

Legend of the Five Rings





Legend of the Five Rings

Game Master's Pack

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The Kharma Rule

A samurai is always ready to die for his lord, to throw away his life at a moment's notice. While this makes for wonderful samurai drama, it can also make for a high mortality rate *L5R* campaign. Players can – understandably – get quite tired of every character they make ending his life with his own sword in his gut.

Because *L5R* can have such a high mortality rate, we suggest you implement the “kharma rule” described here. You may also wish to employ the kharma rule if a character has died honorably, gloriously, or selflessly, or if his death fulfills that character's destiny.

Essentially what the kharma rule does is transfer points from a player's dead character to his next character. There are many ways to justify the transfer of points, but its up to you and your player to determine the reason.

Kharma and Dharma

The Rokugani believe in reincarnation (the rebirth of the soul in another body). Two important concepts in reincarnation are kharma and dharma.

Dharma is a character's “soul duty.” When he is born, his destiny is already put in place. He is part of the Celestial Order. His *dharma* is his “soul duty”, his place in the Celestial Order. His *kharma*, on the other hand, is a measurement of how well he performed that duty. Those who perform their dharma well have great kharma, which will follow them into the next life.

It is that last phrase, “the next life”, that has brought so much controversy to the shugenja schools across Rokugan. When is the “next life”

that Shinsei spoke so cryptically about? Are Rokugani born again in another world that will exist after this world is dead and gone, or will they be born again in this world to continue their role in the Order? None can say for certain.

Using the Kharma Rule

When a character dies, it is up to the GM to determine if he fulfilled his dharma. Did he serve his role in the celestial order, or did he deny his role and attempt to live his life “under his own terms” as many young samurai are now choosing to do?

We'll provide you with an example player – Ted – and his recently deceased character to show you how the GM used the Kharma Rule.

TED AND SHIBA USOBE

Ted's favorite character – Shiba Usobe – recently passed on. He died while protecting his daimyo, Shiba Ujimitsu. Usobe was watching Ujimitsu enter into a duel with a dishonest Crane and saw the glint of poison on the Crane's blade. Usobe shouted a warning to his lord and killed the Crane with an arrow. Another Crane diplomat demanded justice for the samurai's interference. Ujimitsu reluctantly agreed and Ted's favorite character was forced to commit *seppuku*.

At the end of the game session, the GM announced that Ujimitsu himself wrote a haiku to the memory of his devoted samurai – which raised Usobe's Glory total by one Rank. Then he asked Ted to make a new character. The GM reminded Ted that Usobe did have a daughter, and that his next character could be her.

In this case, the GM would be using some of Usobe's Traits, Honor and Glory to determine starting points for Ted's new character. To begin with, the GM decides to use Usobe's Glory 6 as a guide for Ujiko's (Usobe's daughter) starting Glory. Since Ujiko was Usobe's first-born child, she begins with a starting Glory one Rank lower than her father. Ujiko's starting Glory is 5.

The GM also decides to use Usobe's Insight to determine Ujiko's starting Character Points. He decides to not include points Ted used on Honor, Advantages or Disadvantages. Usobe's Insight is 176, and the GM tells Ted that he can spend those Insight points in the following manner:

Raising a Trait: 10 Points
Raising Void: 12 Points
Raising (or buying) a Skill: 1 Point
Advantages and Disadvantages: List cost
Honor: 3 Points
Glory: 5 Points

Once all the points are spent, Ted figures Ujiko's Insight total (which could be significantly different from her father's). The GM tells Ted that if Ujiko meets the Insight qualifications for a higher Rank in the Shiba School (Rank 2 or 3, for instance), that she automatically qualifies for that School Rank and gains the appropriate Techniques as well. However, the GM also tells him that raising her School Rank will not affect her Glory Rank, because that's determined by her heritage.

Ujiko also inherits her father's sword which happened to be a *nemuranai*. She also inherits any lands and titles he may have acquired. Since Usobe was a magistrate, she will fill that title (Ujimitsu was generous to the daughter of his favorite magistrate).

Now Ted has a brand new character who carries on the legacy of his old character. There

are some reminders of Usobe still lingering in the air (his sword on her hip, his title, his lands, etc.), but Ujiko has many characteristics that are distinctly her own.

Conclusion

There is no hard and fast formula for using the Kharma Rule. It's a tool, just like the other rules we've provided. Put it in your GM toolbox and take it out when you find a use for it. Play around with it, adjust it to your own needs or just ignore it completely. Some GMs use it so players will not have to be playing a Rank 1 samurai in a group of Rank 3 and 4 samurai, while others like the feel of the passing on of tradition. It's also a great incentive for true samurai drama. Reward players with bonus points if they perform especially fearless deeds. Remember that a samurai gives up his life so his family can have better position in the Clan. The Kharma Rule provides GMs and players with a tool that allows samurai to throw away their lives with the certainty that their sons and daughters will have a better life.





(OR, "NEVER GIVE A PLAYER AN EVEN BREAK")

In the basic book, we outlined a whole bunch of advice for the GM to use when he ran his game, but let's face it, players always read the GM section. That's why we've included the following advice here, in the GM Pack. Granted, it's not strictly forbidden for players to buy a GM Pack, but they are less likely to do so, so we've dropped in the following information, for your eyes only.

It isn't easy being the GM. It takes creativity, improvisational skills and a whole lot of planning. But it also takes one other element that many players are not aware of (or they just lie to themselves in order to avoid recognizing the truth).

The GM cheats.

Not just little white cheats, but big nasty cheats that his players would lynch him for if they ever discovered the truth.

So, how do you cheat and get away with it?

Easy. You break rules that aren't written down.

Use the System

One piece of advice we gave playtesters was "Use the system, don't let the system use you." Curiously enough, the best way I can illustrate this came from one of our players, not a GM.

You see, there was this Crab samurai and a Scorpion shugenja. The Crab was downright rude - beyond the call of duty - always treating the Scorpion like dirt. One day, after a particularly nasty skirmish with an ogre, the Crab told the

Scorpion to use her healing spell to deal with a deep cut on his leg. The Scorpion pulled out her scroll and cast the spell... and failed. She bowed politely, told the Crab what happened and went on to heal the other samurai.

Now, what happened on the table was this: when the Scorpion rolled her dice, she re-rolled her ten (which turned out to be a seventeen) and paused a moment, deciding which dice she would keep. She smiled and asked me if she could keep her ones and twos.

I was taken aback. I thought for a moment and said, "Sure. You can keep whatever dice you want." She kept the one's and two's, informed the Crab that her spell failed and went over to the handsome Crane and healed him right up to zero Wounds. Now, she had to make a Sincerity roll to ensure that the Crab didn't take the whole incident as an insult, but I gave her a couple of extra dice to roll as a bonus (always reward creativity if you can).

That's just one example of using the system. The reason we designed the system the way we did was so you could really use it to its fullest. Whenever a character wants to use Raises, let him. If a Scorpion shugenja wants to keep her low dice, let her. Use the system to your advantage, don't let the system use you.

Hitting Below The Belt

Some RPGs tell you to be fair.

Others tell you to be arbitrary.

Not us.

We tell you to hit your players below the belt.

Never give 'em a break.

Never let up.

Never take it easy on them.

Why? Because they'll hate you if you do.

The fact of the matter is, players are a masochistic lot. They want you to run their characters through the grinder. They want you to take advantage of their character's weaknesses, to pummel them mercilessly and leave them in a bloody pulp.

However - and here's the tricky part - they also want to win.

If you've ever seen the *Die Hard* movies, you know exactly what I'm talking about. At the end of every film, John McLane is bruised, bloody and

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busted up beyond all hope of repair. But he also got the better of the bad guys. That's what players really want. They want to come out heroes, but they want to do it by the skin of their teeth.

Here's an example.

During a session of the upcoming adventure "The Anvil of Despair", the characters spent months lugging a huge cursed anvil across Rokugan. All manner of bad fortune had fallen upon them (it never stopped raining the whole time), and they were cold, wet and exhausted. They finally reached the Festering Pit of Fu Leng and were ready to throw the Anvil into the Pit when an Oni flew up out of the gaping, slimy maw of the Pit and attacked the exhausted characters.

The magic of the Anvil didn't allow them to heal properly, so they were all sorely wounded. To reflect the exhaustion of their battered bodies, I took away the highest die they rolled. I forced them to miss Perception checks. The Oni was spitting acid. The shugenja couldn't cast her spell because she dropped the scroll in a puddle of mud. The Oni grabbed the party's most powerful shugenja and began leaching the life right out of him. Finally, two of the shugenja got together for a Tomb of Jade and blasted the Oni... and the

shugenja it was sucking life from. When the spell was done, the Oni was entombed and half of the shugenja's face had been turned to jade. Permanently. Finally, they dropped the Anvil in the Pit and started their long walk home.

The characters had been through hell. All of them had permanent scars from the journey. None of them would ever be the same again.

And they showed up next Friday, eager to play again.

Go ahead. Hurt your characters. After all, pain builds character.

How To Handle the Power Player

There are many ways to build the "ultimate samurai" with the character creation system we've provided. The phrase "The GM has final authority over all characters" is enough to keep players from "minmaxing" (minimizing your losses and maximizing your gains) the system. But let us suggest to you a different technique for handling a power player.

Let us suggest you give him everything he wants.

Here's an example.

Early in the game's development, one player abused the system to its fullest. He put all of his points into combat. He maxed out his physical Traits, ignored his mental Traits, and put the rest of his points into combat skills. He took one of the other characters as an enemy so he could raise his Strength another point. He also took the Shadowlands Taint as a Disadvantage so he could get the extra to hit and damage dice. His philosophy was simple: *I'll roleplay the mental stuff. John never makes me roll for it anyway.*

He was right. I rarely make players roll when



they roleplay well. I took one look at the character sheet and saw what he was up to. I had a choice. I could tell him to re-make his character, or I could let him play the character as it stood.

I chose the latter, and dealt with him accordingly.

It's true, I hardly force people to roll when they roleplay well.

But NPCs always roll. And when an NPC makes a Contested Roll, that means the player has to roll as well...

One day, the characters were in court, preparing to be sent out by their lord on a special mission they had been hand chosen for. The player in question had created a big, mean Crab who was perfect for the mission (rescuing Phoenix shugenja in the Shadowlands). They were in their daimyo's court, ready to receive the commission, when a Scorpion samurai stepped forward, demanding to replace the Crab samurai. When the daimyo demanded an explanation for this outrageous claim, the Scorpion was armed to the teeth. He claimed the Crab was unworthy of going. He had the Shadowlands Taint, which made him unreliable. He held a grudge against the Crane samurai he would be riding with. He had no knowledge of the Shadowlands itself (it was true, he failed to purchase the Shadowlands Lore Skill), and was nothing more than a bully with no wit, wisdom or cunning. Obviously, the Scorpion was the better choice.

The Crab was outraged and demanded that his honor had been compromised. I told him that he would have to explain that to his daimyo in order to get justice. He made a passionate and poetic speech. I listened patiently. When he was finished I told him to make a Contested Sincerity roll against the Scorpion.

You should have seen the look on his face. He looked at his 1 Awareness and watched as I counted up six dice. "Are you ready?" I asked him. "If you fail, you realize your Honor and Glory will be compromised!" He nodded, rolled, failed and stayed home while the Scorpion took his place. Soon after the adventure, the player asked me if he could make another character. I told him that was no problem, and even gave him some extra points to keep up with the other players' more experienced characters.

The One Rule You Shouldn't Break

It may sound as if I'm encouraging you to have fun at your players' expense. I'm not. When I said the *L5R* Golden Rule was the only rule you should never ignore, I meant it. Roleplaying is supposed to be fun. Sure, sometimes it's frightening, tension-filled fun, but that all depends on what kind of group you are going to be playing with.

What a good GM needs is a sense of responsibility. Your players are counting on you to make their evening an enjoyable one. They're counting on you to show them a good time. Don't let rules get in the way of that. Heck, don't let a lack of rules get in the way of that, either. If your players enjoy playing by the rules, then by Amaterasu's sake, play by the rules! Everyone's got their own house rules for *Monopoly*; why not have a set of house rules for *L5R*?

Have fun, and don't let the dice and charts limit your imagination.

That's a rule.



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Clarifications and Errata

Why are the combat rules so unforgiving? I mean, one hit from a katana and my samurai is down three or four dice!

When we first started designing the combat system, we brought on a professional consultant. His name is Tony Kull (yes, that's "Sensei" Tony from the credits page), and he comes in once a week for our kenjutsu lesson. Tony is also accomplished in several other martial art forms.

I explained to him the idea of the classic "five second combat round," and asked him how many times he could hit me in five seconds.

Sensei Tony smiled his wicked smile and said, "I only need to hit you once."

The fact of the matter is, our combat system is very forgiving. Many samurai are able to survive one or two hits from a katana before they go down. In real life - just as Sensei Tony says - all it takes is one.

Consider this little historical fact for a moment:

In feudal Japan, the method for testing swords involved slicing through a pile of convicted criminals. If the sword couldn't slice through at least four criminals, it wasn't a good blade.

If this still doesn't convince you that our combat system isn't "heroic enough," you aren't thinking like Sun Tzu and Musashi. Yeah, one hit takes your samurai down three or four dice, but one hit takes your opponent down, too.

Choose your battles carefully. If you go

charging blindly into combat, you're going to get yourself killed. Fight wisely, and you'll live a long Glorious life.

For those of you who still want a more heroic campaign, you can have super-human samurai with a simple adjustment to the Wound stat. Simply multiply the character's Earth by 3 instead of 2 to determine Wounds.

On the Crane Clan Page (pg. 81), the Asahina Shugenja School says shugenja learn "3 Air, 2 Earth and 1 Air." What's the deal?

This should clear things up. Asahina shugenja learn 3 Air, 2 Earth and 1 Water.

On the Crab Clan Page (pg. 79), the Kuni Shugenja School says shugenja learn "3 Earth, 2 Force and 1 Water." What's a Force spell?

It should read "2 Fire." Sorry, no Jedi in Rokugan.

Under Gaki (pg. 192), it says that Gaki can only be sensed with an Intuition roll. And on pg 193, it says that Kitsune are considered to have an Empathy of 6. What's wrong?

Both Intuition and Empathy are really Awareness in disguise.



On the Crab Clan Page (pg. 79), the Rank 1 Crab Technique reads: "He adds his current Earth to all to hit and damage rolls." Does this mean he adds dice to the roll equal to his Earth?

No, it means he adds his Earth to the total roll. For instance, a Crab with a 4 Earth rolls a 14 to hit. Since he adds his Earth to the roll, he then adds 4 to his roll of 14, making it a total of 18. Pretty handy.

Are the Traits listed in parenthesis after each Skill the only Traits you can use with that Skill?

Certainly not. We only listed those Traits with those Skills to show the most common Trait associated with that Skill. The GM can call for a roll with any Trait + any Skill.

Sometimes the rules are ambiguous about extra dice. When the rules say I get to roll additional dice, are they dice I get to keep?

No. If the rules tell you that you get to roll additional dice, that's what you get to do. If the rules say you gain an additional die you can roll and keep, then you get to keep it.

Do I have to keep the highest dice I roll?

Heavens, no! You can keep any of your dice, even the low ones. Sometimes victory lies in failure, after all.

I count two different ways to figure Insight. How do I do it?

Just add up your Rings and multiply the total by ten. Then, add up your total Ranks in Skills. Add these two totals and you have your Insight Total. The character creation example in the rulebook is correct.

What Skill do I use when I use a pole-arm?

You use the Yarijutsu Skill.

What's up with the Hunting Skill?

For all intents and purposes, the Survival Skill does not exist and you should refer to the Hunting Skill in its stead.

What's up with page 246?

For some reason, we've ended up with an entire page missing from our basic book. Page 246 is really page 146.

So, what was on page 246?

Well, it was the wrap-up of John's afterward as well as the suggested reading section. We asked

John and he said printing his afterward here would be a bit out of order, but we've included his suggested reading section below for your perusal.

Essential Reading

Miyamoto Musashi. *A Book of Five Rings*.
Sun Tzu. *The Art of War*.

Stories

McAlpine, Helen & William. *Japanese Tales and Legends*.

Mackenzie, Donald A. *Myths of China and Japan*.

Murasaki Shikibu. *The Tale of Genji*.

Roberts, Moss. *Chinese Fairy Tales & Fantasies*.

Russel, Sean. *The Initiate Brother and Gatherer of Clouds*.

Sakai, Stan. *Usagi Yojimbo*.

Tyler, Royall. *Japanese Tales*.

Yoshikawa, Eiji. *Musashi*.

Philosophy

Doubleday, Tony & Scott, David. *The Elements of Zen*.

Inazo Nitobe. *Bushido: The Soul of Japan*.

King, Winston L. *Zen & the Way of the Sword*.

Lao-Tzu. *Tao Te Ching*.

Sadler, A.L. *The Code of the Samurai*.

Suzuki Shosan. *Warrior of Zen*.

History

Hiroaki Satō. *Legends of the Samurai*.

Morris, Ivan. *The World of the Shining Prince*.

Ratti and Westbrook. *Secrets of the Samurai*.

Sawyer, Ralph D. (trans). *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*.

Turnbull, Stephen. *Samurai Warriors*. (and anything else you can find by the good doctor!)

Films

Anything by Akira Kurosawa, including:

Ran

Throne of Blood

The Seven Samurai

Yojimbo

Rashomon

ALL YOU NEED IS AN SASE...

If you've got any questions about the L5R RPG, feel free to drop us a line and ask us. Please make sure you include a self-addressed stamped envelope with your question. We can't guarantee any response to questions that have no accompanying self-addressed stamped envelope.

Send questions to:

L5R RPG Q&A
c/o Alderac Entertainment Group
4045 Guasti Road, #212
Ontario, CA 91761

Did we mention the self-addressed stamped envelope?

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USING BLACK MAGIC

- To cast maho, the shugenja uses: Earth + Shadowlands Rank.
- The shugenja must bleed a number of Wounds equal to the Mastery Level of the spell. This blood can be his, or someone else's.
- For every additional sacrifice of blood (equal to the required amount, above), the shugenja gains one Free Raise.
- Finally, the shugenja gains a number of Shadowlands Points equal to twice the Mastery Level of the spell.



Many Rokugani believe that all things are made up of the Five Elements. There is, in fact, a sixth Element, created by the presence of Fu Leng. It is the Element of corruption, and its power is so great that it has dampened the presence of the Five Elements in the Shadowlands. Fires do not burn in that place, the air is foul, the water is black and rotten and the earth is spoiled.

Many Crab shugenja (almost the entire Kuni family line) have devoted their lives to studying the Sixth Element, but they have learned only a little. They have learned that, like a disease, Corruption is contagious, carried in the blood of creatures and humans. Prolonged proximity to Corruption can cause contamination. Many Crab samurai gain what the Kuni shugenja call "the taint."

Once infected, the samurai's appearance and behavior begin to change. His skin turns pale and translucent and his hair turns greasy and thick. When confronted with violence or threats of violence, the samurai typically responds with swift, unthinking brutality. Over time, his condition worsens. Skin flakes and peels away, eyes sink deep in his skull and his breath turns putrid. His behavior becomes even more erratic, until finally, he is nothing more than a rotting, diseased, slime-drooling madman.

The Phoenix shugenja have developed spells to counter the "Shadowlands sickness," but they are far from reliable. Often times, the will of the samurai is too weak to fight off the supernatural corruption turning his blood to tar. Some speculate the Crab shugenja may even encourage their samurai to gain the infection. After all, the sickness does bring supernatural strength and a

berserker's courage along with the putrid countenance. And only a Crane would worry about his appearance ...

THE ELEMENT OF CORRUPTION

All creatures from the Shadowlands (goblins, ogres, oni, etc.) carry the Shadowlands Element. Characters can also acquire the taint - for better or worse. It is Ranked from 1 to 5 and each Rank is made of 10 Shadowlands Points (just like Honor and Glory).

As was said above, prolonged exposure to the Element is what causes the taint. For every 24 hours spent in the presence of the Element, a character must make a Simple Earth roll. The TN for the roll is 5. If the character succeeds, his Earth has successfully resisted the corruptive effects of the Shadowlands Taint. If he fails, he has been Tainted (see Tainted Characters, below). For every additional 24 hours, the TN goes up by 5.

Example: *A samurai spends 24 hours in the Shadowlands. The GM calls for a Simple Earth roll at a TN of 5. The character makes his roll, so he escapes the corruptive effects of the Shadowlands. At the end of 48 hours, the samurai must roll again, but this time, the TN is 10. At the end of 36 hours, the TN raises to 15. This process continues until the samurai is clear of the corruptive element.*

The Power of Jade

After a thousand years, the Kuni have found a few methods of staying off the Shadowlands element. They have discovered that samurai who carry pieces of jade with them seem to stave off the effects of the Shadowlands. Samurai who carry jade with them into the Shadowlands find the jade turns slowly black and soft as it absorbs the corruptive elements.

A single piece of jade (about the size of a man's finger) is enough to protect the samurai from all corruptive effects for about a week. This means that after the week has passed, the Earth rolls start up 24 hours later at TN 5.

Multiple pieces of jade provide extended protection, but only to a point.

- One jade 7 days
- Two jade 12 days
- Three jade 16 days
- Four jade 19 days
- Five jade + 21 days

All times are approximate.

Likewise, shugenja can become infected with the taint through the use of black magic (see below).

Tainted Characters

The first time a character becomes infected with the Shadowlands Taint, he gains 1-5 Shadowlands Points (roll a die and divide by 2). There are advantages and disadvantages for being infected with the Shadowlands Taint. A character may add his Shadowlands Rank to any Strength, Agility, Stamina or Reflexes rolls, but this trick adds another Shadowlands Point to his total.

Also, characters must subtract a number of dice equal to their Shadowlands Taint from any social interaction rolls.

If the Shadowlands Element ever becomes a character's highest Element, he is overcome by the Taint and becomes a slave of Fu Leng. In short, the character becomes an NPC under the direction of the Game Master.

Getting Rid of the Shadowlands Taint

There is only one known way of getting rid of the Shadowlands Taint. The combined efforts of the Crab and Phoenix shugenja have provided Rokugan with the "Purification" ritual.

PURIFICATION

Base TN: 10 + Shadowlands Rank of Target x 10

Casting Time: 1 hour

Duration: N/A

Mastery: 8

Concentration: Total

Raises: Shadowlands Points Destroyed

Effect: This complicated and complex ritual demands at least an hour's worth of concentration and effort in order to cast properly. If casting is successful, a number of Shadowlands Points equal to the number of shugenja in the ritual are destroyed. However, all shugenja involved in the ritual automatically gain one Shadowlands Point. Each raise will destroy one extra Shadowlands Point outright.



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CURSES: TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING

When you're considering a curse, ask yourself: "Will it be fun for the player?" Remember, having a curse put on a character is taking control away from the player. Make a curse a challenge, but also make it fun for the player and the group as a whole. The best way to do this is to employ the "Too much of a good thing" rule.

For example, you have a player who has created the archetypal handsome, lady-killer Crane samurai. You could curse him ugly... or you could curse him irresistible. Imagine what would happen if every woman he meets falls instantly in love with him. It's a little less mean and a lot more entertaining, and it's what the player wanted in the first place: a character that no woman could resist!

The Magic of the Nameless Ones

The three shugenja best known for their knowledge of "forbidden lore" are Nakanu, Yajinden and Iuchiban. The family names of these shugenja have been erased, so no dishonor will come to their families.

Knowledge of the first two is very hazy. However, much is known of Iuchiban. Three hundred years have passed since his entombment, and still, children scare each other with ghost stories of the sorcerer.

Iuchiban was one of the most prominent shugenja in Rokugan, trusted by the Emperor himself. It was a Unicorn shugenja and a Lion samurai (both magistrates of the Emerald Champion) who discovered the shugenja's researches in maho, and together they were only barely able to thwart Iuchiban's plans to assassinate the Emperor.

The shugenja was put to death, but even that did not end his evil. Eventually, Iuchiban was bound in jade and entombed deep in Shinomen forest. His tomb is guarded by traps both supernatural and mundane (the tomb was constructed by Crab engineers and Scorpion and Phoenix shugenja), and despite the fact it has remained undisturbed for three hundred years, even mention of the sorcerer's name is enough to give even the boldest samurai the shivers.

THE FORBIDDEN SCROLLS

Only three documents record the forbidden formulae of maho. Many industrious shugenja have attempted to make copies of these documents, but despite the best efforts of the Phoenix Clan, all attempts have been unsuccessful.

The most prominent document, known as the "Iuchiban scrolls," fully details the rituals involved in raising the dead, laying curses, summoning oni and other forbidden magics. The other two documents, the Nakanu and Yajinden scrolls, are less detailed and reliable.



Traditional magic involves summoning the energy of the Elements and petitioning the Fortunes with prayer. Sorcerers have only one source of energy to worry about: Fu Leng. All black magic involves prayer to the Dark God trapped under the earth in the Shadowlands. In order to gain favor with Fu Leng, sorcerers must spill blood. There is good news, however: it doesn't have to be the sorcerer's blood ...

Because black magic involves such a tremendous strain on the physical and mental strength of the caster, Earth (+ Shadowlands Rank) is used whenever black magic is cast. A shugenja gains no bonus dice for his Shugenja Rank when using *maho*, but he may gain Free Raises for spilling blood. For every additional sacrifice of blood equal to the required amount that is bled at the casting of the spell (from the caster or another source), the caster gains a Free Raise.

Maho may seem more powerful than "normal" spells. They are. But those who use this dark magic pay a terrible price. Those who call upon Fu Leng for power fall deeper and deeper under his control. Every time a character successfully uses maho, he gains a number of Shadowlands Points equal to twice the Mastery Rank of the spell.

Example: *Isawa Tadaka is researching the black magics of the Shadowlands. He successfully casts a maho with a Mastery Level of 5. He gains 10 Shadowlands Points (Mastery Level 5 x 2 = 10).*

Spell format is similar to the spells listed in the basic book.



Base TN: This is the base TN of the spell. Whenever using maho, sorcerers use Earth to determine the number of dice they roll to beat the spell's TN. Sorcerer's may add their Shadowlands Rank to their Earth Rank, but they only keep a number of dice equal to their Earth.

Casting Time: The number of Actions required to cast the spell.

Duration: How long the spell lasts

Mastery Level: If a shugenja has an Earth + Shadowlands equal to or greater than the Mastery Level of the spell, he gains all the benefits of spell mastery listed in the basic rulebook. Also, maho requires a number of Wounds (blood) be sacrificed equal to the Mastery Level of the spell in order for the spell to be effective.

Concentration: Concentration levels (when appropriate) are listed here.

Raises: Maho requires blood sacrifice. For every additional sacrifice of Wounds equal to the Mastery Level of the spell, the caster gains a Free Raise.

ANIMATE THE DEAD

Base TN: 20

Casting Time: 10 Actions

Duration: 1 month

Mastery Level/Wounds Required: 5

Concentration: None

Raises: Additional Targets, Duration, Casting Time

Effect: Cast upon the remains of a sentient being, this spell animates the corpse into a Shadowlands undead. The shugenja can animate additional undead with one additional target per raise. If the corpse has been dead longer than one week it revives as a Skeleton, pulling itself upright from any remaining flesh and shedding any excess tissue. Corpses animated less than one week after death become Zombies whose faces are covered by a mystically appearing porcelain mask. These creatures are slow and generally weak, but serve the shugenja without thought.

BLOOD OF MIDNIGHT

Base TN: 10

Casting Time: 1 Action

Duration: 8 Rounds

Mastery Level/Wounds Required: 4

Concentration: Casual

Raises: Additional Target, Duration

Effect: Imbues a bloodlust to the target (with an additional target per raise), increasing his/her attack and damage dice by four. The target must

spend one round after killing a foe to further butcher the body and taste its blood. Each foe slain increases the duration of this spell by 2 Actions. After the spells duration, the target must make an Honor Test equal to five time the number of foes slain, or else lose one point of Honor. While under the influence of this spell, the target is fully aware, but not under control of his actions (and may in fact attack friends as well as foes). If the target of this spell is unwilling, the TN becomes the target's Earth times five.

CORRUPTION OF THE EARTH

Base TN: 15

Casting Time: 3 Actions

Duration: 4 Actions

Mastery Level/Wounds Required: 8

Concentration: Total

Raises: Duration, Area, Casting Time

Effect: If successful, the earth within three feet of the target of this spell transforms to deep mud which begins swallowing all within its radius at a rate of two feet per action. Characters trying to escape must make Earth roll of TN 15 to move three feet. Attempts to move (successful or not) cause the character to sink an additional foot unless a Water roll at TN of 10 or greater is made. Once to the edge it takes an Earth roll to pull free. The TN of this roll is equal to TN five times the number of feet submerged. Anyone in the morass at the end of the spells duration must be dug from the earth, but can be assisted by any number of people who can reach the target. If the spell stops short of its duration for any reason, the earth spirits will retaliate against the shugenja by immediately releasing the targets and reversing the spells effect upon the shugenja's area. Each Raise increases the radius of the morass by three feet. Should the Shugenja lose concentration, the Morass is dispelled and the ground slowly firms up, giving those trapped ample opportunity to escape.

CURSE

Base TN: 10

Casting Time: 5 Actions

Duration: See below

Mastery Level/Wounds Required: 5

Concentration: Complete

Raises: See below

Effect: This is a generic curse spell, usable by anyone intimate with black magic. Curses are simple, but require a sympathetic component: a

More curses:

- The Scorpion samurai who finds that everyone trusts every word he says
- The Dragon who couldn't dream
- The Crab who couldn't lie
- The Unicorn who cannot sleep under the same roof twice
- The Lion who couldn't whisper
- The Phoenix who draws too much power when casting spells
- The Crane who can't be quiet
- Vampire Curse: this character has a super-powerful Trait that drains from everyone else's Trait

Consider curses very carefully. They can ruin a player's good time, and that's not what being a GM is about.

空

SO YOU SUMMONED AN ONI

Now that you've summoned it, what does it look like?

Well, you see, that's the problem. Summoning oni is a tricky process, and you're never quite sure of what you'll get when you're done.

As a general rule, the more Raises the caster uses, the bigger, badder and meaner the oni will be. Alternately, Raises can symbolize more control over the beast.

Legend has it that the Blood Speakers had summoning oni down to an art form, but three hundred years of corrupt texts have diluted the true method into guess-work, leaving modern *maho-tsukai* with less than perfect rituals that don't always give you what you ask for.

lock of hair, a fingernail clipping, an ounce of blood, etc. It is not enough to gain a piece of clothing of the subject of the curse; the caster must gain something that contains spiritual energy of the target.

If the curse is successful (see previous page's sidebars for curse suggestions), the caster must keep the item in physical contact at all times. If the caster ever loses the item, the curse is broken. This is the only way to break a curse.

DARK DIVINATION

Base TN: 15
Casting Time: 3 Actions
Duration: 1 Action
Mastery Level/Wounds Required: 4
Concentration: Complete
Raises: Questions

Effect: This spell allows the caster to ask questions to the GM. Each question gains the caster 8 Shadowlands Points (Mastery Level x 2). The GM must answer the question honestly, but is only required to answer with a "Yes" or "No." For every Raise, the character can ask an additional question.

SUMMON GAREGOSU NO BAKEMONO

Base TN: 15
Casting Time: 5 Actions
Duration: N/A
Mastery Level/Wounds Required: 9
Concentration: None
Raises: Casting Time

Effect, Single Use: Successfully cast, this spell summons a tentacle-horror known as Garegosu no Bakemono who fights for, and obeys, the Shugenja until the sun rises. The Shugenja involved need never fear Garegosu no Bakemono.

GAREGOSU NO BAKEMONO: SHADOWLANDS CREATURE

Earth 3
Fire 3
Water 4
Air 2
Attack 4k3
Damage Earth Rank + 5
TN to Hit: 25 (Heavy Armor equivalent)
Wounds: 9: -1; 20: -2; 35: Dead
Special Abilities:

Eating: Each time the Garegosu no Bakemono kills an opponent it consumes the body and adds the digested meal's former Earth Rank to its own

(increasing its damage and wounds).

Fear: Garegosu no Bakemono is a horrific creature resembling a large cancerous octopus about the size of an elephant. Whenever anyone sees Garegosu no Bakemono for the first time they must make a simple Willpower check at TN of 15 or flee from its sight. Witnessing a Garegosu no Bakemono eating requires another Willpower check at TN of 20 or flee from its sight.

SUMMON ONI

Base TN: 20
Casting Time: 10 Actions
Duration: See below
Mastery Level/Wounds Required: 5
Concentration: Complete
Raises: Casting Time

Effect: This spell (and its companion below) calls oni from the depths of Fu Leng's underground kingdom. A sacrifice of blood (5 Wounds) is required as well as a name. The procedure is as follows:

First, the caster must make a circle of bones. Second, the caster must place a scroll within the circle. Written on the scroll is the name of a living man or woman. (If the person named on the scroll is not cooperating willingly with the summoning, the shugenja must make a Contested Roll of his Void + Shugenja Rank vs. the target's Void. If the shugenja loses the contest, the TN to summon the oni increases by 10.) Lastly, the caster must chant the name of the oni it wishes to summon as he spills blood on the scroll within the circle.

If the ceremony is performed correctly, the oni is summoned within the circle and bound to the name written on the scroll. The mortal whose name was written on the scroll is also bound to the oni. The oni and the mortal share a symbiotic relationship from that point on, until the scroll is destroyed. Slowly, the mortal loses strength to the oni. His skin turns pale, his bones grow brittle and his will leaks away.

In game terms, when an oni is given a samurai's name, he begins to gain Shadowlands Points. The rate of corruption depends on the Earth Rank of the samurai:

Samurai's Earth	Rate of Corruption
1	1 Shadowlands Point per 36 hours
2	1 Shadowlands Point per week
3	1 Shadowlands Point per two weeks
4	1 Shadowlands Point per four weeks
5+	1 Shadowlands Point per eight weeks

Jade does not protect the samurai from this



process.

Whoever possesses the scroll (assuming its not the caster) has control over the oni. The oni must obey all of the caster's commands. If the scroll is ever destroyed, the connection between the oni and the mortal is severed, and the oni returns to the underworld of Fu Leng. If the mortal is overcome by the Shadowlands taint, the oni gains permanent status in the world and the caster loses his command over the oni's will.

SUMMON SWAMP SPIRITS

Base TN: 10

Casting Time: 2 Actions

Duration: 25 Actions

Mastery Level/Wounds Required: 7

Concentration: None

Raises: Casting Time, Number Summoned

Effect: The spell must be cast near a still body of water. It calls forth minions of the swamps to do the caster's bidding. These swamp spirits are blue-green humanoids that appear to be made of the clay found at the bottom of Rokugan's swamps. The spell calls forth one swamp spirit and one additional one swamp spirit can be summoned per Raise, but this increases the casting time by one action.

SWAMP SPIRIT: SHADOWLANDS

CREATURE

Earth 1

Fire 2

Water 3

Air 1

Attack 3k2

Damage 3k2

TN to Hit: 10

Wounds: 4: -1; 10: Dead

SUMMON REVENANT

Base TN: 20

Casting Time: 5 Actions

Duration: 1 hour

Mastery Level/Wounds Required: 7

Concentration: None

Raises: Duration, Casting Time

Effect: This spell summons an undead champion who appears at the end of the spell and thereafter fights for, and obeys, the Shugenja for the spell's duration. At the end of the spell the Shugenja can permanently enlist the undead champion (making the spell permanent), but must permanently sacrifice one point of his/her Earth Rank (both Stamina and Willpower) to do

so. If enlisted, the champion thereafter fights and obeys the shugenja until destroyed or the shugenja dies. If there are no dead bodies within a quarter mile of the casting shugenja, the scroll will destroy itself without effect.

SHADOWLANDS REVENANT

Earth 5

Fire 4

Water 2

Air 2

Attack 6k4

Damage Weapon's DR + 5

TN to Hit: 20 (Light Armor)

Wounds per level 15: -1; 30: -2; 45: -3; 60: -4;

75: Dead

Special Abilities: Fear 3.

STEALING THE SOUL

Base TN: 15

Casting Time: 2 Actions

Duration: 8 Actions

Mastery Level/Wounds Required: 8

Concentration: Full

Raises: Casting Time, Duration

Effect: Ritual. The spell's target loses one from each Ring and Trait for each Shugenja participating in the ritual until the duration expires (no Ring or Trait can be reduced below one).

This terrible spell was used to incapacitate Hida Shonojo, the legendary Crab *daimyo*, immediately before his assassination. Its dread power is said to come from a boiling black pit in the Shadowlands.

TOUCH OF DEATH

Base TN: 20

Casting Time: 2 Actions

Duration: NA

Mastery Level/Wounds Required: 5

Concentration: NA

Raises: Range, Casting Time, Damage.

Effect: Strikes the target with lethal energy, summoned directly from Fu Leng, through the casting shugenja and into the target. The target must be within 10 feet plus 2 feet per raise of the casting shugenja. The skin and hair of the target age rapidly under the influence of this spell. The hair loses all color, turning white and falling out in great clumps, while the skin blackens as the flesh ages too rapidly to fall away. The DR of this spell is seven.

The Hare Clan

A Three-Part Adventure
by Greg Stolze

Usagi Furiko rode all day and came at last to the Scorpion Castle. 'Open!' she cried. 'Open and take arms, for the Blood Speakers come to destroy us all!' Hearing her cries, Bayushi Gohaku came to the battlements and said, 'Run away, little Hare, for we have known all along what the Blood Speakers plan. Perhaps your clan will die; what concern is that to us? Controlling you gains us little. When the Blood Speakers conquer you, we shall control them; and they are strong.'

With the laughter of Gohaku in her ears, Furiko rode into the night until it was day again to reach the castle of the Crane. 'Beware!' she cried. 'The Blood Speakers approach Hare Castle now, and if they take it the lives of my family will feed their attack upon Rokugan's heart!' The esteemed Crane invited Furiko in and offered her food, and praised her speed and courage, and described in moving terms their desire to help, and the warmth of their concern, and the anguish it caused them that they could not spare troops for so distant a mission. The Crane gave many reasons for their reluctance, and all seemed wise and noble. It was not until Furiko was riding away that she realized they too had failed her.

Furiko spurred her pony for another full day, and a night again after it, and reached the castle of the Lion clan. Here she paused before she spoke, and said to herself, 'The Scorpion and the Crane have refused to help me; the Lion are my last hope, and any delay could mean the fall of my home and my family. I must speak with great care.' Then she cried 'Fortune favors the Lion clan, for they have at last an enemy worthy of their mettle!'

At this, Matsu Shirogama stuck her head forth and asked 'What enemy?' But the cunning Furiko did not answer. Instead she said 'Oh, the Crane will smite their own heads with anger when they learn that the Lion have claimed a battle honor they were unwilling to grasp!' 'What honor? Who is the enemy, Hare woman?' demanded Shirogama, but Furiko did not answer, except to say 'Oh, the Scorpion clan will gnash their teeth when they learn that the Lion have plucked a powerful dupe from their fingertips, earning glory in the sunshine while heaping ruin upon the shadow dealings of their clan!' By this time Shirogama had grabbed her daisho and was fairly running in place, so eager was she to steal an honor from the Crane and a pawn from the Scorpion. She shouted 'Cavalry – to horse! Archers, ready your bows! Rouse the infantry and assemble, for we march to war!' When she heard this, Furiko shouted back to the Lion general, 'You shall not regret this! By the Lion and Hare clans will Iuchiban and the Blood Speakers be wiped from the face of the Empire! March to Hare castle at your greatest speed – I go to defend my family! Having secured the aid of the Lion clan, Usagi Furiko rode without stopping, back to her home and her battle.'

– From the Family Histories of the Hare Clan

Part One: Getting There Is Half the Fun

"The hunter who chases two rabbits will lose both." – Akodo Kage

A rough outline of "The Hare Clan" is this: the Lion clan has asked your heroes to recover a scroll, believed to be in the possession of the Hare clan – a minor clan, historically allied with the Lion. After sneaking through Scorpion lands and reaching the Hare clan's castle, the heroes



discover that the missing Hare family sword is hidden in the Shadowlands.

At this point, the characters can stay and look for the scroll, or go to the Shadowlands and look for the sword. If they stay, they learn that the Scorpion clan is also after the scroll. They consider them important enough to destroy the Hare clan, and search for the scroll in the rubble. If they go to the Shadowlands... well, they'll be in the Shadowlands!

The Approach

This adventure assumes that your characters are together in a cohesive group; if this is not so, they can be assembled by Matsu Chokoku. Chokoku is a well known member of the Lion clan (Glory 5). He's known for his courage in combat (once, in the Shadowlands, he killed an oni single-handedly after it frightened off half his troops. He then ordered those who had fled to commit *seppuku*) and for his discretion. There are rumors that he's some sort of secret magistrate, but no one says for sure. His approach to the PCs varies, but his story is probably something like this:

"As you may know, one of the Lion clan's minor allies is the Hare clan – a small family with a castle far to the north, past the Scorpion holdings. We share a glorious history with them – they were instrumental in our destruction of the Blood Speakers.

"Unfortunately, it appears – we are not certain, but there is some evidence – that a member of the Hare clan, or a clan vassal, stole a valuable scroll from the Kitsu family.

"I would hate to believe this, but if – I stress 'if' – it is so, the thief has probably returned to Usagi castle. While this scroll is in code, the thief might eventually break it. Therefore, time is of the essence.

"Since suspicion from us would be insulting, we cannot openly dispatch any magistrates to Usagi castle. Furthermore, we are anxious to avoid any Scorpion entanglements.

"Therefore, we have turned to you. You are unknown to the Hare clan, and would be better able to slip through

Scorpion territory without comment.

"The scroll is on vellum. It is decorated with crimson and gold marbling along the sides. It is about a handsbreadth wide. When taken, it was upon an ebony stick, inside a black scroll case made of horse leather. It was closed with the Akodo family seal.

"Return it to us and you will have my personal gratitude – and that of the Lion clan. However, I cannot stress enough the need for subtlety and discretion. A clumsy or blatant disclosure will humiliate everyone concerned."



空

SHOSURO REI

Rei is a samurai-ko about thirty years old. She's of medium height and stocky – a contrast to the Scorpion norm. Her features are slightly puffy, like she doesn't get enough sleep, and the lines on her face show both worry and amusement. Her mask is a metal mesh in the shape of a spider web, stretching diagonally across the left side of her face. A spider shape is cut over her left eye, and it is through this that she regards the characters.

Rei is a complicated character with a sophisticated set of beliefs. She is loyal to both the Emperor and her daimyo, but considers bushido a set of "useful untruths." She believes bushido to be untrue because she has seen so many violations of it.

Like many who study secrets, she has become cynical. However, she genuinely believes that it's best for all concerned that people *pretend* to follow bushido (although almost no one really does).

As a magistrate, Rei has an interest in justice. Unlike many of her counterparts, this interest is more than a pretext for gaining power; she believes some things are wrong, and must be punished – no matter who is guilty. However, a violation has to be pretty blatant before Rei becomes incensed. She'll let a lot of little stuff slide because it's not worth the trouble.

You don't have to read the above script verbatim if you don't want to; feel free to modify it or use your own words, of course.

LION CLAN

If your characters are all Lion clan, Chokoku apologizes for the necessity of such indirect action, but stresses his desire to spare the Hare clan embarrassment if they are innocent. If the characters ask why they were chosen, Chokoku says it's because they are not well known by the Usagi family.

SCORPION CLAN

If your characters are all members of the Scorpion clan, there are two ways Chokoku can play it.

The straight approach is this; Chokoku says that some embarrassing papers of his have been taken by someone from the Hare clan; he lacks the subtlety to get them back, and he would be embarrassed if they were discovered. He is freely offering his secret to the Scorpions, knowing that they, at least, will keep it close and not simply blab it everywhere. "To my great shame, I would prefer that it be known only to you, rather than to the whole court. Besides, I know I could never send agents through the heart of your lands without discovery."

The crooked approach is for Chokoku to allow them to "overhear" him trying to get ronin to go on a "sensitive mission" for him. If the Scorpions take the bait and confront him about this mission, he "breaks down" and tells them the above story; now, however, your Scorpions think that going after the scrolls is their own idea. In either event, he does not tell them the story in the boxed text about the shugenja scrolls.

An alternate way to hook in Scorpion characters is to have them approached by an ally from inside their own clan. This ally is uncomfortable with Tomaru gaining the Usagi lands by conquest; perhaps the ally is worried about a loss of prestige if Tomaru becomes too powerful. In any event, he or she wants the scrolls recovered before Tomaru gets there.

OTHER CLAN(S)

In this case, Chokoku is somewhat more standoffish. He emphasizes how awkward it would be for the Lion clan to appear suspicious of their onetime allies in the Hare clan. Then he stresses how indebted he personally, and the Lion clan in general, would be to a group that could handle the problem thoroughly – but quietly.

RONIN

This is the easiest case. Chokoku offers a flat cash bribe – 20 koku apiece. He also offers a warning: "If you complete this mission discreetly, you will have the favor of the Lion clan – something people in your position might find more valuable than gold. But if you attempt to betray us, you will curse the day. No one will believe your word against us anyway."



The Journey to Castle Usagi

Once the characters agree to go, Chokoku provides them with some traveling expenses and travel papers through the Scorpion countryside.

The papers the characters receive are signed, but blank – when he hands them over, Chokoku blandly says that the characters are honor-bound to fill the forms out accurately. It is impossible to tell if he really believes this. (Characters who want it to look like the same magistrate who signed the papers wrote their names – a standard procedure – should make a Fire + Forgery roll. The TN is 25, but don't tell them what the number is or if they've failed or succeeded.)

This done, little remains but to set out for Scorpion lands. (If your players don't work up a cover story, you may allow TN 20 Intelligence rolls to realize how smart a rehearsed alibi would be. Or not.)

SCORPION TROUBLE

It's a four-day leisurely ride to Castle Usagi. Three of those days are through Scorpion lands. This is good because Scorpion roads and inns are notorious for their quality. It's bad because the Scorpion watch everyone who enters with a great deal of interest.

If they go on the roads, it's all geisha houses, comfortable inns, fast traveling... and magistrate stations. If they go off the road it's going to be soggy rice paddies at night (probably getting covered with Rokugan's favorite fertilizer), cooking their own food, sleeping under the stars and looking *really* suspicious if they get spotted. Characters on the road meet a Scorpion magistrate named Shosuro Rei.

If your characters go off-road, have them roll Agility + Stealth or Agility + Hunting against TN 15 every day to avoid being spotted. If they are spotted, it's by... Shosuro Rei! (Assuming they haven't met her before.) If she spies a small group of samurai sneaking through her territory, she's concerned, but won't immediately call out the guards. Instead, she gets ahead of them and arranges to "accidentally" meet them. She doesn't identify herself as a magistrate; she claims to be a Scorpion samurai-ko on a hunting trip (which, in a sense, she is). She strikes up small talk with the party and tries to get a sense of what they're up to. Then she wanders off and continues

following them until they reach Hare lands.

Once your characters have gotten by Rei (or think they have) they have an uncomplicated journey to Hare territory.

AN ENCOUNTER ON A DUSTY ROAD

It's easy to spot the border; the roads go from being well tended and smooth to coarse and dusty. There are fewer magistrate stations, fewer inns... and what there are seem provincial by comparison.

It's a long day's ride to Castle Usagi, but there's a diversion about noon. It's a young samurai going one on one with a twelve-foot ogre. They hear it before they see it; a loud thump, and two voices. One is inhumanly deep. The other is loud and defiant. Then they hear another thump. As they get closer, they can hear words.

After that, the heroes come around a bend and see the combatants: a young samurai in a kimono with the Hare clan mon. He's slender and not very tall, with a conservative, traditional topknot. He's holding his katana with an unusual, one-handed grip. His opponent is twelve feet tall, with bloodshot eyes, fangs like daggers, and the distinctive "goat urine" smell of an adult ogre. The ogre has an eight-foot club, thick as a grown man's thigh.

As the characters arrive, they see the ogre make an overhead bash at the samurai. The samurai jumps back, then runs *up the club*, slashes the ogre's face with his katana and jumps down to the ground. The ogre drops his club and staggers back, clutching his face and howling. Then, blowing bloody snot, it draws a no-dachi from its belt; in the ogre's massive fist, the six-foot sword looks like a normal katana.

Only now do your heroes notice the samurai is wounded; his face is pale and his left arm dangles.

Roll for initiative, please.

USAGI OZAKI, HARE CLAN SAMURAI

Earth 2
Fire 3
Water 2
Air 3
Void 2
Attacking: 5k3
Damage: 5k2
TN to hit: 15

空
H

SHOSURO REI (CONTINUED)

Drunkenness, non-fatal brawling, minor bribery or blackmail – no problem. Even for cases like theft or forgery, she's more likely to arrange reparations and mete out some informal punishment than go through proper channels. The crimes that arouse Rei's sense of duty are those that involve innocent deaths (an unauthorized duel wouldn't count; killing someone's child as a warning would) and treason.

Rei has uncovered clues indicating that there is treason being plotted at high levels – both within and without her own Clan. Rei immediately spots any papers that were filled in with less than the TN 25 Forgery roll when filling in their travelling papers. She won't be concerned, however; she knows how much forgery goes on in the Empire. She doesn't let on, but she's interested. She asks a lot of questions, checking their story. (This is a chance to make your players sweat.) In the end, however, she sends them on their way with a sardonic smile.

Rei will show up again; if your characters play it right, Rei might decide she can use them to investigate the big treason mystery. (If you've seen *The X-Files*, think of Mulder's contact "Deep Throat".) They're attractive to her if they're honorable – but not *too* honorable. Just like herself...

空

USAGI TOMOE

Earth 2

Fire 3

Water 2

Air 3

Void 2

Attacking: 3k3

Damage: 3k2

TN to hit: 15

Wounds per level: 4: -0;
8: -1; 12: -2; 16: -3; 20: -4;
24: Down; 28: Out; 32: Dead

Skills: Tanto 1, Defense 1

Shugenja Rank 2 (Kitsu school)

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, Counterspell, The Path to Inner Peace (Water), The Ties that Bind (Water), Sympathetic Energies (Water), The Fury of Osano-Wo (Fire), Wings of Fire (Fire), Heart of the Inferno (Fire), Earthquake (Earth), Hands of Jurojin (Earth), Secrets on the Wind (Air), Cloak of Night (Air).

Tomoe is usually a serious, somewhat shy girl. The only time she forgets to be shy is when something really grabs her attention; when that happens, she becomes lively, speaks quickly and can be a little pushy – until she remembers that she's shy.

Recently she's stumbled upon something sinister near to the heart of the Lion clan. She's afraid she's in over her head – and the sudden arrival of well-armed strangers will not comfort her. Even though they saved her brother's life, she's sure the strangers have been sent for the scroll, and she's afraid of what will happen if they find it.

Wounds per level: 4: -0; 8: -1; 12: -2; 16: -3; 20: -4; 24: Down; 28: Out; 32: Dead

Skills: Iaijutsu 1, Kenjutsu 2, Defense 2

Special abilities: Leap of the Hare. (This is his school's special ability; any maneuver that involves a big jump has its TN reduced by 10.)

NOTE: When the heroes enter the battle, Ozaki has used up his last Void point and is at 16 wounds.

Ozaki is a slender man, not overly tall, with a rather weak chin. His clothes are formal and conservative – a year or two out of date by court standards.

THE OGRE

Earth 2

Stamina 6

Fire 4

Water 1

Strength 6

Air 1

Attacking: 4k4 (3k3 when the heroes enter combat)

Damage: 8k2 with club, 8k3 with no-dachi
TN to hit: 30 (Heavy Armor)

Wounds per level: 15: -1, 30: -2, 45: -3, 60: Dead

NOTE: When the heroes charge in, the ogre has taken 17 wounds.

Presumably the heroes help Ozaki kill the ogre, who fights to the death.

While the no-dachi the ogre was using was of normal quality, the scabbard it was using is obviously very fine, decorated with silver. Upon closer examination, the Hare clan crest can be seen on it.

Before all this can be noticed, however, introductions must be made. The injured samurai introduces himself as the oldest son of the Hare clan daimyo. Despite an obviously shattered left arm, he is polite and expresses his gratitude eloquently. (He does seem a bit dazed; he's operating solely on reflex.) He invites the characters to the castle, and then asks them to help him tow the ogre corpse back. (He might mutter something about how embarrassed the Crab clan would be by this specimen – but not if there's someone obviously from the Crab clan present.)

When he sees the ogre's scabbard, he blinks and says, "That appears to be the saya of the Hare

clan sword, missing for years. If you'll excuse me, I believe I'm going to faint now." Then he passes out.

HEROES OF THE HARE CLAN

Castle Usagi is just up the road, and the reaction to seeing the unconscious heir with a bunch of strangers and a dead ogre is not going to be conducive to the "discreet and subtle" investigation Chokoku intended.

Once the heroes are inside, a lovely young woman rushes across the courtyard at Ozaki, yelling "Brother! Brother!" She wants to know what happened, who the heroes are, how badly hurt Ozaki is, etc. She tells her servants to take Ozaki to her chamber, then excuses herself as her father arrives on the scene.

Her father bows and introduces himself as Usagi Oda. He glances worriedly at his son's limp form, but greets the guests with courtesy and apologizes for the abrupt departure of his daughter Tomoe. He asks the heroes who they are and why they've come, but it only takes a TN 10 Perception or Awareness check to realize that he's concerned about his son's well-being. After the minimum permissible amount of polite chatter, he invites the characters to be his honored guests and packs them off to bathe for dinner. (This may



USAGI ODA, HARE CLAN DAIMYO



be a good time to introduce some of the family retainers from Part Three.)

At dinner, roughly an hour and a half later, the Usagi family presents a much different appearance. Usagi Oda is effusively polite and flattering to his guests, praising them for their valiant rescue of his son. Ozaki looks much better, though his arm is in a sling; if asked, he credits his sister's pious shugenja practice. As for Tomoe, she looked good before; now she looks great.

Dinner is plain and unpretentious, but with lots of good, filling food. After dinner, Ozaki asks for the heroes' advice in a matter of family importance. Assuming they agree, he produces the ogre's saya – now cleaned and obviously of high quality.

"This is the scabbard of the Hare clan ancestral sword – lost to us for many years.

"Five hundred years ago, this saya was worn by Usagi Gohei when he and only fifty samurai held this castle against two hundred Blood Speakers, led by the black sorcerer Iuchiban himself. When his wife, Usagi Furiko, returned with reinforcements from the Lion clan, she took the sword from her husband's corpse and struck down Iuchiban with it.

"Two hundred years ago, there was... an



USAGI TOMOE, HIS DAUGHTER

amorous entanglement between Usagi Nidei and a Crab clan samurai-ko. He knew that she had entered the Shadowlands and not returned. Nidei begged his mother, the daimyo, for permission to pursue her. She refused – but that night, Nidei fled the castle to rescue his love, taking the clan sword with him. Since then it has been missing.

"Now we have a clue at last. But how to find the blade it held?"

The obvious answer is for a shugenja to cast "Commune," something Tomoe will realize if no one else does. If asked where the sword is, a stern, ghostly voice from the saya answers "Hiruma Castle."

People can make Intelligence + History rolls with a TN 15 – 10 for Crab clan members. Those who make the roll know Hiruma Castle; is the Crab clan's greatest disgrace (so far). Three hundred years ago, it was conquered by the Shadowlands – the only castle the Crab have ever lost.

At this news, the Usagis look crestfallen and pale. At length, Ozaki stands, and says he's going to prepare for his journey into the Shadowlands. The ensuing discussion should involve the characters (if they hesitate, remind them that Oda asked for their input – also, the family members all try to get their support).

Ozaki wants to set out for the Shadowlands at first light – broken arm or no. While he's deeply grateful to anyone who volunteers to come with him, he does not invite anyone (since it would be embarrassing for the invited party to decline). He is adamant that his sister stay behind. He says "You have... important business here," while giving her a significant look.

Tomoe flips among several positions. If Ozaki goes, she wants to go too. But maybe she should leave him behind and go by herself. Or they could wait until he's healed and then go together.

Oda doesn't want Tomoe to go at all, and thinks it would be suicidal for Ozaki to go with a broken arm.

Let the heroes hash this out with the family members, but don't let your players discuss their secret mission from Chokoku unless their characters sneak off somewhere private. Basically, they can go look for the ancestral sword – probably in the company of Ozaki, or Oda (unlikely, but possible), or Tomoe (even less likely). Or, they can stay in the castle and search

USAGI TOMOE (CONTINUED)

Image: Tomoe was fortunate enough to get her mother's chin, while keeping the wide, expressive eyes and delicate features of her father's family. She's very slender and short – almost doll like. Her dresses and hairstyle are provincial by court standards, but she is still very beautiful.

Role-playing Tomoe: Be very meek and agreeable. Speak only when spoken to, and be sure you wait until everyone else has said their part – unless the subject turns to marriage or magic. On those topics, speak quickly and vehemently (about marriage – you've set a very high standard for what you'll accept in a husband, and defiantly list all the sterling qualities he must have) or enthusiastically (about magic – you're fascinated by it and believe it's the best way to enlighten the human soul).

空

USAGI ODA

Earth 3

Fire 3

Water 3

Air 3

Void 2

Attacking: 6k3

Damage: 5k2

TN to hit: 15

Wounds per level: 6: -0; 12:

-1; 18: -2; 24: -3; 30: -4;

36: Down; 42: Out; 48: Dead

Skills: Iaijutsu 2; Kenjutsu

3; Battle 2; Defense 2

Special Abilities: Leap of the Hare – Hare school special ability; any maneuver that involves a big jump has its TN reduced by 10. He also has the first two ranks of the Akodo Bushi school.

Oda is a good man in a tough position. He's the daimyo of a tiny clan whose lands are surrounded by the Crab (who could care less) on one side and the Scorpion (modestly hostile) on the other. His lands have been harassed by an ogre for two years running, and the clan sword's been missing for decades. Finally, he recently sent his daughter to Otosan Uchi hoping to wed her to an influential Scorpion or Crab. Her beauty aroused interest, but he cannot afford a rich dowry. The most interested suitor is a swinish brute named Yasuki Nokatsu, but Oda is reluctant to entrust her to a man who flogs slaves for a living.

for the scroll. Those characters who choose the first option go to Part Two. Those who wish to stay and search, go to Part Three.



Crab Country

Before your heroes enter the Shadowlands, they have two days' travel through Crab country. They can get through this by:

- Getting a pass (with a bribe, or using the ogre's corpse as blackmail).
- Sneaking through (Roll Agility + Stealth or Agility + Hunting against TN 15 each day).
- Fighting through. (Work up some Crabs and have fun. If your group gets too beat up, the Crabs still might respect them enough to accompany them into the Shadowlands!)
- Alternately, your characters may decide to just walk up to the gates and ask to be let through. Honesty is the best policy in Crab territory, after all. If they choose this route, make sure to post a huge Crab at the gate who, as the party passes by, mumbles "One fewer Crane, one fewer Unicorn, one fewer Lion..."

Three Days In The Shadows

Once your heroes sneak over the wall (going into the Shadowlands isn't hard; it's coming back that's tricky) give them a five sense description of the Shadowlands to keep them edgy – but nothing attacks the first day.

GOBLIN SPIES

Midmorning on day two have everyone make Perception or Awareness rolls (TN 15). Everyone who succeeds realizes there's an ugly green creature squatting nearby staring at them. Her pointy green ears are sticking foolishly out of a dented helmet.

Once the goblin realizes she's been spotted, she runs towards her steed. Heroes can give chase.

Goblin Spy

Earth 2

Fire 2

Water 1

Air 1

Attacking 3k2

Damage 4k2 (sword)

TN to Hit 15 (Light Armor)

Wounds 6: -1; 12 Dead

The spy has the skill "Ride Goblin Mount" at 1, so she rolls 2+1 for fleeing. Characters chasing may hear her yelling things like "Left! No, your other left, idiot! Faster! You want to stay this way forever?"

Goblin Mount

Earth 1

Fire 3

Water 1

Air 1

Attacking 2k2

Damage 2k1

TN to Hit 15

Wounds 6: -1; 12 Dead

A goblin mount is a goblin who has been warped by magic into a vile burlesque of a horse. If it performs well, it may get transformed back. The goblin mount performs like a Poor quality mount – top TN of 15 for a chase. However, it can still outdistance a running human.

If the goblins are captured, the spy begs for mercy in a nauseating fashion – licking boots, claiming she has children, offering sexual favors. As for the mount (who's her brother), he just resignedly asks the characters to kill him. "It's better than what The Exalted Ugu will do to me." The Exalted Ugu is a goblin shugenja who rules Hiruma castle. The spy and the mount are in his service and know the following information:



- There are lots of goblins at the castle. "More than twenty – maybe even a million!"
- The front gate is well defended – boiling oil, a catapult, lots of guards. "After all, samurai only attack the front gate. Everyone knows *that*."
- Two ogres live at the castle – their names are Mug and Mug.
- The Exalted Ugu has a lieutenant named Big Stick who keeps the goblins in line.
- The goblin patrols have seen a mysterious woman sneaking around the castle, so Ugu sent

out spies to set up an ambush. The ambush party is Mug and Mug.

OGRE AMBUSH

If the heroes chase down or kill the goblin, the next event doesn't occur. If the spy got away, the heroes are ambushed by two ogres from Hiruma Castle.

Mug and Mug
Earth 2
Stamina 6

**USAGI ODA
(CONTINUED)**

Image: Oda is always seen in the traditional red and white of the Hare clan, but his clothes are terribly plain by the Great House standards. Slender and a bit short, he has aged well – except that he is completely bald. Like his son, he has a weak chin.

Role-playing Oda: Oda is a bit old fashioned in his rigid adherence to Bushido, but he is not formal and stuffy. He's down to earth and takes his duties seriously. He is earnest almost everything – he never makes jokes, and hesitates before laughing to make sure he's understood correctly.

**LEFT: MAP OF
HIRUMA CASTLE
ENVIRONS**



MASAGO

Masago has an oni's mark on her, but has not yet given her name to the Lady of Black Hands. She's desperate to find something to give her the strength to resist, and hopes the Hare Clan Sword is it. (Normally she associates with a group known as the Last Chance Bandits, but they're too smart to follow her on this errand.) Masago is a small woman with mean eyes and a serious demeanor. Her hair is starting to go grey, and she has a pitch black handprint covering her mouth and the left side of her jaw.

A TN 25 Intelligence + Courtier roll reveals that Masago is a wanted criminal. This is only TN 15 for Kitsu school shugenja, who will also know that she was kicked out of their school for unspeakable experiments.

Earth 2
Willpower 3

Air 3

Fire 2

Water 3

Void 3

Skills: Shugenja Rank 2, Horsemanship 1, Defense 3, Stealth 3, Kenjutsu 1, Maho 2, Torture 1

Advantages/Disads:
Driven (gain magic knowledge); Social Disadvantage (2 levels)

Attacking: 3k2 with Katana

Fire 4

Water 3

Strength 6

Air 1

Attacking: 4k4

Damage: 8k2 with club

TN to hit: 25 (Poor Quality Heavy Armor)

Wounds per level: 15: -1, 30: -2, 45: -3, 60: Dead

This is a tough encounter; if it looks like your characters are going to be slaughtered, they can get rescued by a band of Nezumi.

Five Nezumi ("Ratlings")

Earth 2

Fire 3

Water 2

Air 1

Attack 4k3

Damage 4k2 (spear)

TN to Hit 20 (Light Armor)

Wounds: 9: -1; 18: Dead

One Nezumi Bushi

Earth 4

Fire 4

Water 2

Air 2

Attacking 6k4

Damage 6k2 (sword)

TN to Hit 20 (Light Armor)

Wounds: 10: -1; 20: -2; 30: Dead

The Nezumi swarm over one of the ogres; they always attack a single target, then move on to another when that target's disabled.

If the Nezumi help your heroes defeat the ogres, they may try to communicate. The Ratlings speak no human tongue. Unless there's a Crab who speaks Nezumi, or there's a magic solution, it's going to be a long game of charades. Successful communication reveals the following.

- The ratlings hate the goblins.
- The goblin shugenja killed the Nezumi "holy person" last month.
- There are four more Ratlings and another Ratling Bushi nearby.
- The chance to attack the ogres with samurai present was too good to ignore.
- The Ratlings are hesitant to attack the castle

alone, even with the ogres dead.

• The Ratlings are also reluctant to join samurai who may just be going to get killed. (An offer of weapons or armor will encourage them.)

The Ratlings know nothing about a "mysterious woman".

If the ambush doesn't occur, you can have the heroes meet the Nezumi outside combat. Growing up in the Shadowlands, the Ratlings are pretty skittish. They'll flee at the first hostile gesture. However, gifts or visible truce gestures (such as dropping weapons and approaching with open hands) may bear fruit.

Diplomatic characters may get some backup for their approach to Hiruma castle. In any event, they reach it around noon of the next day. They aren't the only ones looking to get inside; a shugenja called Masago is also after the Hare sword.

If Masago sees the heroes before they enter the castle, she may cautiously approach them. If asked what she's doing there, she'll tell them the truth: "I'm looking for something to help me escape an oni's curse."



MUG, OR POSSIBLY MUG

Hiruma Castle

To understand the defenses of Hiruma Castle, you must remember that goblins don't think the way humans do. For one thing, they don't do it nearly as well.

When Hiruma Castle fell, much of the wall around it was destroyed. The front gate remained fairly intact, however, and it is there that the goblins have concentrated their defenses. Why? Because according to their understanding of bushido, no samurai would attack anywhere but the front gate.

AREA 1 — THE FRONT GATE

There's a pair of huge, iron studded doors, closed tight. (The goblins just walk around the side, through area #2, when entering and leaving. They don't even know how to work the door mechanism.) The drawbridge is down across the moat, and cannot be raised without Mug and Mug pushing.

From the tree line around the castle, a pair of white decorations can be seen on each door. From the drawbridge, it's clear that these are human skulls, painted with foolish expressions and vandalized with parodies of the Crab and Hare clan mons.

There are ten goblins above the gate for "missile defense" — slung stones at first, and boiling oil and large rocks when the attackers approach. There's a catapult of small rocks calibrated to fall right between the gate and the drawbridge; anyone who's in that space when the catapult fires takes 1 die of wounds.

The boiling oil (which is actually not oil but a vile, tarry goblin drink) can be dodged, and does 1 die of wounds — and armor does not decrease the goblins' TN to hit. After the catapult and oil, another ten goblins will swarm out from around area #2 and engage in hand to hand while the ten on top of the wall continue to throw rocks. If Mug and Mug are still alive, they'll lumber out to fight as well.

Even if the heroes slaughter all the skirmishers, the goblins up top will continue their barrage. The heroes will have to batter down the door — unless they decide to walk around to area #2 and walk through the open gap.

Ten Goblin Chuckers

Earth 2

Fire 2

Water 1

Air 1

Attacking 3k2

Damage 2k1 (rock)

TN to Hit 10

Wounds 6: -1; 12 Dead

Skills: Throw 1

Ten Goblin Skirmishers

Earth 2

Fire 2

Water 1

Air 1

Attacking 3k2

Damage 4k2 (sword)

TN to Hit 12 (Poor Quality Light Armor)

Wounds 6: -1; 12 Dead

Mug and Mug (stats on opposite page)

At night, the whole area is well lit by torches, bonfires and crude lanterns. It's almost as bright as daylight. Unless it gets significantly darker, run the combat like a daylight assault. If it does get dark, the goblins will be distracted and frightened. The chuckers' TN gets increased by 10, and the skirmishers won't go out at all.

AREA 2 — THE FALLEN WALL

The ground here is rough, but a horse could get through. If the heroes killed Mug and Mug earlier, this area is guarded by only five goblins, identical to the skirmishers, above. If the ogres are still around, they're the guards. The goblins at the gate will *never* help the goblins or ogres guarding the gap in the wall, insisting that it's a trick. "I'm just following orders!"

If the heroes attempt to sneak in at night, it's a TN 15 Agility + Stealth roll for each character. The ogres will be asleep, but due to their advanced senses they'll wake up if any hero fails the roll.

AREA 3 — THE COURTYARD AND THE BREACHED CASTLE

The northwest corner of the castle is also demolished, providing entry — if the heroes can get past Big Stick and the rest of the castle's goblins. They just charge without order or plan, each attempting to hit as many samurai as possible.

What makes this assault horrible is that

空

MASAGO (CONTINUED)

Damage: 6k2 with Katana

TN to hit: 15 (20 with damaged light armor)

Glory: -1

Honor: 0

Wounds per level: 4: -0; 8: -1; 12: -2; 16: -3; 20: -4; 24: Down; 28: Out; 32: Dead

Outfit: Poor quality light armor, Poor quality katana

Spells: Counterspell (innate), Sense, Commune, Summon, Elemental Ward (innate), The Fury of Osano-Wo, The Path to Inner Peace

WHAT IF THEY SCALE THE WALL?

The walls are patrolled by goblins every ten or twenty minutes. There are five goblins in each of the two remaining towers (the northeast and southeast towers) who will certainly notice any daylight incursion and will swarm over to tip ladders and cut ropes. They'll also call the ogres. Only one ogre will show up, and he'll wait on the far side of the wall in case anyone gets over.

At night the patrols are less frequent, and heroes who go right after a patrol have to roll Agility + Stealth at a TN 15. If they manage that, they can get into the courtyard unnoticed.

everyone participates. Not only are the samurai fighting goblin skirmishers, but goblin children and pregnant goblin women as well.

At the back of the battle stands their general, Big Stick. If he is killed or driven off, the rest of the goblins break ranks and flee through area #2. However, your characters won't be able to reach Big Stick unless (1) they hew their way through twenty goblins first; (2) they use archery, which has a +5 to the TN; or (3) they use magic. If a character gets close enough to make an attack on

him, Big Stick runs away and the goblins bolt for Area #2.

Only five goblins per turn can attack each character (no more than that can get close enough). Characters who stand back to back can only be attacked by three apiece.

The guards from the gate still won't desert their posts, and Big Stick doesn't even remember that they're there.

To keep this from being the most boring combat ever, make sure your characters realize how outnumbered they are – even if their opponents are vastly inferior. Describe the screaming goblins, the horror of realizing that the goblin trying to bash your skull in is a female, the ghastliness of swarming goblin children; push them to think of some strategy other than slugfest.

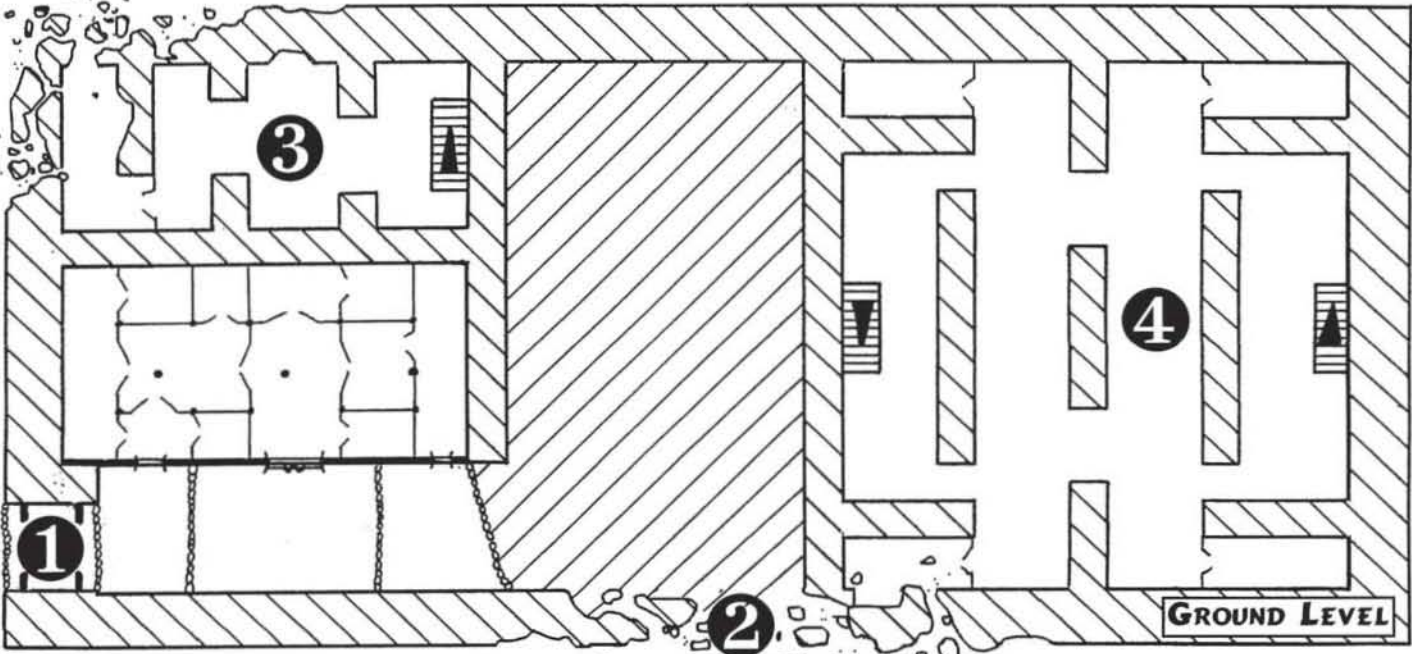
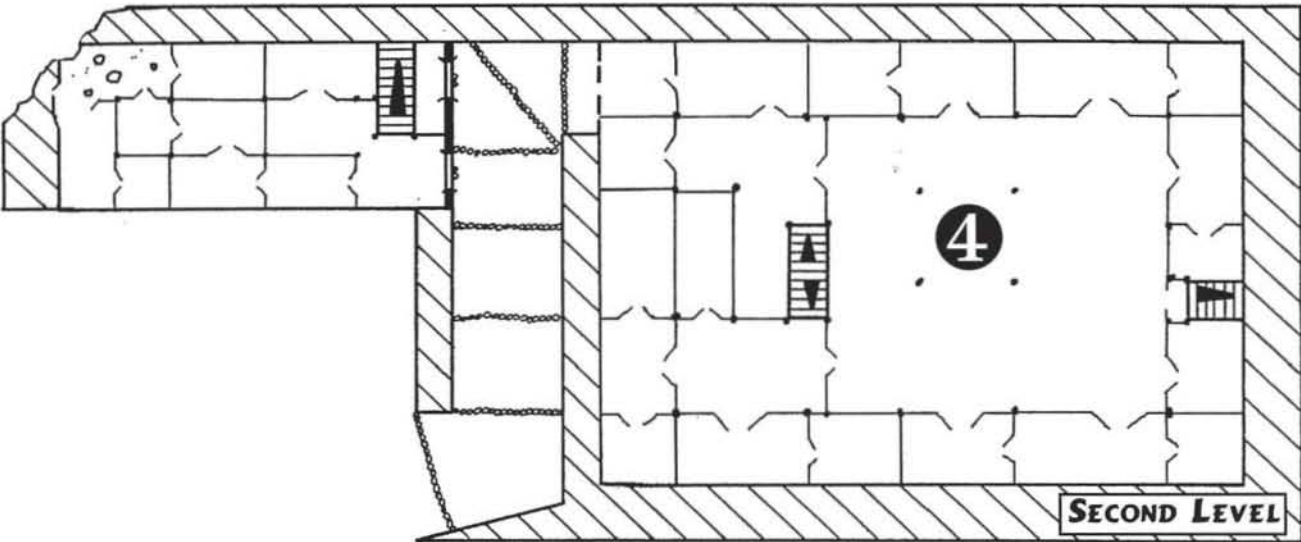
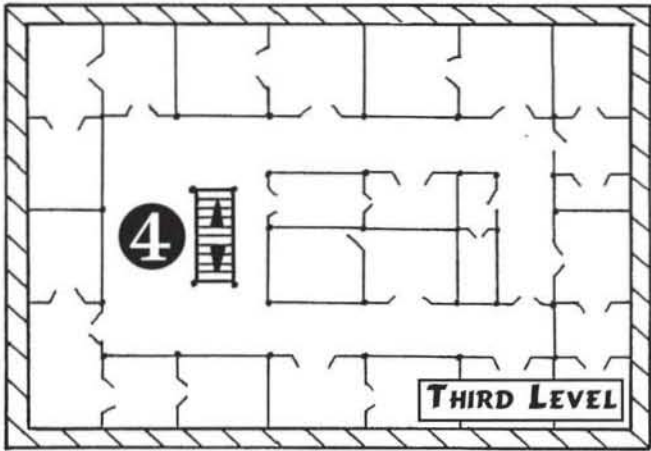
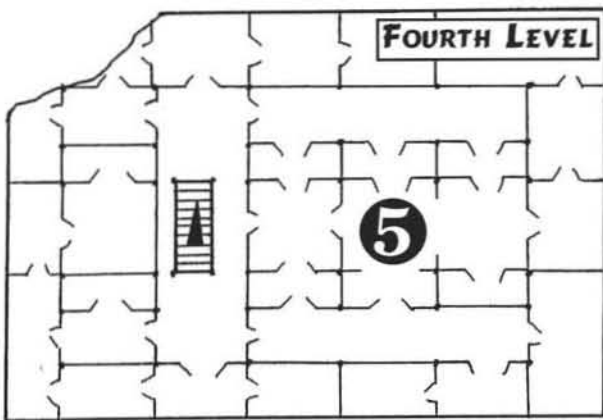
If the Nezumi are present, they'll kill – women, children and elderly – without compunction. Assume that each Ratling kills one goblin per turn, and that *one* Ratling per turn gets killed by lucky goblins.

If forty or more goblins get nailed but Big Stick is still alive, he'll call a retreat and they'll split up in the castle to cause more headaches for the heroes inside.

The smartest thing the heroes can do is a strategic retreat. The goblins won't pursue them past Area #2. The night after the retreat, the goblins will have a feast (partially on any non-goblins who fell in combat) complete with moronic sing-alongs (their favorite song is "Eat and Drink", closely followed by "Drink and Eat"), dancing, a bonfire, brawls and binge drinking. It's comparatively easy to get past Area #2 (there are five goblin guards, but they're drinking) and then either sneak into the castle, or attack the group and get the drop on Big Stick and Ugu. (Besides, there's some irony in destroying your enemies at a banquet held to honor their victory over you...)

If the heroes sneak in at night (meaning no alarm was raised at Area #1 or #2, or by the guards in the





HIRUMA CASTLE RUINS - FLOOR PLAN

GOBLIN WOUND BOXES

Use these boxes to tick off wounds taken by the goblin horde.

Goblin Skirmishers:

-1 Dead
 -1 Dead
 -1 Dead
 -1 Dead
 -1 Dead

-1 Dead
 -1 Dead
 -1 Dead
 -1 Dead
 -1 Dead

-1 Dead
 -1 Dead
 -1 Dead
 -1 Dead
 -1 Dead

-1 Dead
 -1 Dead
 -1 Dead
 -1 Dead
 -1 Dead

Big Stick, the Goblin Warlord:

-1
 Dead

towers) then of course there's no massive gang of goblins; they're all inside, asleep.

THE ENTIRE GOBLIN POPULATION OF HIRUMA CASTLE, EXCEPT FOR GATE GUARDS

Twenty Goblin Skirmishers

Earth 2

Fire 2

Water 1

Air 1

Attacking 3k2

Damage 4k2 (short spear)

TN to Hit 15 (Light Armor)

Wounds 6: -1; 12: Dead

Thirty Goblin Women

Earth 2

Fire 2

Water 1

Air 1

Attacking 3k2

Damage 3k2 (club)

TN to Hit 10

Wounds 6: -1; 12: Dead

Twenty Goblin Brats

Earth 1

Fire 1

Water 1

Air 1

Attacking 1k1

Damage 1k1 (branch or sharp stone)

TN to Hit 10

Wounds 6: Dead

Big Stick the Goblin Warlord

Earth 3

Fire 3

Water 2

Air 1

Attacking 5k2

Damage 6k2 (katana)

TN to Hit 20 (Light Armor)

Wounds 10: -1; 20: Dead

AREA 4 — INSIDE THE CASTLE

The only part of the castle that's really important is area 5, Ugu's chambers, but here are a few things they could run into while looking for Ugu.

- A stairway. There's a sneaky goblin at the top with three big, round rocks. Once the PCs are halfway up the stairs, he'll roll a rock down on them. It's Agility TN 20 to dive over the rock, or TN 15 Agility to turn around and run back down the steps. The rocks do 3k1 damage.

- The goblin kitchen. This is filled with the stench of goblin cuisine. Goblins fighting here will throw woks and cutting boards, run around under tables, and hide in the pantry if things go badly. In the pantry is the half-eaten corpse of a Crab clan samurai-ko.

- What was once the library has been turned into a goblin nursery, full of vile little goblin brats.

- The goblin stables, containing three goblin mounts who won't fight unless attacked.

- The smithy. There are broken weapons all around, along with various piles of armor in disarray. Goblins fighting here will duck behind the mess, attempt to tip racks of spears over on PCs, and grab rusty hammers as weapons.

AREA 5 — THE LAIR OF THE EXALTED UGU

These chambers were once the home of Lord Hiruma — the lord in charge of defending this castle. They're now the home of the Exalted Ugu.

The chambers were once comfortable with lacquered screens of great Crab clan victories, thick rugs, decorative chests to hold the Hiruma family's possessions, a few lamps and incense burners and so on. Most of the screens, rugs and chests are still present, but Goblins have no concept of cleanliness, so everything is stained with mud and food. The smoke from the goblins' candles has left a meaty soot on most surfaces, and everywhere is the acrid odor of goblin sweat.

It should be prohibitively difficult for characters to get this far without an alarm being raised. If they've succeeded and Masago isn't with them, the alarm will be sounded as she gets discovered sneaking in.

Ugu is hiding in the room farthest from the door, bleeding himself for one last spell. He's stirring up the angry ghosts of Usagi Nedei and his sweetheart to protect him.

Nedei and his beloved were killed right here at



Castle Hiruma; their skulls decorate the front gate. The rest of their skeletons are kept up in Ugu's room, and he has a spell that lets him raise their ghosts. Since the ghosts don't have their heads, they can't see correctly, and Ugu is able to enchant them into attacking his enemies. (Ugu just points and says "See what I command you to see! There! It's the people who desecrated your bodies!")

The Exalted Ugu

Earth 3

Fire 3

Water 2

Air 2

Attacking 3k2

Damage 5k3 (Hare Clan sword)

TN to Hit 15

Armor 5

Wounds 10: -1; 20: Dead

Skills: Maho 2

Special Abilities: Call up angry ghosts and misdirect them. (See below.)

Transform goblins into goblin mounts and back.

Burning Blood. This Fire spell has a TN 15, and Ugu can use it once per round as his



THE EXALTED UGU

attack. To attempt it he has to be bleeding and blow or spit his blood at someone. If he succeeds, the blood turns into hot wads of sticky fire (2 dice of damage.)

NOTE: To use any of his spells, he has to take one wound point of damage.

Ugu is a tall, gangly goblin with a flattened nose and beady eyes. When the heroes enter, he's already taken one wound point to call up the ghosts.

When Ugu reaches -1 impairment, he'll fall to his knees, surrender, beg for mercy, offer to show them "a great treasure" (10 koku down in the root cellar) and generally humiliate himself.

Two Vengeful Ghosts

Earth 4

Fire 3

Water 3

Air 2

Attacking 5k3

Damage 6k1 (spirit weapons)

TN to Hit 15 (can only be hit by weapons that are magical, silver, or stained with human blood.)

Wounds 15: -1; 30: -3; 45: Vanished

Special Abilities: Fear 2.

A successful Intelligence + Shugenja Lore roll (TN 15) lets a student of the occult "remember" that some ghosts can only be harmed by weapons that have human blood on them.

If Nedei is identified, characters can attempt to persuade him that they're not his real enemy. Doing so takes a TN 20 Awareness + Sincerity roll. This TN is reduced by 5 for each of the following: dropping a weapon and saying "I will not fight you, honorable Usagi"; being a member of the Usagi family; giving the ghost his skull back.

In any event, the ghosts vanish once Ugu is killed. He can also call them off if he surrenders. Vanishing doesn't mean they're settled, however; they won't rest until their bones are blessed and buried. (Until that happens, Nedei may haunt the clan sword, along with his lady friend...)

Once the sword is recovered, Masago will watch for an opportunity to either steal it, or get the sword's owner alone and attack him from advantage. She may follow it all the way back to Castle Usagi. If she fails, she'll flee - probably back into the Shadowlands.

GOBLIN WOUND BOXES

Goblin Women:

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空

THE ANCESTRAL SWORD OF THE HARE CLAN

The clan sword of the Hare family has been carried by their greatest heroes. Usagi Furiko, Usagi Gohei and Usagi Nedei have all used it to great effect against the enemies of their Clan.

The spirit of the sword (supposedly a powerful rabbit spirit) grants two benefits to its carrier. The first is the speed of the rabbit, and the second is protection from the hunter's arrow.

However, the curse of the Blood Speakers is on the sword as well. The dying words of Iuchiban were "My loss of blood has made me weak - but the blood of your children shall make mine strong!" What this means for game mechanics is this:

- Any character who carries the clan sword in battle rolls for initiative as if his/her Reflexes score was ten points higher.

(Therefore, if Ozaki is holding it, he would roll and add 15 - ten plus his air score of three.)

- Any character of the Hare clan who carries the clan sword cannot be struck by any normal missile. Only enchanted arrows, spells or the like have a chance, and their TN is increased by 15.

- When the sword's carrier faces a Blood Speaker, the sword carrier loses 5 wounds at the end of every combat round, and the Blood Speaker gains 5 wounds.

Once they've recovered the sword and dealt with Masago, it's time to return to Castle Usagi. Like Usagi Furiko so many years ago, they return to find the castle besieged. Take your characters through Part Three.



Part Three: Scorpion Siege

"You made a classic tactical blunder; you had a secret, and you assumed I didn't know it."

- Bayushi Shoju

Overview

Parts two and three of "The Hare Clan" can be interchanged; it doesn't matter which gets played first. Just to make things simpler, Part Three will be written as if it's being played through before Part Two. If this is not the case, introduce the characters returning from the Shadowlands on day two or day three.

Here's what really happened with the scroll: it was stolen by Usagi Ozaki.

Ozaki was at court at the time, showing Tomoe off to potential suitors. Both were nervous about being alone at court for the first time and concerned that Tomoe make a good match.

Their third night there, Ozaki learned that a retainer had gone to a notorious den of vice known as the House of the Winter Moon. Tomoe had to go to a formal dinner, and would appear poor without a sufficient retinue. Ozaki decided get the errant retainer (named Seiki) himself.

Disguised, Ozaki entered the House of the Winter Moon. There he saw not only his wayward servant, but a friend of his, Matsu Akira. Ozaki recognized the disguised Akira by his raspy voice (he was once injured by a boken). Before Ozaki could speak with him, a figure in dark garments joined him. The two spoke in low tones, exchanged papers, and departed.

Something about the dark figure alarmed Ozaki, who feared his friend was being blackmailed. Pausing only to get Seiki, Ozaki



followed Akira's visitor.

Ozaki was astonished when his quarry changed clothes and was revealed as Soshi Yukio – a Scorpion shugenja widely known as Akira's enemy.

Ozaki was now certain that his friend was being blackmailed, but he was wary of offending the famous Matsu pride by letting on. Dedicated to help Akira without Akira learning about it, Ozaki enlisted his sister's aid. However, their investigation turned up nothing until they learned that Akira was going out one night, unattended.

On a hunch, Tomoe followed Yukio, while Ozaki followed Akira. The Lion and the Scorpion met again – this time Akira *received* a large sum of money! Trying to spy with magic was useless, but Ozaki got close enough to hear Akira giving Yukio "new orders." The orders were on a small scroll.

The Usagis followed Yukio, but this time they were spotted. Yukio attempted to flee, the two gave chase, and the pursuit ended with Yukio's death. Ozaki and Tomoe recovered a vellum scroll, with gold and red marbling on the sides.

The pair kept the scroll close, and returned home with it after a few disappointing marriage discussions. Since that time, Tomoe has been trying to decipher it. She's had no luck.

That's how things stand. Now let's take a look your characters' company (other than the Usagis) for the siege.

SEIKI

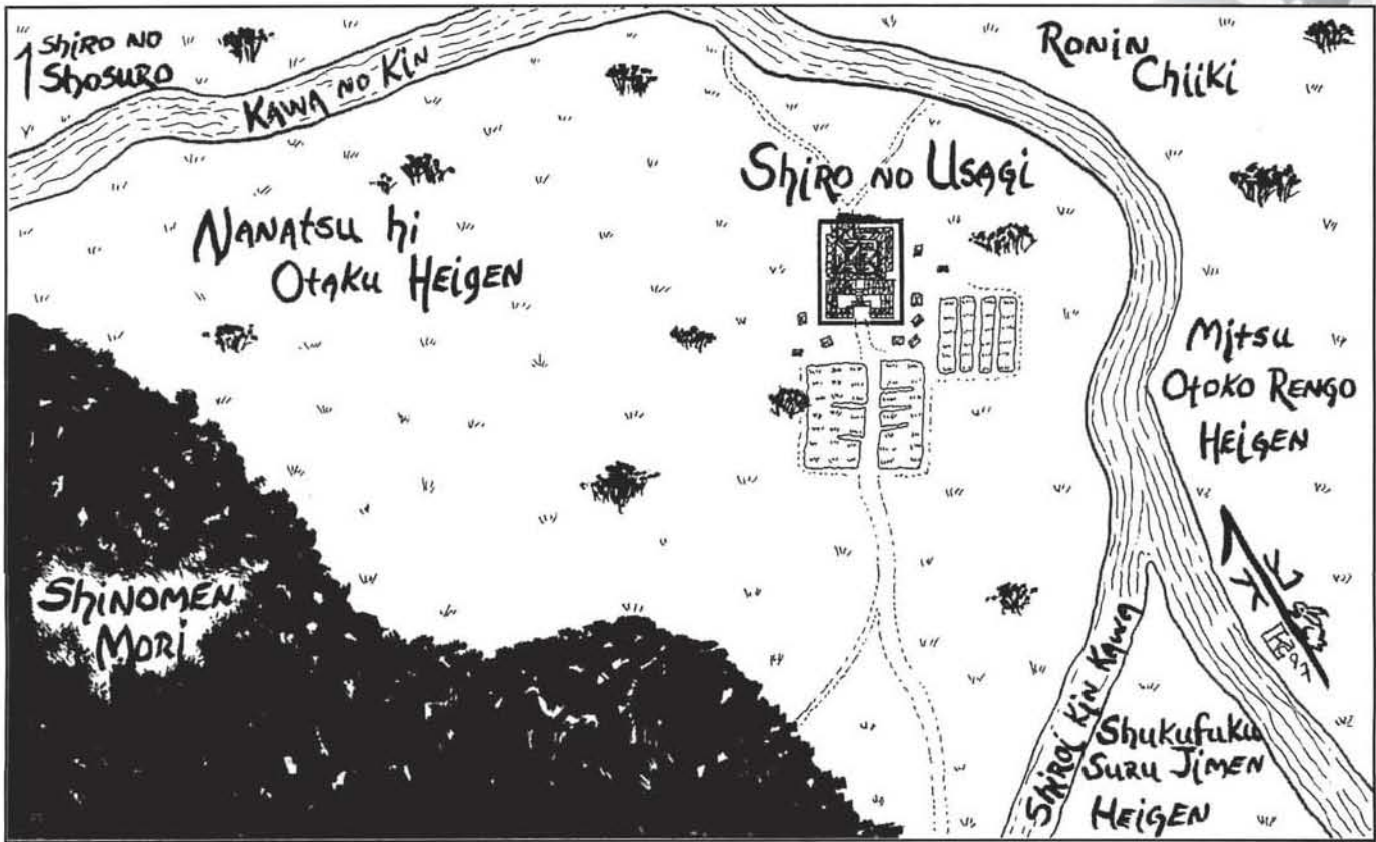
Seiki is a samurai retainer of the Usagis. Big, brash and hairy, Seiki won't back down from a fight. Due to his disgraceful behavior, he has been demoted to the rank of a common guardsman.

Seiki failed because he's an opium addict. He took to the drug to ease a broken heart, and now has a problem ten times worse.

Although he would never betray the Usagi family for gain, Seiki may do something foolish during the siege as his addiction begins to work on him.

What He Knows: When Ozaki came to get him at a sake house in Otosan Uchi, Ozaki was interested in a pair of men there, and they (Ozaki and Seiki) followed one when he left. The man went into a fancy house and Ozaki followed the

BELOW:
MAP OF USAGI CASTLE ENVIRONS



USAGI CASTLE UNDER SIEGE

(THREE CONCENTRIC MOATS NOT SHOWN)

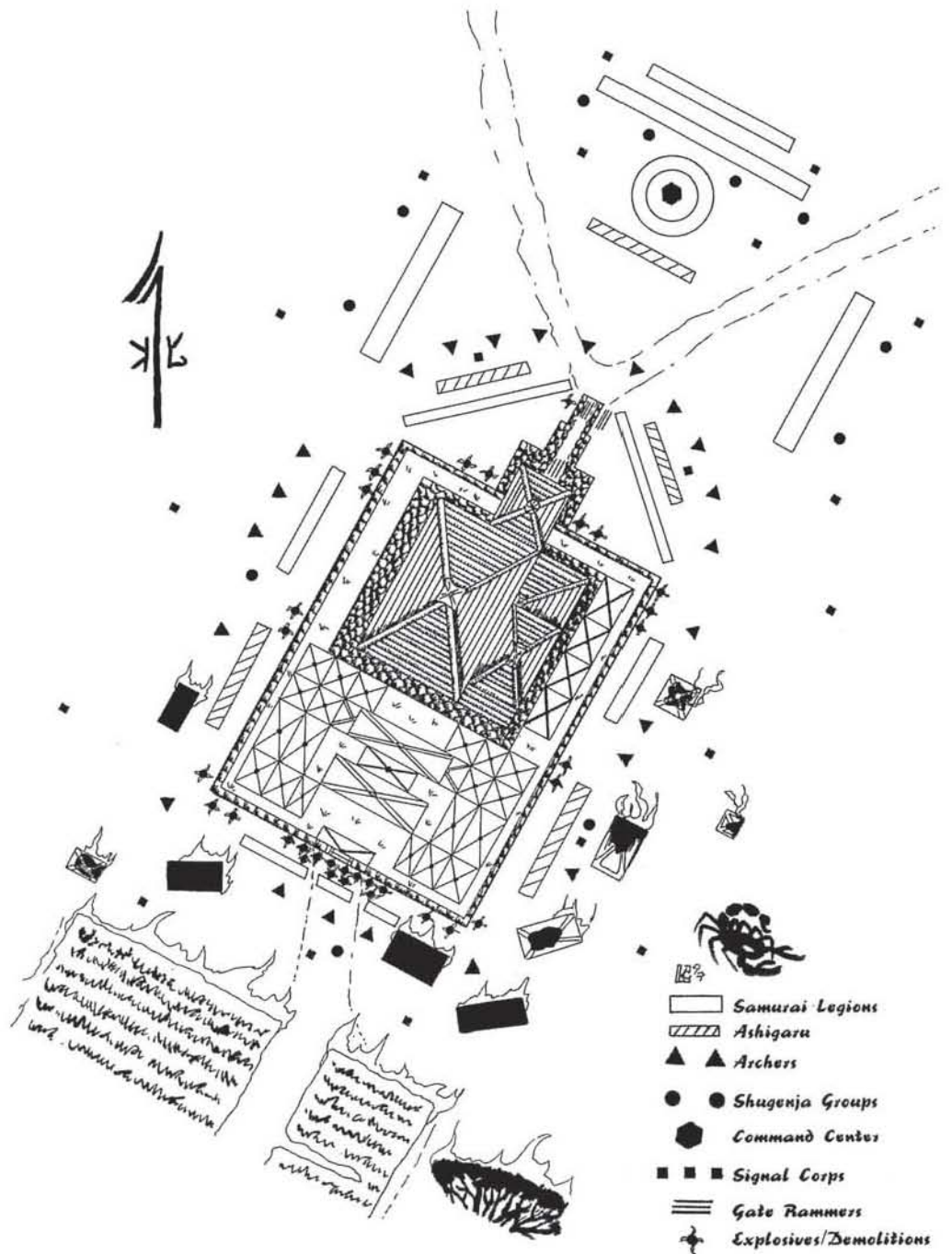
WHAT IF THE HEROES JOIN THE SCORPIONS?

If they defect, they'll each get 10 Koku, but lose 4 Honor Points (unless they're already at Honor 0). If they bring the scroll, the clan sword, or proof that they assassinated a member of the Usagi family, their reward will increase to 100 Koku! However, they will lose 5 Honor Points - at the GM's discretion, those who drop below Honor Rank 0 in this fashion may get a Glory loss as well.

Characters who just decide to get out of this entanglement altogether will be allowed past the army - once they've been questioned and searched. Characters who bug out in this fashion will hear later of the absolute massacre of the Hare clan.

"Heroes" who decide to stick around and back the likely winner will be singled out on the battlefield for particular vengeance by Oda, Tomoe, Seiki and Ozaki. Unless everyone in the castle is killed, the heroes get no Glory for their part in the battle, because word leaks out about how they befriended and betrayed the Usagis.

At the GM's discretion, Honor and Glory penalties can be mitigated somewhat for Scorpion clanspeople who were, presumably, just doing their dirty duty.



man over the wall, leaving Seiki behind. Then Ozaki came back over the wall and they had to run away from the guards at the house.

SUKI

Suki is a chambermaid, meaning she straightens and cleans and helps serve meals. She's pretty, in a heavy, peasant way, but feels that at age twenty, it's time she found a husband. She's friendly and flighty, a flirt and a total romantic. She will not comprehend the danger of the siege at all. This may be due to a book she owns, "Siege of the Heart," in which a samurai falls in love with a virtuous peasant during a lengthy castle siege. In the book, the lovers die in the end, but that won't stop her from trying to live out the plotline.

What She Knows: Suki knows that Tomoe failed to make a good marriage in Otosan Uchi, and that she's been spending a lot of time alone in her room since then. She knows Tomoe has been looking at a lot of old, dusty books in the library, and that Seiki did something disgraceful.

OTHER NPCs

Some other NPCs around the castle include...

- Takeshi, Oda's gruff *karo*.
- Kenzo, a young peasant who wants to be a samurai.



TAKESHI, HARE CLAN GENERAL

Day One: The Bearer of Bad Tidings

The first days of the siege are written with the assumption that Ozaki left for the Shadowlands and Oda stayed behind. You may have to modify as needed. (If Oda went to the Shadowlands, Ozaki talks with the monk. If no one went, no hero gets dispatched to search, etc.)

The characters get breakfast with the Usagi family the next day, and everything seems fine until a mendicant monk stops by and insists on talking to Oda. After spending half an hour closeted with the monk, Oda calls everyone into the courtyard for an announcement.

"Vassals, servants and guests; I have bad tidings. The monk Dazai, long known to us as a trustworthy man, has come to warn us that a sizable force of Scorpion infantry are approaching. They are led by Bayushi Tomaru, and their stated destination is Castle Usagi.

"Though we have never been friends of the Scorpion, I know of no reason they would attack us now; nonetheless, we must prepare for the worst.

"I want you to know that I have complete confidence in you, in this castle, and in the purity of the clan's spirit. Within these walls, Usagi Gohei and fifty samurai held off an army of evil sorcerers. This castle has never fallen since Usagi Taro laid its stones; I refuse to be the first of my family to see it taken.

"Soldiers; you know your duties. The rest of you – now is the time to learn that you have the stuff of heroes within you. You will be trapped here with us, but you will also share in the glory when Tomaru and the Scorpion are repulsed. For now, obey Captain Takeshi and remember; our cause is just!"

If the heroes try to cheese it at this point, Takeshi stops them and roughly tells them no one can be allowed to leave the castle. "We know how adept the Scorpion are at extracting secrets," he says.

Give your players a few minutes to realize their situation and discuss it for a bit. Then Oda wants to speak with them.

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HEROIC DEEDS DURING THE SIEGE

- You captured the standard of an enemy unit.
- When a small group of soldiers from your unit got cut off, you carved a path to them.
- You personally held a gap for a quarter hour while your unit withdrew.
- You vaulted off your horse, over the heads of the enemy line and wreaked great havoc.
- Stood like a rock in the face of superior force to blunt an enemy charge.
- You kept a retreat organized when it threatened to turn into a rout.
- You took an injury to save your standard bearer – and kept fighting.
- You killed three of the enemy after your weapon broke.
- You led a charge that shattered the enemy defensive line.
- You got the drop on a siege crew and destroyed a siege engine.
- You led a charge into an archery emplacement and slaughtered them.
- You executed a perfect pincers maneuver that cut off and neutralized a group of tough infantry.
- You prevented a rout by rallying fleeing troops and getting them back into the fight. (This is a nice one for the type who are usually persuasive courtiers.)
- You performed a fake retreat to lure enemy troops into a trap.

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POSSIBLE DUELISTS DURING THE SIEGE: SCORPIONS

BAYUSHI MINIKUI – A sneering young man out to prove his valor, he'll taunt his opponents and deride them in the middle of battle. His mempo consists of horizontal stripes of steel.

Earth 2

Fire 4

Water 2

Air 2

Void 3

Attacking: 5k2

Damage: 5k2

TN to Hit: 15 (Light armor)

Special Ability: Add two dice to Reflexes for initiative.

Wounds per Level: 8: -1;

12: -2; 16: -3; 20: -4; 24:

Down: 28: Out; 32: Dead

YOGO ATSUI – A blocky man in heavy armor that is strangely smooth and featureless. His mempo is completely blank and he will not speak to his enemies.

Earth 4

Fire 2

Water 2

Strength 3

Air 2

Void 2

Rolls when attacking: 3k2

(All TNS increased by 5)

Rolls for damage: 6k2

TN to Hit: 20 (Heavy Armor)

Special Ability: Add two dice to Reflexes for initiative.

Wounds per Level: 16 -1;

24: -2; 32: -3; 40: -4; 48:

Down: 52: Out; 64: Dead

SHOSURO NAGAI – A remarkably tall and slender samurai-ko whose naginata blade is shaped like a scorpion sting.

Oda looks pretty grim, but greets them courteously. The first thing he tells them is that they are free to leave if they wish. "You've done enough by saving my son; I can't shackle you to our ill fortune."

If the heroes say nothing, that's the end of it, although Oda seems to be waiting for something. If the heroes ask if there's any way they can help, Oda will *look* eager, but say "Oh, no, I couldn't ask you, really." This will go on through the typical three offers, after which Oda will ask for a volunteer to try to bring back whoever went to the Shadowlands.

After that, the day is up to the heroes. They can help prepare for the siege – discussing tactics with Oda, hauling in food for storage, soaking down the castle to prevent fires... or, they may try to find the scroll.

The scroll is in Tomoe's room, hidden in a glass box with a mirror cleverly angled to conceal the space behind it. Even when the box has something inside it, it looks empty.

Tomoe has accidentally established an excellent defense against magical spying; while the spell "The Light of Lord Moon" will illuminate the box, there are at least a dozen other boxes in the room with tricks or puzzles that must be solved to open them. Tomoe collects them, and there's no way to learn which contains the scroll. (The spirits of the boxes are loyal to Tomoe and suspicious of outsiders.)

In any event, Tomoe spends the day rushing back and forth between her room and the library, trying to find spells that will help repel an invasion. Shugenja heroes will certainly be invited to help.

Day Two: Guarding Loins

Early in the morning of day two, the first refugees arrive. These sorry-looking peasants are afraid the Scorpions are going to raze farms and slaughter heimin. They continue to trickle in all day.

At noon, a woman in Scorpion Clan livery rides up. She's wearing no armor and is waving a flag of truce. It's Shosuro Rei (see page 18.) and she wants to talk to Oda.

Unless persuaded not to, Oda goes to meet her out in the open, with a troop of armed guards. If

the heroes want to come, they're welcome.

She greets Oda cordially and offers apparently sincere regrets about the invasion. If the irony of this is pointed out, she winces and says "Sometimes it is hard to balance my duty to my clan with my duties to the Emerald Champion. It's a pity there's no way the whole matter couldn't be avoided..."

If no one says anything in response to that, she figures they're clueless and deserve the punishment they'll assuredly receive. However, if someone prompts her to continue, she argues that Oda has given Bayushi Shoju a longed-for excuse to destroy him by killing a Scorpion vassal and stealing from him. Oda is baffled, of course. If the PCs explain things to him, Rei is willing to negotiate with Tomaru in return for the scroll. Otherwise she'll wish him luck.

If she recognizes the PCs, she'll ask to speak with them privately. Hesitantly, Oda agrees.

If Rei knows their papers were forged, she'll threaten them and demand that they spill the dirt about the scroll. If they tell her what they know (or reasonable lies) she'll tell them it's connected with high level treachery that involves many clans. She'll then tell them that if they get her the original scroll, she'll try to get Tomaru to limit himself to a symbolic victory.

If your heroes went to Part Two first, one option is to have them return in time to speak with Rei. This is a good option if your players like sleuthing and intrigue. If they're more combative, you may want to have them get back on Day Three in order to foil a Scorpion sneak attack.

After speaking with Rei, the rest of the day is for the heroes to do what they will. This will probably involve talking to the people who went to the capital, so a breakdown of what those people are doing is provided.

SEIKI

Seiki is getting increasingly nervous and irritable; he smoked the last of his opium yesterday. Anyone who searches his gear will find a long pipe. A Perception + Investigation roll (TN 15) will identify the residue in the pipe as opium ash. Any fellow opium addict will recognize it instantly.

TAKESHI

Takeshi has his hands full and has no time to talk. On the other hand, his chamber is guarded by only a TN 12 lock. There's nothing suspicious



inside, however; just a tidy room, a simple ancestral shrine, and many maps of the area. Anyone who examines the maps and makes a TN 30 Perception + Battle roll will realize that there seems to be a way to move troops from the castle to a nearby hill.

OZAKI

If Ozaki is around, he's helping his father and/or Takeshi prepare the defenses.

If he is confronted about the scroll, he may tell the heroes about it, or may not – GM's discretion. Keep in mind that he wants to save his family home, but is also dedicated to the code of bushido. Buying his way out of a crisis will not appeal to him.

He also can argue that the Scorpion clan is unlikely to want to see justice done. They don't want to bring evil deeds to light; they want them concealed, so the threat of revelation can control the evildoer.

His room is tidy and has enough nice things (a few netsuke, a set of heavy armor on a stand, an inkstone and brush with no paper) to occupy searchers for a while.

TOMOE

Tomoe has hidden the scroll in her mirror box and is busy trying to find defensive spells.

If she's confronted about the scroll, she denies everything, while secretly being confirmed in her

belief that the heroes are part of the same conspiracy as Yukio and Akira. (In fact, this is true, if being pawns counts as being part of the conspiracy.)

Her room is full of scrolls; she's had their complete library moved up to her room so she can search it better. Everything's a mess – spell scrolls and normal scrolls are thrown everywhere.

**Day Three:
Unwelcome Guests**

Bayushi Tomaru arrives midmorning, but the dust from his army can be seen a few hours earlier. If heroes want to go scouting, they can get a good sense of the numbers involved. He makes no secret of his numbers, figuring that intimidation is in his best interests.

Tomaru has five hundred infantry troops, five hundred archers, six hundred siege engineers and two hundred elite samurai cavalry. Tomaru has 6k2 dice for Battle.

Oda has two hundred infantry troops, five hundred archers and one hundred fifty cavalry. If things get desperate, perhaps a hundred heimin can be armed as well. He rolls 5k3 dice for Battle.

The main part of the Scorpion army begins setting up camp out of arrow range in front of the castle. Soon after, an unarmed herald comes

Earth 2
Fire 3
Water 2
Air 3
Void 3
Attacking: 5k3
Damage: 5k3
TN to Hit: 20 (Light armor)
Special Ability: Add two dice to Reflexes for initiative.
Wounds per Level: 8: -1; 12: -2; 16: -3; 20: -4; 24: Down; 28: Out; 32: Dead

HARES

In addition to Oda and Ozaki (and, if the going gets really tough, Tomoe), the following opponents might also be available to treacherous Scorpion lickspittles.

SEIKI – A big, hairy brute of a man.

Earth 2
Fire 3
Water 3
Air 3
Void 2
Attacking: 5k3
Damage: 6k2
TN to Hit: 20 (Light armor)
Special Ability: None.
Wounds per Level: 8: -1; 12: -2; 16: -3; 20: -4; 24: Down; 28: Out; 32: Dead

TAKESHI – Oda's right hand man is small, but determined and methodical.

Earth 2
Fire 3
Water 2
Air 3
Void 2
Attacking: 6k3
Damage: 5k2
TN to Hit: 25 (Heavy armor)
Special Ability: Takeshi ignores the heavy armor penalty.
Wounds per Level: 8: -1; 12: -2; 16: -3; 20: -4; 24: Down; 28: Out; 32: Dead



**AN EARLY, UNSUCCESSFUL DECIPHERING ATTEMPT.
(SEE PAGE 44 FOR THE ACTUAL KOLAT SCROLL.)**

forward with a proclamation from Tomaru.

"Attention, Hare clan miscreants! Through treachery you have struck down Soshi Yukio. Not content with murder, you soiled yourselves and his corpse by pillaging the body! Now, like the cowardly animal whose name you bear, you have fled home to your warren."



"The Scorpion will not rest while Yukio's slayer remains unpunished. You have two choices; you can surrender the villain, along with the scroll that was taken from Yukio's body. Or, you can be completely destroyed."

"Choose wisely."

Oda's response (possibly sent through a PC) is to deny that anyone murdered anyone or stole anything. He'll then accuse the Scorpion of envying the Hare clan's lands, and of being too full of lies to honestly admit their greed.

When Tomaru hears Oda's response, he laughs and sends back the messenger. Then his herald speaks again.

"So be it! If you insist on clutching a killer and thief to your bosom, who am I to dissuade you? After all, the Hare clan has little else to offer!"

"I am Bayushi Tomaru! When Doji Hiroko insulted my honor, she paid with her life, on the grounds of her own dojo! When Otaku Isas lied about me, only flight saved him – and he runs to this day, has run beyond the borders of Rokugan! Soon your name too shall be spoken of with horror, as the living contemplate your lingering death!"

At this point, Takeshi is considering opening the gates and sending out some troops to harry and discomfort the enemy while they're still tired from marching. He will want to discuss this with anyone knowledgeable; he knows that an early victory, even a minor one, would boost morale. However, an early defeat – even one with few casualties – would be equally bad. He'd be glad for any heroes who volunteer to participate, but will insist on Ozaki, himself or (in the worst case) Seiki leading the charge. (He still doesn't trust the heroes enough to put the first battle under their command.)

Regardless of whether the defenders mount an early skirmish or not, the Scorpion herald is back again around dusk.



"The Scorpion clan is eager to spill the blood of warriors – not the blood of fools and those who follow them. Therefore, we offer an opportunity for the wiser among you to escape. Lord Tomaru has three lieutenants, eager to wet a blade with noble blood. If the Hare clan will set forth three champions to match against these lieutenants, we will let twenty people from the castle go free and unharmed – for each victory claimed by one of your champions!"

"Come! If you are truly brave, come out from behind your walls and engage our best with your best – one on one. No tricks, no strategy, no grand deceptions – just three duels to the death, for sixty lives. You will not get such odds on the battlefield!"

The three lieutenants really do want fair duels (well... moderately fair). Tomaru figures the Hare clan will lose face if they refuse, and lose morale if they lose. To hedge against them winning, he's planning an assault on the rear of the castle's first

wall while everyone is watching the duels in the front.

If none of the heroes volunteer as champions, Seiki steps forward, then Oda, and finally (if no one stops him) Kenzo.

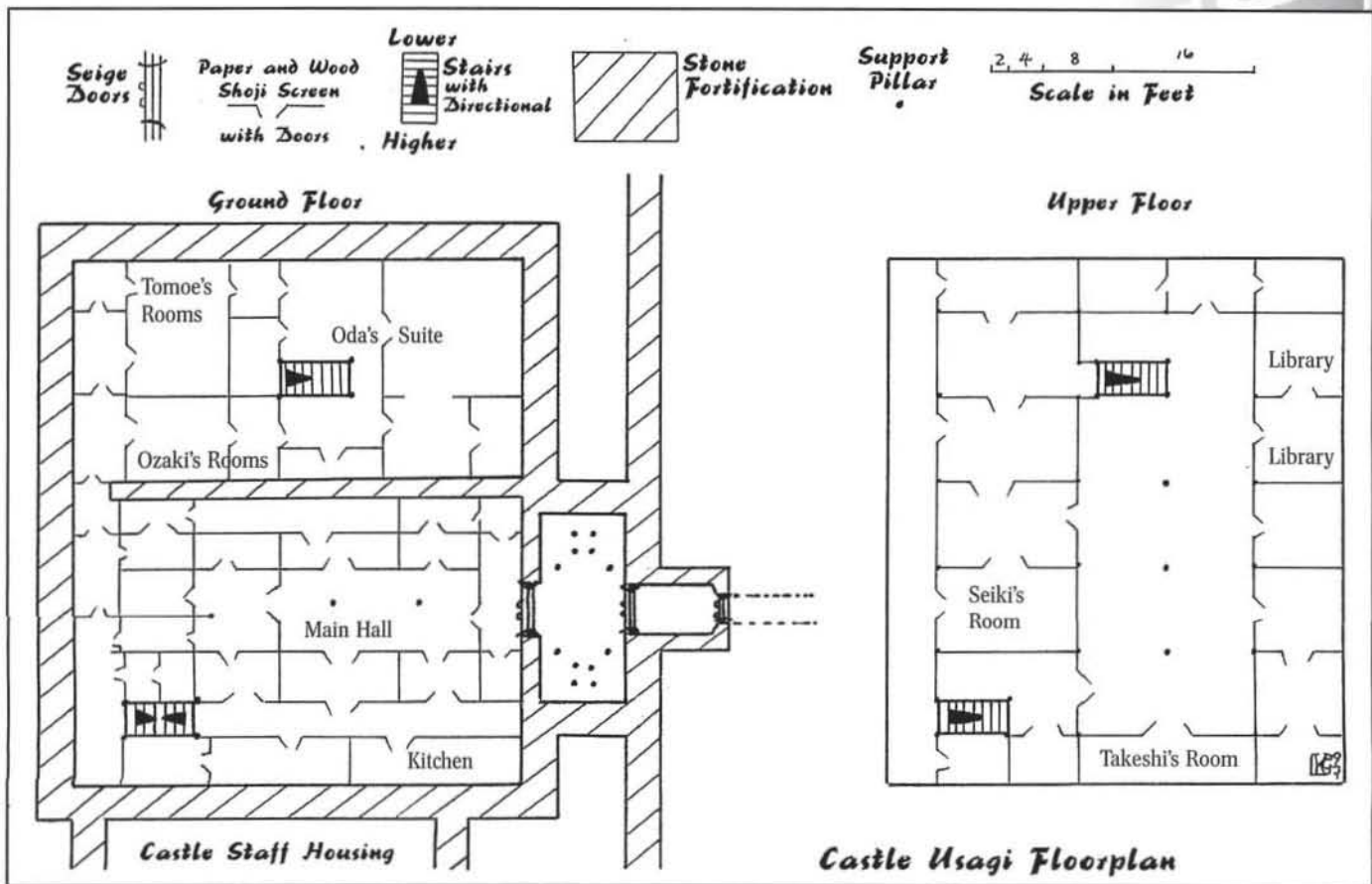
If no heroes go to duel, Seiki and Kenzo both buy it, but Oda kills Bayushi Sadaki. Immediately, many of the peasants begin clamoring to be released. During that confusion, the assault force attacks.

On the other hand, with heroes present there are many possible outcomes:

- If the defenders lose all the duels... well, that's pretty obvious.
- If the defenders kill one of the Scorpions, some peasants still clamor to be let go.
- If the defenders kill two of the Scorpions, many of the peasants say "I wouldn't trust a Scorpion's promise of safe conduct – and wouldn't leave here even if I did!"
- If all three Scorpions are slain, the Scorpion have to make do with inferior leaders for their troops. If anyone from inside the castle survives

HEROIC DEEDS

During the siege, the Hare Clan will occasionally be called upon to perform a certain number of Heroic Deeds during an assault. Any PC or Hare Clan NPC who's in the fighting must roll on the Mass Combat Table; a successful Heroic Opportunity or a won Duel counts as a Heroic Deed for the Hare Clan.



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THE THREE LIEUTENANTS

BAYUSHI SADAKO

Earth 1
Fire 4
Water 2
Air 2
Void 2
Attacking: 6k4 (Iaijutsu) or
5k4 (Kenjutsu)
Damage: 4k3 (5k3 for the
first strike of a battle)
TN to hit: 10
Wounds per level: 2: -0; 4:
-1; 6: -2; 8: -3; 10: -4; 12:
Down; 14: Out; 16: Dead;
Skills: Iaijutsu 2, Kenjutsu
1, Defense 2

Sadako is a short, skinny samurai-ko with a perpetual sneer. Her mask features small antlers curving from her temples down around her eyes and cheekbones. Weak and sickly all her life, she trained hard and is now the dueling darling of the Bayushi family. She carries a fine katana named Cruel Sting; it's coated with a poison called Fire Biter. The first time it does damage in combat, an extra die of damage is rolled and dropped, and the person struck is afflicted with tremors and severe pain for an hour (-1 on Agility).

KOCHAKO TOMI

Earth 4
Fire 2
Water 2
Air 1
Void 1
Attacking: 3k2
Damage: 7k2 (10k2 on first
blow)
TN to hit: 5
Wounds per level: 8: -0; 16:
-1; 24: -2; 32: -3; 40: -4; 48:
Down; 56: Out; 64: Dead

the siege, they tell the story of the duel until it becomes widely known, giving all who fought in it +2 Glory.

The assault force is a small one – if Usagi Oda wins the contested Battle roll, and the Hares perform two heroic deeds in the single hour that the assault lasts, then the palisade remains unbreached. In any event, the Scorpion drain the first moat.

After the sneak attack, the Scorpion retreat and the castle gets buttoned up. Another day undefeated. Now is a good time to show the effects of the siege on the various characters. Heroes who won duels can expect increased attentions from Suki and Kenzo.

Day Four: Under Cover of Night

The day begins with thunder. Heroes may wake up clutching their swords, wondering what new assault has begun. It's just the assault of the weather.

Takeshi and Oda are pleased; rain is the ally of the defender, and a misery to the attacker. It's not a torrential downpour, but a cold drizzle is unpleasant enough.

The mood of the others in the castle depends largely on the previous day's duels (or lack thereof). If morale is good, people will make half-serious jokes about the spirits of the Seven Thunders coming to protect them. If morale is poor, people just stare glumly out at the rain.

The Scorpion mount a tentative, probing attack on the first palisade around midmorning. If the Hare commit all their forces, it's a fair fight; three Heroic Deeds and a successful Battle roll by the Hare general are needed each hour to keep the palisade up. If the Hare commit only part of their forces, it takes six Heroic Deeds an hour to keep the Scorpion at bay – but in this case, a successful Battle roll counts as a Heroic Deed. Once it's down the Scorpion fall back, unless there's some reason to keep up the attack.

In the middle of the afternoon, the Scorpion try bridging the second moat on the castle's right side. Every hour the Hare

clan gets three Heroic Deeds is one where the moat remains unfilled. Halfway through, the rain redoubles in force. Again, the Scorpion retreat once the moat is filled in (unless they're unusually effective and want to press their advantage).

These abortive attacks are no cause for rejoicing, as any character trained in Battle will know; the Scorpion haven't committed more than a fraction of their forces to either attempt. They're





probably trying to gauge the depth, speed and intensity of the defense, while maybe causing a little attrition.

The rain stops just around dusk. As the sun sets, the Scorpion troops attack in force on the west side. This is a fully committed assault with battering rams, ladders, and lots of troops. The shadows of the troops seem miles long as they charge out of a bloody sunset. Every hour the Hare clan gets two Heroic Deeds (or only one if they win the Battle roll) is one where the wall remains unbreached. The Scorpion will withdraw after three hours.

Again, Tomaru is hedging his bets. Even if the western assault fails, it serves as a distraction, allowing a pair of ninja to get inside the castle.

The first ninja's mission is to poison the castle's well. Then he is to hide in Oda's chamber and assassinate him. The second ninja's mission is to find the scroll in Ozaki or Tomoe's chamber and sneak out with it.

Both ninja will save a poison capsule for themselves in case of capture.

Ninja #1

Earth 2

Fire 3

Water 2

Air 2

Attacking: 5k3 with all weapons.

Damage: 4k2 with nekote, 4k2 with ninjato (8k2 first time it does damage), 5k1 with poisoned shuriken (1 if reused)

TN to hit: 10

Wounds per level: 4: -0; 8: -1; 12: -2; 16: -3; 20: -4; 24: Down; 28: Out; 32: Dead

Skills: Nekode 2, Shinobi 4, Dodge 3, Shuriken 2, Poison 2, Katana 2

Special ability: Distraction. By increasing all his TNs by 10 or 20, he can increase the TN to hit him by a like amount.

Ninja #2

Earth 3

Fire 2

Water 3

Air 2

Attacking: 4k2 with both weapons.

Damage: 5k2 with nekote, 5k1 with poisoned shuriken (1 if reused)

TN to hit: 10

Wounds per level: 6: -0; 12: -1; 18: -2; 24: -3; 30: Down; 36: Out; 42: Dead

Special ability: Distraction, as above.

Instead of a ninjato, this agent is carrying a total of ten packets of vanishing powder, as well as a 50' rope with a hook, for a speedy escape.

If the heroes are all involved with the assault on the west, one ninja succeeds in poisoning the well, but is discovered and killed in Oda's chamber. The other ninja trashes Tomoe's and Ozaki's rooms, fails to find the scroll, and escapes.

If your heroes (or some of them) are either in Tomoe's room or are wandering around the castle, be sure to have them run into the ninja.

Once Tomoe realizes what the ninja were searching for, she'll show the PCs the scroll, tell them everything that happened, and beg for their advice.

She's contemplating surrendering to Scorpion justice, holding the scroll hostage until the invasion force withdraws. The only reason she hasn't done so already is that she hopes they can survive the siege - but this looks less and less likely, especially if the well is poisoned. She is also repelled by the idea of the Scorpion clan being the only ones to learn of the conspiracy, since they'll be more likely to join it than destroy it.

If the heroes are willing to copy the scroll and take it to the proper authorities, Tomoe is willing to surrender. Her decision will hinge on what the heroes say when she discusses it with them. (She won't want Ozaki or Oda present. She thinks Ozaki would want to take the blame instead, even though he's needed to carry on the Usagi name. As for Oda, she's afraid he would forbid her straight out, even though it's the only chance for any Usagis to survive.) If they encourage her to surrender with the scroll, she does so the next day, carrying the scroll out with a torch ready to destroy it.

If Tomoe surrenders, the Scorpion forces withdraw (temporarily) while she is imprisoned, interrogated, and eventually executed. (Assuming her brother and his new-found allies don't rescue her.) After her execution, the Scorpion have no pretext for another invasion, but the Hare clan will need powerful allies at court to keep the Scorpion from finding another reason to crush them. The court influence angle is complicated because (1) the Lion are less willing to help and

Skills: Iaijutsu 1, Kenjutsu 1, Defense 1

Tomie is a thick, brutish looking man whose features are completely concealed behind a grimacing mask. He never speaks to his opponents, and his fighting style lacks the grace and fluid style of the Bayushi school. He makes up for it with power and poison; his sword is coated with a milky-white fluid that makes a blow from it incredibly painful.

SOSHI HISOKA

Earth 2

Fire 2

Water 2

Air 3

Void 2

Attacking: 3k2 (Iaijutsu or Kenjutsu); 4k2 during the duel

Damage: 5k2 (9k2 for the first strike of a battle, 10k2 for the first strike of the duel)

TN to hit: 15

Wounds per level: 4: -0; 8: -1; 12: -2; 16: -3; 20: -4; 24: Down; 28: Out; 32: Dead

Skills: Iaijutsu 1, Kenjutsu 1, Defense 1

Hisoka is the chief shugenja for this mission. A tall, slender man, his fingers seem freakishly long, and his mask is a featureless white veil. His voice is high and clear, and he will greet his opponent with extreme courtesy. However, his sword has the same poison on it as Tomie's blade. Furthermore, he has cast *Biting Steel* on his weapon. If Hisoka dies in the duel, no one else in the Scorpion army can cast *Mists of Illusion* or *Earthquake*.

空

TOMOE'S APPRENTICES

There are two minor shugenja who have studied with and under Tomoe, and who usually tend minor temples throughout the Hare lands. During the siege, they'll come to Castle Usagi. Their names are Koretada and Yasuko. They have identical stats and are both at shugenja rank 1.

Earth 2

Fire 2

Water 2

Air 2

Void 2

Wounds per Level: 8: -1;
12: -2; 16: -3; 20: -4; 24:
Down; 28: Out; 32: Dead

Both of them have the following spells:
Sense, Commune, Summon, The Fury of Osano-Wo, The Path of Inner Peace

In addition, Koretada knows Hands of Jurojin and Yasuko knows Counterspell.

Koretada is a very young man – barely older than a boy – with a prominent adam's apple and a look of perpetual concern. Yasuko is a bit older, about eighteen, and a bit overweight.

These two will only go out into battle in the most dire of circumstances. They have no combat skills or training.

(2) the loss of face caused by Tomoe's admission of guilt, theft and murder. (This loss of face might be somewhat mitigated if Ozaki comes back from Hiruma castle with the lost clan sword.)

Tomoe is doubly likely to sacrifice herself if the clan sword is still missing. She wants to spare the family until the sword can be recovered.

However, it's equally possible that the heroes and Tomoe will try to tough things out – perhaps while racing to crack the code before the Scorpion can crack their gate. Tomoe is convinced that there's some kind of trick to simplifying the code – "I feel that I'm just not looking at it the right way!"

Day Five: Wave Upon Wave

By this time, several variables have come into play. If the ninja successfully poisoned the well, assume that the Hare lose all future Battle rolls. If any of the Scorpion's assaults so far were successful, especially the last western one, increase by two the number of Heroic Deeds needed each hour to keep the Scorpion at bay.

Even if both the ninja and the western assault were foiled, Tomaru gets impatient and decides to simply crush Castle Usagi once and for all. At dawn, before the castle's defenders have had a chance to fully recover from the previous night's battle, Tomaru commits his reserve troops to a fresh assault on the western wall. The Hare must either make a successful Battle roll and get two Heroic Deeds a turn, or get four Heroic Deeds an hour to keep the wall intact. Tomaru will drive his troops for eight full hours before giving up; this makes for an all-day battle in mud, with the hot sun beating down.

By the end of the day, Tomaru is almost certain to be inside the final wall. If he's not, he makes a final threat around sunset; this time, he promises to slowly kill everyone inside unless they surrender now.

Ironically, that night Tomoe cracks the code. She's appalled to discover the scroll contains instructions to kill the magistrate of Forest Shadow City and make it look like suicide! It gives no other details, other than speaking of a "master", an agent at Forest Shadow City who must be protected, and the "work" there.

If the clan sword is still missing, Oda takes the

heroes and his children aside and tells them about a secret passage out of the castle. He wants to know if they're willing to sneak out, recover the sword, and try to keep the Hare Clan alive even after the fall of the castle. Though uncomfortable with abandoning their family home to destruction, the Usagis may be swayed with arguments about protecting the scroll from the Scorpion clan.

Day Six: The End of the Siege

At dawn, Tomaru's forces renew their assault. Now the Usagis have to get four Heroic Deeds an hour and win the Battle roll, or get *seven* Heroic Deeds an hour to keep the Scorpions out. Once inside, they'll try to make good on Tomaru's promise of slaughtering everyone.

Those Usagis who are still around will closet themselves briefly with Takeshi once the gate is breached; only Takeshi emerges alive, carrying a bloody sword. If the Hare clan's ancestral sword has been returned by this point in the story, it was the blade used to end the Usagi line. Takeshi looks pale, but will ask the heroes to come with him. "It is my late masters' will that you, who helped us without obligation, be spared the wrath of the Scorpion clan." Then he quickly leads them to the escape tunnel and through it. At the other end, he hands them the scroll and the sword. "It was the wish of the family that you have these. And if you would do a favor for...for a ronin..." with those words he kneels and prepares to commit *seppuku*.

If, by some incredible feats of bravery and skill, the Usagi family manages to hold Tomaru off for another eight hours, something happens that's practically a miracle. A lone rider in Scorpion livery charges up the road and is quickly admitted to Tomaru's presence. Within an hour, his troops have fallen back – though still ready to close in. An hour after that, Shosuro Rei flies a flag of truce and asks an audience with Oda while the army begins decamping.

If Oda (or some other representative of the defenders) emerges, here's what Rei has to say.

"Greetings. I've been busy at the fortress convincing those in power that your lands aren't worth the trouble, and that a siege isn't the best way to get the scroll. Just now I

arrived with orders from Shoji's hand that Tomaru is to withdraw.

"The duration of Tomaru's separation depends entirely on you. It can be permanent; but unless we see some prompt concessions, it will be doubly vicious. He dislikes the appearance of failure.

"We require the following: first, at all times and in all places, when the subject of this siege comes up, everyone praises the military might of the Scorpion clan and blesses their gracious mercy. Tomaru is not going to lose face on this deal. Second, the original scroll is to be remanded into my possession, today. Third, a marriage, with an appropriate dowry, will be arranged between Tomoe and a suitable Scorpion samurai. Might I suggest Tomaru himself? It makes a nice story – victor sees beautiful daughter of the clan, his heart is suffused with noble love and mercy, and so forth.

"Those are the three conditions from the Scorpion clan. Now, as I've mentioned before, I sometimes find conflicts between my duties to Lord Shoji and my duties to the Emerald Champion. To be a loyal Scorpion, I have to bring him the original copy of the scroll. However... I feel that the Yukio scroll may be a clue to something larger and more threatening. Therefore, my duty to the Emerald Champion compels me to retain a copy of the scroll for my own investigation...



though, of course, naturally, obviously I could never encourage anyone who's seen the scroll to make a third copy for themselves and to pursue an independent investigation. That would be absolutely out of the question.

"Make up your mind. You've got until sunset to deliver."

If the castle falls, Rei may still show up and try to convince the heroes to let her copy the scroll – she'll have Shoji's orders to pause to show them as proof.

In any event, the siege ends, as does this adventure.

Consequences and Rewards

THE SWORD

If the heroes retrieved the clan sword, give them five experience points and two Glory points.

THE HARE CLAN

If the Hare Clan was destroyed, the heroes get no additional experience points. If only a few members of the clan survived, the heroes each get two experience points. If all the members of the family were saved, give the heroes five experience points.

THE SCROLL

If a player actually decoded the verbatim message on the scroll, give that player's character an extra point of Void. (Also have him send in his solution – see page 44.) If the heroes decoded the scroll (meaning the player rolled to decode instead of figuring it out with pencil and paper), give them two experience points. If they escaped with a copy of the scroll, give them two experience points. If they prevented the Scorpion clan from getting the scroll or a copy of it, give them still *another* two experience points.

THE DUELS

Everyone who fought a duel with a lieutenant gets three experience points that can only be spent on Void or Iaijutsu. Furthermore, everyone who killed their opponent in the duel gains 2 Glory points. An additional Glory point is awarded to a character who beat Bayushi Sadako in a duel (although vengeful relatives may now want a match).

WHAT ABOUT THE SCROLL?

If the characters ended up with a copy of the scroll, they may be in more trouble than they bargained for. It is, after all, a Kolat document, and the Kolat are not noted for their tolerance of information leaks.

At the very least, the Kolat will want to retrieve the scroll. For maximum player paranoia, you may want to have it just disappear one day, possibly replaced by a chrysanthemum blossom. If you want, you can describe this in such a way that the characters will be looking over their shoulders for a good long time.

THE KHARMA RULE

Don't forget that characters who do not survive the siege can give their descendants a headstart on life by using the optional Karma rule, described on pages 3–4.

Hare Clan Characters

USAGI ODA

Earth 3
 Fire 3
 Water 3
 Air 3
 Void 2
Attacking: 6k3
Damage: 5k2
TN to hit: 15
Wounds: 6: -0; 12: -1; 18: -2; 24: -3; 30: -4; 36: Down; 42: Out; 48: Dead
Skills: Iaijutsu 2; Kenjutsu 3; Battle 2; Defense 2
Techniques: Leap of the Hare

USAGI OZAKI

Earth 2
 Fire 3
 Water 2
 Air 3
 Void 2
Attacking: 5k3
Damage: 5k2
TN to hit: 15
Wounds: 4: -0; 8: -1; 12: -2; 16: -3; 20: -4; 24: Down; 28: Out; 32: Dead
Skills: Iaijutsu 1, Kenjutsu 2, Defense 2
Techniques: Leap of the Hare

USAGI TOMOE

Earth 2
 Fire 3
 Water 2

Air 3

Void 2

Attacking: 3k3

Damage: 3k2

TN to hit: 15

Wounds: 4: -0; 8: -1; 12: -2; 16: -3; 20: -4; 24: Down; 28: Out; 32: Dead

Skills: Tanto 1, Defense 1

Shugenja Rank: 2 (Kitsu School)

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, Counterspell, The Path to Inner Peace (Water), The Ties that Bind (Water), Sympathetic Energies (Water), The Fury of Osano-Wo (Fire), Wings of Fire (Fire) Heart of the Inferno (Fire), Earthquake (Earth), Hands of Jurojin (Earth), Secrets on the Wind (Air), Cloak of Night (Air)

Scorpion Clan Characters

BAYUSHI SADAKO

Earth 1
 Fire 4
 Water 2
 Air 2
 Void 2
Attacking: 6k4 (Iaijutsu) or 5k4 (Kenjutsu)
Damage: 4k3 (5k3 on first strike)
TN to hit: 10
Wounds per level: 2: -0; 4: -1; 6: -2; 8: -3; 10: -4; 12: Down; 14: Out; 16: Dead;
Skills: Iaijutsu 2, Kenjutsu 1, Defense 2

SOSHI HISOKA

Earth 2
 Fire 2
 Water 2
 Air 3
 Void 2
Attacking: 3k2 (Iaijutsu or Kenjutsu); 4k2 during the duel
Damage: 5k2 (9k2 on first strike of a battle, 10k2 on first strike of the duel)

TN to hit: 15

Wounds per level: 4: -0; 8: -1; 12: -2; 16: -3; 20: -4; 24: Down; 28: Out; 32: Dead

Skills: Iaijutsu 1, Kenjutsu 1, Defense 1

KOCHAKO TOMI

Earth 4
 Fire 2
 Water 2
 Air 1
 Void 1
Attacking: 3k2
Damage: 7k2 (10k2 on first blow)
TN to hit: 5
Wounds per level: 8: -0; 16: -1; 24: -2; 32: -3; 40: -4; 48: Down; 56: Out; 64: Dead
Skills: Iaijutsu 1, Kenjutsu 1, Defense 1

NINJA I

Earth 2
 Fire 3
 Water 2
 Air 2
Attacking: 5k3 with all weapons.

Damage: 4k2 with nekode, 4k2 with ninjato (8k2 first time it does damage), 5k1 with poisoned shuriken (1 if reused)
TN to hit: 10

Wounds per level: 4: -0; 8: -1; 12: -2; 16: -3; 20: -4; 24: Down; 28: Out; 32: Dead

Skills: Nekomata 2, Shinobi 4, Dodge 3, Shuriken 2, Poison 2, Katana 2

Special ability: Distraction. By increasing all his TNs by 10 or 20, he can increase the TN to hit him by a like amount.

NINJA 2

Earth 3

Fire 2

Water 3

Air 2

Attacking: 4k2 with both weapons.

Damage: 5k2 with nekode, 5k1 with poisoned shuriken (1 if reused)

TN to hit: 10

Wounds per level: 6: -0; 12: -1; 18: -2; 24: -3; 30: Down; 36: Out; 42: Dead

Special ability: Distraction, as above.

Characters in the Shadowlands



THE OGRE

Earth 2

Stamina 6

Fire 4

Water 1

Strength 6

Air 1

Attacking: 4k4 (3k3 when heroes enter combat)

Damage: 8k2 with club, 8k3 with no-dachi

TN to hit: 30 (Heavy Armor)

Wounds: 15: -1, 30: -2, 45: -3, 60: Dead

Note: When heroes charge in, the ogre has taken 17 wounds

MUG AND MUG

Earth 2

Stamina 6

Fire 4

Water 3

Strength 6

Air 1

Attacking: 4k4

Damage: 8k2 with club

TN to hit: 25 (Poor Quality Heavy Armor)

Wounds: 15: -1, 30: -2, 45: -3, 60: Dead

MASAGO

Earth 2

Willpower 3

Air 3

Fire 2

Water 3

Void 3

Shugenja Rank: 2

Skills: Horsemanship 1, Defense 3, Stealth 3, Kenjutsu 1, Maho 2, Torture 1

Advantages/Disads: Driven (gain magic knowledge); Social Disadvantage (2 levels)

Attacking: 3k2 with Katana

Damage: 6k2 with Katana

TN to hit: 15 (20 with damaged light armor)

Glory: -1

Honor: 0

Wounds per level: 4: -0; 8: -1; 12: -2; 16:

-3; 20: -4; 24: Down; 28: Out; 32: Dead

Outfit: Poor quality light armor, Poor quality katana

Spells: Counterspell (innate), Sense, Commune, Summon, Elemental Ward (innate), The Fury of Osano-Wo, The Path to Inner Peace

THE EXALTED UGU

Earth 3

Fire 3

Water 2

Air 2

Attacking 3k2

Damage 6k2 (katana)

TN to Hit 20 (Light armor)

Wounds 10: -1; 20: Dead

Skills: Maho 2

Special Abilities: Call up angry ghosts and misdirect them, transform goblins into goblin mounts and back., Burning Blood. This Fire spell has a TN 15, and Ugu can use it once per round as his attack. To attempt it he has to be bleeding and blow or spit his blood at someone. If he succeeds, the blood turns into hot wads of sticky fire (2 dice of damage.)

BIG STICK-THE GOBLIN WARLORD

Earth 3

Fire 3

Water 2

Air 1

Attacking 5k2

Damage 6k2 (katana)

TN to Hit 20 (Light Armor)

Wounds 10: -1; 20: Dead

TEN GOBLIN CHUCKERS

Earth 2

Fire 2

Water 1

Air 1

Attacking 3k2

Damage 2k1 (rock)

TN to Hit 15 (Light Armor)

Wounds 6: -1; 12: Dead

Skills: Throw 1

TEN GOBLIN SKIRMISHERS

Earth 2

Fire 2

Water 1

Air 1

Attacking 3k2

Damage 4k2 (sword)

TN to Hit 15 (Light Armor)

Wounds 6: -1; 12: Dead

TWENTY GOBLIN SKIRMISHERS

Earth 2

Fire 2

Water 1

Air 1

Attacking 3k2

Damage 4k2 (short spear)

TN to Hit 15 (Light Armor)

Wounds 6: -1; 12: Dead

THIRTY GOBLIN WOMEN

Earth 2

Fire 2

Water 1

Air 1

Attacking 3k2

Damage 3k2 (club)

TN to Hit 10

Wounds 6: -1; 12: Dead

TWENTY GOBLIN BRATS

Earth 1

Fire 1

Water 1

Air 1

Attacking 1k1

Damage 1k1 (branch or sharp stone)

TN to Hit 10

Wounds 6: Dead

FIVE NEZUMI ("RATLINGS")

Earth 2

Fire 3

Water 2

Air 1

Attack 4k3

Damage 4k2 (spear)

TN to Hit 20 (Light Armor)

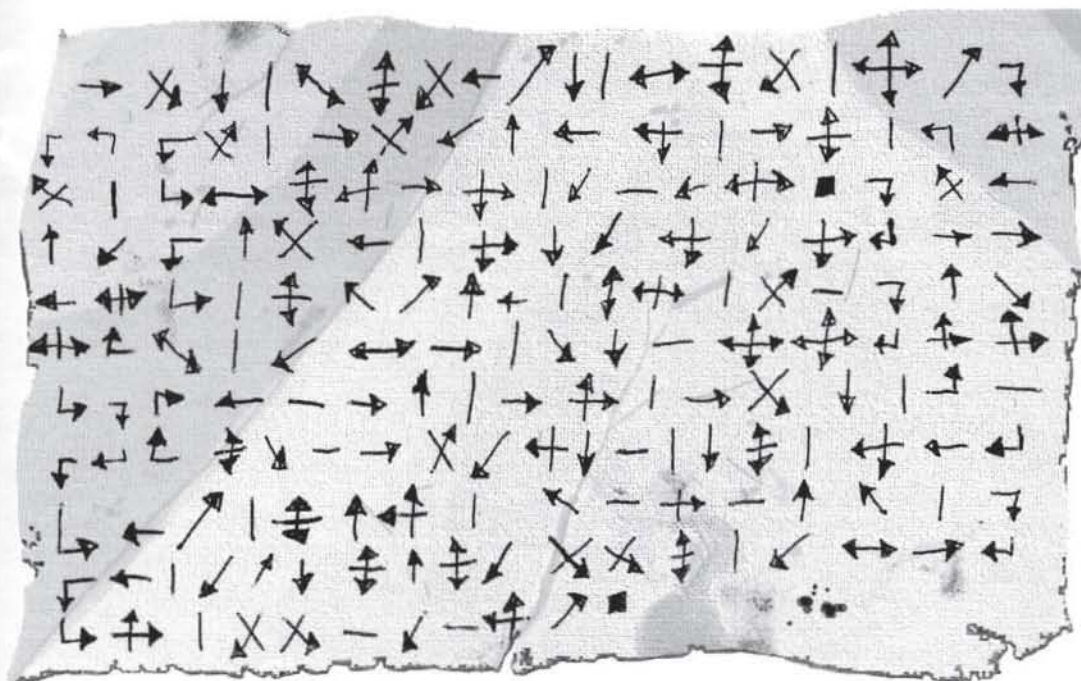
Wounds: 9: -1; 18: Dead

Riddle of the Hare Clan Contest

Below is the actual coded scroll referred to in the Hare Clan adventure. Not only is it designed to be photocopied and handed out to your players at the appropriate time in the adventure, it's also a contest.

Greg is confident that the cipher on this scroll is sufficiently fiendish that it's going to take the NSA several weeks to decipher it, much less a bunch of roleplayers – so prove him wrong! If you can crack the code, send your solution (and the method you used to generate it) with a copy of this page, to:

"I Cracked The Kolat Code"
 c/o Alderac Entertainment Group
 4045 Guasti Road, Suite 212
 Ontario, CA 91761



We'll accept entries postmarked up to and until October 31, 1997. Then in November, we'll award the correct solution (or a random winner from among the correct solutions if there's more than one) the entire L5R RPG line of products in print at that time, including a copy of the extremely-limited-run leatherbound signed Special Edition of the RPG!

Don't let the Kolat get the better of you. The Hare Clan – and a big stack of RPG product – is counting on you!



(and the arms will be in the way). The attacker may be assumed to be trying to keep his hits to the torso/head region, only taking leg hits as targets of opportunity. The target's left side will be hit more often than the right when the attacker is right-handed. The head is only slightly easier to hit because it is very easy to move it quickly, and people instinctively take a lot of care to keep their heads safe.

LOCATION	DIE ROLL
Head	18+
Upper Torso	14-17
Left Arm	13
Right Arm	12
Lower Torso	9-11
Left Leg	7-8
Right Leg	2-6

CHANCE OF HITTING HANDS, FEET, NECK, EYES, GROIN

Rather than clutter the table with entries for these body parts – which GMs might not want to endanger anyway – the GM can determine whether or not one of these valuable bits is hit with an additional die roll. If the GM doesn't want to worry about the long-term game effects of damage to eyes or extremities, just use the tables as presented.

ARMS

If an arm is hit, a roll of 1-2 on 1d10 indicates that the hand is hit.

LEGS

For a leg, a 1 on 1d10 indicates the foot or ankle has been hit.

HEAD

When the head is hit, the GM can assign damage to the eyes with 1 on 1d10, or the neck with 2. If you really want to model groin hits, they occur when you roll 1 on 1d10 after a lower torso hit.

If you want you can add these special locations directly to the tables by setting aside a few % from the "parent" location.

The system below is designed to allow Game Masters to present an additional layer of detail in combat. Normally, Game Masters determine where a character is hit during a skirmish, but the system below adds an additional die roll to further detail a samurai's sword strike.

When using the two tables below, GMs will be using 2 10-sided dice. Depending on how lethal you want the system to be, you may re-roll 10s if you wish (but it isn't recommended for squeamish GMs and players).

Random Hits

This list is used when determining random hits, such as area effect spells, a volley of arrow shots, or any other case in which the firer isn't aiming at a specific body part.

LOCATION	DIE ROLL
Head	18+
Upper Torso	14-17
Left Arm	12-13
Right Arm	11
Lower Torso	8-10
Left Leg	6-7
Right Leg	2-5

Melee Hits by Right-Handed Attacker

In a skirmish, a successful hit is more likely to fall on the torso or arms than the legs. This is because the attacker's weapon is naturally at torso height, the torso is a good place to hit someone

Notes on the Locations

Upper & lower torso are distinct locations because there's some really important stuff (like the heart) in the upper torso. Massive damage to the upper torso (or head) should cause instant death, even if the damage wasn't 100% of the guy's Wounds. Massive damage to the lower torso will chew up the lower GI tract, the liver, etc. and can still easily kill you – but not quite as quickly.

Death and Dismemberment

As a gruesome conclusion to hit locations, we now present a suggested system for determining instant death and dismemberment. Before you read any further, realize that these rules greatly increase characters' chances of getting whacked before their time. You have been warned.

If a character ever receives a head wound and the total number of Wounds is equal to or greater than his Earth x 5, he is killed immediately.

Additionally, if a character receives his Earth x 10 Wounds to the torso, he is killed.

If a character receives his Earth x 3 in Wounds to his arms, he loses the limb. The same rule applies to legs, but the formula is Earth x 4.



Legend of the Five Rings

Name: _____ Clan: _____ Profession: _____

Primary Weapon _____

Primary Armor _____

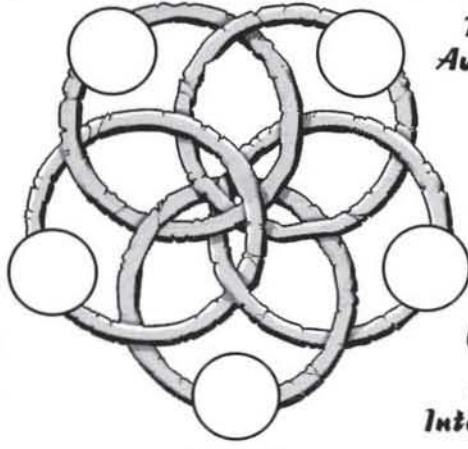
TN to be Hit
(Reflexes x 5 + Armor)

Fire

Agility:
Perception:

Air

Reflexes:
Awareness:



Earth

Stamina:
Willpower:

Water

Strength:
Intelligence:

Void

Void Points Spent: _____

Skills

Advantages and Disadvantages

Insight: _____

Experience Points: _____

School: _____

Rank: _____

Wounds

_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	-0
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	-1
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	-2
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	-3
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	-4
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	Down
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	Out
_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dead

Techniques

Glory:

Honor:

Shadowlands Taint:



Legend of the Five Rings

Name:

Clan:

Home Province:

Allies and Enemies

Spells

Weapons & Equipment

History and Nefarious Deeds

Gifts, Bestowments and Recognitions



Legend of the Five Rings



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Joshua Griffin (order #5340476)