

Outmaneuvered by Force

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

Month of the Rooster, 1343 (Late Fall)

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Role Play, Intrigue, Combat, SHADOWLANDS

At the Coronation of the Interim Jade Champion, important lessons are learned.

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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

In the middle of the Phoenix Clan Coup, the decision to fill the office of the Jade Champion with an Interim champion was made. The Yogo were asked to provide the Empire with a Shugenja to fill the role, an ask that concerned them greatly... but that they would nonetheless attempt to comply with.

Finding an appropriate selection was difficult. The Jade Champion must be a strong shugenja... but also an effective administrator, and at least a competent statesman. For all that Iuchi Katachai was a traitor and monster... he did fill these roles well, and the truth is that the Yogo simply did not have someone who could do the same.

In the end, the Yogo chose Yogo Haruhi. A brilliant shugenja, still young and eager to prove herself after her curse caused the death of her husband. While she is uncomfortable with the trappings of the Jade Champion position, she has nevertheless accepted it in order to better the Empire in trying times.

Unfortunately for her, and for all of the Yogo, Toturi IX has been studious in his time learning about the Shadowlands. In this time, he has discovered that the effects of the curse are replicable... with a great deal of effort. And so, in order to crash down upon one of the battle lines, he works diligently to force her curse to re-engage for his benefit.

What he did not see coming was the arrival of the PCs in Shiro Yogo. In their careers, they have become Samurai of great intrigue to Toturi IX. And so he will come to them with an offer...

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 "Marked by the Lords of Death" cert

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 beginning of this module, PCs lose 1 point of glory. This cannot reduce a PC's Glory Rank to less than their Insight Rank, and the Fame Advantage increases their Insight Rank by one for these purposes.

Taint Progression

If a PC possesses the Shadowlands Taint, they will need to roll at the beginning of the module to see how much it has grown over the intervening time since the last module. The TN of this raw **Earth Roll** is 20. 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

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, any ronin PCs lose half of their koku. This cannot reduce their accumulated wealth below an amount of bu equal to their highest Skill.

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 Castles of Rokugan are often the most grandiose buildings in all of the Emerald Empire. Shining beacons of the beauty and strength of each clans, strongholds that protect the clan's lands from threats within and without, or strategic holdings for the clans of Rokugan to prepare offensives against their enemies.

Shiro Yogo is none of these things. Too utilitarian to be considered beautiful, too out of the way to hold any strategic value. The Yogo value privacy, and the lack of civilization until you get to the village of the castle overlooks only serves to emphasize the point.

But, it is in this land that a Jade Champion will be named. Though this Jade Champion will only serve until a proper tournament can be called, it is still a momentous occasion for the Empire: the Jade Champion is the leader against the Empire's corruption, and the need for a Samurai to represent purity against corruptions that have plagued Rokugan for the past five years is immense.

Miya Hachi is solemn as you approach the gates of the castle. The recently named Herald of the Imperial Advisor has been sent to oversee the ascension of the Interim Jade Champion. And you, honored Samurai, have been specifically requested to be his escorts and witnesses for what is no doubt to be a historic moment in Rokugan's history.

As the box text says, the PCs are assigned as personal escorts to Miya Hachi to Shiro Yogo to oversee the ascension of Yogo Haruhi to the office of Interim Jade Champion. Any PC who has met Miya Hachi before (Price of Failure, Shadow of Dawn, Souls of the Fallen, or Shadowed Path to Victory) received personal invitations to attend him - he wants trusted allies close at hand in a time of war. PCs who have not played any of these mods (likely due to character retirements or the death of previous PCs) have been sent by their Daimyo as trusted servants of the Empire.

Your approach at the gates is noticed by two alert guards. They hold up a hand in halt. One of them, a taller woman, approaches you and speaks in a brusque voice. "Travel papers, please."

Not wishing to make a scene about the matter, Hachi pulls his travel papers from his obi to present them - the mon of Seppun Kazetora proudly shown on the seal. The guard takes the travel paper and inspects it carefully, before nodding and motioning to the gate guard overhead.

As the gates open, an older man in robes noting him as a shugenja stands waiting. The mask he wears is plain and white, covering his entire face. "Greetings, Samurai," the man speaks with an edged, grizzled tone. "Welcome to Shiro Yogo. We hope that your stay is... acceptable, though we apologize that you may not receive of the amenities you may be used to. I have been asked by Yogo Hamanari-sama to provide a blessing to all of you as you pass in, to promote purity as you enter this castle."

Hachi seems a bit surprised at this, but nods his head. “The hospitality of the Yogo is most welcome, thank you. I accept your blessings in the spirit they are offered.”

PCs are welcome to deny the blessing if they so wish. The Yogo here is Kuroiban, and is using the wards as pretense to check for the taint, but is wise enough not to press the issue. If they do accept the blessing, they are placed under the effect of the spell “Elemental Ward,” making all water spells targeting them have their TN increased by 25 for the next hour. They also make a raw Willpower check against TN 25. If they succeed, the Yogo is aware of any taint that they may possess and will report any tainted individuals to Hamanari.

Once the PCs have passed this Yogo, they are given a chance to bathe and prepare for the evening’s court so they may introduce themselves to Hamanari.

In the main court chamber, you enter to find a surprising lack of murmuring. As you look around, you can imagine two reasons for this: First, this is one of the smallest courts you have ever attended. Including yourselves, only about two dozen courtiers, bushi, and shugenja attend the court. Second: at the center of the room appears to be a makeshift dueling ring. The assembled Samurai are circled around it, watching two Samurai in the midst of a duel.

The first is a Scorpion woman, lean and young, watching her opponent with a calm demeanor. The opponent is an older man, easily in his middle thirties, wearing the mons of the Dragon and the Mirumoto. His blades rest calmly at his sides, the traditional style of the famous Dragon duelists.

The Mirumoto twitches, bringing his katana and wakizashi up to strike. In that moment, it is over. The Scorpion woman lunges forward suddenly, intentionally jamming her left shoulder into the wakizashi. Surprised at the sudden surge forward, the Mirumoto steps back, and that moment’s hesitation gives the woman the the moment she requires. Her blade clears its saya into his hip, cleaving cleanly through him through his shoulder. The Mirumoto slumps, dead before his body hits the floor.

The scorpion woman lets out a tired sigh then steps back, bowing to the dead man. Then she turns and finds her way to one corner of the room. As she steps away, so to does the Scorpion Clan Champion,

Bayushi Otozatsu, return to the dais next to the Yogo Daimyo.

Once the duel has concluded, the circle of Samurai disperses to their own sides of the room and normal conversation begins again. Hachi lets out a small sigh, then moves to the dais:

As Hachi approaches the dais, he bows low, lower than he need to for even a Family Daimyo given his new station. “Yogo Hamanari-san, my escorts and I are honored to receive of the hospitality of the Yogo family even in these trying times.”

Hamanari is an old man, clearly in his early forties, who eyes Hachi and his escort with thinly veiled contempt. “Of course, Miya-san,” he speaks in a raspy voice, one that clearly does not see common use. “The Yogo are **honored** to receive an Imperial delegation in the middle of a War that threatens all of Rokugan. No doubt this **important** ceremony will be an exemplary use of our time with the enemy crashing at our gates.”

Otozatsu quickly interjects. “What Hamanari-san is attempting to say is that we are of course honored to receive such an Honored Herald to fill such an important duty. The ceremony shall take place first thing in the morning, but in the mean time, please enjoy the hospitality of a Scorpion court.” Hamanari shoots a look towards Otozatsu that could kill, but does not speak further.

Hachi, for his part, turns to address Otozatsu. “The presence of the Scorpion Champion is no doubt a powerful boon for the success of this event. Thank you for your hospitality.” And with no further words needed, he steps away from the dais and moves to mingle with the court.

Rumors

The following information is available with a Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness roll. A PC from the Scorpion clan gains a Free Raise on this roll.

- 15: Inazuma has had 7 duels in the last month, all to the death. The duels have been various Samurai wanting to test their mettle against ‘one of the Empire’s best duelists,’ and for whatever reason Otozatsu has been approving death duels.
- 20: The Crab are sending support to assist with the battle against the Shadowlands Horde. Miraiko and her husband have been traveling to

various holdings to provide tactical advice and are currently in Shiro Matsu.

- 25: Otozatsu has a duel coming towards the end of Winter Court against an Owl whom he has taken issue with.
- 30: While not a Jade Legionnaire or Magistrate herself, it is said that Yogo Haruhi has happened to be present to stop the attacks of multiple Bloodspeaker and Tsukai cults throughout the Empire. She was determined to be the best person the Yogo had to fill this role.

The PCs will have a chance to meet with the NPCs during this time. There are a small number of them, largely Scorpion (see Player Handout #2, the Court of Shiro Yogo). Each PC should be given a chance to talk to at least one NPC if they so choose.

Yogo Haruhi

Sat firmly in a corner of the room is a woman of middle age with a constant, severe expression. Yogo Haruhi watches the court with a deep mix of alertness and concern, considering each person who walks by with a wary glint in her eye. Perhaps because of this, despite being the woman of the hour she is gifted a wide berth by most of the few courtiers who do roam these halls.

Lore Heraldry, TN 30, can tell a PC the following about Haruhi:

- Haruhi is best known for... appearing... at the site of tsukai cults and bloodspeaker cells and assisting local magistrates with their defeat.
- She had been married previously, but has no children from that marriage, as her late husband passed during the Battle of Broken Jade.
- (Scorpion Only) Rumor is that her husband's death is the manifestation of her Yogo Curse. She fed information to him that a Bloodspeaker cell would be striking at Shinsei's Last Hope. When he got there, however, he found only a horde of Shadowlands creatures and was never heard from again.
- (Yogo Only, no roll required) For a brief moment, as you sit to speak with her, there is an odd feeling. A tension, threatening to pull apart and snap at any moment.

Despite her severe demeanor, Haruhi is actually relatively amenable to conversation. While she has no patience for gladhanding and foolishness, she appreciates Samurai who are direct with her and do not waste her time with idle gossip. She is glad to answer questions about her new position and how she will enact policy as the interim Jade Champion.

In general, Haruhi can speak to the following things:

- She is a priest and a warrior, not a politician. Her intention is to do her very best to fight the army... then host a new tournament of the Jade Champion for a proper replacement.
- She is widowed, and intends to keep it that way, though she knows that Hamanari wishes for her to marry his son.
- She is uncomfortable around sycophants, and would rather not deal with them at all.
- She is also not a statesman or a tactician, and will be looking for people to fill those roles for her.

Yogo Hamanari, Yogo family Daimyo

Seated on the dais, old Hamanari watches you approach with barely contained disdain. Still, he offers a polite affectation of a bow to you, and motions you forward. "Hai, Samurai? How can I help you?"

Lore Heraldry, TN 40, can tell a PC the following about Hamanari:

- Hamanari has lived in his castle essentially his entire life. He is an administrator, first and anything else second.
- Hamanari has only been seen three times outside of Rokugan. When he swore his vows to Bayushi Otozatsu, and when he Swore to both Toturi IX and X.
- Hamanari has one son, a foppish, brazen sort name Yogo Kometsu. Kometsu lives in Koeru Mura, where he's said to be in sort of a soft exile.

If Hamanari gives the impression that he is a bit of a bitter asshole, it's because he very much is. He prefers to sit in his tower and administrate, and especially hates that there are out of clan samurai in Shiro Yogo. His answers are brusque and brief, and he won't give information about his castle to anyone.

Bayushi Otozatsu, Scorpion Clan Champion

On the dais next to Hamanari, Otozatsu has a somewhat bored expression as he watches no doubt the smallest Court he has ever been a part of.

Lore Heraldry, TN 15, can tell a PC the following about Otozatsu:

- Despite having bushi training, Otozatsu is confessed to not being much of a tactician. He is supporting his Clan in the best way he knows how, by representing it in court and getting out of the way of the tacticians.
- Otozatsu himself has a Duel to the Death against an Owl Samurai during the middle of Winter Court. The nature of the disagreement seems to involve comments made in the fallout of the Scorpion/Owl war.

Otozatsu is a disarmingly charming, brilliant man, who puts on a front of knowing *everything* about whoever is talking to him (he should be assumed to have successfully recognized anyone with a glory of 5 or higher).

Otozatsu knows the following:

- If PCs are curious as to why he is consenting to Inazuma's constant duels to the death, Otozatsu will simply explain that she has earned a reputation and he has no interest in denying her the chance to prove that reputation.
- Asked what he thinks of this Court or the proceedings, he lauds the necessity of bringing Courtly tradition even to a place such as the Yogo lands.
- If a Scorpion asks him if they have any responsibilities while they are here, he simply tells them to protect Hachi. "Body and Soul."

Miya Hachi, Herald of the Imperial Advisor

After introducing himself to Hamanari, Hachi has found a place around the center of the Court Chamber. Though there are not many members of the Court, the young Miya seem to enjoy the relative low stakes relative to the places he frequents. Still, as you approach, he bows politely to you, a charming grin on his face.

Hachi is young, charming, and glad to talk. He is especially glad to chat with people he has met before, and chat about things that maybe don't involve the immediate potential destruction of the realm.

Hachi knows the following:

- Kazetora was returned to Otosan Uchi by a Phoenix Honor Guard a few days after the Coup. Makibesu demanded the Honor Guard's execution, but Kazetora and Otomo Kazuko were able to keep them alive with some strong political maneuvering.
- Despite Kazetora's return, the Emperor has still been largely absent from the Imperial Court. When he is present, he hides behind a screen and allows Doji Makibesu to do most of his talking for him.
- The Winter Court in Mukui Toshi, Hachi feels, will go a long way in determining the fate of the Phoenix. He does hope that a reasonable choice can be made, though Makibesu's anger on the matter is not to be understated.

Soshi Yukiyo, Jade Legionnaire

Perhaps the most practically dressed of all of the imperial Court, Yukiyo currently sits contemplating a Go board. As you approach, she looks up and offers a polite bow, offering a smile that fails to quite reach her eyes.

A Lore Heraldry Roll, TN 25, can tell a PC the following about Yukiyo

- Yukiyo volunteered for and was assigned to the Jade Legion after the death of her family. She is known to be one of the more zealous hunters of maho in the Empire, and has taken it upon herself to do everything she can to cleanse the shame that has befallen the Jade Legion.
- Yukiyo has been largely moving between fronts since the initial attack at Shiro Shinjo. Her focus has been on reinforcing legions where they are weak and slowing the advance where she can.

Yukiyo is a Soshi, and fairly charming in that vein, but has a certain bitter air to her in the wake of constant warfare. She is angry about the corrupted

Jade Champion and has sworn to slay him... by any means necessary.

Yukiyo knows the following:

- She has worked with Haruhi once before, and can speak to both her zeal as a hunter of Maho and power as a shugenja. The position of Jade Champion is still a political one as much as anything, and as such she wonders why Haruhi would be picked as a relative unknown to the Courts.
- Since she has started moving between fronts, she has noticed that the enemy army is far too organized to be like any Shadowlands army she has studied or faced (she will, as is proper, use obfuscation when referring to the Shadowlands). No matter what the leader says he is, she is certain that he is very canny.
- As soon as the Court is dismissed, she plans to lead Haruhi to the Front where they can help in destroying the Enemy once and for all.

Shosuro Inazuma, Tormented Duelist

Hidden in the most distant corner possible from the Dais, the young woman immediately eyes your mons with some level of suspicion as you approach...

Whether or not Inazuma relaxes is dependent on the PCs reputation and mons. A PC with high glory that is recognizable as a duelist will be met with a certain level of suspicion, while PCs with low glory or without any sort of reputation will allow her to quickly relax.

A Lore: Heraldry Roll, TN 10, can tell the PCs the following about Inazuma:

- Inazuma served for several years as the yojimbo of one of Otozatsu's nephews. She was largely known until 1342, when she slew an Owl and a Phoenix in a duel.
- Since then, her name has gradually found its way to Courts all across the Empire. In the past two years she has fought two dozen death duels.

If a PC shows no intent to challenge her, she will visibly relax and reveal herself to be a calm, charming woman... if very tired.

Inazuma knows the following.

- She is very well aware of who is responsible for her increase in fame over the last few years. An Ikoma courtier who is now married into the Scorpion was originally betrothed to the slain Owl. The courtier has not forgiven Inazuma for slaying her beloved and has used those duels to launch Inazuma to fame... no doubt hoping a better duelist will eventually come along and kill her.
- Inazuma doesn't much care that someone dislikes her, but especially given the current situation, she feels that killing other Samurai that could be fighting the Enemy is a waste of time, resources, and good men.

That night, as the PCs are preparing to go to bed, they can roll Investigation (Notice) / Perception. The PC who rolls the highest, or a Yogo PC, notices Haruhi skulking around the castle as they are retiring to their rooms. If they go to confront her, she will explain that she was asked to check on the wards and ensure that they are prepared in advance of tomorrow's ceremony (this is not a lie).

Yogo PCs, as they are discussing this with her, feel a sudden, throbbing headache, as if their head is about to burst in her presence. Haruhi will be legitimately concerned and offer to help them back to their quarters so they can rest.

Part One: A Ceremony for the Ages

Dawn arises with little fanfare in Yogo lands. Today, however, is just a little bit different. The main courtroom is awash with bright, festive versions of traditional Scorpion decoration. A small band of servants play a jaunty tune in the corner of the room. And Hamanari, flanked by Otozatsu and Hachi, sits at the dais, trying to hide a clear hatred of this current situation.

The courtroom doors open, and in steps Haruhi, her traditional Shugenja's robes lined with brilliant jade green. Her steps are slow and purposeful, careful not to make any missteps in the face of a Daimyo, a Clan Champion, and the direct servant of one of the four most powerful Samurai in Rokugan.

The ceremony itself is long and arduous. Hachi opens a scroll and reads out a missive penned by Seppun Kazetora. Hamanari leads the assembled in perhaps the most awkward prayer to the Fortunes that has ever been conceived for public ears, and then Hachi and Otozatsu together take her vows to faithfully execute the duties of the Jade Champion so long as she holds the office.

After an hour, the ceremony is concluded. Hamanari steps forward to address the assembled Court. "Thank you for witnessing this entirely necessary ceremony. I would thank you to hurry on out and return to your homes."

Before he can continue, Otozatsu clears his throat. "What Hamanari-san **means** to say is that we have prepared a variety of pieces of entertainment before we send you on your way. The first of which being an offer for those inclined to such things to show off their skill with my Yojimbo." He nods over to Shosuro Inazuma, who quietly nods and steps to the Dais, kneeling before it as she waits to find out who she will fight. Hamanari shoots another Death glare to Otozatsu, but seems unwilling to gainsay the Scorpion Champion.

Any PC is allowed to challenge Inazuma (her stats are in Appendix 1: NPCs). Oddly, he will inform an accepting PC that should they wish to test their skills against her in a duel to the death, he will oblige them the chance (though he will not deny them the chance at first blood, either). He will also allow any number of people to challenge her concurrently, no matter how exhausted she seems by the end of each duel.

The main focus of these events is to exhaust PC resources ahead of Part Two. The general tone should be revelry and joy, putting PCs at ease before the Shadowlands break through the wards and strike.

Kemari

Once duels have completed, Otozatsu will then announce a game of traditional Kemari for any who wishes to participate. He will be personally participating, and states an eager anticipation to face down Samurai in such a contest. Mechanically, this takes place as a contested Games: Kemari/Agility roll. Athletics / Agility may be substituted, but two raises must be called for no effect. The TN to be a potential winner is 40 (Otozatsu's score). The winner

receives a G8 glory gain for defeating a Clan champion in his preferred game.

A Discussion of the kami

After Kemari has concluded, Otozatsu nods to Haruhi, who smiles nervously. "Ah, Samurai, I would like to end today's proceedings by providing a discussion on the nature of the kami."

As she begins the discussion, have PCs make an investigation (Interrogation) / Void roll at TN 30. The PC who noticed her skulking about the day before receives a free raise to this roll. On a success, for a brief moment they feel a heavy tension, before a sudden, painful snap, as if a small thread was suddenly cut inside them. In addition, Haruhi will seem notably nervous, though she does her best to hide that aspect.

Haruhi continues her conversation, heedless of any discomfort she might be feeling. "We of course endeavor to respect the kami. But..." she pauses a moment, taking a breath. "we also see them as the... the tools... they can..." for a brief moment, Haruhi grabs her head, then shakes it. "Apologies, Bayushi-san. I think that perhaps right now is a poor time for me to be leading such a discussion."

Otozatsu blinks in surprise, but nods. "It is understandable, Haruhi-san. We can host such a discussion another time." He then turns to the rest. "That is all for the planned events that we had today. I encourage you to enjoy some refreshments before you return to your lords."

Just then, a sudden commotion clangs from outside. Suddenly, the court door opens, and a Scorpion Bushi in bloodied Armor approaches the Dais, not so much kneeling as falling onto the ground in front of it. Hamanari stands with a start, eyes wide. "Bayushi-san! What is the meaning of this?!"

"My Lord! The Horde has bypassed the Wards! We estimate that they shall be to the castle in less than an hour!"

Hamanari's eyes widen, rage unable to hide from his voice. "That's IMPOSSIBLE. The wards I set up should have slowed any advance onto this castle by weeks!"

Haruhi, for her part, looks absolutely terrified. Still, she manages to speak up. “My Lord... I checked the Wards last night like you asked...”

“Haruhi-san,” he turns to her. “What did you do..?”

“My Lord, I swear that I only intended to ensure the Wards were properly placed as you taught me. But... I thought I saw inaccuracies in the pattern... and all day, I have had a feeling, like... like when I betrayed my husband.”

“Haruhi-san...”

“My Lord, I believe I have been manipulated somehow. I do not know how, but it feels as if my curse has triggered a second time.” For a long moment, silence reigns.

But only a moment later, Hamanari is back in action. “Inazuma-san, I trust you to get Lord Otozatsu to safety. Yukiyo-san, I place you in charge of Haruhi, Hachi, and his entourage. Ensure they get out of the Castle. Beiden should be safe enough to get them back to the North half of the Empire.”

“My Lord,” Haruhi protests. “No. This mistake is mine, and I should be the one paying such a price.”

“No. I am just an old fool. My death will serve better purpose than my life ever could. You however, are the Jade Champion, and the hope of many in the Empire. Whatever has happened to you, you must uncover the source of this treachery and destroy it. As the Yogo have always done.”

Haruhi grimaces. But nods. She would not argue a second time.

Part Two: A Long Damn Day

The PCs are sent immediately to their rooms to collect necessary equipment and don armor. Servants are sent along with them to expedite the process as much as possible before taking their own leave. If for some reason there are no PCs that need to spend significant time putting on armor (or if they simply opt not to put on armor), then each PC gains a free raise on any roll made during the upcoming skill challenge.

As you are tying the last bits of armor together, a rumbling sound resonates through the castle. A

boom. A second. And then moments later, the sound of the castle gates being shattered, as if a gigantic fist simply punched through it.

Yukiyo finds you and Hachi and motions. “Come. Haruhi plans to meet us at one of the back entrances. It should have escaped the notice of the enemy force.”

As you begin making your way through the castle, voices can be heard chattering from the floors below. Yukiyo grimaces, quickening the party’s pace until you round a corner and are forced to stop. A small creature sits at the end of the hall, sniffing around. It has dull red skin, a humanoid appearance... or at least the disgusting approximation of a humanoid. A large underbite highlighted by two disgusting facngs would be bad enough, if not for the disgusting yellow eyes, glowing eerily as it looks in your direction. It lets out a disgusting screech, and a second later the sound of hundreds of other screeches echo across the hall. “Damnation!” Yukiyo cries out, “Move! We need to move, now!”

Escaping the castle is going to require a cooperative effort from all PCs, with each PC providing their own unique skill sets to assist in the effort of escaping. Mechanically, this takes the form of a skill challenge. Have the PCs consider what actions they would like to take to escape the castle.

- The PCs must make a number of successes equal to the number of PCs plus two before suffering a number of failures equal to half the number of PCs.
- Each PC can only use the same method once. For example, if a bushi decides to use their chief weapon skill, they cannot make a second attempt using a weapon skill.
- A PC may call raises on their roll to make things easier for their allies. For each raise they call, they can provide a free raise to an ally’s roll.
- If a PC fails a roll, they may opt to take wounds equal to the amount they failed by to turn that failure into a success. Success in this way only provides a base success and does not provide free raises to future attempts if they called raises to give another PC free raises.

The TN for these rolls must be determined by the table’s GM. The TNs should be determined by the

feasibility of an act to actually help, but should also be between 35 and 55, depending on how difficult the task is. PCs should know the TN before they attempt the roll, and be given a chance to rethink their options if a course of action is considered too risky. Examples are listed below.

- TN 35: Using stealth to disguise the Party's movements from the enemy forces.
- TN 40: Using Battle to predict enemy movements to avoid skirmishes.
- TN 45: Using Investigation to search for hidden nooks to slip past the enemy.
- TN 50: Using a Weapon Skill to fight off the goblins as they come after you.
- TN 55: Using Athletics to barrel through enemies.

If a shugenja PC wishes to use spells, have them roll spellcraft/<Relevant Ring> and determine how they're using that spell to help, then assign a TN accordingly. If a shugenja fails a cast by 5 or less, a Kansen will approach them offering to complete the spell. If they accept, the spell will cast successfully, but the PC will gain 5 points of the Shadowlands Taint.

Success

It takes twenty minutes to fight and dodge your way through the enemy forces, but finally Yukiyo pulls you all into a hidden alcove on the first floor. The Interim Jade Champion stands within, watching your group quietly. "We should hurry. They'll find this exit soon enough," her voice has returned to the calm from the day before.

The sounds of battle become muffled as you find yourself traveling through a long tunnel system. Eventually, the sounds of battle dim, and you step out into the light of the day at the base of the Spine of the World. The fields east and south seem largely clear, and from here it's clear to see: the Enemy had sent a large but singular force with the intent of capturing Shiro Yogo quickly.

"They must wish to use Shiro Yogo to stage further attacks towards Beiden," Yukiyo comments coldly.

"Indeed," Haruhi agrees, eyes stuck on the castle for a long moment.

"Haruhi-sama. I must ask, what happened there? Your skill with Wards is known well among the shugenja of the Scorpion. Surely this couldn't have been a simple mistake coming from you?"

Before Haruhi can answer, the sound of an explosion bursts from your south and west. Fire seems to latch to Shiro Yogo, spiraling up into a pillar of conflagration. After a few moments, it is gone, and with it all hints of Shiro Yogo.

Haruhi looks stunned as she sees this. It lasts a moment, before she nods, and looks to all of you. "My Lord has sacrificed himself that we can escape. We best make the most out of that sacrifice. The Empire must be warned."

Hachi nods in agreement. "Hai. Let us remember Yogo-sama for his honorable sacrifice by making it safely to Otosan Uchi."

Failure

Twenty minutes of long battle. Then thirty. Then forty. And still, it feels as if your progress is stilted. You finally make your way down to the first floor, but goblins charge in large numbers at you. As you stop at a dead end, Yukiyo rushes to the front of the group, pressing a hidden button. "Go!" As Goblins fill the hallway and Samurai rush into the hidden passage, she stands behind, holding position in front of the door. "I will buy you time! You must get word to the Capitol!"

A scroll pops from her satchel, and she begins to pray, sweat breaking down her brow. "Not the end I had planned... but it will do I suppose." A smile graces her face.

At the bottom of a flight of stairs, Haruhi waits. "Where's Yukiyo-san?" She asks.

"Buying us time," Hachi responds quickly. The sound of wind blasting from above and behind you threatens to pop your ear drums... and then for the time being the world falls silent.

Haruhi looks down and says a quiet prayer, then nods. "We must move. Come along, I know the way from here."

After another ten minutes of travel, you find yourselves at the base of the Spine of the World. To

your south and west, heavy smoke rises from where you should see Shiro Yogo... but no sign of the castle still seems to exist.

Regardless of success or failure, Hachi and Haruhi will insist that the party continue moving on. At least out here, Haruhi will not discuss what happened at Shiro Yogo.

After a few hours of travel, have the PCs roll Investigation (Notice) / Perception at TN 30. The Wary advantage applies to this roll. If no PCs succeed, the PCs will have a -20 to initiative for the first round of the coming combat.

The sound of wings flapping in the distance can initially be discounted as the flapping of birds. But then they get heavier and heavier. It does not take long, for the flapping wings to take form. A small number of flying beasts burst down through cloud cover. Their wings are pointed with razor sharp claws, and beaks let out a screeching cry... revealing teeth that could cut steel.

There are a number of Gachō-no-Oni equal to the number of PCs minus one. They start 30 feet in the air, though once they engage, they will not flee and keep attacking until they or their target is dead.

Gachō-no-Oni

It is a pleasant day in the middle of a terrible war, and these are horrible Oni.

Air 4 Earth 4 Fire 4 Water 4

Initiative: 8k4 **Attack:** 10k6 (Bite, Complex) 10k4 (Claws, Simple)

Armor TN: 30 **Damage:** 10k4 (Bite), 10k2 (Claws)

Reduction: 10 (5 vs. Arrows or Spears, 0 vs. jade or crystal)

Wounds: 50 (+10) 100 (Dead)

Taint Rank: 6.0

Skills: N/A

Special Abilities: Terrible Screech: As a free action in response to being attacked, the Gachō-no-Oni lets out a loud screech, increasing its ATN by 10. It can let out this screech once per round.

Fear 3

While not directly involved in the combat, Haruhi and Yukiyo will provide support for the PCs in the following ways:

- Yukiyo will use the kami to bolster allies. Mechanically, during the reaction stage of any round, she will give one PC (preferably one that she is an ally with or one that she has had pleasant conversation with) a 1k1 bonus to either their first attack or damage roll in their next turn.
- Haruhi will use her wards to protect and heal allies. In the first reaction stage, she will place wards on the two PCs who are the most hurt, giving them +20 reduction for 4 rounds. In concurrent rounds, she will heal one PC 20 wounds per round.

Once the Gachō-no-Oni are defeated, the PCs are able to start back towards Beiden. As they begin cresting a low hill:

Standing at an elevated position, you can more clearly see the battle that still rages below you. The Scorpion troops hold a loose line against the forces of the Shadowlands. For now they hold the line... but it's clear to anyone who has ever looked at a battle map that this line can only hold for so long.

Riding at the head of the Horde's force is a figure with a crow mask, the hints of a face that was no doubt once beautiful showing from under it. His Sashimono is that of a Scorpion under a simple Kanji: Tenno.

Though some PCs may want to go after Bayushi Tenno, there is no real way to get to him without charging into a Shadowlands army... an act that is clear suicide.

Part Three: Beiden

After several long hours of travel, the PCs finally make their way to Beiden.

A mid-sized town at the front of one of the largest passes to the northern half of the Empire, Beiden stands as one of the most well known trade hubs in Scorpion lands not named Ryoko Owari Toshi. The fact that there is a great deal of movement within the city is not much of a surprise: goods tend to move to and from the city like water, passing from the

Southern rice farms of the Crane and Scorpion to the hands of the Lion, the Phoenix, and the Unicorn.

What is surprising, however, is that most of the movement seems to be heading northward. A single Scorpion bushi stands at the western gate of what should be a major intersection into and out of the city... but none approach it save you and your group. The Scorpion does not bother checking your papers, greeting you and motioning you quickly into the city.

As you walk through Beiden, the sight of shuttered buildings is woefully common. Homes are empty, shopping stalls lack wares or people around them. Inside, the sight of Lion and Scorpion Samurai working together to guide as many north as they can is almost more common than the sights of the peasants following along to escape the horrors that threaten to come for Scorpion lands.

If Players are interested in gathering rumors, they can roll Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness. A Scorpion or Lion PC, or a PC with the Hero of the People advantage gets a free raise on this roll (to a max of one free raise per person):

- TN 5: I saw four hundred Akuma-no-Oni traveling this way just yesterday! We're doomed! Dooooooooomed!
- TN 10: No, the army of the Fallen Emperor is not here yet. That said, how can the Scorpion hope to hold even a season against such a terrible foe?
- TN 15: Hiruma Miraiko had come up this way only a few weeks ago before heading to Shiro Matsu. Surely that means the Crab are on their way soon?
- TN 20: Matsu Yutsuko sent half a legion of the Second Matsu Army to come assist the Scorpion with evacuating Beiden. She is so honorable!
- TN 25: Sure, it is the right thing to do to get the noncombatants out, but come on now. The Scorpion just don't want any of us ending up on the other side of the war.

Though most buildings are closed, there are a small number of inns still in operation for the time being. Though most are full, Hachi is able to arrange for rooms for the PCs and the rest of the entourage at the Twenty-One Flavors Inn, so called for its supposed twenty-one unique sake brands that it claims to self brew.

The evening at the inn is quiet. Most heimin who were able to secure lodgings have hidden in their rooms, and even Samurai who might otherwise be loud and boisterous are more staid and quiet in the face of an attack that some feel could come any day. Hachi orders drinks for any who stay around, whether PCs or otherwise, while Haruhi retires early. If Yukiyo is still alive, she joins Hachi. The two of them are glad to talk to the PCs about whatever they like, though neither of them are in a particularly celebratory mood. If asked about what happened over the long day, Hachi admits that he has barely allowed himself time to think of anything else but getting home, while Yukiyo expresses regret for the destruction of yet another Scorpion holding.

The next morning, however, as the PCs are getting ready to leave, they will find that Yogo Haruhi is already standing outside.

Pack slung to her shoulder, Yogo Haruhi stares west and south, where only hours away the battle against the Shadowlands rages forward. For several long moments, she is quiet.

Finally, though, she speaks. "My friends, I thank you for bringing me here. But..." she pauses, "My place is out there, on the battlefield. The Jade Champion is an administrator. A leader of men. I am none of those things. What I can do is fight, and I do it well. I feel as if I should stay here, to fight alongside those who have been fighting and sacrificing for the sake of the Empire. Given what my actions have caused, going to Otosan Uchi feels only like running away."

Hachi steps forward, offering a polite smile to the Interim Jade Champion. "Haruhi-sama. I cannot pretend to understand your feelings on these matters. But returning to Otosan Uchi is not running away. There is much to do there, and more of it that can assist in our cause here. In addition, allies within the Court can only help my cause and that of Kazetora-sama's. I assure you, your presence would not be a waste if you returned."

Haruhi glances at Hachi a moment, then at you. "What do you think, Samurai? I do not wish to gain say wise advice from an experienced courtier, but I still feel that I can be of assistance to the Scorpion on the front. If you were in my position, what would you do?"

There truly is no right or wrong answer to this question. If PCs have questions regarding the recent events, Haruhi and Hachi will answer as best as they can. The two know roughly the following:

Haruhi

- Haruhi did not intentionally sabotage the wards. She was asked by Yogo Hamanari (May he rest well in Yomi) to reinforce them and did look through them and make adjustments as necessary.
- Haruhi felt something snap just before the attack, as if a sudden tension broke. She's felt that feeling one other time: the day after she sent her husband to die, when her curse broke.
- To Haruhi's mind, the curse has never manifested in a Yogo twice (A Lore: Scorpion / awareness roll confirm this).

Hachi

- The Imperial Courts have largely been ruled by Doji Makibesu roughly since 1341, after the death of Yoritomo Kaminari. The Emperor has only rarely been seen, and has not provided voice to policy in the time since. In Hachi's mind, this has allowed Makibesu to effectively create policy that largely benefits the Crane.
- While this is not usually overly problematic, Hachi blames the Phoenix clan coup on Makibesu. If Makibesu had not claimed the blessing for the Crane, then Norimichi's ire would not have stirred. (Though certainly a matter of victim blaming, Hachi will point out that Makibesu's policies have consistently favored the Crane to the direct detriment of Clans in greater need).
- There are elements of the Imperial Court that are concerned about Makibesu's current level of influence. There was hope that his abdication of the Crane Championship would allow him to work in a more impartial manner. This has clearly not been the case.
- Hachi would like more supporters, not necessarily to directly oppose Makibesu, but to work with him and others towards removing Toturi X from isolation (he will not name other elements, though he won't deny if someone speculates that Kazetora is one of them).

Once the PCs have asked questions and made arguments, the PCs can make Courtier (Manipulation) or Sincerity (Honesty) / Awareness.

The base TN for this is 50 (if the PCs universally argue for her to go to the front, no roll is required). It can be adjusted in the following ways:

- The PCs expressing belief in her abilities as a Courtier: +10 to any argument to get her to go to Otosan Uchi
- Discussing the Front (Insisting she could not make a difference if they are arguing for her to go to Otosan Uchi or Insisting she could make a difference if they are arguing for her to return to the front): +5 to any argument to get her to go to Otosan Uchi or - 5 to any argument for her to go to the Front.
- Noting that she could make a difference in the Courts on the merits of her position: -5 to any argument for her to go to Otosan Uchi
- The PCs expressing that her ward work could help in Otosan Uchi: -10 to any argument for her to go to Otosan Uchi

By default, Haruhi will stay at the Front. If multiple PCs argue in different directions, the highest roll that beats the TN will win.

If the PCs persuade her to stay at the Front (or do not attempt to persuade her at all):

Haruhi looks to the North and East. Then shakes her head. "Otosan Uchi will be fine without me. I'm sorry, Hachi-san, but you should pick allies who will be able to properly assist with your needs. I wish you the best of luck, but right now my clan needs me."

Hachi nods calmly. "I am saddened... but I understand, Haruhi-sama. I hope that you are able to make a difference out there."

Haruhi nods once, then turns towards the southwest. Her steps taking her to a long, hard battle.

If the PCs persuade her to go to Otosan Uchi:

Haruhi looks to the South and West. For a moment, there is a glint at the corner of her right eye. A tear? It lasts only a moment, then she nods, her expression becoming resolute. "The Empire must be united in order to pass the coming trials. If there is an element of the Imperial Court that is an obstacle to that unity, the duty of the Jade Champion is to stop it. I shall assist you, Hachi-san."

Hachi nods, smiling gently. "Thank you. I promise that this will be a worthwhile endeavor, Yogo-sama. Let us make haste home."

Part Four: Toturi IX

After two days of hard marching, the welcome sight of Shiro Matsu highlights the horizon. As you approach the castle, a shrine can be seen in the near distance. Surrounding it is a small squad of Lion bushi, with two Crab kneeling in front of it.

Any shugenja or lion PC, or any PC who makes a TN 15 Lore: Theology / Intelligence Roll, recognizes the shrine as a Shrine to the Fortune of Heroes: Goemon.

Any PC who has seen them before will readily recognize Hiruma Miraiko, the daimyo of the Hiruma family and Interim Clan Champion as well as her husband, Hiruma Goshi. Take a few minutes to have the pair greet the PCs before...

It is subtle, at first. A sniff of chrysanthemum in the air. Just south of you, the path you just came from, the ground begins to shake and twist, shadows roiling into form. The sight of a horse... no... a small, serpentine Dragon made of shadow spills from the very Earth itself. Sitting atop of the Dragon is an impressive man, more impressive by the Aura of Dark Power that surrounds him. He looks between the assembled Samurai, and a calm smile gracing an impossibly handsome face. "Miraiko-san. It has been a long five years, has it not?"

All PCs should contest Fear 6. If they fail by more than 15, they are frozen in terror instead of fleeing the scene.

PCs with the Cert "Marked by the Lords of Death" gain 2 free raises on the Fear check, then destroy this cert, no longer gaining it's benefits or drawbacks. They receive a sudden vision:

For a moment, your vision becomes white hot. And then, as it clears, you are not on the plains south of Shiro Matsu any longer. You stand in the middle of the Shadowlands, just to the right of the Dark Lord. Ten skeletal figures stand before the Dark Lord, speaking words you cannot quite comprehend. Then one of them reaches for The Dark Lord, claws at his

face. The claws rend, a strike that would have destroyed any lesser member of Ningen-Do.

But this is not any member of Ningen-Do. This is the Dark Lord, and the claw touches his face and does nothing. The skeletal figure screeches in surprise and agony as a flashing blade slashes into its head, shattering the crown.. "What you Foreign Gods have never understood - for the Hero, there is no death." The kanji for courage flashes brightly from the blade of Toturi IX.

Regardless of whether or not anyone has the vision, Miraiko reacts before any else can.

Miraiko, quiet as ever, steps to face this new threat. She makes a simple sign, recognizable to any who have studied her sign language. "Rest in Peace."

With no further preamble, Miraiko charges; her blade gleaming with the morning light. She brings her blade down upon Toturi Reizan, the Fallen Emperor, with the grace and speed that one of the finest swordsmen in the Emperor could display. The Dark Lord makes no motion to move, perhaps stunned by her speed and decisiveness?

Her slash bites hard into the shoulder of the Dark Lord's armor, only to stop suddenly, denied any purchase by the Dark Lord's very skin. Toturi IX sighs, stepping with impossible speed behind her as his blade clears his saya. "Goodbye, my friend." It only takes one slash into her back, and Miraiko drops to the floor, a stunned look in her eyes the only hint of continued life in her body.

Goshi cries out in surprise and anger, hand going immediately to his wakizashi.

If no PC does anything, Goshi immediately charges Toturi IX and is summarily cut down. Persuading or stopping him requires a skill roll relevant to what they are attempting at TN 30.

Toturi IX is actively attempting to persuade the PCs to his side. He will deny any attempts to duel, lambast any suggestion that what he's doing is wrong, and generally deny the PCs every idea that he's going to fail (to the point of gaslighting if needed). He is never actively rude, and in fact is very complimentary to the PCs and their abilities. He does not, however, tolerate any violence against him.

If a PC attacks him, he will set them immediately to the end of the Injured Rank, regardless of their wounds, insight rank, ATN, or techniques/spells. If he is attacked again, he will kill them without hesitation.

Beyond these, Toturi IX knows the following:

- He is responsible for the second triggering of Yogo Haruhi's curse. It took him some time to work out how Fu Leng created the original curse, but he was able to figure out how to recreate the effects against a single target. He does not wish to use something like that again, but would admit that he is working out how to make the curse function on a larger scale if needed.
- He did not die as was reported during the Battle of Broken Jade. Though he was nearly killed, he was brought to the Festering Pit, where he spent a year recovering. Jigoku had intended to subsume his will. He instead subjugated Jigoku, bending its will to his own.
- He has no interest in destroying the entirety of Rokugan - He only allows his army to attack strategically viable targets and keeps them from killing unnecessarily. Captured targets are given the option to join his Empire willingly. Those who do not are sent to Meido.
- His hope is to unite Jigoku and Ningen-Do. Create a fully united Rokugan free of the Corruption of Jigoku for those who do not want it as well as the petty infighting that has plagued Rokugan for Centuries.
- Toturi IX has no current plans to attack Tengoku, though he is more than happy to slay any Fortune who tries to stop him.

Once PCs have indicated a side:

Toturi IX lifts his blade, staring at those who would still defy him. "A shame, truly. I wish to minimize the loss of my subjects' life when I can help it. But if you will not capitulate..."

Behind him, a burst of light radiates from the barely breathing body of Hiruma Miraiko, causing a surprised step forward from the Emperor. A radiating voice, not coming from Miraiko so much as around her, booms through the valley. "Hiruma Miraiko, Hero of Rokugan! Though you have no voice, your

prayers are heard by the Fortune of Heroes! Come! We face this beast together!"

As the light fades, Hiruma Miraiko is back on her feet. The terrible gash on her back still remains, but is enveloped in a bright light that seems to permeate through the rest of her body. Faintly, the outline of a tall Bushi stands behind her. Miraiko and the Bushi both look to you, the eyes of both glittering with renewed determination. "We shall keep this Usurper at bay. You must flee to Shiro Matsu!"

Toturi IX laughs, a cold, terrible laugh. "Gods and men cannot stop me. But I am curious as to what I can take from the Fortune of Heroes when I slay him!"

Presumably, the PCs will take this opportunity to retreat. As they do:

Miraiko, bolstered with the strength of Goemon, prepares for Reizan's charge. This time, as he comes, she reacts with surprising speed, slashing for his neck. For a moment, the Dark Lord is surprised, pulling back from what would be a fatal blow to a normal man. As you rush away from the scene, for a brief moment, you catch a line of blood across Toturi IX's cheek.

Conclusion

As the PCs retreat, Toturi IX does not pursue further, content in what he has achieved one way or another. Yutsuko meets the PCs at Shiro Matsu and takes their report, with or without Goshi.

Yutsuko is quiet as she takes in the report, sitting in silence for several minutes before she finally speaks. "The Matsu will fight for as long as we can. But if we cannot harm this Dark Lord, whatever he is, then it is irrelevant in any case."

After a deep breath, she speaks again. "Please, you have been traveling for too long. Rest here for the evening, then return to your Lords. We will need as many at full strength as we can in the coming days."

That night, as you fall asleep, your rest is surprisingly peaceful. You find yourself dreaming of a young woman seated at a table, dressed in resplendent finery appropriate for an Empress. The two of you drink tea

and make pleasant conversation, before finally she speaks.

“The Empire... the Empire that was mine, that was my Father’s. The Empire that once was the Hantei’s. It stands at threat, and neither the Heavens nor Ningen-Do can stop it alone. You who have been exceptional Servants of the Empire, we wish to help you stop the threat of my misguided Descendant. We will follow Goemon’s example. Until we are able to help, though...”

...Protect my Descendent. Protect the Emperor, from the threat that is obvious, and from the one at his side...”

When you awaken, you feel more refreshed than you have in many years.

If PCs are curious as to who just spoke to them, they can make a Lore: History / Intelligence Roll at TN 20. If they succeed, they realize that they were just visited by Toturi II, the Second Monarch of the Toturi Dynasty.

The End

Rewards for Completing the Adventure

Surviving the Module: 1 XP

Good Roleplaying: 1 XP
Escaping Shiro Yogo: 1 XP
Confronting the Dark Lord: 1 XP

Total Possible Experience: 4 XP

Favors

PCs escort Hachi to Shiro Matsu successfully: 1 favor.

Honor

Confronting the Dark Lord of the Shadowlands is an H9 for Courage

Glory

G10 glory for surviving your encounter with the Dark Lord

Other Rewards and Penalties

A PC may, at their option, choose to buy off the disbeliever disadvantage at the conclusion of this module for no favor cost. Experience is spent as normal.

GM Reporting

1. Did Soshi Yukiyo die?
2. Did Haruhi return to the capital?
3. Did Hiruma Goshi die?

GM must report this information BEFORE (5/9/2022) for it to have storyline effect

Appendix #1: NPCs

If any NPCs require statblocks not listed elsewhere in the module

Shosuro Inazuma

Exhausted Duelist

| | | | | |
|------------|---------|------------|--------------|-----------|
| Air 4 | Earth 4 | Fire 3 | Water 2 | Void 4 |
| Reflexes 5 | | Agility 4 | Perception 3 | |
| Honor 4.1 | | Status 3.5 | | Glory 8.2 |

Initiative: 10k6

Attack: 10k4e
(Katana, Simple)

Armor TN: 30/35
(Bayushi 1)

Damage: 6k2
(Katana)

Reduction: 0

Wounds: 20 (+0), 28 (+3), 36 (+5), 44 (+10), 52 (+15), 60 (+20), 68 (Down, +40), 76 (Out), 77 (Dead)
School/Rank: Bayushi Bushi 4

Techniques: The Way of the Scorpion: +1k1 to Initiative Rolls. +5 to Armor TN against any opponent with lower Initiative.

Pincers and Tail: Free Raise on any Maneuver Strike at the Tail: When assuming a Stance at the start

of Turn, may choose a target within 30'; the target is

Fatigued if you hit them this Turn. During the Reactions Stage, an affected opponent may attempt an

Earth Ring roll against a TN of 25 to negate the effects

of this Technique. If he fails, the effects of this Technique end during the next Reactions Stage (the second Reactions Stage after he was struck).

Strike from Above, Strike from Below: Simple Action Attacks with melee weapons

Skills: Courtier (Manipulation) 2, Defense 2, Etiquette 2, Iaijutsu (Focus) 8, Investigation (Notice) 4, Kenjutsu (Katana) 7, Sincerity 3; Athletics 3, Battle 2,

Horsemanship 1, Intimidation (Control) 3, Jiujutsu 1, Stealth (Sneaking) 3

Mastery Abilities: ready swords as a Free Action, Free Raise to Focus, +2k2 to Focus if wins Assessment

by 10+, +1k0 sword damage

Advantages/Disadvantages: Heart of Vengeance (Phoenix), Wary / Disbeliever

Dueling: Assessment: 10k6 w/Void (Emphasis) Focus: 10k8e+9 w/Void or 10k10+11 v/Void and Assessment by 10+. Against Phoenix: 10k9+9 w/Void or 10k10+19 w/Void and Assessment by 10+ (Emphasis)

Strike: First Blood: 10k8+4 w/center stance, 8k2m damage (keep low unless Phoenix, in which case keep enough to do strong damage but not kill). To Death: 10k6 to hit (10k8 if void is spent, only on enemies with a reflexes of 5 or higher). 8k4+4 base damage w/ void before raises.

Miya Hachi

Slim and energetic, Hachi remains dedicated to the future of the Empire while he tries to overcome the trials that assail it. Now the Herald of the Imperial Advisor, he hopes to find a way to use that title to help the Empire however he can.

| | | | | |
|-----------|---------|----------------|---------|-----------|
| Air 5 | Earth 2 | Fire 3 | Water 3 | Void 3 |
| | | | | |
| | | Intelligence 4 | | |
| Honor 6.8 | | Status 7.0 | | Glory 5.3 |

Initiative: 10k5

Attack: none

Armor TN: 30

Damage: none

School/Rank: Miya Herald 5

Skills: Courtier (Rhetoric) 5, Defense 5, Etiquette (Courtesy) 6, Horsemanship 5, Investigation 4, Lore: Heraldry 5, Sincerity 5

Artisan: Painting 4, Athletics 3, Calligraphy 3, Games: Go 3, Hunting 3, Lore: Bushido 4, Lore: Gaijin 3, Lore: History 5, Lore: Theology 4, Meditation 3, Tea Ceremony 4

Advantages/Disadvantages: Benten's Blessing / Soft Hearted, True Love (Toturi Kazetora)

Player Handout #1: News From the Empire

Honored Samurai,

Never has the news I share been so disastrous and bleak.

The forces that shall not sully our courts with their descriptions have moved with unholy speed across the plains, and though the Clan of Shinjo fights alongside the Imperial Legions for every inch of territory, the Unicorn lands have fallen. The Minor Clans of the north are likewise over-run. The Badger, Frog, and Hare Clans have either left their provinces behind or been slain by the invaders. Refugees from the territories beset by war are seeking protection from their neighbors and allies.

The battle-lines have moved as far south as the Lion and Scorpion lands. This division in the enemy's forces is perhaps the only good news, for if they were concentrated, who knows how long even the stalwart samurai of either clan could stand? Reports indicate that Shiro Soshi and Ryoko Owari are under siege, while the main force of the enemy closes on Shiro no Shosuro. Likewise, the Lion have been forced to give ground to a line between Shiro sano Ken Hayai and Kyuden Ikoma. These two strongholds serve as anchors for the Lion defense, but the Clan of Akodo has so far been unable to mount an effective counterattack – though thousands have gone to their ancestors in honor.

There are signs that the foe does not seek indiscriminate destruction. While all military forces arrayed against them have met with an utter lack of mercy, cities of political or economic value have only been raided and abandoned. Little effort is being spent to hold these places, unless they hold a position of strategic importance. What this portends is surely unspeakable.

Even the East, the direction of the Sun's Blessings, presents difficulties to overcome. There have been reports of raiders striking at smaller Mantis holdings. The source of this is unclear so far, but it is difficult to imagine it is entirely unrelated to the other issues the Empire faces.

The matter of the Phoenix rebellion is much on peoples' minds, even in the press of these other concerns. The actual fate of the clan will likely be determined by the Imperial Winter Court, to be held in the Phoenix city of Mikui Toshi. While both the Clan Champion and the Master of Water were killed, most of their military was able to retreat and are now under the command of the new Champion.

Darkness threatens our glorious land once again. Now is truly the time for heroes to step forward, to keep the light of honor shining bright for all of Rokugan to see!

With Hope in Honor, my Friends and Comrades in Arms.

Otomo Yusuke

Player Handout #2: The Court at Shiro Yogo

Bayushi Otozatsu, Scorpion Clan Champion (Status 8.0, Glory 7.3) - Well known as both a brilliant statesman and competent Swordsman, the Champion of the Scorpion rules with Grace and determination.

Yogo Hamanari, Yogo Family Daimyo (Status 7.0, Glory 2.1) - At best known for being a recluse, Hamanari is old and bitter, and does not want to be there.

Miya Hachi, Herald of the Imperial Advisor (Status 7.0, Glory 5.2) - Here to preside over the ascension of Yogo Haruhi, Miya Hachi has become an accomplished Herald in only a few years.

Yogo Haruhi, Wardmaster, soon-to-be Jade Champion (Status 4.0, Glory 4.1) - An experienced Wardmaster, Haruhi was selected to fill the slot of Jade Champion after a long deliberation.

Soshi Yukiyo, Jade Legionnaire (Status 2.5, Glory 5.1) - Devoted hunter of the Enemy.

Shosuro Inazuma, Otozatsu's Yojimbo (Status 3.5, Glory 8.2) - Impressive but tired Scorpion Duelist