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# Imperial Herald™







Legend of the Five Rings™

# DISKWARS™

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# Summer 2000

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## A Message from the Brand Manager

It's me again. Once more, things here have changed. It appears that the only thing I can count on in my job is change, so I'm getting pretty used to it. As many of you know by now, AEG will no longer design the L5R TCG. In many ways, this is sad news for me, but I know that it will be best for the fans and L5R. Many of you may wonder why we made such a move. Here's the scoop.

Most importantly, L5R is a story-driven game. Over the last couple of years, we have tried to involve the L5R players more and more in the story. Things like the global storyline tournaments came from that. As many of you have guessed or heard before, creating a card set is a very time-consuming thing. From the first day a designer gets the green light, almost a year passes by before it hits the players' hands. This is just way too long.

By moving the story and design in house, we strive to have the storyline reflect the players' actions much much faster. By having the designer, story person, art director, brand manager, and project manager in the same building, we should be able to turn on a dime. It will certainly take a while for us to figure out the details of how, but having full-time, dedicated L5R people in this building is clearly the first step.

There is also a very important strategic business reason for this move. L5R is one of the few properties that Wizards of the Coast (or

Hasbro, for that matter) owns. Bringing the story in house will allow us to attempt to expand the L5R property into other areas more easily.

I should make it clear that there is no animosity between AEG and Wizards. AEG will continue to design the roleplaying game and the miniatures game with our full support. In fact, the relationship with AEG has never been closer! They have a coLple of non-L5R games in house that Wizards of the Coast is currently analyzing for publication.

But wait, even more changes are in the works! Steve Horvath, pre-*Imperial Edition*<sup>™</sup> player, fresh from launching the *X-Men* TCG, will take over brand management for the L5R TCG from Ed Bolme—who now works on the second in our comic-based TCG games, the *Spider Man* TCG. I am taking the helm of L5R the property and working on expanding it in exciting new ways (which, of course, I can't talk about in too much detail).

Because we work way ahead here, you won't see any effects of these changes until the *Gold Edition*<sup>™</sup> release, and Dave Williams over at AEG even designed and picked those cards.

Luke Peterschmidt

Imperial Herald  
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# DCI Tournament Checklist

by Andy Heckt

Besides developing fair and standardized rules for the games it supports, the DCI™ also gathers information on sanctioned tournaments to produce ratings for these games. The DCI depends upon organized and diligent tournament organizers and each player to make the system work. You can find a description of the responsibilities of both players and organizers in the Universal Floor Rules (<[www.wizards.com/DCI/UTRules.asp](http://www.wizards.com/DCI/UTRules.asp)>) and in the floor rules for each game (L5R's are at <[www.wizards.com/DCI/UTR\\_L5R.asp](http://www.wizards.com/DCI/UTR_L5R.asp)>). What follows is a checklist for both players and organizers of some of the more important rules for the purpose of reporting tournaments.

## Player's Responsibilities

- ☐ Gives the organizer his or her DCI number for reporting.
- ☐ Ensures that the organizer has his or her first and last name spelled correctly.
- ☐ Ensures that the organizer reports the Clan played by the player in the tournament.
- ☐ Visually checks the final record the organizer reports, to ensure the information is correct.

## Organizer's Responsibilities

- ☐ Has the sanctioning number for the event he or she runs.
- ☐ Ensures that each player has a DCI number (gets the player's current number or gives the player a new one).
- ☐ Verifies the spelling of each player's first and last name.
- ☐ Records each player's name under the Clan he or she plays. (Note: Players cannot declare for a Clan other than the one they are playing.)
- ☐ Uses the two-digit codes for the Clans on his or her report form:
  - Brotherhood/Monks = BS
  - Crab = CB
  - Crane = CN
  - Dragon = DG
  - Lion = LN
  - Naga = NG

Ninja = NJ  
Phoenix = PX  
Ratlings = RN  
Scorpion = SC  
Shadowlands = SH  
Toturi's Army = TA  
Unicorn = UN  
Yoritomo's Alliance = YA

- ☐ Completes the finishing order for all players involved, not just the top-tiered.
- ☐ Reports the names of the judges.
- ☐ Report how prizes were distributed.

## Organizers and Reporting

It is vital that organizers keep copies of their tournament reports. DCI policy requires that they keep each copy for one year after the event date.

Tournament results are due back to the DCI within eight days of the event. After fourteen days, they are marked "not received". After thirty days, they are "delinquent." Organizers can still report delinquent events. The DCI can also invalidate a tournament after this time.

The organizer is responsible for checking the website (<[www.wizards.com/dci](http://www.wizards.com/dci)>) to ensure the DCI received and processed the event report.

Organizers are encouraged to visit the DCI Tournament Organizer (TO) Information Center at <[events.wizards.com/download/dcicoords.asp](http://events.wizards.com/download/dcicoords.asp)>.

The DCI TO Information Center contains:

- access to the DCI online sanctioning tool
- access to an online event status report
- a tool to search for certified **Magic: The Gathering®**

DCI judges

- downloadable DCI Reporter tournament-operation software (Windows 95/98)
- downloadable DCI forms for tournament operations

Access to the DCI TO Information Center requires a password. Go to the site to get information on how to get a password.



# Empire League Season III: The Scorpion Clan Coup

by Mike Liesik

*Of the Seven Thunders who followed Shinsei into the Shadowlands to defeat Fu Leng, only the Scorpion Thunder returned, clutching twelve black scrolls. "Protect these scrolls, for they were the doom of Fu Leng," she said to her lord Bayushi before dying. Hantei charged the Scorpion Clan with hiding and protecting the scrolls to prevent Fu Leng's return. He also met privately with Bayushi later, commanding him to build a network of spies to protect the Empire from internal threats. Knowing that this would forever place the stigma of distrust upon his children, Bayushi still agreed to the Emperor's will.*

*Several hundred years later, the Scorpion Clan, now led by Bayushi Shoji, has become known as the least trustworthy of the seven great clans. If there is a secret to be known in Rokugan, the Scorpion know it. In fact, it is commonly believed that the Scorpion are just a front for a darker, more sinister, organization—the Ninja. Of course, this is exactly how Bayushi's children want to be viewed. They have become masters of manipulation, treachery, and deceit.*

*Troubled by nightmares, Bayushi Shoji traveled to the bowels of Kyuden Bayushi in search of the answers his dreams said lay there. After fighting through unknown horrors, Shoji came upon a scroll containing the ancient prophecies of Uikku. What he discovered he only revealed to his most trusted advisors. A descendant of the first Hantei would bring about the return of the dark god Fu Leng and, with his return, the destruction of the Empire.*

So begins the tale of the third season of the Empire League™, the Scorpion Clan Coup.

This season, as with Seasons I and II, will focus on three clans; the Scorpion, the Lion, and the Crab. Faced with the certainty of dishonor, Shoji makes the ultimate sacrifice for the future: he ends the Hantei line. Without the tactical genius of their daimyo, the Lion must rally the clans for an assault on the most protected city in the Empire. The Crab leave the Kaiu Wall undefended after forging a dark pact with the Shadowlands to lend their aid to those they deem worthy.

The new objectives are designed to challenge experienced players by placing restrictions on their win conditions or deck contents. A few examples include:

## Scorpion

### The Future Revealed

Use the four known Oracles (one each of Earth, Fire, Water, and Wind) in a single turn. You may not use Dark Oracles for this objective.



## Lion

### Assault on Otosan Uchi

Assign a Personality from each Great Clan except Scorpion (Crab, Crane, Lion, Dragon, Phoenix, and Unicorn), to the battle that destroys your opponent's last Province.

## Crab

### Kisada's Choice

Achieve an Honor Victory without destroying a Province.

League members who complete all of the objectives for one or more factions are eligible for a Clan mon pin at the end of the season. Players who chose not to play one of the featured factions will, as usual, still be eligible for the Empire League pin, which they can earn by having the most play points. Everyone who earns 10 play points earns a special button commemorating that season.

If there is an epic event in Rokugan's past that you would like

to see as a future Empire League season, please send an email to me at <toku@wizards.com> with the subject line "Empire League ideas." I cannot guarantee that I will use your suggestion or that, if I use it, you will receive credit for it.

Will you fight to avenge your Emperor or destroy your Clan to save the future? Let your voice be heard at your local Stronghold store!

If your local Stronghold or Premier store is not currently running the Empire League, they can sign up and purchase their league packet by calling their Merchant Services representative or by calling our Direct Sales department at 1-800-821-8028. If they ran Season I or II, they still need to call their representative to order the kit for Season III.



# Race to Volturnum: The Tournaments

by Mindy Sherwood-Lewis

Race to Volturnum, our second global storyline tournament of 2000 and our fourth global storyline tournament overall, had 233 stores in seventeen countries participate. Players in Australia, Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Greece, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Spain, the United Kingdom, the United States, and West Malaysia all got together to show us what their clans could do.

Of those 233 stores, 167 turned in their reports in time to both affect the storyline and have their top three players entered into the drawing for a bye into the finals at Gen Con®. It looks like stores averaged just over eleven players each (for a total of 1,864 players) and had a good variety of clans played in the tournament.

As you will see by Ree's story (starting on page 6), the Phoenix won again. They weren't played in the highest number, but they did have the highest percentage of top-three finishes. Finish-wise, Toturi's Army was right on their flank. Purely participation-wise, there were a lot of Yoritomo's Alliance players, of which I estimate that nearly half used the Fox box. That's a difficult statistic to quantify any better than that, as many people marked YA as their Clan but a large number of them wrote in "Fox" instead.

The Clan breakdowns look like this:

BS	93	CB	148	CN	123
DG	185	LN	127	NG	139
NJ	94	PX	139	SC	137
SH	144	TA	146	UN	156
YA	199				

Thank you to everyone who organized and ran one of these tournaments and to all of the players who participated! Oh, and the Gen Con byes go to the following folks:

BS	Jeff Dai	CB	Sean LaFond*
CN	Mike Chang	DG	Kelly Garcia
LN	Tim Maruyama	NG	Elvin Calderon
NJ	John Riley	PX	Chris Arendt
SC	Ryan Chapman	SH	Matthew Demand
TA	Antoine Ho	UN	Robert Lalloke
YA	Brad Aronambault.		

Congrats, and we hope to see you there!

\*We had originally drawn Paul Ryan as the Crab player. When we informed him of this, however, he pointed out that he had already won a bye by placing first at the Australian Kotei, and he asked that we please redraw the Crab name. Thanks, Paul!

## Legacy of the Naga: A Global Storyline Tournament

*"The Qatol has ascended. The Celestial Order is restored. The new cycle begins. Those of us who returned to the Akasha already beckon for those awake to join them in their dream. But the dream is disturbed. The Akasha hears the echoes of dreams and has felt the blood of the Pale Eye.*

*"While this legacy remains with us, we wonder what dreams may come."*

The Akasha calls them to sleep, but before they can rest the Naga must choose: who will guard the legacy of the Naga?

Legacy of the Naga will be the final global storyline tournament of the 2000 season. Applications were sent

out to Stronghold and Premier stores in early July and are due back to our offices no later than August 2. We will post a list of participating stores to the website as we have done with previous tournaments.

Convince your local store to participate, so that you can make a bid for your Clan to be the one that has the honor of guarding the legacy of the Naga! The winning Clan will be determined by the participation and finish data reported by stores that hold the event and return their reports on time. The story effects will be for the winning Clan to know what the legacy is and to have the honor and duty of guarding it. This effect will show up during the *Gold Edition* storyline.



# Zen's Card Focus: Air Dragon

by Zen Faulkes

They are *back*!

The elemental dragons quit Rokugan's mortal coil in disgust following the death of their brother, Togashi. But they've returned with a vengeance, leading the clans to Voltturnum. And the Experienced Air Dragon—perhaps the least popular Dragon originally—is poised to deliver a beat-down and might just be the nastiest of the lot.

The basic stats for the Air Dragon are identical to its original incarnation. It's a 7F/4C Cavalry Shugenja with 4 Personal Honor, and Spells and ranged attack can't target it. But the Air Dragon learned a neat trick while it was gone: it gained a "pumpable" innate ability. You can discard a Spell or Kiho to give the Air Dragon a +2F bonus.

As an Open action.

Any number of times a turn.

If you have a dedicated Kiho-slinging deck, the Air Dragon can easily get into double-digit Force before the battle even starts. It should be able to pop Provinces like bubble wrap.

Not only is the Air Dragon itself more powerful, but cards that didn't exist during its first go-round increase its power. For instance, Creature cards debuted in the Dragons' absence, like Way of the Zokujin, Deep Forest, and Primal Rage (a Dragon can focus an awe-inspiring 9!). Then there are Cavalry-related cards like Shinjo's Breath and Kamoko's Charge.

But despite being more powerful than ever before, the Air Dragon's Gold cost didn't go up. No, sirree. It went down. From 10 Gold to 8.

8?!?

Want me to make it worse? I'll make it worse. The *Soul of the Empire*™ expansion also features Dragon's Tooth, a 1G Item you can destroy to lower a Dragon's Gold cost by 4. One of these means you'll effectively pay 5 Gold for a Dragon. Two copies of Dragon's Tooth in your hand mean you can hire the Air Dragon with just two Small Farms.

Before you get too upset, you have to do more than pay Gold to hire the Air Dragon. All of the Dragons still have double-digit Honor requirements. Plus, the Experienced Dragons have additional conditions you have to meet; for example, the Air Dragon wants you to have the Ring of Air in play. The Ring of Air has always been considered the easiest

Ring to play, but it sees little use because its ability is correspondingly weak. Well, just think of being able to bring this beast into play as another power of the Ring!

Still, even with all of these requirements and restrictions, the Air Dragon is still so cheap that you've got to ask if you can take advantage of its low cost.

A House of Tao Monk deck can start with the Ring of Air in play and can get above 10 Honor in a turn or two by hiring Shioda or being declared an Enlightened Ruler. For Monk, a second-turn Air Dragon is not out of the question. The Air Dragon isn't turn-two material for other Clans, but it's relatively easy to play the Ring of Air courtesy of Kaede Sensei and Wisdom Gained. The Honor requirement may be a bigger

barrier to hiring the Air Dragon than playing the Ring!

With the Elemental Dragons back in town, more players than ever will find out how painful it is to be on a Dragon's bad side. Here are a few tips for surviving their renewed onslaught.

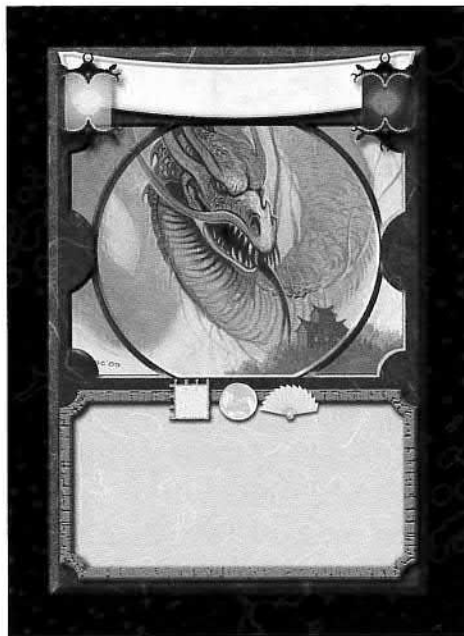
Dragons can't attach Followers, which means favorites like Refugees and Stand against the Waves are very effective against them.

They're Cavalry, which makes them vulnerable to Steep Terrain, Skirmisher's Pike, or Tiger's Teeth. Or, you can just slay them outright with Elite Pikemen.

You may gain some leverage from their Elemental nature, particularly with The World Stood Still. Dragons' 4 Personal Honor, normally an advantage, means that Fields of the Morning Sun can lock them out.

Finally, you may want to dust off Dragon hosers like Dragon Helm or Flight of Dragons. The Experienced 2 Hitomi can also do in Dragons but didn't have much cause to use that power throughout the last storyline. Luckily for the Air Dragon, she's too busy shining at night to worry about dragons . . .

Hmmmm. Maybe it's not coincidence that the dragons were out of the picture almost exactly as long as Hitomi was at the center of it . . .





# "Race to Volturnum" Story

by Ree Soesbee

The Shadowlands spread before them like a plague, stretching for ri after ri of broken, twisted terrain. Even salt could do no harm to the bitter ground of this wasted land. The earth here had died, long ago, at the hands of oni and other waste. The Shi-Khan Wastes were the lands of Akuma, of a thousand dead Kuni and a hundred tortured lives.

Here the shugenja of the Phoenix gathered, their once-elegant robes stained and torn. A whisper called them, and a voice that had no source murmured into their ears—soft at first, then louder as the wind from the south began to rise. Ten Phoenix bushi escorted the four shugenja, but there had been no battle. The war was being fought to the south, where Tsanuri's Lion held the line against a host of demonic monsters. Behind the Phoenix, samurai of the other clans fought back the rising tide of undead and oni hordes just within view. Tsukune looked back at their rising fires, seeing the silhouettes of warriors, bloodied and fallen, through the smoke. Though the fighting was within earshot of these fields—such as they were—the Shi-Khan Wastes had been considered "relatively safe" by the Unicorn scouts.

"Safe," that is, because neither side had any use for them. Acrid, wasted, filled with pits of acid and hollows of snaking marsh, the land here did not rest. Still, the fighting was close, and the shugenja would need to finish their spells with haste. At any minute, the lines could break, and the oni would be upon them.

"Can the other clans stand without us if we fail?" asked one of the bushi, his yari lowered as they walked cautiously forward, the formation of samurai encircling three robed shugenja, a woman in flame-colored armor, and a boy.

"If this ritual works, Raigen-san, then they will not have to. We will be able to spirit entire legions across miles of land, through Akuma's armies. If the Elemental Masters can perform it without . . ." She paused, looking once more at the empty place in the circle of shugenja. Four, where there should be five. "They will have to succeed. Someone must clear the way."

The voice was that of his champion, and the bushi nodded. "And if it fails?" No fear, only preparation echoed in the bushi's tone.

Tsukune had no answer. The ritual itself was one of the most powerful spells of the Isawa libraries, thought destroyed when Isawa Tsuke burned the Phoenix lands. Lost . . . save to the Master of Fire, Hoichu. During the titanic battle with his father's ghost at Morikage long ago, he had wrested the lost knowledge from the mad spirit's mind. But how, when one Master of Fire had failed the clan, could the Phoenix bring themselves to trust another? Tsukune looked at Hoichu carefully, appraising his stance and movements. The young man was powerful, yes, but was he strong enough to bear the kansen of the Shadowlands and the drain they would place on his magic?

The Phoenix could only pray.

The others walked into a tremendous withered clearing, allowing a dark-haired young woman to step forward. She walked slowly, her pale hand reassuringly holding the hand of a boy no older than 10.

"Ningen . . ."

The ten-year-old placed his arms on his sister's shoulders with his child's exuberance. "It will be all right, Tsukune-sama. I can hear him, too. And they need me." He looked at the gathering shugenja on the plain before them. "But when we call, you have to come. You have to."

"Of course we will. You're sure . . . ?"

"Ningen-san?" Isawa Hoichu's voice lingered on the stale air. "We are ready."

"I have to go, sister-mei."

"I know." Champion of her clan though she was, Shiba Tsukune could hardly restrain the choke in her voice as she said her goodbyes to the young boy who was too quickly turning into a man. She stood



looking out at the desolate waste as Ningen raced forward to the waiting Master of Fire. A few words were exchanged, and the young boy nodded, straightened his gi, and bowed. Hoichu smiled, took Ningen by the hand, and led him into the circle. It was an incomplete circle: four stood in place of five—four where there should be legion.

"We come to the circle that we may guard the Empire," whispered Taeruko, beginning the ancient litany.

"We come to the circle that we may find wisdom in truth," said another man, older, with steely brown eyes.

Hoichu spoke, "We come to the circle that we may have weapons against our enemies."

A pause, and all was silent. Then Ningen chirped quietly, "We come to the circle that we may find balance."

Around them, the wind began to pick up, shifting aimlessly like a caged beast. A solemn chant began in the Master of Air's throat, thrumming softly against the sounds of the battle behind them.

Taeruko's thick blanket of hair moved gently as she lifted a stone from the ground, crushing it into paste between her fingers. As she opened her hand again, gravel—in an impossible volume, given the source—streamed from between her fingers and encircled the shugenja in a ring of floating, flying stones. Her gentle alto voice drifted in the sorcerous wind, echoing from the rocks around her as if the earth itself sang harmony with her chant.

Wisps of smoke drifted into the air, and spontaneous sparks began to cluster around the stones. Each one popped faintly, glowing with energy, until at last some barrier was breached and the stones burst into flame. Swirling flame surrounded the company, blocking the view of the bushi that stood outside.

"Tsukune-sama," Raigen said suddenly, raising his yari. "There are beasts—moving our way. They are headed directly for us; either they see the flames or they feel the magic."

*It seems these plains are not so safe after all,* thought Tsukune, drawing free her clan's ancestral sword.

Three Lion riders raced toward the plain, their steeds lathered and hot. \

"Phoenix-sama!" Matsu Mori shouted, seeing Tsukune. "An oni heads your way. You must retreat back behind the lines!"

"By the Fortunes, we cannot retreat." Tsukune indicated the cluster of shugenja, stone-still in meditation as shining streams of starlight began to glow through the ring of flame and stone. "There is too much to lose."

Mori looked at the shugenja, their hands raised in prayer, and nodded. Signaling his troops to remain, he turned his steed in great leaping strides, bringing the tall bay to a halt. With surety, he drew his own sword. "Then we will stay with you, Shiba-sama."

Tsukune looked back at her brother. Ningen's solemn face—still, quiet with meditation as his elders began to reach into the center of the circle. As they did, strands of starlight, stone, and fire began to form, twisting with their motions, joining with their hands, and pulling at the fabric of the world. Gennai, the Master of Air, twisted the air into their pattern, weaving invisible cords of wind among the darker strands of night.

Side by side with the three Lion horsemen, the Phoenix fell back. At one side, Tsukune shouted orders to build a line and hold it, and, on the other, Mori arranged his two men into a mobile strike unit, harassing the oncoming horde as they drew closer to the small Phoenix stand. Farther off, behind the advancing line of Ugulu and mujina, a volley of sorcery pierced the clouds, falling in bloody rain on the distant Crane and Unicorn guards. The heart of the battle approached.

"The fight wasn't supposed to fall back to this point!" Tsukune cried to Mori as he swept past, her sword cutting down a stray Oni no Ugulu that approached too close. The Phoenix bushi began to move out, farther from the sorcery being performed behind them. Each step they could push the oni back from the ritual, the better. Tsukune wouldn't be satisfied until the chanting of the Elemental Masters was no more than a dull drone in her ears. Here. Here was the place to make their stand. Looking up at Mori on his yabanjin charger, Tsukune shouted, "What has given them the strength to break through the Crane lines?"



Mori smiled bitterly, turning his steed once more. "They must have seen your sorcery, Phoenix. That, and one more thing. The forces of the Shadow have gained strength since your bushi last took the field. "Mirumoto Sukune has fallen."

Another troupe of oni charged their position, and, though her heart sank, Tsukune fought valiantly. Her sword felt like lead in her hands, but she would not cease her labors. Sukune, the ever-present old man-dead? How bitterly the Dragon would mourn. He had brought fifty soldiers to the wastes of the far south, seeking retribution for his lady's past. If he had died, it was certain that his troops fell beside him. Too many fallen... too many lost.

Behind Tsukune the chants of the Elemental Masters grew, and the wind rose. Soon they would complete their spell—but sooner, the main body of the Shadowlands horde would reach them, and their work would be for naught. Suddenly, a wash of blood magic swelled to the south, rushing like a river toward their position.

There, behind the oni-Goju shadowmancers.

The bloody tide swelled, turning the ground red with blood and washing aside the fumbling oni charge. Tsukune tried to scream, to warn the Elemental Masters before the wave of darkness and blood reached her, but it was too late.

The oni attack had been no more than a feint to cover the true assault. Tsukune saw the men who stood between her and the rolling arc begin to burn, flesh steaming and peeling back from suddenly blackened bones. In seconds, oni, bushi and all exploded into ash and char. The wave continued, and Tsukune felt her face scorch, her long hair burn, and the skin of her callused hands begin to crack with heat and shadow.

Charging from the right, Mori's massive bay steed appeared through a haze, as if the Fortunes themselves had granted him passage. Sweeping Tsukune onto the back of the charger, he urged the horse back toward the Elemental Masters.

"Take cover!" Mori howled to them, but Tsukune, clinging to consciousness, barely heard his roar. The last of the Phoenix bushi, seeing that their champion hung limply from Mori's horse, leapt between the swiftly approaching tide and the circle of shugenja. Their bodies would be the only cover that the Elemental Master would have from the shadowy force.

"You can't stay!" Mori shouted, stunned.

"We cannot leave," Raigen said firmly. "It is not what she would wish." Indicating Tsukune, the Shiba steadfastly stood his ground, positioning himself between the bloody swell and the chanting Master of Air. "We have not fought for the Isawa for a thousand years, given our lives and our honor, to fail them now. We stand with them, as we have promised."

"Damn your courage!" Mori snarled, tugging his horse's reins. He commanded the other two Lion horsemen to join him, and they, too, leapt to place themselves in the path of the death-laden crest. Four men, three horses, and courage were all that stood between the Phoenix Masters and the storm.

Then the tide was upon them.

The chant continued, held aloft by Gennai's experienced bass rumble, but the spell cast by the four Elemental Masters began to fragment under the sorcerous attack of the Goju shadowmancers. The threads of their ritual began to unweave, wrapping them—Masters, Shiba, Lions, all—in a tangled web of sorcery. Through the roar of the wind and the blood-drenched haze of the shinobi, Mori clung to Tsukune's half-conscious form, his body shielding the Phoenix Champion from wind and razor-sharp heat.

"Hoichu . . . no, we cannot . . ." The Master of Earth attempted to pull back on her strands, lacing the stone with fire, trying to end the ritual.

"We need water, Taeruko! The ritual—we must complete . . ." Their voices were lost in the whirlwind, and Mori felt his skin blackening, cracking like the flesh of an acrid desert waste. Around him, the other bushi began to detonate, their ashes scattering on the fierce winds as, one by one, they fell to the shinobi tide.



"My sword . . .," Tsukune murmured, gathering herself through the agony of the burns she had suffered. With a heroic effort, she lifted the shining blade to the sky and whispered three words. "Shiba . . . help us."

Within her soul, a choir of voices answered the call.

Barely aware, Mori felt rather than saw a fierce glow emanate from Shiba Tsukune's weapon as the Ancestral Sword of the Phoenix sprang to life. Tapping the courage of Tsukune's heart and her dedication to her clan, the sword's glow spread around them, protecting them from the bitter wave of foul blood and shadow. All of the souls that had ever been part of Shiba—the spirits within her own—enshrouded them. Within the faint haven the glow produced, Mori clung to Tsukune, praying to the Fortunes that it would be enough.

Then all Jigoku broke loose around them. The ritual neared completion, bursting into starlight and flames of enchantment. Hoichu dominated the rebellious magic, and, with a fierce yank upon sorcerous strands, Mori felt the world began to spin. He heard Gennai chant, bringing the air to cushion the blow as best he could, but Hoichu's enthusiasm and drive spun the ritual out of control. Without the fifth Elemental Master, they were all lost. Just then, a whisper, barely heard, echoed through the ritual. "We come to the circle that we may find light in the darkness . . ."

The blood coalesced within the whirl of flames, stone and starlight. It shivered, as though some great force tugged at the very nature of its being, and then, with another burst of energy, the red of taint and foulness began to pale. It lightened not to diluted pink, but rather directly from foulness into clear purity. As though the red of all of the blood was changing through will, the redness swam and shrank within the liquid; the blood became water. And the water began to swirl, joining with the other four elements and opening a portal in the center of the Elemental Masters' circle. Mori watched as they winked out one by one, like stars into a morning sky. "It is time," murmured that strange, half-remembered voice, and Mori saw a man with a golden aura standing on the far side of the magical portal. Beyond him, the other Elemental Masters began to appear, the towering gates of Volturnum surrounding them with shadow and darkness.

"Sister, sister!" Ningen's voice echoed strangely though the portal as he clasped the hand of the man with the golden aura. Tsukune strained, but she still couldn't make out his face. Ningen continued to shout joyfully as the portal began to close. "He is here! We have found him! Hurry, oh, hurry! We will wait in Volturnum for you!"

"Take care of her . . .!" Ningen screamed, but his voice was soft and pale. Though pain gnawed at Mori's flesh, he did not let go of the Shiba Champion; he watched through a haze of anguish and awe.

The Lion nodded, staring with respect and surprise at the solemn power hiding just behind the young child's eyes. "I will."

Far away, Ningen smiled, brown eyes crinkling within the starlight that surrounded them. Then, the shifting reality that linked distant Volturnum to the Shi-Khan Wastes began to fade.

Tsukune watched as the starlight swallowed them all and the earth began to cease its shaking movements. Seconds later the portal closed, and the images of Volturnum faded to nothingness. "Oh, Ningen." She smiled proudly, lowering her sword as the flames around them began to die. "You did it. All of you. Somehow, I do not know, but you did it."

"Where have they gone?" Mori asked somberly, staring as the last motes of light and flame sparkled in the air and died softly before the coming twilight. "And who have they found?"

"They will wait for us at Volturnum. When we arrive there, the Elemental Masters will be ready. As for the rest . . ." Tsukune shook her head, uncertain. "I do not know."

"Then let them clear the way, and we will not fail them." Mori nodded with a sharp, malicious grin. "Come, Shiba-sama. You are wounded, and there is still much to do."

Tsukune nodded, feeling the voices in her soul quiet and fade. To the far south, a star shone high in the sky, following the trail of the moon.

"Ningen," she whispered, knowing somehow that her brother could hear her, "We will come for you." With that, Mori turned his staggering horse and began the journey back to the encampment, leaving only ashes and smoke to tell the tale.



# Oracle of the Void: The FAQ

by Zen Faulkes

**Q: The Accumulated Rulings haven't been updated in a long time!**

A: Hey, that's not a question; raise your voice at the end of a question. (Ha!) Until the main accumulated rulings can get back up to speed, new rulings are being collected at:

[www.planet.net.au/~zfaulkes/rulings.html](http://www.planet.net.au/~zfaulkes/rulings.html)

**Q: Now that Warrens of the Nezumi have been released, can I name "Ratling" for Alliance?**

A: Not yet. "Ratling" isn't listed in the *Soul of the Empire* rulebook as one of the Clans. This means that Warrens of the Nezumi players can't pay 2 less Gold for Ratlings, nor can they gain Honor for hiring them at full cost. (The Nezumi Stronghold article in the last issue of the *Imperial Herald* was written before than information was available. Sorry.)

**Q: Just how does Purusha work?**

A: Just like he says, of course!

Seriously, the FAQ answers most of the questions about Purusha ([www.zdi.net/jwa/15r](http://www.zdi.net/jwa/15r)), in the section about actions before the Defender's first action. The most important thing to remember about Purusha's ability is that "before the Defender's first action" just means, "before the first Battle or Open action" (even if the Defender ends up passing!).

The most popular "I go first" card, Sneak Attack, lets the Attacker take the first normal action. Between the Sneak Attack itself and that first "normal" action, however, any player involved in the battle can react with Purusha. Other "I go first" cards, however, may work differently than Sneak Attack. If the Attacker preemptively plays a card to stop ranged attacks with one of those (e.g., Scout, Hitomi Tashima), Purusha cannot react.

Some cards similar to Purusha provide "one action" or "an action" before the battle (e.g., Daikua), and these are not cumulative. Purusha is worded differently, however; multiple copies of Purusha can all be used before battle.

Finally, Purusha can't combine its ranged attack with other "normal" ranged attacks in the unit. All ranged attacks must be legal at the time they are performed.

**Q: Is it really possible to have two Sensei on one Stronghold?**

A: Yes. If you play Forgotten Lesson, your original Sensei "does not affect play," which means you pretend it isn't even there. You can legally play A New Teacher while Forgotten Lesson is in effect. After Forgotten Lesson wears off, voila! Two Sensei on one Stronghold. Note, however, that you can't put a second Sensei on this way using the Stronghold ability of Temples of the Crow. In that case, discarding the Sensei is a cost of putting the new one on.

**Q: Can the Fox Stronghold use "Mantis" Sensei?**

A: Yes. Remember, Kyuden Kitsune is a Yoritomo's Alliance Stronghold; "Fox" does not exist as a Clan in rules terms.

**Q: Speaking of Sensei, are my Kolat and Ratlings Shadowlands cards if a Shadowlands player brings them into play using Kage Sensei or Ak'tok'tuk Sensei?**

A: No. They gain the "Shadowlands Horde" trait. This term is not separable and is not equivalent to "Shadowlands." This is true if you're playing Sepulcher of Bone and The Spawning Ground, too, not just the Shadowlands Horde Stronghold itself.

**Q: Does Stepping between the Cracks negate everything that happens to the Personality for the rest of the turn?**

A: Sorry, you're reading too much into that card. Stepping between the Cracks is a one-shot negation of previously applied effects. It does not negate effects that occur after it is cast.

**Q: One last question about Seppun Sensei: Can I play Iaijutsu Challenge when I use that Sensei?**

A: Yes. Treat "would" as "will." Iaijutsu Challenge doesn't always cause an Honor loss, so Seppun Sensei players can use it.

**Q: Can Kuni Yasahii use his ability to move out of battles that have already resolved?**

A: Yes.

**Q: Can I use the Tactician trait to discard a card for a Force bonus while March of the Alliance is in effect?**

A: No. The Battle action allowed by Tactician is in the rulebook, not on the card.

## Most Recent Printings and Errata

**Ashigaru:** Now gain +1F for all Farms.

**Capturing the Soul:** Is a Ritual.

**Corrupted Dojo:** Is correct as printed (i.e., is not Shadowlands).

**Heavy Infantry:** Honor requirement is still 0 (erratum).

**Iaijutsu Duel:** Losing Honor and dishonoring the Personality are not costs of refusal (erratum).

See page 32 for the official word on the Ratlings and the Warrens of the Nezumi.

# The Unicorn Clan

by Edward Bolme and Ree Soesbee

Shinjo, the most adventurous of the children of the Sun and Moon, founded the Unicorn Clan. At the dawn of time, she tried to broker a peace between Fu Leng and their other siblings, and, after that war, she asked Hantei the First to let her explore beyond the boundaries of the Empire to find any new threats that might reside beyond the limits of the known world.

She and her clan were gone for 800 years.

As one might imagine, after eight centuries, the Empire had grown used to the Unicorn Clan being gone. So when they returned riding powerful horses twice the size of those in Rokugan and bearing caravans filled with the wealth of foreign civilizations, the disruption they caused was great. They reclaimed their ancestral lands, displacing the Lion who had taken over the right to administer the fertile plains. With their "barbarian" ways and their very non-samurai value system, the Unicorn were shunned as freaks and vagabonds, a stigma that lasts to this very day.

During the Clan War, the Unicorn Clan Champion appointed some of his cavalry to support Toturi and his Dragon army at the battle of Beiden Pass (demonstrating to the Dragon that sometimes "barbarian thinking" is very clear). As the Clan War escalated, the Unicorn realized that the Great Clans were destroying the very Empire they sought to win. Years of hardships abroad had proven to the Unicorn again and again that the survival of the clan depended on everyone from the highest daimyo to the lowest heimin, so alone among the clans the Unicorn fought to defend the peasants of Rokugan—especially from the Shadowlands horde.

At the Day of Thunder, the Unicorn's powerful cavalry helped defeat Yogo Junzo's army, and the battle maiden Otaku Kamoko herself crushed Yogo Junzo beneath her horse's hooves. Her fortune did not follow her into the final battle with Fu Leng, however, as her impetuous attack caused her to be the first to fall before the evil god's blows.

With the coronation of Emperor Toturi, the Unicorn and their powerful steeds were given the Emperor's authority to act as magistrates, a duty that seriously insulted the Lion Clan. The Lion had traditionally been the right hand of the Emperor, smiting his foes, but they saw this as a step toward giving that privilege to the Unicorn.

On the anniversary of his coronation, Emperor Toturi was abducted. Blamed for his disappearance, the Scorpion Clan was exiled to the Burning Sands. There the Scorpion discovered the heart of the Moto family, one of the powerful Unicorn houses. Centuries earlier, a large portion of the Moto family entered the Shadowlands to defeat the evil creatures therein. No one knows exactly what happened, but only a few stragglers escaped with their lives. Since that day, undead

Moto have been seen riding hideous steeds in the Shadowlands, and those Moto who remain untainted live largely in self-imposed exile, their family name tainted by this ignoble defeat.

With the help of the Scorpion (whom the isolated Moto did not know to mistrust), Shinjo herself rose from her resting place in the Burning Sands. When told that a mortal—Toturi—had slain the rightful heir to the throne, she was incensed. Never mind that Hantei the 39th had been possessed by an evil power. Both Hantei and Fu Leng were her siblings, and she would also avenge his death. Shinjo gathered her clan and marched on Otosan Uchi.

Meanwhile, in Rokugan, Toturi's return to the throne unveiled the Kolat, a secret order that sought to control Rokugan with puppet strings. Toturi's unusual insight into the Kolat led to the exposure of several Kolat in the Unicorn, among them the daimyo himself. As the clan reeled with these revelations and teetered on the brink of collapse, Shinjo and the Moto returned to Rokugan.

Naturally, the Unicorn rallied to Shinjo. With the help of several other clans, Shinjo's army stormed Otosan Uchi, although Toturi evaded their grasp.

But now, back in Rokugan, the untainted Moto turn their eyes south, to the Shadowlands. The prophecy of the Burning Words, the last words that Shinsei spoke while in the Empire, imply that the time is coming for the Moto and their corrupt kin to fight again, and it was said that this battle would decide the family's doom.

It is said that the Burning Words have come to pass, and it is also said that Otaku Kamoko herself is rallying the Dark Moto to her banner . . . and when the war is done there will only be one Moto family.



## Unicorn Top Ten

1 David Deveau	1416
2 Richard Riley	1415
3 David Claxton	1360
4 Kyle Jones	1261
5 Erik Batt	1199
6 Sandy Cottone	1120
7 Sean Nordell	1117
8 Gary Kirby	1037
9 Bryan Reese	987
10 Molly Timmers	981



## The Otaku Palaces

### Dynasty Deck (40):

#### Events (4)

Doom of the Dark Lord  
Imperial Gift  
Inheritance  
Kolats Duplicate

#### Holdings (15)

Hiruma Dojo x 3  
Merchant Caravan x 3  
Small Farm x 3  
Stables x 3  
Silk Works x 3

#### Personalities (21)

Asako Sagoten x 3  
Iuchi Karasu Exp. 2  
Iuchi Shahai x 3  
Kuni Yori Exp. 3  
Shinjo Goshi x 3  
Shinjo Yasamura Exp.  
Shinjo Yokatsu Inexp.  
Shinko Kamiko  
Otaku Kamoko x 3  
Otaku Kamoko Exp.  
Otaku Tetsuko x 3

### Fate Deck (41):

#### Sensei (1)

Hantei Sensei

#### Actions (24)

Dead Eyes x 3  
Focus x 3  
Kolats Master x 3  
One Koku x 3  
Rallying Cry x 3  
Superior Tactics x 3  
Strength of Purity x 3  
A Test of Courage x 3

#### Followers (6)

Scouting Team x 3  
Undead Cavalry x 3

#### Items (7)

Ancestral Sword of Unicorn Clan  
Armor of Earth  
Burden of the Word  
Corrupt Jade Sliver x 3  
Gohei's Daisho

#### Spells (3)

Fires of Purity x 3

## "Dark Moto" Deck

by Gary Kirby

This deck was designed for storyline tournaments in order to have storyline implications. It has been fairly successful, a close variant placing in three Strike at Midnight tournaments. It was designed in response to Shinjo Naru's (formerly Shinjo Molly) movement to save Otaku Kamoko with Jade Tokens. Its goal is to kill Otaku Kamoko with a Corrupted Jade Sliver and then resurrect her using the Experienced 3 Kuni Yori. Its path to victory is your standard Province-crush.

The key to this deck is speed. If you are faced with a choice between buying Gold and bringing out a first-turn Personality, dump the Gold and then bring out the Personality. If possible, take a Province on your second turn. Don't hesitate to spend your Stronghold Gold on an Undead Cavalry Follower or Dead Eyes; either one of these plus a Strength of Purity on Kamoko will get you nearly any Province in the game. Combine this combo with a Rallying Cry and a Shinjo's Breath, and you've got serious second-turn damage.

If an early Imperial Gift comes up, you have two choices. If you have either a One Koku or a Small Farm, get Burden of the Word. It's a reusable Strength of Purity and obviously should go onto one of your Kamokos. If not, get Gohei's Daisho. Its 2-Force bonus and card-drawing ability is awesome in a quick attack deck.

You will take some Honor losses, so try to get your Asako Sagotens out early if possible. One Koku can be a big help here. Also, if you run the Merchant Caravans, you can often get Iuchi Karasu or Shinjo Yokatsu out on the second turn. This can be game-breaking. You should use your Hantei Sensei to eliminate Berserkers, Evil Portents, Secrets on the Wind, and Rise from the Ashes.

Once you get into the midgame, the fun really begins. A well-timed Shinko Kamiko can be double-whammy devastation. First, you decimate your opponent's Gold scheme, and then you gain +2/+2 for each Holding you destroy. To top it off, Kamiko's Cavalry! Stealing dead Personalities with your Kuni Yori can be fun, especially when you face another Unicorn player. But the best use of Kuni Yori is to resurrect the Kamoko you just killed off by activating the Corrupted Jade Sliver you put on her. Putting the Fires of Purity on Iuchi Shahai gives you lots of mid- and late-game strength, as they are again reusable Strength of Purity.

#### Adjustments:

Most of the Dynasty deck should be easy to get. If you don't have a Doom of the Dark Lord, use Emissary from the Ivory Kingdoms. You can easily replace the Experienced Otaku Kamoko with a later version of her, one of which comes fixed in the *Hidden Emperor*™ Unicorn starter. You can replace the Inexperienced Shinjo Yokatsu with the Experienced Shinjo Yokatsu, and you can replace the Experienced Shinjo Yasamura with Hida Yasamura. You can replace Shinjo Goshi with Moto Soro. If you can't get some Merchant Caravans, replace them with a Golden Sun Plain and two Otaku Meadows.

The fate deck is a little tougher. You will lose some speed without One Koku. Your best bet as a replacement is Avoid Fate or Forced March. If you can't use A Test of Courage, use Flee the Darkness instead. If you don't have the Ancestral Sword, use the Otaku Nageyari. You can replace The Armor of Earth with Kitsu Kaagi's Journal. You can replace the Fires of Purity with Biting Steel or Charge.

## "Unicorn Magistrate" Deck

by Molly and Josh Timmers

The Unicorn are not just for crushing undefended Provinces anymore. This Unicorn deck reflects their role as the Emperor's magistrates, winning with Honor and Chi rather than speed.

The core Personalities in any "Unicorn Magistrate" deck are Shinjo Shirasu and Shinjo Tashima. Both come out for the Otaku Palaces Stronghold and have innate dueling abilities. Shirasu can challenge any Dishonored Personality to an unrefusable duel—including Ninja, Oni, and Undead cards, so even the Horde and the Ninja can't run from his justice. Tashima gets +2/+2 in any duel or battle when a Human Personality with 0 Personal Honor opposes him, and he can challenge any unaligned Samurai to a duel, an ability that has earned him the nickname "The Real Doom of Toturi."

To use Shirasu effectively, you need a way to dishonor your opponent. Secrets on the Wind and a cheap Scorpion Shugenja can mean a Personality kill each turn for as long as the two of them stay alive. Iaijutsu Challenge is practically unrefusable against this deck. If your opponent turns down the duel, Shirasu can bow to challenge the Dishonored cur the next time you can take a Limited action. Command of the Kami and Enough Talk! help ensure that your opponent doesn't have the Favor to re-honor his or her Personalities before you duel them.

The biggest problem with Shirasu's innate duel is his low printed Chi, which is only 2. Unless you take some precautions, he can't successfully challenge many Personalities. You can get around this by raising his Chi through Kakita's "The Sword" or Fortress of the Dragonfly. Also, Nemesis is a good one-shot Chi bonus that gets Shirasu's Chi up to 5 against any one Personality.

The other method of winning duels is just to strike before your opponent can focus. A Tetsubo is one way, but then Shirasu's Chi drops to 1. Yuck. This deck uses Kakita Technique, which allows you to focus or strike before your opponent as long as your Personality has the higher Personal Honor. Since Shirasu can challenge only Dishonored Personalities, it is almost a certainty that he will have the higher Personal Honor!

Once you see to it that your opponent has no Personalities left alive, you can either take out his or her undefended Provinces or simply bow the Sanctified Temples and bring out Personalities for full cost to run to 40 Honor and the victory.

### Rare and Fixed Cards

The Ancestral Sword of Unicorn Clan is a tough card to get, but if you can win a few easy duels, a common Bloodsword on Shirasu is just as good or better and makes the deck legal for Strict Jade. Test of Honor and Force of Will just increase your killing potential, but Shame and Remorseful Seppuku also work well with this deck. While Shinjo Tashima is only an uncommon, he comes from the hard-to-get *Crimson & Jade*™ expansion. You can add a third Buodin instead, and no Unicorn deck is hurt by a couple copies of any version of Otaku Kamoko.

## The Otaku Palaces

### Dynasty Deck (40)

#### Events (4)

Alliance  
Emperor's Peace  
Imperial Gift  
Inheritance

#### Holdings (18)

Ashalan Sandsmith x 2  
Hiruma Dojo x 3  
Kakita's "The Sword"  
Sanctified Temple x 3  
Silk Works x 3  
Small Farm x 3  
Stables x 3

#### Personalities (18)

Asako Sagoten  
Bayushi Kachiko Inexp.  
Ide Buodin x 2  
Iuchi Karasu Exp. 2  
Otaku Tetsuko x 3  
Shinjo Shirasu x 3  
Shinjo Tashima x 3  
Soshi Jomyako x 2  
Soshi Jujun x 2

### Fate Deck (40)

#### Sensei (1)

Toshimoko Sensei

#### Actions (28)

Block Supply Lines x 2  
Command of the Kami x 2  
Counterattack x 3  
Enough Talk! x 2  
Iaijutsu Challenge x 3  
Iaijutsu Duel x 3  
Kakita Technique x 3  
Marries a Barbarian x 2  
Nemesis x 2  
Superior Tactics x 2  
Test of Honor x 2  
Unrequited Love x 2

#### Elemental Ring (1)

Ring of the Void

#### Items (4)

Ancestral Sword of Unicorn Clan  
Bloodsword x 2  
Gohei's Daisho

#### Spells (6)

Force of Will x 3  
Secrets on the Wind x 3



# The Art of War

One of the joys of playing any card game can often be getting the “killer combination” into play. Here are a selection of combos from two “experts” at Wizards of the Coast and some players in the field.

**Goju Adorai Exp. + Plain of Fast Troubles + Oath of Fealty + Bayushi Hisa Exp. 3**

**Combo Name: “The Goju Gatling Gun”**

**Submitted by Leon “The Master of Mujina” Phillips**

Play the The Dark Path of Shadow Stronghold, and use Oath of Fealty to get Bayushi Hisa into your Clan. Then all you need is somebody to attack one of your Plains of Fast Troubles. Assign Goju Adorai and Bayushi Hisa to the battle. Then, using Goju’s ability, destroy something in the opposing army by destroying Hisa and put him on the Plain of Fast Troubles. Bring Bayushi Hisa back into the battle for free as your next action. Repeat.

**Dairya Exp. 3 + Daidoji Technique**

**Combo Name: “So You Wanted to Know Why Dairya is ‘The Super Bad-Ass Ronin’”**

**Submitted by Frank Chafe**

Normally Dairya’s ability is only usable on those people with Clan Swords and Champions and stuff. With Daidoji Technique you can smack anyone around with this ability. Use Daidoji Technique on Dairya and then issue the beat-down on any person in the battle. As long as you don’t use Focus in your deck, you’re fine.

**Moto Gaheris Exp. + Armor of Earth**

**Combo Name: “Lots of Love from the Burning Sands”**

Quite simply, if you want to shut your opponent down militarily, here’s how you do it. Moto Gaheris is the new

Champion, and his ability is quite brutal. Your opponent cannot play an action unless it would send Gaheris home. With the Armor of Earth attached, Gaheris can’t be sent home and makes the battle swing dramatically in your favor.

**Oni no Garusei + Dark Moto Sensei + Lesser Oni**

**Combo Name: “Finally, a Reason to Play Lesser Oni”**

Play any of the Clans whose Personalities the Dark Moto Sensei can attach to, and get Oni no Garusei out on the first turn. Second turn, drop all of your free Lesser Oni and have a 13-Force unit attack second turn.

**Arrival of the Emerald Champion + Come One at a Time**

**Submitted by James Collier**

Here’s a nasty trick to play on Unicorns or on anyone else who assigns to Provinces you haven’t defended. You can play Arrival in a battle in which you have no units,

producing a 5F/6C Samurai with Double Chi—a level of dueling ability normally reached only by expensive, Unique Personalities like Seppun Toshigen and The Grey Crane. Following this card with Come One at a Time (Duels-R-Us), cuts huge Follower-based, weenie Horde armies in half without any difficulty—and it’s very difficult to see it coming. To make it impossible to see it coming, use Garrison and Mushin.



**Burden of the Word + For the Empire**

Bowing the Burden gives your Personality +3/+3 and the **Shadowlands** trait for a turn. For the Empire begins an unrefusable duel between a Shadowlands Personality and a Samurai. If the Shadowlands Personality wins, it receives a permanent +1/+1 . . . which is very likely,

since your Personality with the Burden just received +3C and (if you're smart) had 3C or more to begin with. Also, don't forget that the duel is a Limited action and the Burden's is Open. Take your 3/3 Personality, win your duel, gain +1/+1, and then attack with your (now) 7/7 Personality.

#### Assuming the Championship + Clan Banner (fires extra)

Clan Banner gives you +1F for every dead Personality and +3F while your Clan Champion is dead in your discard pile. Assuming the Championship gives one of your Personalities (the one with the highest Chi) the **Clan Champion** trait. So, if you use Assuming on, say, a high-Chi, low-Force Personality and then destroy him or her, your Banner-bearer suddenly gets 4F.

#### Yasuki Nokatsu Exp. + Oh-chi'chek

The Experienced Nokatsu can destroy one of his Followers to give the rest of his Followers +2F until the end of the turn. This usually results in losing a Follower, but not if you use Oh-chi'chek. Oh-chi'chek lets you attach three 1F Ratling Followers to one of your Ratling Personalities when he is destroyed. Destroy him to give Nokatsu's Followers the +2 Force bonus, and then attach the three token Followers to one of your Ratling Personalities. Seems like a fair trade.

#### Sanctified Blade + The Power of Incompleteness

Sanctified Blade gives a Chi bonus equal to your character's Personal Honor—great for duelists, but not so great for military. Answer: Use the Power—which sets your Force equal to your Chi, whichever is higher. Now you can make Otaku Kamoko a 5/5, with +1 for attacking. For even more fun, attach the Blade to a high-Honor Monk with Takao's Jingasa. Cast Power on the Monk. Then cast Chasing Osano-Wo on a high-Honor

Personality. Almost as good as a Clan Sword.

#### Sanctified Blade + White Shore Plain + any Tactician

White Shore Plain gives Tacticians that didn't use their ability in a battle a Force bonus equal to their Chi.

This is most effective when the Tactician's Chi is greater than 4. The Sanctified Blade is a cheap way to make that happen. For the nominal cost of 3 Gold, your Personality gains a Chi bonus equal to his or her Personal Honor. The Experienced Qamar, who has a Personal Honor of 3 and Chi of 5, would get a +8F bonus when White Shore Plain resolves.



#### Burden of the Word + Evil Portents

Here's one they won't see coming. Give your Personality the **Shadowlands** trait, then Portents bomb everybody else. This one combines well with the Unicorn Shinjo's Breath/Rally combo. Take two Provinces, then pump up your Kamoko while killing off your opponents and take the last two.

#### Burden of the Word + Darkness Beyond Darkness

This combo destroys any Shadowlands card in play for the minimal cost of bowing your Personality. Bow the Burden to give your Personality the **Shadowlands** trait, then bow your Personality and play Darkness to kill off one of your opponent's Shadowlands cards. While this

works against beefy Personalities like Oni no Akuma, Kyoso no Oni, and Moto Tsume, it is also very effective against Kuni Wastelands, The Festering Pit of Fu Leng, and all of the Dark Oracles.





# Top 10's

## Crane

1 Tyler Running Deer	2157
2 Eric S. Wiener	1988
3 Wolfgang Baur	1588
4 Les Purcell	1370
5 Terry L. Madden	1072
6 Shawn C. Hopkins	952
7 Paul Ryan	845
8 Neil Canuel	841
9 Paul Johnson	720
10 Jay Luo	716

## Lion

1 Thierry Laurent	1139
2 Noel Meyer	969
3 Matt Levy	951
4 Garnung Benoit	948
5 Joel Mazorra	771
6 Brian Welshans	733
7 Jose Castro	707
8 David Veschi	688
9 Marty M. Schuchman	625
10 Rob Tollefson	614

## Ninja

1 Scott Hadsall	2000
2 Dawniel Ramsdell-Loesch	1275
3 Nathan A. Roberts	1051
4 Pete R Warren	939
5 Mathew E Manders	923
6 Brandon M Flores	919
7 Tim Huey	879
8 Orlando Rodriguez	806
9 Martin A. Helsing	788
9 Bill Beese	788

## Scorpion

1 Lang M. Johnson	1069
2 Robert Ciccolini	1045
3 Magnus Chung	957
4 Torrey C. Martinez	936
5 Mark Armitage	799
6 Lepvriar Laurent	763
7 Dennis J. Quearry	667
8 Toby Dewley	659
9 David Chow	651
10 Wade D. Greninger	575
10 Paul Bennett	575

## Shadowlands

1 Darrian Dalangin	2423
2 Ramon Pena	1406
3 Scott Parker	941
4 Richard A. Jones	913
5 David Salsman	877
6 Todd Leistra	866
7 Mike S. Colson	859
8 Sebastien Duthu	821
9 Kris S Scudgington	788
10 Warren S Owen	675

## Crab

1 Brian Duff	1898
2 Bob Yager	977
3 Alexis S. Kampas	892
4 Matthew Budd	744
5 Jeremy D. Holcomb	710
6 Douglas Wimberley	669
7 Keven Walker	664
8 Paul Heaver	649
9 Gunnar R Lundquist	563
10 Bob Schultz	562

## Dragon

1 Gregory Osborn	1845
2 Matt Rynearson	937
3 Josh Timmers	876
4 Kelly Garcia	848
5 Jeremy M. Nagorny	814
6 David Brown	797
7 Matt Loomis	796
8 Kenneth Yeung	577
9 Chuck Derby	538
10 Shan Simpson	497

## Naga

1 Luis Matos	1146
2 Charles Jones	988
3 Barry Osser	961
4 Marty Loftus	730
5 Sean Cabin	591
6 Paul Gerardi	482
7 Jacob J. Lesgold	437
8 Damian O'Dea	424
9 Shane Lindstrom	418
10 Richard De Tagle	379

## Phoenix

1 Shawn Williams	2804
2 Jim Beck	2567
3 Antoine Blanchard	2309
4 Paul M. Higgins	1901
5 Art Reid	1585
6 Afshin Coleman	1557
7 Ian Ryan	1447
8 Raphael Pinard	1366
9 Devin B. Precourt	1320
10 Raphael Carton	1248

## Brotherhood

1 Thomas Cottone	2458
2 Jeff Hicks	1404
3 Jason Marlis	1113
4 Bret Swanson	1089
5 Matthew Farney	1017
6 Terry Doner	911
7 Michael Young	757
8 Jonathan Scharer	740
9 Chris M Allen	699
10 Stefan J. Zarzynski	685

## Voritomo Alliance

1 Alexis Sardella	1450
2 Joe Sanzone	1428
3 Jason Cadd	932
4 Jeff Schomoke	831
5 Jody Mooney	796
6 Andy T. Boyd	766
7 Paul T. Main	688
8 Wolfgang Baur	664
9 Peale Chuang	656
10 John C. Fiala	651

## Who's Who: Mike "Toku" Liesik

Hi. My name is Mike, and I'm obsessed with Toku.

My path to the L5R world began in the summer of 1987. My brother and I saved every penny of our allowance for months so that we could buy a Nintendo system. I spent countless hours feeding my new addiction, **The Legend of Zelda** game. As time passed (and new game systems were released), I grew to love role-playing and strategy games. My friend, Richard (who, conveniently enough, works in the Customer Service department here at Wizards), and I spent every weekend playing video games at his house, usually starting at noon and finishing at six in the morning.

I moved to Tennessee for a couple of years, but when I came back, Rich had a new type of game for me to try:

the **Magic** TCG. I was hooked. I found the challenge of pooling (usually limited) resources to construct a deck that could beat one or more opponents into submission strangely exciting. I played at least six games a day, seven days a week. About the time that my interest in the game began to wane, a new game was released. I promptly sold every **Magic** card that I owned and dumped all of that money into the **Legend of the Five Rings** TCG (sucking Rich into the game as well). The feudal Japanese setting, vivid story, and diversity of the Clans fascinated me. Those things—and Toku.

Three and a half years later, I found out the Wizards was opening a retail store in the mall in my town. I jumped at the opportunity. After I got the job, I felt it was my duty to share this opportunity with my best friend, Richard. I worked as a retail lackey for about six months before finding an opening in the Human Resources department at the corporate offices. I just met the minimum qualifications and aced the interview. (Rich's move to CS followed shortly thereafter.) While I could have worked in HR for the rest of my life, it wasn't my dream job. I tried

for two L5R-related positions before being selected to run the demo program.

Some of my basic job duties include scheduling demos, attending conventions, running the Stronghold program, and incorporating new games into the demo program. I worked on the initial Empire League design, which included five unique objectives for each of the thirteen Clans. With the redesign of the league, I had the task of creating the objectives and writing the backstory for each season. I started L5R playtesting with the *Soul of the Empire* expansion (just about the time that the *Ambition's Debt*™ expansion hit the streets) and am in charge of the Wizards playtest team. I also write for the *Herald* and a little magazine called *TopDeck*™. And oh yeah, I am obsessed with Toku.

I've been married for about three years to an incredibly loving woman who shares my passion for video games, if not card games. I have a beautiful ten-month-old daughter (pictured on page 8 of *Herald* #15), who is affectionately known around the office as "baby O-Ushi." I also pride myself on being the youngest member of the L5R brand team, at a mere 23 years of age.

I'm not sure what I want to do with the rest of my life; I just know that I want games to be a part of it. Feel free to stop by the demo area of the Wizards booth at either Origins® or Gen Con and chat for

a while. Be sure to check out my Book o' Toku, Volumes I and II.

By the way, did I mention my obsession with Toku?





# Kotei Reports

compiled by Mindy Sherwood-Lewis

When we went to press with this issue, about half of the Kotei tournaments had been run. I asked some of the organizers, judges, and players to write brief reports of what went on at their Kotei events, so that we could share the experience with you. Hopefully you had an opportunity to get to one of the nineteen Kotei events held worldwide. If you did not, start planning now to try to play in one in 2001!

## Australian Kotei, by Zen Faulkes

Australia led the charge to Oblivion's Gate at the year's first Kotei, held Easter weekend in Melbourne. Players came from all over the country, they were excited, and there was a terrific atmosphere.

The 2000 Kotei was Australia's first truly *national* L5R tournament. Besides the Melbourne locals, players came from Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane, and Darwin (the other side of the country, 3,150 km away!).

The Clan breakdown among the thirty-four players was surprising, with Naga's six representatives leading the pack! But the big shock came during a "Clan cheer" before the first round: instead of loud cries of "Banzai!" for Dragon and Phoenix . . . *nothing!* Despite the perceived power of (say) Phoenix, Aussies played their favorite Clans.

Quick contests were held between rounds, ranging from "Showing the Mon" for best costume to "the fastest L5R tournament in the world" (a 4/5 tournament), with lots of signed cards and other goodies awarded.

After the initial six rounds of Swiss, nobody was undefeated, indicating just how tight the competition was.

The finals pitted Honor against attack: Paul Ryan's Crane versus Matthew Hasting's Shadowlands. Matthew had destroyed thirty-two Provinces in his previous eight games (Chrysanthemum Festival came up for his one loss), but, in the finals, Paul hired the Ki-Rin at exactly the right moment, keeping the Horde at bay. Matthew's Ambush on the Ki-Rin came only after he had three copies of Kakita Shijin in play, pushing Paul to 41 Honor and the title of "Best L5R Player South of the Equator."

You can find more reports and pictures at:

[www.planet.net.au/~zfaulkes/kotei\\_pics.html](http://www.planet.net.au/~zfaulkes/kotei_pics.html)

## Toronto Kotei, by Jeff Kyer

We met upstairs at Reilly's, though there was some confusion about the time! This year we had seventy-two players, up from last year's sixty-five, from near and far. Since this tournament came hard on the heels of last month's Hilariko's Redemption tournament at Orion, fewer travelers attended. But some people came a good distance, including one fellow from Thunder Bay, Ontario, and a carload of people who came from Boston. The person from farthest away received an Exile promo card. A few L5R notables made an appearance, such as Nik Olah and Steve Murray (to name but two). The most heavily represented Clan was Unicorn, which is not surprising in the Toronto area, with twelve stalwart Ponies fanatics playing Otaku Palaces. With the exception of only one brave soul playing Monk, the other Clans were surprisingly well represented.

Five rounds of Swiss were played to determine top finalists, and a few side tournaments were played for those who didn't make it into the sweet sixteen. Hairy Tarantula Games and Skyfox, who were kind enough to set up booths at Reilly's for the day, donated extra prizes for the tournament. A raffle was held for one of the beautiful, big Kotei posters, given away by our lovely barkeep, Sara. Sara kept the beer and food flowing, which is why I love playing here.

Playing in a pub makes for a very relaxed, genteel atmosphere, and a lot of fun was had by all. The winner, Sau Hoang, played Phoenix Enlightenment. The rest of the Top 4 were all Unicorn: Jack Fair placed second, followed by Dave Deveau and Paul Germain. After that, we all went down to enjoy what a pub is for . . .

## K2KLA, by J. L. Robert

The Los Angeles Kotei tournament was held in Costa Mesa, California. Through a bit of effort, some generous contributions, and my own pocket, I assembled the biggest collection of prizes for an L5R tourney out here.

I was a bit disappointed that only fifty-nine (*not* sixty-five) participants showed up to play. I was surprised, however, with the range of players who did show up. The San Francisco gang failed to make it, despite reports

of their intentions of doing so, but there were a few participants from northern California present all the same. Arizona and Washington state had representatives present. And Bob Yager made the trip from South Dakota to participate in the event! K2KLA was an *international* event, too, as a small handful of players from Tijuana, Mexico, also attended! My thanks to all who journeyed so far to play with our band of locals.

When all was said and done, a surprise winner was crowned, with a surprise result. Conrad Jackson, on break from school in Florida, marched through the field and won with an impressive 10-0 record. His Lion speed deck caught many anti-Phoenix decks off guard; each time I observed his matches, he was in control, with at least one opponent's Province destroyed.

For his efforts, Conrad will represent southern California at the L5R World Championships at Gen Con, despite flying in from Tampa, Florida. Congratulations, Conrad, and best of luck to you in August!

My thanks go out to all who participated. Thank you for making my final L5R experience a fun and exciting one.

### **Manchester Kotei, by Mark Wooten**

The U.K. and Ireland Kotei was held on Saturday, June 10 in Manchester, and for the first time we broke the hundred-player barrier at an event in the United Kingdom.

The room had been decked out with banners, bamboo screens, and ornamental plant arrangements—enough to soothe anyone's karma! The event itself saw a predominance of Unicorn and Yoritomo's Alliance decks, with nearly a third of the decks from these two Clans. Competition was fierce, as always, but with good spirit and camaraderie between the players.

Oriental entertainment of various types punctuated the tournament itself throughout the day. Musicians, dancing, and martial arts displays lifted the spirits of the players between rounds. A hearty lunch of stir-fried vegetables, chicken, and a few koku of rice, all courtesy of the U.K. DCI, kept the bodies and minds going!

For those who did not fare so well, there were a number of free side events, including a sealed-deck tournament. Many players took advantage of this and enjoyed themselves in casual play as the tension of the final rounds approached.

At the end of a serious day's dueling, a "Crab Walls," a "Spawning Pits Oni," a "Junzo's Army Attack," a "Unicorn Magistrate," a "Phoenix Dishonor," a "Fox

Personality-Control Military," a "Lion Tactician," and a Toturi's Army deck held the top places.

Before the knockout stage commenced, prizes were awarded, amidst cheers and applause, to the players with the highest Clan finishes. At this stage, special mention has to go to the "Crab Wall" deck that went 7-0 through the Swiss section of the tournament. Then, once more, battle commenced!

When all of the fighting was done, Marc Crowley and his Junzo's Army emerged victorious as the U.K. and Ireland Dark Kotei Emperor. He, together with Kamal Abdollah, who finished second with his Fox deck, get all-expenses-paid trips to U.S. Gen Con, together with the nearly thirty players already committed to coming over for the event out of their own pockets!

Watch out America: the Celts and Angles are coming!

### **Seattle Kotei, by Frank Chafe**

I experienced and really enjoyed many great things about the Seattle Kotei—everything from the line that went through the building for the "Box of Greed" to the oooooohhing and aaaahhhing of fans and visitors alike at the prizes, as well as the support of the fans and the appreciation that they showed to us for running this event. I thought it was cool the way the only Ninja player always sat in the shadows, and they always seemed to follow him where he sat and played in the event. It was noteworthy to see the ogre brigade on their mission to save them: go ogres! The Scorpion showed their hatred for Aramasu by ripping one up every round of the event while shouting, "For the Empire! For the Scorpion! For Lang!"

But ultimately, I thought the coolest thing was the massive earthquakes that hit the Seattle Game Center throughout the day. The ground shook, the walls quivered, and people were raised out of their seats at one point by the thunder and excitement of . . . wait a minute. Those weren't earthquakes. Those were some wild fans getting excited. Those were people shouting their support for their Clans, their Empire, their GAME! All together now . . .

Uts!

# **Banzai!**



# News from Court

by Andy Heckt

## Members of the Assembly,

The armies of the Empire stand before Oblivion's Gate as the dead of Jigoku wander from its gateway. Goju and his forces seek to destroy the gate and thus destroy every Rokugani's tie to the past—and thus their future.

## The Favor

In keeping with the past coming back, this quarter's issue has reached back in time for members' benefits. The cover-letter offer is for the "Box of Greed." Close to 500 years ago, the Bloodspeaker Asahina Yajinden devised the Box, a distant cousin to the Anvil of Despair, as a trap with which samurai were enticed into giving up their koku for rare items that would ultimately corrupt them with their . . . . Let me start over. The Box of Greed is a random collection of rare cards from some past sets. In this case, the Box of Greed includes cards from the *Anvil of Despair™*, *Time of the Void™* (sorry, no Wedges), *Pearl Edition™* (no, not the ones offered by Taka), and *Shadowlands™* (uncommons only) sets. Some older promos and a couple of incomplete *Heroes of Rokugan™* sets are also in there. (Wolfgang Baur wrote a piece on the Box of Greed for issue #12.) Your cover letter explains more of the details for taking advantage of this offer.

Note also that within this issue we have continued to offer six cards that only members can order from the wily trader. You need to provide your DCI number (and Koku) to Taka when ordering these items, to verify your membership. Taka selected some of the best *Pearl* cards just for members.

## Changing Your Assembly Affiliation

Last issue was the final "clan letter" for the members affiliated to "Ronin." Ronin can still change their affiliation by calling 1-800-324-6496 and talking to a Customer Service representative or by emailing me at <fanclubs@wizards.com>.

For Ninja affiliation, you need to have won a 16+-player sanctioned tournament while playing a Ninja deck. Please provide as much of the following as you can: the event sanctioning number, the organizer's last name, the date of the tournament, and its location.

## Canada

As announced last issue, the improvements in transport and trade and the switch to regional offices has allowed us to offer to residents of Canada domestic rates for membership and shipping. That is correct! \$15US for Canadians to join or renew the assembly . . . so call!

## Renewal

If you didn't renew or join before this issue, you all now know why I've been beating that drum: members-only offers like last issue's *Heroes of Rokugan* offer. The *Herald* is now back onto its quarterly schedule. Issue #17 comes out in early November, and the first issue of next year comes out in February. Benefits for members only are on the increase, other cover-letter offers will appear, and we continue to grow while our prices remain the same for most of you.

## Access to the Chancellor

With any questions you have about membership benefits, Koku redemption, or changes of address, contact Customer Service at:

Telephone: 1-800-324-6496 or 1-888-4-5RINGS

Email: fanclubs@wizards.com

To better serve our members in Europe and South Africa, we have relocated basic operations for these members to regional offices. For contact information, see below.

## Membership Drive

This wraps up our year-long membership drive. We've given out a set of foils from each of the last expansions, and now its time to award the final prize of a full set to Ramsay Trainton of Canyon, Texas, sponsored by Robert Hindbaugh of Amarillo, Texas.

Thank you all for participating, and we hope that, as the premier representative of this game, you'll continue to encourage others to learn, play, and join our community.

## Legend of the Five Rings Order Form - Herald #16

Redemption Policy: Send your orders via certified mail or other traceable means (except when sending to the Belgium office). We are not responsible for lost orders. A self-addressed, stamped envelope for card orders is no longer required. Shipping and handling for all other items is still required. Write down orders by item number. Please allow four to eight weeks for delivery. Contact Andy Heckt if you do not receive your order after six weeks (see "News from Court" above).

Item #s: \_\_\_\_\_  
Alternate choices (card requests): \_\_\_\_\_ Shipping & handling total: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DCI#: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Koku in order: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ If you are in the U.S. and are under 13, or if you are not in the U.S. and are under 18,  
have your parent or guardian sign here: \_\_\_\_\_

## SEND ORDERS TO your regional office:

Americas & Asia/Pacific  
Fan Clubs/Taka's Treasures  
P.O. Box 707  
Renton, WA 98057-0707  
U.S.A.

U.K., Ireland, South Africa  
Wizards of the Coast U.K., Ltd.  
Customer Service  
P.O. Box 61, Maidenhead  
Berkshire, SL6 1FX  
ENGLAND

France  
Wizards of the Coast, France  
Customer Service  
BP 103  
94222 Charenton Cedex  
FRANCE

Other European Countries  
Wizards of the Coast, Belgium  
Customer Service  
PB 2031  
2600 Berchem  
BELGIUM

Orders from this issue of the *Herald* will be accepted from 8/1/00 to 12/1/00.



## What Is

### Koku?

You can find Koku on the back of every booster pack and on one of the inside flaps of every **Legend of the Five Rings** deck box. So how

do you use the Koku once you've found it? Send it to Taka to exchange it for L5R cards, T-shirts, and other merchandise! Make sure you follow the shipping and handling directions carefully and pay close attention to the order form for the address of the office closest to you to which to send your order.



# Taka's Treasures

### 16-1 NEW cover-letter offer! Box of Greed

You read about it in issue #12. Heard about it on the list server. Used it at Gen Con. Maybe it visited a Kotei tournament near you. Now members can get some of the action!

**16-2 Foil boosters** These were mis-collated and mis-wrapped boosters. They are plain silver, but they contain *Time of the Void* and *Obsidian Edition*™ uncommons (11 cards each). *30 Koku*

**16-3 L5R logo shirt** 250 Koku, plus \$4US S&H U.S. & Canada/\$10 elsewhere

**16-4 War banners** Wear the color of your clan to ear! Bear your clan mon into battle! Honor your home! Come prepared for your next tournament as the samurai did for battle, displaying the standard of your clan. Produced by Kamweid exclusively for the *Imperial Herald*, this 1' x 3' banner features your clan's mon prominently upon the background color of the clan. Ready to be mounted on poles (instructions included) or hung on your wall. Please specify which clan when ordering: Crab, Crane, Dragon, Lion, Phoenix, Scorpion, Unicorn, Naga, Shadowlands, Monk, Toturi's Army, or Mantis.

1000 Koku, plus \$3US S&H U.S. & Canada/\$5 elsewhere



## The Card Shop

All selections are limited by availability—first come, first served. Only one request of each card per order, please! Cards 16XA–16XF are for Assembly members only. Each order must be accompanied by the order form (on page 22). All artwork is ©1996–2000 by the respective artists or Wizards of the Coast and is used by permission. Cards are 20 Koku each.



**Reprinted cards** These Personalities were reprinted with the new card borders.

16AA Hida O-Ushi  
16AB Kakita Yoshi  
16AC Togashi Yoshi  
16AD Kitsu Motso  
16AE Isawa Kaede  
16AF Bayushi Goshui  
16AG Ide Tadaji

16AH Yoritomo Exp.  
16AI Dashmar  
16AJ Takao  
16AK Dairyu  
16AL Ninja Shapeshifter  
16AM Moto Tsume Exp.



# Hold the Gate.

*Emperor Toturi slips into the Shadow's grasp.  
Its reach extends to the living and the dead.  
The fate of the Empire  
will be decided. NOW.*



BATTLE AT OBLIVION'S GATE  
Storyline Tournament  
Gen Con® 2000 Game Fair  
August 10-13, Open Format  
TAKE A STAND.



THE SCORPION  
First Clan War™ Novel  
July 7, 2000



STORMS OVER MATSU PALACE™  
New Beginner's Set  
July 10, 2000



SOUL OF THE EMPIRE™  
Expansion  
July 10, 2000



EMPIRE LEAGUE™  
Story-Based League Play  
Season III starts July 17, 2000

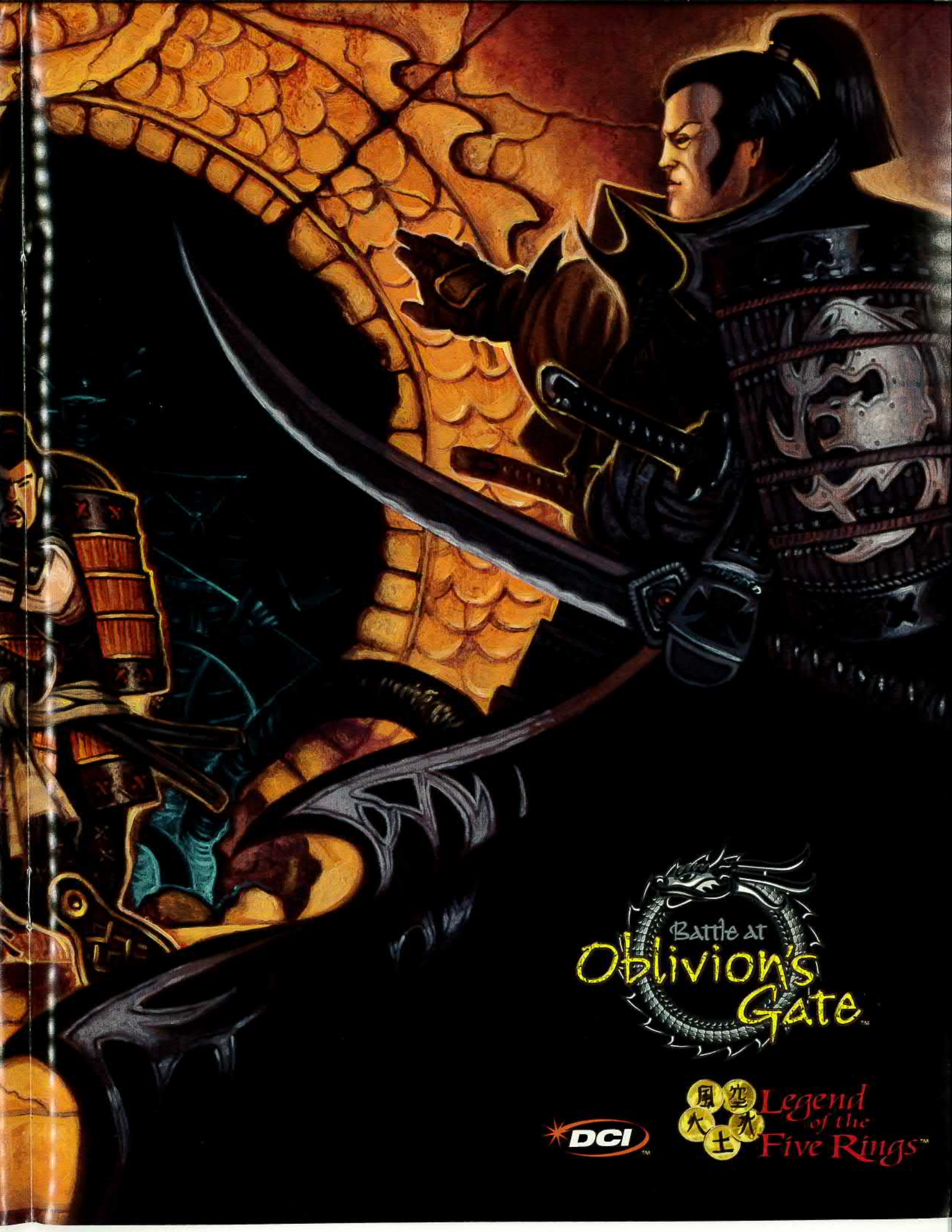


[www.wizards.com/L5R](http://www.wizards.com/L5R)

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Battle at  
**Oblivion's Gate**



Legend  
of the  
**Five Rings**



16A  
Chrysanthemum  
Festival



16B  
Clan Heartland



16C  
Focus



16D  
Geisha Assassin



16E  
Investigation



16F  
Iris Festival



16G  
Mantis Bushi



16H  
Night Medallion



16I  
Ogre Warriors



16J  
Oracle of Earth



16K  
Oracle of Fire



16L  
Oracle of the Void



16M  
Oracle of Water



16N  
Oracle of Wind



16O  
Poisoned Weapon



16P  
School of Wizardry



16Q  
Spirit Guide



16R  
Touch of Death



### Members-Only Cards

16XA  
Ambush



16XB  
Avoid Fate



16XC  
Imperial Gift



16XD  
Inheritance



16XE  
Kolats Master



16XF  
Test of Honor





# Soul of the Empire Card List

<b>Actions</b>		Defenders of the Wall	R	Bayushi Ikita	C	Yaro	C
Bide Your Time	C	Hurlspit Goblins	U	Bayushi Meharu	C	Yasuki Nokatsu Exp. 2	U
Blessing of the		Jal-Pur Raiders	U	Bhakarash	C	Yoritomo Exp. 3	R
Celestial Heavens	C	Lost Souls	R	Bokatu	C	Yoritomo Furikae Exp.	U
Cavalry Screen	C	Moto Chargers	C	Daidoji Rekai Exp. 2	R	Yotsu Shoku	C
City of Empty Dreams	C	Naga Vipers	U	Dairya Exp. 3	R	Zorr'tek	C
City of Living Flames	C	Oni no Byoki	U	Doji Benku	C		
City of Loyalty	C	Oni Podling	R	Doji Kuwanan Exp. 3	F	<b>Regions</b>	
City of Tears	C	Shadow Assassins	C	Dragon of Fire Exp.	R	Dark Plains	U
City of White Clouds	C	Shiryo no Chiroku	R	Earth Dragon Exp.	R	Fields of Courage	U
Cornering Maneuver	C	Shiryo no Gohei	R	Elder Goju	C	Fields of the Moon	U
Daidoji Technique	U	Shiryo no Hantei	R	Ginawa Exp. 3	R	Glory Grounds	C
Deadly Fright	C	Shiryo no Kunliu	R	Goju Adorai Exp.	R	Otomo Towers	U
Death-Seeker Technique	U	Tsunami Legion	R	Grey Crane, The, Exp. 3	R	Temples of the New Tao	C
Devastation	C	Void Guard	U	Hida Tsuru Exp.	R		
Emperor Returns, The	U			Hiruma Abun	C	<b>Sensei</b>	
Fearful Soul	C	<b>Holdings</b>		Hitomi Iyoin Exp.	R	Hoshi Sensei	R
Firefly Tattoo	U	Empty Crevasse	C	Hoshi Eisai Exp.	U	Hoturi Sensei	R
For My Clan	U	Kolat Chambers	U	Hoshi Wayan Exp. 2	R	O-Ushi Sensei	R
Fortified Ground	U	Master Courtier	U	Ide Tadaji Exp.	U	Otomo Sensei	R
Fulfilling My Duty	C	Nori Farm	C	Isawa Tomo Exp. 2	U	Shirasu Sensei	R
Fully Armed	C	Political Favors	C	Jama Suru Exp.	U	Tetsuya Sensei	R
Half-Beat Strike	R	Shrine of the Dead	C	Kage Exp. 5	R	Yodin Sensei	R
Increased Production	C	Shrines of the Emperor	U	Kakita Kyruko	C		
Kingdom of Ghosts	C	Spy Network	C	Kakita Yoshi Exp. 3	U	<b>Spells</b>	
Lessons of Honor	U	Traveling Caravan	C	Keda	C	Blood Rite	R
Orochi Tattoo	U			Kitsu Moto Exp. 2	R	Bloodstained Forest	U
Overwhelm	C	<b>Items</b>		Kyoso no Oni Exp. 2	R	Burning the Ashes	C
Passage of Time	U	Armor of the Ebony Samurai	U	Mat'tck	C	Chains of Jigoku	U
Rank Hath Privilege	R	Armor of the Monkey Clan	U	Matsu Agetoki Exp. 2	R	Eyes Shall Not See	C
Rebirth of the Dark Daughter	U	Armor of the Twilight Mountains	C	Matsu Domotai	C	Past Glories	U
Shadowed Wastes	U	Draft Notice	C	Mirumoto Taki Exp.	U	Restoring the Age of Myth	U
Sniping	U	Dragon's Tooth	R	Moto Gaheris Exp.	F	Ruined Earth	R
Something Worth Dying For	U	Heavy Barde	R	Moto Tsugi	C		
Son of the Clan	C	Katana of the		Mukami Exp. 2	R	<b>Strongholds (including reprints)</b>	
Steel and Iron	R	Twilight Mountains	C	Naka Kuro Exp. 2	R	Citadel of the Hiruma, The	
Strike from Behind	R	Magistrate's Blade	U	Ninja Mystic Exp. 3	R	Dark Path of Shadow, The	
Sun Returns, The	R	O-Ushi's Hammer	R	Ninja Shadow-Walker Exp.	U	Eternal Halls of the Shiba	
Swamp Marsh	U	Regional Travel Papers	C	Norikesh	C	Iron Mountain	
Time of Destiny	U	Riding Yari	U	Oni no Gorusei	C	Kitsu Tombs, The	
Where the Sun Walked	R			Oni no Okura Exp. 2	U	Kosaten Shiro	
		<b>Kihos</b>		Otaku Kamoko Exp. 4	R	Kyuden Kitsune	
<b>Events</b>		Amoro's Honor	U	Otaku Sahijir	C	New Akasha, The	
Imperial Wedding	U	Brothers in Blood	R	Seppun Toshiken Exp. 2	R	Northern Provinces of the Moto	
Into the Heavens	U	From Broken Ground	C	Shiba Kiku	C	Spawning Ground, The	
Kolat Courtiers	U	Kaede's Tears	R	Shiba Tsukune Exp. 3	R	Temples of the Crow	
Moon and Sun	U	Karmic Link	U	Shinjo Hanari Exp. 2	R	Towers of the Yogo, The	
Public Ridicule	U	Nature Provides	C	Suana Exp. 2	R	Vigilant Keep of the Monkey	
Return of Thunder	U	Question without an Answer	R	Thunder Dragon Exp.	R		
Soul of the Empire	U	Ryoshun's Last Words	C	Togashi Mitsu Exp. 2	R		
When Spirits Walked	U			Togashi Senai	C		
Winter Court	U	<b>Personalities</b>		Toku Exp. 3	U		
		Air Dragon Exp.	R	Toritaka Mariko	C		
<b>Followers</b>		Ashida	C	Toturi the First Exp. 4	F		
Armored Steeds	C	Bayushi Aramoro (Exp. 2 Aramoro)	R	Void Dragon Exp.	R		
Asahina Archers	R	Bayushi Goshiu Exp. 3	R	Water Dragon Exp.	R		
		Bayushi Hisa Exp. 3	U				



# A Fistful of Koku

by Scott Schultz

If you've been following the story-tournament series in the previous and current *Herald*, you're aware by now that the L5R TCG is not just an ordinary card game. It's a collaborative story told by the game designers through the cards and by the players through the decks they play at storyline tournaments. If you're new to the game, then these articles have probably made you aware of the story prizes awarded at storyline tournaments along with the standard material prizes like swords or boxes of cards.

You may not be aware, however, that there's often more at stake than just the official prizes. There are many ways to influence the storyline at a story tournament, and winning is just the most obvious. At a story tournament, the game designers look for inspiration in many places: deck design, unusual events, and interesting styles of play, just to name a few. Players have the chance to tell their own story through their decks and hope that the story team takes notice and incorporates some element into the official storyline.

This player involvement in the story has lead to an activity unique to the L5R fan-base: bounty hunting. A "bounty" is a prize offered by a player or group that wants to encourage other players to play a particular way at a storyline tournament. Bounties range from simple offers of cards to elaborate prize packages that involve a lot of blood, sweat, and tears for the person offering the bounty. It all depends on the resources of the player making the offer and how badly that person wants to see a particular outcome in the story.

For instance, a player who wanted his or her favorite Personality to become a Clan Champion might offer a bounty to any player who makes the semi-finals, plays that Personality, and plays "Assuming the Championship" on the Personality. The player offering the bounty hopes that the story team notices and decide to incorporate that element into the story. A player who tries to claim the bounty might be a fellow fan of that Personality or a "bounty hunter" motivated by the bounty alone. Either way, both players "win" if the bounty is claimed and the story is affected as a result.

The mixture of game, story, and clan loyalty is what inspires bounties. In most other games, bounty hunting would actually be frowned upon as a kind of bribery.

For the L5R TCG, though, the designers and judges have decided to leave this activity as the purview of the players. Individuals decide if it's worth altering their chances at a tourney victory in order to collect a bounty and create a "story victory" for their clan or favorite Personality. No other card game has this kind of synergy between players and designers. When was the last time you saw a bunch of **Magic** players rooting for "blue" or rewarding the other tournament participants for playing Necropotence?

For those curious about the evolution of bounties, you can read a history of storyline tournaments at Kitsu Sei's Story Tournaments and Vote Outcomes website:

[www.munitions.com/~fianna/lion/storytrn.html](http://www.munitions.com/~fianna/lion/storytrn.html).

Besides a record of player influence on the storyline, it has bounty lists for several tournaments that show how past players tried to influence the story using bounties. Interestingly, the earliest verifiable bounty (confirmed by Dave Williams, the game designer) appears to have been from a rival game company. Chaosium offered a lot of gaming materials if the winner of the Day of Thunder revealed him- or herself to be a Scorpion in disguise. Other players almost succeeded at getting similar results for the Shadowlands! Neither of these bounties was claimed, but a long-running tradition of "storyline bounty hunting" was born.

You may offer bounties for any storyline tournament. Gen Con has historically had the greatest number, due to its size and importance. This year is no exception. If you're interested in the bounties currently offered for Gen Con, you can find a list on the Web at the Tao of the Unicorn home page:

[www.geocities.com/Area51/Dimension/3403/bounties.html](http://www.geocities.com/Area51/Dimension/3403/bounties.html).

Check it out, even if you're not going to Gen Con. It's an interesting way to see what the players want to accomplish in the storyline. If you *are* going to Gen Con, then you may just find a bounty you want to win. You may even be inspired to offer your own bounty! Storyline bounties are one more reason why you don't have to win the tournament to be an L5R winner.

# Toturi's Army

by Edward Bolme and Ree Soesbee

The Scorpion Clan Coup left in its wake a broken throne, a broken sword, and a broken man. That man, Akodo Toturi, fell from his position as the Lion Clan daimyo to that of a ronin. Denied his seppuku by the heir of the Emperor he had failed to save, Toturi was stripped of his honor, his position, and his name, and, with Toturi's shame, the entire Akodo family was dishonored.

Toturi had failed his Emperor for the love of a geisha, a geisha who had cast herself off of a cliff after the coup. Without home, duty, honor, or love, Toturi struggled to understand his new position in a hostile world.

He found one confidante: Togashi Yokuni, the enigmatic Champion of the Dragon Clan. Yokuni helped guide Toturi through his darkest days, and, as the Clan War began, he charged Toturi with leading Dragon troops to defend Beiden Pass against the Crab. Emboldened by this support and his victories, yet without the restrictions of oaths and loyalties, Toturi at last recognized his true duty: to defend the Empire against the real threat of Fu Leng and his Shadowlands horde.

As the Clan War ground on, Toturi rallied around him an army of ronin and disillusioned samurai, as well as Dragon samurai who disagreed with Yokuni's de facto isolationism. Fighting the Shadowlands wherever they were found, Toturi's army gained the support of peasants across the land and soon became a crack fighting force led by the finest general of the age. Several of Toturi's samurai themselves became legends in their own time: Mirumoto Hitomi, who later left Toturi's side to follow her own path; Mirumoto Daini, who opened relations with the Naga and was eventually adopted by them; Togashi Mitsu, the fire-breathing monk, who would later renounce his ties to his clan and the dark lady who led it; and Toku, the brash young samurai to whom Toturi could always look for inspiration.

In the end, Toturi, as one of the Seven Thunders, slew Fu Leng in the final battle at Otosan Uchi. As a man without clan ties, and as the brilliant general who was the first to recognize the true threat, he was made Emperor. In deference to the sacrifice made by his childhood friend Doji Hoturi, Emperor Toturi the First appointed a Crane as his advisor in all things political. His army of ronin were at last legitimized and comprised his new personal guard.

On the anniversary of his coronation, at which time his rightful position on the throne would be sealed for all time, Toturi was abducted. The throne room guards were found slaughtered, and of Toturi himself there was no sign. The Scorpion Clan was accused of the crime and exiled from Rokugan into the Burning Sands. Without an Emperor on the throne, the Empire again teetered at the brink of war.

In the midst of this chaos, two of Toturi's finest samurai—Ginawa, the ninja-hating former Akodo; and Hiroru, the samurai-turned-Ninja-assassin—set off to search for Toturi, leaving Takuan, Toturi's lieutenant, to administer the throne as regent. While they did not find Toturi, they did discover the underlying threat to the Empire: the Shadow.

Toturi was at last found at Morikage Castle, taken by the Unicorn Clan's force of arms, and escorted back to Otosan Uchi. It quickly became apparent that all was not well with the Emperor. His eyes

were solid black, reflecting nothing. He was moody and temperamental, and at his worst moments would slaughter artists, courtiers, and guards alike without remorse. At other times, it seemed his memory failed him, leaving him groping for understanding.

But when Shinjo returned from the north, leading the combined armies of the Unicorn and the Scorpion to unseat "the usurper Toturi" who had slain her brother, Toturi seemed to know his place at last. "The law proclaims it, my blood demands it, and those who deny me betray their oath to the Empire. I am your Emperor," he said as Shinjo and her followers stormed Otosan Uchi. As the armies closed in on the palace, a small band of heroes went to face Toturi and were forced to fight the Moon in order to save the Empire. With the destruction of the Moon, the Shadow was forced to

retreat and the Empire changed forever. With the help of Isawa Kaede, once his betrothed, Toturi was taken to Phoenix lands and escaped the armies bent on his death.

There, Toturi faces the final truth: that he is the heart of the Empire, and the Shadow, that dark threat from the dawn of time, has a grip on his soul. It is a grip that must be severed if the Empire is to survive.



## Toturi's Army Top Ten

1 Ronald Carlson	2797
2 Jon Paulson	1695
3 Alexis Sardella	1326
4 Leon Phillips	1275
5 Michael G. Jahnke	1203
6 Jeff Furnish	1185
7 Paul H. Li	1101
8 Bruno Bastet	1094
9 Seth Mason	1091
10 Conrad Jackson	1080



## Vigilant Keep of the Monkey

### Dynasty Deck (44)

#### Events (4)

Imperial Gift  
Inheritance  
Iris Festival  
Yoritomo Refuses the Throne

#### Holdings (15)

Basecamp x 3  
Hiruma Dojo x 3  
Jade Works x 3  
Kabuki Theater Troupe x 3  
Small Farm x 3

#### Personalities (22)

Dairya Exp. 3  
Kitsuki Kaagi x 3  
Otomo Yayu x 3  
Seppun Mashita x 3  
Seppun Nakao x 3  
Seppun Toshiken Exp. 2  
Shotai  
Tohaku x 3  
Toku x 3  
Toku Exp. 3

#### Regions (3)

Glory Grounds  
Osari Plains x 2

### Fate Deck (43 + Sensei)

Toshimoko Sensei

#### Actions (39)

Awakening Shakoki Dogu x 3  
Come One at a Time x 3  
Counterattack x 2  
Daidoji Technique x 3  
Entrapping Terrain x 3  
Half-Beat Strike x 3  
Hunted x 3  
Iaijutsu Challenge x 3  
Iaijutsu Duel x 2  
Imperial Edicts x 3  
Kitsuki Evidence x 3  
Loss of Face x 3  
Rank Hath Privilege x 3  
The Wind's Truth x 2

#### Ancestors (1)

Shiryo no Hantei

#### Elemental Ring (1)

Ring of the Void

#### Items (2)

Armor of the Monkey Clan  
Toturi's Daisho

## "Monkey Honor Monkey" Deck

by Leon Phillips

When I first saw this Stronghold, I jumped with glee. The Monkey have their own Stronghold! Now I can make monkey noises during tournaments and have a valid reason for it. Even so, I'd probably have my opposition doing all of the hooting and laughing if I didn't have a deck worthy of the Vigilant Keep. The Palaces of Otosan Uchi has several strengths that this Stronghold lacks, so finding a way to make the Monkey just as competitive is not an easy task.

The most obvious tag that this new Stronghold will get is that of the dueling deck. While the Fox Shugenja get a bonus to their Chi, the Monkey spread the wealth to all of those Samurai for which Toturi's Army is renowned. For those who disagree on the "renowned" part, just take a look at all of that Personal Honor! This deck has a generous 56 Honor possible from Personalities alone. Additional Honor comes from duels and Holdings, or even battle, if necessary. Still, it is vulnerable to Yoshi Sensei, and you may need to shift to a pure Military Victory.

This deck is loaded for defense and plans on Honor-running the competition while smacking around key Personalities. The Osari Plains throw people for a loop, as they don't get to destroy your Terrain before it takes effect—plus, they'll wonder what Terrains you have up your sleeve in the first place. If you do need to shift to military, you'll probably notice that the deck doesn't have a single Rallying Cry. Use Counterattack after laying your opponent's armies to waste, or wait for the Osari Plains to pop up with the appropriate Terrains in your hand.

At first glance it doesn't appear particularly fast, but then again, it's Strict Jade. A variant of this under the Palaces Stronghold took second place at a twenty-player Race to Voltturnum tournament.

Daidoji Technique works wonders with high-Chi Personalities (I think they meant to call it Monkey Technique). Dairya particularly likes the technique for, well, smacking anybody around.

Straightforward decks aren't usually my style, so I threw in a Magistrate theme. It's possible to have five Magistrates out on the table, and they get to toss around Hunteds or flaunt the fact that Rank Hath Privilege. I can't wait for Toku with the Armor to start bowing out Dishonored Clan Champions. Now that's what you call a Monkey Clan Champion.

### Rare and Fixed Cards

I've tried to limit the rare cards to the Personalities and Events. I've found that Unique Personalities are easier to get than rare Actions and Items. Toturi's Daisho is fixed in the *Pearl* starter.

### Variants

When shifting to Extended Jade or even Open, I'd highly suggest Iaijutsu Art and Merchant Caravans, just to start. I deliberately made both decks with a little over forty cards, so feel free to toss out a card here and there depending upon availability. No one card is essential. I've contemplated throwing in a couple of Fortress of the Dragonfly cards and a Shurin's Storms to let Otomo Yayu wipe out entire armies with the Osari Plains. Campsites are especially potent in dueling decks (thanks to Dan Carew for enlightening me so well), in which case dump the Terrains and go for higher-Focus-value cards.

## "Toku's Tactician School" Deck

by Leon Phillips

This Strict Jade Military deck is built on patience. It takes a couple of turns before it's ready to attack, but when it does it has a variety of Battle actions to shift the balance of power. Though there are only seven Tacticians, the utility cards that go with them (or for high-Chi Personalities in general) can turn the tide. The deck waits out other Military decks until Peasant Revolt appears, as none of the Personalities or Followers in this deck have above 2 Force (the Scouts go on Kamoto for 2 Force). There's always the option of forcing the opponent to attack with Will of the Emperor and then counterattacking. Or, better yet, lure the opponents into attacking as you feign Honor-running (48 points of Personal Honor and Kabuki Theater Troupes do the trick).

Void Guard in a high-Chi Military deck is beautiful to behold. Under the right circumstances, one Tzurui with a Void Guard defending alone can shoot from 3 total Force to 27 total Force without moving anyone else into the battle. For those of you wondering whether I misread the Void Guards and pumped them higher than Tzurui's printed Chi, try to solve the puzzler again (answer page 32).

The Sun Returns makes you lose Force, as you have to bow a Tactician to use it, but it can easily break an opponent's sole defense or offensive combination.

### Rare and Fixed Cards

The three rare cards are replaceable. Kolat Duplicate is a great card for any deck, even if just to prevent your opponent from getting it. Any of the Experienced Tokus work just as well as the Experienced 3 version. Master's Tactics is a good card for making sure your Terrain stays in place, but you can certainly drop it for a variety of other utility cards. If you can get ahold of them, I highly recommend Superior Strategists.

### Variants

Tactician decks can easily double as dueling decks. Throw in some dueling cards, and switch back and forth between focusing the high values and using them as Force bonuses.

## Vigilant Keep of the Monkey

### Dynasty (43)

#### Events (2)

Kolat Duplicate  
Peasant Revolt

#### Holdings (14)

Basecamp x 3  
Hiruma Dojo x 3  
Kabuki Theater Troupe x 2  
Jade Works x 3  
Small farms x 3

#### Personalities (25)

Ginawa x 3  
Kamoto x 2  
Kitsuki Kaagi x 2  
Otomo Yayu x 3  
Seppun Mashita x 3  
Tohaku x 3  
Toku Exp. 3  
Tzurui x 3  
Yotsu Seou x 3

#### Regions (2)

Fields of Courage x 2

#### Fate (42 + Sensei)

Hantei Sensei

#### Actions (34)

Come One at a Time  
Counterattack x 3  
Daidoji Technique x 3  
Heroic Opportunities x 3  
Iaijutsu Duel x 2  
Master's Tactics x 3  
Rallying Cry x 3  
Sneak Attack x 2  
The Sun Returns x 2  
Superior Tactics x 3  
Tactical Maneuvers x 3  
White Shore Plain x 3  
Will of the Emperor x 3

#### Ancestors (1)

Shiryo no Hantei

#### Elemental Ring (1)

Ring of the Void

#### Followers (6)

Scout x 3  
Void Guard x 3



# A Word about the *Clan War: Daimyo Edition* Release

by Ken Carpenter

Over the last two years, the **Clan War**<sup>™</sup> miniatures game has grown from a single boxed set with a few supporting blisters to a major miniatures line with ten army expansions and over a hundred different blisters and boxed sets. The growth and support have given AEG a rare opportunity to integrate and consolidate the system in ways that they have never done before.

The *Daimyo Edition*<sup>™</sup> (DE) **Clan War** release is the culmination of that effort. In DE's 320-hardbound-page book, players can find the consolidated rules and forces from all previous **Clan War** publications. That's all eleven affiliations, unaligned forces, rules ever published (that the system still uses) and a number of new rules. We also took the opportunity to tighten the bolts on the system, streamlining a number of processes and clarifying rules.

The *Clan War: Daimyo Edition* release represents the forces of Rokugan from shortly before the Day of Thunder in the **Legend of the Five Rings** original story arc. As time marches forward in Rokugan, the **Clan War** game will continue to advance in time, realizing and exploring changes to the Empire and its people.

The **Legend of the Five Rings** world and Rokugan are living entities with stories that bear telling. Could the **Clan War** game do justice to such a vibrant world if they were not?

## Ronin's Honor

*Tsukuro's head bobbed from side to side, his jawbone rattling loosely under his skull. A cruel intellect worked behind his empty eye sockets, evaluating his army.*

*Tasked by his master to march a force to Otosan Uchi, Tsukuro had already appeared to make his mission a success. With only two days' march to Otosan Uchi, his force had only encountered a small band of Unicorn to slow their progress, and his forces had quickly rid him of that nuisance.*

*Directing his forces to the top of the next hill, a signal from one of his oni caught his attention. Following quickly up the hill, the undead general was briefly surprised by what he saw beyond.*

*In the shadowed valley beyond the hill waited a small army of ronin and Dragon troops. The only banner that Tsukuro could make out was that of a wolf. He tried to recall . . . wasn't that the mon of the ronin, Toturi the Black?*

*With a flash of Tsukuro's tessen, his army took combat form, massing at the bottom of the hill to face the nearby enemy.*

*Elemental fires played about Kyoso no Oni as she hurled balls of flame at the enemy below.*

*Across the battlefield, Toturi quickly analyzed the formation and potential of his opponent's troops and position, then gave a quick series of orders. His army leapt into action.*

*Formerly Akodo Toturi, the ronin commander had once been the defender of the Emperor and the Empire. Though stripped of his name and place in society, he silently vowed that this army of foul abominations would not touch the soil of Otosan Uchi.*

## Deployment and Setup

The Shadowlands player begins army placement by putting the first unit into play. Players then alternate placing units normally until they have placed all units on the battlefield. See the map on page 24 for army placement areas.

## Objectives

### *Shadowlands Army*

The Shadowlands army has one major goal in this scenario: to finish the ronin army quickly so it can continue to Otosan Uchi. The Shadowlands army achieves a Decisive Victory if it has at least 4 more VP than Toturi's army at the end of Turn 5. It achieves a Marginal Victory if it has at least 4 more VP than Toturi's army at the end of Turn 7.

### *Toturi's Army*

Toturi's army gains a Decisive Victory if it has 3 or more VP than the Shadowlands army at the end of Turn 5. It achieves a Marginal Victory if it has at least 3 VP more than the Shadowlands army at the end of Turn 7.

Notes: The game ends after Turn 5 if either army has achieved a Decisive Victory; otherwise, it ends after Turn 7. Note that it is possible that neither army will claim victory.

### *Other Forces*

If players choose to play this scenario with forces other than those provided, both armies should have roughly equivalent forces.

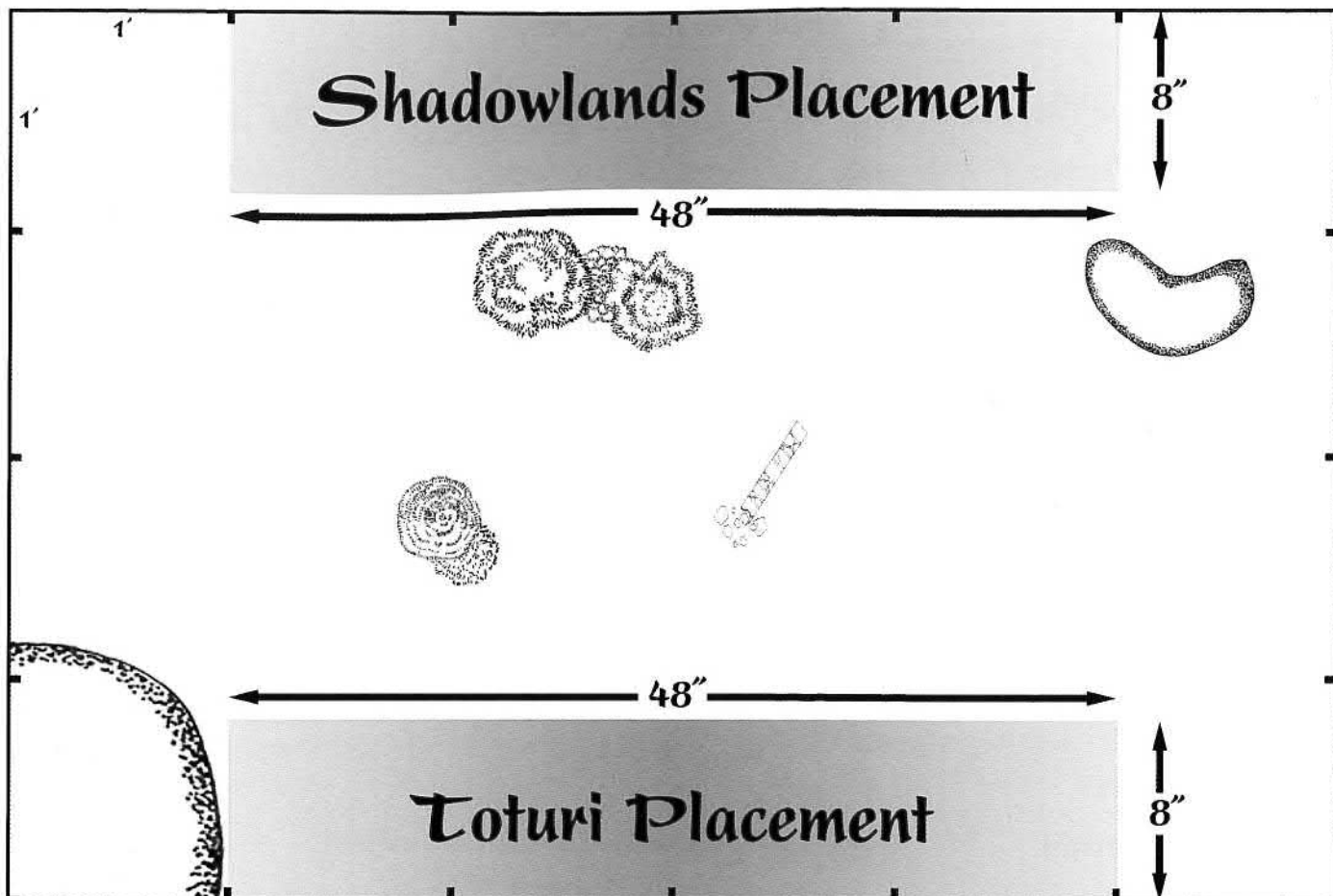
## Shadowlands Army

<u># Mdls</u>	<u>Model Type(s)</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Shadowlands Tactical Deck</u>
1	Tsukuro	350	2 x All or Nothing
24	Plague Zombies	288	3 x Charge
			2 x Defensive Position
1	Moto Tsume	154	3 x The Face of Fear
40	Lesser Oni	340	3 x Frenzy
			3 x Grim Determination
1	Kyoso no Oni, expd	400	2 x Karmic Strike
1	Goblin Warmonger	88	3 x No Mercy
19	Goblin Mob	133	3 x Parade Ground Practice
			2 x Student of Akodo's Leadership
1	Goblin Warmonger	88	2 x Superior Tactics
22	Goblin Mob	154	2 x An Unguarded Moment
<b>110</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1995</b>	

## Toturi's Army

<u># Mdls</u>	<u>Model Type(s)</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Toturi's Army Tactical Deck</u>
1	Takuan	218	2 x Bad Karma
20	Elite heavy Infantry	400	2 x Banzai Charge
			2 x Burst of Speed
1	Mokoto	135	3 x Charge
24	Mounted Infantry	288	2 x Countercharge
1	Yojimbo	19	3 x Grim Determination
			2 x Know the Terrain
1	Morito Tokei w/ Jade	156	3 x Parade Ground Practice
	Strike (15), Evil Ward (15),		3 x Pieces of Jade
	Tomb of Jade (25), Ebb and		2 x Retreat
	Flow of Battle (25)		2 x Stall until Sunrise
			2 x Superior Tactics
1	Akodo Godaigo	210	2 x Virtue of Honor
1	Ginawa, expd w/Fukushu	174	
20	Elite Heavy Infantry	400	
<b>70</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2000</b>	





### Toku's Tactician School Puzzler Answer (from page 29)

Tzurui (2F/4C) allows the Void Guard to pump up to 4F.

Then use his Tactician ability and a measly 4 Focus value to go to 10F.

Three Otomo Yayus from outside the battle can pump Tzurui up another +6/+6 (equaling 16F/11C).

Heroic Opportunities then gives him a Force bonus equal to his Chi for a whopping grand total of 27F.

Fear the wrath of the Monkey of the Void!

### Warrens/Ratling FAQ

Your Ratlings are all considered Unaligned. The Stronghold does not confer a Clan ability and has nothing to do with a Clan of any name. You are essentially working with a Stronghold whose major members are Unaligned (and unorganized).

As a recap:

The Warrens Stronghold does not have a Clan trait.

You cannot purchase Ratling Personalities as though they were a member of a Clan (i.e., you cannot get them into play for 2 less Gold, nor do you receive Honor for bringing them into play).

Personalities (of any kind) cannot swear fealty to the Ratlings, as "Ratling" is not a Clan affiliation.

The Warrens player may use Sensei with the **All Clans** or **Ratling** traits in deck construction.

# Doing What Is Right for Rokugan

by Todo, the Shadowlands Monk  
(Todd Rowland)

Good evening, citizens of Rokugan, samurai, shugenja, farmers, esteemed guests, and that really cute geisha in the back. I come before you tonight with a message that cannot wait, a message that must be heard. There is a species in our world that is dying. A species that, through no fault of its own, has been mistreated, even slaughtered, by those hiding behind "orders."

It is time for all of that to change.

The ogre is a proud creature, a strong creature that needs your help. Save the Ogres is by far the largest organization in the known world dedicated to the prevention of cruelty to ogres. Save the Ogres operates under the simple principle that the ogres are not ours to mistreat or kill at will. They are a noble race that deserves our care, concern, and occasional goblin snacks.

Kuni Mokuna himself stated that he has never seen a female ogre, and he theorized that Fu Leng created new ogres as he saw fit. Fu Leng is sadly no longer with us, and the ogre is now in great peril. If we don't protect these beautiful creatures, who will?

It is very easy for you to help. There is no fee; we are a nonprofit organization. There is no hazing involved, either, although Gratch might hit you a few times. All you have to do is show your support! Include an ogre in your decks at sanctioned tournaments and, of course, at all storyline tournaments. Some people shy away from ogres because of their great cost. The Ogre Bushi is a little on the expensive side, but the Ogre Outlaw is quite the bargain. Only 7 Gold for a 6-Force 4-Chi bruiser with no Honor loss involved! Are you considering running Military? Who can argue with 6 Force? Or do you prefer to show your opponents your finesse in dueling? 4 Chi is nothing to sneeze at. Perhaps you enjoy sitting back in your opulent palaces and currying favor with the Emperor. What better than a huge ogre to turn away all those who would attack your beautiful palaces and lush gardens? If I saw a group of newly gempukku'd samurai standing guard at one castle and an ogre standing

guard at another castle, I sure wouldn't go after the ogre! I also have it on good word that the Lady Shizue keeps several ogres as a personal guard. By the way, does anyone know what happened to that cat she used to have?

To my fellow monks: Our temples are open to those who need sanctuary. Take in the ogres; protect them as you once did Shinsei. No other creature on Earth is as much like Shinsei as an ogre. Ogres' simple mannerisms and contemplative nature can teach you much about yourself.

In the end, perhaps the best part of all is that ogres are self-sufficient! You don't even have to worry about feeding them! Just be sure to have a peasant village or two near your castle . . .

Save the Ogres also has many great things in store for its supporters. Perhaps the greatest to date will be at this year's Gen Con. Anyone who includes an ogre in his or her decks during an official sanctioned tournament will receive a *free* set of exclusive Save the Ogre Button Men! That's right—Ogre Button Men! It's a new promotional set of James Ernest's great game, featuring art by Matt Wilson and Troy Graham! The only way to get these exclusive Button Men is to show your concern for the ogres at Gen Con! Outstanding Save the Ogres member Scott Schultz has put his heart and soul (and possibly the souls of a few others) into this project, and the results have been fantastic. If you have not already, you can view them at [www.geocities.com/darkmoto](http://www.geocities.com/darkmoto)—home of Save the Ogres. Also, we have been in discussion with the gaijin merchants, Kamweid, to prepare clothing so that you can show to all your concern for the ogres. Don't miss out!

Many brave samurai and shugenja have already pledged their loyalty to our noble cause. Even Ninja have vowed to leave ogres' faces right where they are. They know what is right and good in this world. Won't you join them? Won't you stand for what's right?





# The Dragon Clan Mountains: A Journey of Trials

## Part 1 of 2

by Chris Dornaus and Phil Lewis

The mysterious mountains that shelter the hidden refuge of the Dragon Clan are regarded with much trepidation. It is said that in order to reach the castles and towns nestled among them that one must climb treacherous peaks, cross yawning chasms and dense forests, and scale sheer rock walls. One must also, it is said, face a strenuous battery of tests, both mystical and mental, that challenge the mind, body, and spirit.

In the *Way of the Dragon* it is said that to reach Togashi Castle one must find one's own path. Long ago there may indeed have been a road to the castle, but no more. Those few who have reached the castle and returned speak of a different path arriving and leaving, and no one describes the same path as another.

Most characters have no need to go further into Dragon territory than the Dragonfly Castle or, at most, Kitsuki Keep. A few shugenja may be invited to the Agasha school, but few non-Dragon Samurai travel into true Dragon lands. It is true that each year many samurai and peasants travel to Togashi Castle in search of truth and to become ise zumi. Few are ever seen again—and those few who are seen again are the ones who could not find the castle and lived to tell the tale. It is said that the mountains themselves know who belongs there. The road shown on maps between Kitsuki Keep and Togashi Castle is a lie. It leads a few miles into the hills and stops at a large patch of particularly dense brambles. To go further, one must make choices.

Should you try to go around the brambles or through them, follow game trails or go over land, navigate by landmarks or trust your senses? There are trails throughout the Dragon Clan lands; many seem to lead in circles or end without warning, as though the land itself were trying to stop you from traveling further.

For the RPG game master whose players are interested in exploring these lands, we have a few thoughts and scenarios. If the party has a Dragon Clan character, then you can ignore most of these

tests if there is a very good reason why the party needs to go where they think they need to go.

Dragon samurai are all instructed against leading foreigners past the Kitsuki lands without permission from the Kitsuki Daimyo or another similar authority. The paths traveled are sometimes easy and sometimes very difficult, even without any tests or obstacles. Within the Dragon lands there are actually very few flat areas, and most of them are used for farming and are near Kitsuki Keep. The land is very vertical and is therefore strenuous to travel through. But if the characters desire to travel on, they will be tested, and some of the tests will be dangerous.

### Test One: You Know the Way

The party enters a wooded area. Along the way are notable landmarks: a peculiarly twisted tree, a patch of mushrooms, a babbling creek. As they progress through the forest, they come upon the same landmarks they saw earlier. No matter which way they go, they eventually find themselves surrounded by familiar scenery. To find the way out, all characters must trust their instincts to lead them out. Any amount of arguing or dissent will doom the party to continue wandering without gain.

The best way to get out of the forest is for all of the party to meditate successfully and pick a particular party member to lead them. Alternately, if the party gives up and only wishes to return the Kitsuki Keep, you may allow them to do so. It would be embarrassing for a party to be trapped there until a local peasant found them and lead them back to Kitsuki Keep . . . .

### Test Two: Riddle Me This

The path leads to a sheer mountain wall, and the characters can find no way around it. The wall is inscribed with ten riddles. Beside each riddle is a small hook driven into the stone. At the base of the wall is a basket containing eighteen small tiles with loops at the tops. Each tile bears a single word. The

蚂蚁  
Ant  
风筝  
Kite  
脚印  
Footprint  
箭  
Arrow  
火  
Fire  
鸟窝  
Nest  
眼睛  
Eye  
梳子  
Comb

party must hang the appropriate tiles on the hooks beside each riddle. The eighteen tiles have the following words on them: a footprint, a fish, a lantern, a snowflake, an eye, fire, a kite, an arrow, a comb, a bird's nest, a cup, a saw, a pail, an ant, a dove, a pair of boots, rain, and a snake. The riddles are:

1. Together even when alone, strong warrior without a sword.
2. Flies without feathers, soars without wings, fragile flesh and bone tethered with strings.
3. They can take you where you go and can lead to what you find, and the more you take the more you leave behind.
4. It has feathers to help it fly. It has a body and head but is not alive. Its strength determines how far it will go. You can hold it in your hand, but it is never thrown.
5. It can end life or save it, but it is not alive. Feed it, and it will grow; give it a drink, and it will die.
6. A home built in the woods but not of brick or stone. A bowl of pearls, but not of clay or bone.
7. A window, a lamp-dry or damp. Clouded or bright, dark set in white.
8. Easy to part with, yet easy to hold. Will not bite, but has teeth of wood, stone, or bone.
9. White bird without feathers, drifting over sea or land. Lives upon the winter wind and dies upon your hand.
10. Iron roof, paper walls, burns and burns but never falls.

Answers: 1. Ant, 2. Kite, 3. Footprint, 4. Arrow, 5. Fire, 6. Nest, 7. Eye, 8. Comb, 9. Snowflake, 10. Lantern

When all of the correct tiles are set upon their respective hooks, the words of the riddles will glow and cracks will appear in the wall, outlining a large, irregular doorway. A combined strength of 10 is needed to push the door open, and the average strength TN should be 30 for each character pushing. Subtract 5 from the TN for each 2 points of Strength above 10.

Once the door is open, a passageway is seen that leads through the mountain and to an exit on the other side that is very hard to find once the characters are beyond it (a TN of 30 to find it again unless precautions are taken). Now that they are even further into Dragon lands, however, going back is also more difficult.

### Test Three: The Key to Freedom

The path ends in a deep, slender, steep-walled little gorge filled with thick brambles. A bit of looking around will reveal a crack in the right-hand wall that opens up into a short passageway, and then a cavern of significant size. The crack is only 18 inches wide, so some large characters may have difficulty getting in. Once all characters enter the cavern, a previously unseen door slams down after them, sealing the party into the cavern. There is no way to open the door, as it is both very heavy and slightly inset, with no finger-holds. Only once everyone is in the cavern do its features become visible.

The cavern is large and no light filters beyond 20 feet or so. Now, with no light at all from outside, the party can notice a very small glow from a pool in the center of the cavern. The cavern seems entirely natural except for a large stone door in the far wall, over 100 feet from the entrance. The door's only feature is a small keyhole. Careful observation of the pool will reveal a key shape in the bottom of it, about 2 feet deep. The pool is not filled with water but with an obnoxious, foul-smelling fluid that bubbles and fumes. Touching the fluid brings instant pain, as acid eats away at the flesh that touched it. Any object put into the acid to try to scoop the key out will quickly disintegrate, making it useless within a few tens of seconds. The only way to get the key is for somebody to make the ultimate sacrifice and reach in to get it.

If a character reaches in, his or her flesh will immediately start to dissolve, causing great pain. A stamina check with a TN of 25 will be needed to continue beyond the first splash. If the stamina roll fails, an honor roll may be attempted at the same TN. If they continue, their muscles will be soon exposed and the character, too, will begin to dissolve, quickly showing the bone beneath. Only when the character actually grabs the key will the agony end and the arm become instantly healed. If the rolls fail and the key is not grasped, the character takes 2d10 damage when he or she removes his or her arm. If the character takes more than 10 points of damage, the arm becomes useless. The key can then be used to open the exit door, although the key cannot be removed from the door and will later reappear in the pool. Past the exit door is a tunnel that rejoins the original gorge about 100 yards further along.

雪花

Snowflake

灯

Lantern

鱼

Fish

杯子

Cup

锯子

Saw

桶

Pail

靴

Boots

雨

Rain

蛇

Snake



# Slaves of Mortals, Part 2

## The End of Antiquity

by Patrick Kapera

The darkness reminded Kaleel of the pleasant serenity he had felt at his birth, within the infant minds of his godly parents. At the dawn of time, Lady Sun and Lord Moon had yet to know the Younger Races—their fear, resentment, and eventual betrayal. There was only the sublime balance between them, the stars, and their newborn children, the Jinn.

Creating the Ashalan and the humans had been a mistake; of that, Kaleel was most certain. The Jinn—godly yet without godly insight—sought the fulfillment their parents had achieved with their creation. They wished only to be revered. But the Younger Races were flawed. They refused to worship the Jinn, turning instead to pagan idolatry and self-indulgence.

*They were our mistake, Kaleel corrected himself. One that will soon be corrected.*

A mar in the darkness below grew into the forms of approaching Jinn—Kaleel's brothers, Akhad and Abjar, their smoldering forms illuminating a prisoner held between them. Israk—the lost sibling.

"Welcome home, brother," Kaleel began.

Israk regarded the Jinn lord—the being he had once called "brother," and whom he had ventured into the Blighted Realms to find after the first Jinn war. "I should have left you to the sands, demon."

"Yes, perhaps you should have . . ."

"What do you want with me, Kaleel?"

"We all regret something, Israk. But I intend to rectify my mistakes. The humans will be unmade."

Israk nearly burst into laughter. "The humans are stronger now. They have allies. You can't hope to defeat them. The coming age is already theirs!"

"No . . .," a voice slithered from the shadow beside Kaleel. "It will be ours."

The gloom beside Kaleel bulged like the mirrored surface of calm water as something surfaced, revealing a featureless face and long, slender limbs. The figure emerging from shadow was simple in the extreme, light and vision slipping from its edges to be lost in the gathering pools of darkness surrounding it.

Israk knew the being well. The Ma'Ghul—the creature that had granted Israk the power to find his fallen brother and see beyond the Jinn lord's phantom nobility. "Ambassador to the realms of the dead," it called itself. Truly, it was little more than a scavenger, subsisting on the memories of the fallen because it was too weak to face the living.

"No longer, minion," the Ma'Ghul answered Israk's thoughts. "The world has seen its final dawn."

Israk felt the tendrils of Shadow clinging to his form like suckling children, his skin crawling at their touch. "You . . . madman! You can't possibly understand what you're releasing upon the world!"

"I do . . ." Kaleel answered.

"The Shadow . . ."

" . . . Is a force older than time and more powerful than the gods!" Kaleel's image seared within the throne room, his flame rising with his mania. "With its help, we can renew the world in our image, start again without the Younger Races! Erase them from history!"

Israk was stunned. Kaleel had long since gone mad, striking out against Shilah and his namesake. But to even consider loosing the Unnamed upon the world . . .

"Kaleel. Listen to me! I know the Shadow. I have walked with it for four hundred years. Even you must realize that once it's free, none of us can stop it. It will consume . . . everything! It will unravel creation!"

"Israk, my dear little brother. You have such limited vision! The Shadow cannot survive here in the wastes, remember? Shilah's Wrath ensured that. We . . . are safe. Everything else . . . outside our borders and beyond the burning light . . . will simply fall away . . ."

" . . . Leaving nothing but the void where we were born," the Ma'Ghul finished. "The Jinn who survived the Day of Wrath are strong enough to continue; their names grant them dominion even in the blasted ruin of the dunes. But the humans and other lesser beings are weak, and—as history has shown us—easily swayed by our kind. Once we are free, they will be feeble opposition indeed."

Israk's shock quickly turned to fear. "Kaleel . . . you can't trust him!"

The Ma'Ghul continued, unabated by Israk's pleas. "Without the interference of the Younger Races, Creation's true inheritors can coexist in peace."

"The Shadow won't be satisfied! It can't be! After it's finished with everything else, it will come for us! For you!"

"The balance will at last be restored . . ."

"Kaleel . . . please . . . do not do this . . ."

"It is already done, brother. As we speak, my agents move to collect the final piece of the bargain . . ."

Pashal's hand rested on the wrapped weapon lying in his lap. It felt heavier than his own sword, even though they were roughly the same size and had similar weight distribution. The blade unnerved him; he could almost feel it ripple beneath the fabric, rustling to get free.

The citadel of the Celestial Alliance loomed above him as the carpet swept below the immense circle of fire that supported it and dove between the bridges of its central column. Pashal had long since grown accustomed to the disorientation of riding with the Sky Raiders, but today he found himself light-headed as the carpet's angle of ascent spiked.

"Are you all right, squire?" the pilot asked, his arm instinctively shooting out to grasp Pashal's vest.

Pashal shrugged off the confusion, responding, "Yes. I . . . just a little dizzy."

"That happens this high up. Hang on. We're almost there."

The carpet leveled off and swooped into a wide ballroom, alighting upon a circular landing area several feet above the floor. Pashal stepped down onto the platform and steadied himself, only taking hold of the bundle lying on the carpet after the room settled. As he grasped the sword, Pashal could feel arms stretching around his torso and locking him in a gentle embrace. They were warm and soothing.

"Hello, lover," Dawn spoke from behind him.

Pashal turned and welcomed the Ashalan into his arms. One of the few of her kind who remained behind after her race vanished into the sands, Dawn had been one of the greatest proponents of his search for them. She had also been the first to discover that the Jinn lord Kaleel had returned, arriving with word of his rise shortly after the Awakening. Both were mere children by the standards of their races, but this last year had thrust them into adult roles, and they had reached out for anything to help them through it.

They had found each other.

"Hello yourself." Pashal blushed.

"What's this?" Dawn reached for the wrapped sword, but Pashal quickly reined her in.

"Just . . . something for Mohandis to look at," he answered quickly.

"No presents for me?"

"Just this . . ." Pashal distracted her with a gentle kiss as Effendi appeared at the foot of the steps.

"Not to interrupt," Effendi called up to them, "but I'm eager to see what was so important that it dragged you away from Sahlah's wedding."

"Effendi!" Pashal blushed again. "I was just coming to see you . . ."

"Of course you were," Effendi answered, a wry grin creeping across his face. "Come. I'm sure the bride and groom will be happy to see you."

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"It was amazing, Effendi! Gathriq was dead. This killed him!" Pashal held up the weapon, still wrapped in thick fabric. "Do you know what this means?"

"Let's not get our hopes up quite yet, Pashal. We don't even know that it was the sword that killed Gathriq. Maybe Tabari found another means of harming the Jinn."

The two strode through the narrow hallways of the Celestial citadel, heading toward the laboratory of Mohandis the Enchanter. Ahead, the corridor opened into one of the many junctions within the floating fortress, where the structure's divisions met. Turning toward the bridge across which Mohandis resided, neither of them were aware of the figures lurking above them within guard alcoves designed to blend into their surroundings. At the figures' feet, a pair of Ebonite Templars lay dead, their souls ripped from their withered bodies.

"Even if this blade can hurt the Jinn, it's only one blade. How do we use it against an army of them?"

"I don't know yet, Effendi. But it's a start. We can—"

Pashal was suddenly knocked to his feet as someone landed upon his shoulders, kicking out toward Effendi's head. Both collapsed, and the bundle flew out of Pashal's arms, sliding along the catwalk and out of sight. Pashal scrambled for purchase, catching hold of the railing and dragging himself to his knees in time to see the figure approaching again. Her reflexes were everything Adira had said they were.

"Fatima!" Pashal mumbled as he deflected the first blow. "But you're—"

"Dead?" she finished. "Only mostly."

A second blow sent Pashal reeling backward, toward Effendi's unmoving form. A slowly growing pool of the boy-prince's blood gathered beside his head, seeping from a terrible gash along his temple.

"Don't worry. He's not dead . . . yet!" Fatima descended upon Pashal, ripping him upward and drawing a thin, curved blade from her belt. She twisted him around upon her knee, disabling him, and raised the dagger to his throat. "He'll be along to meet you soon."

Off to the side, Pashal could see a lanky macaque dragging the bundle toward the infamous Monkey Man. The Jackal laughed as he took the blade from his pet and lowered his shoulder for it to climb upon. As he approached, Fatima called out to him, "You can have the prince. This one's mine!"

Pashal looked back to the diseased Assassin who held him pinned. The left side of her face was ragged, as if the flesh were sloughing off of her skull, and her eye had dissolved into the socket. The smell of rotting candy struck him in waves as she leaned horribly close.

"I must admit, the Ashalan has remarkable taste."

Darkness pooled about Fatima's hideous visage, and her breath scarred Pashal's cheeks. He felt faint as she inhaled, drawing away his memories, his dreams, his personality. The darkness grew ever stronger, and Pashal started to lose consciousness, withdrawing behind the last feeble barriers within his mind. He dove into the darkness, accepting it as Judgment, his mentor, had taught. He loosed his emotions, freeing himself of their anchoring influence, and searched for a single thing to latch onto.

But time and again, his ideas—his intents—slipped away into the void, stolen by the Half-Soul. Panic began to set in, and Pashal felt the limits of his imagination closing in. He was being consumed, piece by piece. Darkness was replacing him.

Then the darkness spoke. A simple word. His name.

"Pashal?" it called out to him, through the mire of his jumbled mind.

"Who is out there?" Pashal was sure he was dead—that these were the Blighted Realms. But . . . why couldn't he see anything? Where were all his friends and family, who had perished in the city the year before?

"We are here for you, Pashal. Follow us."

"To where?" Pashal responded. "What's happened to me?"

"Back home. You are alive, Pashal."

Spectral images began to flicker before the squire's vision, flashing around him with blinding intensity. Everything was sharp, as if he were seeing light for the first time. He strained to bring the images into

focus and found himself lying within Sehai's chambers. The cool air around him nipped at his wounds, and his face felt dry, the skin cracked. He reached for his cheeks, finding them warm to the touch.

Rising slightly, Pashal found himself surrounded by friends. Dawn, who held his shoulders lovingly. Judgment, his impassive features as supportive as ever. Ashalla, Khaidu, Katani, San'a, Nim, Sahlah, and Saqr—all displaying concerned smiles. Sehai the Healer sat at his side, studying his reactions.

"Effendi?" Pashal inquired, looking about the room.

"He should live," Sehai answered, "though his condition is far worse than yours."

"How? Who saved us?"

"We did." Pashal hadn't noticed the extra pair of eyes observing him from the foot of the bed, surrounded by slight, swirling pinpoints of light in the shape of a robed woman.

"Lurza . . ." She had rarely spoken in the year since she arrived, refusing to discuss her people—the Quest—and remaining in her chambers unless needed. Pashal shook his head in confusion.

"The Sayel. The blade. We sensed it as you approached the citadel."

"You know what it is?" Judgment interceded.

"We know. It created us."

"The Sayel is part of a force that seeks to unravel the known universe," Lurza began to those assembled in the citadel's enormous arched hall. "It was created at the beginning of time, and—if allowed to proceed unchecked—would consume everything in existence."

The Quest's blunt delivery stunned everyone into a long moment of silence. Finally, Truth pierced the quiet. "Yes, but . . . what is it?" he asked.

"Let me start at the beginning," Lurza answered. "The Jinn were the first creations that Shilah and Kaleel placed here on this plane. Unlike their parents, the Jinn were not solitary creatures. They grew lonely and desired others with whom to interact, as well as activities to occupy their time. Eventually, they created humans, but—"

"The jinn created us . . ." Nepherus's words were laced with disbelief, and the murmurs of many others throughout the hall sounded worse.

"But first," Lurza continued, "they were granted many more creations by the Sun and Moon, including this world—its mountains, rivers, valleys, and forests." Lurza paused for the assembly to collect itself before going on. Pashal watched the assembly growl and mutter over the implications of the Quest's words, knowing that it would only get worse if the rest were revealed.

"But Lord Moon recognized the danger of their first creations, the Jinn. He knew that they had enough strength to rise against the heavens if they worked together, and desired a weapon to use against them should that day come. So, while Lady Sun created and named things, he allowed a single slip of nothing to escape into the world. This slip—known to us as the Khayel—is within that sword today."

Once again, Truth recovered the focus of the meeting, asking another pointed question before reactions could swell out of control. "But how did it come to be inside the blade?"

Lurza, obviously admiring his clarity, addressed Truth with her next words. "When the first war of the Jinn swept through the heavens and Lord Moon witnessed his own imminent demise, he called upon his secret weapon, but it did not respond. It had already been trapped within this blade by Kaleel. You see, the Khayel was young and unwise; once it was discovered by the Jinn lord, it was child's play to seduce it with lures of greater power and then overwhelm it with logic.

"However, the Khayel instinctively knew enough to spread itself over the greatest possible area. When the Day of Wrath came and Lady Sun's anger drove magic away from the Burning Sands—or destroyed it altogether—parts of the Khayel survived. The residual energies that surge through the blasted dunes have prevented the Khayel's parts from reuniting since then, and most of it remains hidden in places such as the Blighted Realms, also known as the Black Earth."

"Where Israk was born . . ." Ashalla mused.

"Not exactly," Lurza resumed. "Israk is brother to the Jinn lord, born of the heavens at the start of the world. He has been here since the beginning."



"He told us that he didn't know who his parents were . . . only that he came from the lands of the dead."

"A convenient elaboration. After the first Jinn war, Israk was not convinced that his brother was dead. He went looking for Kaleel, eventually exhausting his options here in the physical plane. When he entered the Blighted Realms, however, he found something far more pervasive than he bargained for."

"The Khayel," Pashal filled in, intrigued now. Israk had always been guarded about his past and seemed more than a little obsessed about Kaleel. The answers were finally coming together.

"Israk became the first of the Quest-Shadow-Jinn-the merging of the Khayel with the divine."

"So the Khayel can't consume Jinn?" Truth inquired.

"It can, but only if they are weak enough, or unnamed. Of course, most unnamed Jinn were destroyed at the Day of Wrath, leaving only the young and naive as its victims. Israk was not consumed. Indeed, he grew stronger from the union, as did the sliver of the Khayel within him. Together, they formed the perfect warrior, stronger than anything seen before or since. But this perfection comes with a terrible price; Israk is plagued with near-uncontrollable urges to devour, to return everything to the primal essence from which it came."

"How can you be sure of all this?" Balance called out from the back of the room.

"Because all Quest carry the ancestral memories of the Khayel within them at all times, sharing each other's experiences. And because we contend with its terrible urges every moment of every age."

"If Kaleel tricked the Khayel," Judgment observed, "and the Quest share that memory, why haven't they entered the war against the Jinn?"

The importance of the question was not lost on the assembly, which quieted in anticipation of the answer. Unfortunately, it would not be one they would like.

"Because the Khayel, on its own, is without purpose or desire. Lord Moon made sure of that. Being nothing, it does not recognize betrayal or seek out retribution; these traits-and others-have been inherited from those with whom it has come in contact.

"The Jackals, for instance," Lurza continued, at least partially for Pashal's benefit, "worship part of it through the Black Stone, the object under which it hid at the beginning of time. They provided the Khayel with greed, an emotion it had never encountered before. But it is only capable of mimicking this emotion as it first encountered it. In the case of the Jackals, their original need to appease a presumed death-god has warped into a never-ending campaign of theft. The Jackals no longer understand why they steal souls; they just continue as they have for hundreds of years, the obsession growing every day until it consumes them whole.

"The Quest-Jinn consumed by the Khayel-are similarly devoid of purpose. The Khayel has absorbed their original feelings, aggressions, and desires, and it doesn't know what to do with them. So the Quest have become docile, uninvolved with affairs outside their own citadel. They simply do not realize that the rest of the world exists."

"But they can be reminded," Judgment prompted.

Lurza appeared uncomfortable at his suggestion. "Yes, though I would not advise it. As I have said, the Quest are the most powerful force in creation, and their hold upon the Khayel is tenuous at best. If they were driven to aggression, they would surely lose their struggle with the Khayel, and it would be loosed on the world once more. Through the Quest, the Khayel would resume its unraveling of creation-overtly."

"Revealing the sword to them would do this," Balance noted.

"Yes. I believe Kaleel knows this and used the Jackals to attack the temple to obtain the Sayel. Without it, the Quest could not be convinced to enter the war and we would lose the only weapon we have strong enough to stop him."

The room fell into silence again. Pashal could feel the oppressive weight of these new revelations upon the assembly. The weight of a new age dawning . . .

"Invaders!" Screams ripped through the hall as something exploded elsewhere in the citadel. The room pitched to one side, and Pashal was suddenly very aware that the structure was spiraling out of balance. A Sky Raider crashed into a pillar flanking the balcony leading outside, followed seconds later by a

streaking fireball. The collision sent debris of the far wall out into the room and flattened all but a few of those collected within.

Moments later, three Jinn burst into the room through the gaping hole that was once a beautiful balcony, silhouetted by the image of Kaleel's citadel closing in on that of the Alliance—and the city below. The Jinn were part of his legion, led by a blue-skinned giant dripping venom from countless spikes along its shoulders and back. Ajbar—one of Kaleel's brothers, a general of his army—directed the others to grab the Sayel as he closed on Judgment, the first of the Alliance to rise.

Ajbar's soldiers—green-scaled, slithery abominations burning with the fury of Shilah's anger—moved to retrieve the weapon from where it was pinned between several large blocks of stone. Moments before their arrival, however, a smaller form appeared at its pommel, futilely tugging to free it.

"Nim! Get away from there!" Pashal screamed as he dragged himself free from the rubble. "You'll be killed!"

The approaching Jinn drooled after their new prey, descending upon the helpless Jinn child, but stopped short as the stones pinning the sword suddenly rose up into the air, swirling about them. Confusion soon turned to terror as the stones crashed together upon the free Jinn, crushing their physical forms into a bloody mess. Nim took the chance to drag the weapon toward the far side of the room.

Pashal looked around for the source of the attack, spotting little San'a against a nearby wall. Her eyes glowed with rage, and her feet hovered several feet off the floor. Pashal and his friend Adnan had always assumed that San'a would be affected by her time with the Khadi, but neither of them ever considered anything like . . . this.

Ajbar's angry howl drew Pashal's attention back to the gaping hole, where the Jinn held Judgment dangling out in the wind, his limbs weak and limp at his sides. "Master!" Pashal screamed, suddenly frantic.

But it was already too late. Judgment's skin bubbled as smokeless fire consumed his form and converted it to ash in a matter of moments, after which the raging winds outside swept it up. Ajbar turned to observe the room, scanning past the pulped remains of his followers and to the surviving defenders who formed a semicircle around the Sayel blade.

"You can't win," he seethed.

"We can make sure you don't," Valor growled back.

"Pashal!" a feeble voice called from a nearby pile of rubble. "Quickly!"

Saqr al Fediq lay beneath a collapsed archway, twisted nearly beyond recognition. With his one free arm, he waved toward Nim, calling to the young Jinn. "The sword! Bring it here!" Then he lifted his arm toward the aperture and painfully waved open a portal. The Crossroads.

"Nooooo!" Ajbar screamed as he leapt toward the defensive line. Within seconds, four more of the Alliance were bathed in smokeless fire or torn to shreds. At this rate, the remaining defenders would be overwhelmed long before Pashal could get to the sword and through the portal.

"Squire!" Twisting his head around, Pashal found the Sayel sailing through the air, tossed to him by Qashima, the Naar Teban outcast. The Nagah quickly stepped in front of the Jinn, releasing a long gout of liquid fire to hold him off. "There is no time! Go!"

Plucking the blade from the air, Pashal closed his eyes and leapt through Saqr's doorway.

"Another volley!" Kaleel roared from his throne. "I want that citadel grounded!"

The Jinn lord looked down to his captive, held within a cube of crystal surrounded by a dozen of his flaming troops. "Enjoying the view, brother?" he mocked.

Israk remained silent, his physical body frozen in place by the light of the Jinn guards, refracted through his crystal prison. Were he only able to move . . .

Kaleel chuckled and returned his attention to the attack, barking orders at his front line that rolled across the dunes like a thunderclap. This close to his imminent victory, Kaleel was ill-prepared to consider anything so bold as an invasion of his inner sanctum, least of all one from a lowly squire . . .

Pashal's first blow pierced one of the burning sentinels through its chest. The Jinn was only capable of loosing a single momentary shriek before it was devoured by the Sayel, leaving a narrow gap between



the others. Pashal leapt through, slashing out at the cube, shattering it into countless tiny prisms that rained down upon the Jinn hordes below.

Free, Israk engaged two of his wardens, ripping through them as the fury of the Khayel within him awakened. The darkness in his wake consumed each Jinn that fell, even as he moved on to his next target. Meanwhile, Pashal was scarcely idle. The blade, eager for the blood of Jinn, seemed to move of its own volition, with skill and precision the squire had never seen before. Even his master, Judgment, had not exhibited the force with which this weapon fought. In moments, Pashal, drunk with its power, joined Israk before Kaleel's immense throne.

The Jinn lord rose from his seat, towering above them as his flames leapt to lick the ceiling and far walls. "Who *dares*?"

Pashal, his neck craned high, attempted to force down the fear swelling within him. He managed only a quick glance to Israk, who seemed all too calm. "Can we win?"

"No," the Shadow-Jinn answered, "but I know who can."

Sucking in a deep breath, Israk closed his eyes to focus, muttering three short words beneath his breath. Pashal could barely make them out. "Forgive me, Mother . . ."

The air between the Jinn lord and the heroes started to ripple outward from a single point, as if a large stone was thrown into an invisible pool of water. The ripples gathered to form a dark ring several dozen feet in diameter, which seemed to confuse Kaleel as much as it did Pashal. The squire waited, watching for the arrival of additional Jinn troops, but the rest seemed to be out conducting Kaleel's war.

"The blade! Hold it up!" Israk commanded, his form rigid with effort.

Pashal thrust it up at the ring as the space within filled to a dark void, obscuring Kaleel on the other side. Then a single pinpoint of light appeared deep within the void. And another, and another, like a thousand eyes blinking open. The eyes observed the scene—the carnage of the fallen Jinn, their brethren Israk . . . and the Sayel.

Finally comprehending Kaleel's treachery, the Quest surged through the portal, sweeping through the throne room and blotting out the senses one by one. Kaleel's garbled screams were among the first sounds to vanish, hurled into oblivion just seconds ahead of the rest of him.

"What have you done?!" Pashal screamed at Israk's collapsed form, remembering Lurza's warning. "You've doomed us all!"

Israk managed a brief smile as the room began to collapse in upon itself. "Trust . . . the weight of . . . dreams."

A faint glow emerged from Israk's chest, where a circular symbol crept to the surface through his shadow-form. The Seal of Hakhim. A portal to Shilah . . .

Pashal felt the first tendrils of Shadow wrapping around him, unmaking him. Terrified far beyond the capacity to flight or fight, he simply went limp and focused on the Seal, where the Khayel seemed to funnel out into another void . . .

"Pashal!" Dawn's cries echoed across the dunes where the ruins of Kaleel's citadel settled in ruin.

Nepherus approached her sobbing form, taking her gently by the shoulders. "Come, Dawn. There is something I must show you."

Reluctantly, Dawn withdrew into the heart of the Alliance citadel, led by Nepherus toward Lurza's private chambers. No one had been allowed inside since the Quest arrived, and Dawn felt odd stepping through the narrow, arched doorway without permission. But what greeted her within dashed away all possible concerns.

The room's walls had fallen away, revealing the endless night sky. As far as Dawn could see in any direction, the heavens stretched beyond her vision, a million tiny stars dancing about her.

"Pashal's sacrifice was not in vain," Nepherus spoke, pointing toward a patch of stars above them. In moments, the patch shifted, contracting into the form of a lithe female surrounded by a cloak that billowed out into the heavens behind her. Lurza.

Dawn was suddenly aware that they were not alone. The other warriors, scholars, and philosophers of the Celestial Alliance stood about them, hovering in space and observing Lurza's arrival. "Children," Lurza said to them, her voice heard from every star in the sky. "Our warriors have been successful. The threat of Kaleel's Legion is over. But there has been a price . . ."

Lurza waved her arm toward the skies, where a darkness spilled into the face of the morning Sun, like ink in water. When it was full, the darkness bled into the surrounding heavens, blotting out the stars one by one.

"Israk opened a twin portal linking the Quest citadel with that of Kaleel, and both into the realm of the heavens using the ancient Seal of Hakhim. When the Quest arrived to take possession of the Sayel, they—and everything they touched—were funneled into the sky. The Khayel is unmaking the world, from the beginning to its end."

"But why?" Dawn asked, uncaring whether her irreverence mattered anymore. "Why send the Khayel into the heavens? Why not leave it here, where it can be fought?"

"Because, child, none here are strong enough to harm the Khayel. It must be trapped where it cannot threaten us." Lurza paused as the last of the stars winked out, leaving nothing but limitless black around them. "But the tale between ages is not quite over. There is still one more sacrifice to be made."

Lurza's form shifted again, dissolving into the darkness. In her stead, a thousand tiny pinpoints of starlight spiraled out into the sky. Dawn looked to the others standing about her, all of whom were shifting as well, their forms dissolving as light to join their champion in the heavens. Even Nephurus, his warm smile fading by the moment . . .

"Come, Dawn." His last words were thin and fleeting, swept up in his star-mist as it joined the others in the vault of heaven.

The Ashalan was confused but unafraid. Her hand was already fading, her fingers streaming off in a chorus of fledgling stars. As the effect spread, her mind opened up, joining a thousand other voices to herald the new age. Each reminded her of something—the strength in fear, the innocence in a child's eye . . .

One in particular reminded her of love.

"Look, Grandfather!" Shagala pointed to the heavens, where another star emerged from the darkness, full and strong.

"That is the morning star," Jangir answered. "The twin spirits, bound forever by courage, and devotion."

"Does it have a name?" Shagala asked, looking back to her mentor, but he was already fading, the first rays of the morning Sun piercing his body as if it were merely a ghost. "Grandfather?" Shagala asked, her voice touched with fear.

"It is time for me to go, young one."

"I don't understand . . ."

"The gods of the First Age are dead. The time of heroes—our time—is done. The slate is clean. The new age awaits its heirs."

Jangir smiled, then burst into a cloud of sparkling lights, rising up to meet the heavens. Shagala watched them dance away, and smiled.

The First Scribe placed his quill upon the desk and blotted down the last page. Looking up from his finished work, he considered the man at the end of time, whose frenzied words had plagued him for so long. A fraction of remorse swept through him, as their many stories crept back to the surface.

*There will be no more tales, he thought. Our job is done.*

"Goodbye, old friend," he called out to Time and stepped away into history.



Hello, everyone.

What you've just read is a somewhat modified (and grossly distilled) version of what I had planned for the climax of the second story-arc for the **Legend of the Burning Sands™** TCG. The game was originally written as a trilogy, with a third chapter kicking off the Third Age, tentatively called "The Hundred-Year Night." Regrettably, that story is not likely to see the light of day. But it's good to see that at least part of the second storyline is making it out to the public. I hope you enjoyed reading it as much as I enjoyed putting it together.

Now, on to the bowing at the end of the show . . .

First of all, let me just say that I'm grateful for the opportunity that Wizards of the Coast, AEG, and all of you have given me with this game. The LBS TCG was my first professional endeavor and remains very close to my heart. Special thanks are due to several folks who

helped immensely over the years and who supported the game even long after its final release. These include Zen Faulkes, Mark Wooten, and many others (most of whom are on the LBS list server). Thanks to all of you.

Thanks also to the fans. You're the ones for whom I created this world.

I would also like to take this chance to give credit where it's due. While I may have written some pretty words once in a while, my work was merely window dressing for one of the finest card games ever designed. For that, you have to thank Raymond Lau and his design team. Make sure to do so if you ever meet him.

Well, that's it. The curtain's coming down, and the producer's screaming in my ear. I've been up here long enough.

Exit, stage left.

—Patrick Kapera, AEG

## The New Team

Wizards of the Coast is proud to announce that Jeff Alexander will take over L5R card design. Jeff has been involved with L5R since before the *Imperial Edition* set. Most of you know Jeff as the "keeper of the FAQ," a job he has done faithfully for years. Jeff was the first choice for the job, and Wizards of the Coast is thrilled to have him as part of the team. Jeff will give a talk at the big *Gold Edition* meeting about his plans for the future of L5R card design. If you're going to Gen Con, be sure to come to the meeting; if not, read Jeff's soon-to-come online summary and a more detailed version in the next *Herald*.

Congrats, Jeff!



# CLAN WAR<sup>®</sup>

## Daimyo Edition<sup>™</sup>

The Scorpion Clan Coup has passed,  
Hantei the 38th is dead,  
and the Day of Thunder looms . . .

The *Daimyo Edition*<sup>™</sup> release of the *Clan War*<sup>™</sup> game updates and collects all of the *Clan War* army lists and rules errata into one package, to appear in July. It ships as both a deluxe hard-cover rulebook and a boxed rules set with miniatures, to relaunch the *Clan War* game line.



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# *Legend of the Five Rings*™

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