

# Ancestral Dictate

**A One-Round Low/Mid-Rank Adventure for  
Champions of the Emerald Empire (Living Rokugan)**

*The Lion and the Crane, Part 1*

**by Robert Hobart**

**Conflict brews on the border near the contested city of Toshi Ranbo. A Lion samurai marches his army, defying his Clan Champion, and you may be all that stands between Rokugan and all-out war.**

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This is a RPGA Network adventure game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for playing the game (or this round of the game), but the actual playing time will be about three hours.

It is a good idea to ask each player to put a name tag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes it easier for the players to keep track of who is playing which character.

**Scoring the game for RPGA points:** The RPGA has three ways to score this game. Consult your convention coordinator to determine which method to use:

1. *No-vote scoring:* The players write their names and numbers on the scoring packet grid, you fill in the top of the grid. That is all. No one is rated. This method is used for people who are just playing for fun.
2. *Partial scoring:* The players rate the game master and the scenario on their player voting sheet, and provide personal information, but don't vote for other players. The game master rates the scenario and completes personal and event information, but does not rate the players as a team or vote for players. This method is used when there is no competition, but the convention coordinator wants information as to how the game masters are performing, or the game master wants feedback on his or her own performance.
3. *Voting:* Players and game masters complete the entire packet, including voting for best player. If this method is used, be sure to allow about 15-20 minutes for the players to briefly describe their characters to the other players, and about 5-10 minutes for voting. This method is used when the players want to know who played the best amongst them, or when the adventure is run in tournament format with winners and prizes. Multi-round adventures usually required advancing a smaller number of players than played the first round, so voting is required for multi-round adventures.

When using Voting, rank the players in order of your voting choice while they are completing their forms, so that you are not influenced by their comments on your abilities.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in **bold italics**. It is strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text, instead of reading it aloud, as some of the text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

## GM's Information

THIS TOURNAMENT SHOULD NOT BE RUN COLD!

This adventure is a Low-Mid Level adventure. This means that only Rank 1, 2 or 3 Characters should be allowed to play. This adventure was not written with Rank 4 through 5 characters in mind and cannot anticipate all that these characters may bring to the table.

All bulleted information is just that, pure information. Feed it to the players through an NPC when appropriate. Sometimes, reading it straight just doesn't sound right.

The world of Rokugan is a cross between feudal Japan and China. It is set in an age of honorable samurai, serving their Lords (Daimyos) and Empire. Remember that family names come before personal names. Akodo Toturi is from the Akodo family and his personal name is Toturi.

A note on female designations: If a samurai has the designation of -ko, then the samurai is a female. For example, if you see Samurai-ko, then this denotes a female samurai.

A note on commerce in Rokugan: Samurai are not supposed to care about worldly possessions, especially money. A samurai pays a commoner as if the money is meaningless, a concession to the commoner's silly needs. Between samurai, the exchange of money and merchandise is an exchange of "gifts."

CREDIT WHERE IT IS DUE: This scenario draws on materials published in "Legacy of the Forge" (Alderac 1999) and "Fortunes and Winds" (Alderac 2002) although ownership of those materials is not required to play or run the adventure.

### Glory and Honor Awards and Penalties

The end of this adventure lists suggested Glory and Honor awards (and penalties) for dealing with the challenges presented herein. However, at times the players may take extra actions which the GM judges worthy of additional reward – or punishment. The following may be considered as guidelines:

- Performing an act of selfless, sacrificial loyalty to one's daimyo or clan: +1 point of Honor.

- Abiding by the tenets of bushido when one could gain an obvious advantage from breaking them: +1 point of Honor.
- Betraying or disobeying your duty, Clan, or family: lose 1-10 points of Honor and Glory, depending on the severity of the failure.
- Crying out in pain when injured: lose one point each of Honor and Glory.
- Using sneaky, underhanded, or treacherous methods when at an Honor rank higher than zero: lose 1-5 points of Honor.
- Using poison: lose 1-10 points of Honor, depending on the circumstances (there is always an Honor loss for using poison).
- Performing a socially acceptable public act of extreme courage and skill: +1 point of Glory.
- Drunk, insulting, or otherwise ill-mannered in public: lose 1-5 points of Glory.
- Made ronin: Glory drops to zero.

### Adjusting for Party Strength

This is a Low/Mid-Rank adventure, and thus can involve parties of widely varying capabilities. The encounters have been optimized for a party of average Rank Two.

Although most of the challenges here are role-play oriented and thus not terribly dependent on party strength, a few changes can be made to adjust the adventure difficulty for low-end and high-end parties, as follows:

#### **Low End Party** (most/all characters Rank One):

- Reduce the physical traits for the “Warriors of the Forge” to 2.
- Reduce to four the number of Warriors of the Forge in the encounter “Escaping Toshigoku.”
- Lower the TNs for resisting the power of Toshigoku by 5.
- PCs who join in the battle are given Heavy Armor for the duration of the combat.

#### **High End Party** (most/all characters Rank Two and Three):

- Add 1 to all Rings and Traits for the “Warriors of the Forge,” who now roll 4k4 to attack and 7k2 for damage, are TN 25 to be hit, and have Wounds fo 20: +5 and 40: Dead.
- Increase to six the number of Warriors of the Forge in the encounter “Escaping Toshigoku.”
- Add 5 to the TNs for resisting the power of Toshigoku.

## Adventure Summary and Background

This adventure takes place at the city of Toshi Ranbo wo Shien Shite Reigisaho, Violence Beneath Courtliness City, in the northern Crane territories. This city was Lion for many centuries, but a little over twenty years ago the Crane seized it in a sudden political maneuver. The Lion Clan Champion, Akodo Arasou, died a little over eight years ago trying to retake the city. Since then the Lion have made no further attempts to recover the city militarily, but the bitterness of its loss still burns in their hearts. The Matsu family, in particular, longs for the day when the Lion armies will march on the walls of the city where Arasou fell. After all, he was betrothed to marry the young Matsu daimyo, Matsu Tsuko.

The soul of Akodo Arasou does not rest quietly. Because of his death in a bitter, uncompleted military campaign, his spirit rages in Toshigoku, the maddened realm of eternal battle. There he struggles endlessly to win an un-winnable battle, his rage burning ever higher. But Arasou’s soul is not wholly consumed by Toshigoku. He sees the approaching doom of the Lion Clan, and amidst the eternal battles he still struggles to reach out to his living cousins and warn them.

Those with spiritual or emotional ties to Arasou sense his anger and growing despair, and feel the need to answer it. One such person is Matsu Tsuko, but her oaths of obedience bind her to the more peaceful policies of the Lion Clan Champion: Arasou’s younger brother Toturi. Other, lesser Lion, however, find it more difficult to keep their oaths. One such is Matsu Morishige, an eager young *taisa* (officer) in the Lion armies. Driven by the frenzied, incoherent demands of Arasou’s spirit, Morishige has forsaken his vows and is leading his troops toward Toshi Ranbo.

There he will encounter the PCs, who are in the city to witness the Setsuban Festival, an annual celebration of peace and goodwill. The PCs will have the opportunity to rescue Akodo Arasou’s soul from Toshigoku, and to slow – or to accelerate – the slide toward war between the Lion and the Crane.

NOTE on RUNNING THIS SCENARIO: “Ancestral Dictate” can easily run long, especially if the PCs split up rather than all accompany Kitsu Takahara into the spirit realms. It is recommended that this module be run in a five-hour slot.

## Introduction

*It is the eighth day of the month of the Monkey, the month of Shiba (September) in the formal usage. Today is the annual Setsuban Festival, a celebration of the turning of the seasons from summer to autumn.*

*It is also a celebration of peace, for Spring and Summer are the seasons of war-making, and the coming of Fall means that conflict is at an end for the year. No man may shed blood on this day, and executions are forbidden.*

*There is irony, then, that you find yourselves celebrating the festival in Toshi Ranbo wo Shien Shite Reigisaho (Violence Beneath Courtliness City), in the northern Crane territories. The small city has been a source of bitter conflict since the Crane took it from the Lion a generation ago, and the previous Lion Champion, Akodo Arasou, died here less than nine years past, trying vainly to recapture the city.*

*This year, the Crane have gone to great lengths to make the celebration at Toshi Ranbo a thing of beauty and renown. Samurai from all across the Empire, yourselves among them, have been invited to participate in this celebration of peace and beauty. Clearly, the Crane hope that this festival will inspire the other Clans to forsake the path of bloodshed.*

*You arrived in the city late last night, many of you after long journeys, and the Inn of the Brooding Tempest, the main inn of the city, was crowded. Several other travelers shared your table for dinner.*

Allow the PCs to describe and introduce themselves. All Clan PCs are here as guests to attend the Festival. If any of the PCs are ronin, they are here looking for work. After the players have had the chance to establish their characters, move on to the next day.

*Soon after sunrise, dozens of samurai gather a couple of miles outside the city, on the shore of the Drowned Merchant River. The Crane have prepared a barge, shaded with pavilions and decorated in colorful bunting, which rests at the riverside. Standing before it are Doji Shusaku, governor of Toshi Ranbo, and another man who you recognize with surprise as Doji Hoturi, the daimyo of the Doji family and eldest son of the Clan Champion, Doji Satsume.*

*Hoturi bows to the gathered crowd. "On behalf of the Crane Clan, I welcome you to Toshi Ranbo for the annual Setsuban Festival!" he calls in a clear pleasant voice. "From this barge you will be able to observe the beauty of the autumn foliage in peace and*

*safety. This evening, you will be guests at the governor's residence in Toshi Ranbo, feted by our finest entertainers. Enjoy the day, when peace reigns across Rokugan!" The crowd applauds politely and begins to flow down onto the barge.*

### The Guests and NPCs

There are over two hundred guests here: samurai, courtiers, and shugenja from all across the Empire. All of the Great Clans have representation here (there are even a few grumpy Crabs), and several of the Minor Clans as well. There is even a representative of the Imperial families, Otomo Hiroshi, a historian and chronicler.

The GM should feel free to improvise various NPCs for the players to interact with. (For example, if a PC is looking for someone from their own Clan.) The following specific NPCs will be present on the barge for the players to interact with:

**Doji Hoturi (Doji family daimyo).** The daimyo of the Doji family is a handsome, elegant man in his late twenties, with long white hair held back in a loose ponytail. Hoturi has a reputation (earned in his younger days) as a womanizer and sybarite, but in recent years (since his marriage) has lived a life of honor and restraint, at least in public. His manners are as perfect as his looks, and he plays the ideal host to everyone present, without regard for Clan (except ronin, who he politely ignores).

**Doji Shusaku (Governor of Toshi Ranbo).** Shusaku is a slim older man with gray hair at his temples. He is always alone except for his son Isaku. (Courtier/Intelligence or Crane Lore/Intelligence at TN 15 to know that his wife died of a fever a few years ago.) Shusaku is a calm and dignified man, and does his best to see that his guests have a pleasant time. He is seeking an advantageous marriage for his son and only heir, and will assess female PCs from that perspective. Shusaku is uneasy around Lions (due to the recent increase in tensions between the Clans) but is never overtly rude to them.

**Doji Isaku (heir to Toshi Ranbo).** Shusaku's son is an elegant young Crane with the usual white-died hair and splendid kimono. He has a mischievous sense of humor and enjoys making small jokes and puns in conversation. Isaku enjoys flirting with beautiful women and will do so casually throughout the Festival. He is equally friendly to samurai from all Great Clans, but somewhat contemptuous of Minor Clan samurai. He ignores ronin (unless they are attractive females).

**Daidoji Konsetsu (merchant prince).** Konsetsu is a slightly overweight, middle-aged man who, while nominally a bushi, is actually a merchant prince, running scores of trade enterprises through his commoner subordinates. He normally lives far to the south, in the wealthy Crane coastal provinces, but has come north to introduce his lovely daughter Mei to the courts of Rokugan. He is a pleasant, cheerful fellow, although PCs who roll **Simple Awareness** at TN 15 may sense a coiled ruthlessness beneath his pleasant veneer.

**Daidoji Mei (Konsetsu's daughter).** PCs who have played the adventure *Face of Fear* have encountered Mei, and may even have earned her gratitude by rescuing one of her childhood friends from the Shadowlands. She will remember such PCs and speaks with them in person, thanking them again for their help. Mei is a lovely, delicate young woman, just a couple of years past her *gempukku* (coming-of-age), and behaves very sweetly and properly, with restrained manners and downcast eyes. She has none of Ide Tamai's fierce spirit.

**Kitsu Takahara (idealistic sodan-senzo).** PCs who have played through the adventure *Evil Feeds Upon Itself* may have briefly met this young *sodan-senzo* (ancestor-shugenja). An earnest, smiling young man, Takahara will be happy to speak with anyone, but especially seeks out those who are marked by the attentions of ancestral spirits (Ancestor advantages, or Haunted disadvantages). Takahara is not only idealistic but extremely naïve – he tries to think the best of everyone he meets, assumes everybody is a loyal servant of the Emperor, and accepts bushido as an unquestioned fact of life. The behavior of Matsu Morishige will come as a great shock to him.

**Bayushi Tenkawa.** A Scorpion courtier in his late thirties or early forties, Tenkawa puts on the air of a quiet, gentle, world-weary man who is troubled by the sordid maneuverings of Rokugani politics. This is a front: he is actually a Scorpion agent of supreme skill and ruthlessness. Tenkawa has no particular mission here and is in the scenario mainly to make Scorpion-phobic characters nervous.

**Ide Tamai (Unicorn ambassador).** Tamai is a tall, elegant young woman with a refined air and an acerbic razor-sharp wit. She dislikes crude and uncivilized folk (such as Crab, Matsu, ronin, and the lest refined members of her own Clan) and will let them have the full impact of her courtier skills. She is seeking a good marriage, one which will be politically advantageous to

her family. She hopes for an honorable husband and not some “crude brute” or “fat, vile merchant prince, like that Daidoji Konsetsu.” She will confide her fears of a bad husband to female PCs who seem sympathetic.

**Shiba Tsumenitsu (minor Phoenix daimyo).** Tsumenitsu is a minor daimyo from nearby Phoenix lands, and a skilled swordsman. PCs who roll **Kenjutsu/Intelligence**, **Iaijutsu/Intelligence**, or **Lore (Bushido, Kenjutsu, Iaijutsu, or anything similar)/Intelligence** at TN 10 have heard of his formidable skills. He is obsessed with his rivalry with a Dragon general, Mirumoto Sanbe, and this attitude spills over into a general dislike of Mirumoto samurai and of their fighting techniques, which he will disparage at every opportunity. Since Tsumenitsu is a daimyo with a Glory of 5.8, most PCs will have to bear his insults in good grace.

A PC who rolls **Courtier** or **Lore** (any category judged suitable by the GM), with the **Intelligence** trait, at TN 15 may have heard stories of Tsumenitsu's rivalry with Sanbe, including tales of a famous duel at winter court two years ago, a duel which was provoked by Sanbe insulting Tsumenitsu's swordsmanship, and which had to be called off when both men were severely wounded in the opening pass of arms. Anyone who rolls **Simple Intelligence** (or **Phoenix Lore/Intelligence**) at TN 15 knows that Tsumenitsu has become a daimyo only recently, appointed to the position in recognition of his many accomplishments as a swordsman and, especially, his stunning victory in a Phoenix Clan kenjutsu tournament last winter (less than six months after recovering from his duel with Sanbe).

## A Beautiful Trip

*The barge floats downstream, controlled by a couple of dozen servants who pole it along the river shallows. About a mile downstream is a large forest which crowds close to the northern shore of the river. The beginning of autumn has turned the leaves a riot of colors, red, orange, and gold mixed in with some which retain their green freshness. The guests on the barge share soft comments on the stunning natural beauty before them.*

The barge will drift slowly downstream for about an hour before the servants begin the arduous work of poling it back upstream to Toshi Ranbo. The return trip takes more than twice as long, and it is past midday when the barge puts in to land again.

During the trip, the PCs will be free to interact with all the NPCs on board, and discuss the news and doings of

the Empire. Besides the specific interests of each NPC, the following general gossip is going around:

- **The status of Hantei Sotorii.** The Imperial heir was rescued a few months ago from the clutches of the Bloodspeaker cult. Since then he has been in seclusion in the Imperial palace. Rumors abound that he has been deformed or Tainted by his experience, although no-one will speak such things above a whisper.
- A popular conversational topic is the **recent murder of a Lion ambassador** in the City of the Rich Frog, a ronin settlement which lies between the territories of the Lion and the Unicorn Clans. Lion troops were dispatched to the city to arrest a Unicorn who was suspected of the crime. Although the city rulers presented evidence suggesting that the Unicorn magistrate had been framed, tensions between the Lion and Unicorn have been extremely high since then, and some believe a full-scale war may be eminent. (PCs who played through the adventure *A Hidden Blade* will know more about what happened.)
- **Lion – Crane tensions** have also been high for many months. Some Lion are said to believe that the incident in the City of the Rich Frog was staged by a Daidoji spy trying to divert the Lion from war with the Crane. The Crane deny any such rumors, of course.
- **There are peculiar rumors about Scorpion lands.** Some sort of terrible secret has been discovered in the cave they unearthed beneath Kyuden Bayushi two years ago. It is said that Bayushi Shoji, the Scorpion Champion, has been spending long hours closeted with his shugenja, discussing the secrets they have found. (Bayushi Tenkawa will deny all of this, dismissing it as silly, tiresome rumors. “All a Scorpion has to do is cough, and everyone thinks a plague is coming,” he sighs.)
- There are **rumors from Dragon lands** that Mirumoto Hitomi, the young daimyo of the Mirumoto family, has left her home and wanders the Empire with only a handful of guards and servants. Whether this is true, or just another false tale about that brash young samurai-ko, is unknown. Dragon PCs will not know any more about this than the NPCs.

(Shiba Tsumenitsu may use this topic as an opportunity to make some sneering remarks about the Mirumoto family.)

- Some recent incidents are **re-igniting the feud between the Yasuki and the Crane Clan.** The Crane have accused the Yasuki of smuggling gaijin pepper (gunpowder), and two minor Yasuki daimyo have committed seppuku to atone for the shame of the incident. Some Crane, notably in the Daidoji family, have been suggesting that that is not nearly enough, and that it is high time the Crane taught the Yasuki the meaning of Honor on the battlefield once more.

## Return to the Docks

As the barge puts in to shore, a large meal waits for the guests, laid out on long tables under wide pavilions to protect them from the bright midday sun. The food is excellent, subtle and complex in flavor, and includes several traditional festival dishes.

As Doji Hoturi promised, there is entertainment during the meal: several Kakita artisans offer performances of origami, dance, poetry, and music to supplement the natural beauty floating by on-shore. The Kakita artisans are quiet and tasteful, making sure to never let their displays become gaudy or distracting. A Shiba Tejina (entertainment mage) is also present, and offers a few minor, humble illusions to supplement the Kakita's work.

As the meal concludes, Doji Hoturi rises to announce the next part of the festival. Before he can speak, however, someone cries out: “**Daskette!**” (Help me!)

The voice is that of a young Crane, gray-faced with exhaustion, weaving in the saddle as he rides his foaming pony up to the gates of the city. Before the sentries can do more than step toward him, he slumps off his mount, landing heavily. “The Lion, the Lion are attacking!” he gasps out between gulping breaths.

### The Scout's Report

The scout's name is Kakita Toju. He lies semi-conscious next to his steed, which is wheezing for breath, sporting two bloody arrows from its side. PCs with the Medicine skill or healing magic can treat the pony or its rider if they wish. If they take no action, an Asahina shugenja will eventually come forward and treat Toju, who has a nasty arrow-wound in his leg. The pony, if left untended, will collapse and die after a

few minutes, during a suitably dramatic moment of conversation.

Once recovered, Toju offers the following information:

*“I was part of a scouting party which patrols the border of Lion lands each day. This morning seemed no different than any other... but then we saw a Lion army, hundreds of men, marching up from the south. When we approached and demanded their business, they fired arrows at us. My comrades were slain instantly, and I ran for my life. The Lion followed only slowly – they were on foot – but I could clearly see they were coming in this direction. They will be here in a day or less.”*

Kakita Toju is being completely truthful, and is struggling to hold back tears over the deaths of his comrades. The arrows which pierce his mount are fletched in Lion gold-brown, and a **Heraldry** or **Fletchery** roll (**Intelligence** trait) at TN 10 can confirm with certainty that they are of Lion make.

## Matsu Morishige Arrives

Let the PCs make whatever response or preparation they wish to the news they have just learned. The Crane are in a flurry of alarm, dispatching scouts and messengers. Reports soon filter back: a party of mounted Lion troops are approaching. Courtiers scurry this way and that with panicky haste, but Doji Hoturi stands calm and fearless as he waits for the Lion. He dispatches Governor Doji Shusaku to the city itself, warning him to prepare its defenses, and stands in the company of only a few other samurai.

*Soon you can see the approaching Lion, a group of about twenty, all mounted on sturdy Rokugani ponies. They are dressed in full battle armor, many of them with terrifying mempo covering their faces. Banners with the mon of the Lion and the Matsu family flutter from their backs. The leader, a broad-shouldered man with eyes that glare ferociously through the roaring-lion face of his mempo, raises one muscle-corded arm and halts the troop fifty yards away. He dismounts and strides forward a few paces alone, then stands there, hands on hips. A long moment of silence follows, broken only by the whinnies of the mounts.*

Morishige will wait until Doji Hoturi (or a PC) is about to speak, then calls out in a deep, shocking bellow.

*“I am Matsu Morishige! The blood of a thousand Lion ancestors flows in my veins! When Shinjo*

*Tamai faced me in the field, his head fell from his shoulders! When Shiba Kansuke insulted my family in court, he paid with his life!”*

Any PC who rolls **Battle/Intelligence** or **Lore (Bushido)/Intelligence** at TN 10 recognizes this as traditional pre-battle boasting, a means of psychological dominance which all Rokugani samurai use before a fight. Doji Hoturi listens patiently, then answers:

*“I am Doji Hoturi, daimyo of my family. A hundred samurai have tested my blade, and a hundred samurai have perished. What are you doing on Crane lands, Matsu Morishige-san? Why do you profane the sacred Setsuban festival with your shouts of war?”*

Morishige replies: *“Eight years ago Akodo Arasou, our beloved Clan Champion, perished on treacherous Daidoji spears, fighting to reclaim a city which has been Lion since the earliest days of the Empire! The spirit of Akodo Arasou cries out for vengeance, and I have answered! The shame of Arasou’s death in the walls of this city will not be endured any longer! My army marches, and in one day’s time we will reach this city, erase the shame of twenty years ago, and avenge Lord Arasou’s valiant death!”*

After this initial speech, Morishige will soften his tone slightly, explaining that he is notifying the Crane now so they can evacuate those who are not combatants. “Compassion is a part of bushido, and I am not blind to it. Those who wish to fight us honorably may remain. We know that many Crane do not practice the arts of combat.” (He sneers, and his men chuckle behind him.) “And of course we have no desire to slay those of other Clans who are here merely as guests.”

His message delivered, Morishige turns on his heel and marches back to his mount, ignoring the cries and demands from the gathered Crane. Doji Hoturi shouts at his retreating back, “If you wish Crane blood, Lion, why not try to take mine?” The Lion simply swings onto his pony and rides away, escorted by his guards.

### Morishige’s Spirit-Burden

If any of the PCs are *sodan-senzo*, or have the ability to detect spirits or ghosts (Cloud Tattoo, Falcon clan, or Half-Blooded Kitsu), then during this entire scene they will see a spirit’s image hovering over Morishige’s shoulder – an angry samurai in full armor, his face contorted in rage, shouting into Morishige’s ear. Any PC who rolls **History/Intelligence** or **Lore (Lion Clan)/Intelligence** at TN 15 (TN 10 for Lion Clan

PCs) after seeing this apparition can identify it as Akodo Arasou.

## The Crane Response

As soon as the Lion ride out of sight, Hoturi and Governor Shusaku spring into action, hastily summoning troops from the city and dispatching more scouts to patrol the area. Hoturi also sends couriers to Otosan Uchi (the capital of the Empire) to inform the Emperor of the Lions' violation of peace. Other messengers go out to summon Crane troops from the surrounding countryside. Reports soon arrive confirming that the Lion army, numbering over 700, is marching steadily toward the city and will be here by midnight at the latest.

Doji Hoturi will calm the crowds of anxious guests, assuring them that there is no immediate danger. He will suggest that perhaps, in light of these unfortunate events, the guests should leave at once rather than staying for the celebrations, evening meal and fireworks which were planned to conclude the Setsuban Festival. How the PCs react to this suggestion is up to them. The responses of the various NPCs are listed below:

**Doji Hoturi** himself will wish to remain and defy the Lion. His bodyguards will urge him to depart ("not to flee, but to carry on the fight elsewhere, where your words will carry weight"). Hoturi is sensitive to accusations of cowardice, and will not depart unless some of the PCs join their words to those of his guards.

If the PCs speak with Doji Hoturi about this crisis, he expresses bewilderment at the entire incident. "I have some acquaintance with Akodo Toturi, the Lion Champion, and he has assured me he will not allow the Matsu to start a fight without permission. What could drive this Morishige to disobey his Clan Champion? The Lion teach obedience above all things."

**Doji Shusaku** will remain to help defend the city which he rules. He will force his son Isaku to depart for Otosan Uchi to plead their case to the Emperor. (His real motivation, of course, is to preserve his family's bloodline.) Shusaku will now be extremely hostile to any Lion (and especially Matsu) PCs, demanding to know why their Clan is breaking the peace of the Empire.

**Doji Isaku** will be obviously upset at his father's orders, but will reluctantly obey. He tells any PCs who speak with him that he would far rather die honorably, fighting the "Lion dogs," than live with any stain of

cowardice upon him. PCs may be able to talk him into accepting his orders more gracefully. However, female PCs who agree with his suggestion that retreat is cowardice will prompt him to secretly remain behind in defiance of his father.

**Daidoji Konsetsu** and his daughter **Mei** will immediately depart the city. Konsetsu is not a true bushi and has no intention of endangering his daughter in a battle. Mei will urge any PCs she knows to "please, find a way to avert this war."

**Ide Tamai** will have no intention of letting a few "uncouth Matsu" disrupt the Setsuban Festival, and urges everyone to carry on as before. Many of the Crane will follow her example, continuing on with the festival even as their troops assemble to defend the city.

**Bayushi Tenkawa** will plan to depart, but remarks that there is no need to leave before the Festival is complete, since the Lion will not attack until tomorrow. He will stay until evening, nudging the Crane toward further hostility toward the Lion. "The Lion play a double game, it seems, promising peace but then delivering war. And they think we Scorpion are untrustworthy."

**Shiba Tsumenitsu** is disgusted by this "Lion aggression" and immediately prepares to depart for Phoenix lands. He also mentions that he plans to immediately notify his Clan Champion, Shiba Ujimitsu, of the Lion Clan's violation of the sacred Setsuban truce.

### What is Happening?

Any Lion PCs will know that in point of fact, Akodo Toturi has not approved any attack on Toshi Ranbo. Therefore Morishige is in violation of bushido by defying his lord. However, if anyone realizes that Morishige is obeying the dictates of an ancestor (Akodo Arasou), the situation becomes more complex. All samurai are taught to revere their ancestors and to obey their dictates. Morishige is caught in a conflict of loyalties.

## Kitsu Takahara Takes Action

In the aftermath of Morishige's visit, any PC who observes the reactions of the guests will notice a deeply troubled expression on the face of Kitsu Takahara. He will initially keep his concerns to himself, standing lost in thought while the Crane and the other NPCs rush about in panic. Eventually, if none of the PCs

volunteer to speak with him, Takahara will approach one of them – preferably a Lion (especially a fellow *sodan-senzo*) or a PC who struck him as honorable and noble.

Takahara has seen the same apparition that some of the PCs may have seen – the raging spirit of Akodo Arasou, screaming at Morishige for vengeance. “I have never seen such an angry and unquiet ancestral spirit. How can our late Clan Champion be so filled with wrath? Something must be wrong.”

Takahara is reluctant to speak further until he sees the PCs’ response. If the PCs behave favorably (that is, they seem to share his concern over the strange behavior of Arasou’s spirit), he will eventually confess his true fear – that Arasou’s soul has somehow been condemned to Toshigoku, the Realm of Endless Battle.

“But such a thing seems impossible,” Takahara frowns. “Toshigoku lies far beyond the mortal realm, and the wrathful souls condemned to that place spend eternity in futile, mindless battle. Only those blessed souls who have been elevated to Yomi have the power to advise their karmic descendents. If Arasou is there, how can his soul be reaching out to this young Matsu? And yet how else to explain the mad wrath with which he urges Morishige-san on to war?”

Any PC who rolls **Theology** or **Lore (Ancestors)** with the **Intelligence** Trait (TN 15) can confirm that Takahara’s description of the afterlife is accurate. Spirits in Yomi, the Realm of Blessed Ancestors, are peaceful and enlightened, freed of the cares and angers of the mortal realm. Arasou’s wrath is highly uncharacteristic of such spirits. But the angry spirits condemned to Toshigoku lose all connections with their descendents, and degenerate into mindless killing machines. Arasou’s behavior does not fit that realm either.

### **Takahara’s Proposal**

If the PCs seem both sympathetic to his concerns and willing to help, Takahara will eventually offer the following proposal:

*“As some of you may know,”* (he nods politely to any shugenja among the PCs) *“we of the Kitsu family are sometimes taught the art of spirit-walking, traveling into the afterlife to consult with the blessed spirits of our ancestors in Yomi. I myself have made such a trip once, in the company of my sensei. I believe, under these circumstances, that the only way to avert a disastrous war – a war which will bring the wrath of*

*the Emperor down on the Lion Clan – is to find Akodo Arasou’s spirit. I am prepared to attempt the journey – but I am not sure I can survive it alone. The spirit realms are filled with dangers.”*

Takahara is too much the proud Lion to directly ask for help – this is as close as he will get to asking the PCs to accompany him. He will gladly accept the aid of any PC who offers, smiling with gratitude.

If the PCs ask Takahara for more details about traveling into the spirit realms, he can share the following information:

- Yomi is the Realm of Blessed Ancestors. It is said to be a supremely safe and enlightened place, where all elevated souls dwell in harmony. This is where karmic ancestors are usually found, and it is where Takahara intends to seek first for Akodo Arasou. “Even if he is not there, it should be possible to gain the help of those who reside in the Blessed Realm.”
- Toshigoku is the Realm of Slaughter, a place of endless battle and death. The souls condemned to that place slay each other in senseless combat, only to rise again the next day and resume the madness. It is an extremely dangerous place. “If we must go there, you will have to be on your guard against the corrupting power of the place. Your own anger will betray you.”
- Crystal can protect against Toshigoku’s influence, if the PCs have any.
- PCs must watch out for other entities in all the Realms beyond this one. “We Kitsu are not the only ones who can cross the barriers between the realms. I have heard stories...” He trails off and will say no more.
- It is also possible (though unlikely) that Arasou may be trapped in Gaki-do, the land of Hungry Dead. Takahara shudders at the thought. “Gaki-do is a deadly realm,” he warns. “If we must go there, trust nothing and be constantly alert.”

In the event that no PCs decide to accompany Takahara, the upcoming Lion attack can probably not be averted, but the PCs can still try if they wish. See the section “Not Going to Toshigoku” for details.

## Arasou's Shrine

If the PCs agree to help Takahara in his enterprise, he asks them to accompany him into the city of Toshi Ranbo. "There is a shrine to Arasou's memory in the city. Such places are well-suited to passing the walls between the realms."

The gates of Toshi Ranbo are guarded by angry-looking Crane bushi, who will be extremely reluctant to let any Lions into the city. If most or all of the party is composed of Lion PCs, the Crane will be downright hostile and aggressive, and the PCs will have to be extremely polite and persuasive (and make a **Sincerity** roll or two) to avoid an armed confrontation. Even if the only Lion present is Takahara, the Crane guards will be reluctant to admit the party to the city, and will have to be politely convinced to do so. **Sincerity** and **Etiquette** rolls can be helpful here, as can support from Crane PCs. PCs with social prominence (Emerald Magistrates, Ear of the Emperor advantage, allies in the Crane Clan or the Imperial Families) should get a bonus in such negotiations.

Bold or desperate PCs can appeal directly to Doji Shusaku, or to Doji Hoturi if he has not yet been convinced to leave the area.

Once the PCs gain access to the city, a pair of guards will escort them directly to the Shrine of Arasou, which is located on the grounds of the actual castle in the center of the city:

*Your escorts lead you through the gates of the small city, past frantic, milling crowds of commoners, and into the parade grounds where the castle troops are mustering for the city's defense. After speaking with a series of guard posts, you are led through an inner gate and up a long ramp to the castle complex itself, passing beneath Crane banners which seem to flutter and snap with the anxiety which consumes all of Toshi Ranbo. Once you reach the courtyard, the guards turn aside and lead you around the castle walls to a small stone building tucked into one corner behind the barracks. A torii archway guards a narrow pathway which leads behind the building. The guards gesture for you to proceed.*

The guards are polite (assuming the PCs were polite themselves) and will not enter the shrine area unless they hear violence or other untoward sounds.

Beyond the archway, a narrow path leads between the walls of the shrine and the castle. It circles around to a wooden door which is sealed with a large Lion Clan

mon. Anyone who rolls **Lore (Lion Clan)**, **Lore (Crane Clan)**, or **History** (all with the **Intelligence** trait) at TN 15 will know that the Lion constructed this shrine after the battle eight years ago and sealed Arasou's armor inside. (Takahara will know this if none of the PCs do.)

Takahara will kneel on the raked gravel path outside the shrine and begin to compose himself for the trip to the spirit realms. He urges all those PCs who are accompanying him to kneel in a circle around him, and to "clear and compose their thoughts." He then begins to chant, a long droning incantation which goes on, hypnotically, for several minutes.

In order to successfully clear their thoughts and calm their souls enough to accompany Kitsu Takahara into the spirit realms, the PCs must succeed in either a **Simple Void** roll at TN 10, a **Meditation/Void** roll at TN 10, or a **Simple Awareness** roll at TN 15. Any PCs who fail the roll (or who choose not to accompany Takahara into the spirit world) find themselves suddenly alone in the alleyway: Takahara and his companions vanish instantaneously, with no sound or flash of light to signal their departure.

## The Journey to Yomi

*You find yourselves passing through a realm of coiling white mists, in which nothing is visible save the indistinct outlines of your companions. You are standing still, but there is nonetheless a sense of movement, more like the world is shifting past you than you are moving through it. Kitsu Takahara's voice is muffled and indistinct, as though spoken through a thick layer of silk, even though he stands right beside you. "This is the passage between worlds. Be cautious, and do not let yourself be pulled apart from the group. There are dangers here for those who let themselves be distracted."*

Have each PC roll **Simple Void** at TN 15. Any PC who fails to make the roll will be subjected to one of the following visions, distractions, or threats while they travel through the mists between the realms. Each such PC perceives a different encounter, and none of them share their vision unless the GM judges that they have enough similarities in their personal identities to do so (for example, a brother and sister PC might see the same vision). PCs who made their Void roll are completely unaware of what befalls their companions.

The list offers an assortment of suitable encounters for this journey – the GM can improvise different ones if they seem more appropriate than those available.

1. **Darkness.** The PC perceives a coiling line of shadowy darkness which slithers forward out of the mist, like a questing snake. This is a manifestation of the Living Darkness. If the PC ignores the darkness, it slides coldly across his/her foot before vanishing back into the mist. If the PC reacts in some way, the darkness suddenly takes the form and aspect of his/her greatest fear. The PC must roll **Simple Willpower** at TN 10 or cry out in horror, losing at least 1 point of Honor. If the PC already has been Corrupted by the Lying Darkness (in the adventure *A Foreign Legacy*), s/he must make the Void roll to avoid gaining another Rank of Shadow Corruption.
2. **Ghost.** The PC has a vision of a dead family member – father, mother, lost sibling, honored grandparent, etc. – standing in the mist. (If the PC in question has a deceased Lost Love, the ghost should be that love.) The figure gazes at the PC longingly and reaches out a beckoning hand. If the PC actually attempts to take the offered hand, s/he must roll **Simple Strength** (or **Athletics/Strength**) at TN 10 or be dragged away into the mists, lost forever. If the PC successfully resists, or rebuffs the offered hand, the ghost’s face momentarily takes on a horrible insectoid aspect before it fades out of sight.
3. **Battle.** The PC seems to see a distant vision of two armies clashing. One of the armies is from the PC’s own Clan, and the other is of that Clan which the PC dislikes most. The PC can hear faint battle-cries, the pounding of drums, etc. The PC’s own Clan is clearly losing the battle. If the PC shows any interest at all in joining the battle, s/he must roll **Simple Willpower** at TN 10 or charge into the mists, sword swinging, and be sucked to Toshigoku, the Realm of Slaughter. Such PCs will be encountered later (and possibly rescued) when the rest of the party travels to Toshigoku.
4. **Mujina.** One of these goblin-like trickster spirits begins to harass the PC, making faces, mocking him/her in outrageous and bitterly personal ways, trying to steal small items, and so forth. No physical weapon can damage the mujina, and spells cannot be cast here, so there is no way to harm the miserable little beast. If the PC shows overt anger at the Mujina’s taunting, s/he must roll **Simple Awareness** at TN 15 to avoid losing his/her temper and thus, losing face (and a point or two of Honor).
5. **Wandering Spirit.** The PC sees a ghostly samurai walking quietly toward some distant goal. The samurai spirit will not respond to the PC unless the PC asks where it is going. “I go to Meido, the Realm of Waiting, to await the judgment and decision of Emma-O-sama. Should you not be on my path as well?” A PC who hears such a response will feel a sudden overwhelming urge to accompany the spirit to Meido and hear the judgment of Emma-O, god of the dead. The PC must roll **Simple Willpower** at TN 10 to keep from following the spirit to Meido. Such PCs can be encountered later (and rescued) when the party reaches that realm.
6. **Celestial Vision.** The PC has a sudden dazzling vision of a place of golden light and shining palaces, where godlike figures and magnificent dragons dwell together in eternal splendor. The vision is so beautiful that the PC weeps with joy. Although there is nothing wrong with such a response to a vision of Tengoku, the Celestial Heavens, a PC might subsequently react with shame or embarrassment at this burst of emotion. Such PCs dishonor the Celestial Heavens (and hence themselves).

## Arrival at Yomi, the Realm of Blessed Ancestors

*The cold white mists suddenly thin and fade away, leaving you blinking in bright, glorious sunshine. You are standing on a low hill, colorful wildflowers speckling the thick, soft grass. In the distance you can see a lush dark green forest and, rising on a hill behind it, a beautiful five-story castle. The air smells sweet and clean, and you can hear distant birdsong.*

Kitsu Takahara looks around himself with an expression of unalloyed joy, momentarily oblivious to the PCs. Each PC will appear stronger and healthier than they do in Ningen-do (the realm of mortals), and any injuries or illnesses which normally plague them will be absent while they remain within Yomi. Even their equipment looks better here.

*After a few moments, the thunder of hooves echoes across the fields, and a large party of horsemen rides*

*toward you. Their beasts are magnificent, bigger and stronger than the mightiest Otaku steed. The riders, a mixture of handsome men and lovely women, wear the armor and colors of every Great Clan in the Empire, along with a few of the Imperial Families and even the Minor Clans. The leader of the group is a mighty Phoenix samurai-ko whose polished armor blazes like the sun. She pulls up in front of you and regards you through her battle-mempo with an expression of stern question. "What do mortals seek in the realm of Yomi?" she asks in a clear, powerful voice.*

These spirits are the Blessed Guard, those samurai who spend the afterlife patrolling the borders of Yomi against encroachments from more dangerous realms. Their commander is Shiba Toriiko, one of the most famous of all Phoenix ancestors, who died dueling a Crane to prevent a war.

The Blessed Guard will be cautious but polite to the PCs. Once they learn the PCs' errand, they will become pleasant and cooperative. (Rude, crude, or hostile PCs, however, will be subjected to cold and hostile stares. If the uncouth PCs continue in their improper ways, they suddenly find themselves unceremoniously expelled from Yomi back to Toshi Ranbo.)

The spirits can share the following information:

- Akodo Arasou is not in Yomi. Any of the Lion spirits will know this automatically. Kitsu Takahara will flinch and sigh at this news. "As I feared."
- The spirits will be quite puzzled at the accounts of what the PCs witnessed back in Ningen-do (the realm of mortals). "We have never heard of a spirit in Toshigoku being able to speak to those in the mortal realm. Are you sure he is not in one of the other realms?"
- If the PCs actually ask whether there is any other realm where Arasou might be found, the Blessed Guard will reluctantly mention that spirits in Jigoku, the Realm of Evil, can sometimes speak with those in the mortal realm. Takahara, however, will refuse any suggestion that Arasou might be in Jigoku.

Kitsu Takahara will eventually ask the spirits for help in locating Arasou (if the PCs don't think of asking first). Shiba Toriiko will suggest there is someone who could help. "A seer, one of great and deep wisdom.

He spends his time in a small hut in the fields to the north, where our people favor settling." She smiles at some secret joke as she sends the PCs on their way.

### **To the Hut of the Seer**

It is up to the PCs whether or not to continue the quest. Kitsu Takahara will be determined to continue, and if the PCs wish to stop, he will send them back to Toshi Ranbo and proceed alone.

The journey to the mysterious "seer" will take about two hours of walking, a pleasant journey through the beautiful landscape of Yomi. The PCs will find a thin, winding track which heads in the right direction, but they will see no villages or cultivation. Occasionally, however, they pass small castles, fine samurai houses, or dojos with signs advertising their teachers. Sometimes they pass samurai, who always bow and greet them politely, regardless of Clan. At the GM's option, a PC with a karmic ancestor might encounter that ancestor here, and enjoy a brief conversation. This entire journey can be a brief or a lengthy experience, depending on the desires of the players and the amount of time available in the round. Eventually, however, the PCs will reach their destination:

*Ahead of you is a broad, shallow valley covered in thick ripe grass, the tall golden stems swaying in the pleasant breeze. Near the middle of the field is a small, humble-looking hut – the closest thing to a peasant dwelling you have seen since entering Yomi. As you approach, a young boy – no more than 14 – emerges from the hut and waits for you with a pleasant smile. His eyes are a peculiar blue-green color, and he wears the simple robes of a monk.*

This boy is Uikku, the legendary prophet who many Rokugani believed to be a reincarnation of Shinsei, and who prophesied the infamous Dooms. The PCs can recognize him with a **Theology** or **Shintao** roll (**Intelligence** trait) at TN 15, or a **History/Intelligence** roll at TN 20. Takahara will not recognize the boy, although he realizes he must be someone of great power.

Uikku is quiet and friendly, speaking little but always to great effect. He welcomes the PCs by name and leads them inside his hut (which, while small, is perfectly proportioned and spotlessly clean). There he serves them a tea which is more fragrant and pure than any they have ever tasted. After the PCs have had a chance to savor the tea, Uikku speaks:

*“The soul you seek is indeed bound in Toshigoku, the Realm of Slaughter. Yet he fights against its corrupting power with all his strength, and seeks to reach out to those of his blood. Perhaps he may yet be saved from that realm, if brave and honorable samurai seek him out.”* He smiles at the PCs, his eyes seeming to look directly into their hearts. *“Or perhaps not. Only the doing will prove the matter. Seek him in the fields before the image of Toshi Ranbo which lies in that realm.”*

If the PCs ask Uikku for further information, he simply smiles, and perhaps remarks, “Destiny must be met head-on, not awaited.” He will speak briefly with the PCs on other matters, but will offer only short and cryptic responses. For example:

- His prophecies of Dooms: “It is the duty of the living to answer the questions I left behind.”
- The current state of the Empire: “Men are their own greatest enemies.”
- The Hantei line: “Families and trees have life-spans, and both may end.”

If a PC asks Uikku about personal affairs (the PC’s family, friends, etc), the prophet shakes his head. “Such things are distractions.”

## Leaving Yomi

Kitsu Takahara will have no additional questions for Uikku – he is anxious to set out for Toshigoku and search for Akodo Arasou. If any PCs are unwilling to risk a journey to the Realm of Slaughter, Takahara will return them to Toshi Ranbo before proceeding (hopefully with at least some of the party) on the next leg of his journey.

## The Effects of Toshigoku

Once the PCs reach the Realm of Slaughter, they will be in great danger of being consumed by its mindless wrath. Note that the effects listed here have been simplified from those published in *Fortunes and Winds* (in order to keep the scenario running smoothly).

- Immediately after arriving in Toshigoku, all PCs must make a **Simple Willpower** roll at TN 15. Failure means the PC has temporarily gained the Brash disadvantage. If the PC was already Brash, s/he must make an immediate **Honor Test** at TN 10 or be overcome with a killing rage.

- Any time the PCs lose their tempers or behave with anger while in Toshigoku, they must roll **Simple Willpower** at TN 10 or be consumed with the same killing rage. Those who fail the roll can choose to make an **Honor Test** at TN 10 to fight off the rage.
- A PC who engages in combat, or who is injured, while in Toshigoku must roll **Simple Willpower** each round at a TN of 5 to avoid flying into a killing rage.
- PCs who are enraged by Toshigoku will attack everyone around them, screaming furious insults and abuse. They will remain in this rage until they are disabled, stunned, or reduced to the Down or lower wound rank.
- Non-enraged PCs can attempt to “talk down” the enraged PC(s). If they role-play an effective appeal for calm (perhaps by invoking friendship, duty, or honor), the enraged PCs can make **Honor Tests** at TN 15 to regain control of themselves.
- A PC who is carrying any kind of crystal item will be protected from the influence of Toshigoku. However, after the PC returns to the mortal world, the crystal item will be ruined: brittle, cracked, and discolored.

## Arrival in Toshigoku, the Realm of Slaughter

This time the transition through the mists is safe, although the PCs sense an odor of blood and ashes as they approach Toshigoku.

*You emerge from the mists into a patch of scrubby, ugly pine trees. The odor of violence and war hangs in the air, and no natural or animal sounds are audible. You feel a crawling unease, as though you might be attacked at any moment. The sky overhead is gray and menacing, and seems to press down on you like a leaden weight.*

All PCs make **Simple Perception** rolls at TN 10. Success brings them the distant sounds of battle. Moving in that direction, the PCs soon emerge from the trees and see a slope leading down to a wide low valley. In the distance, a dark, unpleasant-looking city rests by a sluggish river. The PCs recognize the city as

Toshi Ranbo, although it seems grimmer and more foreboding than the city in the mortal world.

In the near distance, less than a mile away, two small armies of samurai clash. One of them is clearly of Lion, while the other is a mixture of every Clan. As the PCs watch, the armies slaughter each other almost to a man. Finally only three combatants remain, one of them a Lion, standing alone against the other two.

The Lion is, of course, Akodo Arasou. It is up to the PCs whether to intervene on his behalf in the fight – Kitsu Takahara will caution them that wrath and violence can open them to the evil power of Toshigoku. If the PCs do join the fight, refer to the “Warrior of the Forge” description at the end of the module for the stats of the two enemy samurai. If the PCs hang back from the fight, Arasou will eventually defeat his enemies, although he is seriously wounded in the process. He will also be more hostile toward the PCs

### **Speaking with Arasou**

*The Lion warrior turns toward you, dripping with the blood and ruin of battle. His mighty armor clanks heavily as he strides a pace toward you, lifting his crimson-stained sword in a threatening gesture. He wears no mempo, but his youthful face is twisted with anger, almost as frightening. “I am Akodo Arasou!” he booms. “Are you friends or enemies of the Lion Clan?”*

Akodo Arasou has not yet been consumed by Toshigoku, but he is beginning to lose the struggle. He will greet the PCs with angry demands that they join him for the march on Toshi Ranbo. If any of the PCs are Cranes, he will demand that they leave at once to join the defense of their city, “which is surely doomed when my army reaches it.”

In order to break through Arasou’s battle-lust and bring him back into control of himself, the PCs will have to remain calm, explain the situation, and convince him that he is trapped in the Realm of Toshigoku. Arasou will initially dismiss anything the PCs say as “madness” or “Crane tricks,” and the PCs will have to be both polite and persistent in order to wear down his hostility and convince him to listen to them. Lion PCs will have a somewhat easier time of this, but any PC can convince him eventually, if they stay calm and use careful arguments. Pointing out the strange nature of the world around them, asking him where his “armies” come from, speaking of the disaster which he is bringing upon the mortal world, invoking bushido or his lost love Matsu Tsuko, and so forth will all be

effective at breaking through his haze of rage and bringing him to himself.

It is important that the PCs remain calm. Anger is at the heart of Toshigoku’s power, and a PC who allows Arasou to anger him/her will be making things worse. This entire encounter should be a role-playing challenge, without the need for any die-rolls. The GM must judge whether the PCs have been successful in countering the wrath of Toshigoku and reminding Arasou of his true self.

**If the PCs fail** to break through Arasou’s battle-rage, he will attack them, leaving them little choice but to defend themselves. Arasou will keep attacking until he is “killed” (he will rise again tomorrow). At this point there will be little purpose to remaining in Toshigoku, and Takahara will reluctantly return with the PCs to Ningen-do, the Mortal Realm.

**If the PCs do succeed**, Arasou regain some measure of self-control:

*The Lion warrior’s eyes seem to really look at you for the first time, and he stares around him, blinking. Then his shoulders sag. “Ah,” he groans. “I had thought it was a dream, but it is true. I am condemned to the Realm of Slaughter. The Lion will fall, the Empire will fall, and all will come to ruin.”*

Arasou can share the following information, although the PCs will have to ask the right questions:

- He fights each day in Toshigoku, and has died many times. Each time he rises again the next day to resume the fight, just as do all the other souls condemned to the Realm of Slaughter.
- Each time Arasou dies, he has “dreams” and “visions” of what is happening in the mortal realm. He sees doom coming upon the Lion, and through them, the Empire. He tries to cry out to the Lion, to warn them, but all he can do is scream in impotent rage.
- He fears that soon the power of Toshigoku will claim his soul completely, and he will lose all identity, becoming merely another mindless killing machine. “The Lion will be lost. Tsuko will be lost.”

### **What to do Now?**

Kitsu Takahara will be quite confused by Arasou’s discussion of warning visions. “This is very strange.

The denizens of Toshigoku are cut off from Ningen-do, yet Arasou still sees that realm and speaks to the Lion, however weakly. It is almost as though he were meant for Yomi rather than here.”

Arasou’s face creases with despair. “Is this merely some additional torment which I have earned? Am I denied even the mindless oblivion which takes others in this realm?”

If any PC asks how or why Arasou was condemned here, Takahara answers: “All souls are taken before Emma-O, God of the Dead, in the realm of Meido. There they await his judgment. It was by his will that Arasou-sama was sent here.”

Any PC who rolls **Theology/Intelligence** at TN 10, **Shintao/Intelligence** at TN 10, or **Simple Intelligence** at TN 20 will be able to confirm Takahara’s words. They will also know that no soul bound in Toshigoku should be able to experience the things which Arasou has described, let alone communicate with a living soul like Matsu Morishige.

If none of the PCs thinks of it, eventually Arasou himself will hit upon a solution. “Kitsu-san... you are able to walk between the realms. Could we not return to Meido, and plead with Emma-O-sama to change his judgment?” His face tightens with effort as he casts back his thoughts. “I... I remember a tale, that sometimes the god has been convinced to show mercy. Is there any hope for such a venture?”

## Escaping Toshigoku

Once Arasou (or someone else) suggests it, Kitsu Takahara will agree that the best chance is to travel to Meido and appeal to Emma-O to change his judgment. He will urge Arasou to meditate and cleanse his thoughts while Takahara prepares a passage to Meido.

At that moment, several samurai emerge from the nearby scrub forest. They bellow battle-cries and draw their blades. Arasou starts to surge to his feet in response, but Takahara catches him by the shoulder. “No! You cannot leave this realm, even for a moment, while its lust for battle consumes you!” He turns to the PCs. “Hold them off while I seek the passage!”

There are a total of five attacking bushi. These are the Warriors of the Forge, souls who have been completely consumed by Toshigoku. They attack with mindless fury, screaming like maddened beasts, and fight until they are slain or the PCs escape. Any PC who is slain

by them is condemned to remain in Toshigoku for eternity.

If any PC was captured by Toshigoku during the initial trip to Yomi, that PC is one of the five attackers. S/he is considered to be in a killing rage as per the effects of Toshigoku, and can potentially be rescued by the PCs in the same manner as anyone else afflicted with the rage.

See the “NPCs” section for the Warriors’ stats, along with a more detailed description of them.

### **Escape!**

After three rounds of combat, Kitsu Takahara will call out: “Quickly! Gather around me and clear your thoughts!”

In order to cleanse their thoughts enough to escape the insidious pull of Toshigoku, the PCs must make either a **Meditation/Willpower** roll at TN 10, a **Shintao/Void** roll at TN 10, or a **Simple Willpower** roll at TN 15. If the PCs is currently trapped in a killing rage, the TNs are at +5. Down or Out PCs can still roll at normal TNs. PCs who have managed to remain completely calm throughout their time in Toshigoku (such as by fighting on Full Defense against the Warriors of the Forge) can get a bonus to their die-rolls, at the GM’s option.

Failure means the PC is unable to escape the clutches of Toshigoku’s wrath, and remains behind forever as the rest of the party departs for Meido.

## Meido, the Realm of Waiting

As the party again travels through the white mists (this time accompanied by Akodo Arasou), Kitsu Takahara will warn them of what awaits. “Although the Fortune of Death cannot make mistakes, he can sometimes be... quite strict in his judgments. And he is said to have little patience for mortals who interfere in his domain. We must be cautious and courteous if we are to have any chance of persuading him to be merciful.”

Arasou nods grimly. “I fear I am ill-suited to this task, after spending so many years in the Realm of Slaughter. I ask you to speak for me.” He will especially ask Lions, Imperials, and high-Honor PCs for their help, although he will not turn down anyone’s assistance.

*You emerge from the mists into a gray, empty landscape. Flat, stony ground extends in every*

*direction. Scattered widely across this bleak wasteland are hundreds – no, thousands – of people, all standing quietly. Most of them seem to be commoners by their appearance and garb, but mixed in with them are plenty of samurai in fine kimono or warrior armor. None of them seem to notice you.*

These spirits are the newly-dead, awaiting the judgment of Emma-O. If the PCs observe them for more than a few moments, they will see that all the spirits are facing the same direction (toward Emma-O's distant throne, although it is not visible from here). Every one in a while, one of the spirits will step forward a few paces, moving closer to judgment.

The spirits will not move or act in any other way. If they are questioned, they will answer in calm distant voices. All they know, however, is their own past and the location of Emma-O's throne. They cannot be physically harmed and will not respond to any sort of physical threat or abuse.

If any PC was captured by Meido earlier (during the trip to Yomi), that PC will be here now, waiting patiently with all the other spirits. The captured PC will respond the same way as the other spirits here, and can be freed only by physically dragging him/her along, or by pleading with Emma-O to release him/her.

If the PCs travel in the direction which all the spirits are facing, they will eventually reach Emma-O's throne. Kitsu Takahara will again caution the PCs to show proper deference to the God of the Dead. Akodo Arasou nods, clamping his jaws tightly.

### **The Throne of Emma-O**

*Ahead of you, rising above the flat landscape, is a massive throne which seems to be carved of granite. Seated upon it is a huge man, twice the height of a mortal, dressed in the heavy armor of a samurai. A massive yari (spear) with an ornate bladed tip stands at his side. As you draw closer, you see that there is no face within the massive helmet, only a blank grayness. The figure lifts one gauntleted hand to point at you, and a sepulchral voice, neither male nor female, echoes from the helmet. "What do you in Meido, mortals? And why do you bring with you a soul I have already judged?"*

The PCs must plead with Emma-O for mercy upon Arasou's soul. This is a pure role-playing challenge, with no die-rolls applicable (a god cannot be swayed with Sincerity). The God will not accept any sort of casual or half-hearted argument, and he will not brook any sort of insolence or disrespect.

Emma-O will be angry at the PCs for taking Arasou out of Toshigoku, and will accuse them of "rebellious against the Celestial Order" through their actions. They will have to defend themselves against this charge in addition to pleading Arasou's case.

Arasou will remain silent throughout this encounter – he has no right to speak to Emma-O after being judged. Kitsu Takahara will speak, but only if the PCs are tongue-tied – and in any case, he cannot win the argument by himself.

The GM must adjudicate the effectiveness of the PCs' arguments. Here, before the remorseless gaze of Emma-O, sincere and heartfelt appeals will carry as much or more weight as clever and polished words. Emma-O cannot be finessed or seduced, only convinced.

### **Divine Intervention?**

If one or more of the PCs pleading on Arasou's behalf has an Honor rank of 5, and if those PCs are eloquent and heartfelt in their appeals, they will attract the attention of another divinity.

*Suddenly a blaze of golden light shines through the bleak gray landscape of Meido. A tall man with a handsome but simple face appears, dressed in a kimono of shimmering light. His gaze is warm and gentle. "Great Emma-O," he says, in a soft voice which nevertheless rings through your heads like a bell. "Let me add my voice to these mortals pleading for Akodo Arasou."*

All the PCs will know instinctively that this is a Fortune. They can recognize which Fortune (Jizo, Fortune of Mercy) by rolling Theology/Intelligence at TN 10. Kitsu Takahara will drop to his knees and press his face to the earth, while Akodo Arasou will bow deeply. The PCs should react in some similar fashion – PCs who show the Fortune disrespect will be instantly expelled back to Ningen-do.

### **Arasou Saved?**

If enough of the PCs make persuasive and passionate arguments, Emma-O will agree to show mercy on Arasou. This will certainly happen if the PCs managed to bring the attention of Jizo to bear.

*The Fortune of Death thumps his spear heavily into the gray earth of Meido. "Very well," Emma-O intones. "I will be merciful. Let Akodo Arasou go to the Realm of Yomi, to dwell in peace. Now depart,*

*mortals, and trouble me no more.” The god turns his faceless helm away, dismissing you.*

The PCs will have a few moments to say their goodbyes to Akodo Arasou, who thanks them gravely, fighting down tears. He will promise any Lion PCs to watch over their path from Yomi. He also asks them to prevent Matsu Morishige from dishonoring himself by launching his attack. “No one wishes more than I to retake the city from the Crane, but if such a victory is won through dishonor and disgrace, it is no better than defeat.”

### **Arasou Condemned**

If the GM judges that most of the PCs’ arguments have been weak or insincere, and they were unable to invoke the divine intervention of Jizo, Emma-O will rule against them:

*The Fortune of Death slams the point of his spear into the earth, which shakes beneath your feet. “Enough! My judgment is final, and shall not be questioned by mere mortals. Akodo Arasou shall return to Toshigoku, where he belongs.” Arasou opens his mouth to scream denial, but before he can speak, he vanishes – flung back to the Realm of Slaughter.*

Once Emma-O has ruled for a second time, it will be impossible for the PCs to rescue Arasou – the Lion is condemned to Toshigoku forever. The PCs can still plead with the God of Death if they like (perhaps to free one of their companions who is trapped in Meido), but they will not be able to change his mind about Arasou.

### **Departing Meido**

Once Arasou’s fate has been determined, Emma-O will soon expel the PCs from Meido. They will experience the mists between the worlds for only a few moments before finding themselves back in Toshi Ranbo, sitting in front of the Shrine of Arasou. Any PCs who were expelled from the spirit realms earlier will be here as well. The amount of time which the PCs spent in the spirit realms will also have passed in the mortal realm, so it will probably be late at night.

Once the PCs have returned to Ningen-do, they will still have to try to convince Matsu Morishige to call off his attack. See “Negotiating After the Return from Toshigoku” for details.

## **Not Going to Toshigoku?**

If the PCs ignore Takahara, or refuse to help him, then it is up to them what to do in the meantime. They can try to negotiate, help the Crane or the Lion prepare for battle, or simply flee the scene.

### **Meeting with the Lion**

If one or more PCs decide to meet with the Lion army (in hopes of dissuading it from attacking), it will arrive by late that evening and encamp a few miles south of Toshi Ranbo. The Lion will be quite suspicious of anyone who is not of their Clan, and will refuse to see any Crane PCs unless they have a direct connection to the Imperial line (Imperial spouse, Ear of the Emperor, or Emerald Magistrate).

If the PCs can convince the Lion to let them into the camp, they will eventually be able to meet with Matsu Morishige. The Lion commander is irritable and suspicious (anyone attuned to spirits can see that he still hears the angry screams of Akodo Arasou). He will be rudely dismissive to Cranes, or to anyone else who appeals to him in the name of peace, mercy, or other “weak-hearted nonsense.”

Only a PC who Morishige respects – a Lion or Crab, a member of the Imperial Families, an Emerald Magistrate, or a bushi (only) from the Dragon or Phoenix clans – will have a chance of convincing him to call off his attack. Even these individuals, however, will have to find the right arguments to persuade him:

- As mentioned, an appeal to mercy, peace, or compassion will fall upon deaf ears. “I have given them time to remove their families and children. That is mercy enough – more than they deserve.”
- Pointing out that the Lion Clan will lose face by starting a war during the Setsuban Festival will make Morishige uneasy, but will not be enough by itself to dissuade him. “We will lose face, yes. But how can that compare with the face we lose *every* day that Akodo Arasou’s death goes un-avenged?”
- An appeal to Morishige’s duty to the Clan Champion Akodo Toturi, who he is disobeying by making this attack, will be the most effective approach, although it will not immediately succeed. Morishige will counter that he is obeying the dictates of his honored ancestors, whose need for vengeance is denied

by Akodo Toturi's peaceful policies. There are various ways in which the PCs can counter this argument – by suggesting that a living authority must outweigh the dead, or saying that Morishige dishonors those very ancestors by violating his oaths of obedience to Toturi. Theologically wise PCs might also point out that the ancestors are usually far less concerned about vengeance than the living.

Clever PCs may come up with other effective arguments as well. Lion PCs might also consider challenging Morishige to a duel for his crime of disobeying the Clan Champion. (He will accept such a challenge, but not one from someone outside his Clan.)

Regardless, it should be very difficult for the PCs to convince Morishige that he is in error. The GM must adjudicate their efforts and decide whether a skill roll is necessary. Appropriate skill checks would be **Sincerity**, **Oratory**, **Manipulation**, or **Political Maneuvering** (all with **Awareness**) at TN 15. Also, a PC who appeals to Morishige specifically through honor and bushido can choose to make an **Honor Test** (also at TN 15) to help convince him.

If the PCs do succeed, Morishige will agree to call off the attack – on one condition. “The Crane must allow me to visit the Shrine of Akodo Arasou and make my apologies to Arasou's un-avenged spirit.” If the Crane agree to this condition, Morishige will lead his army back home. Otherwise, he will attack.

### Meeting with the Crane

The PCs can meet with Doji Shusaku at any time, simply by sending word that they may have a way to avert the battle. He will meet them in the castle in the center of Toshi Ranbo. If Doji Hoturi is still here, he will meet with the PCs as well.

Shusaku will be overtly hostile to any Lion PCs, but will be polite to everyone else, even ronin (these are desperate times, after all). Doji Hoturi will be more distant, but shows no Clan prejudices. Both leaders will be politely attentive to any PC who claims to offer a solution to the crisis. Anyone making a **Contested Awareness** roll can tell that, beneath the veneer of calm, both Crane leaders are deeply alarmed by these events, and are desperately hoping that reinforcements or an order from the Emperor will arrive soon.

However, if the PCs come with Morishige's proposal (to call off the attack if he is allowed to visit Arasou's shrine), the Crane will initially balk. Allowing

Morishige to do this smacks of surrendering to his threats of force, and the Crane are reluctant to be seen to back down, even in the slightest way, to a “dishonorable Lion thug.” The PCs will need to be both diplomatic and persuasive to convince them to accept this compromise. (Invoking the need to keep the peace, and the terrible price of war, will be a good argumentative tactic.) Again, the PCs can help their cause with skill rolls (**Sincerity**, **Manipulation**, and **Political Maneuvering** are all appropriate), but must role-play well in order to succeed.

## Negotiating After the Return from Toshigoku

If the PCs speak with Matsu Morishige after a visit to the spirit realms, they will find him much easier to deal with – especially if they have managed to send Arasou's soul on to Yomi.

- If Arasou's soul has been saved, Morishige will be suddenly much calmer than he was earlier in the day. He listens gravely to the PCs' story and confesses that his mind seems clearer than it has in months. It will be quite easy to talk Morishige out of attacking Toshi Ranbo, if that is what the PCs desire. He will still request that he be allowed to pray at Arasou's shrine, but this will no longer be an absolute condition of averting conflict.
- If Arasou has not been freed, his angry soul will still be urging Morishige on to war and slaughter. However, the testimony of a Kitsu *sodan-senzo* backed by an assortment of honorable samurai may be enough to convince Morishige to call off his attack. The PCs will have to speak eloquently and persuasively, and roll either **Sincerity**, **Oratory**, or **Political Manipulation** (all with the **Awareness** trait) at TN 10. As before, a bold PC who appeals to Morishige through his Honor can substitute an **Honor Test** at the same TN.
- If the PCs convince Morishige to call off his attack, it is up to them whether to ask the Crane to let Morishige visit Akodo Arasou's shrine. If the PCs tell the full story of Arasou's fate in the afterlife, the Crane will be much more inclined to allow Morishige this face-saving gesture.

## Success: A War Averted

If the PCs succeeded in averting Morishige's attack (whether or not they saved Arasou's soul), they will have the gratitude of the Crane Clan. Doji Hoturi himself will thank the PCs for averting a terrible war. He will also offer training in any of the Crane schools to any PCs who wish it. PCs who already have a School of their own may purchase Multiple Schools and attend one of the Crane schools. Ronin PCs will also be offered membership in the Crane Clan.

If the PCs convinced the Crane to let Morishige visit the shrine of Akodo Arasou, the Matsu warrior spends a full day meditating before the shrine before leading his army back to Lion lands. He thanks the PCs gravely for showing him the error of their ways (especially if they laid Arasou to rest).

## Failure? The First Battle of Toshi Ranbo

If the PCs do not succeed in convincing Morishige to call off his attack, his army will assault Toshi Ranbo the following morning. The battle rages all day.

It is up to the PCs whether or not to participate in the battle – Crane bushi PCs will probably feel obligated to join their Clan in defending the city, and militant Lion PCs may well decide that the Crane deserve a good clobbering whether Toturi approves it or not. (See “Rewards for Completing the Adventure” for the consequences of that choice.) Other PCs may decide to join the battle on one side or the other, depending on their personal motivations. Ronin PCs can find employment with either side at the rate of four koku.

Resolve this on the Battle Table (page 239 of the Game Master's Guide). To determine the Tides of Battle (who is winning), have the opposing commanders roll **Battle/Awareness**. If one side beats the other's roll by at least 5, they are Winning that round and the other side is Losing; if both rolls are within 5 of each other, the battle is Even for that round.

Either Doji Hoturi or Doji Shusaku will command the Crane defense, depending on whether Hoturi was persuaded to depart beforehand. Hoturi rolls 4k4 for the Tides of Battle, while Shusaku rolls 2k3. Matsu Morishige rolls 5k3 for the Lion side. Each successful Duel or Heroic Opportunity by the PCs adds +5 to their general's next roll.

Use the “Generic Lion Bushi” and “Generic Crane Bushi” NPCs for duels (unless PCs on opposite sides make a point of seeking each other out). Heroic Opportunities can be taken from the list in the Game Master's Guide, or improvised according to the circumstances, as the GM thinks appropriate.

### Who Wins?

The battle will last until one side is victorious (by winning three consecutive rounds of battle, or four total rounds of battle) or until six rounds of battle have passed, whichever comes first. If neither side has won at the end of six rounds, the sun sets and the battle ends in a draw.

**Lion Victory:** Matsu Morishige take the city and castle by storm. Doji Shusaku dies defending the castle, along with many other brave Crane bushi. If Hoturi was not convinced to leave earlier, Shusaku will force him to flee now, making a doomed counterattack to force an opening for Hoturi's escape.

The victorious Morishige prays at the shrine of Arasou, declaring his ancestor's death avenged, but he seems troubled – Arasou's wrathful soul is still urging him on the further battle.

Two days later, while the Lion are still celebrating their victory, Doji Hoturi returns at the head of a larger Crane army, numbering over a thousand. He brings with him a letter from the Emperor commanding the Lion to depart the city immediately. Morishige grudgingly bows before the will of the Son of Heaven and departs, promising that “someday the Crane will have to face us without the Emperor's coattails to protect them.”

**Crane Victory:** The Lion assault breaks on the teeth of a determined, clever, and ruthless Crane defense. Morishige and a small number of Lion troops manage to fight their way in to the parade grounds, but are cut off there and slaughtered to the last man. Leaderless, the Lion army quickly retreats back to their own lands.

**Draw:** The Lion take the city, but cannot break the castle itself. They settle down for a siege, and in two days Crane reinforcements arrive (led by either Hoturi or, if he was trapped in the city, by his younger brother Kuwanen) with the command of the Emperor. A furious Morishige, seeing the glory of his victory taken from him, at last loses control completely and draws his sword, attacking the Crane commander (Hoturi/Kuwanen). He is outmatched by the fluid Crane speed, and cut down in a single blow. The rest

of the Lion army, shamed by their leader's behavior, retreats obediently back to Lion territories.

### **The Lion-Crane War**

Ultimately, even if he manages to take the city, Morishige cannot hold it against the Emperor's command. The Lion-Crane War has begun, with the Lion as the aggressors. Toshi Ranbo will soon be a battlefield once again.

## **Rewards for Completing the Adventure**

At the end of the scenario, any PCs with Shadowlands Taint must make a Simple Earth roll with a TN of 5 + (5 x Taint Rank). If the roll is failed, the PC acquires one additional point of Taint.

### **Experience Points**

Playing the adventure:	1 XP
Good role-playing:	1 XP
PCs lay Akodo Arasou's soul to rest:	1 XP
PCs prevent a battle:	+1 XP
OR	
PC fights on the winning side of the battle:	+1 XP

**Total Possible Experience:** 4 XP

### **Honor**

Lion PCs, shugenja PCs, and any PC with close connections to the spirit world (monks, Falcon clan, etc.) gain +1 Honor for laying Akodo Arasou to rest.

Lion PCs who fight in the battle are disobeying the command of their Clan Champion, and must make an Honor Test or lose 1 rank of Honor. The TN of this test is 10 for Matsu characters, 15 for Kitsu and Ikoma, and 20 for Akodo. If a PC has been role-played as extremely militant and/or virulently anti-Crane, reduce their TN by 5.

### **Glory**

PCs who participate in the battle (on either side) earn half (rounded down) of the listed Glory awards from the Battle Table. They also earn 1 point of Glory for each successful Duel and Heroic Opportunity.

After the battle, any PCs who fought on the Lion side lose 2 points of Glory as the Emperor publicly chastises them and orders them to depart the city forthwith. If Morishige loses control (as listed under "Draw") all Lion lose an additional 2 points of Glory from that.

### **Other Awards/Penalties**

If the PCs laid the soul of Akodo Arasou to rest, any Lion Clan PC with Honor rank of 2.1 or better, any Imperial PC with Honor rank of 4.1 or better, and any non-Lion with Honor rank of 5, gains the cert for "Ancestor: Akodo Arasou."

Any Clan PCs who fought in battle on the side of the Lion lose any allies or connections they had with the Crane Clan (except for spouses).

If the PCs averted war, they are offered training in any of the Crane schools (including the right to purchase Multiple Schools if they already have a different School). Ronin PCs may join the Crane Clan if they wish.

## NPCs and Enemies

### Doji Shusaku, daimyo of Toshi Ranbo

FIRE 3 Intelligence 4	AIR 3
EARTH 2 Willpower 3	WATER 2 Perception 3
VOID 3	

**TN to be Hit:** 22 (fine light armor)

**School/Rank:** Kakita Bushi 2

**Honor/Glory:** 3.7/6.4

**Skills:** Battle 2, Courtier 4, Etiquette 4, History 3, Iaijutsu 4, Kenjutsu 2, Law 2, Meditation 3, Oratory 3, Poetry 4, Political Maneuvering 3, Shintao 1, Sincerity 5, Tea Ceremony 3, Theology 2.

**Advantages/Disadvantages:** Ally (Doji Hoturi), Gentry, Social Position (local daimyo)

**Equipment:** Fine daisho (excellent katana, +1 skill die, 3k2 damage), fine light armor, fine kimono.

### Doji Hoturi, Daimyo of the Doji Family

FIRE 4	AIR 4 Reflexes 5
EARTH 4	WATER 3
VOID 4	

**TN to be Hit:** 34 (excellent light armor)

**School/Rank:** Kakita Bushi 4

**Honor/Glory:** 5/7.6

**Skills:** Battle 4, Courtier 9, Defense 6, Etiquette 9, Heraldry 6, History 5, Iaijutsu 8, Katana (specialized weapon skill) 4, Kenjutsu 4, Kyujutsu (archery) 6, Lore (Lion Clan) 4, Meditation 4, Poetry 10, Political Maneuvering 6, Shintao 5, Sincerity 10, Tea Ceremony 7.

**Advantages/Disadvantages:** Ally (Akodo Toturi), Benten's Blessing, Cadence, Kharmic Tie (Bayushi Kachiko), Luck (rank 1), True Friend (Kakita Toshimoko)/Compulsion (women), Dark Secret (illegitimate son, Bayushi Dairu).

**Equipment:** Excellent daisho set (Kakita blade), excellent light armor (+4 TN), excellent kimono.

### Matsu Morishige, Lion Clan general and revolutionary

FIRE 3	AIR 3
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Agility 4	Reflexes 4
EARTH 3	WATER 3 Strength 4
VOID 2	

**TN to be Hit:** 30 (Heavy Armor)

**School/Rank:** Matsu Bushi 3

**Honor/Glory:** 3.2/5.3

**Skills:** Athletics 3, Battle 5, Defense 3, Etiquette 1, History 3, Iaijutsu 3, Katana (specialized weapon skill) 3, Kenjutsu 5, Kyujutsu (Archery) 4, Lore (Lion Clan) 4, Sincerity 3, Tessen 3.

**Advantages/Disadvantages:** Natural Leader, Social Position (Lion officer)/Haunted (Akodo Arasou).

**Equipment:** Daisho set, tessen, heavy armor, kimono.

Kitsu Takahara, idealistic Sodan-Senzo

FIRE 2 Intelligence 3	AIR 3
EARTH 2 Willpower 4	WATER 4
VOID 3	

**TN to be Hit:** 15

**School/Rank:** Kitsu *sodan-senzo* 2

**Honor/Glory:** 4.7/1.5

**Skills:** Courtier 2, Etiquette 4, History 5, Law 1, Lore (Ancestors) 4, Lore (Spirit Realms) 3, Meditation 5, Research 2, Shintao 2, Sincerity 3, Spellcraft 2, Tantojutsu 2, Theology 4.

**Spells:** *Sense Ancestor, Commune with Ancestor, Summon Ancestor, (Water) Path to Inner Peace, Reversal of Fortunes, (Air) Wind-Born Slumbers.*

**Advantages/Disadvantages:** Benten's Blessing/Idealistic

**Equipment:** Kimono, tanto (2k1), scroll satchel.

### Akodo Arasou, soul trapped in Toshiqoku

FIRE 3 Agility 4	AIR 2 Reflexes 4
EARTH 3	WATER 3
VOID 3	

**TN to be Hit:** 30 (heavy armor)

**School/Rank:** Akodo Bushi 3  
**Honor/Glory:** 3.8/8.5  
**Skills:** Athletics 4, Battle 7, Defense 5, Hand-to-Hand 5, Heraldry 5, Kenjutsu 7, Meditation 3.  
**Equipment:** Fine daisho (+1 skill die), heavy armor.

**Skills:** Athletics 3, Battle 2, Defense 2, Iaijutsu 2, Kenjutsu 4, Kyujutsu (Archery) 3, Lore (Lion Clan) 2, Sincerity 2.  
**Advantages/Disadvantages:** Death Trance/Brash  
**Equipment:** Daisho (fine katana, +1 skill die), light armor, bow with 20 arrows, kimono.

**Warriors of the Forge, maddened souls of Toshigoku**

FIRE 1 Agility 3	AIR 1 Reflexes 3
EARTH 2	WATER 1 Strength 3

**TN to be Hit:** 20 (light armor)  
**Attacks:** 3k3  
**Damage:** 6k2 (katana)  
**Wounds:** 15: +5; 30: Dead.

**Generic Crane Bushi (use interchangeably)**

FIRE 2 Agility 3	AIR 3
EARTH 2	WATER 2
VOID 3	

**TN to be Hit:** 20 (light armor)  
**School/Rank:** Kakita Bushi 1  
**Honor/Glory:** 3.5/1.0  
**Skills:** Athletics 2, Battle 2, Defense 3, Etiquette 3, Iaijutsu 4, Kenjutsu 3, Kyujutsu (Archery) 3, Sincerity 2.  
**Advantages/Disadvantages:** Quick  
**Equipment:** Daisho (fine quality, +1 skill die to both weapons), light armor, fine bow (+1 skill) with 20 arrows, kimono.

**Generic Lion Bushi (interchangeable)**

FIRE 2 Agility 3	AIR 2 Reflexes 3
EARTH 2	WATER 2 Strength 3
VOID 2	

**TN to be Hit:** 15 (20 with light armor)  
**School/Rank:** Matsu Bushi 1  
**Honor/Glory:** 3.5/1.0