

BUSHIDO™ Role Playing Adventure

# HONOR BOUND

by  
Stephen Dedman



# HONOR BOUND

Nippon's Kai Province is in sight of Mount Fuji. Most of the population lives in the main valley between sections of the central mountain range.

Honor Bound presents four connected adventures creating a full BUSHIDO campaign set in Kai Province. Herein can be found (set in the provincial capital and in remote mountain villages):

A detailed look (and maps of) Kai Province and the city of Kofu.

The Will of the Noble (adventure)

Rightful Possession (adventure)

Amakurikara (adventure)

Things to Come (adventure)



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by  
**Stephen Dedman**



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**KAI PROVINCE**

**LEGEND** 5 KM

- A CITY OF KOFU
- B TOWN OF NII-MAZU
- C ROAD TO FUJI-SAN
- D KOREYOSHI VILLAGE & NEARBY SHRINE
- E CLASS E NINJA VILLAGES
- F CLASS F VILLAGE
- G MIHSHI'S MOUNTAIN CAVE
- H FUJI-SAN

MOUNTAIN RIDGE TRAILS

LAKES & RESERVOIRS

RIVERS & TRIBUTARIES

BRIDGES

ESTABLISHED TRAILS & LIGHT ROADS

WELL-TRAVELED & WELL-MADE ROADS

KOSHU-KAIDO

- A CITY OF KOFU
- B TOWN OF NI-MAZU
- C ROAD TO FUJI-SAN
- D KOREYOSHI VILLAGE & NEARBY SHRINE
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WELL-MADE ROADS

KOSHU-KAIDO

## EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

Yes, it's been years since we've done anything new for Bushido. We are happy to begin correcting that failure on our part and this book begins what we hope will be a regular publishing schedule of new adventure material for the Bushido game system.

In the years since Bushido's publication, a number of fiction series have been launched that should prove to be invaluable resources for Gamemasters. For those not familiar with these excellent series, the following will help you to find them in your local bookshops or at Amazon.com:

The "Sano Ichiro" series by Laura Joh Rowland follows the career of Sano Ichiro, who acts as the chief detective and problem solver for the Shogun. Not simple mysteries, these books involve political intrigue, dastardly plots, and the danger of outright rebellions. The series includes eighteen novels at the time of this writing.

The "Tales of the Otori" by Lian Hearn is a five volume series set in a world very much like that of the Bushido setting. It is "Japanese," but not the purely historical Japan. These are stories of danger and adventure that would be easily converted to use with the Bushido game system.

It is hoped that Gamemasters and players alike will enjoy Honor Bound and that it marks the beginning of a new series of adventures. Stephen Dedman has already written another multi-part adventure campaign that will be combined with this book to make a larger, thicker book in print form in the near future.

Scott B. Bizar, Editor



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# HONOR BOUND

## INTRODUCTION

Honor Bound contains two principal adventures – one ending in Kofu and one beginning there. They may, of course, be played separately, and only the most sadistic Gamemaster would compel his players to go straight from “The Will of the Noble” into “Rightful Possession” without time to heal and study. The third adventure, “Amakurikara,” is a direct continuation of “Rightful Possession;” the fourth, “Things to Come,” is a sequel taking place several years later. All are set in Kai Province.

## KAI PROVINCE

The player-characters begin the adventure in Kai Province, traveling south-west along Koshu-Kaido, the road from Yedo to Kofu. The Daimyo of Kai Province, Arikawa Kobo, has temporarily retired to a castle near Nu-Mazu, leaving his favorite son to supervise Kofu. The Arikawa Clan has a secure hold over the province: there is no immediate danger of a serious peasant uprising or an attack from neighboring provinces. The Kayama Clan, who control the south of Sagami Province, is their ally; and the Taka Clan, recognized rulers of Shinano Province, is actively seeking an alliance with the Arikawa. The Arikawa Clan's nearest enemy (also hostile to the Taka) is the Kusakabe Clan of Totomi Province.

## THE CITY OF KOFU

Kofu, the capital of Kai Province, is a C-class city with a population of 21,307. The city is guarded by a Level 4 Citadel, with a Garrison of some two-thousand men. Kofu houses four temples, four shrines, five schools, and three gambling houses.

## THE ARIKAWA CLAN

**Status Factor:** .9

**Head:** Arikawa Kobo

**Principals:** Arikawa Ken, heir and Kodai-yoriai; Arikawa Raiko, Yoriai.

**Area Controlled:** Kai Province.

**Allied Clans:** Kayama (Sagami Province).

**Friendly Clans:** Taka (Shinano Province); Toranosuke (Hitachi Province); Nakade (Izu and Awa Provinces); Fujiwara (Mino Province); clans of Musashi Province.

**Enemy Clans:** Akasaka (Mutsu Province); Ugai (Hitachi Province); Kusakabe (Mikawa Province).

**Notes:** The Arikawa Clan is renowned for its patience, and its cultivation of Chikoju-jutsu. Their Mon depicts a stylized mountain – strong, immobile, and eternal. For generations, women of the Clan have traveled to Fuji-San to give birth, asking the Yama-no-Kami, Sengen-sama, to protect their children: so far Sengen-sama seems to have obliged.

## TEMPLES

### Kai-zenko-ji-o-tera (Temple of the Ancient Congregation)

**Abbot:** Natsuki Jiro (Level 6 Gakusho; A)

**Senior Staff:** SatoTetsuya (B) and Kudo Hideo (C (Level 6 Gakusho); Takahashi Yutaka (Level 5; D); Sasaki Satoru (E) and Ito Masashi (F) (Level 4); Watanabe Yoshi (Level 3; G); Kimura Zoki (Level 2; H).

**Associated Ward:** Equivalent to a Class E village, with a population of 345.

**Available Skills:** Butsu-do A, B, C, E, F, H (19), Chinese Classics A, B, C, D, E, F (19), Meditation, all priests (19), Divination A, B, C, D, E, F (11), Calligraphy C, D, E, H (14), all Literary Skills, all priests (15), Gnana-yoga B, C, D, E, G (10), Karma-yoga A, f (10).

**Notes:** This Class B Temple of a contemplative nature, devoted to the study of Meditation and Divination, is famed for its ancient statue of the reclining Buddha and its collection of reliquaries. The abbot will consult the I Ching before admitting any student, to see if he is likely to bring discord to the ward (use the Initial Attitude Table, with modifiers as appropriate). The previous abbot, and Jiro's sensei, was the venerated diviner Sano Mihsue, now living as a hermit somewhere in the mountains of Kai Province.

### Toko-ji-o-tera (Everlasting Temple)

**Abbot:** Endo Minoru (Level 3 Gakusho; A).

**Senior Staff:** Kobayashi Shigeru (Level 2; B); Chiba Masa © and Narita Ken (D) (Level 1).

**Associated Ward:** Equivalent to a Class F village, population of thirty-six.

**Available Skills:** Butsu-do A, B, D (19), Chinese Classics A (17), Physician A (9), Herbalist A, D (9), Jujutsu A, B (17), Bojutsu B (12), Sacred Dance A, B, C (10), all Literacy Skills, all priests (13), Raja-Yoga, all priests (11).

**Notes:** Endo and Kobayashi were born in farming villages near Kofu and trained in unarmed combat, but were attracted to the serenity of Buddhism and became bozu. Their years of wandering have given them a more practical bent than the younger monks.

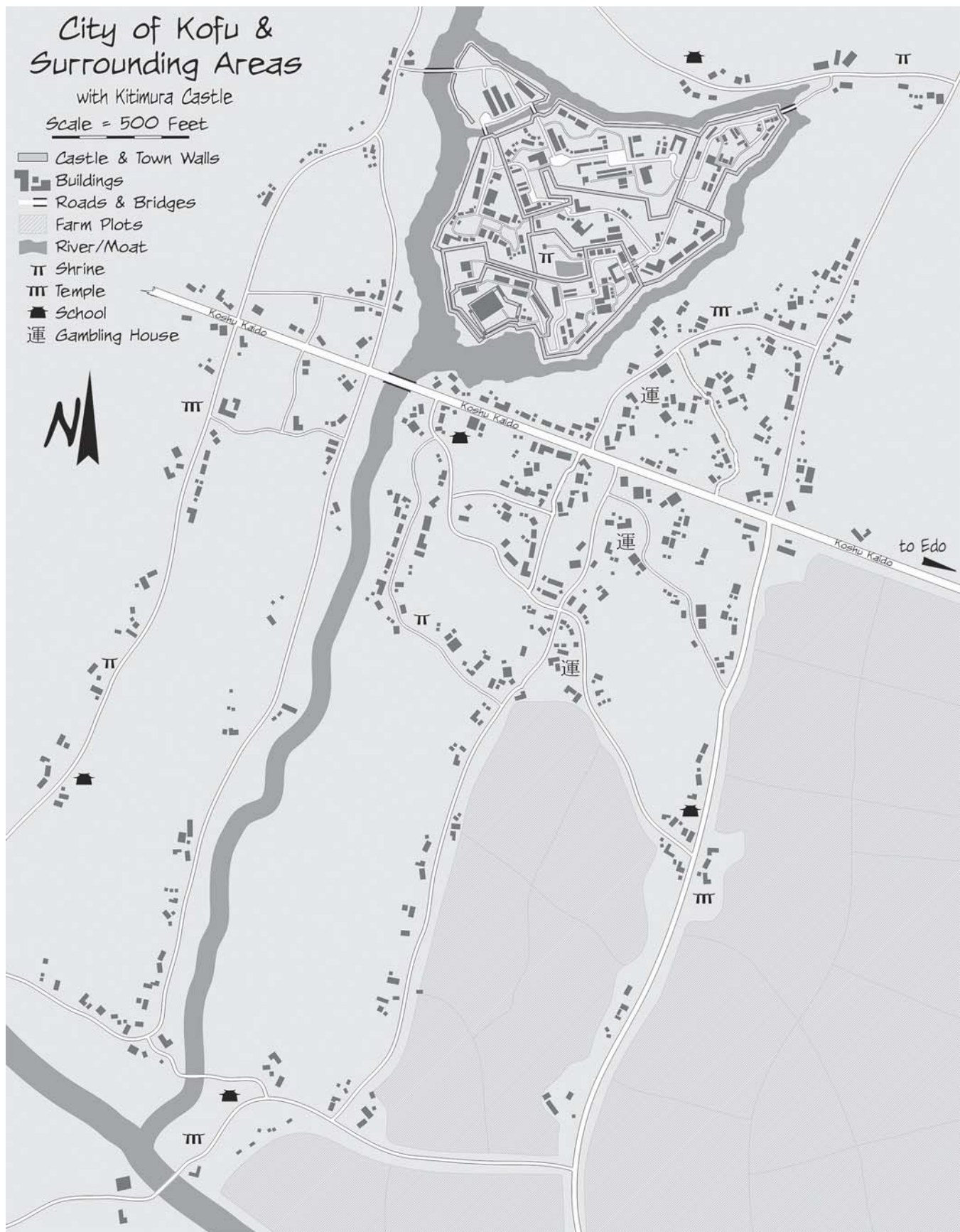
Minoru believes that strength must be used wisely, and that killing is an abomination: anyone the temple accepts as a student must also study Butsu-do if they wish to learn Jujutsu or Bojutsu. This is a Class D Temple of normal orientation.

# City of Kofu & Surrounding Areas

with Kitimura Castle

Scale = 500 Feet

- Castle & Town Walls
- Buildings
- Roads & Bridges
- Farm Plots
- River/Moat
- Shrine
- Temple
- School
- Gambling House



## Daisen-ji-o-tera (Temple of the Librarians)

**Abbess:** Morishata Haruko (Level 4 Gakusho; A).

**Senior Staff:** Abe Yoshiko (B) and Suzuki Yukiko (C (Level 3); Arai Kyoko (Level 2; D); Nakamura Ayama (Level 1; E).

**Associated Ward:** Equivalent to a Class F village, population of 165.

**Available Skills:** Butsu-do A, C (17), Chinese Classics A, B, C, D (16), Meditation: all priests (11); Rhetoric A, B (14), Bojutsu B, C, D, E (8), Hatha-Yoga A, C, D (11).

**Notes:** This is a Class D Temple of normal orientation, dedicated to the Amida Buddha and Kwannon Bosatsu, and famed for its beautiful and ancient statues and its vast collection of illustrated scrolls. The statue of Kwannon is rumored to have cried for the women of Kai Province during times of war or disaster; her tears became Pearls of Ki.

The nuns of this temple are very fond of rhetoric, and frequently become entrenched in unnecessary debates. These may (10% chance) become on-the-spot rhetoric contests of Level 1D3. Most of the physical work in the temple and ward is done by Jun, a Dai-Bakemono converted to Buddhism by a manifestation of the Jizo of Redemption.

## SHRINES

### Takeda-jinga (Shrine of the Kenzoku Takeda)

**Senior Priest:** Matsubara Koji (Level 6 Gakusho). Koji is a former Level 4 Bushi, and knows the following skills: Shinten (19), all Literacies (19), Calligraphy (17), all Yogas (15), Meditation (15), Sacred Dance (16), Acting (15), Court Dance (12), Poetry (13), Rhetoric (11), Japanese Classics (11), Bojutsu (17), Kenjutsu (16), Naginatajutsu (13), Yodomejutsu (14), Kyujutsu (11), Bajutsu (12).

**Attendant Priests:** Yamamoto Yutaka (Level 5 Gakusho), Hayashi Masa, Yoshida Isamu, Yamazaki Masayoshi, Tanaka Hoshu, Mochizuki Kiyoshi (all Level 4 Gakusho), Fukuzawa Kazuhiko (Level 3 Gakusho), Tanaka Tadashi (Level 2 Gakusho).

**Notes:** This is the Class A shrine of a Kenzoku who had previously been the province's daimyo and great general. Most Arikawa samurai come here to worship.

### Kofu-sengen-jinga (Kofu Sengen-sama Grand Shrine)

**Senior Priest:** Nishioka Koichi (Level 6 Gakusho), Koichi has the following skills: Shinten (19), all Literacies (19), Meditation (17), Calligraphy (15), Japanese Classics (15), all Yogas (14), Sacred Dance (14), Rhetoric (13), Jujutsu (14), Musical Composition (9), Singing (9), Instrumental Skills, Foe (7), Poetry (7).

**Attendant Priests:** Maruyama Minoru, Yamada Taro (both Level 5 Gakusho), Suzuki Yukio, Nishimura Satuko, Kato Masayoshi, Inoue Hideaki (all Level 3 Gakusho).

**Notes:** This Class A shrine is a complex of smaller shrines: one dedicated to Sengen-sama, kami of Mount Fuji; one to the Chinjin of the city; one to a Tenjin of Medicine; one to a Tenjin of Painting and Calligraphy; one to a water kami; and one to a fire kami. The famous gardens boast poisonous plants as well as many healing herbs, though the priests are always careful to avoid contact with anyone who is actually sick.

### Idai-na-douro-jinga (Great Road Shrine)

**Senior Priest:** Ito Ichiro (Level 3 Gakusho). All the priests here are former wanderers. Ichiro has the following skills: Shinten (16), all

Literacies (14), Meditation (16), Calligraphy (11), Japanese Classics (14), Gnana-Yoga (19), Herbalist (11), Bojutsu (14), Rhetoric (7), Sacred Dance (10).

**Attendant Priests:** Matsumoto Koichi (3), Sasaki Manabu (1).

**Notes:** This shrine is dedicated to the Dosojin Kami. It is situated near the western gate of Kofu, and is a Class D Shrine.

## SCHOOLS

### Kofu-koukina-geiiji-jutsu-Ryu (Kofu School of the Noble Arts)

**Orientation:** Class C Gentleman's Academy.

**Sensei:** Miyaguchi Minoru (Level 6 Bushi; A).

**Staff:** Shishikura Yukio (Level 6 Bushi; B); Takeda Satuko (C) and Shiho Masayoshi (D) (Level 5 Bushi); Nagano Hidekazu (E) and Nakatani Chisako (F) (Level 3 Scholars).

**Available Skills:** Heraldry C, E (19); Go B, D, E (18); Ikebana A, D, E (16); Tea Ceremony B, C, F (16); Bejutsu A, B, D (15); Ni-to-kenjutsu A, B, D (15); Iaijutsu A, B, C, D (15) with Hurling Okuden (11); Chikugo-jutsu A, B, C, D, E, F (15); Kenjutsu A, B, C, D (15); Senjo-jutsu A, B, C, D, F (15); Hawking A, D (15); Japanese Classics E, F (15); Hojojutsu B, C, D (14); Sojutsu A, B, D (14); Kyujutsu A, B, C, D (14); Yari-naga-jutsu A, B, C, D (14); Naginatajutsu A, D (13); Bowyer B, D (13); all Literacies E, F (13); Chinese Classics C, F (13); Rhetoric F (12); Poetry D, E (11); Calligraphy A, E, F (11); Music Instrumental F (11); Music Singing D, E (9); Court Dance E (6).

**Notes:** Miyaguchi Minoru is sixty-four years old, snobbish, slightly querulous, and extremely particular about who he admits to his academy: applicants must be able to provide evidence of their Buke ancestry and the status of their Clan (.8 or above). Furthermore, they may not be Ronin, or in service to a daimyo hostile to the Arikawa Clan. If in doubt, he will raise the fee by 1D6 x 10%. Members of the Arikawa Clan receive a discount of fifty percent.

### Obayash-Yoru-sei-Ryu (Obayashi's School of Armory)

**Orientation:** Class D Specialist

**Sensei:** Obayashi Kajiro (Level 5 Bushi; A).

**Staff:** Yoshida Kohichiko (B), Nishiyama Mitsuo (C) and Kondo Mamosuke (D) (Level 4 Bushi); Ono Hiroyaka (E), Takeda Katsumi (F) and Miyakajima Yasuyoshi (G) (Level 3 Bushi).

**Available Skill:** Armory A (19) C, D, E, G (16), B, F (14).

**Notes:** Obayashi Kajiro is a Master of his family's hereditary craft. His staff, apart from Kohichiko, came to the school because they were too badly wounded to fight: though trained in armory to Kajiro's rigorous standards, they lack his experience and much of his enthusiasm.

### Fujii-Natsuyosa-Heya (Fujii's Great Strength Sumo Training Stable)

**Orientation:** Class D Specialist

**Sensei:** Fujii Sadamasa, (Level 6 Sumitori; A).

**Staff:** Okazaki Masayuki (B), Mikamoto Masato (C) and Kojima Tadamasu (D) (Level 4 Sumitori).

**Available Skill:** Sumai (19).

**Notes:** The powerfully-built Fujii Sadamasa and his staff are often heedless of their students' safety, and many leave to recover from their injuries. The heya has no affiliation with any known Yakuza clan, and Sadamasa is careful to keep everything above board.

### Wokanryoushimasu-Ryu (School of Complete Healing)



**Orientation:** Class E Specialist

**Sensei:** Meguro Nobu (Level 4 Doctor; A).

**Staff:** Saito Kiosho (Level 3 Doctor; B); Kageyama Yasuo (Level 2 Gakusho; C).

**Available Skills:** Herbalist: all (19), Massage A (19), Meditation B, C (19), Physician A, C (19).

**Notes:** Nobu is a devout worshipper of the Amida Buddha, and sees his profession – the lessening of human suffering – as sacred. He will accept impoverished but promising students at reduced fees (divide usual fee by Learning Rate. Buddhist Gakusho characters may study under Yasuo for a strictly nominal fee or even promise to pay later). Anyone lying to Nobu about their finances will be discovered by Yasuo, and will be permanently banned from the school.

Noriaki also manufactures and sells herbal remedies, including Level 4 Poison Antidotes and Plague Cures.

## YAKUZA IN KOFU

Yakuza activity in Kai Province, and Kofu in particular, has been diffuse and disorganized since the assassination of the old Oyabun, Tsushima Masao. Several minor figures in the province now claim the title of Oyabun. Arikawa Ken has taken advantage of this chaos and effectively suppressed Yakuza activity in and around Kofu.

## NINJA IN KOFU

The Arikawa Clan occasionally uses Ninja of Clans E and F as spies, and to keep out ninja of other clans. Most ninja activity in Kai

Province is controlled by Clan E (the Stalking Shadows), who are based in two Class E villages near Nu-Mazu (and Arikawa Kyoko's castle). Village 1 is inland, and the ninja pose as farmers; Village 2 is on the coast, near the border with Izu Province, and the ninja there pose as fishermen.

## Ninja Base

**Head:** Katsutoshi (Level 6 Classic Ninja)

**Area Controlled:** Kai Province

**Population:** 225

**Skills Available:** Teacher (Level) Village: Skill (BCS)

Instructor 1 (5) 1: Ninjitsu (18); Nawanake-Jutsu (19); Karumi-Jutsu (19); Silent Kill (17); Tracking (13). Instructor 2 (5) 2: Forgery (19); Lockpicking (19).

Instructor 3 (3) 1: Isijutsu (19); Kenjutsu (15); Ninjitsu (16); Silent Kill (14); Tantojutsu (15); Kamajutsu (13).

Instructor 4 (2) 1: Shuriken-jutsu (19); Kusari-Jutsu (18); Fuki-Buri-Jutsu (13); Kenjutsu (13); Kamajutsu (15).

Instructor 5 (2) 2: Yogen (19); Torture (14); Shiatsu (12).

Instructor 6 (2) 2: Hayagakejutsu (19); Ninjitsu (13); Karumijutsu (15); Suiejutsu (13).

Katsutoshi: Ninjitsu (19); Kusari-Jutsu (18); Kenjutsu (17); Shurikenjutsu (17); Iaijutsu (16); Nawanuke-Jutsu (16); Silent Kill (15); Atemi-waza (13); Yogen (13); Torture (12).

**Notes:** Katsutoshi will only teach if strongly influenced by another high-status Ninja of Clan E or Clan F. Instructors 5 and 6 are Kunoichi.

# THE WILL OF THE NOBLE

The player-characters will first meet the Kuge, Sera Tomi, four Ri east of Kofu on Koshu-Kaido. It will be instantly obvious that he is almost destitute: his court clothes, once rich (superior quality), are showing considerable wear, and he is accompanied only by his two kaga-bearers and a single porter, his herald having run on ahead. He is, nonetheless, an Imperial Noble, and entitled to respect.

Sera Tomi, like the player-characters, is traveling towards Kofu, but at Movement Rate 3. He will ask any Bushi among the player-characters to accompany him as his entourage: Gakusho, Shugenja, Doctors, Artisans, Entertainers and Geisha will also be invited to follow him. Merchants and similar scum will not be welcomed, and must remain at a respectful distance behind the entourage. Bushi seen escorting the Kuge into Kofu will receive two points of On; other companions will receive one point.

Sera Tomi's herald, Ikoma Rikio, has arranged for rooms for the Kuge and his entourage in a Class A Inn in Kofu at the expense of Arikawa Ken. Rooms for other player-characters can be found at the Inn, but only at the Buke rate of five silver per night (other inns, nearby, will offer normal rates).

The next day, Sera Tomi will be invited to the castle to meet Arikawa Ken. Player-character Bushi will be expected to accompany him (two points of On). The Kuge will explain to Ken that he will be resting in Kofu for a few days, maybe a week or two, before traveling on to Fuji-San to make a sacrifice to Sengen-Sama.

Sera Tomi will spend the next three days playing Go with Miyaguchi Minoru, Sensei of the Gentleman's Academy. The Kuge has quite a reputation as a player of Go, and anyone wishing to play him must first defeat Ikoma Rikio (to simplify matters, the winner is the one with the higher Effect Number), with the consequent gain or loss of On. At night, he will meditate in his room while Ikoma Rikio stands guard.



Sera Tomi

## RUMORS

For every day the player-characters spend in Kofu, they have a chance of hearing various rumors. Every day, for each possible rumor related to a Profession, roll 1D10. If the result is less than or equal to the highest level in the Profession in the group plus each other member of the Profession besides that character, the rumor will be heard.

Characters who do not interact with members of their profession, of course, will be less likely to hear rumors. Likely sources for gossip are the inns, the schools, the temples and shrines, the gambling houses, etc.

### BUSHI RUMORS

- Taka Hideo, Daimyo of Shinano Province, allegedly seeks Clan Arikawa's aid for an attack on Mikawa Province; Arikawa Kyoko has so far remained noncommittal.
- Arikawa Ken rarely ventures outside Kofu, and the administration of the surrounding villages is largely left to his aide, Yuasa Kazafumi.
- Yuasa Kazafumi has recently lost face because of the scandal surrounding his parents. His father, Yuasa Rikio, killed his wife after learning of her countless infidelities; the loss of On was so great that he asked his daimyo, Taka Hideo, for permission to commit seppuku, and permission was granted.
- Ota Teruo, the merchant, is hiring yojimbo.
- In the farms around Kofu, children have been killed (and partially eaten) while they slept. The heimin are appealing to Arikawa Ken to save them, but no-one has yet seen the predator.

### BUDOKA RUMORS

- Ota Teruo, the merchant is hiring Yojimbo.
- Arikawa Ken's entourage includes two sumotori, identical twins, both of prodigious strength and ability.

### YAKUZA RUMORS

- Yakuza activity in Kai Province has been diffuse and disorganized since the assassination of the old Oyabun, Tsushima Masao, with several minor figures now claiming the title of Oyabun. Arikawa Ken has taken advantage of this chaos and effectively suppressed Yakuza activity in and around Kofu.
- Ota Teruo, the merchant, has the irezumi of a Yakuza gambler, but seems to be peacefully retired.
- Arikawa Ken's entourage includes two Sumotori, identical twins, both of prodigious strength and ability. They are not believed to belong to any Yakuza clan, nor is Fujii Sadamasa's heya.

### NINJA RUMORS

- Arikawa Ken rarely ventures outside Kofu, and the administration of the surrounding villages is largely left to his aide, Yuasa Kazafumi. Yuasa Kazafumi has killed several farmers, wandering merchants and katari-be on the merest suspicion of their being Ninja.
- Arikawa Kobo has been known to use Ninja of Clans E and F as spies.
- Ota Teruo, the merchant, is hiring Yojimbo.
- Miyuki, one of Arikawa Ken's concubines, is a Ninja of Clan E (the Stalking Shadows).
- Arikawa Ken's late wife, Atsuko, died three years ago of a miscarriage, which may have been caused by a slow poison.

### GAKUSHO AND SHUGENJA RUMORS

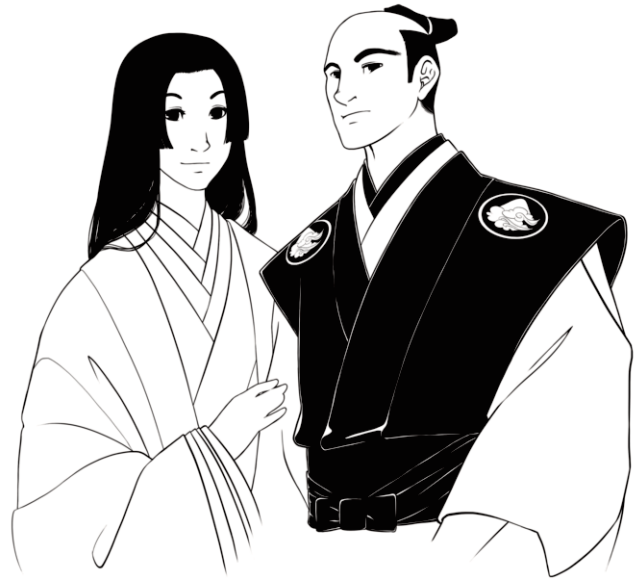
- In the farms around Kofu, children have been killed (and partially eaten) while they slept. The heimin are appealing to Arikawa Ken to save them, but no-one has yet seen the predator.
- Sano Mihsue, one of Nippon's wisest masters of Bokusen, has become a hermit somewhere in the mountains near Kofu.
- Ota Teruo, the merchant, is seeking an exorcist to accompany him on a journey.

## WOMEN'S RUMORS

- Yuasa Kazafumi has recently lost face because of the scandal surrounding his parents. His father, Yuasa Rikio, killed his wife after learning of her infidelities; the loss of On was so great that he asked his daimyo, Taka Hideo, for permission to commit seppuku, and permission was granted. Yuasa Zuiko's infidelities were so extensive that Kazafumi may not be Yuasa Rikio's son.
- Arikawa Ken's late wife, Atsuko, died three years ago of a miscarriage, which may have been caused by a slow poison.

## COMMUNICATIONS

On the third day in Kofu, Sera Tomi asks the bushi player-characters to accompany his herald to the castle, to deliver a message to Arikawa Ken (two points of On). The message is a formally worded request to Ken that his aide, Yuasa Kazafumi, come to the inn at Sei-Seru-no-Toki (4PM) the next day to play Go against the Kuge. Ken, though rather surprised by the request, agrees.



Arikawa Ken and Miyuki

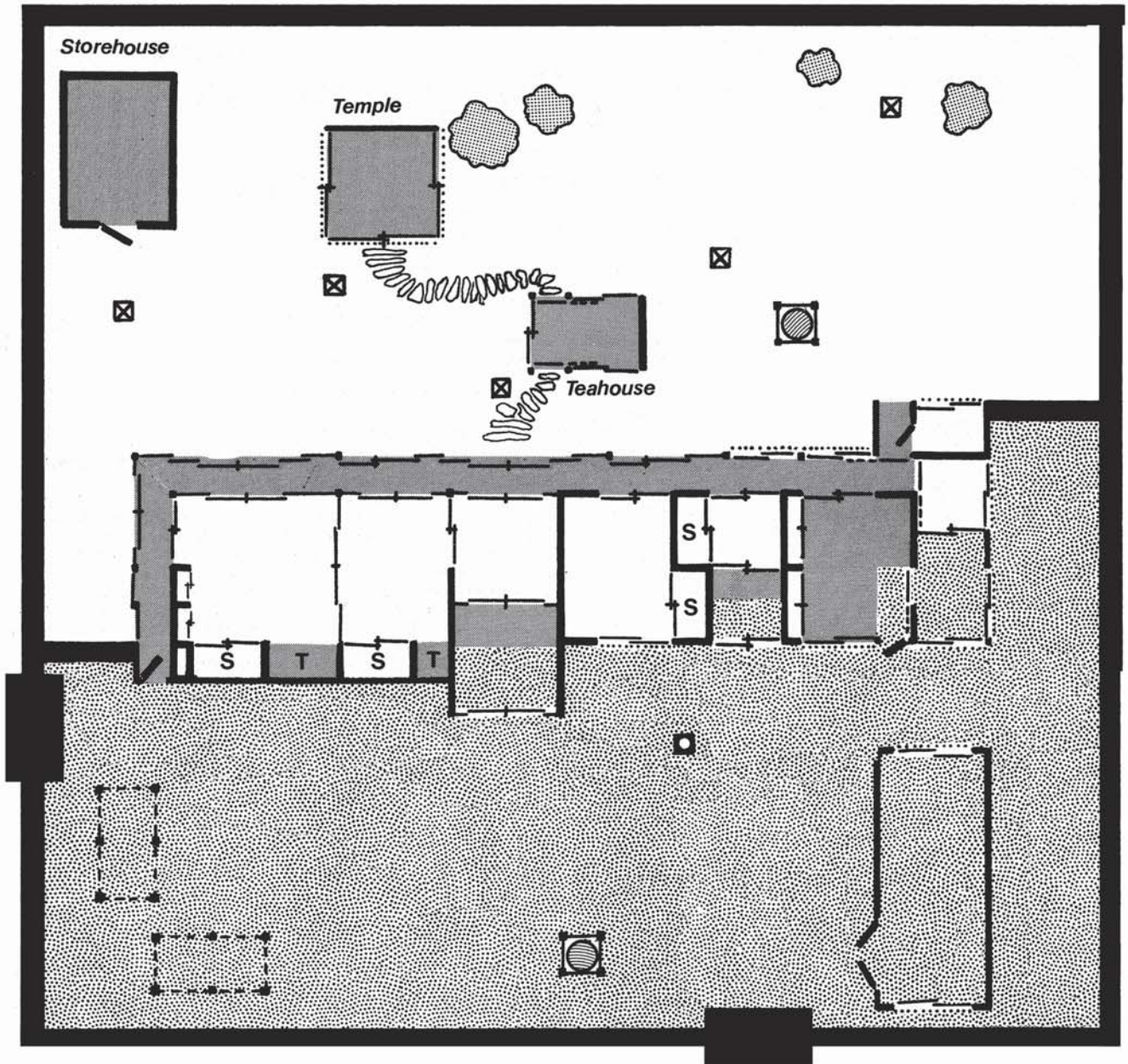
When the Herald returns with Arikawa Ken's reply, Sera Tomi will discretely ask the bushi player-characters if they know where or how he might hire a few ninja or kunoichi, preferably skilled in Fuki-Buri-Jitsu. He has two missions he wishes performed, and is prepared to pay well. The first mission is to spy on one of Arikawa Ken's samurai for a night, for which he will pay up to 30s (Level x 5); the second, acting as bodyguard for a night, for which he will pay up to 10s, depending upon their skill (i.e., equal to half their BCS in Fuki-Buri-Jitsu).

If Sera Tomi is left without any ninja guards, each player-character will lose four points of On. Apart from any ninja player-characters, the only kunoichi available at such short notice will be Nyan-nyan, who will be easy enough to find; the player-characters need only ask the innkeeper. Ninja PCs may choose which of the jobs they prefer. If none of the player-characters are ninja, Sera-sama will employ Nyan-nyan as a bodyguard rather than as a spy; he will also ask that a gakusho or shugenja be present in his room for the night.

## THE MISSION

If a Ninja player-character volunteers for the spy's job, the Kuge will ask him to infiltrate the citadel and spy on Yuasa Kazafumi as he sleeps, between Sho-Ni-no-Toki (11PM) and Sei-Usi-no-Toki (2AM). If

# MANOR HOUSE



- Double Sliding Door
- Single Sliding Door
- Window
- Window with Wooden Shutters
- Wooden Door

- Wooden Floor
- Packed Earth

- Washstand
- Stone Lantern
- Path
- S** Storage Closet
- T** Takanoma





Yuasa Kazafumi

the spy notices anything unusual, he is to do something extremely un-ninjalike: make as much of a disturbance as possible and raise the alarm. He should then escape as best he can, killing as few of the guards/troops as possible. Danger Factor = 9.

The “anything unusual” that the successful spy will see is the headless, handless body of Yuasa Kazafumi.

**#H:** If the alarm is successfully raised, and samurai search the castle, finding as many Hitobar bodies as the head count indicates, up to a maximum of three (Yuasa Kazafumi, Miyuki, and the sumotori: the others live outside the citadel). The ninja receives 1 Budo point for each Hitobar revealed. If the ninja scores more than three “heads,” extra points may be paid in randomly determined gimmicks, stashed in the crawlspace by Miyuki.

**ENC:** The ninja must fight Classic Bushi of random level; 60% chance of the opponent being accompanied by 1D3 Classic Bushi Rabble. There is a 10% chance that the opponent is Abe Tomoko.

**BENC:** The ninja must fight Hitobar (see below). The encounter will probably take place in the crawlspace, on the roof, atop the castle wall, or somewhere equally inconvenient.

**SUR:** The mission is a total disaster. The ninja fails to reach Yuasa Kazafumi’s room, and none of the Hitobar are discovered. Continue to roll on the “Defeated” column.

**ESC:** The ninja gets in, performs the mission, and gets away without being seen. Yuasa Kazafumi’s body is discovered, but not others. Add the Danger Factor to the Ninja’s personal Status.

## 

Ninja hired to guard Sera Tomi will be given six units of “Tako Powder” between them, and told not to expect any immediate effects. Ikoma Rioki will stand guard at the window of the room; Tomi-sama

and Nyan-nyan will wait behind the curtains of the chodai (effectively a four-poster bed). Tomi-sama will ask that any other player-character gakusho or shugenja wait in the corridor, just outside the shoji. Other player-characters will wait in the surrounding rooms.

That morning, just after Sei-No-no-Toki (midnight), the window to Sera Tomi’s room will be opened, and the heads and hands of four Hitobar will fly in to attack the Kuge. Tomi-sama, who has only been feigning sleep, will cast an Armor of Heaven spell to protect himself, then attack with an Omnipresent Sword, meanwhile urging the Ninja to blow “Tako Powder” at the Hitobar; every Hitobar in the room must be dusted. The noise of the battle should alert the other player-characters, who will automatically rush to the Kuge’s aid.

## 

BAP	MNA	ZAN	BMA
12	2	2	5
AC	HPT	HPT	BUDO
6	11(Head)	7(Hands)	.5
<b>Attacks</b>	<b>BCS</b>	<b>Damage</b>	
Bite	12	1D3	
Nails	13	1D3	

The Hitobar are variously armed. Number 1 wields an average Katana, Kenjutsu BCS 14. Number 2 and Number 3 bear Yari, Sojutsu BCS 13. Number 4 wields an Ono, Onojutsu BCS11; if disarmed he will attack with Sumai handblows, BCS 19, 1D10 + 2s damage. The Hitobar want Sera Tomi dead, and will flee as soon as this is accomplished.

The player-characters have a chance (Wit ST) of recognizing the Hitobar if they have already met them in their daytime appearance. Number 1 is the captain of the Kofu police, Number 2 and Number 3 are ashigaru of Yuasa Kazafumi’s patrol, and Number 4 is one of Arikawa Ken’s twin Sumotori. Even if the player-characters haven’t met all of their daytime appearances, they will be able to determine their caste and profession from their respective hairstyles (Wit ST).

Anyone who looks out the room’s window has a chance (Wit ST) of seeing another hitobar hovering outside, over the roof of the next building – a samurai wielding a Daisho. Hiding in the shadows behind him, with ninjitsu skill, is a female Hitobar; if anyone appears at the window, she will throw her envenomed Tanto. The samurai/Hitobar is Yuasa Kazafumi, the kunoichi is Arikawa Ken’s consort, Miyuki. They will attack if recognized; otherwise, if the first wave fails to kill Sera Tomi, they will wait until Sho-Tora-no-Toki (3AM), hoping that the Kuge’s guards will have relaxed their vigil.

If any of the player-characters have been hit by Sera Tomi’s “Tako Powder,” they will notice the effects after 10 + 1D10 minutes, when patches of their skin start to turn an iridescent blue. This stain is as indelible as a tattoo for three days, after which it will begin to fade, completely disappearing in another 2D5 days. There are no other effects.

If the Kuge is killed, the player-characters will have failed. Those in his entourage will lose 10 points of On: If Ikoma Rioki has survived, he will ask one of the player-character bushi to serve as his second. Before committing seppuku, however, he will read the letter Tomi-sama left him, to be opened in the event of his death. It accuses Yuasa Kazafumi of being one of the hitobar that slew the Sera family in Shinano Province seven years before. Rioki will then resolve to kill Kazafumi (legal Blood Feud) or die trying; if he doesn’t die trying, then he will commit seppuku.

The entourage, if they do not elect to commit seppuku, will be escorted out of Kai Province by Yuasa Kazafumi’s patrol at Sei-Tatsu-no-Toki. Arikawa Ken may be petitioned to execute anyone bearing the iridescent blue stains, but the petition’s success will require the use of status and/or Rhetoric skill.

Player-characters who were not part of the Kuge’s entourage – Yakuza, Budoka, etc. - may choose to follow their companions, or to stay in Kofu to track down the Hitobar.

## Hitobar



The rest of this adventure automatically assumes that Sera Tomi has survived, and explained (at least partially) his purpose in Kofu.

## HEADHUNTERS

The next morning, at Sho-Tatsu-no-Toki, a group of Police will arrive at the inn, and wait outside to arrest the player-character ninja, if any (the interior being too cramped to allow effective use of their sasumata and sodegarami). If Hitobar Number 1 was hit by "Tako Powder," the Police leader will be bandaged about the hands and/or face to hide the iridescent blue stain.

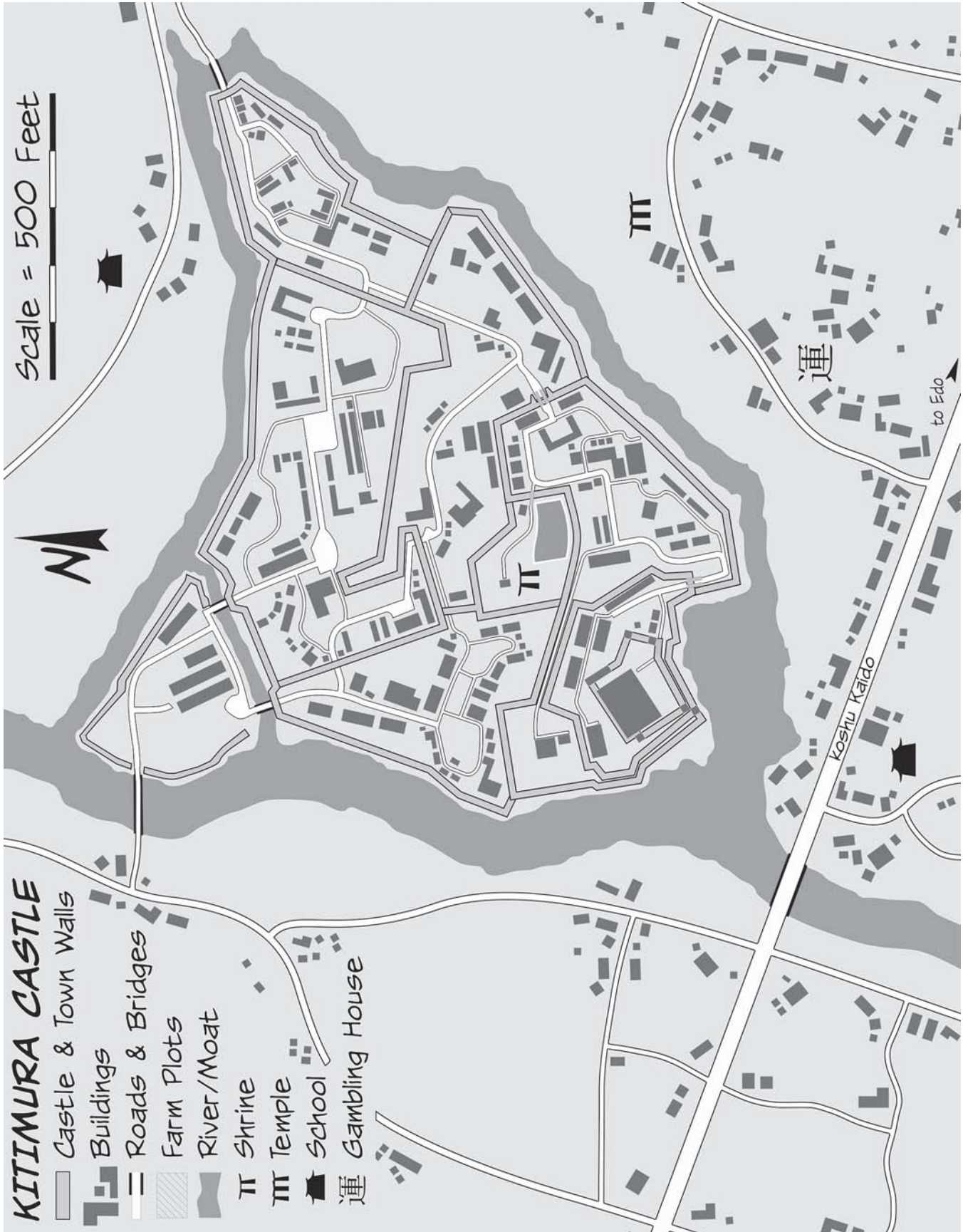
Sera Tomi will protest at this insult – these people are part of his entourage! - but, the police leader will insist upon making the arrest(s). If no-one else acts first, Ikoma Rioki will draw his katana and attempt to decapitate the insolent leader of the police squad with an Iaijutsu attack, and the fight will be on.

The leader is a First Level Classic Bushi: 32 HPT, armed with an average Katana and a Jitte-Gusari, wearing AC5 Ashigaru Armor. His skills are: Kenjutsu (14), Jittejutsu (13), Kusari-Jutsu (9), Sodegaramijutsu (12), and Hojojutsu (12).

The police are First Level Classic Bushi, but with 10 HPT. Two are armed with sasumata and average wakizashi, two with sodegarami and inferior wakizashi. They wear AC4 Ashigaru Armor. Their skills are: Sodegaramijutsu (13), Kenjutsu (9), Kamajutsu (7), Jittejutsu (9). The police are heimin, unused to such well-armed and well-trained resistance, and will retreat hastily if their leader is killed.

From there, Sera Tomi will lead his entourage to the citadel – hopefully, preceded by Ikome bearing the blue-stained head of Hitobar Number 1 atop his standard. In a private meeting with Arikawa Ken, Tomi-sama will tell the story of the hitobar attack, and ask Ken to have anyone bearing the iridescent blue stains of Tako powder immediately beheaded and the bodies burned.

If any of the hitobar bodies were discovered during the night, they will have been exorcised and hidden, preventing the hitobar heads from reuniting with their bodies, and Ken will be ready to believe and cooperate with Tomi-sama. If Yuasa Kazifumi was not revealed by the ninja spy, Ken will still bow to the Kuge's will, but reluctantly – adding the proviso that a senior Gakusho examine the stained bodies and use Perceive Truth to determine whether or not they are actually Hitobar.







Police Leader

The Kuge will agree to this, and the hunt will be on.

Hitobars Number 2 and Number 3, Ashigaru in Yuasa Kazafumi's patrol, will ask permission to commit seppuku rather than be executed, but will not try to fight back. Kazafumi and Hitobar Number 4 will try to fight if accused. Treat Hitobar Number 4 as a Level 4 Sumotori, with 45 HPT and 32 STR.

Miyuki, if stained, will try to cover the blue with makeup using her disguise skill, and try using her status as Arikawa Ken's concubine to prevent the player-characters examining her too closely. If discovered, she will try to escape and hide, rather than try to fight against superior strength.

If Yuasa Kazafumi has survived undiscovered and unstained, he will ask Arikawa Ken's permission to commit seppuku, loudly blaming himself for allowing hitobar to live undetected among his own Ashigaru and the police. Permission will be granted, and Kazafumi will ask Abe Tomoko to serve as his second (if Abe Tomoko has been killed by the ninja, he will ask Ikoma Rioki or the most obviously skilled bushi player-character). His last request is to be buried as a Shintoist, not cremated as a Buddhist.

Eta, Bushi and Gakusho player-characters will all have a chance (equal to their Wit STs) of hearing of this request, but they may or may not realize the full significance. Tomi-sama, if informed, will, and will ask the player-characters to follow the hinin who take the body away for burial. Shortly after sunset, the surviving Hitobar will fly to the cemetery, to help Kazafumi dig his way out of the shallow grave. If not defeated, Kazafumi will take to the road as a ronin, declaring a blood feud against Sera Tomi and some or all of the player-characters.

When (or if) the hitobar have been defeated, Sera Tomi will give the player-characters his statue of the Jizo of Victory (weight 11, 4g). Arikawa Ken will duplicate any payment already made by Tomi-sama to the player-characters, and continue to pay for their accommodation at the inn for as long as they wish to stay in Kofu. Any schools that the player-characters wish to attend will give them any discounts applicable to Arikawa Clan retainers. Ken will also appoint four samurai to serve Tomi-sama, freeing the player-characters for study or other employment. The player-characters will each receive a point of On for every Hitobar slain, plus other bonuses as appropriate.

If the player-characters express a wish to continue to serve the

Kuge, Tomi-sama will consult Natsuki Kajiro. Kajiro will predict that the player-characters will be of greater service to Nippon, and bring more honor on themselves, if they accept other, less prestigious employment, which takes them from Kofu as a group. The first job going which meets these requirements will be as yojimbo and exorcists, in the employment of Ota Teruo.

## CHARACTERS

### ABE TOMOKO (Level 3 Classic Bushi)

Abe Tomoko is Yuasa's Lieutenant, a samurai of middle rank in service to the Arikawa Clan. He is arrogant, a martinet to his men, a tyrant to his wife Toskiko, and extremely suspicious of strangers. Tomoko completely lacks a sense of humor, and – unusually for a retainer to the Arikawa clan – has little or no appreciation for the more peaceful arts.

Physically, Tomoko is extremely handsome, and looks much younger than his twenty-six years – and far less tough than is actually the case. He is something of a dandy, and his clothes and armor are kept in perfect condition by his dutiful wife.



**Skills:** Kenjutsu (19) with Reverse Cut Okuden (12), Yadomejutsu (18), Iaijutsu (15), Kyujutsu (12), Bajutsu (15), Tessenjutsu (11), Katakana (10), Hiragana (10), Kenji (5), Court Dance (9), Heraldry (15), Bowyer (12), Armory (10), Go (7).

**Armor:** Light Samurai Armor Class 4.

**Weapons:** Average Dai-sho; Han-kyu; Man-rating 1; Tessen.

**HPT:** 35.

### ARIKAWA KEN (Level 5 Bushi)

Arikawa Ken is the master of the castle in Kofu, the hatamoto and heir of his father Arikawa Kobo, Daimyo of Kai Province. Though less brilliant than his notoriously cunning father, he is intelligent and extremely cautious, with much of the patience for which the Arikawa Clan is renowned. Also like his ancestors, he studies the fine arts and encourages them in his samurai. He also studies Senjo-jutsu assiduously, but has yet to lead his samurai into battle.

Arikawa Ken lives in the shadow of his father, and is easily impressed by status or intelligence. He will be deferent towards Sera Tomi, and obey most of his wishes without hesitation. Dealing with low-status individuals, he may use his acting skill to seem more imposing than he actually is.

Arikawa Ken is short but muscular, and looks rather younger than his thirty-six years. He is currently unmarried, and still mourns his late wife Atsuko, who died after a miscarriage three years before. His only child is Kamatari, a clever but slightly frail seven-year-old boy.



Strength	Deftness	Speed	Health	Wit	Will
20	20	15	25	12	18
DAM	BAP	MNA	BMA	ZAN	HPT
+1	10	2	5	2	55

**Capabilities:**

Brawl	Climb	Leap	Swim
6	10	8	12

**Skills:** Kenjutsu (19) with Reverse Cut Okuden (9), Iaijutsu (15), Kyujutsu (10), Bajutsu (15), Chikujō-Jutsu (18), Senjō-Jutsu (18), Katakana (15), Hiragana (15), Kanji (12), Court Dance (12), Acting (15), Heraldry (12), Go (9), Tea Ceremony (9).

**Armor:** Usually AC 3 Superior Clothing. Samurai Armor Classes 6 and 9 available.

**Weapons:** Average Dai-Shō.

## IKOMA RIOKI (Level 1 Classic Bushi)

Rioki is Sera Tomi's Herald and bodyguard, appointed by the Daimyo of Shinano Province. He is the youngest son of a samurai family, and is quite proud of what he considers the honor done him.



Rioki is sixteen, and painfully naïve on many subjects.

Rioki is of average build and height, and would be handsome if he was not trying to grow a beard. The backs of his hands are scarred by acid, the result of an attack by a ninja (which also destroyed the hilt of his grandfather's katana). Rioki fiercely hates all ninja, particularly those of Clan D (the Venomous Hand), more for the insult to the sword than for any injury to himself.

**Skills:** Kenjutsu (14) with Hurling Okuden (8), Yadomejutsu (13), Iaijutsu (10), Kyujutsu (10), Bajutsu (12), all literacies (12), Court Dance (9), Heraldry (11), Go (11), Tea Ceremony (9), Singing (4).

**Armor:** Usually Partial Light Samurai Armor, AC 3.

**Weapons:** Average Dai-Shō with mismatched hilts.

**HPT:** 30.

## MIYUKI, Hitobar (Level 2 Ninja)

Miyuki is Arikawa Ken's favorite concubine, and suspected by many of poisoning Ken's wife Atsuko. Her true loyalty is to her hitobar family, of which Yuasa Kazifumi is leader, and to herself. She is only loyal to Clan E (the Stalking Shadows) when this does not interfere with her own wishes, and her obedience to Ken and to the Arikawa Clan is strictly temporary.

Miyuki is extremely attractive, and often makes herself beautiful with a little Hensu-jutsu skill. This skill enables her to successfully play the roles of masseuse/courtesan, travelling singer, or low-ranking farmer's wife.



Strength	Deftness	Speed	Health	Wit	Will
13	22	21	21	13	13
DAM	BAP	MNA	BMA	ZAN	HPT
—	11	2	7	1	29

**Capabilities**

Brawl	Climb	Leap	Swim	Gimmickry
5	13	12	8	5

**Skills:** Tantojutsu (13), Shuriken-jutsu (13), Tessenjutsu (12), Jujutsu (12), Kuji-kuri (11), Clan E Language (12), Ninjitsu (11), Kenjutsu (10), Garrote (8), Silent Kill (6), Hensu-jutsu (13), Naginatajutsu (11), Shiatsu (8), Yogen (7), Singing (6), Katakana (10), Hiragana (10).

**Armor:** AC3 Superior Clothing, or Naked.

**Weapons:** Tanto, with Level 1 Injected Lightning Lethal Poison.

## MIYUKI as Hitobar

HEAD			
BAP	MNA	ZAN	BMA
12	2	2	5
AC	HPT	BUDO	
6	17	.5	
Attacks	BCS	Damage	
Bite	12	1D3 Lethal	

HANDS			
BAP	MNA	ZAN	BMA
12	2	2	5
AC	HPT	BUDO	
6	7	.5	
Attacks	BCS	Damage	
Tantojutsu	13	-1	
Nails	15	1D3 Lethal	

**Notes:** If Miyuki attempts to escape, she will take four shuriken, one dozen tetsubishi, and a grenade with two feet of slow fuse. The shuriken and tetsubishi are envenomed with a Level 2 Fast Lethal Poison. Miyuki keeps a gold piece concealed in her hair at all times.

## NYAN-NYAN (Level 3 Classic Ninja)

Nyan-nyan is a beautiful girl of twenty-two, who lives as one of Kofu's most popular 3rd Level Geisha. She is completely loyal to her clan, the Stalking Shadows, and personally despises the samurai and merchants who pay for her services; her lovers of choice are her fellow ninja. Nonetheless, she always gives value for money, either as a geisha or an assassin.

**Skills:** Ninjitsu (19), Hensu-jutsu (17), Tantojutsu (16), Torture (13), Shuriken-jutsu (11), Kenjutsu (11), Atemi-waza (13), Kuji-kuri (13), Clan E Dialect (12), Fuji-Buri-Jutsu (11), Garrotte (8), Suieijutsu (9), Shinobi-jutsu (6).

**Armor:** Armor Class 2 Ninja Garb.

**Weapons:** Tanto.

**Gimmicks:** Two-length Blowgun; 1 unit of smoke powder; 6 units 'Magic Powder,' 1 unit Blinding Powder.

**HPT:** 30.

## SERA TOMI (Level 2 Shugenja)

Sera Tomi was raised in Shinano Province, in a Level 1 Citadel in a Class E village – the only property the daimyo had allowed his family to keep. After the village was attacked by bandits, the daimyo – Taka Hideo – offered to post a guard in the citadel, but at the Sera clan's expense. The year's harvest was poor, and famine struck the village. The impoverished clan offered to sell much of the citadel to the daimyo, and then to Funakoshi Hidekazu, the commander of the guard and ji-zamurai of the neighboring fief. Both decided to wait for the price to fall.

A month later, Sera Kamataro was murdered in his sleep by a mysterious assassin, and his widow Toskiko and son Tomi argued over whether or not to sell the citadel outright. Tomi-sama used his new status as Kuge to pressure Taka Hideo into relieving Hidekazu of his post because of his failure to protect the clan. Hidekazu asked for permission to commit seppuku, and it was granted.

The night after Hidekazu's death, a fire broke out in the village. The citadel survived, but Sera Toskiko committed suicide rather than face the shame of poverty. Tomi-sama, more stubbornly, refused to rest until his father had been avenged. He gave the citadel to Hideo, and travelled to Kai Province to find the renowned seer Sano Mihsue. Mihsue divined that Sera Kamataro had been slain by Funakoshi Hidekazu, who had flown into the citadel as a Hitobar – and that Hidekazu had survived seppuku, and escaped from his grave to torch the village.

Toru-sama travelled to Edo to study magic and kenjutsu, selling the last of his treasures, and borrowing heavily when the money ran out.



Finally, after seven years, divination and rumor led him to Kotu, convinced that Hidekazu was there, living under the guise of Yuasa Kazafumi.

Sera Tomi is thirty-seven years old, though he looks nearer fifty. He is a little taller than average, and looks gaunt. He gives a strong impression of being introspective, even absent-minded; only the reverence shown him by his entourage hints at his real status.

Strength	Deftness	Speed	Health	Wit	Will
9	12	6	6	18	33
DAM	BAP	MNA	BMA	ZAN	HPT
+0	6	1	2	1	12
Capabilities					
Brawl	Climb	Leap	Swim		
6	6	3	3		
Magic	Power	Ki			
12	33	3			

**Skills:** Kane-do (12), Go (15), Tea Ceremony (15), Divination (13), Kenjutsu (11), Iaijutsu (10), Japanese Classics (7), Court Dance (7), Sacred Dance (7), Acting (9), Katakana (19), Hiragana (19), Kanji (14).

**Armor:** AC3 Superior Court Garb.

**Weapons:** Superior Wakizashi.

**Spells:** Bind Metal 30, Metal Shield 30, Omnipresent Sword, Bar Beasts, Armor of Heaven, Darts of Metal, Bar Men.

**Notes:** Tomi-sama's treasure comprises: a poorly-made standing screen, depicting his village in Shinano Province, weight 23, 3c; a wooden figure of the Dainichi Buddha, weight 6, 18c; a rock from the garden in his former citadel, weight 5, 4c; a large book, tracing his ancestry, weight 4, 5c; a book of haiku, weight 2, 7c; a scroll of Ukiyo-e, weight 1, 10c; a statue of the Jizo of Victory, weight 11, 4g; s Spell Learning Scroll in Kanji, Shield of Sorcery; a Focus for Road of Metal, Level 5; and an Amulet, effective against spells of Hayashi-Do. The Porters Trunk itself is elaborately decorated, value 8g.

Isamu and Yoshikazu (his kaga-bearers) and Shinakio (his porter) are all Level 2 Classic Budoka.

**Skills:** Atemi-waza (15), Jujutsu (12), Karumijutsu (12), Shuriken-jutsu (11), Kamajutsu (14), Katakana (14).

**Armor:** AC1 Peasant Clothes.

**Weapons:** None carried.

**HPT:** 33.



## YUASA KAZAFUMI, Hitobar (Level 4 Bushi)

Yuasa Kazfumi is the third 'incarnation' of a Hitobar who originally called himself Kusakabe Fuyu, a samurai in service to the Akasaka Clan of Mutsu Province. Ambitious and utterly ruthless, to the point of being Machiavellian, Fuyu decided that the best way of advancing himself was a rich marriage. He formed a liaison with the young wife of his gokenin, then murdered the old man in his sleep, flying into his room in hitobar form to avoid the guards and nightingale floor outside. The murder was blamed on ninja, and Fuyu married the gokenin's widow a few months later.

Unfortunately for Fuyu, his wife was a spendthrift, and after a year of their fortune dwindling he decided to murder her as well. Leaving his body in an inn a few ri from town, he flew home to discover his wife with a lover. The lover woke, reached for his sword before Fuyu could attack, disarmed him and slashed the Hitobar across the face. Fuyu fled, leaving his wakizashi in the room; sure that he'd been recognized, or could be identified by the wakizashi, he disguised himself as best he could and left Mutsu Province to become a ronin.

Fuyu reappeared a few years later as Funakoshi Hidekazu, jizamuria to the Taka clan of Shinano Province, with a fief near that of Sera Kamataro. When a village in the Sera fief was attacked by bandits,

the daimyo – Taka Hideo – appointed Hidekazu to guard the Sera's citadel at the Sera Clan's expense. After a poor harvest, Kamataro offered to sell much of the citadel to Hidekazu, but he decided to wait for the price to fall. A month later, he murdered Sera Hamatari in his sleep.

After his father's death, Sera Tomi used his new status as clan head to pressure Taka Hideo into relieving Hidekazu of his post because of his failure to protect the Sera Clan. Hidekazu asked for permission to commit seppuku, and it was granted by the daimyo. Once again, he disguised himself as a ronin and fled, reappearing in Kai Province as Yuasa Kazafumi.

Kazafumi is in good shape for his forty-one years; tall and imposing, with long muscular arms. His scars from his days in Mutsu Province are hidden by a thick beard.

Strength	Deftness	Speed	Health	Wit	Will
22	22	16	16	13	19
<b>DAM</b>	<b>BAP</b>	<b>MNA</b>	<b>BMA</b>	<b>ZAN</b>	<b>HPT</b>
+1	11	2	5	2	37
<b>Capabilities</b>					
Brawl	Climb	Leap	Swim		
7	11	8	6		

**Skills:** Kenjutsu (17) with Lightning Stroke Okuden (11), Iaijutsu (13), Ni-to-Kenjutsu (17), Bajutsu (13), Hawking (8), Katakana (12), Hiragana (8), Acting (11), Court Dance (9), Go (7), Heraldry (4).

**Armor:** Light Samurai Armor, AC 6.

**Weapons:** Superior Daisho: the tsuba of the katana is an Amulet, Intensity 4 vs. Kane-Do, 3 vs. Tsuchi-Do. Both tsuba are decorated with maps of Nippon. Outside Kofu, Kazafumi also carried a Han-kyu, Man-Rating 2, and a quiver of yanagi-ba.

**Notes:** If permitted to commit seppuku, Kazafumi will bequeath his daisho and two Intensity 1 Precious Gems to his second.

### KAZAFUMI as Hitobar

#### HEAD

BAP	MNA	ZAN	BMA
12	2	2	5
AC	HPT	BUDO	
6	17	.5	
Attacks	BCS	Damage	
Bite	12	1D3 Lethal	

#### HANDS

BAP	MNA	ZAN	BMA
12	2	2	5
AC	HPT	BUDO	
6	7	.5	
Attacks	BCS	Damage	
Kenjutsu	17	-1	
Nails	15	1D3 Lethal	



# RIGHTFUL POSSESSION

## STARTING THE ADVENTURE

When their business in Kofu is finished, one of the player-characters hears that Ota Teruo, a merchant staying at the Inn of Welcome Serenity, is searching for yojimbo and a exorcist to protect him on a trip towards Fuji-san. Strangely enough, he is prepared to pay half a month's salary for a journey of a few days. Teruo will admit, if asked, that the work is likely to be unusually hazardous. Player-characters who wish to investigate have a chance, equal to their Wit ST for each day of rumor-chasing, of discovering that Teruo's previous yojimbo were dying at the rate of one a night. He is down to one companion, his masseuse – a mildly attractive young woman named Aiko.

Teruo, if questioned, will admit to the high death rate among his entourage, and tell the player-characters of his reason for travelling into the mountains. He is the victim of a Blood Feud, but a supernatural one: his enemy is dead, and buried near a Class F Shrine in the mountains. For years he was quiet, but since Teruo's return to Kai Province a week ago, he has returned to haunt the merchant – and has been mysteriously striking down members of Teruo's entourage. Teruo does not know what has disturbed his enemy's ghost, but he is convinced that his only hope is to have a Segaki Rite performed on his enemy's remains.

Teruo will not answer any further questions unless the player-characters accept the job(s): renegeing on a contract will cost the player-characters On.

Successful divination will reveal that danger follows Ota Teruo everywhere, and that an attempt on his life will be made the next night by one who walks unseen: a deadly hand will strike him down, to avenge a murder that has not been forgotten. (A ninja character may identify "deadly hand" as referring to Clan D, the Venomous Hand.)

The road between Kofu and Fuji-san is poorly maintained, and Teruo and the player-characters will have to cross one hex of rough terrain and a half-hex of mountainous terrain, setting out from Kofu at first light. Teruo is already suspicious, and any encounters en-route may provoke him into paranoia; wandering peasants will be suspected of being ninja assassins, beasts of being beast-Shura, etc.

A day of travel will bring Teruo and the characters to the edge of the mountains, and a Class E village, population three-hundred. The village has one small inn, a Class F Temple of Sohei orientation, and a tea-house. The innkeeper, Ishii Higuchi, runs the occasional (fairly honest) game in the inn; his wife, Fujiko works as a serving girl. The only other guest is Kenzo Yagamata, who Higuchi employs as a bouncer during games. Yagamata's frequent drinking companion is Shimonaga Yosaku, a warrior-monk from the temple.

The temple honors the Amida Buddha, and is staffed by Okada Takao, who also acts as village headman. The peasants are average men; male and female alike are trained in kamajutsu (BCS 5 + 1D3), and thirty percent will be carrying kama at any given time. Twenty percent of the men also have Bojutsu and Sojutsu as Class 2 Skills.

On arriving at the inn, Ota Teruo will ask Ishii Higuchi if he can hire a guide to take them to the shrine of the Yama-no Kami; Higuchi will recommend Inishiro, the most adventurous of the village youths. Teruo will also try to hire Kenzo Yamagata as a yojimbo, but Yamagata is not interested in employment at any price.



Inishiro

If any of the Bushi player-characters attempt to challenge Yagamata to a duel, Yagamata will suggest a drinking contest instead, with the loser paying for the sake. Foolhardy characters may pressure Yagamata into a non-lethal duel by using Personal Status: the loser, by prior agreement, must pay Yagamata's tab at the inn, currently valued at five koku (Higuchi will arrange a loan, if necessary).

## DEATH IN THE FAMILY

After a fine meal, Ota Teruo will become more expansive, answering most questions the player-characters put to him about the Blood Feud with biased, but fairly accurate accounts, admitting to his career as a Yakuza enforcer, maybe even letting slip that he once buried treasure near the graves. Suddenly, though, Teruo's head will part company from his neck and roll onto the tatami. The shura, Nagata Hidemasa, stands behind him. Hidemasa will be barely visible for one Detailed Turn (Ninjitsu BCS 19, with modifiers for incorrect "uniform," etc.), then will disappear through the wall and into the night.

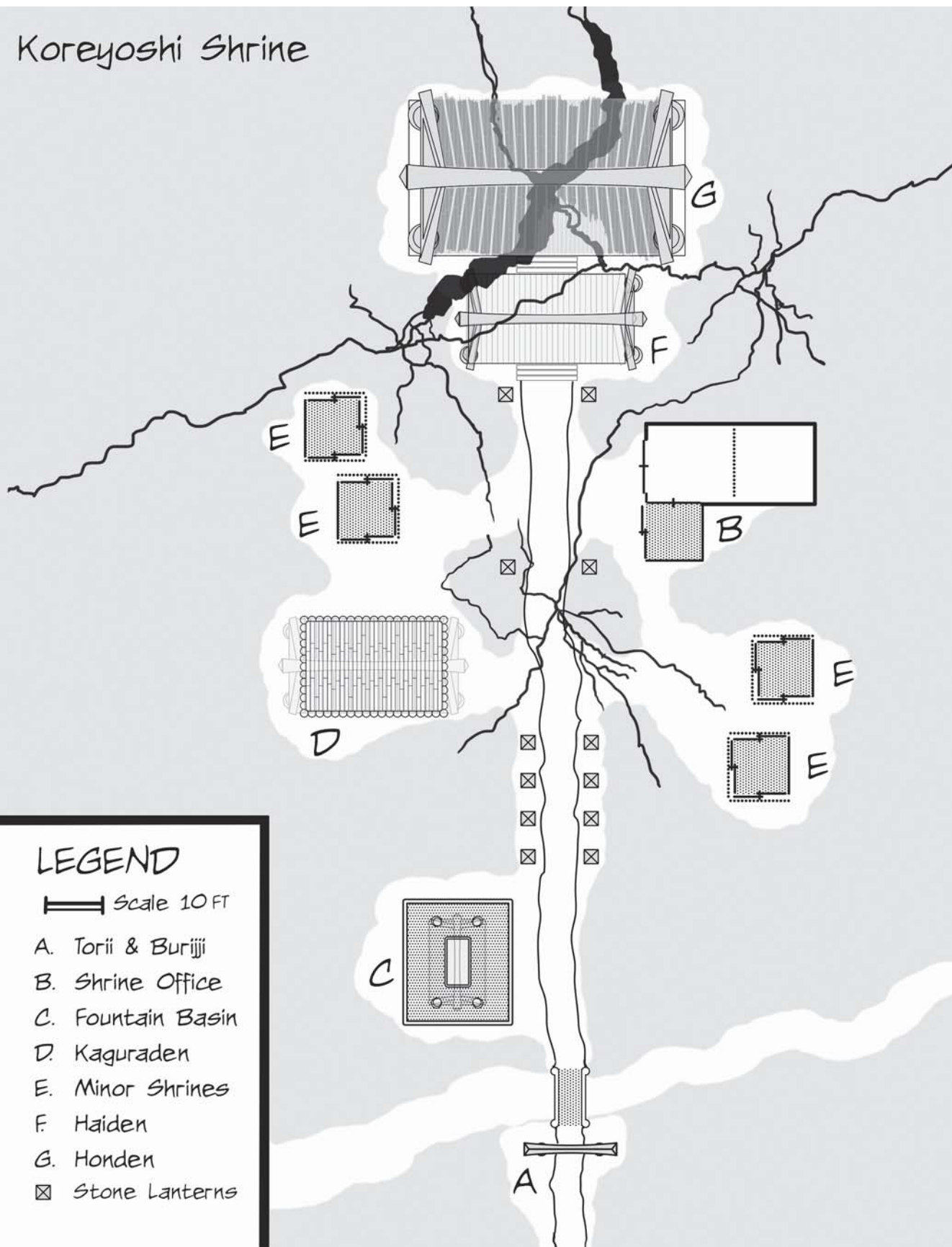
Aiko will be as astonished as the player-characters; she had been responsible for the deaths of Teruo's yojimbo, and for planting a fear of the vengeful ghost in Teruo's mind. She was waiting for him to reveal the location of her father's grave before killing him, and did not expect Hidemasa to take a hand.

Aiko will take advantage of this new turn by urging the player-characters to travel to Koreyoshi's shrine, playing on their greed, their vanity or their altruism as appropriate. Inishiro – who has been paid in advance – will be eager to accompany them.

## KOREYOSHI'S SHRINE

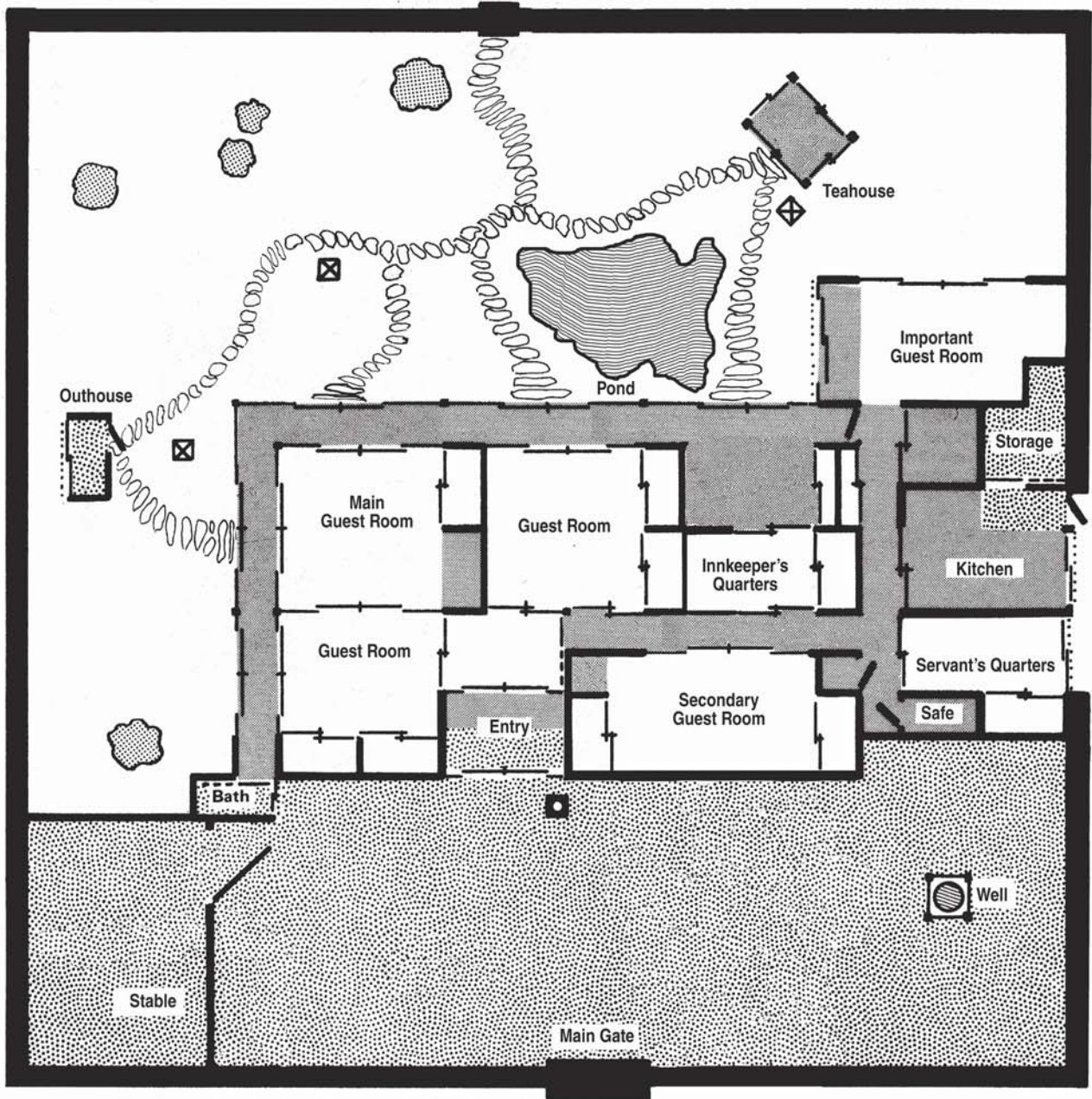
The journey to Koreyoshi's Shrine will be a slow one, even with

# Koreyoshi Shrine





# ISHII'S INN



## MAP KEY

	Wall		Storage
	Sliding Windows		Tokonoma
	Sliding Doors		Bare Wooden Floor
	Single Sliding Door		Packed Earth Floor
	Hinged Door		Tree
	Window with Wooden Lattice		Stone Lantern
	Gate		

Scale  
  
 5 yards



Koreyoshi Shrine

Inoshiro's guidance: the earthquake has changed many of the landmarks, and heavy rain will turn much of the ground treacherous (falls of 1D100 feet). Ai, Inoshiro and the player-characters should reach the shrine shortly before sunset.

The Torii has been utterly demolished by the earthquake, and the worship hall has partially collapsed. Eight Shikome shelter in the ruins. The ground around the shrine is muddy, crisscrossed with fissures, and generally treacherous. The shikome are hungry and foul-tempered, and will attack immediately. Inoshiro will charge the shikome at once. Aiko will hold back, using her tanto if necessary, but keeping her gimmicks in reserve: the fewer people to share the treasure with, the better for her.

The Shikome are variously armed and armored, as follows:

Weapon	BCS	HPT	AC
Fumata-Yari	14	22	3
Naginata	16	26	0
Inferior Katana	12	14	2
Average No-Dachi	13	23	0
Ono	13	26	1
Yari	15	22	3
Ninjato	16	26	0
Average Katana	14	23	2

The sun will set just as the last of the Shikome is slain.

A successful search of the area around the shrine will reveal a yawara and a few small, slightly weathered bones at the bottom of a fissure. Players making a successful roll against Physician skill, or a Wit ST, will recognize the bones as having belonged to a human hand, recently exposed by erosion. Scraping away the soil at the side of the fissure will reveal the ends of a radius and ulna, the bones of the forearm.

At this, two figures dressed as merchants will suddenly appear near the fissure, hacking about themselves with their wakizashi. They are the Yorai of Hidemasa's genin, re-enacting their last battle, and pose

no threat to the player-characters.

If the player-characters attempt to dig for the treasure, it will take them ninety hours divided by their combined Strengths. Digging tools will double a character's efficiency, if anyone thought to bring any. Samurai will probably think such menial labor beneath their dignity (pun unintended).

Buried above the skeletons of the ninja are:

- 1) an empty painted large jar (3s, weight 4) containing 12s, two Intensity 6 semi-precious gems, and two Intensity 2 gems;
- 2) a rotting Furoshiki Sack containing a Text of Praise to Dainichi Buddha (in Kanji), and a Teaching Scroll for Heraldry (in Kanji; 14s, weight 3);
- 3) a Sumi-e set;
- 4) an Armorer's kit;
- 5) four flasks of Sake;
- 6) a Master Wakizashi, which radiates magic. Its scabbard is inscribed with the following Haiku in Hiragana:

*"Who wields the shoto  
Takes the quest. Who bloods the blade  
Must not fear Dragons."*

(The Master Wakizashi is the basis of the next adventure, Amakurikara.)

When the diggers begin to uncover the middle skeleton, the Shura will appear before them. Ai will use the cover of darkness to envenom her tanto, then cry out in Clan F Language, "Father! Help me kill them!" Both she and the Shura will attack. (If the player-characters had decided not to search for the treasure until the next day, Aiko will call on the Shura just before sunrise, even if it means digging up the treasure herself.)

## CHARACTERS

### INOSHIRO (Level 0 would-be Bushi)

Inoshiro is a strong, tough, rather simple-minded farm boy, the fifteen-year-old son of a middle-class Heimin farmer. He suffers badly from a poorly-focused hero-worship and a longing for adventure. Specifically, he wants to be a great Bushi, like the ronin who saved his village from a Karasu Tengu twelve years ago. Inoshiro's exploits so far have consisted of killing a viper with his kama (he now wears an obi made from its skin), and hunting down and killing a bear that had been terrorizing the neighboring villages. Inoshiro will tell the story of his fight against the bear, and how his bamboo spear broke after the first strike leaving him with only the kama, to anyone patient enough to listen (or drunk enough to simply sit there and grunt occasionally).

Callow as he is, Inoshiro is undeniably brave, and will be resolutely loyal to the party. He idolizes all bushi, and is distrustful of shugenja; he has never knowingly encountered a ninja, and has no prejudice against them.

Inoshiro is thick-featured and homely, tall and very muscular. He proudly wears the scars of a bear's claws along both of his arms. He speaks very slowly unless excited, when he tends to jabber incoherently.

Strength	Deftness	Speed	Health	Wit	Will
33	9	15	25	6	20
DAM	BAP	MNA	BMA	ZAN	HPT
+3	4	2	5	1	33
Capabilities					
Brawl	Climb	Leap	Swim		
7	4	8	7		

**Skills:** Kamajutsu (11), Bojutsu (6), Dojutsu (6), Kenjutsu (3), Hunting (7), Tracking (5), Katakana (9), Popular Dance (6).

**Armor:** AC1 Peasant Garb, with viper-skin obi. Straw raincoat.

**Weapons:** Kama; bamboo yari (treat at an inferior weapon, rated as 3 for Breaking).

## ISHII HIGUCHI (Level 3 Classic Yakuza)

Higuchi is indifferent honest, as Yakuza go. He runs an occasional game in the inn, but is careful not to let any villager lose more than he can afford, and will lend money interest-free to anyone in danger of starving (normally, of course, he charges the standard one-hundred percent minus social status rate of interest). He is fairly well-liked by the farmers, but not entirely trusted.

Higuchi's Yakuza clan is on neutral terms with Ota Teruo's, and he will treat Teruo and the player-characters accordingly, but after Teruo dies in his inn, Higuchi will be eager to help the player-characters, hoping to clear his own name

Higuchi is a short, plump and rather ugly man of forty-eight – the second oldest man in the village, after Okada Takao. His wife Fujiko is slightly taller, fifteen years younger, and attractive – one of Higuchi's reasons for employing Kenzo Yagamata.

**Skills:** Commerce (18); Gambling (18); Bojutsu (13); Kiserujutsu (10); Sumai (7); Yakuza Dialect (14); Katakana (14); Hiragana (12); Forger (13); Popular Dance (11).

**Armor:** Superior Peasant Garb, AC 1.

**Weapons:** Kiseru.

**HPT:** 23.

## KENZO YAGAMATA (Level 5 Bushi)

Yagamata is a duellist whose fame and skill have been his downfall; everyone in the cities and the samurai clans knows him too well, and only the most hot-headed and arrogant will challenge him. Yagamata is always either fleeing blood feuds, or trying to drown his reputation in small and inaccessible inns like Ishii Higuchi's.

Yagamata is well-built and fairly tall, but not particularly handsome. His hair and moustache are long, shaggy and graying – he trims them occasionally with his tanto – and his eyes are slightly bloodshot, but perpetually alert. He looks twenty years older than his actual age,



thirty-three. He constantly sits with his back to the wall, and sleeps (or feigns sleep) with his No-dachi in his hand.

Strength	Deftness	Speed	Health	Wit	Will
23	33	27	30	6	12
DAM	BAP	MNA	BMA	ZAN	HPT
+1	16	3	9	3	52
Capabilities					
Brawl	Climb	Leap	Swim		
8	16	14	10		

**Skills:** Kenjutsu (19) with Lightning Stroke Okuden (11); Iaijutsu (19) with Precision Strike Okuden (9); tantojutsu (15); Shurikenjitsu (15); Kyujutsu (11); Katakana (7); Hiragana (4); Kanji (2); Phuysician (11); Court Dance (13); Go (5).

**Armor:** AC1 Samurai Garb, slightly tattered.

**Weapons:** Average No-dachi, Tanto. Two bo-ken inferior Katanas in room.

## KOREYOSHI, Yama-no-Kami

Koreyoshi's power has waned with the encroachment of farmers, and he has been defeated by the shura of Nagata Hidemasa. He is currently in a state of limbo, and will remain so until his shrine is repaired.

Koreyoshi prefers to remain detached from all things human, and he neither helps nor harms travellers unless they disturb his meditations. If provoked – for example, by an Angry Earth spell – he will summon 2D6 Beasts to deal with the upstart.

Local legend has it that Koreyoshi was once a hermit Shugenja, a distant and rather misanthropic old man who sought peace and privacy in which to meditate, and was finally found sitting in a lotus position, his face serene and his heartbeat stopped.

**Spirit Rank:** 4

**Magic BCS:** 4

**Hit Points:** 20

**Armor Class:** 5

**Attribute Saving Throws:** All are 7.

**Powers:** Control Phenomena; Summon 2D6 Beasts.

**Spells:** Arrows of Soil, Dark Circle, Soil Blessing, Wings of Heaven.

**Skills:** Shuriken-jutsu (12); Meditation (19); Tsuchi-do (19); other Schools of Magic (12); Japanese Classics (19); Chinese Classics (12); all Literacy Skills (19).

## NAGATA AIKO (Level 4 Ninja)

Nagata Aiko is the vengeful daughter of Nagata Hidemasa, a great Jonin of Clan D (the Venomous Hand). She has been responsible for the deaths (by poison or silent kill) of Ota Teruo's Yojimbo, but has refrained from killing Teruo in the hope of discovering where he has buried her father – and his treasure. She is, technically, on a mission for her clan, who are also eager to see Teruo dead.

Aiko is twenty-nine years old, with average looks. When not posing as a masseuse, she travels in the guise of a middle-aged Buddhist nun. Aiko is careful not to carry any items which may incriminate her, but she keeps an Intensity 4 Semi-Precious Gem (a jet) concealed in her obi with her gimmicks.

Strength	Deftness	Speed	Health	Wit	Will
17	22	22	21	13	17
DAM	BAP	MNA	BMA	ZAN	HPT
+0	11	2	7	2	40
Capabilities:					
Brawl	Climb	Leap	Swim	Gimmickry	
6	15	15	11	10	

**Skills:** Tantojutsu (19) with Precision Thrust Okuden (8); Shuriken-



## Nagata Aiko and Ota Teruo



jutsu (8); Ninjitsu (14); Kenjutsu (11); Jujutsu (11); Silent Kill (7); Fuki-Buri-Jutsu (7); Kuji-Kuri (9); Naginatajutsu (7); Karumijutsu (7); Hensu-jutsu (7); Yogen (7); Clan F Language (13); Katakana (10); Hiragana (10); Forgery (11).

**Armor:** Armor Class 3 Superior Clothing.

**Weapons:** Tanto.

**Gimmicks:** 1 length Blowgun; 10 Fukiya; 2 Units Level 3 Fast Lethal Injected Poison; 1 Unit Blinding Powder.

## OTA TERUO (Level 4 Yakuza)

Ota Teruo is a merchant and 'retired' Yakuza enforcer, who has recently returned to Kai Province to reclaim a treasure he buried there years before. A skilled gambler, forger and administrator, he would probably have replaced Tsushima Masao as Oyubun in Kai Province but for his having incurred a Blood Feud with a ninja clan, the Venomous Hand. Ninja of Clans C and D will not work for him at any price, leaving him without ninja support in provinces under their control.

Teruo lived comfortably and fairly peacefully as an unaffiliated gambler and merchant, until Nagata Aiko found him en route to Kofu, and began slaying his yojimbo. Teruo has no ethical objections to violence (or to very much else, for that matter), but he acknowledges that he isn't as good at it as he once was, and will use other methods if possible – bluff, bribery, even magic.

Teruo is homosexual by preference, and has never been married; his relationship with Nagata Aiko is strictly professional.

Ota Teruo is tall and extremely fat, and he gives a faint impression of oiliness. His hairline is receding, and he has the broad features of a sumotori (though not the hairstyle). The irezumi on his shoulder are disfigured by a slash from Hidemasa's wakizashi.

Strength	Deftness	Speed	Health	Wit	Will
8	16	13	7	22	13
DAM	BAP	MNA	BMA	ZAN	HPT
+0	8	1	4	2	11
Capabilities					
Brawl	Climb	Leap	Swim		
4	8	6	3		

**Skills:** Gambling (17), Yakuza Dialect (17), Forgery (17), Commerce (13), Tessenjutsu (13), Sumai (7), Katakana (11), Hiragana (11), Popular Dance (7), Acting (7), Go (13).

**Armor:** Ninja Armor Class 4 underclothing beneath Fine Quality clothing.

**Weapons:** Tessen, decorated with a mountain landscape: a semi-precious artwork worth 15s.

**Notes:** Ota Teruo carries 1 gold and 13 silver pieces.

## NAGATA HIDEMASA, Shura

Nagata Hidemasa was a powerful Jonin of Clan D, the Venomous Hand. While travelling from Nu-Mazu to Kofu, disguised as merchants, he and his companions were attacked by bandits. Hidemasa and the two genin routed the bandits, but were badly injured, and sought shelter in Koreyoshi's Shrine while they bandaged their wounds.

Unfortunately for Hidemasa, the fight was witnessed by peasants, and a report reached the local Yakuza enforcer that ninja spies were in his territory. Yakuza converged on the shrine, and the genin were slaughtered. Hidemasa was taken alive, but stabbed to death by Ota Teruo. Their bodies were buried near the shrine, without any rites.



Stories of the Shura of the mountains soon spread, inspiring the arrogant Teruo to bury much of his treasure nearby – but even Teruo avoided the area by night, until eventually he left the area for a more profitable region. Hidemasa was restrained only by the Yama-no-Kami, who was slowly being weakened as farmers – and Jigami – encroached on his territory. Finally, Hidemasa defeated the Yama-no-Kami in spirit combat. An earthquake destroyed the shrine a few days later.

**Spirit Rank:** 6

**BCS:** 19 with Piercing Thrust Okuden 2.

**Armor Class:** 12

**HPT:** 47

## OKADA TAKAO (Level 3 Classic Gakusho)

Takao is, at fifty-two years old, the oldest man in the village, and highly respected – almost venerated. For fifteen years he has given the villagers medical care, wise counsel, and lessons in Bojutsu. He is neutral towards the Arikawa Clan, whose rule barely touches “his” remote village, and may be suspicious towards any Bushi player-characters: his militaristic bent was acquired resisting bandit raids and beast attacks, not fomenting peasant uprisings.

Takao is a tall man, with wide shoulders and long arms; he likes to lean on his staff when he walks, but he doesn't really need it. His eyesight is still sharp, though his hearing fails him occasionally. He no longer has to shave his head, having become bald with age: his eyebrows are white, and his teeth long gone.

**Skills:** Rhetoric (14); Bojutsu (14); Jujutsu (13); Sojutsu (13); Buddhist Theology (18); Chinese Classics (12); Physician (15); Herbalist (8); all Literacies (16); Popular Dance (5); Sacred Dance (9); Fishing (4).

**Armor:** Gakusho robe, AC 1.

**Weapons:** Bo.

**HPT:** 13.

## SHIMONAGA YOSAKU (Level 2 Classic Bushi/Level 1 Gakusho)

Shimonaga Yosaku was a ronin of low rank, the sixth son of an impoverished family, who turned to Buddhism rather than be forced into less honorable employment. He finds temple life hard and unrewarding, and may often be found gambling or drinking in Higuchi's inn. He retains his samurai disdain for the farmers, and they dislike him in turn.

Yosaku is twenty-two years old. He is lightly built, a little below average height, and good looking – almost pretty. He frequently forgets to shave his head, particularly when hungover.

**Skills:** Kenjutsu (13), Sojutsu (14) with Hurling Okuden (3), Naginatajutsu (12), Sumai (6), Hatha-Yoga (8), Prana-Yoga (3), Karma-Yoga (2), Buddhist Theology (6), all literacies (10), Rhetoric (7), Tea Ceremony (7), Meditation (2), Sacred Dance (6).

**Armor:** Complete Light Samurai Armor, AC 6.

**Weapons:** Average Do-Sho, Yari.

**HPT:** 34

The **TEMPLE GUARDS** are both Level 1 Classic Bushi. Taro and Jiro are twin brothers, former Ashigaru of Heimin ancestry elevated to Bushi status because of their proven bravery and fealty. Unlike Yosaku, they are sympathetic to the peasants, and have willingly taught them martial arts. They are twenty-three years old, short and sturdy-looking. Taro (born first by a few minutes, hence his name) is the more aggressive of the pair, and does most of the talking, but Jiro is more popular among the village girls.

**Skills:** Kenjutsu (12), Sojutsu (14) with Hurling Okuden (3), Naginatajutsu (12), Kamajutsu (13), Bojutsu (13), all literacies (10), Rhetoric (7), Meditation (13), Calligraphy (9), Physician (12).

**Armor:** Partial Heavy Samurai Armor, AC 5.

**Weapons:** Inferior Dai-Sho, Yari.

**HPT:** 23.

# AMAKURIKARA

Amakurikara, the enchanted Master Wakizashi found near the graves of the three ninja, has a tatsu depicted on its beautifully carved tsuba (itself a precious artwork, worth 22g). The scabbard is inscribed with the following haiku in Kanji:

*"Who wields the shoto  
Takes the quest. Who bloods the blade  
Must not fear dragons."*

Magic analysis (or a Hatha-yoga trance) performed on Amakurikara will reveal the sword to have been enchanted with a Kane-Do spell, an ultra-complex variant of Mutability of Form: a critical success will show that the tsuba is the source of the magic. A Karma-yoga trance, attempting to prophesy the results of drawing the wakizashi, will reveal that Amakurikara will not return to the scabbard once wielded, but will remain permanently bonded to the wielder's hand until blooded: it will also become an Intensity 3 Amulet against all schools of magic. Attempting to prophesy the results of blooding the blade will reveal only a mistiness followed quickly by a sensation of passing out. A Raja-yoga trance will reveal only that Amakurikara is actually some beast or being transformed into an inanimate shape. Successful use of Armory skill will suggest that the wakizashi was crafted more than a century ago, but less than two centuries. Divination, if attempted by the player-characters, will reveal nothing more.

Countermagic in Kane-Do may release the wakizashi from a character's hand (the transformation spell required Kane-do knowledge of 111), but a Critical Failure will release the tatsu, and countermagic cannot transform him back to a sword. If the wielder is killed, or his sword arm severed, there is a ninety percent chance that the wakizashi will drop from his hand: someone holding the scabbard can resheath it without touching the hilt with a Dexterity CST. There is, however, a ten percent chance that a drop of blood will touch the blade.

The motagi (the ornamented peg which fastens the hilt to the blade) may be removed, and hilt, tsuba and blade separated, unless the hilt has already bonded to someone's hand, in which case the motagi will remain immobile. (Bushu with armory skill will think of this almost automatically, even if the players don't: bushu and buke without armory skill should be permitted to make a kenjutsu BCS.) The wakizashi's blade will revert to being inferior if fitted with another tsuba, and any blade, of whatever quality, to which the tsuba is fitted will become a Master Blade, but this is merely a side-effect of the true spell; the new sword will also attach itself to the wielder's hand, and transform to its living form when blooded.

## THE RITE OF TSUJIGIRI

If Kenzo Yagamata has been persuaded to join the player-characters in their journey to the shrine of Koreyoshi, and if he and Inoshiro have survived the various hazards of the adventure, Yagamata will begin teaching Inoshiro kenjutsu. He will also ask that the wakizashi be given to Inoshiro, as heimin are not permitted to carry katana. Yagamata will read the haiku on the scabbard and comment on it favorably, then admire the tsuba, but he will not suggest the use of magic to determine the wakizashi's quality (neither should the gamemaster-sama).

Where the player-characters go from Koreyoshi's shrine is, of course, their decision. In any case, they will encounter an insolent peasant. The peasant is suffering from Plague; ignorant of the fate of Koreyoshi's shrine, he is going there to pray for a quick death. When the peasant insults them, Yagamata will quickly tell Inoshiro to blood his



sword by killing the peasant (literally tsujigiri – killing in the street to test a new blade). Only characters with a Zanshin higher than Inoshiro's will be able to forestall him.

(The peasant, incidentally, is not from Inoshiro's village, but from a Class F village, two Ri southwest of the shrine. The village has been badly hit by the plague, and its population has dwindled from one hundred fifty to ninety people. The plague has a Danger Factor of 5, and covers an area of twenty-one Ri.)

As soon as the blade is blooded, the wakizashi will disappear, and the wielder will find himself holding a hungry tatsu by the tail. Note: a thrust from the wakizashi will kill any victim immediately; a slash will do only normal damage.

## THE OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAINS

If the player-characters take the wakizashi to Okada Takao, or to any of the gakusho in Kofu, they will be unable to discover any more than the details already revealed. The best the priests can do is to advise the player-characters to search for Sano Mihsue, the hermit. Mihsue is thought to live atop a mountain near the border of Kai and Musashi provinces; the precise location is known only to Natsuki Jiro, the abbot of Kai-zenko-ji-o-tera in Kofu, who has promised to keep it secret (casting a Fetters of Truth spell on Jiro will infuriate the normally placid monks, and cost the Shugenja a point of On for every monk who witnesses this). A Raja-yoga trance may give the player-characters useful hints; otherwise, the group will have little choice but to walk along the border, searching approximately forty Ri of mountainous terrain (roll 2D20 to determine how many ri they have to travel).





When within a ri of the hermitage, alert player-characters (those making a Wit ST) will notice the pug marks of an animal in the snow: Tracking BCS to recognize those of a Shishi. Following the tracks will lead the player-characters to Mihsue's cave.

Mihsue's cave is an easy climb above the snow-line. The main chamber contains an empty sword rack, a brazier (unlit), and a small pool fed by half-hourly drops from a broken stalactite. The doorway between the main chamber and Mihsue's chamber is guarded by two Shishi (27 HPT each), sitting in the mouth with only enough space between them to admit one character at a time. Any character who tries to pass them while armed will be instantly attacked: the Shishi have sharp eyes, and can also smell poison and gunpowder. Characters attempting to sneak small, unvenomed weapons (shuriken,

tanto, etc.) past the Shishi must make a successful roll against their Shinobi-jitsu, Ninjitsu or Hensu-jutsu scores. Anyone datto (unarmed) may pass without hindrance.

Mihsue's chamber is barely big enough for two visitors to confer with him, and far too small for using any but short weapons. Mihsue sits on an old tatami, with an incense burner and a small image of the Dainichi Buddha to his left, and a reliquary on his right. There is a five percent chance that Mihsue will be in a Raja-yoga trance, a seventy percent chance that he will be meditating, and a twenty-five percent chance that he will be asleep: in any case, he will not be happy about being disturbed, and the player-characters will need to use status to enlist his aid (Buddhist Gakusho will receive a +5 modifier, and impromptu poetry or quotes from Chinese Classics will be twice as effective as

normal). If either of his Shisshi guardians have been harmed, Mihsue will refuse point-blank to cooperate, whatever inducements he may be offered. If threatened, he will simply use his Slow Metabolism power to outwait his antagonists.

If Mihsue agrees to help the player-characters, he will spend a day in his tiny chamber 'studying' the sword; being blind he will need a player-character to read for him. At Sei-Tora-no-Toki (in mild revenge for being disturbed), he will wake the player-characters to divulge his findings. Amakurikara is actually a tatsu, imprisoned in the form of a wakizashi by a great master of Kane-Do. The wakizashi will disappear once blooded, and the tatsu will emerge, angry and hungry. 'Blooded' is meant literally: the tatsu will not be released by the temporarily assumed flesh and blood of Supernatural Beings.

The players will probably think of various uses for such a weapon, but Mihsue will not have finished. The honorable thing for the player-characters to do, and a fair repayment for his labors, would be to take the wakizashi and slay an enemy of the tatsu's. As it happens, he knows of a village near the borders of Kai, Shinano and Kotsuke provinces, which is being terrorized by a Mukade that emerges periodically from the nearby river...

## CLOSE TO THE BORDERLINE

If the player-characters travel to the village – Class F, with a population of ninety and no temples, shrines or inns – they may be surprised by their reception. Whatever the makeup of the group, one of the villagers will run into the village square and sound the alarm. Within a minute of arriving, they will find themselves surrounded by unfriendly and suspicious peasants.

Farmers are notoriously great worriers, and these farmers are experts; living within a Han-kyu's shot of both Shinano and Kotsuke provinces and more than fifteen ri from Kofu (or any city), they wake every morning in terror of being overrun by invading armies – as well as the usual fears of marauding monsters, hostile spirits, bad weather, plague, brigands, earthquakes and rockslides. These fears have been



successfully exploited by a wandering yamabushi, Sakurai Shugoro, and the peasants have armed themselves in readiness for attack.

Nine of the village men are Level 1 Classic Budoka. These will be in the forefront of the mob that surrounds the player-characters, and will engage them if any player-character draws a weapon or shows any signs of hostility. They are armed with Kama and Jo: against Bushi or characters armed with lethal weapons, they will use the kama as their primary weapon and attempt to disarm the character(s) with Fire and Stones okuden, then drop their weapons and hold their opponents in a jujutsu grapple; against characters armed with non-lethal weapons, they will use their jo as primary weapon; against unarmed characters, they will use Atemi-waza and jujutsu.

The other adult villagers are average 'men,' trained in Kamajutsu and Atemi-waza (BCS 8 in both), and seventy percent carry kama at any given time. Treat any children (who will be hiding at the back of the mob) as unarmed rabble, with Atemi-waza as a Class 3 skill.

If enough of the Budoka are defeated to leave any player-character unengaged, the crowd will part as in Raiders of the Lost Ark to show Matsui performing tricks with his gusari-kama.

If the player-characters are defeated, or lay down their weapons, Sakurai Shugoro will climb atop a rock near the alarm gong and speak to them (treat the mon on his kimono as a Hidden Thing). If the player-



characters admit to having come to kill the mukade, the farmers will bristle visibly; Shugoro has convinced them that fear of the mukade has protected the village from brigands. He will order that the player-characters be held so that he can tie them hand and foot, and will then have them thrown into the river without their weapons. If Amakurikara is bonded to anyone's hand, and cannot be released by countermagic, Shugoro will order Matsui to kill the wielder outright, then dump the body in the river where the blood will attract the mukade sooner.

The river is about chin-deep, but the player-characters will have to make a Swimming BCS every detailed turn until they can free their limbs (fortunately, Shugoro's hojo-jutsu is sloppy at best). The mukade will appear three hours later, just after sunset, and will attack the character who is bleeding most profusely (whoever has received the most lethal damage). If, by this time, the player-characters have escaped, the mukade will follow the heaviest trail of blood. If there is no trail of blood, he will head straight for the village.

All the villagers hide in their homes at night, though Matsui and 1D6 of the Budoka will rush out to investigate a disturbance (the Mukade moves silently, even if the player-characters don't), and everyone will emerge if the alarm is sounded (the alarm hangs outside the



storehouse, with the mallet on the rock beside it: the mallet may be used as a club in a pinch).

The player-characters' weapons, including Amakurikara, will be hidden in the storehouse, with a small cache of stolen treasure: a keg of sake, a scroll of inferior Yamato-e (8c, weight 1), a kiseru, and a Doctor's Kit containing four units of medication.

Matsui and the villagers will continue to hinder the player-characters until Shugoro is exposed as a tenuki. When this is done, they will make what reparation they can – returning the player-characters' weapons, feeding and housing them, healing them as best they can, etc. If any of the player-characters have died, Matsui will offer to accompany the group as a yojimbo, in the hope of rendering some service.

## CHARACTERS

### AMAKURIKARA, Tatsu

Amakurikara is a 36-foot long Tatsu, who agreed to be transformed into the form of a wakizashi by the great shugenja Nakadai Tatsuya. Tatsuya's sponsor, the daimyo Chiba Masae, agreed to spare the tatsu's family in exchange, but Masae was assassinated by a kunoichi shortly afterwards, and died with his wakizashi out of reach. The beautiful wakizashi was passed from owner to owner over a century and a half, finally coming into the possession of Ota Teruo.

Amakurikara has been sleeping for a century and a half, and will be extremely hungry when returned to her natural form. Once her hunger has been assuaged (a twelve foot Mukade would do nicely, but so would two or three ninja), she may be swayed by rhetoric and status into choosing what and/or who she eats, but not before. The mon of the



Chiba clan, a cobra with its hood spread, is the only sure protection against Amakurikara's wrath.

If not slain, the tatsu will fly to one of the smaller islands around Nippon to live as peaceful a life as possible.

BAP	MNA	ZAN	BMA
61	3	3	6
AC	HPT	BUDO	
8	42	6	
Attacks	Freq	BCS	Damage
Bite	1-3	18	3D6
2 Claws	4-6	16	2D6, Bash

**Powers:** Breathes a cloud of noxious vapor, six yards long by three yards wide.

**Notes:** 'Amakurikara' is an armorer's term, meaning 'dragon wound around a sword' (BCS in Armory to recognize the term) and is not the tatsu's real name, which she prefers to keep secret.

### MATSUI (Level 4 Classic Budoka)

Matsui is a nineteen-year-old son of a farmer, hiding from the Yakuza and moneylenders of Kotsuke Province. Taught the martial arts by a Natural Master, he left home at fifteen in search of adventure, finally finding work as a bouncer in a gambling house in Nikko. He became an inveterate gambler, and was soon deeply in debt to the Yakuza. He fled Nikko and, hearing that the Yakuza were weak and disorganized in Kai Province, travelled south until he crossed the border into that province. He arrived at the village a month after Sakurai Shugoro, who was eager to take him in as Sensei.

Matsui suspects that Shugoro is a fraud, but his life in the village is too comfortable for him to make too many waves. He is also in love with Fujiko, one of the village girls, and is trying to save money for a wedding.

Matsui is handsome and muscular, though he often tries to conceal his features beneath a layer of dirt in case yakuza visit the village and recognize him.



**Skills:** Atemi-waza (19) with Smashing Blow Okuden (10); Karmuijutsu (19); Kusuari-jutsu (15) with Returning Hurl Okuden (11); Kamajutsu (16); Jujutsu (14); Jojutsu (14); Two-weapon bugei, kama and jo (14) with Fire and Stones Okuden (6); Nunchaku-to (11);



Shuriken-jutsu (9); Katakana (11); Shiatsu (15).

**Armor:** AC3 Peasant garb.

**Weapons:** Gusari-kama, Yawara.

**HPT:** 39.

Nine of Matsui's students have reached the status of Level 1 Classic Budoka.

**Skills:** Atemi-waza (13) with Smashing Blow Okuden (4); Kamajutsu (11); Jojutsu (11); two weapon bugei, kama and jo (11) with Fire and Stones Okuden (2); Jujutsu (9).

**Armor:** AC3 Peasant garb.

**Weapons:** Kama and jo.

**HPT:** 24.

## SAKURAI SHUGORO (Tenuki, posing as Yamabushi)

'Shugoro' seems to be a fat and rather ugly warrior-monk with a sharp tongue and a taste for sake. He has been inciting the peasants to arm and rebel, predicting that their village will soon be the battleground in a war between the Arikawa of Kai Province and the Taka of Shinano Province. 'Shugoro' is actually a Tenuki who enjoys seeing the chaos caused by peasant uprisings. His favorite joke to date has been evacuating a village in Mikawa Province by 'divining' a tsunami, then burning the empty houses before moving on.

'Shugoro' has been acting the role of village priest for nearly a year and, despite the adulation and easy lifestyle, is becoming bored with it. The arrival of the player-characters will appeal to his rather earthy sense of mischief, and he will cheerfully risk exposing himself simply to harass them.



'Shugoro' wears tattered samurai garb over his Buddhist robes, displaying what he claims is the mon of the Sakurai Clan – a coiled mukade (BCS in Heraldry to remember that this is actually the mon of the Ugai clan, or that the mon of the Sakurai Clan actually depicts a conch shell). The tanuki will only voluntarily change shape if confronted by a tatsu, or anything else fearsome with a known taste for mukade.

BAP	MNA	ZAN	BMA
25	3	2	6
AC	AC	HPT	BUDO:
5 (Human)	6 (Badger)	34	5

### Badger

Attack	Freq	BCS	Damage
Bite	1-2	10	1D6
2 Claws	3-6	16	1D6

### Human

Attack	Freq	BCS	Damage
Sumai	—	12	1D6 + 3
Magic	—	12	varies

**Spells:** (can cast seven spells per day, as a Level 4 Shugenja) Soil Binding Spell 20, Soil Shield Spell 20, Traitor Ground, Pure Flesh, Pure Blood, Pure Thought, Pure Body.

**Skills:** Bojutus (10); Buddhist Theology (6); Rhetoric (7); all literacies (10); Torture (4); Hojojutsu (4).

**Weapons:** Bo.

## SANO MIHSUE (Level 6 Buddhist Gakusho)

Sano Mihsue retired from his role as Sozu of Kai-zenko-ji-o-tera to a hermitage eleven years ago, ostensibly to perfect his powers of divination in privacy. In fact, Mihsue left Kofu after divining that he would somehow bring disaster to the city. He has spent the years since then attempting to divine further details of this disaster, and his role in it, without much success. Only Natsuki Kajiro, the new sozu of Kai-zenko-ji-o-tera, knows this secret. Many of the younger monks of his contemplative sect revere Mihsue as a Dai-shi.



Obsessed with his failure, Mihsue has become pessimistic and slightly irritable, in distinct contrast to the serenity and benevolence for which he is remembered. Despite the life-preserving powers of his yoga disciplines, he appears even older than his seventy-seven years: completely bald, blinded by cataracts, thin but for a pot belly, his skin pale and leathery. When meditating or in a trance, Mihsue looks more like an ivory carving than a living human.

Mihsue had devised several methods for compensating for his blindness. His memory of Jugaku is near perfect, and he reads hexagrams with his fingers (his sense of touch, like his hearing, is extremely acute). His cataracts do not affect him while in a trance, or diminish his ability to perceive truth, and he will use these powers when he needs to 'see.' If anyone takes pity on his blindness, he will explain brusquely that seeing only the truth is the only true sense of seeing.

The reliquary in Mihsue's cave contains a Relic with the power to dissolve illusions: 1st Level; 13 charges; Religious Power 3; weight 5. The incense burner is a common artwork worth 5c (weight 8); the carving of Buddha is worth 12g (weight 2).

Strength	Deftness	Speed	Health	Wit	Will
5	15	6	15	39	33
DAM	BAP	MNA	BMA	ZAN	HPT
-1	7	1	2	3	27
Capabilities					
Brawl	Climb	Leap	Swim		
6	8	3	4		
Magic	Power	Ki			
19	84	9			

**Skills:** Gnana-yoga (19); Prana-Yoga (18) with Slow Metabolism

Power (9); other Yogas (15); Chinese Classics (19); Divination (19); Japanese Classics (15); All Literacies (19); Calligraphy (15); Buddhist Theology (19); Rhetoric (19); Poetry (19); Meditation (19); Herbalist (19); Physician (15); Sacred Dance (12); Acting (12); Popular Dance (12); Commerce (12); Jujutsu (9).

**Armor:** Armor Class 1 Buddhist Robes (black over saffron).

**Weapons:** None.

**Notes:** Slow Metabolism Power has a Range of “Self,” Cost of 10 – Level of Gakusho.

This power enables the Gakusho to reduce his normal metabolic rate, and thus his need for food and water to near-zero at will. A day’s food and water will last for a number of days equal to his Effect Die: during this time, the Gakusho may remain active and aware, though his Zanshin will be reduced to 1.

## THINGS TO COME

Unlike the previous adventures, Things to Come is recommended only for an extremely powerful and experienced group – though it may be winnable by a moderately skillful group armed with a weapon such as Amakurikara.

It is Shimotsuki (November), and one of the coldest winters on record: all Honshu is blanketed in heavy snow. The group (or one of its members, if their group has broken up during downtime) encounters a large shishi which, instead of attacking, lies down in the path. Around the shishi’s neck is a loose band of silk, on which is written a message in Kanji:

*“The Dai-Sojo Sano Mihsue requests that the noble adventurers, whom he was honored to advise some years before, do him the kindness of visiting him again in his hermitage to discuss a matter of terrible importance.”*

The shishi will continue to pester members of the group until this message is read and heeded. It will lead the player-characters to Mihsue’s cave with the greatest possible haste, fighting on their side if anything hinders them on the way.

Mihsue will be far more cordial to the player-characters than on their last encounter. His years of divining have finally borne bitter fruit. An extremely powerful Dai-Oni of all-consuming arrogance, calling himself Isamu the Wise, has heard that Mihsue is the wisest man in Nippon. Isamu is searching for Mihsue, wishing to challenge him to a contest in the fine arts; anyone or anything who hinders him in this quest, be it shishi or city, will be swatted aside.

Isamu is heading for the Kai-zenko-ji-o-tera in Kofu, hoping to find Mihsue there, and is likely to summon an earthquake to level the city if thwarted. Mihsue wants Isamu stopped before he reaches Kofu, but is unable to travel through the mountains alone: he asks the player-characters for help.

If Mihsue and the player-characters are not able to defeat Isamu alone, Mihsue will invoke the aid of a Buddha to keep the Oni from reaching the Kai-zenko-ji-o-tera, but this is a last resort; Mihsue firmly believes that man’s problems are his own, and too transitory to disturb the Dainichi Buddha.

## CHARACTERS

### ISAMU THE WISE, Dai-Oni

Isamu the Wise is an extremely powerful Dai-Oni of all-consuming arrogance. Having heard that Sano Mihsue is the wisest man in Nippon, Isamu wishes to challenge him to a contest in the fine arts; anyone or anything who hinders him in this quest, be it shishi or city, will be swatted aside.

Despite a wake of carnage and destruction which stretches through

Mutsu and Kotsuke provinces, Isamu genuinely considers himself cultured and wise, and anyone who he suspects of laughing at him will be tortured as artistically as possible.



**Spirit Rank:** 12

**AC:** 12

**HPT:** 192

**Powers:** Awe; Summon 2D3 Oni; Invulnerability – only vulnerable to magical weapons; Control Earthquakes and Floods.

**Spells:** Burning Touch; Smokes of Nai; Binding of Limbs; Concealing Cloak; Calling Beasts; Shadow Eyes; Bar Missiles; Mutability of Form; Angry Earth; Traitor Ground.

**Skills:** Magic (16); Bojutsu (19); Chikojo-jutsu (19); Kenjutsu (19); Naginatajutsu (19); Jujutsu (19); Senjojutsu (19); Yari-naga-jutsu (19); Torture (19); Court Dance (2); Music, Composition (4); Music, Singing (2); Painting (3); Poetry (1).

**Weapons:** Inferior No-Dachi, Inferior Katana, Naginata, six yari-naga.

**Notes:** Isamu’s bandolier of furoshiki sacks contain: an Intensity 2

Precious Gem; a set of Diviners Scrolls (worth 1g); and 5 common artworks, all designed by Isamu himself and nearly worthless.

Isamu travels with a retinue of six Oni, who lack his aesthetic pretensions but are no less obnoxious. The Oni have the following statistics:

**Spirit Rank:** 6

**AC:** 11

**HPT:** 24

**Powers:** Control Floods; Invulnerability – only vulnerable to magic weapons.

**Spells:** Smokes of Nai; Binding of Limbs; Concealing Cloak; Shadow Eyes; Bar Missiles; Angry Earth.

**Skills:** Magic (15); Bojutsu (19); Yari-naga-jutsu (19); Jojutsu (19); Kenjutsu (19); Sojutsu (19); Sumai (19); Music, Singing (1).

**Weapons:** Tetsubo, two yari-naga.

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