them walk out of the dojo, gives you a sidelong glance.

The dojo fades from view as the misty shrouds of sleep are lifted from your eyes...

Dream 2

The steam obscures your vision as you enter the bathhouse, your towel wrapped tightly around you. Your sisters smile at the sight of you – no need for propriety here – and clear a space on the bench beside them. Though it's been months since you were adopted into the Lion's Pride you still marvel at the home, the family, you've found.

“Yasuo-chan!” Seiko says, “You're back! How was the tournament?”

You smile. It's always easier talking about these things. Weapons and contests are safe. “It went well,” you say, the modest words unable to hide the pride in your voice. “I made the finals, farther than any other Lion and farther than any other bushi, save one of the Dragon. The others were all monks.”

They all give a holler of approval. “Well-done, Yasuo-chan,” Aki adds. “Saburo-sama's bound to take you into his guard now.”

At the mention of Matsu Saburo you blush, which of course they notice. “Why Yasuo-chan,” asks Seiko, “surely nothing about our esteemed daimyo Matsu Saburo bothers you?”

“No,” you answer. “Nothing about him bothers me. The company he keeps, however...”

The others nod. “Don't worry,” Aki reassures you. “After your impressive results at the tournament he's bound to promote you to his house guard. Then we'll be able to get that useless minx out of here.”

You blink through the steam and suddenly you're back in another castle...

Dream 3

You stand at attention. Your spine straight, hands held tightly by your side. Though your katana is thrust firmly in your obi you know that in the space of a single heartbeat it could be in your hands, already striking down a foe. Every muscle is coiled and primed, ready for action. It is what you've trained for your whole life, why you were given a place in the pride. To be the perfect warrior of the Lion.

You don't just *hope* that it shows now. You *know* it does.

Matsu Saburo walks around you, studying your posture, your stance, your armor, your eyes. The handsome young daimyo takes in everything you are. Against your wishes you find yourself hoping that he likes what he sees.

Now he's standing in front of you. You keep your gaze defiantly ahead, though you remain aware of everything in the room. You're too well-disciplined to let a good-looking man distract you. Completely distract you, anyway.

"Your sensei speaks very highly of you," he says. "As do your sisters. Even the abbot of Order of Thunder was compelled to write about you. He's actually thinking about making the tournament a regular event." You say nothing though you're beaming inside. You don't know which makes you happier: the hard-won accolades (it would be dishonest to pretend modesty; you've earned them) or hearing them from Saburo's mouth. "I've been considering taking you as my yojimbo." Sunlight. Bright summer sun. "What say you?"

Honesty. Sincerity.

"You have need of me, my Lord."

His *on* cracks and you see surprise on his face. "You think that highly of yourself?"

You shake your head. "No, my Lord, but you are in danger."

"Oh, from what?"

Now is the time. A warrior must not fear death and a Lion must not fear the truth. "From whom, my Lord. It is Kiko. She is using you, spying on you, I am certain of it."

Rage twists his face. "Listen to me, Matsu-san. You will never speak against her again. Do I make myself clear?"

"But the Scorpion!"

He waves the concern away. "Pay the Scorpion no mind. They are my responsibility. *If* they have been plotting of late I need the best and that is undeniably you, but Kiko has nothing to do with them."

You nod, your mouth dry. Perhaps as his yojimbo you can stay this blindness.

Dream 4

The castle is quiet, but that's a good thing. With all the recent battles with the Scorpion, the quiet is a good sign. You walk from hall to hall in Shiro no Meiyo, inspecting guard posts, entry ways, stores of arms and armor, food supplies. It would not do to be surprised. The quiet is a good thing. If anyone was trying to sneak into the castle, the ducks and geese and frogs that make their home in the moat would be expressing their displeasure at anyone passing through their territory, but tonight they are quiet.

“Mastu-sama!” a young voice calls out from one of the private quarters. Kiko. Your mouth twists in displeasure. No need to maintain face in front of this heimin. “I need to speak with you.”

You enter Kiko's private quarters. The girl has already been favored by Lord Saburo with her own rooms. The favors she receives for sharing his bed make- you push down the jealousy growing within you. Best to get this out of the way. You take in the room: rich wall hangings from the Phoenix, a beautiful painted folding screen from the Kakita, every luxury one could ask for, but at least the buzzing mosquitoes will irritate your young rival.

The door slides shut and you look at Kiko, waiting for her to speak.

“I have learned there is a plot to assassinate Sabur- Lord Matsu,” she hastily corrects, unable to keep the affection out of her voice. You defiantly keep your tone neutral.

“That would be obvious to anyone,” you sneer. “We're at war with the Scorpion. Tell me something specific.”

Kiko leans in close. You lean in to her. She whispers, just barely audible above the mosquitoes' buzzing. “We're coming for you first.”

The mosquitoes save your life. Buzzing so close to the folding screen. You've known about the ninja hiding there since you entered the room. You throw Kiko in the path of his knife then draw your own sword and kill him. From an open window you smell the poison floating on the surface of the moat, silencing the fowl below.

You stand over a bleeding Kiko, the assassin's knife still jutting out of her ribs. “He will never love you,” she gasps, coughing up blood.

In response you cut off her head.. You have bigger problems right now.

Dream 5

You enter the chambers and Saburo balks at the sight of you. Your armor is already filthy from combat and a wound on your forehead drips blood into your right eye. Kiko's head is tied to your belt, her hair knotted around your obi. "My Lord," you say as you close the doors behind you. "There are assassins in the castle. Scorpion. I killed two that tried for me and a dozen more on the way to your room. Our soldiers were caught unprepared and the castle will fall."

Saburo visibly shrinks at the news and for the first time you really see him. He'd been a great warrior but it seems much has been lost since he quit the field to take up his position as a lord. Once-lean muscles now turned to fat. Razor-sharp reflexes dulled over time. Courage turned to vinegar.

But he's still a Matsu and has the temper to match. He straightens again and turns to you, fire in his eyes. "This is your fault! I should have known better than to take you as my yojimbo. My castle overrun, my soldiers dead, and death coming for us all. All because of you, you, you..." he sputters for the right word.

He never finds it.

"If you wish to blame anyone," you growl, "blame yourself. I earned my place with the Lion's Pride. I warned you about that whore spy. If I have a failing it was not killing her sooner or requesting permission to commit *kanshi* in protest. Now be a real man and help me barricade the doors."

Without waiting for a response from the sputtering daimyo you begin to drag furniture across the room. Perhaps it will slow the Scorpion down.

In the distance you hear someone screaming as they find a body...

Dream 6

The latest wave of attackers was the biggest so far. They push their way through the doors but it slows their progress and you cut them down when they're forced to enter one at a time. During the breaks between the waves you rebuild the barricade and prepare yourself for the next battle. Saburo continues to glare at you.

Well so what? You are not some shrinking violet, a delicate flower to fall apart at these words. If Saburo cannot see the truth by now, that is his failing, not yours.

“They will come, my lord,” you announce. “Sooner or later they will get by me or they will kill me, and then you will die at their hands. Or they will take you back to Shiro no Shosuro in chains.”

Saburo is silent. You are right and he must know it. You don't wait for his response. You're done waiting for him.

“This is not my fault. You insisted on that concubine. She betrayed you, not I. I am here. I am still loyal. And I will be loyal to the end.”

You criss-cross the room, bringing forward a writing desk with paper and a brush. You find a bottle of sake in a cabinet and a drinking bowl. You set them all out.

“What should I do?” Matsu Saburo asks. His earlier bluster is gone. Now he simply sounds lost, the weight of his mistakes and poor judgments holding him down.

“Kneel,” you answer. “You know what must be done.”

Saburo kneels before the desk. He picks up the brush and, after brief consideration, writes his final poem. Next, he takes the bowl of sake and finishes it in four measured sips, four being the number that represents death. As he sets the bowl down, you move behind him, your katana already drawn.

“Straighten your sandals,” you say impassively. Saburo blushes slightly but he does so. It wouldn't do for him to die with his sandals loose. One should be as dignified in death as in life.

“I am sorry for- I regret this ending,” Saburo says. “I should have listened to you about the Scorpion.”

You give a half-smile. “You were the best lord you could be,” you reply. “And I served the best master I had.” A deep breath. “We'd best get this over with. I don't want to keep the Scorpion waiting.”

Saburo reaches for his wakizashi, his hand shaking as he does so. He hesitates, the hand held over the hilt and he makes no further movement towards it. The Scorpion pound at the door. There is no time; you will not let your lord shame himself in death. Your katana flashes. Matsu Saburo's head, the head of the lord of Shiro no Meiyo tumbles forward, cut perfectly across the throat but still held on by the skin at the back of his neck.

Dream 7

You take a ladle of water and wash the blade of your katana before drying it and re-sheathing the sword. You look down at Saburo's corpse. It was not much of an apology but it's the best you're going to get. Best to get it over with. There will be no second for you, no one to mercifully end your pain. You will endure the three cuts in their entirety.

A warrior to the end. When you were born others thought you were a son of the Lion, but you will die as you lived: a daughter of Matsu.

You kneel opposite Saburo's corpse and take the brush he set down, adding a few more lines to the bottom of the page. Satisfied with your work you set down the brush and instead draw your wakizashi, placing the tip at your stomach.

A pounding at the door. The Scorpion will be in soon. You plunge the blade in performing the first cut.

The pain is incredible but remote. Your back is to the door and so you hear, but don't see, the Scorpion as they pour into the room. A second cut and you feel hands on you, desperately trying to pull the wakizashi away. You won't let them have it.

You see the poem. Gods above, let the kami keep it safe. Let it be known that the lord of Shiro no Mieyo and his yojimbo died with honor, undefeated by the enemy.

You make the third cut and your spirit goes free.

Appendix 6: The Play

Yasuo: My lord, there are assassins in the castle. Scorpion. I killed two that tried for me and a dozen more on the way to your room. Our soldiers were caught unprepared and the castle will fall.

Saburo: This is your fault! I should have known better than to take you as my yojimbo. My castle overrun, my soldiers dead, and death coming for us all. If the Scorpion weren't here to kill you I'd do it myself.

Yasuo: They will come, my lord. Sooner or later they will get by me or they will kill me, and then you will die at their hands. Or they will take you back to Shiro no Shosuro in chains.

Saburo: Because you failed me!

Yasuo: Not I, my lord. You insisted on that concubine. She betrayed you. I am the one that is still here. I am still loyal. And I will be loyal to the end. Now do you want my help or not?

Saburo: What should I do?

Yasuo: Kneel. You know what must be done.

(Saburo kneels and writes his death poem, then drinks a bowl of sake in four gulps)

(Yasuo stands over Saburo with her sword drawn)

Yasuo: Straighten your sandals.

Saburo: I am sorry for- I regret this ending. I should have listened to you about the Scorpion.

Yasuo: *(tenderly)* You were the best lord you could be. And I served the best master I had. *(more sober)* We'd best get this over with. I don't want to keep the Scorpion waiting.

(Saburo reaches for his wakizashi. Yasuo's katana strikes at his neck. Saburo falls to the ground. Yasuo adds her own lines to the page, draws her wakizashi, and performs the three cuts. She falls to the ground.)

Player Handout 1: The Play (Part 2)

(Saburo stands gingerly then sees Yasuo)

Saburo: Yasuo-san!

(She stands as well)

Yasuo: Saburo-sama! But how?

Saburo: Yasuo, I'm sorry. I should have listened to you, I've been wanting to tell you for-

Yasuo: I know.

Saburo: You know? But how?

Yasuo: Do you think my service to you ended with my death. You were lost. I couldn't abandon you. I loved you since I first laid eyes on you.

Saburo: I wasn't worthy of you. You deserved better than my mockery.

Yasuo: I did. But I am a daughter of Matsu. It was never about if you were worthy.

Saburo: Then you can forgive me?

Yasuo: Is that what you need to hear?

Saburo: The castle fell because I chose another over you. You spared my suffering and then died for me. It doesn't matter what I need; how can I ask-

Yasuo: You never had to. Go my lord. Be at peace.

Saburo: And you?

Yasuo: Then I will be free to follow my own path.

(Saburo looks to the heavens above and then the body collapses as the spirit departs)

Yasuo: Thank you for giving us this moment. With Saburo's spirit freed I can move on to. Remember us.

(Yasuo collapses as well)

Player Handout 2: Death Poems

*Ice cracks under foot
Shattering with every step
And I plunge below*

***I dive below the broken ice
Pulled not by love but duty.***