



Once Upon a Time in Old Japan...

no

World of Dew Companion

> Edited by *Ben Woerner*





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Aspects—From the Fate System—Fred Hicks and Rob Donoghue

The Rule Set for this game come from John Wick's Blood & Honor, and have been reprinted here with his permission. If you like this game, you will want to play Blood & Honor.

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Edited by:

Ben Woerner

Artists:

Fabien Badilla, Jolene Houser, Marissa Kelly, Tony Parker, Stan!

Authors:

Tobie Abad, John Kennedy, Ryan Macklin, jim pinto, Steve Radabaugh, Josh Roby, Brie Sheldon, John Wick, Ben Woerner

Layout & Graphic Design

Jessica Kauspedas





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Introduction

This book was never going to exist. It was a fantasy, a dream, a flight of fancy. I never thought the response to a *World of Dew*'s Kickstarter was going to be so overwhelming, but it was and in your hand you hold *The Sound of Water*. It's a compilation of multiple authors and artists adding that little something more to the *World of Dew*.

When *World of Dew* grew from a supplement to a full game I added more concepts and ideas into the game, but page counts have a way of creeping up on you. You can't fit everything you want into one volume if you want to keep it under three hundred pages. Thus, with the massive success of the Kickstarter, thanks to all of you who backed it, I was able to hire a select group of authors and artists to breathe new life into my ideas, expand on the concepts I considered, and bring forth gorgeous art that I had only ever dreamed about.

Each chapter is written by a different author. At the head of the chapters is a piece of art created by a different artist and together highlight the theme of the chapter. Reading these chapters and seeing this art was like a perpetual birthday for me over these last six months. I hope you enjoy reading them and using their ideas in your games as much as I have.

> Ben Woerner December 2014









Chapter A World of Shadows Tobie Abad

There are things in the Dark that exist to smother the Light. Sometimes those shadows blot out honor and passion, and the only fight left is a desperate struggle for life against nameless, shapeless evil. In this chapter we seek to give form to these evils so that you might tell stories with horrible creatures from Old Japan. Or perhaps become one yourself. For those who desire darkness, terror, and horror, enjoy.

Creating Horrors

Horrors are the spirits, hungry ghosts and other supernatural threats that populate a nightmarish version of Old Japan. Create a Horror to add to your Old Japan tales by following three steps:

- 1) Consider the Horror's backstory
- 2) Determine the Horror's Traits
- 3) Choose the Horror's Bane

The Horror's Backstory

Every ghost has a legend. Every spirit has a terrible tale. Every monster has its secret past. In Old Japan, even Horrors were once born and the story of this birth relates to the Horror's Primary Virtue. While a Horror can have ratings in other Virtues, any actions to affect the players or resist their actions should fall under the Primary Virtue. Typically, a Horror has a four or higher in their primary virtue.

What about The Gift?

If you have a player who opted to have The Gift advantage, consider adding this small twist to the rules: The character with the Gift is more in tune with the supernatural forces that exist, and thus the Horrors tend to be drawn to him. They can sense the character's affinity for their kind and when given the choice between them and other targets, they focus on the Gifted first.

However this does offer an advantage as well. Attempts for the character to discern the Horror's Bane come naturally to them. This is reflected as a free wager in all attempts to learn more of the Horror's Bane as well as in actions to use the Bane against it. When dealing with other Virtues (like if the character attempts to misdirect the Horror or murder it before it gets too close), the Narrator determines the statements of any Wagers or Privilege spent. Horrific indeed! No permanent damage or victory can be won until the characters uncover the Horror's bane and use it to destroy the creature. Any such rolls should be awarded with Ninjo and an

Horrors are not meant to be a way to murder your entire party, although the concept of character Mortal Peril should be in effect when facing such a creature. Narrators should remain fans of the characters, and when describing the outcomes of risks use the wagers to describe a losing battle against the monster. Ultimately, however, talk with your players and make them aware that Horrors are just as deadly as Firearms in Old Japan. If a character steps into a Horror's path one too many times without the Bane or a way to survive remember that Horror stories are bleak and sometimes characters die. Players, who wish for their character to survive can still spend an Honor point to be helpless...but who knows what horrific plans are in store for them.

opportunity to introduce more of the Horror's backstory.

Love: (Courage) To once have loved. Whether it was unrequited, stolen away, or supernaturally potent, the love has allowed the Horror to persist. Courage drives them forward in reclaiming what they have lost.

Revenge: (**Prowess**) The Horror can be seeking to right a wrong, or perhaps hoping to avenge itself or someone or something it cares for. Cruelty and pain beget further of the same and such Horrors might use their Prowess as agents of karmic payback.

Cursed: (Wisdom) Some Horrors did not desire to return, but instead have become trapped in a cycle of punishment and fear. Such Horrors find ways to share their Wisdom with others, more so if it is a means to break free (or pass) the curse.

Loneliness: (Beauty) Abandoned by others and consumed with the desire for contact, these kinds of Horrors learn the tricks needed to seduce, attract and lower the guard of others.

Insanity: (Strength) There are few Horrors as deadly as those that had gone mad. And even worse, these Horrors gain an unexpected Strength to fulfill their misunderstood needs.

Forgotten: (Cunning) With legends that have spawned multiple variations, a forgotten Horror has grown Cunning enough to hide hints of its Bane and former identity. Many consider such to be the deadliest of Horrors.

Horror Traits

Each Horror has a number of Traits that help the Narrator embody their presence in the game. Traits function much the same way as Aspects in that they can be Invoked and Tagged. The number of Traits a Horror can have will depend solely on the Narrator. While in most games, giving the enemy more "things" can make it more dangerous, in a game where narrative control is shared, the danger is only as bad as the players are willing to face. Don't worry if you need multiple traits to capture the Horror you have in mind. Just bear in mind that ultimately, the Horror is there for the players to face—and ultimately either triumph over, or escape from—and you will be fine.

Characters can use Cunning to recognize a Horror's Traits, Wisdom to research the Horror's Traits, or even Beauty to talk to survivors. Initially, these are best experienced, rather than something the characters just know. Of course, there are exceptions, such as facing a legendary Horror. Traits have a Tag, and can be tagged with Honor or Ninjo for dice when applicable. Each Trait offers suggestions on when it would be applicable. Traits, however, cannot be Compelled.

APPEARS IN MIRRORS

The Horror solely exists in the world of reflections. Removing mirrors can offer some level of respite and safety, until the players realize another person's eyes can easily act as mirrors as well.

Invoke: Gain 3 dice to strike without warning from a reflection the target glances upon.

Tag: Gain 2 dice now that you know the Horror's blind spots.

DARK WATER

The Horror manifests within or in close proximity to dark bodies of water. This is similar to Appears in Mirrors, with one major difference; the Horror can animate and manipulate water in order to get closer if need be. Rivers will swell, black rivulets of water will trickle down walls, and floors will flood with tides that come from nowhere.

Invoke: Gain 3 dice to hinder a target from leaving an area.

Tag: Gain 2 dice to notice the signs of the Horror in the vicinity.





GIVER OF MARKS

Horrors can mark their targets (usually only one at a time, or in special cases a specific matched group, but no other until that whole group has been killed) to die in a specific way. The act of marking typically cannot be avoided (and traditionally happens because the target did not believe in such things, or accidentally exposed himself to being marked) and once marked gives the target the Tag: Marked to Die (with the specific manner filled in). The Tag can be removed if the Horror's Bane is discovered in time.

Invoke: Gain 3 dice whenever the target is within the time period or close to the supposed manner of death. For example, a character with the Tag: Marked to Die (by drowning) might be in a fight with others in the rain when the Horror invokes 3 extra dice to his opponent to "help" him drown the target during the scuffle.

Tag: Gain 2 dice to avoid the manner to death, thus delaying it and buying you time, when you have prepared equipment, people, or circumstances to help prevent such a death.

HUNTER

Some Horrors choose a specific individual to be their target and from that point on, can unerringly sense the target's whereabouts. For some this manifests as a sixth sense, while for others it's the ability to smell their target's breath over massive distances.

Invoke: Gain 3 dice to track the target, despite their efforts to hide from the Horror.

Tag: Gain 2 dice to misdirect the Horror to a location the target had somehow prepared to lure the Horror, such as leaving his clothes in an area, or perhaps leaving his blood spilled in that place.

ILLUSION CRAFTER

A rare Trait, but some Horrors can lock the target in waking dreams that show terrible scenes and visions. Usually, such Horrors use this Trait to show the target's own eventual death or to give the target glimpses of the Horror in multiple locations at the same time. Illusions cannot harm the target, unless the target's own actions lead to harming themselves.

Invoke: Gain 3 dice to manipulate the target into either hurting itself or going to a desired location.





Tag: Gain 2 dice to survive an illusion when the character is aware of the illusion.

MANIFESTER

Horrors with this trait can emerge from the paintings or even beneath one's own blanket to reach forth and attack their target, even if it were impossible to have come from that location.

Invoke: Gain 3 dice when attacking your target in a physical manner from an unexpected location.

Tag: Gain 2 dice to fight back against the Horror when you're prepared for its attacks to come from any direction. It can touch you, but now you can hit it!

PREHENSILE HAIR

The Horror's hair can be used as extra limbs, allowing it to accomplish feats of Strength or even Prowess. The Trait allows the Horror to climb walls attack with its hair as a weapon and all sorts of strange feats of Strength and Prowess. But hair is always susceptible to fire, and while it may not be its ultimate Bane, it is a weakness.

Invoke: Gain 3 dice when the hair is used in a feat of Strength or Prowess.

Tag: Gain 2 dice to force the Horror back when threatening the Horror's hair with fire.

SHADOW WALKER

This Trait allows the Horror to instantaneously travel from one shadow to another, appearing as if the shadow parts like hair to reveal its face and body.

Invoke: Gain 3 dice to catch a target unawares by appearing from a dark space.

Tag; Gain 2 dice to avoid the Horror when using a strong light or avoiding dark spaces.

TERROR STARE

The Horror locks eyes with its target and overwhelms them with so much fear that it literally scares them to death. It deals mental Injuries with Wagers and Privileges just like physical Injuries. The target must succeed in a Courage Risk and, unlike regular rolls may spend each wager to reduce the amount of Injury that they receive from outright fear. Finally, the target may still survive by choosing to receive a new Tag to represent staring into certain death and knowing it let you live. The *Tag: Never Without Light to represent the overwhelming need to always have a light source nearby for the rest of his life*, is a good example.

- **Invoke:** Gain 3 dice if the target is alone when the Horror uses the gaze.
- Tag: Gain 2 dice to strike the Horror while it stares at another target.

Additional Horror Traits

Thanks to John Wick for allowing us to adapt these traits from the Houses of the Blooded core rulebook and the Wilderness sourcebook.

A THOUSAND EYES

This Horror has more than the usual set of two eyes upon its head. (Some might even be located in other parts of its body!)

Invoke: Gain 3 dice for Cunning risks.

Tag: Gain 2 dice against this Horror when bright light sources are used against it.

BLIND-SPOT

The Horror tends to focus on a single target, ignoring all others even if doing so was tactically unsound. This however also means its chosen target is unlikely to stay alive for long.

Invoke: Gain 3 dice for any Risks that are direct attempts to Injure a chosen target.

Tag: Gain 2 dice on any Risks that take advantage of the focus the Horror gives another target.

CHIMERA

The Horror can transform itself at will. The Horror cannot do anything during the round it tranforms. This Trait has no Invoke or Tag. Instead it allows the Horror to replace one of its other Traits with another.

CRAWLER

This Horror can crawl along any surface, including upside down.





Invoke: Gain 3 bonus dice when it strikes from an unexpected vantage point.

Tag: Gain 2 dice against the Horror when you encountering it out in the open.

CLAWS

The Horror has sharp talons which count as a weapon, giving it a deadly edge in battle. If appropriate, you can allow the Horror's Claws to count as a Katana when it comes to dealing Injuries. Alternately, you can simply give it this Invoke: 3 bonus dice for attacks.



Tag: Gain 2 dice against

it when its talons work against it (such as getting stuck on a surface after missing a Strike, or when hiding from the Horror as it telegraphs its position due to scratching noises it makes against nearby surfaces.)

CUTE

Horrors with this Trait appear harmless (and perhaps attractive) to their targets.

- **Invoke:** Gain 3 dice when luring a target closer by appearing harmless or attractive.
- **Tag:** Gain 2 dice when facing the Horror as its appearance makes it look less intimidating.

GAS

The Horror can summon mists that lull targets to sleep. Roll the Horror's primary Virtue to affect a single target. Extra wagers are spent to affect additional targets. The sleep can be resisted with Strength. The sleep lasts until daybreak, or until the targets are harmed in any way.





GILLS

The Horror breathes underwater. It can indefinitely survive beneath the waves.

Tag: Gain 2 dice in Risks against the Horror while it struggles to return beneath the waves.

Hooves

The Horror has hooves instead of feet, which can aid it in both movement and battle.

- **Invoke:** Gain 3 dice when taking movement-based risks or when using the hooves as weapons.
- **Tag:** Gain 2 dice against the Horror when it attempts to be stealthy or when the terrain is not conductive to hooves (slippery or extremely rocky terrain, for example).

HUGE

The Horror is massive, and benefits and suffers from its size.

Invoke: Gain 3 dice for Risks where its massiveness grants it an advantage.

Tag: Gain 2 dice when ways to use its size are used against it.





INVISIBILITY

The Horror can become undetectable. A Cunning Risks with wagers equal to its Primary Virtue are needed to see the Horror. Once seen, the Horror can no longer hide from that target.

Invoke: Gain 3 dice when its being unnoticed works to its advantage.

SPINES

The Horror has spikes which protect it and deter enemies. Any attacks upon it which did not utilize a weapon with sufficient reach deal back Injuries to the attacker equal to the number of wagers the Attacker made.

SWIMMER

For the Horror, the water is its home.

- **Invoke:** Gain 3 dice when moving, attacking or defending itself in battle.
- **Tag:** Gain 2 dice against it, knowing it will have to come up for air in time.

QUIET

This Horror makes no sound. This can be extremely unnerving for the observer and a tremendous boon for stealth.

Invoke: Gain 3 dice when ambushing a target.

Tag: Gain 2 dice when coordinating with others on how to battle the Horror, as its silence allows the characters to communicate clearly.

QUICKNESS

Mobility comes easy for this Horror, which moves faster than most expect!

Invoke: Gain 3 dice on any speed-related Risks.

Tag: Gain 2 dice when the Horror's brashness acts against its favor. Moving fast does not equate thinking fast.

ROAR

The Horror can unleash its voice in a manner that stuns others.

Invoke: Gain 3 dice to intimidate a target to either dropping their weapon or backing away.

Tag: Gain 2 dice to strike at the Horror while its attention is drawn towards attacking someone else.

SMELL

The Horror's sense of smell allows it to see prey even past walls or in darkness.

Invoke: Gain 3 dice for smell-related Risks.

Tag: Gain 2 dice when using the Horror's sense of smell against it.

SWARM

The Horror is composed of dozens, if not hundreds, of tiny creatures such as insects or vermin. This allows the Horror to attack multiple targets, instead of just one at a time. Each wager it has on the attack allows it to declare another target who suffers the full force of its attack.

Invoke: Gain 3 dice when defending against an attack, as the swarm separates and rejoins from the blow.

Tag: Gain 2 dice against the swarm when breaking away from the swarm's assault.

TENTACLES

Some Horrors have tentacles instead of (or in addition to) the usual appendages. These Horrors can be extremely disturbing to witness.

Invoke: Gain 3 dice in Risks that use the tentacles' flexibility to one's advantage.

Tag: Gain 2 dice against this Horror when attempting to lop off one of its limbs. Tentacles tend to be easier targets to strike.

WINGS

This Horror can fly. If the Horror attacks during flight, it gains 5 Dice against opponents not accustomed to flying opponents.

Tag: Gain 2 dice when the large wingspan of the Horror places it in a disadvantage.



Choosing the Horror's Bane

Horrors were once living, or at least that is what most believe. And while one might attempt to fight a Horror using Prowess or Strength, unless the approach was in line with a Horror's Bane, the attempt is doomed to ultimate failure. Even if one can drive a Horror off temporarily, without a Bane one cannot destroy a Horror.

Every Horror has a Bane.

A Bane is the way a Horror can be bested in a permanent fashion. Discovering a Horror's Bane is the best way to fight back against one and should be the focus of one or more sessions. Each Bane is listed with suggested options in portraying them. If a player uses the correct matching Virtue to perform the listed action, the player need only succeed with wagers equal to the number of Traits of the Horror to defeat it. Given the negative connotations of the number four (Shi), Narrators might find it fun to comply with tradition and make the target number of wagers equal four or more. More powerful Horrors might even have more than one Bane needed to destroy it.

Strength Bane: Perhaps the Horror's corpse needs to be unearthed once found? Perhaps the physical remains or some item the Horror is fettered to must be physically destroyed? Consider the need to hold one's breathe long enough to dive down and pull out from beneath the waters of the well the Horror's corpse. Strength Banes reflect a way to bring the Horror to peace for it could not accomplish the necessary feat of Strength to save itself.

Wisdom Bane: Horrors with this bane tend to be legendary ones, who feel bound to act in certain ways depending on certain practices. Caught in their own tales, these Horrors react the way they are expected to when the target uses such knowledge against it. Examples include throwing rice to the ground to force the Horror to count it, or returning a wedding ring which was stolen from her corpse.

Cunning Bane: Horrors with this bane died because they failed to notice the threat or were unable to see the circumstances leading to their demise, at its most basic: who killed them? To defeat them, the players must discover this detail and present it to the Horror. The Horror would have tell-tale clues to the person behind its death, and by noticing them, the players can draw the Horror to it to redirect its wrath at the appropriate target.

Courage Bane: Horrors with this bane tend to be those that simply hope to cause enough destruction and fear to the point that death follows. By embracing one's Courage, the player stands

up against the Horror's swath of destruction and (hopefully) comes out of it unscathed. More often, however, the Horror still deals injuries upon the resisting player character and only by trusting in Courage will one endure long enough to cause the Horror to vanish. In other cases, the Horror might simply need to lash out, only upon seeing someone who takes the brutality and still forgives her will the Horror then finally be released from its torment.

Beauty Bane: Horrors with this bane either found death because of an act of Beauty, or so desperately desire to experience Beauty



once more, they lash out at all to find it. Perhaps the character merely needs to offer kindness and sincerity to quiet the spirit? Perhaps the proper song must be sung? Perhaps a specific dance must be performed to appease the spirit? Maybe, and only if you are in a group that's mature enough and comfortable with such themes, the character must have an intimate Risk of Beauty to show the Horror that love does indeed conquer all in the end?

Prowess Bane: Some Horrors can only be dealt with the proper use of a weapon to defend oneself. No amount of dance, conversation, nor bravery will save you from the rage of some Horrors. In such cases, using the proper weapon to defend oneself is vital! This can also reflect having to strike at a specific location, such as blinding the eyes of the Horror whose gaze paralyzes others in terror; or striking with one's sword to cut away the paper prayer strip that is upon its forehead and allows it to haunt the living.





A Parade of Horrors

Here are some Horrors that have been created and are ready to be used in your games.

The Fisherman's Wife : An Onryo

After catching her husband in bed with another woman, the fisherman's wife committed suicide by tying her husband's line around her neck and leaping off the pier. They say the thin line sliced into her skin and muscle all the way to the bone (rather than suffocated her) and she bled to death while staring at the setting sun. The Onryo stalks the harbor now, searching for any man she deems has the scent of infidelity on them. She hunts the man she finds, lures them closer with her body then kisses them to sleep. Afterwards, she would dispose of their bodies into the dark waves.

Backstory: Love

Traits: Dark Water, Gas (Sleeper's Kiss), and Hunted

Bane: Beauty. By finding her husband or bringing her remains back to her hometown

The Dark Pair: Tengu

These strange things with their long sharp noses stalk the dark paths through the forest for travelling families. Always dressed in their pom-pommed yuigesa, their black tokin caps and the yamabushi's distinctive robes, these Horrors typically carry with them either a shakujo (the distinctive Buddhist monk staff) or a fan of black feathers. These Horrors seek to abduct young boys and would return them to their families days later, crazed and malnourished from feeding on animal dung.

Backstory: Revenge

Traits: Claws, Quickness, Wings, and Manifester

Bane: Wisdom. The Tengu were originally young boys who died during an abduction by a Buddhist monk. The monsters would be silenced if the remains would be unearthed from the nearby well and reburied in their parents' land.

The Smiling Girl: Kitsune

There is a girl who is always smiling. You will see her in the forest, hiding behind the bamboo. You will see her on the road, smiling from beneath a shuttered lantern. And once you see her, you will realize you cannot find the way home. And you cannot stop seeing her, forever smiling.

Backstory: Forgotten

Traits: Illusion Crafter, Terror Stare, Invisibility

Bane: Courage. To defeat her, the victim must not stop staring back. The victim must stare her down and not break eye contact, regardless of what terrible visions and fear are unleashed upon them.

The Great Thing From the Sea

This thing was never human. A great shark-like monster with a hunger for human flesh, few have ever seen the beast. More infamous is its hooked tail and barbed flesh, which it uses to capsize ships with relative ease.

Backstory: Forgotten (Cunning)

Traits: Spines, Hunter, Swimmer, Gills, Huge and Blind-Spot

Bane: Courage. As Cunning as this Horror is, the character must face down the incoming monster and strike true. There is a tiny scar in the space between its eyes that must be touched with one's lips. And with that kiss, the beast is banished back into the depths.





Artist: Jolene Houser

Dealing the Bad Hand Josh Roby

Yakuza in a World of Dew

The city, this late at night, is finally quiet and still. I find my contact lurking in the shadows behind a new sumo school. I identify myself with the proper sign and he looks sick. "I do not think this is a good idea," he says.

"That's not for you to decide," I tell him. "You owe my father a great deal of koku. This is your only way forward that does not entail a great deal of pain."

He nods hurriedly, and thrusts a package into my hands. I open my mouth to thank him, but he has already disappeared down the alleyway.

It is not far to my destination, and soon I am outside the

magistrate's court. The locks on the doors are simple to bypass. I set the package on the desk and untie the wrapping. Inside the wooden box are four small barrels, each with a fuse dangling out one end. I get to work placing them in the corners of the courtroom. It is time to send these lackeys of the shogun a message they will not forget.

The Bad Hand

The word yakuza is derived from the card game oicho-kabu, in which a hand of ya, ku, and sa is almost certain to lose. This name was applied to those on the outskirts of society, cursed and miserable outcasts who could not hope for a respectable

Historical Accuracy

It is notoriously difficult to accurately trace the origins of the yakuza, who did not keep many records while performing a boatload of activities which were various shades of illegal. This account strings together bits of verifiable history on ribbons of plausible conjecture, hopefully producing something entertaining and useful for your gaming table.

life. However, the disruption wreaked on Japanese society by the



establishment of the Tokugawa shogunate created an opportunity for these outcasts.

With the power of the clans crushed, a horde of samurai suddenly lost their means of support. Many of these ronin took to the streets: they donned outrageous fashions, wielded frighteningly outsized weapons, and became known for terrible and violent behavior. They ate at taverns and refused to pay; they cut down peasants in the street to try out a new katana. They were known as kabukimono, or "crazy ones," but they were doing as they had done their entire lives: taking what they wanted from peasants.

With the clan daimyos either unable or uninterested in stopping the kabukimono, regular citizens of the towns organized to stop this threat to their homes and families. Armed and equipped by donations from the town, they were called the machi-yakko. These brave peasants confronted the belligerent samurai; many died, but they had numbers on their side. Blood ran in the streets across Japan.

At the same time, itinerant peddlers known as tekiya travelled from trading faire to trading faire across Japan. They were slowly eroding the monopoly on trade once enjoyed by the clans. These faires grew into elaborate affairs, to the point where the tekiya required armed men and women to provide security, especially against kabukimono. The tekiya hired the machi-yakko, supporting them with the rent they charged merchants for stalls at the faires.

The fighting between machi-yakko and kabukimono continued to escalate. Finally, the situation got so bad that the shogunate was forced to act, ruthlessly cracking down on both the kabukimono and the machi-yakko. The kabukimono were offered respectable jobs or cut down; the peasants of the machi-yakko were not offered any such choice. Facing execution, the organizations went underground.

Hiding among and travelling with tekiya peddlers, the machiyakko increasingly came into contact with bakuto, tattooed



gamblers with a strange place in Japanese society. Gambling was strictly illegal, but bakuto were regularly hired by the government and offered access to peasants working on government projects. The bakuto were encouraged to cheat the workers of their wages, with the winnings split between the gamblers and the government.

Given their business, bakuto often dealt in gambling debts and loan sharking; this nicely paralleled the tekiya's own business of stall rents, which were often paid at the end of the faire and needed collecting. The machi-yakko were useful to both groups. The connections between the peddlers, gamblers, and militias knit together, eventually fusing into something new. These losers and outcasts, worthless as a hand of ya-ku-sa, banded together.

Chivalrous Organizations

While yakuza often dealt in illegal activities, it would be reductive to consider their role in Japanese society as strictly criminals. They smuggle goods, but provide material that the people needed. They are one of the very few places that peasants can obtain credit. Perhaps most significantly, they often provide very real protection against the depredations of the upper classes.

Even the authorities of the time vacillated on whether yakuza were criminals or heroes. The shogunate repeatedly tried to purge yakuza gangs for their many offenses. Other times, though, officials actually employed yakuza gangs to keep the peace. Tekiya bosses were even given the right to carry twin swords, giving them a status close to samurai.

Emphasizing their commitment to their neighborhoods and the peasants they protect, the yakuza call their own gangs "chivalrous organizations" and themselves gokudō, which means followers of the ultimate path. In some cities, these chivalrous organizations maintain public meeting halls fronted with signs that declare their sponsorship. Even then, though, they do not abandon their secret hideouts. The gokudō are always aware that they may be made criminals again in the space of a daimyo's breath.

The real power of the yakuza is their connections and access, much of which crosses lines that established power cannot cross. In addition to plainly illegal activities, yakuza can call in debts for favors and information. They also maintain a network of relationships across Japan's strict classes—something that a magistrate or samurai simply can't do. The strong bonds encouraged by these chivalrous



organizations also mean that they coordinate quickly and easily. This makes them effective, useful, and dangerous.

Gokudō may be purveyors of organized crime, but it's important to remember who decides what is and is not criminal. To the powers that be, the yakuza are a threat. They are a competent organization with broad ties to many segments of society. They protect the peasants upon whose backs the status quo has been built. Lastly, the governing powers have no way of controlling the yakuza, and to a daimyo or shogun, that may be their most threatening aspect of all.

Oyabun and Kodun

Yakuza gangs are organized through a strict set of relationships between oyabun and kodun. Oyabun means "foster father" while kodun means "foster child," and this theme of an adopted family is often a powerful point of pride. This is unsurprising since many yakuza have nowhere else to go, and also accounts for the nearly fanatical loyalty yakuza gangs often demonstrate.

Initiates to the yakuza way of life are brought in as apprentices, performing menial tasks in the home of the oyabun. Gradually, said



tasks become less and less menial as the apprentice is drawn into the yakuza way. When the oyabun decides an apprentice is ready, they are invited to a tea ceremony.

The ceremony begins with the apprentice's cup half-filled while the oyabun's cup is filled to overflowing, emphasizing their difference in status. The apprentice drinks from their cup and the oyabun drinks from his. Then the oyabun offers his cup to the apprentice and takes the apprentice's cup in return. The broad strokes of this ceremony are practiced throughout Japan by everyone from business partners to samurai clans. For young outcasts off the street, however, it can be a powerful symbol of recognition, status, and belonging.

With every member of a yakuza gang the adopted child of the oyabun, every job they are assigned is a task given by the man who keeps them fed, safe, and off the streets. This is true even when the job is not actually be assigned by the oyabun—each gang has a number of underbosses that handle day-today operations. But the underbosses speak for the boss, the oyabun, and crossing an underboss is considered the same as crossing the oyabun. Kinds of Oyabun

To flesh out your oyabun, you may choose a daimyo aspect (Blood & Honor, page 4-6) to describe them. As long as you are a member in good standing, you receive the advantage of your oyabun's aspect. If you are or ever were a member, you receive the disadvantage.

When a yakuza falls out of favor—by failing a job, upsetting the oyabun's business network, or plain insubordination—they are given a simple ultimatum. Show contrition and shape up, or get thrown out on the street. What contrition means depends a great deal on the oyabun, the situation of his gang, and the time period. Early in the yakuza's history, contrition could take many forms including abject apology, daring action on behalf of the gang, and bribes of koku.

As the yakuza grew established, more accustomed to using violence to get their way, and with sizable membership rolls, darker deeds were required. Yubitsume, the sacrifice of one's own fingertip, presented respectfully and in tasteful wrapping, could communicate proper contrition. Originally a bakuto custom inflicted on those who could not pay their gambling debts, the practice's application on the yakuza's own members signified the corruption that had taken root in the organization.

Defenders of Virtue or Gangster Dogs

While the yakuza's chivalrous organizations began with the best of intentions, the path they traveled grew increasingly dark. Over the generations, the goal of defending the people became perverted. Where once the machi-yakko collected donations for common defense and the tekiya charged rent for bustling trade faires, these practices eventually became little more than protection rackets.


Moving goods became smuggling goods, and smuggling goods became smuggling drugs and people.

Arguably the position that the yakuza were in did not afford them many options. Always seen as potential threats, they were alternately exploited and purged by city officials, daimyo, and the shogunate. Backed into a corner, they often had to choose between violent crime

Women of the Yakuza

While the modern yakuza is exclusively male, the wild early days of this sometimes-criminal, sometimes-revolutionary, always-outcast group was not so codified. Scrabbling for survival on the fringes of society, you take your allies and friends where you can get them. So make characters who are both yakuza and women—as PCs and as NPCs. and disbanding entirely—which for many meant a lingering death on the streets. It is no surprise that the yakuza grew more violent and less principled as time wore on.

The modern yakuza is quite a different organization than where they began, today dealing in extortion, drug smuggling, human trafficking, and incredibly violent crime. Once upon a time, they might have become something incredible and noble; perhaps your game can describe a better path than the yakuza eventually took.

Yakuza Advantages

These advantages probably only make sense for characters with the Yakuza giri—unless you can come up with an interesting story for your fellow players to justify it.

Текіуа

You know where to get things. They might be illegal, they might be rare, they might be stolen. Once per session, you can call on your contacts in the fairs and fences to track down any non-unique item. You'll still need to pay, of course, either in koku, trade, or favors.

Вакито Таттооз

Your body is covered in elaborate tattoos, probably including full sleeves down both arms and your legs. You are unmistakably a member of a yakuza organization, and that carries a powerful and violent aura. Add two dice to your dice pool for any risk where you intimidate someone.

Масні-Уакко

You are a machi-yakko, or consider yourself an heir to that legacy. You are a member of a sizable network of sympathizers, and can call on them at need. These function as Contacts, and you always have as many of them as your Cunning. At the beginning of each session, the Narrator will pick one and tell you that they have been killed, captured, or otherwise compromised. You can replace them with new Contacts.

OYABUN

You are the oyabun of a local chivalrous organization. You begin play with a fine katana and wakizashi. When you spend time in your Yakuza Hideout, you owe no favors to anyone.

Jobs and Favors

Whether they are jobs assigned by an oyabun to a kodun or calling on favors owed by outsiders to the gang, the semi-legal tasks that the PCs run for the yakuza are euphemistically referred to as "running errands." Delivering a dubious crate to the docks? An errand. Shaking down a business who's not paying protection money? Errand. Killing a man in his bed? Errand.

If you are a yakuza, your oyabun may occasionally give you a job that will cause the suffering of the people of your district. "Encouraging" a pillar of the community to pay their gambling debts. Burning down a church that refused to pay protection money. Destroying a fountain to send a message—even if the fountain is the district's source of clean water. Your oyabun may have been put into a corner and is making a distasteful but necessary order. Alternately, it may be that your oyabun doesn't actually care about the people, just his own bottom line. You could try to refuse the job, but that will have consequences. You might try to find a clever way to do the job without harming the people you protect, but that may be difficult.

An oyabun who is a true believer of the machi-yakko way may have some choice errands targeting magistrates and samurai loyal to the shogunate or even funneling support to the emperor and his supporters. This need not be purely altruistic, either; reinstating the emperor to power would quite likely entail a place of power to those who helped him in his time of need. Daimyo loyal to the Tokugawa feared the yakuza, not as criminals, but as their potential replacements.

An errand can be the seed for an entire story that you play through at your table. The Narrator can draw up the characters you'll need to deal with and the obstacles in your path. Your own rolls and wagers can add your own flavor. However, if you want to handle an





errand as a smaller part of a larger story, you can use the following rules.

Running an Errand

Errands typically fall into familiar stages. First the errand-runners consider their skills, equipment, and contacts, making an inventory of what resources they can call upon. Then, quietly and surreptitiously, they gather and review the intelligence they have on their target. Finally, the operatives move in, performing their individual tasks, hopefully in coordination with each other. When the deed is done, they retire back into the shadows or the nearest hideout.

STEP 1: PREPARATIONS

All players running the errand gather and announce their total dice, then each sets aside any number of wagers from that pool.

Little Errands

Your oyabun may have a little errand for you that isn't worth playing out. Instead, treat it as a single season action: make a contact for them, craft an item for them, even spend time at a location for them. Instead of getting the usual benefit, gain one rank in an appropriate Reputation. All rules about maximum Reputations apply.

STEP 2: CASING

Players take turns spending wagers to describe what obstacles they expect to encounter during the errand. For each of these details, they hand the Narrator one of the dice they set aside as a wager.

Once everyone has had a chance to add one detail to the job, continue around the table. Now, each player may spend additional wagers to add more details to the errand or choose to proceed to the next step. Once any player chooses to proceed (or runs out of wagers)Casing is over and no more obstacles may be added.

STEP 3: ACTION

All players roll their remaining dice. The Narrator rolls the dice given to him in the Casing phase, plus a number of dice equal to the number of favors owed the oyabun. If he'd like to roll more, he may add dice by using the Story Pool to reveal plot twists or unforeseen obstacles; each point spent from the Story Pool yields two dice.

Whoever rolls highest gains Privilege. Regular risk rules apply for keeping wagers and failing to beat a ten.

Whoever has privilege, player or Narrator, describes the beginning of the errand in a dramatic fashion.

Hold off on whether the errand will be successful or not for now. They then decide who will spend their first wager.

Players take turns spending their wagers, telling the story of the errand. Your wager might move the errand towards completion or towards failure, but it cannot resolve the errand one way or the other.

Only when all the wagers have been spent, the player with privilege declares the final outcome of the errand, introducing any plot twists or details that the outcome requires.

STEP 4: GLORY

Yakuza on an errand gain Glory based on how difficult and complicated the job was. This is measured by the number of dice you spent as wagers in the Casing step.

If the job was successful, the Narrator distributes all of the dice he rolled to the players as Glory points.

If the job was not successful, the Narrator halves the dice he rolled and then distributes what remains as Glory points. If there aren't enough dice to go around, the Narrator chooses whose actions in the job warrant recognition for bravery,

daring, or laudable competency.

There is no Glory in running an errand that was straightforward and simple. If you spend no wagers during Casing, you gain no Glory for the errand.



The Sound of Silence: Shinobi in Old Japan Steve Radabaugh

Historical facts on Shinobi are scarce. Prior to the 15th century, the term is rare and used to refer to people employed for espionage and sabotage. Then in the 1400s shinobi organized and trained as secretive groups of spies, saboteurs, and assassins going on to claim much infamy within Japan.

Shinobi were mercenaries that could be hired to do the unsavory tasks that were unsuitable for samurai. They often performed acts of espionage, assassination, arson, surprise attacks, and terrorism. The Shinobi families organized into guilds during the Sengoku era. The guilds were led by a Jonin. Chunin were assistants to the Jonin, and the Genin were the field agents who carried out the missions.

The Iga province was the ideal training ground for shinobi, while close to Kyoto, the capital, it was filled with difficult terrain making it difficult to travel through or invade. This made it easy for the secretive ninja villages to remain hidden. The Iga and Koga clans from that area rose to prominence as the two most powerful Shinobi clans. Iga and Koga clan Shinobi were actively hired by Daimyo's for almost a hundred years until Oda Nobunaga invaded the province and wiped out the clans.

Several famous members fled to the mountains of Kii. Others went to Tokugawa Ieyasu and served him. Tokugawa used Shinobi in several key battles on his march to become Shogun of all Japan. Members of the Iga clan, including the famous Hattori Hanzo, later acted as guards for Edo castle, and the Koga clan worked as a police force.

Tokugawa Ieyasu used his shinobi during the Shimabara rebellion. Records of the siege of Hara Castle in 1638 are the last historical documents that mention Shinobi. In later generations they fade to legend and folklore. It should be noted that Shinobi in history did not wear the black outfits that are popular in pop culture. They typically dressed as civilians in outfits that allowed them to hide their weapons in public, or if silence was more important for the task, they kept loose garments tucked in tight with belts.

Shinobi Giri

You were trained from a young age in the art of covert warfare. In addition to being a master of combat, you are also master of escape and avoiding detection. Most Shinobi were raised by one of the shinobi clans, most of which were wiped out just before the Tokugawa Shogunate. Are you one of the many Shinobi who ended up working with the Shogunate as bodyguards or as police force, or did you go into hiding? Maybe you are a member of a smaller clan that was better at staying hidden, and thus lost to the annals of history. Regardless of who you work for, you are commonly hired for a variety of tasks, but the most common involve assassination, sabotage, or infiltration.

Status: Burakumin (0) (or that of persona, see Benefit)

Bonus: You gain your Giri Rank in bonus dice to a risk when you are trying to avoid detection.

Ability: You have trained most, if not all of your life to be Shinobi. You are adept at killing people when they least expect it, and you are not beholden to the honor bounds that Samurai are. Years of training have made you one with the shadows. You gain Giri Rank in bonus dice when calling Strike! while concealed.



Benefit: Staying hidden is more than just staying in the shadows. You painstakingly put together carefully crafted fake personas to slip into. You are trained in one false persona per Giri Rank with a maximum Status rank equal to your Giri Rank+2. These can be anything as long as it is believable. Common personas are priests, entertainers, ronin, and merchants. You are mildly competent at anything that persona should be competent at. While in the guise of your false persona, you gain the status that you should have for that persona.

Being in the guise of your persona counts as being concealed for the purposes of your ability.

Paul's Shinobi, Midori, has spent time crafting herself a persona as a Geisha named Yukariko. The role will make it easy to get her close to important people, and the lavish robes help to conceal her weapons. Paul discusses it with his GM, and they decide that it makes sense that Midori would have learned the companionship skills that any other Geisha would have learned. She is considered Hinen status when in the guise of Yukariko, but she does not get the Ability or Benefit for the Geisha Giri.

Sample Shinobi

Midori

CHARACTER INFORMATION Giri: Shinobi Strengths: Prowess, Strength, Beauty Weakness: Courage Location: Geisha House Persona: Yukariko (Geisha)

THREE TRUE THINGS:

- Your clan was wiped out while you were away on a mission. As a result you resent any Shinobi working for the Shogunate.
- You spend nearly all of your time in your guise as a Geisha.



• You take the occasional assassination job through a contact who knows your true background.

You arrived back at your village after a mission to find everyone dead, and the buildings in ruin. You gathered as many supplies and tools that you could pack into a bag, and disappeared before the Shogun's men came back.

With no place else to go, you appeared on the doorstep of a geisha house in the city. You told them that your name was Yukariko, and that you were an apprentice geisha but your master died of an illness. You had enough prior training to make the story believable, so they took you in and refined your training.

A year later, you were entertaining an official when you recognized his bodyguard as being from your village. The official told you that the bodyguard had been Shinobi, but he swore allegiance to the Shogunate rather than die. That night, you snuck out and murdered the bodyguard and the official.

When word spread around town the next day, one of the other geisha said she noticed you sneaking out the night before. She had lingering suspicions about your history, and put things together. Now she works as your contact finding the occasional extra job that makes use of your unique talents.

Location: Shinobi Village

Shinobi are raised and trained in secret villages. Most of them were in mountainous regions in the Iga province, and were wiped out prior to the Tokugawa Shogunate. This one, hiding right under the shogun's nose, is still in operation.

To most, this village seems like nothing more than a Burakumin Ghetto. To those few who are in the know, this is one of the last remaining shinobi villages. If you can manage an audience with the clan's Jonin, who represents the clan and hires out the mercenaries, you could hire shinobi to assassinate someone, or sabotage something if you have enough Koku. The Jonin has several Chunin who are his assistants. Finding one of them would be the easiest way to get such an audience.

You may petition a Shinobi Jonin for help with an assassination or a sabotage. If you have the necessary funds the Jonin will accept your request. A Shinobi clan can assassinate any non-player character equal to the rank of their Village +1. For example, rank three Village can assassinate a Social Status Rank Four (Samurai) character. The cost is the target's Social Status times 100 in koku plus their Social Status in Ninjo points. Assassinations will not be immediate, but may take up to a week per Status Rank to perform.

Shinobi can also be hired to sabotage Locations in the game. Locations have a similar cost of 100 koku per Location Rank as well as Rank cost in Ninjo points. Sabotaged Locations becomes rank zero Locations for the remainder of the Season and then repair one rank per Season until they return to their original rank.

Advantage:

LIVING A FALSE LIFE (SHINOBI ONLY)

You have dedicated yourself so much to your false persona, that you have started to build a reputation as that persona. Gain two ranks of a Glory Reputation in the Giri of your persona.

Open Secrets

Playing in a game with Shinobi, there are bound to be secrets that the other player characters don't know. Share those secrets with the other players. Having rich internal landscapes that no one else knows about just isn't fun. If your character is Shinobi, but none of the other player characters know that, that's okay, but don't tell the players that you are a merchant. Tell them that you are a Shinobi that they think is a merchant.

You can probably think of a half dozen examples in TV and Movies where you the viewer are privy to information that the hero of the story isn't aware of. This is very similar. Let everyone in on your secrets. They might even be able to tie them into their characters. If you secretly killed the local Daimyo, maybe the Inspector character is trying to figure out who did it, and you're sticking around to keep them off track.

John Wick's Blood and Honor has a whole chapter dedicated to Open Secrets with a variety of techniques. I highly recommend reading through it.

Playing a Campaign With Shinobi

As mentioned previously, the major Shinobi clans were wiped out by Oda Nobunaga during his work to unify Japan. By the end of the Tokugawa Shogunate and the Meiji Restoration Shinobi were relegated to legend and mystery.

Playing a Shinobi in a campaign set early in the time period makes much more sense historically, or if your game isn't set in a particular time period, then it's pretty easy to hand wave. Make sure that the player and Narrator discuss if the player's character is still part of a clan, working for the shogun, or on their own.

A shinobi out in the world interacting with the other PCs may be on a mission trying to get close to a target for assassination, or they might be on the run. It's entirely possible that they've recently assassinated someone when the game begins, and they are just trying to lay low for a while. Maybe the rest of the PCs don't even know that they are shinobi, and instead have connections to one of the personas that the shinobi has constructed.

Playing a game with a mix of PCs where there is one Shinobi will be drastically different than if there is group of Shinobi playing. Games with a group of Shinobi will focus more on the missions that they are trying to accomplish. Just remember that this game is Samurai Noir. While you may be able to do some impressive things as a Shinobi, there are hard consequences, and there are reasons the Shogun hunted the shinobi to extinction.





Chapter 4 Whispers of the Fox Woman

Brie Sheldon

In Old Japan, two things are in balance, but constantly at odds: honor and desire. In the world of the Geisha, these too are in balance. Honor: Beauty and Cunning. Ninjo (desire): power, truths, and lies. When playing as a Geisha in Old Japan one may find themselves wrapped up in more than just a world of artistry, but instead ensnared in a society beneath society, tapping into every vein of knowledge and truths that lie under the bedrock of the city.

In Old Japan, the Geisha houses typically exist just as that: a tea house where one can enjoy company and performances. However, some houses—you might never know which ones—are a front for a secret society that webs throughout the cities of Old Japan. This secret society has many names, but is most often known as the Order of the Kitsune. Named for the fox, common in Japanese folklore, the Order of the Kitsune is known well by those in the underbelly of society as wise and powerful.

Those who are members of the Order often carry symbols of foxes as charms. These charms are very important to those within the Order, as the Order places much significance on the number of tails the foxes have. With each Honorable task completed for the Order, such as completing an investigation, fighting against a common enemy, or a successful theft of something incredibly valuable for the good of the Order, a member of the Order may be awarded a new charm that shows the fox having another tail. It is rare for a member to have greater than five tails, and a true master of the order-one who is nearing the end of their time with the Order—may be lucky enough to have gained all nine. When one has gained nine tails, they are considered a Master, and have many of the same rights within the Order only as would a Samurai-guaranteed hot meals at houses where the Order is present, companionship without question, and the utmost respect from those who follow the Order.

Members of the Order typically have one of two specific Virtues as their guide: Beauty or Cunning. Those who lead with Beauty



are naturally beautiful or charismatic, charming, and gifted in the arts. Those who lead with Cunning are clever, naturally gifted in conversation and manipulation, and often known for their deft fingers. Wherever their weaknesses may lie, they are still subject to the whims of the Order, and must often train to master the skills of the Geisha as well as the talents of a member of the Order—espionage and the art of secrecy.

In most people's vision of Old Japan, there are powerful samurai, confused gaijin, and beautiful geisha. When thinking of geisha, many people think of their colorful clothing, their beauty, and often, their oft-mistaken profession. While many think of geisha as similar to our modern escorts, in reality they were so much more and so very different.

In Old Japan, geisha spent years of their life perfecting their craft. And quite a craft it was! They were well educated in art, music, and even dance. They were companions—experts at conversation, etiquette, and active listening. Their guests let down their guard around these companions, feeling at ease with them.

The odoriko ("dancing girls") of the early Edo period were the forerunners of geishas. They were dancers for hire, popular in private upper class homes. As these girls aged, they needed to find new professions, as young beauty is prized and must be maintained. The



term geisha had been used by men who entertained customers waiting for courtesans, but was adopted by these women who moved away from the necessary work of a prostitute into the desirable work as entertainers as geisha, women alongside the male geisha.

Eventually being a geisha became a profession primarily for women, though some men still practiced. While some geisha still practiced romantic and sexual relationships with their customers, the profession itself is one of artisanship and performance.

The ranking of geisha is strict classification and related directly to the customers who frequent the geisha. At the top level, there are the gokagai—the grand dowagers—who reside in Kyoto, Japan. They are very expensive, demand much respect, and cater to the most prestigious of customers. The very lowest ranking is a hot spring geisha. Still considered geisha, and still trained in dance and music, they are still viewed by many Japanese as common prostitutes, whether they supplement their income with sexual favors or not. This extreme treatment, this author feels, is prejudiced and unkind. Judging someone for their place in society and for the work they do, regardless of some manufactured moral standards, so long as their work does not harm others, is wrong.

Geishas typically begin their training at a young age, including in modern times. Some girls are successors of their mothers, carrying on the tradition and knowledge of their parent. Others, historically before outlawing of child labor, were bonded to geisha houses at very young ages.

The girls, maiko, all have formal on the job training. As they work, they pay their earnings back to their okiya (their trainer at the geisha house). Geisha training is very expensive because it is about a mastering of the arts—and not only does that require intensive knowledge on behalf of the instructors, but often requires materials like expensive teas, paints, and clothing.

For the Player

You have chosen the path of the Order of the Kitsune. It is a path of quiet movements, soft speech, and beauty. It is a path also of cleverness, deft fingers, and cunning. You may find that you fall closer to one side of the path than the other—this is a known leaning, and one where you should follow your natural gifts. It is not wise to play to your weaknesses in this, the game of secrets.



When playing a geisha in the Order, you should keep in mind that your place is still that of a geisha. There should be no indication to the outside world what you are inside, your true place in the world. To those who look upon you, be quiet, unassuming, and above all, graceful. It is not wise for a geisha to go outside their place. Respect for the hierarchy is expected.

However, when eyes are cast away from you, do not fear conflict and danger. You should step forward to take what is needed by the Order, and follow their wishes with unquestioning loyalty. Their wishes may guide you away from what is expected, and may lead you astray from your place as a geisha. You should be prepared for this and act upon it with alacrity and dedication. What is expected in your place in the order is secrecy, respect, and obedience.

Most of all, when playing this part, you should strive always to be greater in your honor in the Order. While you may pursue your own desires, they should come second to the Order, or else you may lose your place. Those masters of the nine tails did not get there by following their own wishes—or perhaps, they did, but they found a way to align their goals with those of the Order. Strike a balance yourself, and the Order.

For the Narrator

In Old Japan, one can easily find themselves in the deep trenches of noir drama. As Narrator, it is your job to make this happen for the players. When doing so using the Order of the Kitsune, you must deal with intrigue and deception. Much of this the players will create on their own. However, this section should prepare you for your own rich stories.

Key Principles

Never expect anything to happen.

Trust no one.

Tell only lies until the truth is revealed.

Never expect anything to happen

Thanks to John Arcadian for the Island Technique described in this section.

When you plan, your well—laid mysteries and tales are likely to go awry. The first rule of working in the game of secrets is that you should always be prepared but never expectant. Be ready for what the players throw at you, but don't pre—judge or assume their actions. They will always surprise you when they have the upper hand. One way to have more influence on where the stories go is to have key points of contact that are flexible. Use index cards to write down potential events or responses to actions, but be willing to alter those prepared ideas.

For example, before the session, you write down on three index cards:

- If players use violence to interrogate a gang member, the gang member gives them information but the gang is now on the player's tail.
- If players interrogate with cunning and clever words, the gang member gives them information but the gang doesn't find out.
- If players don't interrogate the gang member, they can find the information from the local police, another gang member, or one player's family member.

These story seeds are a response to a single action. However, they can all go different ways. The third one even opens up more options for story seeds. You can always alter these. Maybe while they use violence to interrogate, the police find out instead. Or, they push too hard and actually kill the gang member. Anything can happen. It's just up to you to be prepared but flexible.

Trust no one

Your responsibility is to the players. When playing NPCs you should act appropriately, but remember, these are often members of an elite order of spies. They won't trust anyone, even their fellows. How can you do this without alienating your players? First, you have to rely on your players to tell the story they want to tell. Second, you need to eventually reveal secrets when the players have taken the risks necessary. Finally, you should act out the mistrust. Narrowed eyes, cagey behavior, and tight lips all set the players on edge.

Tell only lies until the truth is revealed

Players should have to work for answers when they are exploring secrets. Play with this. Give little tastes of the truth, but do not tell the whole truth. Omission and misdirection are your fairest friends. When a player comes to you with their pressures to get secrets revealed, make them feel like there is a challenge. However, don't hold back secrets forever. Reward your players with little nibbles of sweet secrets, and then sometimes give them a big bite!

Kitsune Giri

You are the essence of mystery and secrecy. You know more about others than they often know about themselves. Everyone tends to turn to you when they find themselves lost in the dark. You know the secrets that unlock doors, turn enemies into allies, and reveal the truth. You also are a master manipulator whether it is by turn of phrase, application of the fine arts, or deft fingers, you get what you need from those who you target. You spend your days acting the part of a geisha—implementing your skill as an artist and your knowledge of people to do your job well.

Status: Hinin

Bonus: You gain your Giri rank in bonus dice when you are trying to ply someone for secrets.

Ability: You have talents and skills that allow you to understand best the manipulation of others. You also are highly skilled at keeping secrets—and sharing them when it's most appropriate. At the start of your turn, you receive a number of rumors equal to your Cunning or your Beauty (whichever is higher) as secrets you've learned in your work. These rumors can be spent at any time during the game session, but cannot contradict truths already established. You may, alternatively, gain a point of Glory representing a successful trade of rumors for furthering your place in the order.

Benefit: You have contacts, and many of them. You may reach out to contacts throughout the city and perhaps even beyond, at the Narrator's discretion, to delve for rumors. You may use your Giri rank in all social risks against anyone who is a member of the Order of the Kitsune. They are obligated to answer your questions and share secrets with you—the risk is whether they let you live through it.





Chapter 5 Scum and Villainy: Smuggling, Piracy, and Sailing in Old Japan John Kennedy

THE UNDERSIDE OF HONOR

The warm bliss of Chinese opium. The forbidden texts of the Bible and the Koran. Dutch ships, Spanish arms, English politics. All of these things, long banned by the Shogunate, have always existed at

the edge of Japanese culture. While certain goods are deemed permissible, such as designs for cannons and battleships, others are banned outright and the penalty for bringing such items into the country without the expressed consent of the government leads to imprisonment, the seizure of your family's business, and often death.

As Japan opens up to the outside world, gaijin merchants come to make a profit. Though not as naïve as some arrogant Westerners may believe Japan to be, there is still a great demand for weapons and goods being brought into the country. At the same time, priceless works of art and family relics are sold to gaijin merchants, leaving the shores of Japan never to be seen again.

In Japan most smugglers make their trade by smuggling their goods in by sea. These sailors brave sailing dangerous seas at night for the hopes of bringing their goods past port inspectors and Imperial patrols. Though chided for disobeying the Shogun and bringing foreign goods into the country, there are those who act with excitement when the smuggling ships enter their ports, as they are curious what strange new devices and wondrous things they bring with them. They are bringers of

Addressing the problematic

In many ways, the men and women who make up the willing part of the seedy underbelly of Japan engage in horrible acts that are not to be lauded. For every smuggler who sells opium or forbidden books to feed his family there are those who have no qualms in selling the daughters of Japan to greedy gaijin or vice versa. It is important to keep an eye on such issues and to acknowledge that these are real issues not treated lightly.

a Pandora's Box, and once they smuggle their goods in the people of Japan cannot pretend they never existed.

Sakoku

Seclusion laws, Nanban trade, the Red Seal ships; the intricacies of international trade matter little to the masses. But where there are banned goods there will always be a desire for such things and for centuries the samurai policed the domains of their masters to keep their island homes free of the corrupting influences of the gaijin and their ways. Yet at almost all levels of society could there be found individuals who knew how to bring such things in.

The prices of these goods would be astronomical in their homelands. Even the Christian Bible, which was eventually banned due to fears it would encourage uprisings against the Shogun, could command a frighteningly high cost to the right, desperate bidder. Poor fisherman whose villages were starving from poor harvests or criminals chased out of cities seeking ways to make a fortune could



indeed make a great amount of wealth by escorting a shipment of Dutch maps into the city.

Though forbidden from doing business with anyone but the government, many gaijin merchants would still meet their prospective buyers under the cover of night or on far off beaches. The smugglers, often acting under the patronage of a noble lord or government official, would seek to deliver their goods to prospective buyers as quickly as possible. Using their own kobune sailing vessels or concealing their goods in oxcarts the smugglers would exchange their goods for koku, which they gave back to their lords upon receiving their share.

Though the government passed laws to hunt these criminals down, it had to deal with who you knew and how well you knew them. The Shogun wanted his armies to have the best ships and wanted access to the best weapons, so he encouraged his men to turn a blind eye when he felt he would prosper. His political rivals, desiring these secrets to themselves or perhaps seeking Western means to gain power and popularity would use their influence to protect sailing vessels known to carry foreign cargo.

Soon Imperial investigators became powerless to stop these men who were one time criminals but now flaunted Imperial seals declaring them as official merchants and sailors of the Shogunate. Though they could not openly flaunt the goods they carried, they began to rule the trade routes between cities and began to dress more and more lavishly, flaunting their wealth in the face of others

Of course, not every smuggler received a pardon to continue bringing his goods into the country. As said previously, it all depended upon who you knew and how well you knew them, and if you fell out of favor or ran afoul of someone who cared not for the protection your patron had given you, you would end up facing down the fury of those seeking to protect the purity and honor of Japan.

The Way of the Smuggler

You are the purveyor of exotic goods in an empire that craves such things and yet officially spurns them. For some smugglers it is no laughing matter and you run the risk of shaming your entire family should your crimes be discovered. You walk a tight rope, trying to explain your newfound wealth while avoiding detection. For others, the choice is easy; where once you were powerless in a society beset by old ways, now you have real power. In some cases, the law cannot touch you without bringing down the wrath of your lord, and you have freedom to do as you please whenever you please.

If you are gaijin, then things are both more precarious for you and yet you have freedoms available to you that your Japanese brethren do not. You can claim ignorance of the law, or your masters offer you protection from across the sea. It is also easier for you to deal with foreigners for their goods, as they find you more pliable than the tradition-oriented merchants of Japan.

Not all goods you may be tasked with carrying are as innocent as they sound; while some of your clientele may seek foreign textiles or books on medicine there are those in Japanese society with a taste



The Sword And The Gun

There is the mistaken belief that the Japanese were completely ignorant of technology until Commodore Perry arrived with his fleet and opened up their borders to trade, but this is not so. The Japanese learned of firearms and how to create cannons from the Chinese, and before the passing of Seclusion laws they imported many devices and inventions. Samurai even learned how to fire rifles and units of ashigaru armed with rifles were a potent force on the battlefield.

That is not to say that guns were still considered dishonorable weapons. Guns brought a different measure of skill to the battlefield, and where as the katana had been seen as an honorable weapon to wage war the firearm allowed for cutting through an opponent's armor at a distance. It became a point of honor to look down upon those who wielded said weapons as they did not have the bravery to face them in honorable combat.

for more exotic and perverse pleasures. On occasion you will be tasked with transporting opium into cities throughout Japan, avoiding the law and helping to keep those addicted to chasing the dragon within its cruel embrace. There are even some smugglers who make a living transporting the poor and convicted criminals to Dutch trade ships off the coast, where these poor souls are doomed to never see their homeland again. Some vow to never take on these tasks, considering themselves better men; others harden their hearts with the gold they earn for such things.

There are still dangers you may face that do not come from the law itself. For starters, you must deal delicately with the yakuza gangs of Japan, unless of course you are a member. They demand a cut of all profit from your dealings and in some cases may try to steal your cargo for themselves. At the same time zealous samurai, holy men, and government officials may seek illicit means themselves to eliminate you from their concerns. Samurai seeking to protect their ways will consider you as hinin regardless of your actual station and deal with you accordingly.

As a smuggler, your interactions with the outside world means you sometimes will show off foreign mannerisms. Perhaps you carry a Chinese made work knife on you at all times, or you wear English boots to keep your feet warm as you sail. You favor a Dutch pistol to the traditional Japanese firearms, or you wear warm Russian furs over your robes. Whisky bottles are kept with your sake and you grow foreign flowers in your garden. Your interactions with the outside world have changed you, for better or worse.

Smuggler Giri

Status: Merchants or lower

A consummate sailor, rogue, and purveyor of foreign goods, you place your freedom and your life on the line to bring only the best goods for your clients. It is not that you are against the traditions of your people, or that you feel the need to encourage foreign trade, but you are given a job by your Patron and it is the only way you know how to make a living. The fact that you are quite good at moving illicit cargo and avoiding detection from authorities only makes it that much sweeter when you outsmart police inspectors, and the samurai who have hunted you for so long.

Bonus: Gain your Giri Rank in bonus dice when attempting to avoid detection by the authorities.

Ability: You keep a watchful eye out for any eyes that may be placed upon you and have an instinctual need to seek ways to escape if need be. Upon entering a scene you learn where guards are situated. You may add your Giri Rank to all risks when attempting to escape from authorities, though you run the risk of having to abandon your cargo behind you. Should you lose your cargo you not only lose out on large sums of koku but your Narrator should probably give you the Tag: Lost Cargo which is a free rank three Tag to your Patron who may use it in any Social Risks against you until you've paid your Patron the amount of koku lost or they forgive you and announce the removal of the Tag.

Benefit: A Smuggler is always able to find crew for his boat in any port, though how skilled the crew are depends upon his reputation. All crew will need to be paid, giving the captain the Tag: Pay The Man until the crew are sufficiently paid. Any ship you start with gains an additional Aspect for free allowing you to start with a larger or better ship.

Fortune and Glory (but mostly fortune) on the seas

As Japan is an island it relies upon foreign goods to be brought to it from across the ocean. When the Shogunate passed laws limiting certain items from being admitted into the country and outright banning other items, the smugglers responsible for trading in these goods had to become more skilled with keeping a low profile as they entered the harbor. Often times a kobune full of Spanish rifles would be forced to seek shelter in a rocky cove while Imperial vessels patrolled nearby.





In World of Dew, ships are essential to players with a need to travel, and a smuggler's ship is even more essential when they must travel somewhere covertly. These ships are not just essential as a means of transportation. For many, these ships are their homes, their livelihood, their lives; their ships are an extension of whom they are.

Players wishing to start the game with a sailing vessel must settle for a small kobune or river boat as their starting vessel. Starting with a larger ship requires more players to spend an Aspect on the vessel, giving them joint ownership over the vessel. A vessel may only have a number of Aspects attached to it equal to the number of players attached to the ship plus an additional Aspect.

Ship Related Aspects

RED SEAL SHIP

Invoke: You have earned, either through the respect of the Shogun or the backroom dealings of the yakuza, a red sealed letter of marque allowing you to operate in the ocean on behalf of Japan. You are allowed to arm your ships with modern weapons, including cannons normally forbidden by others.



Compel: Great power can corrupt, and even you are not immune to its influence. You find yourself leaning more and more on your reputation or your ship's guns to settle arguments, often causing you to act rashly when cooler heads are needed.

THIS SHIP IS A JUNK...

Invoke: ...and it does not look that great as well! The vessel has a drab or otherwise homely appearance to it. It has faded paint, broken pieces of wood, or perhaps smells constantly of dead fish. When this Aspect is invoked it gives the player three extra dice towards trying to avoid being boarded or searched by authorities.

Compel: How one carries themselves about in public is essential in Japan, and maintaining an ugly sailing vessel is a source of great shame for many sailors. When the reputation of the ship or its captain is called into account they may be treated poorly because of the ship's appearance.

ARMED AND DANGEROUS

- **Invoke**: The seas are a dangerous place, and for some it is essential to carry weapons of war. This ship carries with it many cannons and rifles to be used in its defense or in waging war upon its enemies.
- **Compel:** Any vessel not part of the Imperial Navy that is carrying weapons will be boarded and run the risk of being seized by the Navy. In addition to this, an armored ship stands out from other ships, and is much harder to disguise as any other kind of vessel.

HIDDEN CARGO

- **Invoke**: You have learned how to make every stretch of space count on the ship, and you know where to hide things so they will not be found. Your ship has hidden compartments with which to store cargo from prying eyes.
- **Compel**: Hidden compartments only work if their existence is kept hidden from others, and they could be accidentally





discovered at any time. A sense of paranoia always accompanies the captain of the vessel when he has hidden cargo on board, often causing him to think the worst when inviting strangers onboard the vessel.

Applying Tags to Ships

A ship is much more than just a static piece of equipment belonging to its pilot and can change throughout the course of play if the situation calls for it. As a sailor gains more fame he may set out to customize his boat so that it represents him better. He may even find the need to change the boat's appearance in order to avoid recognition, so that he can avoid detection by his enemies or the authorities.

A player must still pay for the Ship Tag by spending an Honor of a Ninjo point to the Narrator. Activating a Ship Tag is free but requires time be spent altering the vessel either by painting the ship, making physical alterations, or disguising it somehow.

EXAMPLES OF TAGS FOR SAILING VESSELS:

Low To The Water

We are not big, but we are sleek. We keep ourselves low to the water , so the ocean helps hide our shadow from the light of the moon.

Disguised

To fool our enemies, we must behave like our enemies. Sometimes to evade the wasps you must look like a wasp.

Light On The Water

We have stripped out as much wood and supplies as possible to make our ship as light as it can be. Now we hope all our work matters as we set sale.

New Aspects

These new Aspects help define those characters who choose to walk a different path of the law. These Aspects follow the same rules for creating a character in *World of Dew* or *Blood* \mathcal{C} *Honor*. Choose one Aspect that represents you as you would typically perform your Giri, another Aspect that defines what you desire to be, and a third Aspect that defines your past.

It's Nothing Personal...

- Invoke:...it's Just Business. You are able to work past your conscience to focus on the task at hand. Gain three dice when fighting against any social morals or emotions that may hinder your task at hand. You have come this far, you cannot turn back now.
- **Compel:** As your moral compass slips, so too does your care towards others, turning you as cold and hard as stone.

I FIGHT WITH THE NEW WAY

- **Invoke:** It was not just Western clothing and goods which the gaijin brought with them but their methods of war as well. You conceal a pistol about your person or feel no qualms about using a Western saber in combat. When wielding a weapon considered foreign and dishonorable to a Samurai you gain three dice.
- **Compel**: Rumors of your choice of weaponry have spread, and many begin to view you as part of the moral cancer that overwhelms the country.





A GIFT FROM A KAPPA...

Invoke:... Is Sometimes Just Fish. You are skilled at talking up the positive traits of an item or extolling the great deeds of an individual despite its flaws. Gain three dice when you focus on trying to sell goods to others or try to influence a transaction in your favor.

Compel: You soon become lost in the art of the sale, seeking to barter everything in your life regardless of its worth.

WHAT YOU SEE IS NOT AS IT APPEARS

Invoke: When you need to move cargo quickly, or need to avoid the prying eyes of the dock authorities or city guards, you are able to move quickly yet silently. When trying to disguise an object to keep it from being discovered, gain three dice.

Compel: Your desire to outsmart others and the overwhelming need to keep up the charade overrides your sense of control at times, and you find yourself constantly afraid that you will be found out.





Muramasa and

Masamune: The Life-Giving Sword and the Death-Giving Sword John Wick

In Japanese history and legend, no two sword-makers are more famous than Gorō Nyūdō Masamune and Muramasa Sengo. While the two were not historical contemporaries, in Old Japan, their stories intertwine.

Muramasa was Masamune's greatest student and his greatest rival. One day, the student challenged his master. "Who can create the greatest sword?" he asked. Masamune nodded sagely and said nothing, but his gesture alone was enough to indicate he accepted the challenge.

The two went to work, both crafting the finest sword they could. They met on the edge of a stream and both agreed to a test. Each would put his sword in the stream, blade facing against the current. Muramasa put his sword, Juuchi Yosamu ("10,000 Cold Nights") into the stream and the blade cut through everything that passed it. The student smiled at the master with pride. But then, Masamune put his sword, Yawarakai-Te ("Tender Hands") into the stream. Muramasa watched as the sword cut nothing. Leaves floated around it. Fish swam about it without injury.

The lesson the master taught on that day was simple. The best sword cuts what its wielder intends to cut and nothing more.

This lesson did not temper Muramasa's ambition and those who desired the deadliest blades still sought his work.

So is the legacy of the master and student, Masamune and Muramasa.



Studying with the Masters

To learn how to make a Masamune or Muramasa blade, a swordsmith must learn one of two skills: The Life-Giving Sword or the Death-Giving Sword, taught by Masamune and Muramasa, respectively.

With the Narrator's permission, master swordsmiths (those with a Rank 4 Giri or more) may seek his tutelage. Studying under Masamune is no easy task and requires a Season Action.

At the end of the Season, the student must make a Contested Risk of Giri vs. Giri against Masamune (his Giri is a 6). If the student rolls higher than Masamune (no wagers required), Masamune has passed on his unique knowledge. Every Season, per Season Action spent, the student studies with Masamune allows him to roll one extra die, this includes the first year. Once the student rolls higher than the master, they may make Life-Giving Swords.

Studying with Muramasa requires the same process. The student spends a year with the master and at the end of the year, they may make a Giri vs. Giri contested risk. If the student rolls higher than the master, they have acquired the right skills to make a Death-Giving Sword. Each year the student studies with the master, including the first year, gives the student a bonus die to roll for his Giri vs. Giri contested risk. Muramasa's Giri is a 5, as opposed to his master's 6.

Making the Swords

Once they have learned the skills needed to make such an eloquent weapon, the swordsmith may begin.

Making a Life-Giving or Death-Giving sword demands four Season Actions plus all appropriate materials required in making such a blade. For example, if a character is making a Life-Giving sword with the Flying Quality they must use a feather granted to them willingly by a Tengu Sword master when oiling the blade for the first time. Conversely, if they were crafting a Death-Giving sword they would burn a feather from a Tengu Sword master they defeated in combat when initially smelting the steel for the blade.

At the end of the Season Action, the swordsmith makes a Beauty + Giri Risk. If they rolls 10 or higher, they succeeds in making a sword.

All swords made with this process are of exquisite quality (see page 161)



Each sword has one of two Aspects: the Life-Giving Sword or the Death-Giving Sword. Also, each sword comes with a unique Curse, as seen below.

LIFE-GIVING SWORD

Invoke: You gain three bonus dice with this weapon. This is a free Aspect and does not count against use of any other Aspects.

Compel: You must use this sword to protect others.

Curse: you may not use this weapon to further your own personal or familial ambitions.

DEATH-GIVING SWORD

- **Invoke**: You gain three bonus dice with this weapon. This is a free Aspect and does not count against use of any other Aspects.
- **Compel**: You must use this sword for your own personal ambitions.

Curse: you may not use this weapon to aid others, only yourself.


Purpose and Will

Each Life-Giving and Death-Giving Sword also has both Purpose and Will.

When the swordsmith makes a Masamune or Muramasa blade, they does so with a specific Purpose in mind. This Purpose may be "To Unseat the Lord of Karamusa Castle," or "Gain Revenge on Those Who Murdered My Son."

The number of all wagers the swordsmith put aside for Qualities equal the sword's Will. This represents how determined the sword is to accomplish its purpose.

The sword can force its wielder to act by making a Will vs. Courage risk. Whoever rolls higher gains Privilege. If the sword gains Privilege, it narrates the outcome of the character's next action. If the wielder gains Privilege, they can resist the sword's will. The sword can narrate a number of bonus actions equal to the number of wagers it makes during the risk.

New Qualities

When a swordsmith creates a Muramasa or Masamune sword, they can use the wagers they made to add Qualities to the sword above the normal Qualities an exquisite blade would hold. The Qualities can all be found in Blood & Honor, page 79-80 and World of Dew, page 161-163.

These new qualities presented here are unique to a Masamune or Muramasa blade. Some Qualities are unique to Life-Giving Swords (L-G) and Death-Giving Swords (D-G) and are marked accordingly.

Note: Some of these Qualities may be too fantastic for some settings. Please use discretion.

BLEED (D-G)

When this sword kills another character, it gives a bonus die to its wielder. This bonus die may only be used for Strikes. So long as the wielder continues to Strike (singularly or in a Mass Murder, but no other action), they continues gaining Bleed bonus dice. As soon as they performs any other action, they lose all bonus dice.

DARKNESS (D-G)

When the wielder draws the sword, it creates a veil of darkness that only the wielder may see through. All others are blinded and suffer accordingly.

FEAR (D-G)

When this sword kills another character, all other characters in its presence (not including the wielder) must make a contested risk: Courage vs. the sword's Will. If the sword gains Privilege, all who failed lose a number of dice equal to the sword's Will from all risks until the end of the scene.

ELEMENTAL (L-G OR D-G)

The blade of the sword may summon one of the five elements, giving it a unique ability depending on the element it may summon.

Fire: the blade burns and will set fire to anything it touches. If used during a Strike, the wielder may use a wager to set the target on fire.

Water: the blade and wielder's are formless and opponents gain no school benefits against the wielder.

Earth: the sword makes the wielder invulnerable to any attack he is aware of. If caught off-guard, the benefit does not apply.

Air: the sword allows the wielder to leap from one place to another with ease.

Metal: the sword instantly kills any target it strikes. This is a voluntary action activated by the wielder. Apply the Yowamushi rule to all targets of this weapon.

FLYING (L-G, D-G)

The wielder of this sword may let the sword go and it will fly to a target making a Strike. The target must be within sight of the wielder. The sword returns to its wielder after making the strike. A sword may do this once per scene.





HONORABLE (L-G)

The sword itself has Honor Points that it may allow the wielder to use. Please note: may allow the wielder to use. The sword has 3 Honor Points. These Honor Points refresh once per day.

HOPE (L-G)

When the sword is drawn, all allies gain a number of bonus dice for their next risk equal to the Will of the sword.

LIGHT (L-G)

When the wielder draws this sword, the light from the sword exposes any creatures under disguise or illusion, revealing their true identities.

PASSION (D-G)

The sword itself has Ninjo Points that it may allow the wielder to use. Please note: may allow the wielder to use. The sword has 4 Ninjo Points. These Ninjo Points refresh once per day.

TRUTH (L-G)

When the wielder draws the sword, none may lie in its presence.

DISGUISE (L-G OR D-G)

As long as the sword is not drawn the wielder appears as whoever they wish to whoever sees them. This is only a visual illusion, if they speak it will be with their own voice. Once the sword is drawn the illusion melts away.

Example Weapons

THE SWORD OF THE FIVE ELEMENTS (L-G)

This sword was one of the first weapons created by Masamune and into the blade he infused the five elements: iron mineral mined during the spring from the base of Mount Fuji, smelted in the mountain's caldera during the summer, cooled by the winds at the top of the mountain in autumn, beaten by steel hammers forged from the mountain during winter, and tempered by the pure melt-ice water that tricked down the mountain in the spring.

Qualities

- Life-Giving Sword
- Will 5: Bring the wielder into balance with life, death, and nature.
- Earth, Fire, Air, Metal, and Water

KUSANAGI (GRASS CUTTING SWORD) (D-G)

This sword is said to predate both masters and is considered by some to be the first sword wielded by the first Emperor of Japan and later the first Shogun, but was lost by the last Ashikaga Shogun in battle. The blade carried now by a wandering duelist that bears the name of Kusanagi is indelibly marked by Muramasa.

Qualities

- Death-Giving Sword
- Will 5: Become the most famous sword in the world.
- Air, Flying, Passion, Fire, Fear









Other People's Misery jim pinto

Other People's Misery

World of Dew: Other People's Misery is a story roleplaying game about servants of an abusive lord, finding solace in the night while he drinks himself into a stupor. Each day, thoughts of poisoning his sake fill their minds, but none has ever grown brave enough to try it.

This game uses the Old Japan setting of World of Dew to play a Protocol game.

World of Dew: Other People's Misery is a narrative roleplaying game for three or more players. This zero-preparation game features enough structure to move the action along with plenty of room for creative and cooperative story-tellers to spin rich and engaging yarns.

World of Dew: Other People's Misery is based on the Protocol game series. Players take on the roles of directors outside the action and characters inside the action, using the ebb and flow of four different scene-framing styles—Vignettes, Interrogations, Interludes, and Ensembles—to tell meaningful stories about characters in crisis. Each story explores unique player characters dealing with the adversity of the particular situation and their own personal issues in the best dramatic fashion.

This **game** requires a deck of cards (with Jokers), as well as tokens to track Desire (*ninjo*) Points, Duty (*giri*) Points, and Shame (*haji*) Points. It presumes some understanding of GMless game protocol: scene-framing, shared authority, and so on. If you've never played a GMless game, try one of the GMZero games like *Dying Memoryes, Forget-Me-Not*, or *Monogatari*. There is also a free PDF online at drivethrurpg.com.



Protocol

Protocol is a series of story roleplaying games that thrusts characters into dramatic situations. Each game uses the same set of rules, with vastly different parameters, start-points, characters, and finales. Players take on the roles of directors outside the action and characters inside the action, using the ebb and flow of four different scene-framing styles (vignettes, interrogations, interludes, and ensembles) to tell meaningful stories about characters in crisis.

Each game in the Protocol series is zero-prep for 3 or more players. The game length is exponentially long, so games with more players take more time to complete. The Protocol Series requires a deck of poker cards as well as tokens to track Duty Points.

This series presumes some understanding of GMless game protocol: scene- framing, shared authority, and so on. If you've never played a GMless game, try one of the GMZero games such as *Dying Memoryes*, or *George's Children*. A free pdf of game advice— GMZero Introduction Document—is available for download from drivethrurpg.com.

The Protocol series includes over 50 games using the core Protocol engine. Some elements of the game have changed since its first release. Those familiar with the original system should review the changes before beginning the game. There are also optional rules that can slow down set-up time and world building.

Be mindful of this. And while the document is longer than before and the format is vertical, some elements have been streamlined. For instance, advanced roles and backgrounds have been eliminated, and roles have been simplified.

Some of the new Protocols have special rules. Be sure to read them carefully.

World of Dew

World of Dew specifically focuses on the era of the Tokugawa Shogunate, a relatively peaceful time marked by conflict between ancient tradition and modern innovation. Shogun Ieyasu Tokugawa initiated two hundred years of peace and united Japan under a single banner, but he also instituted reforms that slowly murdered the ideals of bushido and heralded the end of the samurai. In A World of Dew, you can tell stories during the rise of the Tokugawa's reign through the era when the corrupt and decadent Tokugawa Shogunate fell to the Meiji Restoration.

Despite the influence of Europeans, it was ultimately Tokugawa's own reforms that opened the door for the lower classes to amass wealth and social clout. Geisha, merchants, actors, and criminals of all sorts came to wield immense power in Japan under the Shogunate. Eventually, they and their Imperial allies toppled the Shogunate itself. The descendants of some of these same merchants, criminals, soldiers, and courtesans survive as forces to be reckoned with even today in modern Japan. A World of Dew centers primarily on these characters, the future movers and shakers of Japan, the rising middle class that is determined to forge a future under the shadow of the Shogunate. What does the future hold for them?

> A world of dew. And in every dewdrop. A world of struggle.

Unlike *World of Dew*, there are no European characters to play in "Other People's Misery." The focus is on the servants of a drunk, abusive lord. There are no merchants or middle class, only the lowest rung of the caste system suffering at the end of someone else's pain.

Getting Started

Each character in *Other People's Misery* is a servant or lower caste member, suffering at the hands of an abusive lord. For years, the servants have endured their master's hand, while hiding his shames from public eye. They have maintained their duty for a man who has failed in his duty in caring for his charges.

Characters need names, roles, motivations, and relationships, as described below:

- Select one role for your character—this has no mechanical benefit, but provides perspective on your character's place in the household (See **Role**)
- Determine your character's **Motivation** by drawing a card and checking the results against page 79
- Determine a **Relationship** between two characters by drawing a card and checking the results against page 79

- Describe the town and the situation by answering the questions found under **World Building** on page 78
- Give your character a weird name that other players can pronounce

Special Rules: Ninjo, Giri, Haji

Each player starts the game with one Desire Point, one Duty Point, and one Shame Point. Additional points are only gained during play. The shorthand explanation is that Desire Points affect you, Duty Points affect others, and Shame Points affect the lord. But they do more than that.

Desire Points are the main currency of the game. They break the rules. They end scene early. Whenever you spend one Desire Point, the player to your left gains one Duty Point.

Duty Points reflect the actions of the other players. They can push people out of scenes, draw people in, force them to action, and challenge their pride. Whenever you spend one Duty Point, the player to your left gains one Shame Point.

Shame Points reflect the actions of the master. They can draw the master into a scene and they can affect the actions of the lord. Whenever you spent one Shame Point, the player to your left gains one Desire Point.

Each scene type on page 83 through 93 reveal how points can be spent during gameplay.

Advice

This game series assumes you are remotely familiar with the Japan. There are no rules here for kami, katana, or tea ceremonies. Everything you need to play is found on the charts. Conflicts and trials come up whenever you want them to, so be prepared to narrate clever complications to problems instead of solving everything in the first scene.

Feel free to download the *GMZero Introduction* by Post World Games. It's free at drivethrurpg.com and has lots of advice for GMless gaming.

Advice is also peppered throughout this document. Feel free to ignore whatever doesn't fit your game style.

Victims

There is a great deal of difference between playing characters who have been victimized and playing victim characters. Anger (and the needs for revenge) is an easy emotion to draw upon while roleplaying. What is more interesting are those characters who suffer the lord's indignities without immediately poisoning his soup in retribution.



Deck Shuffling

A standard deck of cards is shuffled at the beginning of the game and again (only) if the deck runs out of cards. Used cards are discarded. Do not

return cards drawn for Motivations or Relationships to the deck. The same goes for Scenes and Locations during play.

Duty Points

Each player starts the game with one Duty Point and only gains additional points during specific scenes. For players who want more authorial control before play, consider starting with two or three Duty Points each. See page 12 for more on using Duty Points.

Roles

While roles provide no specific game mechanics, they help provide perspective and purpose for one's place in the story. All roles serve in the house of the master, who needs a name. If you don't have one his name is Master Gohei.

Advisor. Someone who advising the master in all household and clan matters.

Bodyguard. Someone who looks after the lord's safety.

Concubine. The lord's sexual attendant. Male or female.



- **Cook**. Someone who prepares all the meals in the house. There can be numerous cooks.
- **Doctor**. Someone trained in Eastern or Western medicine, who looks after the family's health.
- Geisha. Someone who entertains master. There can be numerous geisha.
- **Gardener**. Someone who tends to the tsubo-niwa (courtyard garden).
- **Lord***. The master is the antagonist of the tale. If he is part of the story, that means he talks rudely with his attendants. Choosing this character to be 'in charge' is a disingenuous way to play.
- **Merchant**. The lord's personal financial advisor and liaison. After all, the master cannot be seen involving in trade himself.
- **Relative**. The lord's cousin has been staying for too long in his house.
- Scribe. Someone who writes master's history and scribes his letters.
- **Seneschal**. The seneschal is in charge of household matters. He makes sure everything runs smoothly.
- **Servant**. Someone who serves the lord in the most meaningless tasks. Perhaps someone who is burakumin.
- Smith. Someone who maintains the lords armor and weapons.
- **Spiritual Advisor**. Someone who advising the lord in spiritual matters, be it Buddhist, Jesuit, Protestant, or Shinto.
- **Tea Servant**. Someone who brings tea to master in the roji (tea garden).
- Toji. Someone who brews sake for master.
- Trainer. Someone who practices kendo with the master.
- **Wife***. The master's wife has suffered his indignities as well. If she is part of the story, that means she talks openly with the lord's attendants. Choosing this character to be 'in charge' is a disingenuous way to play.
- Zen Gardener. Someone who tends to the karesansui (rock garden).
- * It is not recommended to play these roles the first time through, but including them in the story can elevate the drama.

Motivations

Each player defines the motivation of his own character. Motivations are determined by drawing one random poker card from the deck for each character. The motivation descriptions are vague specificity is your job. For instance, the $\bigstar 3$ is a motivation of family, impulsively. The player may define this motivation as doing whatever it takes to protect her family.

A list of motivations is on page 79.

After all of the players have determined their motivations, one (and only one) player may **spend one Duty Point** to make his character's motivation important to another character as well.

Motivations Are Not Goals

Do not confuse motivations with needs or goals. The goal is defined by the story. What motivates a character is an extension of the character's role within the story. You can be motivated by pride to save another character from herself, but your goal cannot be pride.

A motivation may also be a hindrance as much as a benefit. Being confidently driven by your illness doesn't stop you from coughing at the wrong moment or help you keep up with everyone.

"I was raised the old way. I was taught to desire nothing. I was raised to swallow other people's misery. To eat my own bitterness."

Relationships

Each player selects one pair of characters to have a relationship. Relationships are determined by choosing (any) two characters and drawing one random poker card from the deck. The pair of characters share this relationship. The relationship descriptions are vague. Specificity is your job. For instance, the �10 is a relationship of family trust. The players sharing this relationship may define it as an ongoing issue of trust between two brothers who have lied to each other since childhood.

A list of relationships is on page 79.



Duty Point examples

A player may spend **one Duty Point** to add a third character to a relationship.

A player may spend **one additional Duty Point** to make a drawn relationship between a character and an NPC (see page 82).

Once play has started, any player may spend **one Duty Point** to create a relationship between two characters who have been in a scene together. No card is drawn for this relationship. It is defined by the context of the scene(s) already played.

Defining Relationships

Traditional roleplaying games assume relationships of adventurous intent.

But good drama unfolds when two players can develop a relationship beyond always agreeing to 'chase the gold.' Let your relationships with others focus your gameplay and storytelling styles. But don't let it derail the story. No one wants to watch a movie where two people bicker for two hours (i.e. Bad Boys II).



	suit					
*	 Authority 					
٠	Caste					
¥	Duty					
٨	Shame					
	Value					
A Anger						
2	Charity					
3	Family					
4	Fortune					
5	Glory					
6	Inertia					
7	Misery or Sorrow					
8	Pleasure					
9	Sin					
10	Vengeance					
J	Mischief					
Q	Love or Hate					
Κ	Authority					
Joker	Draw two and combine the results	Jo				

Re	Relationships Chart		
	Suit		
÷	Family/Long-Term		
•	Friends/Rivals		
¥	Romantic		
٨	Community/Working		
	Value		
А	Blood		
2	Codependency		
3	Compassion		
4	Contempt		
5	Distant or Estranged		
6	Kindness		
7	Ominous		
8	Parasitic		
9	Sycophantic		
10	Trust		
J	Mischief		
Q	Love or Hate		
K	Authority		
Joker	Draw again, adding a third person to the Relationship		

World Building

In order to tell your story, each player establishes an element of the game world. This is a collective process, which is completed by answering key questions relevant to the story of an abusive samurai lord.

Each player selects one ingredient from the list below and answers the question as well as he can. Players can take turns, one player can read them off to the others, or a player can even quiz someone else about the questions. No question should be answered more than once. Each bullet point is considered a single ingredient. 79



- Where does the story take place? In Edo? Or in the master's private residence in the countryside?
- Why does the master not have an heir? Is this why he drinks?
- What happened to the person in your role before? How long have you been at this task?
- One of the peasants attendants was killed by the lord for describing her nightmares to another. Describe these nightmares and explain why they offended the lord.
- Why is the courtyard garden closed?
- Why does the master dress as though he is in mourning? Or why does he force his wife to dress like she is in mourning?
- What became of the lord's brother? Father? Why don't they live at the estate?
- Who does the lord owe a debt to? Who among you must keep the secret of this debt?
- Who was beaten most recently by the lord? What is his favorite form of punishment?
- What sexual proclivity does the lord indulge that people find abnormal? Have any of the attendants been forced to pleasure the lord?
- Does the lord abuse his wife as well? In which ways?
- Who works closest with the master? What is one pro and one con of being so close to him?
- Name and describe the master's first wife. What happened to her? Which of the characters had a relationship with her?
- Name and describe a ji-samurai who quietly loathes the lord. Draw one card and define a relationship with this ji-samurai.

Optional Rules

Consider one of these two methods of answering world building questions:

- One player chooses a question for the player to his left to answer.
- Players answer random questions (determined by a die roll or card draw), instead of choosing them themselves.

Duty Point Examples

A player may **spend one Duty Point** to answer one additional world building question (after everyone has answered one).

A player may **spend one Duty Point** to answer a question that has already been answered, offering additional insight that does not contradict what has already been said.

Gameplay

In the Protocol Series, players take turns directing scenes involving some or all of the characters. Directing a scene involves establishing parameters of game play, such as who, where, and when, some of which is provided for you. Scenes and Scenes and Location charts are on page 85, while names appear on page 89.

Each turn the active player (director) draws one card, which determine the scene type — vignette, interrogation, interlude, or ensemble. The scene's type (suit) and atmosphere (value) are determined by the card. For instance, the director draws a \diamond 7 indicating an interrogation (\diamond) about prayers (7).

Some players may find the location cards restrictive. You are free to ignore them or just invent a location if you so choose.

Advice

These 'tags' are designed to inspire the director to create scenes that link a complete narrative together. There is an ebb and flow here, trust me. It works. Listen to what has come before, pay attention to the cards you've drawn, and rely on your instincts.

Optional Rules

- If the same suit is drawn three times in a row for a scene or location, the director may discard the card and draw a new one until a new suit appears.
- At the beginning of the game, shuffle the deck and remove 10 cards at random. Do not look at them. Remove them from play and never shuffle them back into the deck.
- A player always has a minimum of one Duty Point to spend during the finale on his own character.



- Once per game, the players may **award one Duty Point** to a director who has framed a particularly good scene or a player who has contributed to a scene in a dramatic fashion.
- Select a permanent director who does not play a character, but instead runs the game like a traditional RPG. Cards are still drawn for scenes. The game lasts for a number of scenes equal to four times the number of players, or as long as the director chooses. During the finale, the director may spend up to four Duty Points in order to write vignettes about the other characters.

Duty Points

Drama points are used to control the narration and finale. In addition, players may use Duty Points in any way that breaks the rules. They are tools for dramatic escalation, interrupting the action, and general authoritative control. There are few rules for spending Duty Points, but some examples include:

- The director may **spend one Duty Point** to discard a scene/ location card and draw a new one. If the card drawn is a scene card of the same suit OR value, the director may draw a new one at no cost (but only once).
- The director may **spend one Duty Point** to change the suit of a scene card to any other suit. The value may not change.

 If a scene ends with unresolved conflict, any player may spend one Duty Point to shift the conflict to an NPC who has already made an appearance in the story, or **spend two Duty Points** to shift the conflict to a new NPC.

Other examples appear elsewhere throughout this document.

NPCs

NPC is short-hand for Non-Player Character. These are characters who may appear during play, but that no one single player controls. A gangster in a tavern, a gambler in an alley, or a soldier at the city gate are all NPCs.

Sometimes they are the background noise from the world and sometimes they interact with the characters the players control. How often they appear and how much they influence play is up to you.

Creating them for the game is easy. If you're the director, you can create one NPC during any (non-vignette) scene. Each scene type provides information on how NPCs are used in those scenes. When you are not the director, you can **spend one Duty Point** to create an NPC in a scene, following the same rules. Keeping track of NPCs should be done on a separate piece of paper or index card that is easily available to all the players.

Whoever adds the NPC to the scene plays that character in the scene.

Duty Point Examples

A player may **spend one Duty Point** to create a relationship between two NPCs by drawing a card from the deck and defining that relationship in detail.

A player may **spend one Duty Point** to take on the role of an NPC during a scene.

The Opening Scene

Feudal Japan is a dark and unforgiving place. Insert more flavor text.

The opening scene of the game is always a vignette at the estate. The vignette focus is either Public Shame or Wrath. Determine randomly which player narrates this vignette, but do not draw any cards. Afterwards, take turns until every player has directed one scene. Each turn around the table is called an Act. The game is played over



four Acts. After each Acts a special transition scene is played through. See page 93 for more about these transition scenes.

The director decides that the samurai lord has thrown another tantrum. Everyone has been sent away and only his trusted advisors remain. In private, the lord declares that anyone giving birth this year to twins is a witch and the entire family must be burned at the stake as a warning to others. The lord then orders two concubines to his room, before storming off to his private chambers. The director then ends the scene on that ominous note.

Advice

The opening scene sets the proper tone. From here, the other players get a sense of where the story might lead. Pulling together as many world building threads as possible ensures that things won't be forgotten once the game is underway.

The opening scene is about providing pathways to plot threads and not closing the door on ideas.

NPCs

The opening scene does not have dialogue, but any number of NPCs may color the story background. Since the opening scene can be about anything or anyone, this is an opportunity to show the 'audience' what is going on elsewhere in the story.

Duty Point Examples

A player may **spend one Duty Point** to add a minor detail or affectation to the opening scene, but he cannot contradict what was said by the director.

A player may **spend one Duty Point** to add a new NPC to the opening scene, adding a minor detail along with the new character.

ć	Scenes Chart		
	Suit		
*	Vignette		
◆◆	Interrogation		
•	Interlude		
٨	Ensemble		
	Value		
А	Ancestor's Disapproval		
2	Bargains		
3	Cycles		
4	Debts or Duty		
5	Fear Takes Hold		
6	Glory		
7	Prayers		
8	Shame		
9	The Mounting Tension of a Quiet Home		
10	Vengeance		
J	Trouble in the Home		
Q	Love Blossoms or Hate Resumes		
K	The Master's Wrath		
Joker	Flashback		

Location Chart				
	Suit			
♣ Isolated				
♦ Alone in the Crowd				
۷	While He's Around			
٨	♠ Watched Value			
	Value			
А	Garden			
2 Forest				
3	3 Hallway			
4	Shinto Shrine			
5	Bedroom			
6	Patio			
7	Dark Corner			
8	Gate			
9	Breakfast			
10	Dinner			
J	Market			
Q	The Bridge			
Κ	His Bedroom			
Joker	Audience Chamber			

	Ma	ale			Fen	nale	
1	Hiroshi	9	Kiyoshi	17	Keiko	25	Akiko
2	Akira	10	Takeshi	18	Yōko	26	Reiko
3	Kazuo	11	Minoru	19	Kazuko	27	Noriko
4	Takashi	12	Shigeru	20	Hiroko	28	Kyōko
5	Toshio	13	Tadashi	21	Kaoru	29	Toshiko
6	Yoshio	14	Kenji	22	Yoshiko	30	Yui
7	Hideo	15	Kōichi	23	Michiko	31	Rio
8	Masao	16	Takeo	24	Masako	32	Mei

Vienettes (🏞)

Vignettes involve no actual dialog. They merely set the atmosphere for the story. The director determines the location from the card drawn and narrates a brief scene. A vignette shouldn't take more than a minute or two to narrate.

At the end of the Vignette, the director gains one Duty Point.

The director draws a *9 for scene—Vignette about The Mounting Tensions of a Quiet Home.

The master has slept all morning because of a drunken revelry the day before. The longer he sleeps, the more work can be done before he disturbs the household. However, the later he sleeps, the more rage he will have because no one roused him from his slumber. Everyone walks on egg shells, fearing the worst.

Advice

Keep your vignettes short and simple. Narrate enough information to set the tone, but don't overdo it by dragging the action on too long. Concise sentences are a storyteller's best friend.

Vignettes are a good opportunity to show what else is going on in the story that does not involve the main characters. They can highlight a single event, resolve a crisis from another scene, or set up future tension. No one can interrupt a vignette, so explore the game space as much as you like.

NPCs

Vignettes do not have dialogue, but any number of NPCs may color the story background. Since vignettes can be about anything or anyone, this is an opportunity to show the 'audience' what is going on elsewhere in the story.

Duty Point Examples

A player may **spend one Duty Point** to add a minor detail or affectation to a vignette, but he cannot contradict what was said by the director.

A player may **spend one Duty Point** to add a new NPC to a vignette.

Interrogations ()

Interrogations are a complicated but varied approach to sceneframing. There are a number of ways to direct an interrogation scene, but the core concept is that the director asks up to five questions of another player.

Method One

The director selects one player, **steals one Duty Point** from that player, and asks that player up to five questions.

Method Two

The director selects one player. That player takes on the role of an NPC of the director's choosing. The director then asks that player up to five questions.

The director may ask the questions from the point of view of an NPC or his own character. This process should feel organic. However, the interrogation may

be out of character as well, in which case the director asks the questions in an abstract fashion, as though going down a list. Regardless, the questions can be anything fitting the theme of the card drawn.

The player being interrogated cannot say no, nor can the player





avoid answering the question. If a leading question paints the player into a corner, all the better.

Advice

Ask leading questions. Avoid yes/no questions, or questions that can be reduced to short answers. What and why questions are great. Did or can questions are not. "Why are you waiting for reinforcements?"

Duty Point Examples

The director may give one Duty Point to another player to have that player interrogate the director.

The director may spend one Duty Point to ask one additional question during the interrogation.

A player being interrogated may spend one Duty Point to avoid answering one question.

Interludes (>)

Interludes involve two (and only two) characters with a preexisting relationship, but neither character needs to be the director's.



The director sets the scene based on the cards drawn. The scene runs as long as the director likes, without being self-indulgent — calling "scene" when the characters have said or done enough. An interlude involves only one location. Should the characters leave the location (or reach a moment of conflict), the scene ends.

All players **not** involved in the scene **gain one Desire Point** at the end of the interlude.

The director has drawn the \P 5 for scene — Interlude about Fear Takes Hold.

The director decides that the Gardener and Tea Servant are discussing the issues with household. The tea servant has already suffered one beating this weak and he cannot take another. To make matters worse, the tea leaves that have been growing on the lord's estate are dried and sickly, producing weak tea. The tea servant is out and crying her woes to the gardener.

Once the interlude is over, the players not in the scene gain one Duty Point each.

Advice

Interludes are mostly about the drama between two characters. While interludes can be used to advance the plot, this is secondary to the interpersonal actions and reactions of the characters. Let them explore their relationship in the context of the scene's focus.

NPCs

Typically, there are no NPCs in an interlude, unless someone spends one Duty Point to include one.

Duty Point Examples

The director may **spend one Duty Point** to place two characters into an interlude who do not have a pre-existing relationship.

The director may **spend one Duty Point** to add an NPC to an interlude. A player may spend one Duty Point to join an interlude.



A player may **spend two Duty Points** to join an interlude as an NPC.

A player may **spend one Duty Point** to end the interlude early or to extend the interlude after the director has ended it.

Ensembles (🔺)

Ensembles involve all of the characters. Like an interlude, the director determines the focus of the scene, as well as the location. The director may preempt the scene as much as he likes, but once the ensemble starts, the players should let things develop organically. The director still has the right to call "scene" at any moment, but any player may override the director by spending one Duty Point to end a scene early, or to extend a scene longer.

The director may take on the role of an NPC in the ensemble, instead of his own character. Any player may **spend one Duty Point** to take on the role of an established NPC instead of his own character.

The director has drawn the $\bigstar 3$ for scene — Ensemble about Cycles.

The director decides the group gathers in the a private room, while the lord hosts a party. The guests are enjoying sake and music, giving the servants a few moments respite from the lord's wrath. But no sooner do they start to rest when the lord's wife (played by the director) starts to scream from her room that she needs more pillows, sake, and miso soup, all of which have been consumed by the guests.

Advice

Ensembles involve everyone and should be allowed to run their course. But not too long. Eventually the characters will start spewing every kind of theory and idea, which slows play and distracts from the story.

Let everyone get a say, but once you resolve the scene's primary focus, it's time to end things. Don't forget, if there's conflict, the scene ends on its own, unless someone spends one Duty Point. Reward ingenious ideas and know when it's time to cut the action.

Duty Point Examples

A player may **spend one Duty Point** to end the ensemble early or to extend the ensemble after the director has ended it.

A player may **spend one Duty Point** to take on the role of an NPC in the ensemble.

Flashbacks (Joker)

Flashbacks are interlude or ensemble scenes from the past, before the story began. The director determines the focus of the scene, as well as the location. The director may preempt the scene as much as he likes, but once the flashback begins, the players should let things develop organically. The director still has the right to call "scene" at any moment, but any player may override the director by spending one Duty Point to end a scene early, or to extend a scene longer.

Advice

Flashbacks are not there to fill in the gaps of the story we already know. A good flashback takes us to a time and place we didn't expect. It should add a twist we didn't see coming.

Monologues (Joker)

Monologues are solo scenes where the director's character (or an NPC) delivers a single speech that cannot be interrupted. The director decides who else is at the location at the time the speech is delivered.

The director gains one Duty Point at the end of the monologue.

Resolving Conflict

Interludes

Whenever two characters in an interlude reach a moment of unresolvable conflict, the director narrates the conclusion and ends the scene. Should a player wish to override this, he must **spend one**



Duty Point in order to narrate the conclusion. In the case of a tie where more than one player spends Duty Points, one player must spend more Duty Points than anyone else in order to narrate the conclusion.

Ensembles

Whenever two (or more) characters in an ensemble reach a moment of unresolvable conflict, the scene ends, which leaves the conflict dangling. Should a player wish to override this, he must **spend one Duty Point** in order to narrate the conclusion. In the case of a tie where more than one player spends Duty Points, one player must spend more Duty Points than anyone else in order to narrate the conclusion.

Advice

Should a scene end unresolved, this creates a cliffhanger effect. Players may wish to resolve this in the following scene. But this isn't always necessary. Use your best judgement. Sometimes the best things are left unsaid.



Optional Rules

Players who are used to adventure games with clear cut conflict resolution may not like the simplicity of Duty Points resolving conflict. If all the players agree, conflict should be resolved by a card draw (from a separate deck), with players able to spend Duty Points to draw additional cards — high card wins and ties remain unresolved.

Continued Gameplay

Player take turns directing scenes. The order is not important. Players may decide to take turns in a random order, clockwise order, or even bid to be the next director. Just make sure everyone is involved and no one directs two times in a row. Once everyone has directed two scenes, turn to page 95 and resolve the dark secret, then direct two more scenes and turn to page 95 to resolve the finale.

Transition Scene

After each player directs one scene, there is a transition scene. This happens three times throughout the game at the end of Act 1, 2, and 3. The end of Act 4 flows into the finale.

After Act One

The end of act one is about Shame. The player with the most Shame Points directs a single scene about the master of the house. If there is a tie, dice are rolled like conflict resolution. In the case of a tie, dice are rolled again and again, until the tie is broken and a winner is determined.

The winner becomes the director, drawing one card to determine the scene type and focus, drawing again if a vignette is drawn. Like a flashback, the director must play the lord in this scene. Once the scene is over, play continues normally.

After Act Two

The end of act two is about master's dark secret. Each player draws one card and consults the chart on page 95, narrating one vignette each about the secret.



Only one of them is true, but all of them should paint a dark picture of the household.

Once the Dark Secret vignette is complete, play continues normally.

After Act Three

Act three is about Duty.

The player with the most Duty Points directs a single scene about the master of the house. If there is a tie, dice are rolled like conflict resolution. In the case of a tie, dice are rolled again and again, until the tie is broken and a winner is determined.

The winner becomes the director, drawing one card to determine the scene type and focus, drawing again if a vignette is drawn. Like a flashback, the director must play the lord in this scene. Once the scene is over, play continues normally.

Dark Secret

Once everyone has directed two times, the Dark Secret begins. Each player draws one card and consults the chart below, narrating one vignette each about the secret. Only one of them is true, but all of them should paint a dark picture of the household



Once the Dark Secret vignette is complete, play continues normally.

Finale

Players take turns directing scenes. However, the order is not important. Players may decide to take turns in a random order, clockwise order, or even bid to be the next director. Just make sure everyone is involved and no one directs two times in a row.

The person directing the final scene of the game is not responsible for wrapping up loose plot ends. In fact, doing so robs the other players of their agency. Scene 16 is no more important than 8.

Once everyone has directed four scenes, the finale begins. The player with the most Duty Points (or the person who directed the final scene of the game, in case of a tie) narrates the first vignette of the finale. Draw one card to determine the finale's focus. If the joker is drawn, draw again, amplifying the issue. Use of the card is optional and should not replace common sense. After that, these vignettes can be played in any order and the order of events can be fluid/ plastic.

For each Desire Point a player still possesses, he narrates (in turn) a vignette about his character's fate. For each Duty Point a player still possesses, he narrates a vignette about another character's fate. For each Shame Point a player still possesses, he narrates (in turn) a vignette about the lord's fate.

Random Finale

Not all roads lead to the same conclusion and sometimes the journey is more important than the destination. Glib inspirational poster pabulum aside, the way players play the game may lead to a finale where the card draw makes no sense. While I've done my best to make the suits associated with the finale as wide as possible to accommodate the story, it may be necessary to just ignore the card draw and play without it.

Dark Secrets Chart				
Suit				
*	Blood			
•	Duty			
¥	Secrets			
٨	Shame			
Value				
А	leads to betrayal			
2	leads to blame			
3	leads to dishonor			
4	leads to family strife			
5	leads to false confidence			
6	leads to hate			
7	leads to misery			
8	leads to romance			
9	leads to seppuku			
10	leads to worry			
J	leads to chaos			
Q	leads to sex			
Κ	leads to submission			
Joker	A grave illness			
/	Finale Chart			
	Suit			
÷	The Master recruits new servants			
٠	The Master finances change			
۷	♥ The Master finds new love			
٨	The Master takes a life			





The Draoonfly's Eye: Ryan Macklin

The Dragonfly's Eye takes the setting and spirit of A World of Dew and transports them into the Fate system. Because this version uses Fate rather than the A World of Dew's main rules, it tells a different sort of story—one more about heroism than risk, where danger is more survivable, and where the city responds dramatically to the characters as much as they do to the city. This isn't simply trying to be A World of Dew but in Fate; it's another form of the playing stories in the Tokugawa Shogunate.

What You'll Need

This chapter bridges *A World of Dew* and *Fate Core System*, so you'll need both books to play. You likely already have *A World of Dew* already if you have this book, but if you don't, you can get a copy from Woerner's WunderWerks, your Friendly Local Game Store, or online at various sites like Indie Press Revolution or Drive Thru RPG. The PDF of *Fate Core System* is available for pay-what-youwant (including free!) at evilhat.com, and the physical book can be found in fine game stores.

Because this is a Fate game, you'll need Fate dice, tokens for fate points, and the rest of the usual Fate paraphernalia. You can also get *The Dragonfly's Eye* character and city sheets at woernerswunderwerks.com or drivethrurpg.com

What You'll Find

The Dragonfly's Eye takes the foundation of Fate Core, alters game and character creation to fit the needs of the setting, uses the Virtues in A World of Dew in place of skills, presents a variant fate point system that reflects the Honor/Ninjo dynamic, and offers tools for playing out various situations you'll encounter. The Virtues and stunts are reminiscent of how approaches and stunts work in Fate



A Personal Note

One of the joys of working on The Dragonfly's Eye was in engaging the game's history and, in a sense, completing a year-long cycle. I sat right next to John Wick when he was introduced to Spirit of the *Century*, and got to playtest Houses of the Blooded (where it took the notion of aspects from Fate and gave them a twist). Later, I worked on The Dresden Files Roleplaying Game, notably the city creation chapter, which Ben mentioned in A World of Dew. So when Ben asked if I'd like to make the Fate version of A World of *Dew*, I didn't hesitate for a moment in saying yes.

I hope that you have as much fun and joy from this as I had in writing it.

-Ryan

Accelerated, though you don't need to refer to that book as the specific rules for those are contained here.

In this section, you'll find general sense of what the Fate version of A World of Dew is going for. Next is Game & City Creation (page 99), where you'll take a Fate Core approach to building the elements that cities in A World of Dew feature. Then in **Character Creation** (page 104), you'll see how to make the character group for The Dragonfly's Eye. Virtues (page 110), discusses how the six Virtues are used in play, and how they related to the four actions. Stunts & Schools (page 119), offers a number of example stunts, philosophies on making your own, and outlines the sword and sumo schools. Finally, Conflicts of Honor (page 126) offer new rules for fate points, conflicts, advancement, and other situations that complement the feeling that A World of Dew strives for.

What Isn't Here

A World of Dew's core system is one of nuance, risk, and privilege. How your character acts explicitly folds into the rules, through the Honor/ Ninjo system. The locations create story hooks, and the season actions make the game rewarding for long-term play.

These don't exist in *The Dragonfly's Eye*. The original system is fantastic at what it does, and we don't just want to hash out a Fate version of every single rule. That wouldn't be a good game. Not only are many of those rules awkward to fit into Fate (as the rules philosophies don't quite mesh), we really like the idea of this as opportunity to highlight different stories. If there's something in the original game that isn't mentioned here, that's on purpose. Of course, you might find a great way to work it into your Fate game—in which case, please share with us and the fans—but we're going for a focused experience.

Game & City Creation

Setting your game and city up takes many cues from *A World of Dew*, and frames them using *Fate Core*'s game creation scheme. This is because in *The Dragonfly's Eye*, locations do not have ratings and special effects, but instead aspects, so it will feel like a rather different process. For instance, players do not have City Points to spend on the city's elements, and locations do not have special benefits attached to them.

When to Do City Creation vs. Character Creation

Some people like to start by making up the game and city elements, and use that to come up with the characters. Others like to start with character, and use that to inform the city. Both ways are great! Later parts of character creation, notably the Phase Trio (page 106), assume that you've defined the city by that point—so if you do start with character creation, pause when that section tells you to, make the city, and then finish the characters.

Research (If You Want To)

If you're making a city based on or inspired by a real-world location, look to the guidance on pages 50–51 of *A World of Dew*.

The City's Big Issues & Themes

Because this is a Fate Core game, we need to establish the game's overall elements as aspects. Look over the information on setting's big issues (*Fate Core* page 22) and the guidance on coming up with your city's themes (*A World of Dew* page 52).

Every *The Dragonfly's Eye* game has the same persistent game aspect: *The Old Ways are Dying/New and Foreign Ways Arise*. No matter what happens, this aspect never changes. It can't be changed even as the result of a major milestone. Naturally, characters should struggle against the force of change! But know that, as players, it won't—all of Japan is changing, and that's far larger than your city.

Which gets us to the game's scale (*Fate Core* page 21). The scale in *The Dragonfly's Eye* is the city, and should always be the city. If the game's scale changes, you're not quite playing in *A World of Dew*


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story—though don't let that stop you if you are super-engaged and having fun!

Knowing the persistent aspect and the game's scale, come up with a list of the themes you want to play with. Don't turn them into aspects right away; instead, let those inspire you in the next steps, when you're making locations and other elements.

LOCATIONS AND THE MAP

When you have some basic ideas down about what you want this campaign to be about, it's time to come up with locations. If you've already made characters (or have strong ideas about what you want to play), then start by having each character define a little bit about a location tied to their Giri.

As mentioned above, locations in *The Dragonfly's Eye* work just as places do in Fate: they're setting elements where action or intrigue are likely to happen again and again, and they have aspects relating to their characteristics and issues. They aren't ingame resources for characters in the same way that they are in *A World of Dew*; they don't have ratings, and so on. That said, they're just as crucial to playing the Fate game as they are to the original game, so everyone (including the GM) should add two locations, counting the location based on the giri. If you're playing with four or fewer people (including the GM), make up three locations each.

When making these locations, draw them on the map as you would in *A World of Dew*. Look over the list of locations on pages 56–68 of the base book. Unless the GM specifies otherwise for some reason, every Location exists within a city. The locations you define are the places that are most important to the story and provide benefits to the protagonists; as you frequent new locations, add them to the map.

To start, give each location two things: a name and a hook—a short statement that tells the group why we should care about that place in our game. More details, including its aspects, will come later. (This doesn't use the Three True Things method in *A World of Dew*, at least not exactly in that manner.)

THREATS

Going around the table, each player (excluding the GM this time) mentions a threat—a plot or force that threatens the



protagonists somehow. Like with locations, just write down a name and a hook. More will come later.

If you end up with fewer than four threats, as a group come up with more until you have four.

Threats don't have ratings, so they could be of any scale and affect any number of characters (*A World of Dew* page 69). Vary the types, so you don't have all major threats that affect everyone or minor threats that only affect individual characters.

ORGANIZATIONS

The GM starts by noting down organizations that might own or inhabit a location—not naming them or writing hooks, just noting down that they presumably exist. Then go around once or twice (including the GM) and either name one and write its hook, or make up a new one with a name and hook. Again, don't make aspects yet. We're about to get to that...

You might also declare, when fleshing out one organization, that another organization in the list is a part of it.

LOCATION, THREAT, AND ORGANIZATION ASPECTS

Now that you have a city filled with locations, threats, and organizations—which we'll collectively call "elements"—it's time to give them aspects. This is *The Dragonfly's Eye's* version



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of the Three True Things method, where it's distributed around in the spirit of a Fate game.

Going around the table, each person adds one aspect to a location, threat, or organization. This includes the GM, but he always goes last in the round. You'll do this two or three times, depending on whether you're satisfied on the second time or want to go again. (If you have fewer than three players, definitely go three times.)

There are some rules to this. Each element can only have two aspects, one of which is a **characteristic** and one is an issue. Characteristic aspects just define something about the element that's notable about it in a way that you could invoke or compel, like a gambling tavern being a Hive of Scum or a seaport being Bustling with Trade. Issue aspects are as describe on page 22 of Fate Core, either current issues that are ongoing concerns or impending issues that people worry about-or at least should worry about. The first person to add an aspect on a given element gets to decide which of those two types to add. The second aspect must always be of the other type.

On subsequent rounds, you must add aspects to elements you haven't added to before. You don't get to monopolize one, even if everyone else leaves it alone.

Important: the elements you pick will come into play as part of character creation, and whoever writes the last aspect on a given element gets to define its face.

At the end of this process, look at the ones that have aspects on them. Those elements are immediately prominent to the game. Those without aspects still exist in the world, but aren't causing urgent pressures in the moment leading up to when the campaign starts and scenes are played. Expect them to come in later, or better yet, drag them into the story yourself!

FACES

Once you have done the process above, it's time to fill your city with interesting people-specifically those involved in your locations, threats, and organizations. If you were the last person to write an aspect down for a given element, then your job is to come up with the face:

- Write down a name
- Describe the relationship they have to the element

• Note down one or two true things about that face

Don't actually try to make aspects here. Later, the GM will make up aspects based on what's been made, or you'll collectively make up aspects after you're done with all of these details and coming up with your own characters' aspects. After all, making aspects is a lot of work! And you've made quite a few already.

REVIEW AND REFINE

Collectively look over the city you've made. Is there anything that sticks out as not being fun for someone? Are there aspects that seem a little limp? This is the time to do some fine-tuning. Everything else that's mentioned but not defined is in the hands of the GM, which means that these elements are great for creating mystery.

With that done, you have a city that's ready enough to play! The city's elements, combined with the PCs, should give the GM enough to work with to use the GMing methods described in *Fate Core*.





Creating Your Characters

Making characters in *The Dragonfly's Eye* helps you take the spirit of a character from *A World of Dew* and play them in Fate.

OVERVIEW

As a group, you each start by choosing a Giri and high concept aspect (page 104), followed by a trouble aspect (page 105), and then a name (page 105). Once everyone has these basic elements down, continue.

These elements will give you your character's Status, Honor, and Ninjo ratings (page 106). Knowing that and the sort of character you want to play assign your six Virtues (page 106).

At this point, in character creation, if you haven't made the city yet, do that before continuing.

Knowing the city's elements, you can fill in the phase trio (page 106)—unlike in Fate Core, this trio isn't about adventuring but about impacting each other's lives in a messy and everchanging environment. Add your stunts and schools (page 108), even taking a Flawed Virtue if you wish to get another stunt.

At this point, you've made all of the choices for your character. Fill in the stress and consequences for them (page 109), as well as the final details (page 109), and you're ready to play!

Giri and High Concept Aspect

Once you have a character idea, it's time to start fitting it into the setting. In *A World of Dew*, that means picking a Giri, and so that means the same thing in the Fate version. However, Giri work quite a bit differently here, and there's more to this than just picking a Giri. For the list of Giri, see pages 16–29 of *A World of Dew*. The bonus, ability, and benefits that each Giri have in the base game don't have Fate analogues, but do note down your character's status.

Once you have chosen a Giri, it's time to make your **high concept aspect** based on that choice. Use the advice in *Fate Core* regarding using an adjective or descriptor to the idea, and either have your Giri as an explicit part of the aspect or add it in parenthesis afterward.

For example, if you choose Gambler, your high concept could be *Small-Time Gambler*, *Gambler on the Move*, or *Gutter Rat Burakumin (Gambler)*.

Trouble Aspect



For creating your **trouble aspect**, look to *Fate Core*; *A World of Dew* doesn't have a direction analogue. That said, there are two things you can look at when thinking up a trouble aspect, though they're described later in the process.

If you want a trouble aspect themed around a personal struggle, consider your Weakness Virtue (page 106) or, if you choose one, your Flawed Virtue (page 118). Why is that your weakness or flaw? If Courage is your Weakness, is that because you are *Struggling to Redeem the Family* and thus are easily bullied? If you have the Impaired Strength Flaw, is that because you have *An Old War Wound* (*That Holds No Glory Today*)?

If you instead want a trouble aspect themed around problematic relationships, look at the elements made in city creation—locations, threats, organizations, and faces. Pick one that interests you and make a problematic relationship about it. Are you *In Debt to the Yakuza*? *Courted by Suspicious Gaijin*? *Hated by the Dockworkers*?

Of course, you could go another route in making a trouble aspect. What's important is that others are excited by your idea, and that people (including you) can see how your trouble will play off of the city and the group.

Name Yourself

At this point in the process, your character will need a name.



Status, Honor & Ninjo

Status in *The Dragonfly's Eye* is chosen just as in the base game, and acts as an implied aspect between characters of differing status. See page 128 for more on status as situational aspects. The rules for choosing status and its effects (such as if you have a Master or Patron) are the same as the base game, pages 29–31.

Status is also used to determine your Honor and Ninjo, the two forms of fate points in *The Dragonfly's Eye*. If your character's status is Samurai, Priest, or Imperial, or you have the Yakuza Giri, you have an Honor rating of 2 and a Ninjo rating of 1. If your Status is Peasant or lower, Hinin (except the Yakuza Giri), or Gaijin, you have an Honor rating of 1 and a Ninjo rating of 2. These ratings determine how many of each fate point type you get when a refresh happens; see page 126 for how this works in play.

Virtues

This Fate build uses six Virtues in *A World of Dew*, and their Fate rules described in fuller detail starting on page 110. Read over those briefly, and then return here for the rules on assigning values to the six Virtues.

Choose one Virtue to be at Good (+3), two more to be at Fair (+2), and another two to be at Average (+1). The one not chosen is your **Weakness**, which is Poor (-1). (Nothing is set to Mediocre in this Fate ruleset.)

With all six assigned, pick one of the once that isn't your Weakness to be your **Virtue Bonus**. Increase its rating by 1—meaning you might have a Great Virtue, or more Good or Fair virtues. This virtue bonus also informs how you might play, based on its definition of bushido, but has no other effect.

Interlude: Make Your City

If you haven't made your city yet, pause character creation and do so now. If you want to revise your character due to elements you've made in the city, please do!

Phase Trio

The Dragonfly's Eye takes a twist on the Phase Trio (*Fate Core* 38). For phase one, instead of detailing an adventure, describe an

uneasy event: something that happened in the city involving your character and at least one of the city elements you added an aspect to in city creation. Write down a few notes about how your character's life became more complicated or difficult due to an event, much as you would write about your character's adventure. Look to the questions on page 40 of *Fate Core* for guidance.

The other characters aren't necessarily involved in your uneasy event, as they are normally in Fate, so you don't have to worry about the timing as precisely.

For phases two and three, describe how you're **impacted by another's uneasy event**. This is dramatically different than being a supporting role in an adventure, but the way the phase works is essentially the same: you describe something and then make an aspect from it.

Each impact requires you to choose two things: whether it's direct or indirect, and whether it's an overall positive or negative impact. A **direct impact** means that you're inseparably involved in the other person's affairs or situation. Maybe you helped them with a dangerous job for the Yakuza gang, and are now in higher regard with the gang. Or you're a known associate of the other person, and the Yakuza hunted you down to find out where they were. This could even be an uneasy event that was done on your behalf, for love or money.

An **indirect impact** means that you've been affected in a way where you might not even know about the other person's involvement at the time. You're collateral damage or unexpected windfall. The other person could have instigated some drunk gaijin in a tavern who then opened fire, killing your son who was just trying to earn a living there. Or said drunk gaijin shot a rival, which gave you a bit of breathing room. Whatever you choose, by the time play begins, you've learned that the other person was involved or even responsible for this impact.

Positive and negative impacts are fairly straightforward: did it make your character's life better or worse? Don't look into the immediate moment, but know how your character feels about the impact when play begins. After all, something that seems beneficial in the moment can turn into something you resent, and something detrimental could end up opening interesting doors for you.

Don't choose the same pair for both. If you take direct/positive for one, choose indirect/positive, direct/negative, or indirect/negative for the other.





Stunts & Schools

You can take two stunts (including sword schools and sumo schools). The rules for making stunts and a list of example stunts start on page 120, and the sword and sumo school rules on page 124.

Note on Schools: If you're of Samurai status or higher, one of your stunts must be a sword school; you can't take a sword school otherwise. If you're a sumo, one of your stunts must be a sumo school, and you can't take a sumo school otherwise. These ways of life, and focus of discipline, grant privileged power, but at the price of flexibility.

If you take a Flawed Virtue (page 118), you can take a third stunt! You can't use this bonus stunt to take a sword or sumo school.

(You might notice that this doesn't work how stunts at character creation normally do for Fate. The traditional idea of refresh doesn't exist in *A World of Dew*; that's part of the Honor/Ninjo dynamic as mentioned on page 126. Thus, everyone has either two or three stunts, depending on if they've taken a Flawed Virtue.)

Stress & Consequences

Characters have two stress tracks: physical and face. Physical works as default in *Fate Core*, and face covers emotional and social harm— as mental would in *Fate Core*, but the wording change reflects the setting's culture and framing. You start with two stress boxes in each, and gain more based on the rating of Strength (for physical) or Courage (for face).

If you have Strength at Fair (+2), gain a third physical stress box. If it's at Good (+3) or Great (+4), gain a third and fourth physical stress box. Should you raise it to Superb (+5) in advancement, you also gain a minor physical consequence.

Likewise, if you have Courage at Fair (+2), gain a third face stress box. If it's at Good (+3) or Great (+4), gain a third and fourth face stress box. Should you raise it to Superb (+5) in advancement, you also gain a minor face consequence.

Final Details

At this point, you've made all of the character pieces crucial to playing *The Dragonfly's Eye*. There are some details that *A World of Dew* asks you to come up with in character creation that you should give a quick answer to: age, koku, equipment, and so on. These details affect the situations you're playing in and the story overall. Add any descriptions or other elements as inspiration strikes.

You Have Characters!

Once all of the characters are made, discuss then with the group and make sure everyone is excited to start. With that, it's time to play!





Virtues

The Dragonfly's Eye uses the same six Virtues as in A World of Dew: Beauty, Courage, Cunning, Prowess, Strength, and Wisdom. Here, they work like super-skills, almost like approaches in Fate Accelerated or skill modes in the Fate System Toolkit. Each one can be used for overcome actions and creating advantages. Each Virtue plays a particular role in physical and face conflicts, through attack and defend actions as well as determining how many stress boxes and consequence slots a character has.

Beauty

Beauty is the ability to communicate to others. It may be through poetry or rhetoric or drama or even gardening. Beauty is the most important Virtue because without it you cannot communicate your ideas to the world. Use Beauty when you want to convince or enthrall others.



Overcome: You can use Beauty to charm or inspire people to do as you ask or imply, or to just see that you are an agreeable person. You can also use this Virtue to stir strong emotion in someone through words or art, which could intimidate or overwhelm them. Beauty is also the Virtue of making art for its own sake, which extends to crafting fine goods and maintaining such works. This Virtue also covers a great deal of artistic and cultural knowledge.



Create an Advantage: Use Beauty to establish a mood, positive or otherwise, on a target or in a scene. You might stir a crowd into a *Passionate Fervor*, make someone *Overwhelmed with Grief*, or merely make someone *Charmed* or *Shocked*. Depending on what sort of action is being done, Courage, Cunning, or Wisdom could defend against such manipulation. Advantages could also apply to works, either as craftwork itself (*Exquisite Flute*) or critique of such work (*Spotted a Flaw*). And, of course, being able to affect someone with art requires you to be able to read that person or that crowd, allowing you to assess the emotional state or general sense of who they are with Beauty.



Attack: Beauty can be used for face attacks that involve doing direct emotional harm to another. Your relationship

with the target, and the social circumstances that you're in, figure a great deal into whether or not you can make a given Beauty attack. (Courage, and sometimes Wisdom, are used to defend against such assaults.)



Defend: When another attempts to enthrall someone you have influenced or make you look poorly in front of others, you can use Beauty to prevent that through oratory and performance. It does not defend against face attacks.

Special: As Beauty covers emotions, it is the Virtue used when addressing face consequences.

Fate Core Skills: Deceive, Empathy, Lore (for art and culture), Provoke (with eloquence or artist endeavor), and Rapport.

Courage

Courage is the ability to say "No." It is the ability to say no to temptation, to fear, to pain, to anything. Courage is the most important Virtue because without it your character will not be able to refuse temptation or stand strong against fear. Use Courage when you want to assert your will against the winds of the world.



Overcome: You can use Courage to push past anything that just requires brute force of will, anything where another's resolve would falter before your own. This could be something physical in nature (like holding a burning coal or staying up for a full night and day); something mental (calmly walking into a dark cave where you believe there is an ambush), or social (getting a guard to step aside as you stubbornly pass).



The intent of the Virtues in A World of Dew don't entirely line up with the default skills in Fate Core, but the skills served as a good baseline. As you read the actions the Virtues cover, you'll see instances that read much like lines from two or three different skills.

Each Virtue ends by directing you to *Fate Core* default skills as reference points. Those aren't hard and fast rules, just helpful elements should you want more direction. Use the spirit of the Virtue when looking at those skills.



Create an Advantage: You can use Courage to place aspects on yourself, representing a *State of Deep Concentration* or *Inner Reserve of Strength*.



Attack: Courage isn't used for attacks.



Defend: Courage is the Virtue you use to defend against face attacks, as it represents your control over your reactions against emotional manipulation and resilience at social manipulation. It can also defend against another's attempts to ruin a mood you've created or make you look bad, if you're there in person and able to demonstrate your strength of character.

Special: Courage gives you additional face stress boxes or consequence slots. Average (+1) or Fair (+2) gives you a 3-point stress box. Good (+3) or Great (+4) gives you a 3-point and a 4-point stress box. Superb (+5) and above give you an additional mild consequence slot along with the additional stress boxes. This slot can only be used for face harm.

Fate Core Skills: Physique (for endurance against pain and fatigue), Rapport (for some defense against Beauty assaults), and Will.

Cunning

Cunning is the ability to see the plan within the plan within the plan. Cunning is the most important Virtue because without it you will not be able to anticipate your enemy's plans. Use Cunning when you want to see past the obvious to what is really going on around you.



Overcome: Cunning covers discovering information and intent, as well as hiding your own. You might use Cunning reactively to notice someone's odd mood or attitude. Other Cunning obstacles involve information that's hard to uncover for some reason—analyzing a crime scene for clues, searching a cluttered room for the item you need, or poring over an old book to find the passage that makes everything make sense.

Use Cunning to bluff your way past someone, or to get someone to believe a lie, or to get something out of someone because they believe in one of your lies. Cunning is the Virtue you use for determining if a disguise works, whether on yourself or others. You can also use Cunning to do small tricks of sleight-of-hand and misdirection.



Create an Advantage: You can use Cunning to create advantages around deception. Cunning also reveals aspects relating to another's emotional state or social situation. And as long as you're willing to take the time, you can find out just about anything about anyone, discover nearly any detail about a place or object, or otherwise make up aspects about nearly anything in the game world that your character could reasonably unearth by: eavesdropping on a conversation, looking for clues at a crime scene, examining records, verifying the truth of a piece of information, conducting surveillance, and so on.



Attack: Cunning can creates a lot of opportunities you can capitalize on, but it doesn't do direct harm to an individual.



Defend: Cunning can be used to resist another's Cunning actions, as well as some Beauty actions.

Fate Core Skills: Deceive, Empathy, and Investigate.

Prowess

Prowess is the ability to wield weapons. Prowess is the most important Virtue because without it you cannot defend yourself against martial attacks. Use Prowess when your skill and speed with a weapon are needed in combat.



Overcome: Since you don't really use Prowess outside of a conflict, it's not often used to overcome obstacles. Prowess is what's used when using a weapon to deliberately acting to harm another, as well as for larger-scale tactical combat where you're commanding a force. For displays of fighting prowess in a demonstration or for regulated sport fighting, that's Strength rather than Prowess.



Create an Advantage: Any number of maneuvers in a physical conflict can be covered as a Prowess advantage: a

Cunning VErsus Wisdom Defense

The two Virtues that defend against face attacks are Courage and Wisdom, depending on how you are able to defend. Wisdom defenses revolve around dispelling lies, and Courage defenses revolve around being unfazed as well as demonstrating honor and resolve. By default, use Courage as defense unless you're explicitly able to illustrate the falsehoods against you and the conflict is taking the form of someone spreading those lies to others.



targeted strike to stun, a dirty move, disarming, and so on. You could also use Prowess to assess a combatant's sword or sumo school, which could reveal exploitable weaknesses in his or her form. For ranged weapons, area and psychological effects are possible; though repeating rifles are exceedingly rare, you could aid a group of people in creating a *Covering Fire* or *Fearful Killing Zone* advantage.



Attack: This skill makes physical attacks. For melee weapons, the opponents have to be within reach (typically the same zone). For ranged weapons, use story logic to determine how many zones away apply in a given conflict—typically 1 zone for something thrown, 2 or 3 for a crossbow, and line of sight within reason for a bow or rifle.



Defend: Prowess is used to defend against any melee attacks against you while you're using a weapon to defend yourself. (For defense against ranged weapons, see Strength.)

Fate Core Skills: Fight (for armed combat) and Shoot.

Strength

Strength is the ability to perform physical actions: lifting, pushing, pulling, even feats of manual dexterity, speed and nimbleness.



Strength is the most important Virtue because without it you cannot swim, climb, or jump in dangerous situations. Use Strength when your physical endurance and power are needed to perform tasks or you attack without a weapon.



Overcome: You can use Strength to overcome any obstacles that require the application of brute force—most often to overcome a situation aspect on a zone—or any other physical impedance, like prison bars or locked gates. Strength is also used for sumo matches and other contests of applied strength.

Along with force, Strength covers agility-based situations, allowing you to overcome obstacle regarding movement jumping, running, climbing, swimming, etc. You use overcome actions with Strength to move between zones in a conflict if there's a situation aspect or other obstacle in your way. You also roll Strength to chase or race in any contests or challenges that rely on these types of activities.



Create an Advantage: Strength can be used to create a variety of advantages regarding application or athleticism and physique, such as jumping to *High Ground* or making an opponent *Pinned*. Also look to the guidelines for creating Prowess advantages.



Attack: Strength is used to make unarmed physical attacks. Opponents have to be within reach (typically the same zone).



Defend: Strength is used to defend against melee attacks while you're unarmed, and all ranged attacks from threats you're aware of. If you aren't aware of the threat, your defense against ranged attacks is treated as your Strength—2 or Mediocre, whichever is higher, without a die roll or chance to invoke aspects or boosts.

Special: Strength gives you additional physical stress or consequence slots. Average (+1) or Fair (+2) gives you a 3-point stress box. Good (+3) or Great (+4) gives you a 3-point and a 4-point stress box. Superb (+5) and above give you an additional mild consequence slot along with the additional stress boxes. This slot can only be used for physical harm.

Fate Core Skills: Athletics, Fight (for unarmed combat), and Physique.





Wisdom

Wisdom is knowing what is true and false in the world. Wisdom is the most important Virtue because without it you cannot determine facts from falsehoods. Use Wisdom when you need to know something about the world or others that is not immediately apparent.



Overcome: You can use Wisdom to overcome any obstacle that requires applying knowledge about the world, history, politics, sciences, and so on, to achieve a goal. (Note that knowledge about arts and culture fall under Beauty.) Wisdom is the Virtue that covers situational awareness in non-conflict contexts, though this is largely passive.



Create an Advantage: Wisdom provides a lot of very flexible opportunities to create advantages, provided you can research the subject in question. More often than not, you'll be using Wisdom to get a story detail, some obscure bit of information that you uncover or know already, but if that information gives you an edge in a future scene, it might take the form of an aspect. Likewise, you can use Wisdom to create advantages based on any subject matter your character might have studied or can research, which gives you a fun way to add details to the setting. Attack: Wisdom isn't used to attack.



Defend: Use Wisdom to defend against face attacks where worldly knowledge would allow you to see through deceit or hyperbole and thus deflect that emotional or social harm. (If that isn't the case for a given face attack, you defend with Courage instead.)

Special: As Wisdom covers medicine, it is the Virtue used when addressing physical consequences.

Wisdom is the only Virtue that can address the spiritual or invisible world. All four actions are valid when some element of that is the target—though attack and defend would only work if you decided to add explicitly supernatural elements to your game, which *A World of Dew* doesn't assume.

Fate Core Skills: Notice (except in social situations and physical conflicts), Lore (in general), and Will (against some face attacks).

Flawed Virtue

When making your character, you have the option of taking one of your Good (+3) or higher Virtues and making it flawed, akin to

Fate Core Skills Not Directly Covered

Some skills from *Fate Core* aren't explicitly at all in *The Dragonfly's Eye*, because the base rules have a different focus than what Fate assumes the focus is for players and GMs. If Burglary, Contacts, Drive, or Stealth actions come up, use the most appropriate Virtue in a given context. The same is true for actions involving skills mentioned here that don't quite fit the Virtue it's connected to.

For Notice situations, use the Virtue that it the situation most closely aligns, and default to Cunning if it's social or a potential conflict situation and Wisdom if it's not a potential conflict situation.

If you want to use Resources, assume the characters have a Resources rating based on their Status: Burakumin have it at Poor (-1), samurai at Good (+3), imperial at Superb (+5), and others generally at Average (+1). If they have an aspect that reflects being especially wealthy or poor—permanent or situational—then increase or decrease this rating by 1 or more.



Flawed Virtues on page 41 of *A World of Dew*. A Flawed Virtue in *The Dragonfly's Eye* follows the same principle: some large element of an otherwise impressive Virtue is treated as a Weakness. In this case, when rolling that Virtue, you roll at Poor (-1) rather than whatever its normal rating is, and that flaw will not improve should you raise the Virtue in character advancement.

The flaws listed on pages 42–45 of *A World of Dew* work as flaws in the Fate version, with the following exceptions.

Courage Flaw: Fear of Mortality

Because Fate does not treat character death in the same way *A World of Dew* assumes, this flaw changes slightly, in that it applies when you believe or feel that your life is a risk.

Weaknesses, Flawed Virtues, and Compels

Weaknesses and Flawed Virtues showcase the character being in an especially difficult situation. Compels exist to offer especially difficult situations for in-game reward. Thus, these two ideas dovetail. You can't take a fate point (either Honor or Ninjo) just for using a Weakness or Flawed Virtue, but if playing to an aspect puts you in a case where you have to rely on your weakest elements could be worth declaring a selfcompel. (As always, the GM and table adjudicate this, but this is still handy as a potential compel flag.)

Furthermore, if you're in a situation where you're forced to use a Weakness or Flaw, and a compel didn't put you into that situation in the first place, that could be a moment to instead voluntarily fail and propose a compel based on the complication that arises from the moment.

Prowess Flaws

Since Fate's conflict rules work fundamentally differently, the Prowess flaws change slightly. For Slow, treat Prowess as a Weakness when striking (page 130). For Unprepared, treat Prowess as a Weakness when facing multiple opponents in armed conflict. For Obvious, treat Prowess as a Weakness when facing a single opponent in a duel (page 130).

Stunts & Schools

Stunts in *The Dragonfly's Eye* take a form similar to those in Fate Accelerated. Every stunt you take is related to a particular sort of action on a particular Virtue. There's no list, but there are guidelines followed by examples for each Virtue.

There are two types of stunts: stunts that give a bonus and stunts that allow you some unusual option or ability. The first type of stunt gives you a +2 bonus when you use a certain approach in a certain situation. Use this template:

Because I [describe some way that you are exceptional, have a cool bit of gear, or are otherwise awesome], I get a +2 to [pick one: attack, defend, create advantages, overcome] with [pick a Virtue] when [describe a circumstance].

Sometimes, if the circumstance is especially restrictive, you can apply the stunt to both the create an advantage action and the overcome action (or in odd cases, defend and overcome). Or if it covers a broader set of actions, but still has some strong focus, the bonus might be +1 instead of +2. (See Master Manipulator on page XX as an example of a stunt covering a broader set of actions.)

The second type of stunt lets you make something true, do something cool, or otherwise ignore the usual rules in some way. Use this template:

Because I [describe some way that you are exceptional, have an interesting items, or are otherwise awesome], once per game session I can [describe something cool you can do].

You can also look to the rules for making stunts in *Fate Core*, if you have ideas for more involved stunts or even stunts that require fate points to use. Some sorts of stunts aren't valid in *The Dragonfly's Eye*—namely, anything that involves skill substitution or would let you use one Virtue for something another strictly covers.

You may come up with stunt ideas that don't key to one of the six Virtues. It's rare, so if you do come up with one, talk with the GM about what place that stunt has in your campaign. (Stunts involving firearms—see page 132—are the most likely to not fit with a Virtue.)

On Weaknesses and Flawed Virtues

Your stunts never affect your Weakness or your Flawed Virtue (if you have one). You can't take a stunt that works with your Weakness





Virtue. If you take a stunt that plays off of your Flawed Virtue, then it only has an effect if you're using the non-flawed elements of that Virtue. Another's stunt also can't beneficially affect you when you're using a Weakness or Flaw.

City-Based Stunts

Some of the example stunts listed below involve city elements, such as notable NPCs or locations, and are marked with an asterisk (*). When you take the stunt, you choose an appropriate element in the city. If that element ever drastically changes to where this stunt is invalid, either choose a new element or replace the stunt. Talk with the GM should this happen.

Example Virtue Stunts

Beauty Stunts

Master Manipulator: Pick a type of emotion or base state of mind, like lust, rage, despair, or protectiveness. Because you are skilled at eliciting that type of emotion, you get +1 to Beauty rolls for overcoming actions, creating advantages, and making face attacks when you're trying to play off of that emotion and your target is susceptible to it. You can take this stunt multiple times, for different emotions.

Crowd-Pleaser: Because you're so versed at playing for a crowd, you get +2 to Beauty when creating advantages around a crowd's mood or overall emotion. This doesn't necessarily affect individuals in the crowd (like PCs or key NPCs), but does affect at least all of the nameless NPCs.

Patron*: Your arts have earned you a patron. You can be each your patron for favors. Name your desired favor and roll Beauty versus Fair (or higher, if the GM deems your favor is particularly troublesome or complicated). If you tie, your patron is able to either grant you some of what you need now or all of what you need, but in time; GM's choice. If you succeed, you are able to get your favor. Either way, your patron will expect something in return. If you succeed with style, your patron is purely generous, and expects nothing special for the favor. If you fail, the patron isn't available (or is perhaps displeased with your request, if you fail by 3 or more).

If you use this again, the base difficulty increases by 2 each time. It resets to Fair when your fate points refresh. (There may be versions of this stunt applicable to other Virtues, such as having a sumo patron and using Strength.)

Courage Stunts

Defiant: When someone of *Higher Status* attempts to coerce you into some action, agreement, or duty, you get +2 to your Courage defense against such actions. Additionally, they can't invoke that aspect (or related aspects, perhaps including their high concept) against you on those rolls.

Strong Will: Your will is ironclad. Treat your Courage as 1 higher for the purposes of calculating face stress boxes and consequence slots.

Death Has No Hold: Because of your utter fearlessness against death, you get +2 to overcome and defend actions involving Courage when your life is threatened—verbally or physically.

Cunning Stunts

Subculture Familiarity: Pick a social culture, such as geisha

house workers and patrons, Yakuza, nobles, farmers, sailors, Gaijin, and so on. Because you're particularly familiar with those people, you get a +2 to defend or overcome attempts by those people to tell if they're lying or what emotions they're hiding. You can take this stunt multiple times, for different cultures.

Eye for Detail: Because your keen senses pick up the slightest clues, you get +2 to Cunning overcome actions and creating advantages relating to investigating details in a scene, such as looking for evidence or reading a ledger—this doesn't aid in the social side of investigating. Additionally, if the GM calls for a roll to passively notice something and you fail by 1 or 2, treat it as a tie instead.





Snake's Tongue: Because you are so good at hiding your intent and feelings, you get a +2 to Cunning rolls creating advantages around your deception.

Prowess Stunts

Dirty Fighter: Because you're willing to break with honor while fighting, you have +2 to Prowess when creating advantages revolving around your dirty tricks, like throwing sand in an opponent's eyes or using poison.

Wounding Pride: Your wit with the blade cuts deep into another's sense of self. When you're dueling against an opponent, and there's an audience for the duel whom your opponent cares about or has some vested interest in, you can instead wound your foe's pride. Your attacks can be face attacks instead of physical, if you explain how you're humiliating or toying with the other. However, if the defender succeeds with style, you take 2 face stress instead (rather than the defender getting a boost) and you can't use this stunt for the rest of the duel.

Familiar Terrain*: Pick a location in the city. You're so intimately familiar with a location that you could fight while blindfolded in it and best others. Because of this, you get a +2 to attacks and defense in this location.

Strength versions of all of these stunts could be taken as well, representing those arenas of conflict.

Strength Stunts

Renowned Sumo: Because you are respected in the community for your formidable skill, you get a number of free invokes on your high concept aspect equal to your Strength rating. These are valid in social situations where being a well-regarded sumo would help. These refresh when your fate points do, and you can regain two mid-session if you win a sumo bout and further your acclaim. You must have an appropriate high concept to take this stunt. (Renowned Duelist is the Prowess version of this stunt.)

Agile: Because of your quick reflexes, you get +2 to Strength rolls involving overcome actions when your agility is of utmost importance. (Another version of this stunt could work for creating advantages, which is less about reflexes and more about deliberately using grace.)

Iron Body: You're able to stay in a fight longer than people might expect. Treat your Strength as 1 higher for the purposes of calculating physical stress boxes and consequence slots.

Wisdom Stunts

Learned: Pick a scholarly subject. Because you've devoted yourself to study of that subject, when you successfully create an advantage with Wisdom relating to it, those aspects get an additional free invocation. In those cases, tying still creates an aspect with a free invocation that sticks around, rather than just a boost. You can take this stunt multiple times, for different subjects.

Academic Resources*: Choose a location in the city. Because of your ties to that place and the resources it has, you have a number of free invocations equal to your Wisdom rank on one of that location's aspects. You can use these free invocations to gather information, as appropriate to that location's access to information. You're also assumed to be able to get into the location when you need to, in order to use this. If the GM puts some obstacle in the way that makes this uneasy, you earn a fate point as that's effectively a compel against the concept. These free invocations refresh when your fate points do. (There are potential Beauty and Cunning versions of this stunt.)

Esoteric Scholar: Pick an esoteric subject. No one else in the city knows this subject nearly as well as you; everyone else treats Wisdom as a Flawed Virtue for this subject, and you get +2 to creating advantages and to overcome actions relating to your study. If another PC or NPC has this stunt, they aren't affected by you having it, nor are you affected by them having it.

You must have an appropriate high concept or other character aspect regarding your reputation as such a master, and talk with the GM about the subject you choose.

Status Stunts

Some stunts relate explicitly to your Status (and thus your high concept). The following are the most common examples.

Marksman: Because you've spent a great deal of time honing your skill with firearms, you roll at Great (+5) when attacking with one. You must be a Gaijin to take this stunt.

Legendary Sword: Because you have a rare sword forged by a true master, you inflict 1 extra stress in physical conflicts when using it. If



you tie on an attack with it, you can choose to do 1 stress rather than take a boost. You must be Samurai or Imperial to take this stunt. This stunt only works for swords, and you must tell a little of the history of that sword when you take this stunt.

Overlooked: You're easily dismissble, even to others of the same class. You get +2 to actions relating to hiding or sneaking when you appear just as some anonymous commoner. You must be Peasant or lower to take this stunt.

Shinto Charms: You have the ability to make physical charms and talismans to bestow luck onto others. You can make a number of charms equal to your Wisdom rank. When you do, you must state what you're blessing, such as *Good Luck in Love*, *Good Luck in Battle*, *Good Luck in Farming*, and so on. You give these charms to other people, who can use them as a boost. You can't use your own charms, and a person can only carry one charm at a time. The powers of these charms fade and the charms you can make reset when your fate points do. (If they refresh mid-session, you can keep the current charms

> active until the end of the session, though they still count against your total charms.)

Sword & Sumo Schools

Sword and sumo schools work like powerful, focused stunts.

Sword Basics: If you have a sword school, you get a +1 to all Prowess actions while in using a sword in combat.

Sumo Basics: If you have a sumo school, you get a +1 to all Strength actions while fighting unarmed.

OPPOSITION SCHOOLS

When you take a school, you choose one of the five types to be your school's style. Schools grant you advantage over two schools, and disadvantage over two other schools. For more on what the schools feel like, go to page 129 of *A World of Dew*.

When fighting someone that your school grants advantage over, you gain a number of free boosts based on your school's linked Virtue. You get none if that Virtue is lower than Fair (+2), one boost for Fair, two for Good (+3), and three for Great (+4) or higher.

Earth ("Chi"): Schools of Earth teach students supreme confidence in both mental and physical tests, granting boosts based on a student's Strength. Advantage over Fire and Water schools. Disadvantaged against Void and Wind schools.

Fire ("Ka"): Schools of Fire teach students that action and forward motion is the key to success, granting boosts based on a student's Courage. Advantage over Void and Wind schools. Disadvantaged against Earth and Water schools.

Wind ("Fu"): Schools of Wind teach students to watch an opponent carefully and deduce his weaknesses, granting boosts based on a student's Cunning. Advantage over Earth and Water schools. Disadvantaged against Fire and Void schools.

Water ("Sui"): Schools of Water teach students to be fluid and ever adapting. Flexibility allows victory, granting boosts based on a student's Beauty. Advantage over Fire and Void schools. Disadvantaged against Earth and Wind schools.

Void ("Ku"): Also known as "Sky" or "Heaven," Schools of Void teach their students the philosophy of No Thought: Reacting without knowing, Emptiness in motion. Schools of Void grant boosts based on a student's Wisdom. Advantage over Earth and Wind schools. Disadvantaged against Fire and Water schools.

Master Ranks

There is a second rank of sword and sumo schools, available to characters who take the stunt a second time. These are known as masters of their school, and get a couple perks. First, masters increase their stunt bonus to +2. Second, if they are fighting against someone who is of a school that has advantage but isn't also a master, they one fewer free boosts in the conflict.

Having a master rank means adjusting the character's high concept aspect to follow suit.



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Conflicts of Honor

The Dragonfly's Eye has a few new rules that overlay on Fate's system of challenges, contests, and conflicts.

OVERVIEW OF NEW RULES

Honor & Ninjo (page 126) presents a new method of fate points, with two separate types that cover different sorts of invocations and compels.

Status (page 128) is an implied aspect system relating to how two characters' statuses differ.

Physical Conflicts (page 129) covers the ways in which characters would harm one another in the style of *A World of Dew*—notably strikes, duels, mass murder, sumo bouts, and using firearms.

Face Conflicts (page 132) offer a variant on the Fate conflict system that handles emotional and social manipulation with a more fluid back-and-forth set of rules, where even aggressors can be harmed in their own actions.

Finally, **Time & Advancement** covers the Fate idea of how character and world advancement works for *The Dragonfly's Eye* characters and their city.

Honor & Ninjo: Fate Points

In *The Dragonfly's Eye*, there are two different types of fate points: **Honor** and **Ninjo**. Each one covers a different sort of invocation or compel situation, and their difference is key to showing where your sense of honor or selfishness lie.

Refreshing Fate Points

When a refresh happens, wipe away all existing Honor and Ninjo points. Every refresh starts the various fate point pools with a clean slate. Each character takes a number of fate points equal to their Ninjo rating, and puts those points in their personal Ninjo pool. Then add everyone's Honor rating together, and put that many fate points in a communal Honor pool.

Note that as part of character advancement, you can adjust your Honor and Ninjo ratings; see page 138.

HONOR VS. NINJO POINTS

Honor points are fate points that everyone in the group can access. These fate points can be used for any invocation, as well as for a stunt that requires a fate point to be spent. However, you can never use more than half (rounded down, minimum 1) of the points in the Honor pool on a given action, as to use more would be dishonorable.

Ninjo points are personal fate points, as fate points are naturally in *Fate Core*. These fate points can only be used for invocations (or stunts) when you're acting selfish or secretive, or in other circumstances that go counter to the group's needs and direction. You can use these Ninjo and Honor points on the same action, and there's no restriction as to how many you can use on a given action.

COMPELS

When you accept a compel, you must figure out if that fate point goes into the communal Honor poll or your personal Ninjo pool. If the compel is about you acting honorably to the point of complicating your life, then you can *choose* whether that goes in the Honor or your Ninjo pool. You can choose either way for this. It's important to know that you get this choice based on the act itself, not what the character is thinking or feeling during the act.

Points from compels can always be put into your Ninjo pool, no matter what the story is behind that compel. Essentially, you can only choose to help the group when being honorable, but you can *always* help yourself.

If you gain fate points from other sources, such as due to another person invoking aspects against you, you use the same method to decide if they're Honor or Ninjo points. If for some odd reason the fate point doesn't have to do with the action or story, then you can choose which pool it goes in.

IMPORTANT DIFFERENCES IN RULES

In *A World of Dew*, you can lose Honor and Ninjo based on how you act, and you can spend them for various effects. Because this is a Fate game and these are fundamentally fate points, those rules don't

Using Normal Fate Points

If having two types of fate points is difficult to keep track of and tell apart, feel free to put these rules aside and use the normal fate point system. All characters have a refresh of 3. That said, we hope you'll try to use this system for at least one session, as the dynamic between honor and ninjo is key to A World of *Dew*'s core story; if you use normal fate points, you should put more effort into making sure the themes of honor and ninjo come out in play.





exist here. At the same time, you don't gain either sort of point just for acting in a certain way; fate points still require complications in the form of compels or in aspects being invoked against you to be earned.

Status

Status takes the form of an **implied situation aspect**—it's not an aspect that you have to note down, but whenever two or more people of different statuses interact in any meaningful way, there is a *Higher Status/Lower Status* aspect between them. This is a very flexible aspect, meant to be invoked or compelled as the situation demands. Typically, this can get invoked if you're using status as leverage over another person in a contest or face conflict; it's not something that would be invoked in the heat of combat, because at that point swords or guns are drawn and social concerns are put aside.

Lower Status is rich with compellable situations—the foundations of social dynamics in Japan are built on your status dictating lives in complicated and at times detrimental ways. When you are forced to obey the decree of your betters when it would cause you harm, loss, or other problems beyond mere inconvenience, you're likely being



compelled. Refusing that compel would represent either subverting or outright defying such demands.

Higher Status is compellable when your status would force you to treat another differently than you'd wish to, because those in higher stations are no less bound to the social order. Having to discipline someone for publicly defying you even though that goes against your own needs is one way to have your status compelled. It could also very much be used against you directly, if you're in a situation where your higher status makes you a target.

There is a limit to invoking status, though: you can't also invoke a character aspect that relates to status, such as invoking status and also invoking someone's *Dutiful Geisha* high concept. (In a sense, the status aspect is convenient shorthand for invoking someone's high concept in specific situations.)

If the compel is about a specific status in society—like a Samurai attempting a pacifist life being required to execute someone, or an Imperial being pulled into a situation they wish to avoid but would be politically advantageous for their family—then that's compelling the character's high concept rather than compelling this relative status aspect.

Characters without status, such as priests or gaijin, cannot be compelled or have status invoked on them. They can probably find

ways of invoking another person's high concept aspect, though, representing that while they are not bound to the strata of bushido, others are.

Physical Conflicts

A World of Dew makes a difference between three sorts of physical conflicts: strikes, duels, and mass murder. The Dragonfly's Eye uses the central conflict rules in Fate Core, with some alterations to reflect the spirit of play in A World of Dew.

On Katanas and Other Deadly Weapons

Some builds of Fate uses weapon ratings (such as those found on page 277 of *Fate Core*) to reflect how deadly a given weapon is. *The Dragonfly's Eye* doesn't use these rules. There is a single stunt that reflects a legendary, masterwork sword being fierce to face in combat, Legendary Sword on page 123. Otherwise, all weapons are equally dramatic in *The Dragonfly's Eye*, except for firearms as you'll see on page 132.

Of course, if you'd like to incorporate weapon ratings in your *The Dragonfly's Eye* game, please do!

STRIKES

Violence begins with the strike. There's no sense of turn order or initiative with strikes-the player (or GM) just shouts "Strike!" and points to the person whose character they're attacking. This is a physical conflict using Prowess for attacking and defending, and inflicts physical stress.

For this moment, only those two people are involved, and the action has to be attacking (not creating an advantage). Furthermore, if the person being attacked is completely unprepared for violence (as judged by the GM), the attacked gets a *Caught Unprepared* boost on that action. Once this strike is over, other characters can announce their intentions (and perhaps mass murder begins), but this first strike is solely between the attacker and aggressor.

If two or more players announce strike at the same time, they both happen. If they're targeting different people, resolve one at a time, but still no one else may interrupt. If they're striking each other, instead of rolling two sets of attack and defense, roll one attack each. Neither of them gets to roll defense as they're focused on attacking; just use their Prowess's rank for the difficulty as-is. You get the *Caught Unprepared* boost against someone else who's striking, because they're putting their thought and energy purely into attacking.

Sudden violence is dangerous in The Dragonfly's Eye. Respect it, and respect those who could bring such violence to bear. For more on the theme of strike, see pages 121–122 of A World of Dew.

Note that the default assumption is striking with a sword, thus using Prowess. Some weapons use Strength instead (including unarmed combat), and is discussed on page 130 of A World of Dew.

DUELS

Duels are ritualized combat that follows a neat order, not the impetuous nature of strikes or chaos of mass murder. It is always against two combatants, and uses Prowess to emulate the ritual in Fate and keep a sense of tempo, there's a certain order and respect to things.

On each exchange, you each state what action you're doing and describe it. Then you roll two sets of Fate dice: one for your action and one for your defense or opposition. They're separate actions, and you can invoke aspects and boosts on them independently, but you know the outcome of both sets of rolls at the same time.

For each action, whoever *loses* that action describes what happens, keeping true to the game's effect and the other person's intention. If

you've created an advantage, you get to name your advantage, but the other person describes further. The job of the loser is to show respect to the other's ability—players get to celebrate each other, knowing that if they're good sports about describing how they lose, the other must be as well.

After each exchange, assuming no one was taken out, each combatant takes a Fate die in their hand and secretly rotates it to row or , then reveals it. If your die is , you've conceded as normal in Fate, if your die is , you're not conceding, though perhaps the other is.

If you both choose , then you've both conceded, and the duel is a draw. In these cases, both players get fate points for consequences taken, but not the additional one for conceding that's normally gained.

If you are taken out, the other's fate is in your hands. If both are taken out simultaneously, then each person describes the other's fate.

Should another person interferes, this becomes mass murder. The duelists can choose to continue in that form, or stop their fight to preserve their honor.

MASS MURDER

In *The Dragonfly's Eye*, mass murder—open, chaotic combat uses the standard Fate conflict rules. You set the scene, establish sides, determine turn order, and play out the exchanges until only one side hasn't conceded or isn't taken out.

For determining turn order, use Cunning as the main Virtue, and then either Prowess or Strength (depending on what that combatant is using) in case of ties.

SUMO BOUTS

Sumo bouts work as contests (page 150 of *Fate Core*), even though physical harm is a likely factor. Each sumo is trying to score three victories, but there's a catch: if they score enough victories but their opponent is just one victory behind them, the bout isn't quite over. So each sumo needs at least three victories, and have more than one victory over the other.

Each exchange just features the combatants rolling Strength overcome actions against each other, with the winner gaining a victory (or two if succeeding with style). Ties mean neither side gains ground.

Long sumo bouts: on the fifth exchange, the sumo with the most victories wins, regardless of how many the other has. By that time,





both are growing tired, and minor slip-ups prove disastrous. If they're tied at this round, then they continue and the moment one has more victories, they win.

The loser takes a mild consequence from the fatigue or the shame, their choice. If that consequence is already occupied, either fill in the lowest consequence available with one relating to the sumo match, or progress a consequence you already have one slot higher-making that consequence more of a problem-and put the sumo consequence in its place.

FIREARMS

Firearms are utterly deadly in A World of Dew, but Fate doesn't play with character death in the same way. Still, as firearms represent the death of the Tokugawa era, they deserve to have their own devastating rules.

There is no Virtue to using a firearm. When attacking with a firearm, your skill is assumed to be Average (+1). If you have an aspect that relates to some firearms proficiency (and assume that most Gaijin do), the skill rating is instead Good (+3), or Superb (+5) if they have the Marksman stunt from page 123. If the target is effectively able to dive out of the way before or as the trigger is pulled, they get to roll a Strength defense. Otherwise, the defense roll is considered Mediocre (+0).

Firearms don't inflict stress like normal attacks. Instead, they go straight to consequences as so:

- If you succeed, you inflict a moderate consequence.
- If you succeed with style, you inflict a severe consequence.
- If you tie, you inflict a minor consequence.
- If you fail, nothing happens-though if the defender succeeds with style, they still get the normal benefit.

Naturally, if the type of consequence is already filled, a higher one must be used. If a firearms attack Takes Out someone, they die. If a person hit with a firearms attack concedes but took a severe or extreme consequence from the firearms attack, they're going to die if they aren't treated very shortly afterward (typically the next scene).

Face Conflicts

A World of Dew handles conflicts of emotional and social manipulation as Beauty and Cunning Risks. As Fate uses its contest and conflict system for all those situations just as they do physical, so does *The Dragonfly's Eye*. However, the tempo of these exchanges—these conflicts of face—tend to feel deliberately different from a conflict like mass murder, so there are changes to how turn order and rhythm go.

The basic rules assume two people against each other, and rules for sides with multiple participants are described afterward.

Initiating a Fate Conflict: First, a face conflict is initiated much as a strike is: one person declares a face attack against another. That attack happens; once this attack is resolved and if the conflict isn't decided, then the conflict continues based on the results of that attack.

This assumes the other side doesn't want to be manipulated. Naturally, if they agree or are amenable, it just happens and isn't a face conflict.

Attacks: When making a face attack (almost always with Beauty or Cunning, depending on the approach), you as a player must make your intent clear to the GM and rest of the group, even if your character is being subversion and trying to con someone. This could be a lasting emotional state, such as "I want the other person to feel genuine regret." This could be a drive to action, such as "I want the



other person to storm out and challenge his brother to a duel." This could also be a drive to inaction, such as "I want the other person to *not* storm out and challenge his brother."

Defense: Other characters defend typically with Courage, though in some cases Cunning (to see through deception) or Wisdom (when worldly knowledge would disprove an attacker's claim) are possible Virtues to defend with.

Failing and Stress: When you attack, you open yourself up to the possibility of stress based on being rebuffed, humiliated, frustrated, and so on. Thus, whoever wins the exchange does face stress to the other based on the number of shifts. A tie still goes to the attacker and generates a boost. Defending with style doesn't grant a boost, since defense instead causes stress.

Regardless of who attacked or defended, it's whoever *fails* that describes the impact that moment has on their character. It's always up to that character's player to describe their emotional state, though they must do so with honor and respect the fact that their character has just taken stress. If you aren't sure how to describe that, ask for suggestions and talk it over with the group. (If the GM thinks you're being too soft on yourself, he'll have you push harder.)

If you're defending and you're taken out, you must respect the attacker's intent as how you feel or are duty-bound to act. If you're attacking and are taken out, then you must respect that you know you're beaten and cannot attempt to re-engage in that same conflict at least until the situation surrounding it radically changes.

After you fail, you have two choices: concede or act. If you were attacked and concede, then you respect the other person's influence on you, but you may interpret it on your terms—such as irritation, anger that keeps you from having a clear head, confusion, etc. If you defended and concede, then you back off sooner than you otherwise might and keep your wits about you; you still can't re-engage that conflict until the situation radically changes.

If you walk away from the face conflict, that is conceding.

Following Exchanges: Provided that neither person has conceded or been taken out, whoever loses goes next. They can attack (possibly attacking their attacker and stating their own contrary or tangential agenda), they can create an advantage relating to the conflict, or they can overcome an advantage created by another.

Typically, if you're looking only to defend in a face conflict, you're going to create advantages on your turn. You use Courage to add to your mental defense, Cunning to find some flaw in an argument, and so on. These rolls might be against a simple target like Fair (+2), your opponent's Beauty or Cunning rank without them rolling, or even a contested roll. Or, if you're looking to overcome an advantage in play, you use the appropriate Virtue against the die result that made that advantage.

If you attempt to overcome or create an advantage on your turn, it becomes the other side's turn afterward. If you instead attack, the side who failed goes next.

MULTIPLE PARTICIPANTS

If one person (or group) is attempting to sway many people, the rhythm and actions differ slightly. It still begins with one attacker targeting any number of people and stating the intent, such as "Make the audience weep," "Rally a crowd of people in despair to hope," or "Enrage the tavern patrons into a brawl."

Multiple Defenders: Each person defending rolls separately against the attacker's single result, and applies stress if they fail. If even one defender fails, then the attacker is considered to succeed—no stress is done based on anyone else's defense. If the best defender result is a tie, then the attacker simply gets a boost and is considered to succeed for the purposes of who goes next. If everyone defending succeeds, though, the attacker loses and takes stress based on the highest success.

Multiple Attackers: Use the teamwork rules from *Fate Core* page 174, provided that others are able to act in concert with you. However, all those aiding take stress if the attack fails.

Single Defender with Allies: If the attacker is targeting one person, and that person is with others who would bolster him, then he gets teamwork benefits for those people who are trying to keep him from being manipulated. However, all those aiding take stress if the defense fails. Those that are also being targeted can't help another person in that moment, and you can only give teamwork benefit to one person at a time.

Decisions and Who Goes Next: If the attacker succeeds, then whoever took the most stress gets to go next, with ties in that regard being handled by group consensus. They decided if they concede or act. If they concede, then the person who took the next-highest stress makes that decision. If someone decides to act before the decision comes to you, you aren't forced to decide to stay in or not on this exchange.


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If the defenders all succeed, then the attacker must decide to concede or continue. If they decide to continue, someone else on the attacker's side gets to go; the attacker goes again immediately if there's no one else on that side.

If you use your action to overcome or create an advantage, then someone else on your side gets to go next. If everyone on your side has gone since the last attack, then the turn goes to any of the attackers. If you use your action to attack, then the next turn is based on the result.

Conceding and Taken Out: If you concede, then you personally accept the situation just as you would in a one-on-one face conflict. The conflict continues without your further action or teamwork benefit.

If you're taken out, then the conflict is over for everyone involved. When you break, those around you crack a little. Everyone else on your side effectively conceded, though in this case they don't earn the fate point for conceding (but still do for any consequences taken).

RECOVERY

Physical stress is cleared off after a few minutes of rest. Physical consequences are addressed (Fate Core page 164) with Wisdom. If a roll to address a physical consequence fails, it might become *Infected*. In any case, failure means that consequence is beyond the means of that person in that situation, and will require someone else or a place with better supplies to address it. (Alternatively, you might succeed at a cost.)

Naturally, the person making the recovery roll must have appropriate supplies, and maybe even assistants, on-hand to attempt the action.

Face stress takes longer to address. To clear face stress, you must go to someplace separate from where the conflict happened, preferably a location that's calming or reaffirming to you, and spend a few minutes to clear your head. Do this, and the stress clears.

Face consequences can be addressed by someone with Beauty, but only in the proper environment-seeking comfort with a geisha, engaging in soothing art, being reassured by your spouse. As with face stress, this must happen in a location away from where the conflict took place.

Time & Advancement

Because characters in *A World of Dew* change slower than is typical in Fate, what you get during various milestones takes a dramatically different shape.

Core to this is the idea of **aspect progression:** where you rename an aspect slightly to reflect a small change in the character, location, or other element. When you've progressed an aspect, put a check next to it; after an aspect has been progressed twice, it can be dramatically renamed (including replaced) the next time you progress it. When you wholly change an aspect—whether by progressing enough, taking an extreme consequence, or for a reason between you and the GM remove the checks you've accumulated on that slot.

If wanted, you could just put a check on the aspect without renaming it. That represents the aspect still being aptly named, but that change is still happening. On the second check, though, it must be renamed or replaced.

Another concept is a **downtime boost**, where because you've done

something in between sessions, you have a single-use invocation available to you in the next session. These always relate to your actions in locations or with organizations in the city, and it tells the story of what your character does when not adventuring on-screen. When vou take one, start the next session by briefly describing what you did and what you earned. An important restriction is that it can't just be based on something that happened during play, but about genuine actions in between sessions—so if you end a session on a cliffhanger, downtime boosts aren't an option at that time. You can name this boost or you can just have it as a free invocation on your high concept. (Visit the





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Fate SRD for more on using boosts: http://fate-srd.com/fate-core/ types-aspects.)

CHARACTERS ADVANCEMENT DURING MILESTONES

For minor milestones, you can choose one:

- Progress an aspect that isn't your high concept. This must reflect what's happened in play, either externally or due to your character's viewpoint changing.
- Take a downtime boost based on fulfilling your high concept.
- Raise your Honor or Ninjo by 1, reducing the other by the same amount. You can't make one of them at 3 and the other at 0. Explain how this change has happened.

Note that the typical options of swapping a skill or stunt aren't available here. If you're dissatisfied with your character, talk to the GM about rebuilding him, but otherwise they don't change as quickly in The Dragonfly's Eye. Because this Fate build doesn't use refresh, taking more stunts based on refresh is also not available.

For significant milestones, in addition to the minor milestone benefit, you get all of:

Put a check in either the Stunt Progression box or the School Progression box. You can only put on in the School Progression box if you've established time training in that school with a master.

Put a check in a Virtue's Progression box (except for your Weakness).

- Address and rename a severe consequence, as standard in Fate Core.
- Add an aspect to a city element that is specifically for you.
- · You can progress your high concept aspect in lieu of progressing another.

When you have checks in your Stunt Progression box equal to the number of stunts you have, erase them and add a new stunt slot. (You can fill it in when you'd like, including right away if you have an idea.) You can also pay one check to swap a stunt for another, provided it's not your School.

When you have four checks in your School Progression box, you can raise your school to the master level (see page 124). If you don't have a school, you can take one.

When you have checks in a Virtue's Progression equal to twice its rating, raise it by one. You can never raise your Weakness. Virtues cannot be raised beyond Fantastic (+6). Naturally, raising one that has a Flaw (see page 118) doesn't also improve the Flaw.

For **major milestones**, take double the significant milestone benefits (including the minor milestone). During a major milestone, you can raise your Honor or Ninjo to 3, leaving the other 0. You also address extreme consequence, as standard in Fate Core.

GM ACTIONS **DURING MILESTONES**

On a **minor milestone**, the GM progresses up to four aspects on city elements: two based on actions that happened during play, and two based on parts of the city that have been ignored—after all, others are constantly scheming and the parts of the city not on-screen aren't safe just because we don't see them.

On **significant and major milestones**, the GM renames aspects relating to that milestones action as appropriate, and progresses those that have been festering in the background. In particular, eyeball the city's overall theme aspect, especially for a major milestone!





Appendix I Meeting Buddha on the Road

Ben Woerner

If you meet the Buddha, kill him.(逢佛殺佛) —Linji

During the development of A World of Dew I ran a lot of playtests, and after the Kickstarter I ran even more games. These thirteen characters were developed during that time, and while each one has been played multiple times by many different players in unique and excellent ways they have become very personal to me and blended into a sort of super Platonic ideal of each character. The cowardly gambler who stood up against the corrupt magistrate and never lost a single gamble. The tired police detective who always had just one more question, and was never paid enough for the crappy job he had. The legitimate merchant with his Portuguese companion and secret cave who held a gun to his own head when negotiating his big payday.

These and so many more characters played by excellent players over this last year have made me come to love this game even more than I thought possible. Now I want to share those characters with you here.

Artist

Concept: Wandering Shamisen Player

Name examples: Kenshin, Tenzin, Sakura, Steely Dan, Yoshida

Rank: 2

Age: Spring

Status: Artisan

Koku: 2

Honor: 1

Ninjo: 2

Desire: To recover your Mother's Shamisen stolen from you by that woman Kachiko





GIRI RANK: 1

You are the creator of art. Through you flows amazing riffs on your fretless three string guitar of awesomeness. Peaceful lullables or rocking ballads all flow from your soul, through your fingers, and out to the world from your simple Shamisen.

Points:

GLORY

Reputation: Plays a mean Shamisen

Rank: 1

Reputation: Skilled with the Blade
Rank: 2 Points: ____

VIRTUES

Beauty: 4	Cunning: 3	Strength: W
Courage: 2	Prowess: 4	Wisdom: 2

FLAWED VIRTUE

Beauty—Plain

You are convincing, and skilled in the things you create, but others do not find you attractive. When trying to seduce anyone your Flaw activates.

ASPECTS

The Talented Hawk

A Monk for Three Days

Luck Exists

ADVANTAGE

In Another Lifetime: For a short time you had another calling. You gain two Ranks of a Glory Reputation in a Giri other than your current Giri. **Tell the Narrator why you are no longer performing that Giri.**

Prodigy: You are dedicated to your School of training. Gain two (2) ranks in a Sword or Sumo School of your choice. If you are not of the proper status to begin normally with any ranks in such a school you must provide your Narrator and Party with an excellent story as to how you've gained such training.

MARTIAL ART SCHOOL

Kenjutsu Water ("Sui") School Rank: 2

Schools of Water teach students to be fluid and ever adapting. Flexibility allows victory. Schools of Water give bonus dice based on a student's Beauty. (+2 vs. Void and Fire Schools)

Doctor

Concept: Herald of Modern Medicine

Name examples: Dr. Dailey, John Matthews, Hiro, Henry Morgan, Victoria Edmunds

Rank: 3

Age: Spring

Status: Peasant

Koku: 3

Honor: 1

Ninjo: 2

Desire: You just healed a woman named Kachiko, now she's dead, find out if it was your fault.

GIRI RANK: 1

You bring comfort, remove poison, and disease within the bodies of those who seek you out. You are a Western trained doctor of European medicine using sterile tools, advanced surgical techniques, and even germ theory and antibiotics if the setting is the 1850s.

GLORY

Reputation: Deft Surgical Hands

Rank: 1

Points: ____

VIRTUES

Beauty: W	Cunning: 3	Strenth: 2
Courage: 3	Prowess: 2	Wisdom: 5

FLAWED VIRTUE

Wisdom—Foolish

You have seen the sights, and you are well read, but you care little about where you are, or what you are doing. Whenever your Wisdom would require you to know something about your current situation your Flaw activates.





ASPECTS

Fall Down Seven Times for the Kami Dumplings Rather than Flowers Luck Exists

ADVANTAGE

Gaijin Gear: You own some western medical texts and surgical tools.

Contacts: People that can provide information, but probably not material aid, from various walks of life. You have as many as your Cunning. Detail them with your Narrator as you need them. Or you may spend a point of Honor or Ninjo to declare an NPC to be a Contact of yours.

Gambler

Concept: Just a man who fits in his time and place

Name examples: Gui-yu-no, Lucky Liu, Golden Gi, Jinora

Age: Spring

Status: Samurai Rank: 4

Koku: ROLL!

Honor: 1

Ninjo: 2

Desire: Have a drink, play a game with your friends, enjoy life, but first get your tatami mat back from that woman Kachiko

GIRI RANK: 1

Others think you live a life of chance. You know better. You find the advantages and take them whenever offered. You're a ronin samurai who realized that life is safer when testing your luck in a gambling hall then on a battlefield. You know that you only win when you seize your advantage.

GLORY

Reputation: One Cool Customer

Points: ____

VIRTUES

Beauty: 2	Cunn
Courage: W	Prowe

Cunning: 4 Prowess: 2

Rank: 1

Strength: 3 Wisdom: 4

FLAWED VIRTUE

Cunning—Trusting

You can lie with a straight face and you notice when something is out of place, but you cannot penetrate the souls of others. When trying to determine if someone is being honest your Flaw activates.

ASPECTS

Wake From Death

The Reverse Side

Luck Exists

ADVANTAGE

Blackmail: You have dirt on someone. You can and may already be blackmailing them for either koku, information, or access. You decide, but be careful it is illegal and can come back to bite you.

Ally: A true friend, someone who wouldn't double cross you and is some position to provide help in one specific area. Work with the Narrator to create this complete character. Start with Three True Things.

Geisha

Concept: Listening for the Truth

Name examples: Sakura, Hiro, Higurashi, Kitsune, Red Mel, San

Age: Spring

Status: Hinin

Koku: 2

Honor: 1

Ninjo: 2

Desire: Find out who killed your friend Kachiko

Rank: 2

GIRI RANK: 1

You are peace and pleasant times personified. You bring calm and serenity wherever you go. Samurai look to you for respite from the harsh realities of life, as do commoners. You are not a woman who sells her virtue. No, you are a woman who





practices the highest arts of entertainment: singing, small talk, gentle speech, instrument playing, and companionship.

GLORY

Reputation: An Ear for Rumors

Points: ____

VIRTUES

Beauty: 4	Cunning: 3	Strength: 2
Courage: 3	Prowess: W	Wisdom: 4

Rank: 1

FLAWED VIRTUE

Beauty—Unimaginative

You are beautiful, and can persuade others with your honeyedtongue but you have no skill at creating works of art. When you try to create any work of art your Flaw activates.

ASPECTS

Do Not Stand in the Melon Field

The Talented Hawk

Entering the Tiger's Cave

ADVANTAGE

Blackmail: You have dirt on someone. You can and may already be blackmailing them for either koku, information, or access. You decide, but be careful it is illegal and can come back to bite you.

Ally: A true friend, someone who wouldn't double cross you and is some position to provide help in one specific area. Work with the Narrator to create this complete character. Start with Three True Things.

Holy Person (Shinto)

Concept: "Zen" Buddhist Charm Selling "Holy Person" **Name examples:** Jubei, Happusai, Honorable Hiro, Daigotsu **Age:** Spring **Status:** Priest **Rank:** N/A

Rank: N/A Koku: Change comes from within

Honor: 1

Ninjo: 2

Desire: Make enough koku to feed myself and spend some time at the Gambling Hall. These Gaijin beads, err, Holy Charms should do the trick. Get that woman Kachiko to pay me the money she owes me from gambling last night.

GIRI RANK: 1

You are devotion to a higher ideal. You are a Buddhist Nun or Priest seeking enlightenment beyond the cares of the mortal realm. You are here to teach others and bring them enlightenment via the Buddha, yeah right, that or make enough money to sleep in a bed.

GLORY

Reputation: Slick Tongue

Rank: 1

Points: ____

VIRTUES

Beauty: 4	Cunning: 4	Strength: 2
Courage: W	Prowess: 3	Wisdom: 2

FLAWED VIRTUE

Cunning—Distracted

You can lie like an actor and tell when others do as well, but you miss important details in the world around you, you're always thinking about your next scheme. When you try to notice what is going on your Flaw activates.

ASPECTS

Do Not Stand in the Melon Field

The Talented Hawk

Dumplings Rather than Flowers

ADVANTAGE:

Blackmail: You have dirt on someone. You can and may already be blackmailing them for either koku, information, or access. You decide, but be careful it is illegal and can come back to bite you.

Gaijin Gear: You found a pistol with a small pouch of dry powder! You have six shots with it, you keep it hidden in your monk robes, and fortunately you're finally away from that monastery your parents sent you too.





Holy Person (Gaijin)

Concept: The Instrument of God's Will

Name examples: Francis Xavier, Brother John, Michael, Father Frank

Age: Spring

Status: Priest (Gaijin)

) **Rank**: N/A **Koku**: Change comes from within

Honor: 1

Ninjo: 2

Desire: Speak to the woman Kachiko again. She told you she had something to confess to you tomorrow, maybe she's converted, or will she finally confess her love for me?

GIRI RANK: 1

You are devotion to a higher ideal. You are a Jesuit Brother bringing the glory of the Holy Jesus's word and Francis Xavier's teachings to the people of Japan. You are here to teach others and bring them enlightenment about Holy Jesus.

GLORY

Reputation: Wise Counselor

Rank: 1 Points: ____

Reputation:	Musketeer	
	Rank: 1	

Points: ____

VIRTUES

Beauty: 4	Cunning: 3	Strength: 3
Courage: 2	Prowess: W	Wisdom: 4

FLAWED VIRTUE

Beauty—Plain

You are convincing, and skilled in the things you create, but others do not find you attractive. When trying to seduce anyone your Flaw activates.

ASPECTS

Do Not Stand in the Melon Field Fall Down Seven Times for the Kami The Reverse Side

Advantage

In Another Lifetime: You weren't always a priest. Once you fought in the Catholic/Protestant Wars in Europe. But those wars opened your eyes to truth and you took orders and became a priest. Worldly desires have not left you, however. You still feel and remember those days, and you carry a small pistol and a plug bayonet under your cassock when you think you might be in danger.

Blessed: Your karmic outlook is good. You may re-roll one Risk per session.

Merchant

Concept: Smuggler, I mean Merchant

Name examples: Ken, Anjin, John Sweets, Han, John Blackthorne

Rank: 2

Age: Spring

Status: Gaijin

Koku: 2

Honor: 1

Ninjo: 2

Desire: Meet Kachiko to deliver my latest shipment, but soon! Oyabun Jambaru-sama wants my head!

GIRI RANK: 1

You are the provider of all needs and wants. You sell people what they want and in exchange they give you koku. You've traveled from the other side of the Earth to arrive here in Japan. Your goods are common and legal and also sometimes rare and prohibited. Some might even call you a Smuggler. However others see you, you have what everyone else wants and you'll give it to them, for a profit.

GLORY

Reputation: Smooth Talking Scoundrel Rank: 1 Points: ____

VIRTUES

Beauty: 3	Prowess: 2
Courage: 4	Strength: 2
Cunning: 4	Wisdom: W





FLAWED VIRTUE

Courage—Fear of Power

You can face down the mightiest beasts, and have no fear when asked to do the unthinkable, but when faced with staring down those of higher status you falter. Your Risk Activates when you are faced with opposition from those with higher Status.

ASPECTS

Luck Exists

An Angry Bull

Entering the Tiger's Cave

ADVANTAGE:

Ally: A true friend, someone who wouldn't double cross you and is some position to provide help in one specific area. His name is Jesus, he's a Portuguese sailor and your right hand man. He's huge (Strength is his primary virtue), only speaks Portuguese and is handy with an old crossbow he carries.

Gaijin/Japanese Gear: You have, you think, the fastest smuggling ship in these waters, she's not much to look at, and needs some repairs, but she's fast and will get you there, plus she has smuggling compartments. You also have your trusty pistol.

Police Inspector

Concept: World Weary Police Inspector

Name examples: Mori-san, Ueda Reiko, Fujitsu Korambo, Murtonari, Dekaru

Age: Spring

Status: Samurai Rank: 4

Koku: 4

Honor: 2

Ninjo: 1

Desire: You just were assigned the case of the murder of the woman Kachiko, find out what happened.

GIRI RANK: 1

You are the hand of justice, literally. You may see yourself with such ideals, or you may be a retired soldier just doing the only job he knows. Either way, you capture criminals and bring them to justice.

GLORY

Reputation: You Always have just one more question
Rank: 1 Points: ____

VIRTUES

Beauty: 3	Cunning: 4	Strength: W
Courage: 2	Prowess: 4	Wisdom: 2

FLAWED VIRTUE

Prowess-Slow

You can acquit yourself well in duels and you know the ways of war, but you are not as fast as others. Whenever you declare a Strike your Flaw activates.

ASPECTS

Luck Exists The Reverse Side A Monk for Three Days

Advantage

Will of Stone: You are built like a small mountain and can weather things better than most. You may endure Injuries up to Rank 6. Treat a Rank 6 injury like a usual Rank 5 injury. You may endure one additional injury of every type before they rank up to a higher injury and you may have a single Rank 5 injury. If you gain a Rank 5 injury you have major damage to your body, but because you are so strong you may drag yourself along and still act. Of course, your opponent(s) can still tag your injuries.

Heart of Stone: You are not easily swayed by the sweet words and looks of those who are Beautiful and honey-tongued. Gain two dice to any Risk when someone with True Beauty, Stylish, or a Beauty related Aspect (Narrator's call) tries to convince you of something.





MARTIAL ARTS SCHOOL Katana Wind ("Fu") School Rank: 1

Schools of Wind teach students to watch an opponent carefully and deduce his weaknesses. Schools of Wind give bonus dice based on a student's Cunning. You gain +2 Bonus dice versus Earth (Strength) and Water (Beauty) Schools.

Ronin

Concept: Wandering Sellsword

Name examples: Kenshin, Hiro, Sanjuro, Mugen-ko, Shimada Kambei

Age: Spring

Status: Samurai Rank: 4 Koku: 4

Honor: 2

Ninjo: 1

Desire: To pay Kachiko for the room she rented to you last night.

GIRI RANK: 1

You are the wave without an ocean or shore to crash upon. Once you served a daimyo, but now your daimyo is dead, or you have been let go from service. Why are you still alive if your daimyo is dead? Why do you grip so tightly to this life and this world? Will this stain of honor ever wash away? Or do you not care? Who or what do you serve now?

GLORY

Reputation: Fast Hands

Rank: 1

Points:

VIRTUES

Beauty: W Courage: 4 Cunning: 3 Prowess: 4 Strength: 2 Wisdom: 2

FLAWED VIRTUE None

Aspects Entering the Tiger's Cave Fall Down Seven Times for the Kami

Wake From Death

ADVANTAGE

Prodigy: You are dedicated to your School of training. Gain two (2) ranks in a Sword or Sumo School of your choice. If you are not of the proper status to begin normally with any ranks in such a school you must provide your Narrator and Party with an excellent story as to how you've gained such training.

MARTIAL ARTS SCHOOL

Katana Fire ("Ka") School Rank: 3

Schools of Fire teach students that action and forward motion is the key to success. Schools of Fire give bonus dice based on a student's Courage. +2 Bonus Dice vs Void (Wisdom) and Wind (Cunning).

Servant

Concept: Faithful Servant—Unseen Presence Name examples: Ji-haka-masu, Jin-Ro, Hotaro, Lin, Yue Age: Spring Status: Burakumin Rank: 0 Koku: 0 Honor: 1 Ninjo: 2

Desire: To give this gift to Lady Kachiko from your Master

GIRI RANK: 1

You are the perfectly placed rice bowl, the repaired armor, the night soil removed, the delivered note, and the bribe paid for your master. You work for a master of some sort be it a samurai lord or a merchant prince. Either way you are a trusted personal servant to your master and they trust you. Perhaps you are here because your master wants you to keep an eye on these others she has hired, or perhaps your master does not know what you do when she is not there and cares not what you do as long as it serves your purposes, which are her purposes. Or perhaps you are working to be free of your master, either way you live to serve.





MASTER Three True Things:__

GLORY

Reputation: Attention to Detail

Points: ____

VIRTUES

Beauty: 2	Cunning: 4	
Courage: 4	Prowess: 2	

Rank: 1

Strength: W Wisdom: 3

FLAWED VIRTUE

None

ASPECTS

The Talented Hawk

Fall Down Seven Times for the Kami

Dumplings Rather than Flowers

Advantage

The Gift: The Kami, God, or Fate has granted you some special ability. Your Gift is that you turn into an Invisible Ghost for short periods of time, it is linked to your Cunning. You have all the advantages and disadvantages a Ghost has. There's also a gnawing at your stomach for flesh when you stay in your Ghost form too long. You may activate this ability a number of times equal to your Cunning (4) per session.

Soldier

much you love her.

Concept: Honorable and Devoted Name examples: Jin-Ro, Sun, San, Fuu, Age: Spring Status: Ashigaru (Peasant) Sergeant Rank: 4 Koku: 4 Honor: 1 Ninjo: 2 Desire: To summon the Courage to tell Lady Kachiko how

GIRI RANK: 1

You are your master's sword, his spear and his glory! You are a warrior trained to fight. You are Samurai and as a Bushi you have trained your entire life to be the pinnacle of fighting perfection. You are you are not an honorless Ronin, you fight for your master and physically defend his cause, be he a Daimyo, the Shogun, or a European Merchant. Commanding Officer:

GLORY

V----

Reputation: Devoted to y	our School	and Love
Ran	k: 1	Points:

VIRIUES		
Beauty: 2	Cunning: 2	Strength:
Courage: 3	Prowess: 4	Wisdom:

FLAWED VIRTUE

Prowess—Obvious

You know the devilry that is massed combat, and you are not slow, but your moves are obvious. When you find yourself in a duel you are easily understood and your Flaw activates.

ASPECTS

An Angry Bull

Fall Down Seven Times for the Kami

Entering the Tiger's Cave

ADVANTAGE

Sensei: Your Master of your Giri (or School) has taken a liking to you and favors you over others. They will impart wisdom and help you on your path to greater Glory. But they expect more from you. If you perform all the extra duties your Sensei demands of you once per every three increases in appropriate Glory Reputation Ranks you will gain another Giri Rank.

Bloodline: You are descended from lofty ancestors. Your Status is one higher than your current position dictates. This matters not to characters of Imperial Status or Holy Persons and they cannot take it, and it is rare for Gaijin unless they are some sort of royalty, not just noble.



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MARTIAL ARTS SCHOOL

Naginata Earth ("Chi") School Rank: 1

Schools of the Earth teach students supreme confidence in both mental and physical tests. Schools of Earth give bonus dice based on a student's Strength. +2 Bonus Dice vs. Water (Beauty) and Fire (Courage) schools.

Sumo Wrestler

Concept: With Great Strength Comes...

Name examples: FUJI! KUJIN! MOTONARISAMABUEGI! KANDO!

Age: Spring

Status: Hinin Rank: 2 Koku: 2

Honor: 1

Ninjo: 2

Desire: Get the money Lady Kachiko owes you for protection last week.

GIRI RANK: 1

You are the wall of honor. You are the sacred defender. The man who the kami has destined to never flinch, to never move, but only to move others. You are Sumo. You are the Rock, the Earth, none can stop you once you start. You were most likely raised from birth in a Sumo school to master this ancient, honorable, and religious art form of sacred fighting. You may be a champion or a failure. You may still be part of your fighting school, or perhaps you've hired out your services as a bodyguard to a merchant, a smuggler, a geisha, or a Yakuza boss. Whatever you do, no one can stop you.

STABLE MASTER:

Three True Things:

GLORY

Reputation: Rising Sumo Star Rank: 1

Points: ____

VIRTUES

Beauty: 2

Courage: 3

Cunning: 2

Prowess: W

Strength: 5

Wisdom: 3

FLAWED VIRTUE

None

ASPECTS

An Angry Bull Fall Down Seven Times for the Kami Do Not Stand in the Melon Field

ADVANTAGE

Sensei: Your Master of your Giri (or School) has taken a liking to you and favors you over others. They will impart wisdom and help you on your path to greater Glory. But they expect more from you. If you perform all the extra duties your Sensei demands of you once per every three increases in appropriate Glory Reputation Ranks you will gain another Giri Rank.

MARTIAL ARTS SCHOOL

Sumotori Mutoh Style School Rank: 1

Students of the Mutoh School learn to face all enemies head on without fear. They will even employ techniques to frighten their opponents such as early splitting roars and great slaps to their own chests. Mutoh Students gain a bonus based on the student's Courage. Mutoh students gain a (+2) bonus against students of Rikidozan and Tarokichi Schools.

Чакиза

Concept: A Street Rat with a Heart of Gold

Name examples: Gorgeous Jin, Red, Black Lotus, Fuu, Golden Mei

Rank: 1

Age: Spring

Status: Hinin

Koku: 10

Honor: 2

Ninjo: 1

Desire: To get back into your Oyabun, Lady Kachiko's, good graces.





GIRI RANK: 1

You are a protector of the common man You are the provider of illicit goods and services. And you defend those illegal actions with violence and intimidation. You are a member of a Chivalrous Organization. Your deeds are tattooed on your body, your oyabun knows you better than your own mother, and your brothers in arms always have your back as long as you have theirs.

GLORY

Reputation: Street Rat with a Heart of Gold Rank: 1 Points:

VIRTUES

Beauty: 3	Cunning: 4	Strength: 2
Courage: 4	Prowess: W	Wisdom: 2

FLAWED VIRTUE

Courage—Fear of Mortality

You can perform any dirty deed and scoff at the ranks of those in power. But when faced with the flashing blade of a duelist, the claws of a beast, or the Execution Grounds your Flaw activates.

ASPECTS

Luck Exists

A Monk for Three Days

Do Not Stand in the Melon Field

ADVANTAGE

Gaijin/Japanese Gear: A pistol with six shots, and an old axe you took off a dead Gaijin soldier.

Wealthy: You have more koku then you can spend or perhaps you are from a wealthy family. Maybe you're a rich Gaijin Merchant who has returned to Japan for even more wild profits. Whatever your reason you want for nothing. You have the best clothes, weapons, horses, food, and entertainment.

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New rules include:

- How to tell Japanese horror stories
- In-depth rules for playing Yakuza and Geisha
- How to play Shinobi/Ninja
- Smuggling and Piracy
- Custom ship design
- New rules for forging and using magic weapons
- Full conversion rules to play using the Fate system
- A full Protocol game written in Old Japan
- A complete set of pre-generated characters for immediate use in any game

Dive deeper into the World of Dew with the Sound of Water.



At the ancient pond An old frog plunges into The sound of water - Basho

