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KITSUNE MORI

CAMPAIGN SETTING

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KITSUNE MORI

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■ TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction. **pg 5**

Chapter 1. Characters

Humans. **pg 7**

Real World Religion and Kitsunemori. **pg 10**

Kitsune. **pg 12**

The Kitsune Fox Form. **pg 15**

Backgrounds. **pg 16**

Bushido. **pg 19**

Chapter 2. Classes

Core Classes. **pg 23**

Class Concepts. **pg 28**

Martial Artist. **pg 29**

Samurai. **pg. 30**

Sohei. **pg 30**

The Courtier Class. **pg 31**

The Myobu. **pg 36**

The Nogitsune. **pg 40**

Chapter 3. Character Options

Prestige. **pg 45**

Trickery and Deceit. **pg 49**

Shrines. **pg 52**

Feats. **pg 58**

Skills. **pg 56**

Flaws. **pg 61**

Chapter 4. Equipment

Weapons. **pg 64**

Armor. **pg 70**

Goods. **pg 72**

Chapter 5. Magic

Hearth Magic. **pg 75**

Wards. **pg 77**

Lore Charms. **pg 78**

Healing Charms. **pg 80**

Worship Charms. **pg 81**

Blessings and Curses. **pg 83**

Geomancy. **pg 84**

The Tao of Elemental Resonance. **pg 85**

Geomantic Arrays. **pg 86**

Magatama. **pg 88**

Fox Magic. **pg 90**

Map of Kitsunemori. **pg 98**

Chapter 6. Kitsunemori

Ametsuchi: The Pillars of Heaven and Earth.
pg 100

The Kami. **pg 102**

Greater Deities. **pg 103**

Lesser Deities. **pg 103**

The Seven Lucky Gods. **pg 105**

Spirits. **pg 106**

The Empire. **pg 107**

The Yonhosu Valley. **pg 112**

The Toukai Han. **pg 113**

The Akaki Han. **pg 116**

The Sairuuykoe Han. **pg 118**

Sohei Temple Map. **pg 122**

The Yamaken Han. **pg 123**

Shrine to Inari Map. **pg 125**

Prominent Figures in the Yonhosu Valley. **pg 126**

Calendar. **pg 133**

Holidays and Days of Importance. **pg 136**

Chapter 7. GM's Section

The Story of Hanumachi. **pg 139**

Heavenly Halberd of the Marsh. **pg 140**

Chapter 8. Adventures In Kitsunemori

Suggestions for Game Masters. **pg 142**

Story Seeds and Adventure Hooks. **pg 143**

Chapter 9. FOREST DENIZENS

Bakemono. **pg 145**

Baku - The Eater of Dreams. **pg 146**

River Dragon. **pg 148**

Gaki. **pg 150**

Jikininki - The Corpse Eating Priest. **pg 153**

Kappa. **pg 154**

Kijo. **pg 156**

Ki-No-O-Bake. **pg 157**

Moon Folk. **pg 158**

Nukekubi. **pg 160**

Oni. **pg 162**

Akuma. **pg 163**

Amanojaku. **pg 165**

Kumo. **pg 166**

Samebito. **pg 169**

Shikigami. **pg 170**

Tanuki. **pg 172**

Temple Guardians. **pg 173**

Tengu. **pg 175**

Yuki-Onna. **pg 176**

Glossary. **pg 178**

Bibliography. **pg 193**

Index. **pg 194**

OGL. **pg 197**





INTRODUCTION

The sun dawns upon the thick canopy of tightly-knit treetops, giving the mist an otherworldly radiance as it wraps lazily around the trunks and underbrush. The only relief from the ocean of green is the roads, maintained by the local authorities to ease travel, and the occasional pointed roof of a Shinto shrine. A few travelers are already making their way, trudging along muddy roads that have not yet been set with paving stones, checking to ensure their papers are in order for the border outposts that control traffic between the different feudal lands.

A lone wanderer wipes the morning dew off his thick traveling cloak and spots a small shrine on one side of the road. The man is not particularly religious, but he recognizes to whom the shrine is dedicated. Careful not to incite the wrath of the spirit of the shrine, the traveler

stops to leave a small morsel as an offering at the paw of a stone statue of a fox. The man utters a short prayer before quickly walking away.

As soon as the traveler is out of view, the stone statue transforms into a real fox and eats the offering, twisting its four tails in the direction of the traveler to grant the man a small blessing as a way of thanks. The fox then scampers into the underbrush, planning its mischief for the day.

This is a typical scene in *Kitsunemori—The Fox Forest*. A setting based on a variety of Japanese folktales and myths, *Kitsunemori* is centered around the kitsune, the enigmatic fox spirits that are both heroes and villains in many tales.

You will need the Core Rule Books in order to play, but otherwise this book contains everything you need to create stories rooted in Japanese myths and legends.



WHAT IS KITSUNEMORI

Kitsunemori is a self-contained setting that describes a small area—the Yonhousu Valley—of an otherwise unspecified world. You can insert the *Kitsunemori* setting into a larger, pre-existing world, expand the setting, or simply limit travel to the four lands detailed here.

You will also find a collection of new rules to give a d20 game a more mythic Oriental flavor, from racial traits and classes available to kitsune characters to new feats, monsters, spells, and magic. Any or all of these options can be adapted for use in other types of d20 games as well.

OVERVIEW

Kitsunemori is divided into eight chapters for ease of use:

Chapter I: Characters contains rules for creating a character in *Kitsunemori*, including details about the two standard races (human and kitsune) as well as background information to help you flesh out a character's history.

Chapter II: Classes describes how to adapt the standard d20 fantasy classes for use in *Kitsunemori*. The chapter also introduces two kitsune classes (the myobu and the nogitsune) and a new socially oriented class (the courtier), as well as suggestions on how to multiclass in order to realize popular Japanese concepts such as the samurai, ninja, and Shinto priest.

Chapter III: Character Options presents the concept of prestige as well as a system to calculate how much experience kitsune receive for their trickery. This chapter also discusses the importance of shrines and contains new feats and kitsune racial vulnerabilities.

Chapter IV: Equipment consists of a collection of useful items with a Japanese flavor. Much of this equipment obeys the conventions of myth rather than the laws of physics, and some equipment options blur the boundary between masterwork and magical equipment.

Chapter V: Magic presents new wards and charms for both humans and kitsune, as well as fox magic, a new system of racial powers that only kitsune can wield.

Chapter VI: Kitsunemori details the Yonhosu Valley, a small region covered by the haunted Fox Forest, where the kitsune frolic in hidden glens and from which they venture into human lands to wreak havoc and convey the favors of the gods. This chapter includes plot hooks for stories based in *Kitsunemori* and describes the main storyline, which revolves around protecting the whole valley (and possibly the world) from a rising threat. The chapter also includes stats and descriptions of prominent NPC's in the *Kitsunemori* setting, as well as detailed information on the customs and traditions of the people of the Yonhosu Valley.

Chapters VII - VIII: give background, plot hooks and other information for GM's to run a game in *Kitsunemori*.

Chapter VII: Forest Denizens offers statistics and descriptions for the many creatures who inhabit *Kitsunemori*. This chapter presents several monsters based on Japanese mythology, from the playful tanuki to several kinds of terrifying demons.

SOURCES OF INSPIRATION

Kitsunemori is deeply rooted in the myths of both ancient and modern Japan. Many tales have inspired this setting, from those passed down for hundreds of years to those recently published. The folktales, legends, and imagery that inspired *Kitsunemori* come from popular media such as video games, movies, and Japanese manga and anime as much as they do from historical and mythological sources. Thus, *Kitsunemori* represents a mythic version of medieval Japan, not a historical or factual one.

The kitsune themselves were obviously the main inspiration for this book. They are intriguing creatures featured in many Japanese folktales as well as in actual history, and they have been reinterpreted in various ways in modern popular media. Kitsune are bringers of mischief and misery, and so many people are quick to classify them as demons. But kitsune are also messengers of the god Inari, patron of rice, life, and fertility, and are thus also benevolent beings. In both conceptions, kitsune are described as playful, cunning, charming, and utterly dangerous.

Other staples of Japanese myth included in *Kitsunemori* are the tanuki, tengu, and kappa, as well as the evil oni and the ambiguous bakemono. In many instances, monster descriptions deviate from those found in traditional folklore; these monsters are presented as fantasy races and as creatures inspired by Japanese folklore rather than strict re-creations. Shinto mingles with Buddhism to create a cosmological backdrop for the setting, but a thorough knowledge of either is not necessary.

Another inspiration for *Kitsunemori* was the chambara genre as represented in comics and animation, which features heroic samurai and masterless ronin bravely crossing swords for the sake of honor. Of course, no mythic Japanese setting would be complete without the ninja, the legendary shadow warriors who could master all sorts of magical powers. In *Kitsunemori*, most of the legends are real.



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CHARACTERS

Making a character for *Kitsunemori* is similar to creating a character for any other d20 fantasy game: determine ability scores, select a race, select a class, choose skills and feats. While the mechanics are mostly the same, you'll want to think about what kind of character you want to play and how it fits in with the mythic Japanese flavor of *Kitsunemori*. Don't be afraid to resort to popular movies or other media for inspiration. Is your character a runaway ronin working as an assassin while biding his time for revenge? Is she a young kitsune who fell in love with a cursed monk and is in search of a cure for him? Is he a one-eyed ninja master or the ninja's defiant kunoichi companion?

Races in *Kitsunemori*

The only two races automatically available for play in *Kitsunemori* are human and kitsune. You can introduce other races at the Game Master's discretion only, as more than a few races found in standard fantasy d20 games can break the mood established in *Kitsunemori*. Dwarves and elves come from a mostly European body of myth and are the least appropriate for inclusion. Gnomes and halflings, on the other hand, share in the worldwide tradition of "little people" and can be incorporated without much change, although by making them enigmatic woodland creatures, they become more mysterious and less amicable with humans. Characters of other races can be introduced as travelers from afar, such as exotic weapon dealers, wandering mystics, adventurous entertainers, or zealous missionaries.

HUMANS

Passing on their traditions to the younger generations and making their living from the land, humans have lived in the Yonhosu Valley for many hundreds of years. As the valley is relatively isolated, history moves slowly and life there takes a while to catch up with

developments in the surrounding lands. Humans, despite being comfortably settled on the land, are restless in spirit, and the four provinces in the valley witness a great deal of migration as people move within and across borders.

Playing Humans

As is true everywhere they settle, humans in the Yonhosu Valley encompass a wide variety of backgrounds and occupations, from poor vagabonds who eke out a living as wandering tinkers to rich landlords who exploit the toil of peasants.



A human in *Kitsunemori* firmly believes in his conscious mind that the world belongs to him, but deep in his subconscious, there's an instinctive fear of the surrounding woodland, which teems with forces that implicitly challenge humanity's supremacy, though these forces rarely present themselves openly.

Most of the humans in the Yonhosu Valley have ties to the land that date back for generations; thus, they know which parts of the woods are the most haunted and what roads are the safest. As rooted as they might be, humans are no strangers to travel - thanks to the network of roads, bridges, and watch outposts that covers the face of the valley. Many peasants walk the distance between villages to get new tools, sell their crops or crafts, or tender their services. Tax collectors leave no village unvisited, and patrols within the same province often change headquarters as needed.

Because of their insularity, the inhabitants of the Yonhosu Valley have a distinct accent and local dialect that helps them be recognized elsewhere in the empire but that also marks strangers and visitors in Yonhosu. The richer the visitor seems, the less distrust the Yonhosu people will show, with poor travelers and vagabonds earning hard stares and often rude behavior behind a thin veneer of hospitality.

Human Territories

Although humans call the whole of Yonhosu their own, they share the land with a variety of unofficial neighbors into whose territories they dare not trespass. The real human domain is limited to the villages, cities, farmlands, and roads along with a few patches of woodland that they are allowed to exploit by the supernatural forest creatures.

The Yonhosu Valley is bordered by the Torayama Mountains on the east and the Shirokage mountain chain to the north and west. Numerous rivers wind their way through the valley towards the sea to the south. Access to the Yonhosu Valley is limited, to a few mountain passes and rivers that connect the provinces to their neighbors. For information on the Yonhosu Valley, please see [Chapter VI: Kitsunemori](#).

Human characters in *Kitsunemori* can hail from a settlement in any of the four provinces in Yonhosu:

Toukai: The oldest of the provinces in the Yonhosu Valley, Toukai is the commercial center of the valley. It has the best roads and well-equipped guards, although

security is a little loose and the authorities show signs of increasing corruption. The people of Toukai are considered shrewd and not very trustworthy.

Akaki: Blanketed by the lush redpine forests of the north, this province is the lumber capitol of the valley. The Akaki forests have a mysterious lack of supernatural inhabitants to protect them, and, therefore, humans feel emboldened to cut down the trees and ship them down river to Sairyuukoe and Toukai. Akaki woodsmen are rough and pragmatic, used to surviving and exploring in the wilderness.

Sairyuukoe: This province gets its name from the multiple navigable rivers that cross its land, creating an extremely efficient transportation and communication network. The governor of Sairyuukoe and his officials are utterly corrupt. Murmurs of rebellion ripple through Sairyuukoe and though a revolution has yet to spark, which has sparked a revolt movement that has not yet sparked, but the movement is only waiting for the right chance to do so. Humans of Sairyuukoe appreciate the arts and respect travelers, being among the most open-minded people in the valley.

Yamaken: The thickest part of Kitsunemori lies within the border of Yamaken. A haven for mystics and religious people, Yamaken has a great number of shrines and geomantic power nodes, which brings the people good fortune. The Inari shrine rests within Yamaken, and this province has the largest population of kitsune, which makes the humans more respectful of the land and a tad bit more superstitious.

The Empire: The provincial lords of Yonhosu owe allegiance to a higher authority, being part of the larger empire that lies outside the mountain walls that enclose most of the valley. This empire is an unspecified land, free for players and Game Masters to define, although it bears similarities to post-Heian Japan. The empire is a land that's slowly but surely breaking down as imperial authority collapses and the warrior class gains power.

Human Territories

Humans in *Kitsunemori* have organized themselves along feudal lines. The Yonhosu Valley contains four provinces, or hans, each with its own governor and system of government. Due to the weakened imperial power, the han lords are mostly autonomous inside their borders.

Social Status

While the concept of caste is not recognized officially, there's a default system of social hierarchies that people are all too aware of. The ruling class is almost untouchable, appointed by divine authority even if held accountable by earthly concerns. Priests and all manner of holy men are treated with utmost respect, even those that show unseemly behavior. The rising warrior class, the samurai, is a dynamic force that's wresting power from the effete nobles. Akaki, for example, is effectively ruled by a warlord, not an aristocrat. Below these respected class, the merchants and peasants struggle to gain recognition, although the merchants are in a much better position thanks to the financial assets they control.

Human society is steeped in tradition, and respect and honor are fundamental values. People are expected to show proper deference to those of higher station, to obey the orders of superiors without question, and to work for the good of their family, clan, guild, or other organization, putting the needs of the group ahead of their own.

Education

The empire is highly advanced in terms of education, boasting several schools and numerous tutors to spread the written word as well as the history and arts of the culture. The problem is that access to education is mostly limited to those with the money to pay for it, as there's no law that would provide education to the lower class. A few temples and shrines marshal their resources to teach small classes in the surrounding communities, but they're the exception rather than the norm. There are also instances of rogue teachers who have left important posts in the major cities to impart their knowledge to grateful peasants in small villages.

A special type of school that teaches a specific art form, from flower arranging to the martial arts, is called a dojo. A martial arts dojo is the responsibility of a single family that has developed its own fighting style and teaches it to promising apprentices. Most dojos only accept the heirs of wealthy families as well as members of the samurai class, but there are also a few humble dojos that have grown because they admit students based on talent, not social standing.

Communication and Transportation

A system of roads and paths connects most settlements, with the most important trade roads heavily monitored by patrols, watchtowers, and traffic checkpoints. Villages typically consist of a number of farms surrounding a small central commercial area that has a few stores and other businesses. People are used to traveling a lot, either to reach their own village center or to visit other villages in hopes of obtaining better offers for their merchandise.

Transit is monitored through checkpoints and border outposts. Officials at these posts ask travelers for their passport, a piece of wood with the person's name and village of origin carved on the surface, the issuing authority's fire-etched seal attesting to the document's authenticity. Depending on the state of affairs, checkpoint officials may arrest a traveler without a passport, turn him back, or charge him a fine (or extort a bribe) to let him pass.

Professional couriers also tread the roads, carrying mail and special messages back and forth. Each courier bears a special seal on her passport to indicate her



status; the higher her status, as indicated by the type of seal, the less time she needs to wait at a checkpoint before being allowed to pass.

In most of the valley, but particularly in Sairyuukoe, river transport is a fast alternative to the roads, and many ferries take people and goods from one port to another along the many navigable bodies of water. Even though these waters offer swift transport, they are not without danger, as strange creatures often lurk in their depths.

Gender Roles

Officially, human society is a patriarchy, with women holding far fewer rights than men. However, in the villages and towns, particularly in Yamaken and Sairyuukoe, a shadow matriarchy rules thanks to the importance of priestesses and midwives. Although barred from official positions of power, females can gain importance through other outlets, particularly the ninja and the yakuza, who defy established societal norms. Women may also find great opportunities as Buddhist and Shinto monks. In traditional Shinto practice, women were considered impure due to their menstruation. However, in the world of *Kitsunemori*, priestesses may wield great power and authority. There are very few instances of female samurai, but the wives and daughters of established warriors sometimes take up training in arms and fight alongside their male relatives.

Religion

There are two main religions practiced in the empire: Shinto and Buddhism. Shinto (“the way of the gods”) is the main religion and indigenous to *Kitsunemori*, with all manner of shrines and temples throughout the land. Shinto is an animistic religion that honors a multitude of gods and sacred spirits called kami. These kami are often deified aspects of nature and concepts important to life, such as the sun, the moon, rain, thunder, trees, fertility, and destruction. Other kami are the spirits of ancestors revered by their descendants as minor divinities. Paramount among all kami is the sun goddess, Amaterasu, progenitor of the Imperial line (though other families trace their lineage to a kami as well).

In Shinto, there are no absolutes. There is no absolute wrong and right, and no one is perfect. All people are thought to be fundamentally good in nature, and evil is believed to be caused by the influence of malevolent spirits. As a consequence, most Shinto rituals are con-

cerned with driving out evil spirits or keeping them at bay through purification and offerings to specific kami. Both men and women are allowed to join the Shinto priesthood, and they’re usually permitted to marry and have children. (The white-clad *Miko*, who must remain unmarried, are the exception.) Shinto shrines are places of worship and the home of kami. Most shrines regularly celebrate festivals (*matsuri*) to expose the kami to the world beyond the shrine.

Buddhism was introduced later to Japan and was rapidly adopted by many. Buddhism espouses a path of personal enlightenment and honors the Buddha, a being who transcended the mortal coil and dispenses infinite wisdom from the heavens, with many lesser enlightened beings (*bodhisattva*) acting as agents in the world of mortals. The central aim of Buddhist practice is to end the cycle of rebirth (or reincarnation) through the awakening of an individual to ultimate truth (or *dharma*) and the eventual achievement of peace and liberation (called *nirvana*). The Great Wheel of Existence, the cycle of reincarnation, is ruled by the laws of karma, of cause and effect: positive actions beget positive results, while negative conduct brings only negative consequences. Karma can reward the enlightened and also punish evildoers with retribution

REAL WORLD RELIGION AND KITSUNEMORI

Kitsunemori is a fictional setting, and while the religions depicted herein bear some resemblance to their real-world counterparts, the genuine Shinto and Buddhist faiths are much more intricate and nuanced than the simple guidelines presented here would suggest. Game Masters and players are encouraged to read further on Shinto and Buddhism, as it may bring greater depth and detail to the game. Any suggestion in this book that these religions have evil applications is done strictly for the purpose of creating interesting game play. If your gaming group is uncomfortable dealing with religions that have real-world analogues, consider adapting a basic polytheist framework, such as the one found in the core d20 fantasy rules, for use in *Kitsunemori* by changing the names of the gods to better suit the flavor of the setting.

in this and subsequent lives. Buddhism offers a path to freedom from the cycle of suffering, death, and rebirth through the principles of dharma, or ultimate truth. Truth is at the core of Buddhism, and a Buddhist could spend a lifetime investigating the Four Noble Truths: 1) all worldly life is unsatisfying, disjointed, and full of suffering; 2) the root of all suffering is attachment or desire; 3) there is an end to suffering in nirvana; and 4) there is a path that leads out of suffering, and that is the Noble Eightfold Path. The Noble Eightfold Path consists of 1) right understanding, 2) right intention, 3) right speech, 4) right action, 5) right livelihood, 6) right effort, 7) right mindfulness, and 8) right concentration. Individuals are to adhere to Five Precepts on their path to enlightenment: 1) to refrain from harming living creatures (killing), 2) to refrain from taking that which is not freely given (stealing), 3) to refrain from sexual misconduct (sex outside of marriage, adultery, rape, incest, and bestiality), 4) to refrain from incorrect speech (lying, slander, and harsh language), and 5) to refrain from intoxicants, which dull the mind. Buddhist monks are often celibate, having taken an augmented version of the Third Precept.

Over the centuries, the two religions have commingled, and many people profess to follow aspects of both, pursuing enlightenment while at the same time honoring the gods and some famous enlightened Buddhist spirits who have ascended to the rank of kami. Many Buddhists see kami as manifestations of the Buddha or bodhisattvas. In *Kitsunemori*, both religions coexist harmoniously.

Each religion has many sects embracing different aspects of the main philosophy. For example, the samurai have begun to embrace Zen, a branch of Buddhism that extols a life of strict discipline—something that resonates strongly with the samurai way of life. Both religions have sects that have divorced themselves from the main philosophy and have turned onto evil paths: Shinto priests may worship demons, and Buddhist cultists may follow an immoral path toward enlightenment.

In *Kitsunemori*, all magic is seen as divine in nature whether it flows from faith or from arcane knowledge. Only a handful of priests and shrine maidens can muster the necessary faith or enlightenment to harness divine magic, and the power attributed to arcane magicians is slowly fading as a dark age approaches. The **onmyouji**, sorcerer-priests who advised the old emperor, are beginning to die out, their knowledge forgotten as they fail to find apprentices to receive

their lore. Lone sennin, wandering mystics, still wield considerable arcane might but are rarely seen in human lands.

Names

Traditionally in the West, the family name, or surname, is placed after the first, or given, name. Naming customs among humans in the Yonhosu Valley, however, dictate that the surname be placed first and the given name second. The surname can be either a family or clan name, or even a place of origin if a person is poor. Nobles and high-class samurai still put the particle no (“who belongs to”) between both names and use multiple surnames to specify their allegiance to family and clan. Commoners forego this practice for expediency’s sake and use only surname and given name, or sometimes only the latter.

Sample Surnames: Akechi, Ando, Chikamatsu, Daishi, Enoki, Fuchida, Fukuoka, Fukuzawa, Hagiwara, Hama, Hasegawa, Hida, Hideyoshi, Hiroyuki, Hoshino, Ibuka, Imamura, Ishinomori, Jumonji, Kanada, Katayanagi, Kikugawa, Kitano, Kojima, Kondo, Kurusu, Matsumara, Minamoto, Morioka, Motoori, Musashi, Nakasone, Ohka, Onishi, Otomo, Saeki, Satoh, Sayuki, Shimizu, Shiratori, Sugiyama, Takabe, Takishita, Tommii, Toru, Uehara, Ushiba, Watabe, Yamakage, Yamato, Yoshida.

Sample Male Names: Akihiro, Akira, Atsumichi, Dayu, Eisen, Ekiken, Eisuke, Fujio, Fumihiko, Gennai, Gennosuke, Go, Hachiro, Haruke, Heikichi, Hideo, Hikaru, Hisato, Hitoshi, Ichiro, Ikku, Iwao, Jotaro, Kanbe, Kaoru, Kazu, Kei, Keitaro, Kenshin, Kinnojo, Kohei, Koto, Kozue, Kyoshi, Manobu, Masahiko, Masamune, Misao, Mokichi, Nori, Noritada, Rintaro, Rosanjin, Shoichi, Shoyo, Subaru, Tadaaki, Taizo, Takejiro, Tanzan, Tsukasa, Tsutomu, Ukyo, Yachi, Yoichibei, Yoshida, Yoshitsune, Yuichi, Yuko, Yusuke.

Sample Female Names: Ami, Arisa, Ayane, Chie, Chisato, Emiko, Echiko, Fumiko, Hanae, Gemmei, Haruko, Hiroko, Hisako, Ichi, Izumi, Kaede, Kaori, Katsue, Keiko, Kimiko, Kita, Kiyomi, Kumi, Kyoko, Madoka, Maiko, Mari, Masami, Midori, Maya, Mina, Mitsuko, Mio, Momoko, Nanami, Nao, Natsumi, Otsune, Rei, Rumiko, Ruri, Sadako, Sakue, Sayoko, Sen, Saya, Tama, Tomoe, Tsuki, Tomoko, Ume, Yae, Yui, Yuko, Yuriko, Yuya.

Racial Traits

The racial traits of human characters are the same as listed in the *Player’s Handbook*.

COMMON SURNAME ELEMENTS

aka (red)	ki (tree)	numa (marsh)
ao (blue)	kita (north)	oka (hill)
asa (shallow)	kiyo (pure)	saka (slope)
fuka (deep)	kuro (black)	saki/zaki (cape/edge)
hashi/bashi (bridge)	mae (front)	sawa/zawa (stream)
hata/bata (cropfield)	matsu (pinewood)	shima/jima (island)
hayashi/bayashi (wood)	minami (south)	shita/shimo (lower)
higashi (east)	mizu (water)	sugi (cedar)
lke (pond)	mori (forest)	ta/da (ricefield)
ishi (stone)	moto (near)	take (bamboo)
ita (board)	mura (village)	tani (valley)
iwa (rock)	naka (in)	tsuka (below)
kawa (river)	nishi (west)	uchi (in)
	no (plain)	ue/kami (upper)
		yama (mountain)
		yoko (side)
		yone (rice)



You can assemble your character's surname from common elements that carry a specific meaning.

KITSUNE

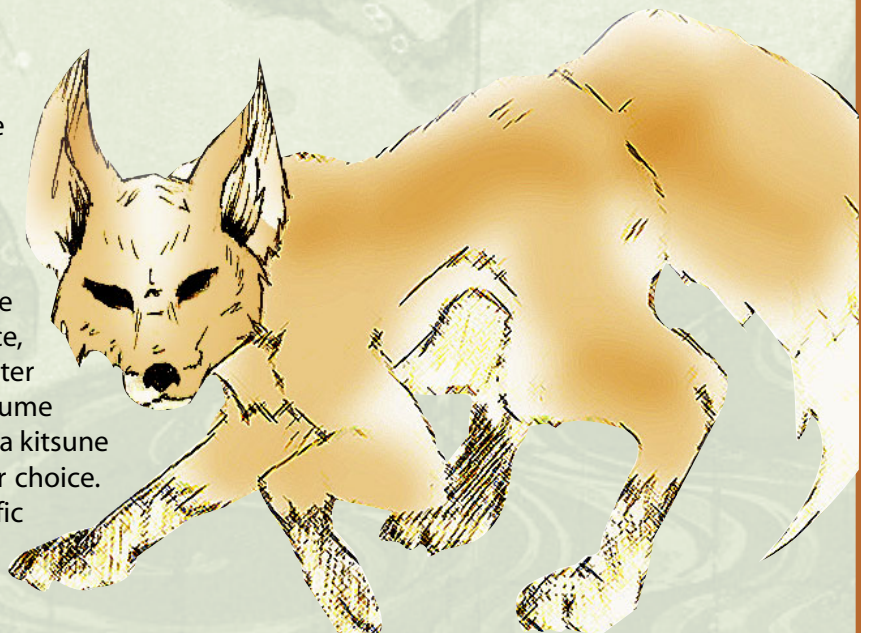
The mischievous foxes known as the kitsune are the heart and soul of *Kitsunemori*. Enigmatic creatures through and through, the kitsune have inspired many legends and much debate over whether to classify them as spirits, demons, or something else entirely. The kitsune are quite happy with their uncertain status, for they enjoy the befuddlement they cause in humans. The kitsune are certainly no ordinary creatures: born as ordinary foxes, they grow old and wise until they can access the magic powers that are their birthright. Eventually, they join one of the two main factions in kitsune society.

Playing Kitsune

During the first century of her life, a kitsune is nothing but a normal fox. Of course, in *Kitsunemori*, even the "normal" foxes are devilishly smart, having the intelligence of a young human child. A fox that manages to live for one hundred years finally gains the full attributes of a kitsune, including sentience, her second tail (see below and the Character Options chapter), and the power to assume human shape. Upon gaining her second tail, a kitsune can begin gaining levels in the class of their choice. At that point, some kitsune choose a specific path available only to kitsune; one which she'll follow from then on: becoming a

servant of the god Inari or becoming a pest and a pox upon humanity. Based on this decision, she joins one of two groups.

The Myobu: Myobu kitsune are kind-hearted souls that serve the god Inari and are worshipped by humans. Most of the shrines built by humans in honor of kitsune are devoted to the myobu, which gives these kitsune a steady influx of power. Myobu have a relaxed but recognizable organization under the supreme command of Inari, and they are obligated to protect the humans that worship them.



The Nogitsune: These malicious foxes take great delight in causing trouble for humans, and thus they are at odds with the myobu. The nogitsune are free spirits that don't enforce any rules upon their members, making them more a loose coalition of like-minded individuals than a true organization. Nogitsune run the gamut from mischievous but mostly harmless pranksters to truly evil troublemakers that prey on humans for sport.

Kitsune characters exist in two worlds: the supernatural world in which their society thrives and the human world that they sometimes deign to visit. They mature and mingle with fellow kitsune, but are encouraged to go out into the wider world and have fun with it, whether to teach and protect (in the case of the myobu) or pester and harass (in the case of the nogitsune).

Playing a kitsune means coming to terms with this dual existence. She can live as a human among humans, disguising her true nature as she works from the shadows of anonymity, but she will never stop being a kitsune.

Kitsune Territories

The Yonhosu Valley belongs to the kitsune. That humans have settled there and survived is only due to the god Inari's lenience, although the nogitsune aren't bound by this indulgence and always make trouble for the human settlers. The thick forest that covers the valley, particularly in the northern provinces, hides the secret glens where kitsune live and thrive.

A singular aspect of kitsune lands is that their holdings aren't exactly in the same world as the physical forest around them. The elder kitsune have the power to weave entire cities out of geomantic energy and hide them in the hollow of a tree, and it's in these artificial realms that the kitsune go to rest and mingle with their kind. These hidden lands are called shrine realms because they need the energy of a shrine to anchor them to the physical world.

Shrine realms exist as demiplanes that can't be entered except through the proper gateway, which the creating kitsune determines upon completing the realm's fabrication. A shrine realm is always changing as more kitsune gain the power to shape their own home within it, and groups form to expand the realm

to add gardens, rivers, a palace, or other natural or artificial features. Only a few lucky humans have ever been granted the honor of being able to visit a shrine realm.

Nogitsune have the power to create shrine realms, too, but theirs also act as traps, with entrances built in places that humans can wander through, leaving them trapped in the nogitsune's fantastic abode. Since many nogitsune have an appetite for human souls, those unfortunate travelers are rarely heard from again.

The largest shrine realm is the one anchored to the Inari shrine in Yamaken province. It acts as a sort of capitol and headquarters for the myobu, and it's often graced with visits from Inari himself. There are many more major shrine realms across the provinces, all of them belonging to the myobu. Nogitsune shrine realms are more numerous in Akaki, but these kitsune are free roaming by nature; very few go to the pain of erecting a shrine realm, and when they do, it's mostly for personal use.



Kitsune Society

Kitsune society mirrors human society to a certain extent. Kitsune are regulated by strict rules of etiquette when dealing with other kitsune, but they don't express themselves in terms of submission to higher class as the humans do. These rules require the kitsune to be polite with one another at all times, regardless of intention or faction. An encounter between myobu and nogitsune is marked by polite jabs and poetically phrased insults.

The only true symbol of prestige among the kitsune of both factions is the number of tails. A one-tail is merely a fox, barely above normal animals, while a nine-tail is a great hero and respected adversary. Each tail represents years, even centuries of hard work on behalf of the kitsune and also represents very real magical power. The more tails a kitsune has attained, the more powerful magic she can wield.

However, the number of tails doesn't entirely represent social status or responsibility: a kitsune prince in charge of the affairs of a large shrine realm can be a four-tail, while a nine-tail can be a wandering vagabond—greatly respected but not necessarily obeyed. While a kitsune's power might be measured by number of tails, positions of authority and responsibility among the myobu are allocated based on merit.

Among the myobu, the god Inari awards temporal power to the "ruler" of each shrine realm, who is also responsible for the lands surrounding it in the physical world. The shrine realm ruler is therefore called a "king" and can appoint his own ministers and deputies. This work is treated mostly as an interesting game by the whimsical kitsune, who rarely take their own positions too seriously.

The nogitsune are an altogether different case. They have no set society or rules among themselves, but small bands sometimes group together, with a pack leader forcing her way to the top by intimidating the others. This intimidation can take the form of direct action against competitors, or it can simply consist of impressing the others with boasts about pranks pulled on humans. Many-tailed nogitsune are most often in a position to bully their way to leadership. Nogitsune packs mark a territory as their own and craft a shrine realm to act as their lair. Packs of nogitsune often war with each other for territorial dominance, but they tend to give myobu holdings a wide berth.

Kitsune are quite capable of getting into fights with each other, but shedding kitsune blood by kitsune hands is seen as a grievous sin, even among the nogitsune. When their fearful human worshippers ask them to drive nogitsune away, myobu attempt to dialogue with the invaders and drive them out rather than consider killing one of their wayward brethren. There are tales that kinslayer kitsune become true demons, although no one has seen this happen, and such stories are treated as myths.

Kitsune Beliefs

Being magical creatures, the kitsune derive their powers from their own heritage and not necessarily from the favor of a deity. Considered **kami** in their own right, the myobu serve the god Inari, but they don't worship him. Some few kitsune have dedicated their lives to the Shinto faith and joined the monkhood, but they are rare. Kitsune have regular dealings with other spirits and minor deities of the land, being able to deal with them directly, so instead of prayer they use mundane cajoling and negotiation to influence spirits and gods.

Kitsune mostly adhere to the Shinto tradition, but a few of them have converted to Buddhism. Buddhist kitsune are seen as amusing oddities by their Shinto-following fellows, but they've proven vital in dealings with strong Buddhist monks: the Buddhist kitsune's inclination toward lengthy discussions about philosophical matters has won the kitsune some respect and tolerance from human monks.

Religion affects kitsune mainly in the form of rituals humans use against them. As spirit creatures, the kitsune are vulnerable to human faith, and many priests and priestesses have magic that can affect the kitsune directly. As a result, most kitsune avoid human clerics.

Names

Kitsune names follow the same guidelines and principles as human names, although most kitsune lack a surname. When they want to be formal, kitsune use the name of their shrine realm as a surname, followed by the *no* particle and their given name.

Racial Traits

The following are the racial traits of kitsune characters. These traits refer to a kitsune's human form, even though her fox form is her natural form.

- **Fey:** Kitsune have the fey creature type.
- **+2 Charisma, -2 Constitution.** Kitsune possess natural charm and magnetism, but they aren't as hardy as ordinary humans.
- **Medium:** As Medium creatures, kitsune in human form have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.
- *Kitsune base land speed is 30 feet when in human form.*
- **Low-Light Vision** (Ex): Even when in human form, a kitsune can see twice as far as an ordinary human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. She retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- **Entrancing Beauty** (Ex): In her human form, a kitsune is incredibly attractive, gaining a +4 racial bonus on Bluff and Diplomacy checks with humans. Even kitsune males are rather feminine looking, and they often take delight in masquerading as women.
- **Fox Form** (Su): Although a kitsune interacts with humans mostly in her human form, her natural form is that of a fox. She can assume her fox form at will but may only shapeshift into her human form three times per day plus one additional time per character level. A kitsune may stay in her human or fox form for an indefinite period of time, but she is still limited to the number of times per day she can switch between her human and fox forms. Transforming into or out of fox form is a standard action and doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity. Unless otherwise noted, this ability functions just as the druid wild shape ability. See the boxed text for the full attributes of the kitsune's fox form. A character in fox form can display one tail or all of her tails (if she has more than one) at will.
- **Tails** (Ex): Kitsune characters begin play at one hundred years old, when they gain their second tail. How kitsune gain more tails and the subsequent effects are described in the [Rules chapter](#).
- **Fox Magic** (Sp): Kitsune have access to a

special form of magic unique to their kind, which they can obtain through feats or by taking levels in the myobu or nogitsune racial classes. A kitsune begins play with one fox spell for free. A kitsune can use her fox magic once per day per character level, and can spontaneously choose which of her fox magic powers to apply the uses to.. (See the [Magic chapter](#) for more details.)

- **Honor Bound** (Ex): The kitsune rarely give their word, for when they do, they must live up to it. When a kitsune makes a promise, she's treated as being under the effects of a *geas* spell with respect to that promise. The normal

THE KITSUNE FOX FORM

Kitsune characters gain the following abilities when transforming into their natural fox form:

- **-6 Strength, +6 Dexterity.** In fox form, kitsune are extremely agile but not very strong.
- **Tiny:** As a Tiny creature, a kitsune gains a +2 bonus to AC and to attack rolls as well as a +8 bonus to Hide checks. She suffers a -8 penalty to grapple checks as well as the appropriate size difference penalties for other opposed combat checks.
- *Kitsune base land speed is 40 feet when in fox form.*
- **Bite (Ex):** Kitsune in fox form gain a bite attack that deals 1d3 points of piercing damage.
- **Scent (Ex):** Kitsune in fox form gain the Scent ability.
- Kitsune in fox form have a +4 racial bonus on Hide, Listen, and Move Silently checks and a +2 racial bonus on Survival checks.
- **Speech:** Kitsune can speak freely while in fox form and retain their understanding of all languages known in their human form. Kitsune in fox form gain the ability to speak with ordinary foxes.
- **No hands:** Without opposable thumbs, kitsune can't wield weapons or any other equipment designed for human hands; they also can't perform the somatic components for spells that require them.
- **Equipment:** All clothes, armor, and equipment that the kitsune wore in her human form disappear. Armor and protective items continue to provide their bonuses to AC, and magic items worn that provide a continual effect work as well. Items that need to be activated or actively used are unavailable.

consequences of defying a *geas* (3d6 points of damage per day; Fortitude save each day to avoid becoming sickened) afflict her when she breaks that promise and continue to affect her until she makes amends or resumes performing the promised action. This magical enforcement of the *geas* effect lasts up to a year and a day or until the promise is kept.

- **Divine Vulnerability** (Ex): Kitsune suffer a –2 racial penalty on saving throws and caster level checks against divine magic cast by human spellcasters.
- **Alignment:** Any nonlawful. With the exception of their honor-bound trait, kitsune are whimsical and unpredictable.
- **Automatic Languages:** Common and Kitsune. Bonus Languages: Beastspeech, Kappa, Tanuki, Tengu, Spirit.
- **Favored Class:** Upon character creation, decide on one of the following classes to be the character's favored class: bard, courtier (see the Character Classes chapter, below), sorcerer, rogue, or illusionist wizard. A multi-class kitsune's chosen favored class does not count when determining whether she takes an experience point penalty for multiclassing.
- **Level Adjustment:** +0.

BACKGROUNDS

A character in the isolated Yonhosu Valley of *Kitsunemori* is intricately connected to the world around her, even if she's a lone vixen traveling into the valley from beyond the mountains. To aid you in fleshing out a character's personal history, a collection of backgrounds is offered below. A background can encourage roleplaying and firmly connect a character to the world of *Kitsunemori*.

Kitsune and Backgrounds

The mystical foxes live apart from human society, but that doesn't mean that they don't have a society of their own. Kitsune roles aren't as identifiable as those of humans, but since kitsune have as much variety in personalities and inclinations as humans do, they've developed certain equivalents.

Kitsune can choose any of the backgrounds described in this section, although they don't have the connotations and prestige that the human versions do. For example, kitsune warriors are akin to the samurai, but they don't have the same code of honor, and without the master-servant relationship binding human samurai, kitsune never become ronin. Kitsune "nobility" is a matter of merit, not bloodline, and even then the authority of nine-tails isn't always heeded by the younger kitsune.

Bushi

Bushi are professional warriors but not necessarily samurai. They are competent soldiers in the armies of feudal warlords, bodyguards to ministers, or even members of a palace guard. While not governed by the strict code of bushido, the bushi are still warriors who greatly value honor (unlike mercenary sell-swords) and are mindful not to impugn it.

Child

The woodland creatures seem to have a soft spot for children, whether they want to play with them, teach them valuable wisdom, or just eat them. Mothers warn their offspring against venturing into the Fox Forest, filling their heads with cautionary tales of monsters and ghosts roaming the deeper woods, but a few adventurous youth will always defy these orders and meet with various ends. The myobu have recruited many an ally from wayward children that they rescue and return to their homes; sometimes they even grant the children magical gifts and invite them into their society, in the process starting a new line of izuchi-mochi, or feytouched (see the [Feats section](#) of the [Rules chapter](#)). Many characters of this background follow and acknowledge [Jizu](#), god of children, in addition to Inare.

Many tales also speak of prodigious children who are as brave and capable as adults while still retaining a childhood innocence that allows them to look at things from a fresh perspective.

Constable

Neither true military nor simple thugs with authority, the constables of the kingdom compose true law enforcement organizations, with their own hierarchies separate from those of the provincial armies and with their own special martial arts techniques, designed to subdue rather than to kill. Each constabulary is in charge of manning the internal checkpoints along

its province's roads as well as keeping the peace in major cities and towns. Rural constables maintain a light presence in small villages, usually dividing their efforts between several of them and sometimes conducting regular patrols along roads and between farms. High-ranking constables have the authority to investigate crimes on their own, and most of these proto-detectives are also ministers in their province's judicial system.

HUMAN INFILTRATOR

Kitsune Only

The playful foxes have observed humanity for centuries and have learned enough to mimic them not only in form but also in behavior. Each time she ventures into human society, a kitsune can adopt any of the backgrounds, choosing the one that best suits her objectives at the time. A human infiltrator, however, takes great pains to build a stable "life" for her human identity. Some kitsune have been known to live full lives in a village, getting married and even having children, seeming to age normally; once they reach the end of a standard human lifespan, they "die" to their human kin and friends, only to return to their kitsune brethren. Most human infiltrators aren't so dedicated, however, devoting only a handful of years to each identity until they either grow bored or complete their tasks.

Merchant/Mercenary

Merchants and mercenaries share at least one trait: they sell their services or goods. Mercenaries offer their sword arms to the highest bidder, serving variously as caravan guards, escorts, general trouble-shooters, or cannon fodder. Merchants have a curious status in the empire: while they are wealthy enough to afford at least some luxuries, they lack the heredity and most probably the education required for membership in high society. Mercenaries are derided by samurai and even by rank-and-file soldiers of a standing army, for they are perceived as scoundrels with no loyalty (a trait valued even among the yakuza).

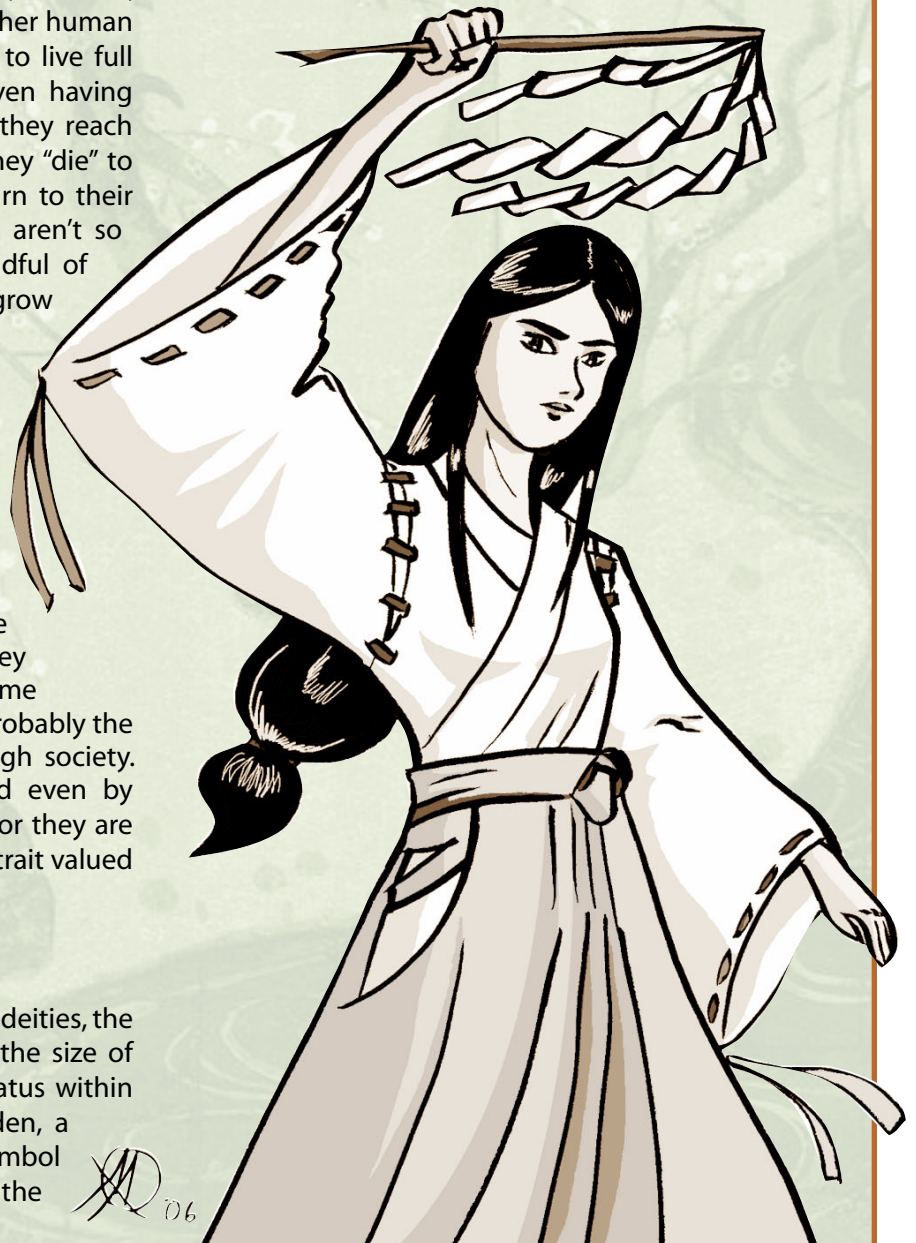
Miko

Caretakers of the shrines erected to honor deities, the miko have duties that vary according to the size of the shrine in their care as well as their status within it. Being both priestess and shrine maiden, a miko always wears a white kimono, a symbol of her purity, whether she is in charge of the

ceremonies and duties of the priesthood or merely in training and as yet suited for nothing more than keeping the floors clean. The miko are exclusive to Shinto shrines and are usually devoted to a single deity. In large cities, the miko fade into the background as temple staff, leaving the priestly duties to the shrine's high-ranking monks, but in small towns, it is often a miko who holds the most religious authority. Unlike most of the Shinto priesthood, a miko is prohibited from marrying or having children.

Minister

The power of government officials is in decline as the samurai rise in importance and the court becomes thoroughly corrupt. Ministers are in charge of seeing that the will of the empire's authorities is carried out, with their specific tasks defined by their rank. At the



lower end, a minister may be in charge of etching the daimyo's seal on passports or collecting taxes, while the head ministers in a province can have hordes of minor officials helping them balance their lord's budget, carry out relations with other provinces, dispense justice, and so on. Judges, bureaucrats, minor governors, and even village elders can be described as ministers.

Monk

Though they are the priests of the Shinto and Buddhist faiths, not all monks can wield divine magic. Only the most saintly or devoted monks can muster either the faith or the inner enlightenment to channel the divine might of their gods, and it's often the unlikeliest candidates who do so. Apart from their knowledge of the deities or the teachings of the Buddha, monks aren't that different from normal folk; some of them even fall into vices such as drinking and gambling. Monks can be cloistered in a monastery, work at a temple or shrine, or wander the lands spreading their teachings to the most remote corners of the empire.

Shinto monks are allowed by their faith to marry and have children, while many Buddhist monks are celibate. Some Buddhist monks' interpretation of the precept against harming living creatures has led them to lives as vegetarians.

Of particular interest to provincial authorities, particularly those of Sairyuukoe, are the sohei, militant monks who have joined oppressed peasants in revolt. The sohei have abandoned their conventional religious duties in favor of martial training and insurgent activities, but they still clothe their words and actions in the robes of their faith (See [Chapter II: Character Classes](#) and [Chapter VI: Kitsunemori](#) for more information on the sohei)

Noble

The nobility is limited to a few families that have inherited power from their ancestors. Many nobles have paid historians and poets to unearth or even invent an illustrious ancestor; a few go so far as to claim descent from a deity. The imperial family does, in fact, descend from the sun goddess, Amaterasu, but aside from that only a very few noble families, such as the Kitaishi clan of the Yamaken province, have a genuinely divine origin. The nobility in the capitol faces a mounting crisis as the court descends into decadence and ineptitude. Meanwhile, many provincial nobles are gaining in strength, exploiting

their unofficial autonomy and vying for more power. Some are aware of the rising power of the samurai families and seek to merge them into their own genealogy through marriage or, less successfully, to suppress their growth.

Onmyouji

The wizard-priests of the old empire are in steep decline. Once they were a major political force, standing behind the emperor and advising him on many matters. With the rise of the warrior class, in some areas arcane magic is becoming distrusted and, while no public persecution has erupted yet, the onmyouji have seen several of their leaders quietly arrested on trumped-up charges. The magic of the onmyouji is subtle but very potent; the onmyouji are experts in weaving fate and in tracing the paths magical energies take as they course through the land and people's bodies. As is the case with the priesthood, however, the number of onmyouji who can actually harness those energies and twist them according to their whim is rather limited, and the true wizards have already fled the capitol, sensing the tide of the ages shifting against them.

Peasant

Though not many songs are sung in praise of the average peasant, many legends have peasants as their protagonists. Peasants generally know their place in life and accept it with heroic stoicism, but a scant few push beyond societal barriers to become something greater. The peasant character concept is the only one with potential connections to every other concept: there are peasant members of the shinobi, peasants working for samurai families, and peasants who provide the goods that merchants sell. Peasants are also the main recipients of the kitsune's attention, for good or ill.

Samurai

While the word *samurai* is sometimes reserved for the warriors, it's often applied to the members of a warrior's immediate family as well as to his entire household. The samurai were servants, first and foremost, to their masters, or daimyo. However, now the warrior (or samurai) class is emerging to dominate the affairs of the empire. As long as a samurai is in the service of his daimyo, he will always have a place to live, as well as access to special training and equipment.

Samurai and nobles are the only persons allowed to openly wear a **wakizashi**, which serves as a symbol of

their status (whether they know how to use it or not). All members of a samurai family, including daughters, are given basic weapons training, and the wives of samurai are known to have displayed legendary courage and fighting prowess when in desperate situations. Martial prowess is a point of pride with all samurai families, and the samurai-warriors seek to master kendo, the art of swordplay.

To the samurai, duty and honor are everything. He doesn't disobey his daimyo's orders, no matter how ridiculous they are. (He tries to work his way to success despite ludicrous orders.) The way of the warrior, bushido, demands that he behave with courtesy, honesty, loyalty, honor, and courage. Behaving otherwise not only brings shame upon the samurai himself but also upon his family and his daimyo. Should the shame be too great, a samurai's duty is to atone by killing himself, committing seppuku (ritual disembowelment).

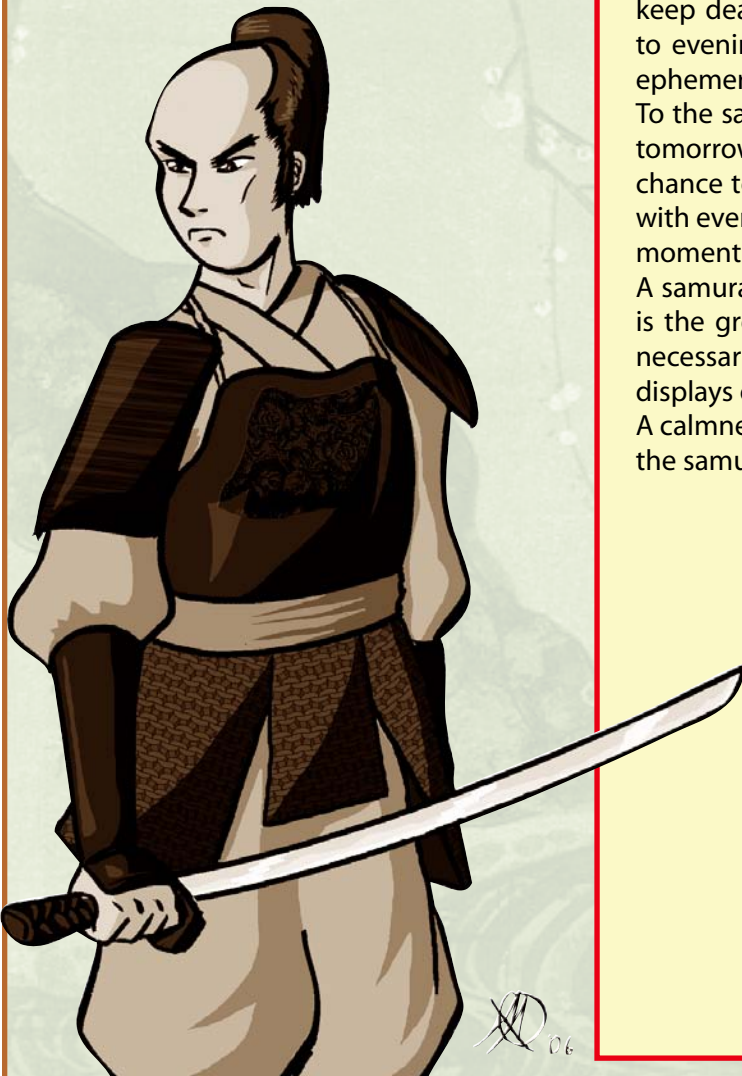
Sometimes the daimyo or family elders ask a samurai to commit ritual suicide to atone; the samurai must submit or become a ronin (see below).

When a samurai character acts contrary to bushido, forsaking honor and duty, he's disgraced. Bushido, while informal in its form, is strict in observance. Seppuku is often the only recourse for a dishonored samurai. As the consequences of dishonor are dire, Game Masters and players alike should remain vigilant in monitoring the actions of samurai characters. Game Masters should warn a player when a given action may lead to the dishonor of her character.

Bushido ("way of the warrior") is a code of conduct and a way of life for the samurai. It's an unwritten code, a collection of maxims handed down through the generations. Strict adherence to bushido is required of every samurai. To break with it means to become ronin, and the only remedy is to atone through ritual disembowelment (seppuku). According to bushido, a samurai doesn't fear death but instead must keep death in mind at all times. All of human life is likened to evening dew and morning frost, things quite fragile and ephemeral, and the life of a samurai is particularly precarious. To the samurai, the life he has today isn't certain to continue tomorrow; therefore, he must act as if today were his last chance to do right, and he must not fail. Samurai drink in life with every breath and action because death may come at any moment. They must follow the path of loyalty and familial duty. A samurai values his honor and duty above all else; dishonor is the greatest failure possible. Self-control and stoicism are necessary to be fully honorable. A samurai isn't allowed overt displays of pain or joy; he must endure all without expression. A calmness of mind and dispassionate affect are cultivated by the samurai.

There are seven virtues associated with bushido:

- 1) **Gi** – Rectitude or justice
- 2) **Yu** – Courage
- 3) **Jin** – Benevolence
- 4) **Rei** – Respect
- 5) **Shin** – Honesty
- 6) **Meiyo** – Honor and glory
- 7) **Chugi** – Loyalty



Ronin

Becoming ronin is one of the worst fears of samurai. A ronin lives in a constant state of shame, for he who has pledged his life to the service of a master no longer has a master to serve. If the master released the samurai from service with an honorable discharge, the samurai doesn't become ronin—usually he just retires or becomes a monk—but being exiled is an indelible stain on the ronin's sense of honor. Equally shameful is not dying to protect the master's life with his own. The epitome of dishonor is running away from his duty. If a master dies without a successor, his samurai become ronin under not-so-shameful circumstances, but they must seek new employment or risk dishonor.

Some samurai willfully become ronin as part of a secret plan. There is a tale of forty samurai who were left masterless after their daimyo was forced to kill himself because of treason and political manipulation. The samurai wandered the land, tolerating their shameful state, each working towards gaining revenge in one last, glorious assault on those responsible for his master's death.

Rover

Kitsune Only

Folk heroes aren't always human; sometimes they only appear to be so. A roving defender is a kitsune who, not content with waiting for the orders of Inari or the opportunities around her home, prefers to wander the land, assuming different identities to fight injustice. This concept would seem to be within the purview of the myobu only, but the rare nogitsune may be a rover looking to shake up the social order. Rovers are likened to human vagabonds and, when recognized, are treated as such by humans, but since kitsune have no societal constraint against traveling, their antics and wanderlust actually accrue prestige among kitsune and, eventually, additional tails.

Trickster Sage - Kitsune Only

Unlike a rover, a trickster sage is a kitsune that's eager not to right perceived wrongs but rather to teach the humans to do it themselves. A kitsune that embraces the path of a trickster sage is one that has already reached some understanding of her own nature as a spirit being and her duties to her flesh-bound

cousins. However, being kitsune, the lessons she teaches are almost always in the form of practical jokes and ingenious pranks designed to impart a moral lesson, one that her target should heed lest the kitsune never end her taunting.

Shinobi

Also known as ninja, these shadow warriors are the stuff of legends and folktales, and nobody is really sure whether they exist, which is just as the shinobi desire. Shinobi stand apart from the criminal yakuza and the honorable samurai class. They're organized into clans for mutual support and training, with a central family ruling each clan's affairs, but a clan will take in worthy people from outside of the family circle.

Not constrained by a strict code of honor, the shinobi can do things that samurai won't and are therefore employed by daimyo who wish to have a goal accomplished covertly. The shinobi represent the antithesis of the samurai ideal. They work from the shadows and strike at opponents without ever being seen, making them both utterly despicable and utterly indispensable. Shinobi cultivate the legend that they're a bunch of assassins—which is true only to a certain extent, for members of a shinobi clan can practice any craft and specialty to complement the work of their more notorious field operatives. Shinobi clans maintain a network of spies, sleeper agents, and informants from all walks of life, and their hidden enclaves practice the trades and crafts one would expect in an average village.

Shrine Guardian

Myobu Kitsune Only

The myobu are the messengers and agents of the god Inari and therefore represent divine authority. The shrine guardians are



those foxes that have the responsibility of caring for the shrines erected to honor them and Inari; they are the priesthood of the kitsune. Shrine guardians can hear the prayers of the humans around them as well as the voice of Inari directing them to attend to those prayers. They're the most sedate (but never repressed) of the kitsune, speaking with the wisdom born of training and divine inspiration.

Runaway Shinobi

Though not adhering to any of the samurai's honorable tenets, shinobi do prize one value: absolute loyalty. A member who leaves or betrays the clan in any way becomes a renegade, and an immediate order to hunt her down and terminate her is issued by the clan leader. Runaway shinobi are in that sense similar to ronin, with the main difference being that there's most certainly a price on their heads.

Prostitute

The world's oldest profession is alive and well in the Yonhosu Valley, and many women whose husbands have run deep into debt have little choice but to gain employment in a town's "red-light district." As with many other professions, there are many kinds of prostitutes, from those who work the streets carrying a straw cot to the top employees of elegant brothels, who have earned the right to choose their clients. High-level prostitutes are actually on the same level as many ladies of the court in terms of education and refinement, if not in reputation. Trained to entertain in more ways than one, courtesans can be great sources of information and lore, having access to secrets normal people would never hear about. Posing as a prostitute is a favorite tactic among kunoichi, or female shinobi.

Thug

A thug is simply a person who lends his muscle to an employer, acting as an enforcer, bouncer, bodyguard, or intimidator. Thugs are typically motivated by profit and will serve any master who can meet their price, but more than a few are driven by cruelty and a perverse desire to dominate those beneath them. The

yakuza has plenty of thugs in its lower ranks but hardly a monopoly; bullies and strongmen can find employment in whorehouses, inns, merchants' entourages, or minor criminal gangs.

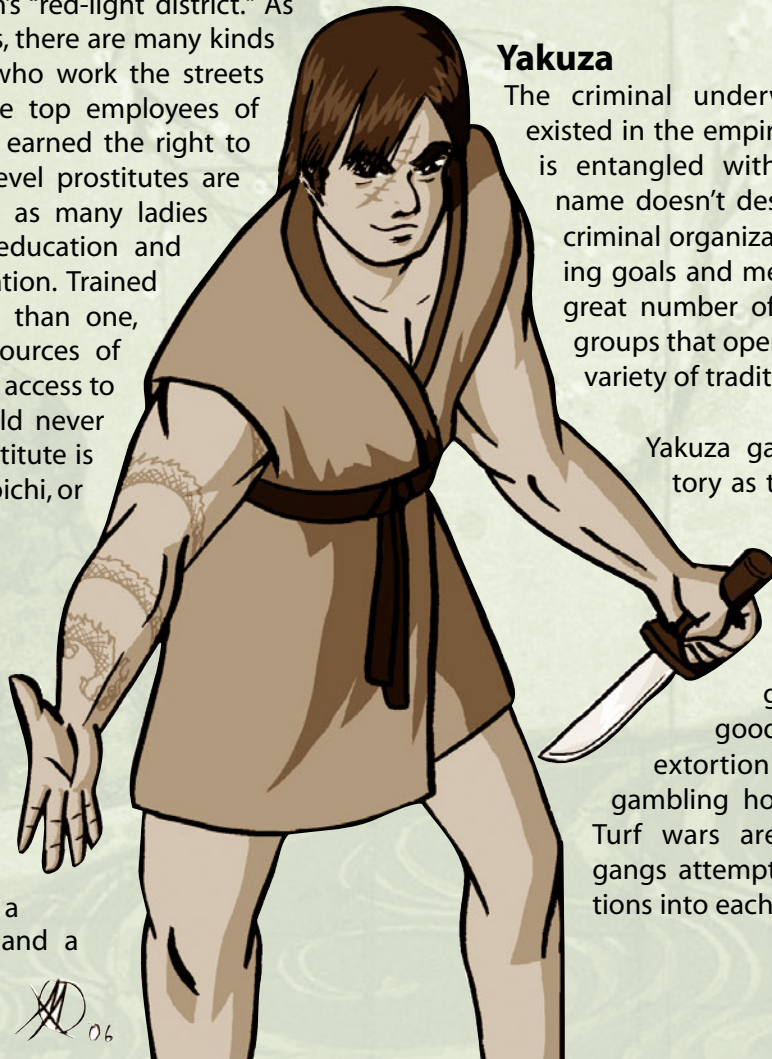
Vagabond

The lowest stratum of society encompasses people with no attachments to land or family. Even the poorest peasant is regarded more favorably for his or her devotion to land and relatives than is a vagabond, who has forsaken all allegiance. Vagabonds need not be poor; many so-called adventurers adopt the vagabond lifestyle, carrying with them a passport from their long-abandoned home province or doing their best to dodge the patrols and checkpoints that control traffic along the roads. A vagabond can be anyone from a fugitive criminal or a refugee from a war-torn province to a wife fleeing her abusive husband or a soul who simply prefers to live on the fringes of society. (Although ronin and runaway shinobi can be considered vagabonds, their circumstances and status are sufficiently unique to warrant a separate description.)

Yakuza

The criminal underworld has always existed in the empire, and its own elite is entangled with the yakuza. The name doesn't describe a monolithic criminal organization with overarching goals and methods but rather a great number of gangs and minor groups that operate within a similar variety of traditions and customs.

Yakuza gangs claim a territory as their own, and they involve themselves in all manner of activities there. Some gangs specialize in smuggling forbidden goods while others run extortion rackets, brothels, gambling houses, and the like. Turf wars are common where gangs attempt to expand operations into each other's territories.



A yakuza gang is like an unofficial feudal dominion, working beneath legitimate authority. In some cases, yakuza gangs supplant governments, such as when officials are weak or absent, or when a town is in open revolt. When rulers abusive their people, the yakuza act as a counterbalancing force, protecting the commoners.

The concepts of bushido and honesty are largely alien to the yakuza, but they do operate within a certain code of conduct—a “thief’s honor” that guides their hand. Thief’s honor requires little, but prohibits snitching, betraying your gang leaders, and cheating your gang. The yakuza is also like a family, differing from the samurai family in that they are not bound by blood ties but by mutual benefit. The Yakuza are said to take in anyone who passes their tests and survives their initiations. Yakuza initiations are the stuff of legend and rumor. Little has been confirmed, but gossip speaks of potential Yakuza recruits having to participate in bizarre rituals like eating live scorpions and tattooing their bodies entirely from the neck down.

Mixing and Matching

The easiest way to run a story in *Kitsunemori* is to have player characters who are either all kitsune or all human, but it’s feasible to have members of both races cooperate and join the same adventuring party. Sometimes, in fact, human-only groups have the greatest potential for interparty conflict, especially when one character is a samurai and another a runaway shinobi or, worse, a yakuza.

When creating characters, players and the Game Master must discuss what kind of story they want to tell and work together to discover ways for the characters to tolerate, if not befriend, one another. A yakuza character could have once saved a samurai character’s life and thereby proved his “honor.” A shinobi character may not have revealed his true identity to anyone (usually a wise choice) and is pretending to be someone more acceptable to other members of the group.

The kitsune may have a hard time adventuring with humans to whom they do not wish to divulge their true nature, thus necessitating that they hide their magic and special abilities. However, the kitsune talent for guile and subterfuge ensures that they can adapt life among almost any group of humans.





2

CHARACTER CLASSES

Kitsunemori allows players to choose any of the character classes found in the core d20 fantasy rules, but since most of those classes are derived from occidental traditions, a few adaptations are offered here to enable players and Game Masters to better integrate these characters into a Japanese-flavored setting. Following a discussion of the role each of the standard core classes performs in *Kitsunemori*, this chapter presents three new classes: the courtier (available to both humans and kitsune) and the myobu and nogitsune racial classes (available only to kitsune).

CORE CLASSES

The standard classes in the core d20 fantasy rules are fantasy archetypes designed to help players create characters; they are easily modified to give characters the look and feel necessary to fit into the setting of *Kitsunemori*. Included below are suggestions for modifying these core classes to better reflect the nature of *Kitsunemori* as well as class concepts that transform standard core classes into uniquely Japanese archetypes. Players and Game Masters can make use of these alterations or simply retain the standard character concepts provided in the core d20 fantasy rules.

Barbarian

In the highly civilized Yonhosu Valley, barbarians are almost unheard of. They exist mainly in folktales about savage warriors of the past or in the anecdotes of soldiers and mercenaries who've fought on the borders of the empire. Barbarian characters would certainly not be seen as compatriots of the people of Yonhosu and would be unwelcome in most of the land, harassed by checkpoint officers, and quite possibly hunted down by provincial authorities.

Barbarians in *Kitsunemori* would most likely resemble

Mongol raiders, as the Mongols had the nearest thing to a "barbarian" culture during the medieval period in Japan. A European-style berserker would be presumed to be a demon and likely attacked by the people (which might present an interesting roleplaying challenge).

Fast Movement: Barbarians in *Kitsunemori* are mounted warriors. Instead of applying their fast movement bonus to their own base speed, barbarians in this setting apply the bonus to their mounts' speed. Barbarians also gain a +1 competence bonus to AC when they're mounted as a result of their deft horsemanship.

Bard

The bard is a fixture of Celtic culture, but the role of a traveling entertainer does exist in *Kitsunemori*. Dancers, singers, jugglers, acrobats, and actors, the bards of *Kitsunemori* are highly skilled performers. These entertainers stand apart from the regular social structure of the Yonhosu provinces, appreciated for their skills but without station in the social hierarchy. Most performers learn their trade in entertainment and tea houses and then strike out on their own in search of fame and patronage. Most entertainers are women, and it is not seen as particularly honorable profession. For greater safety and convenience, bards in *Kitsunemori* often travel together in performing troupes, which are generally treated leniently by checkpoint and border authorities longing for a respite from the tedium of their jobs. Bards traveling on their own may find life forbidding, though many endure the adversity that comes with being an entertainer in the hopes of winning the attention of a rich patron.

Not all performers are bards in the strict sense of the word. There are very few who can wield magic through their art, and they prefer to hide this capability. Such

magic is closely identified with the kitsune, and any human bard who displays magical powers will likely be accused of being one of the mystical foxes before he's generally accepted as a human magician. Even then, some people will hold stubbornly to the belief that he's foytouched.

Bardic Music: The artistic magic of the bards is akin to the magic of kitsune; as a consequence, a kitsune bard can combine his daily allotment of fox magic and bardic music into a single pool. For example, a 5th-level kitsune bard can use any combination of fox magic and bardic music up to 10 times a day.

Bardic Knowledge: As wanderers, bards come into contact with the tales and the gossip of the lands outside the Yonhosu Valley as well as those within. The kinds of knowledge bards can acquire and the associated DCs depend a great deal on the world into which the Game Master inserts *Kitsunemori*.

Cleric

Called 'priests' or 'monks' rather than clerics, the men and women of faith serve one of the two main religions in *Kitsunemori*: Shinto and Buddhism. Shinto priests can devoted themselves to just a few deities or even to only one, even if they honor the entire Shinto pantheon, which includes ancestors and other minor spirits. Priests are most often assigned to a shrine or temple, where they receive their training and remain for the rest of their lives unless reassigned by the elders of their temple. Divine magic is much more common than arcane, and therefore there are more priests with actual magical powers than there are genuine wizards and bards (although there is a veritable horde of charlatans who pretend to wield arcane knowledge, peddling their fraudulent services to the credulous). This means that even the most remote village with a shrine tended by a priest or shrine maiden will have magical succor in times of trouble.

Some monks take to wandering the roads, solving problems of a spiritual or temporal nature as they travel, vanquishing demons and bringing solace to the population. Monks of Inari and Koshin are reknowned for this, and they're usually the only people of faith well-disposed toward the kitsune. A wandering monk is easily recognizable thanks to his **takujo**, a long staff topped by a series of rings that chime with every step.

Domains: Reflecting their reverence for the whole

pantheon, monks of the Shinto faith can choose any two domains. They will be more favorably inclined toward the deities who represent those domains, but are not strictly limited to the worship of those deities. Buddhist monks have this freedom, too, but one of their domains must be either Law or Good.

Holy Symbol: Clerics in *Kitsunemori* don't need a physical holy symbol to help them channel their faith. Shinto priests instead channel divine energy in by forming special seals with their hands, and Buddhist monks recite **sutras**.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The priests and monks of *Kitsunemori* are proficient only with simple weapons and light armor. They aren't proficient with shields. In general, priests and monks in *Kitsunemori* are much less militant than clerics in the core d20 fantasy rules.

Skills: Clerics in *Kitsunemori* may add Hearth Wisdom to their list of class skills (see [Chapter V: Magic](#) for more information on Hearth Wisdom).

Exorcism (Su): Instead of the ability to turn or rebuke undead, the clerics of *Kitsunemori* gain the *exorcism* ability. A powerful tool in a priest's or monk's arsenal, *exorcism* functions as the turn/rebuke undead ability except as noted here. *Exorcism* affects creatures of the aberration, fey, outsider, and undead types and creatures with the shapechanger or extraplanar subtypes. A priest may use the *exorcism* ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + his Charisma modifier. Unlike the turn or rebuke undead ability, the *exorcism* ability requires prolonged concentration; therefore, each *exorcism* attempt requires a full-round action (though it doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity) Creatures affected by an *exorcism* can only be turned or rebuked, never destroyed or commanded by the *exorcism*.

Sense the Unnatural (Su): Clerics in *Kitsunemori* are particularly attuned to the supernatural. The ability to *sense the unnatural* works like a paladin's ability to *detect evil*, but the cleric's ability targets any of the types and subtypes of creatures potentially affected by the exorcism ability, and the cleric may attempt to *sense the unnatural* only a number of times per day equal to 3 + his Charisma modifier (rather than at will). As a standard action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity, a cleric may *sense the unnatural* in a 60 foot cone-shaped emanation for as long as they concentrate, or up to 10 minutes per cleric level. In the

first round, the cleric will be aware of the presence or absence of the unnatural (aberration, fey, outsider, and undead types and creatures with the shapechanger or extraplanar subtypes). In the second round, the cleric becomes aware of the number of unnatural creatures in the area. In the third round, the cleric becomes aware of the location and strength (HD), and type (or subtype) of every unnatural creature in the area. Unlike the paladin's *detect evil* ability, clerics using *sense the unnatural* are not adversely affected by the overwhelming presence of particularly powerful creatures and line of sight is not necessary to know any creature's locations (the cleric is simply aware of the distance and direction to each creature in the area of effect).

Druid

Druids are Shinto priests who've focused their attention on the worship of nature kami rather than the whole of the Shinto pantheon. They're a rare breed, more likely to be found in the wilderness tending simple shrines instead of in the cities and towns



tending elaborate temples. These holy men and women are hermits and lack any sort of organization or mutual allegiance, having developed their powers through personal introspection and meditation.

Fighter

The men and women of arms are gaining a lot of prestige in these times: the number of samurai clans isn't yet fixed, and many simple bushi still have a chance to carve their names into history through martial skill, determination, and political aptitude. Most of the top samurai clans have generations of renown to their credit, but merit in the present day matters, and fledgling houses challenge the dominion of the elite clans all the time.

The martial arts command much respect, especially in these times, and the way of the warrior gains followers by the day. Dojos train prospective students, honing their bodies and minds; the fields of battle serve as the proving grounds for swordsmanship and honor.

In *Kitsunemori*, fighters are professional warriors who've either received extensive training or who've worked hard on their own to develop a unique fighting style. In either case, a fighter is one or more steps above rank- and-file troops and, even if she's a mercenary, can expect higher pay and greater recognition. Players wishing to play fighters may adopt the bushi background and use the standard fighter template, or they may elect to adopt the samurai concept with all of its benefits and restrictions.

Monk

In *Kitsunemori*, the term *monk* is usually reserved for the priests of Shinto and Buddhism; the analogues to the standard monk character class are often referred to simply as martial artists. Weaponless martial arts are still not very common in the world of *Kitsunemori*, as the training is limited to select dojos and monasteries. While some samurai do train in unarmed combat, they opt to perfect their weapon skills first.

The martial arts practiced by members of the standard monk class are much more common among those in the lower classes, who have no right to bear noble weapons. This fact has given birth to several disciplines dedicated to using everyday tools as instruments of death. The shinobi in particular have developed their own fighting style, known as ninjitsu, while the samurai practice kenpo, an art imported from another empire.

See the [Martial Artist Prestige Class](#) under the [Martial Artist Class Concept](#).

Paladin

The paladin is an enlightened soul, almost like a [bodhisattva](#) who attained the peak of enlightenment but chose not to ascend to nirvana in order to remain in the world to aid others. This holy warrior is the exception to the rule: there are no paladin organizations, and temples can't train private paladin squadrons. Simply put, a paladin is born, not made.

The paladin character class should be unavailable to players at the time of character creation. Only a character of lawful good alignment who has shown herself to be particularly enlightened should be allowed to later gain paladin levels. She must hold herself accountable to the teachings of the Buddha, which means that she must be truly virtuous in deed and thought or risk losing her paladin abilities.

Mount: Upon reaching 5th level, the paladin gains her mount in the form of a guardian [kami](#) that takes on animal form (usually a heavy warhorse or a warpony) to assist the paladin. The guardian kami functions in all respects as the standard paladin's special mount except that the *Kitsunemori* paladin's special mount is a celestial creature (i.e., has had the celestial template applied to it).

Ranger

These explorers and scouts are able counterparts to straightforward fighters, practicing their own brand of stealthy combat. Rangers can become samurai just as fighters can, but their roles in war are different. The combat style class feature reflects the training that rangers undertake in a dojo or the skills they simply learn by themselves.

A great many enforcers among the shinobi are rangers instead of fighters, for they favor the agile fighting style, scouting capability, and infiltration skills associated with the ranger, and they appreciate the ranger's interest in studying the anatomy and customs of particular types of creatures in order to gain a combat advantage.

Animal Companion/Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Rangers in *Kitsunemori* can keep the ability to gain an animal companion or relinquish it in favor of gaining proficiency with medium armor.

Rogue

The rogue class is the most closely tied to the shinobi and yakuza, for it focuses on stealth and sneaky combat tactics instead of a straightforward and honest martial arts style. Rogues are professional scoundrels and crooks who resort to underhanded tactics to achieve their ends. Sometimes they receive training from others of their ilk, although most of the time they acquire their talents on their own.

The only organizations that formally train rogues are the shinobi and the yakuza, which employ the covert tactics rogues specialize in for their own purposes. Independent rogues can become thieves, spies, or mavericks, but they must be on alert not to infringe on the turf of local yakuza gangs or inadvertently run afoul of a shinobi mission.

Sorcerer

Magical power that suddenly manifests itself in unsuspecting individuals is perfectly in tune with *Kitsunemori*. Those who display such power are viewed with suspicion, given people's suspicions about the source of the power. Within the Yonhosu Valley, sorcerers are rare, and most can trace the source of their arcane might to a kitsune ancestor, although some descend from tanuki, tengu, or even oni (see [Chapter VII: Forest Denizens](#) for more information on tanuki, tengu and oni).

Budding human sorcerers who are fortunate are found by a shaman or a mountain hermit ([sennin](#))—himself a sorcerer—who helps the young one to harness his emerging and frightening power. If the child truly is a kitsune descendant, the foxes themselves may tutor him. The myobu will do so surreptitiously, guiding his growth through chance encounters and engineered situations; the nogitsune will simply kidnap the child and return him to his human family once he can control his powers and has pledged to aid the rogue foxes.

Familiar: Sorcerers are shamans who don't gain a normal familiar. Instead, they receive a spirit companion. The only differences between a normal sorcerer's familiar and a spirit companion are that the latter has the outsider (native) type instead of the magical beast type and, instead of receiving the Alertness, improved evasion, and share spells abilities, the creature is considered to be ethereal. A master can always see its spirit companion, which, like normal familiars, is a faithful servant. The spirit familiar can materialize a

number of times per day equal to its master's Charisma modifier (minimum of 1) and maintain its material form for up to 1 minute per its master's sorcerer level. Its master can send it back to its ethereal state before the duration of its materialization has expired. Because this is a unique type of familiar, only sorcerer levels count for the purpose of determining any familiar abilities that depend on the master's level (though their hit points are still one-half of the master's total hit points).

Wizard

The strict education that wizards require is only available in the lessons of onmyo-do, the magical arts of the onmyouji, making the onmyouji the *Kitsunemori* equivalent of the wizard. Onmyo-do is centered around the teachings of the Tao, the understanding of the yin and yang, the relationships among the five elements (wood, fire, metal, water, and earth), and the summoning of shikigami, guardian spirits that fight to protect the onmyouji.

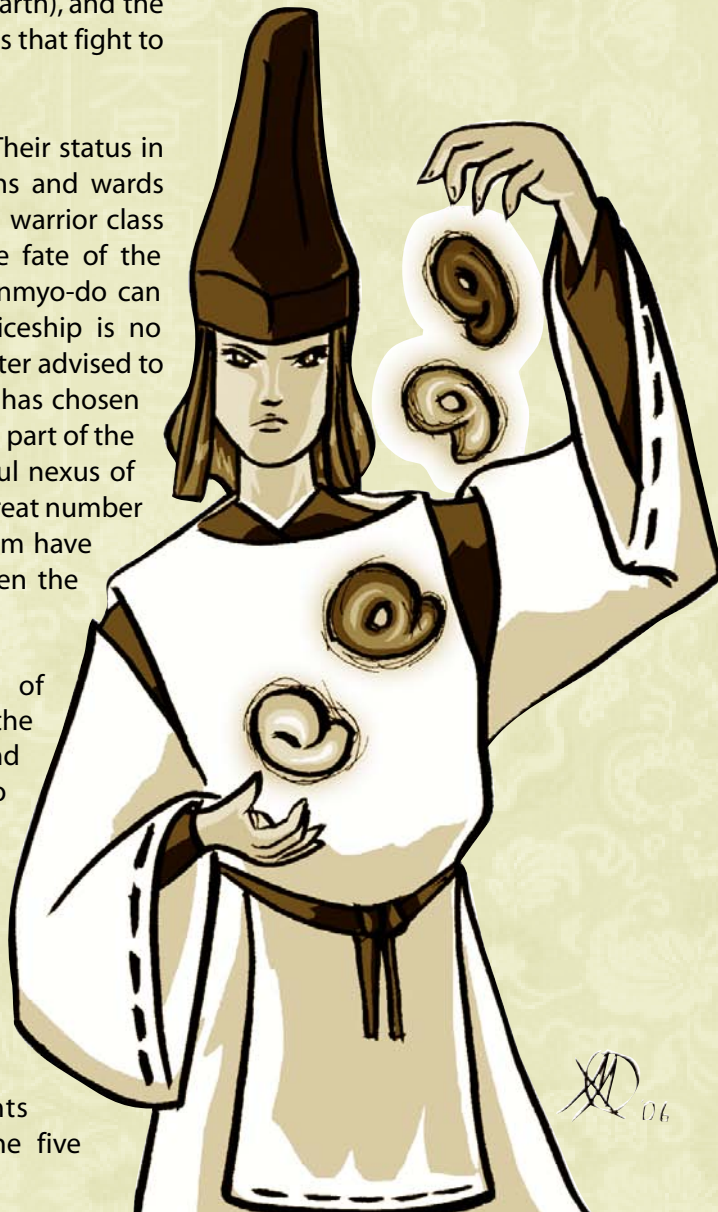
For these wizards, time is running out. Their status in court is dwindling, and their divinations and wards are less sought after as the burgeoning warrior class begins to wrest control and direct the fate of the empire. Anyone who wishes to learn onmyo-do can still travel to the capitol, but apprenticeship is no longer assured; a would-be wizard is better advised to seek out one of the few onmyouji who has chosen exile and taken up residence in a remote part of the empire. The Yonhosu Valley is a powerful nexus of geomantic lines, which has attracted a great number of unemployed onmyouji, some of whom have gained positions with warlords and even the regional governors.

Magic Style: The onmyouji style of spellcasting is different from that of the standard wizard. Onmyouji don't depend on complex, mind-bending formulas to cast spells, and the spellcasting components are somewhat different as well. The bizarre utterances of typical verbal components are replaced by repetitive chanting, and Buddhist mudras (hand gestures) take the place of standard somatic components.

Conventional material components are replaced by representations of the five

elements, which express the onmyouji's understanding of how the elements' energies and correlations can be manipulated. For this, he requires magatama, sacred stones in the shape of a tear with a hole in the middle (see the Equipment chapter). There is one type of magatama for each of the five elements, and a 1st-level wizard begins the game with two magatama of his choosing. (He must acquire the other three on his own.) Each element corresponds to a school of magic as follows:

- *Wood:* Transmutation, Conjunction (healing, creation).
- *Fire:* Evocation (fire, force), Illusion (figment, glamor).
- *Metal:* Conjunction (calling, summoning, teleportation), Divination (all), Illusion (shadow).



- *Water*: Evocation (all but fire and force), Enchantment, Illusion (pattern, phantasm).
- *Earth*: Abjuration, Necromancy.

Onmyouji are not allowed school specialization, but they do have a number of benefits similar to specialist wizards.

Geomancy: The Knowledge (geomancy) skill can aid the onmyouji in the preparation of his magic; see the Magic chapter for details.

Spellbook: Onmyouji do possess spellbooks, but they come in the form of scrolls and prayer strips bundled together.

Summon monster: Onmyouji gain the ability to cast *summon monster* spells in a manner similar to the way in which a cleric gains domain spells. An onmyouji gains access to a *summon monster* spell at each spell level he can cast. (In other words, at 3rd level, an onmyouji automatically obtains access to the *summon monster II* spell. In addition to the normal number of spells a wizard of a given level and Intelligence score can cast each day, an onmyouji gets to cast one “domain” spell at each spell level he can cast. Thus, a 3rd-level onmyouji with an Intelligence score of 17 can prepare four 0-level spells, three 1st-level spells, and two 2nd-level spells as well as one *summon monster I* and one *summon monster II* spell each day. The onmyouji must still memorize this bonus “domain” spell as with all other spells.

Familiar: Onmyouji don’t gain a familiar; instead, they gain the ability to summon shikigami, spirit creatures that manifest in the form of small birds or animals, and assist the onmyouji in spellcasting. A successfully summoned shikigami can significantly augment the potency of an onmyouji’s spells. A onmyouji can summon a shikigami a number of times per day equal to 1 + his Intelligence modifier; a successfully summoned shikigami will serve the onmyouji for 1 minute per every three wizard levels the onmyouji has (minimum of 1 minute). Before attempting to summon a shikigami, the onmyouji must decide the bonus that the shikigami will represent (+2, +4, or +6) and the highest spell level the shikigami will be able to affect. The onmyouji then makes a caster level check (1d20 + wizard level) against a DC 15 + the desired shikigami bonus + the highest spell level the shikigami will be able to affect. This summoning is a full-round action that does provoke attacks of opportunity. If the summoning is successful, the shikigami manifests and,

while it is manifested, grants its bonus to the save DCs of all spells the onmyouji casts which have a spell level at or below the maximum spell level the shikigami can affect. The shikigami fades after its time has expired. Shikigami can be dismissed by the summoner, and they can be dispelled as well as affected and damaged under specific circumstances. If a shikigami is destroyed or dispelled, the onmyouji immediately loses the bonus to spell DCs that the shikigami conferred. (See Chapter VII: Forest Denizens for more details on shikigami).

CLASS CONCEPTS

The core classes represent basic adventuring roles, but *Kitsunemori* includes a series of character concepts that enable players to further develop and refine some core character classes to better reflect the setting’s world. Rather than needing page after page of new base classes and prestige classes, players using the guidelines below can multiclass and adapt existing classes to produce a desired character concept.

Ninja

The shinobi are not a monolithic group relying on the same cluster of talents, making every ninja and kunoichi (female shinobi) the same. Within the same shinobi clan, there are many roles to fulfill, and not all of them require combat prowess. The shinobi perform vital tasks for their clients, from espionage to assassination, and this necessitates a variety of talents. This means that a shinobi can belong to any class, her choice depending on what role she plays inside her clan.

Ninja Warrior

Ninjitsu is a fighting style that relies not on discipline or enlightenment, but on trickery and sly tactics. Those shinobi whose job is to be the warriors of their clan train extensively to hone their fighting abilities, taking levels in both the fighter and rogue classes. The Dodge, Mobility, and Spring Attack feats and a highly developed Tumble skill allow them to protect and reposition themselves in the field of battle, exploiting their sneak attack ability for all it’s worth.

Ninja Spy

Gathering intelligence is the duty of the spy. The rogue is the perfect class to perform this duty, with maximum ranks in Disguise, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, and Sense Motive. Ranks in Gather Information. Disable

Device, and Open Lock are all recommended for those spies who want to take a more direct approach to intelligence gathering—breaking into offices and residences to steal secrets. A few levels in the monk class give the ninja spy more flexibility in combat and reconnaissance.

Ninja Sleeper

An alternate form of the ninja spy and a role often delegated to the clan's kunoichi, a sleeper infiltrates an organization in disguise, often as a mere servant but just as often as a concubine or even close advisor. As with the spy, the sleeper needs a lot of skills, and her main class should be rogue; her secondary class should correspond to the role she's impersonating. Bard, sorcerer, and courtier (see below) are popular options for multiclassing and maintaining a ruse.

Ninja Mystic

Those who learn the mystical aspects of ninjitsu are highly valuable operatives. They can act as spies, sleepers, and even warriors who've expanded their ability to tap arcane powers. With rogue remaining his central class, the ninja mystic can multiclass with wizard or sorcerer (for work as a spy) and with sorcerer or bard (for sleeper duty). The ninja mystic might also take a few levels in the martial artist prestige class to bolster her ability to deal with opponents in melee. What separates her from other ninja is that she focuses much of her training on her magical abilities. Most kitsune that pose as or become shinobi are drawn to the mystic role.

MARTIAL ARTIST

Martial artists are warriors who practice a variety of fighting styles, especially unarmed styles and with weapons other than swords.

A few dojos are highly respected and even given official sanction along with samurai dojos, but others are outlawed because of their antigovernment philosophy (such as the sohei – see the sohei class concept).

As with the samurai's fighting styles, martial arts can be simulated through a selection of feats and classes. Combinations of the fighter class and the martial artist prestige class work particularly well for this because of the wide variety and number of feats the fighter class offers and the AC bonus the martial artist prestige

class awards. New feats and rules options in the Character Options chapter make it easier to adapt and combine classes to achieve different martial artist character concepts.

Samurai will occasionally take levels in the Martial Artist Prestige Class to hone and diversify their fighting styles, but only after they have mastered the sword or bow.

The Martial Arts Prestige Class

In *Kitsunemori*, the standard monk class as such doesn't exist, but its abilities can be accessed through the following prestige class.

Requirements

To qualify to become a martial artist, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Alignment: Any.

Ability Score: Wis 15.

Base Attack Bonus: +6.

Feat: Improved Unarmed Strike.

Class Skills

The martial artist's class skills (and the key ability for each) are identical to those of the monk class.

Class Features

Once meeting the requirements for this prestige class, a character can begin taking levels in the standard monk character class, with his effective monk class level equal to his martial artist level. In all ways except as noted below, a martial artist functions as a monk of the equivalent class level.

Alignment: A martial artist can be of any alignment. A 10th-level monk's ki strike is considered lawful if the character is lawful, chaotic if the character is chaotic. A character whose alignment is neutral with respect to law and chaos chooses to have his ki strike be either lawful or chaotic upon acquiring this ability at 10th level; he may not thereafter change that decision.

Level Limit: A martial artist can advance no further in this class than 10th level, meaning he can at most acquire ten levels of monk abilities.

Multiclassing:

A martial artist can continue to advance in this class (and acquire monk levels, up to and including 10th level) even if he chooses to take one or more levels in another class after taking his first level in the martial artist prestige class.

SAMURAI

Requirements

Alignment: Alignment must be lawful good, neutral or evil. Samurai must strictly adhere to bushido.

The fighter class is perfectly suited to represent the traditional samurai warrior, and the various swordsmanship styles of the different samurai dojos can be represented with feats that give a character specialization with certain weapons and tactics. A quintessential aspect of the samurai is his right to bear the prized daisho, a masterwork katana and wakizashi (see the Daisho Ownership Feat in Chapter III: Character Options). These two blades were the soul of the samurai warrior, and samurai often give names to their swords. Any fighter opting to take on the samurai character concept must take the Daisho Ownership feat to qualify. (For this and other new feats, see the Character Options chapter, below.) Samurai must adhere to the tenets of bushido and absolute loyalty to their daimyo, or face dire consequences (see the samurai background and the bushido sidebar, above).

Skills and Feats: Fighters opting for the samurai class concept may add Concentration to their list of class skills.

Certain feats allowed only to fighters using the samurai character concept give the samurai a variety of distinct combat styles. Standard feats can also be renamed to give them a different flavor: Power Attack can become an upward thrust called 'Rising Dragon Slash' or represent the mighty swing of a giant club called 'Holy Mountain Crush'.

Through a combination of new and conventional feats, the samurai can create his own martial arts school. The following examples describe distinct samurai styles and their associated feats.

Iaido

This martial art is all about drawing a weapon first to deal maximum damage in as little time as possible. *Feats:* Quick Draw, Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Weapon Focus, Greater Weapon Focus, Weapon Specialization, Greater Weapon Specialization, Weapon Technique, Improved Critical, Deadly Arc (samurai only), Zanshin (samurai only), Improved Zanshin (samurai only).

Nintenryuu

This school uses two swords at the same time, traditionally a katana and a wakizashi.

Feats: Combat Expertise, Two-Weapon Fighting, Two-Weapon Defense, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Greater Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Technique, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack, Whirlwind Attack, Warding Blades (samurai only), Zanshin (samurai only), Improved Zanshin (samurai only).

Kyuudo

The Zen art of archery, kyuudo concentrates on the use of the bow, although it's more reflective and meditative than dexterous.

Feats: Dodge, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Far Shot, Rapid Shot, Manyshot, Shot on the Run, Improved Precise Shot, Weapon Focus, Weapon Specialization, Improved Critical, Mounted Combat, Mounted Archery, Unerring Arrow (samurai only), Weapon Technique, Zanshin (samurai only), Improved Zanshin (samurai only).

Many samurai have taken to expanding their horizons, letting their combat training slip a little in order to branch out into education and philosophy, through multiclassing with the courtier class (see below).

SOHEI

Requirements

The character must have at least one level of cleric (Buddhist monk) in addition to one or more levels in the martial artist prestige class. Sohei must be of a non-evil alignment.

Benefits

Sohei are always equipped by their monastery, as long as they remain active members of the brotherhood. Any sohei can receive equipment and weapons from their monastery free of cost with the permission of the zasu (leader). GM have discretion as to what is available and permissible in the way of equipment and weapons requested by a sohei character.

A militant group of priests in Sairyuukoe known as the sohei is growing in size and power. Sohei literally means "warrior monk," and the order is composed of Buddhist monks who have dedicated themselves

to honing not only their spirit but also their bodies. The sohei brotherhood has a series of monastery complexes in the mountains surrounding Sairyuukoe. The sohei education is rigorous, requiring novices to spend twelve years in training before they're allowed to venture out of the sohei mountain monastery. The radical brotherhood of the sohei is aligned with the Buddhist religious establishment, unlike the samurai who swear unquestioning allegiance to their daimyo and government. This difference has been a source of great tension in the Yonhosu Valley. Sohei are primarily NPCs due to their extended training period and high entry requirements. Sohei can be player characters, however, with the permission of the Game Master, with fighters and rangers multiclassed with one or more cleric and martial artist levels making the most effective sohei. Some sohei were also paladins before joining the order, but they're exceedingly rare.

The sohei, their mountain monasteries, and notable warrior monks are detailed in Chapter Six: *Kitsunemori*.

Sword Saint

The samurai represents a worldly and disciplined warrior; his techniques are rooted in what can be achieved through hard work and diligent practice. The sword saint trains on another level entirely. A sword saint channels and weaves mystical forces into his fighting style, practicing incredible techniques that meld raw physical skill with mystical enlightenment.

Multiclassing the fighter with various spellcasting classes yields different kinds of sword saints. The sword saint as a class concept is very flexible and allows for melding magical prowess and martial skill.

Characters adopting the sword saint class concept never suffer XP penalties for multiclassing in Cleric, Fighter, Martial Artist Prestige Class, Sorcerer or Wizard.

Heavenly Saber

A healer sword saint, the Heavenly Saber is a fighter/cleric (with either the War or Protection domain and the Healing domain) who, in addition to his fighting prowess, can call upon the powers of the heavens to heal his own wounds or those of others.

Blade of the Explosive Flame

This mystical art harnesses the power of fire and blade. A Blade of the Explosive Flame combines fighter levels with either wizard (evoker) or sorcerer levels. His prepared (wizard) or known spells (sorcerer) should all be fire related. The sorcerer class is a better match for the sword saint, given the sorcerer's ability to cast spells spontaneously.

Righteous Hurricane

An acrobatic character who relies on speed and agility, the Righteous Hurricane mixes the flexibility of the fighter with the mystical arts of the martial artist. She should probably use one of the weapons available to prestige martial artists or use the feats in the Character Options chapter to adapt prestige martial artists abilities to the sword saint concept.

THE COURTIER CLASS

Though the warriors are inexorably taking over the reins of the empire, the old courts and halls still exist, and their natural predators, the courtiers, still retain their power. One fatal mistake many warrior lords have committed is that in their attempts to gain legitimacy with the courts, they've allowed the courtiers to retain the same authority that the decadent regime had given them, effectively creating a rival power source.

Courtiers are masters of the verbal battle, relying on the sharpness of their tongues and wits instead of their swords. They work as magistrates at various levels, from lowly border posts to imperial ministries. They're not highly effective combatants, nor do they pretend to be. Even when they belong to samurai families, they're spokespersons and diplomats, not warriors.

Adventures: Not at heart an adventurer, at least in the conventional sense of exploring ruins and slaying foes, the courtier is more at home in the battles for political position and the skirmishes for status that take place at social affairs. With a martial spirit ruling the lands, however, many minor magistrates and even some major ones have been pressed into field service for their ministry, leading or advising groups of people more oriented to combat. The most common adventuring courtiers are magistrates for the various local law enforcement ministries, whose task is to investigate crimes against their provincial

lord. Diplomats and ambassadors undertake a lot of travel as well, as do inspectors and even the idle nobles who want to experience firsthand some of the things they've read about in books.

Characteristics: Because their preferred arena of battle is social, courtiers possess many abilities useful for dealing with people and the things that people do. They're educated and skillful, capable of mastering many arts and crafts, learning to read people like books and, eventually, to write those books. Their abilities stem from keen skill and inborn talent, not magic, making it all the easier for courtiers to ply their trade undetected and unnoticed.

Alignment: Courtiers play along with the laws that govern society, but that doesn't mean they respect them out of conviction. Courtiers can have any alignment, but their profession demands that they be bound by the unwritten rules of social standing and public face.

Religion: Courtiers aren't particularly devout, and many show the outward signs of following a religion only because it benefits them to appear faithful. They're mostly adherents of Shinto, whether strictly for show or out of genuine belief, as Buddhism would demand of them virtues they can't afford to possess as they pursue their political and social goals.

Background: A courtier's background depends on what position she's supposed to have. High-ranking courtiers whose words carry weight with the ruling classes are almost always of noble birth, while those who flutter in the same halls as entertainers have humbler beginnings. Minor magistrates reach their position through diligent education and training (if they're members of the middle classes) or through guile and raw talent (if they're from the lower classes).

Races: Since the courtier class focuses on exploiting human society, it's not strange that humans dominate its ranks. The mischievous and inquisitive mind of the kitsune is also perfectly suited for the kind of manipulation courtiers are famous for, however, and whether they practice at home or have infiltrated human society, kitsune have the social skills that suit them perfectly for this role.

Other Classes: Courtiers see themselves as the representatives of an ordered and civilized society, and they regard other classes from that vantage point. As the warrior class is currently the greatest threat to their power, they've worked toward subverting them to their will. They make use of rogues to carry out the dirty work and are slowly cutting their ties with the declining class of the onmyouji. Courtiers see the rest of the classes as somehow beneath them but not so low that they can't provide additional training to expand a courtier's knowledge and skills.

Role: Courtiers are the master bureaucrats, negotiators and diplomats of Kitsunemori. They may official emissaries sent by a government official, spies sent to investigate a neighboring province, or negotiators in tense disputes. In an adventuring party, courtiers are best suited to social interactions and subterfuge, as they are not particularly good combatants.

Game Rule Information

Courtiers have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Mental abilities are of vital importance to courtiers. Charisma gives them the poise and sheer magnetism needed to influence others, while Wisdom is useful as a defense from the



manipulations of rivals and targets. Intelligence is greatly valued as well, as it gives them the tools to concoct and dissect plots, and it allows them to expand their knowledge and skills. Those courtiers who venture into the world can enjoy greater durability by having a high Constitution score.

Alignment: Any.

Hit Die: d6

Class Skills

The courtier's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Decipher Script (Int), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (local) (Int), Knowledge (nobility and royalty) (Int), Listen (Wis), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), and Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at First Level: $(8 + \text{Int modifier}) \times 4$.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: $8 + \text{Int modifier}$.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the courtier.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Courtiers are proficient with all simple weapons and with the wakizashi. They are not proficient with armor or shields.

Style and Grace (Ex): The courtier learns to exploit her natural charm to the maximum, combining attire and speech to make herself more attractive. At 1st level, a courtier receives a +4 competence bonus to all Charisma-based skill checks that relate to social interaction. If the Prestige rules are being used (see the Character Options chapter), the courtier's Prestige score is increased by +2 at 1st level.

Talent (Ex): Courtiers tend to be exceptionally good at whatever they apply themselves to. Beginning at 1st level, any time the courtier selects the Skill Focus feat for a skill whose key ability is Charisma, Wisdom, or Intelligence, he receives a +5 bonus instead of the normal +3.

Wealth (Ex): Either through familial wealth, a talent for finances, or plain bribery and embezzlement, the courtier has much more money than characters of other classes. In addition to his normal starting wealth and a free wakizashi, the courtier at 1st level has 50

gp per point of Charisma bonus. At the end of each year, the character obtains an additional 50 gp per courtier level and point of Charisma bonus. Thus, a 5th-level courtier with a Charisma of 17 would receive an annual stipend of 400 gp. If not outright stolen (which should carry its own risks) or earned (which should require time and effort), this money is supposed to pay for favors, gifts, and bribes that would benefit the courtier's family or organization; if the character wastes this money on foolish purchases, he may not receive more until he proves he's competent.

Iron Will (Ex): As they deal in manipulation, courtiers develop a certain resistance to being manipulated themselves. At 2nd level, the courtier receives Iron Will as a bonus feat.

Gossip (Ex): Courtiers tend to hear a great deal of gossip and can often tell a thing or two about the people they meet just from the rumors they collect. Starting at 3rd level, a courtier may make a Gather Information check modified by his courtier level upon encountering or hearing of any individual, place, or item strongly associated with the empire's society. The Game Master provides the player with information depending on the check's result.

As gossip isn't always a reliable source of information, the "facts" provided by this ability are not always accurate. The standard skill check DC represents the difficulty of ferreting out potentially reliable information. The base chance that that information, once found, is true is $50\% + 1\%$ per point of Charisma modifier. The Game Master makes this roll secretly so that the player is never sure about the veracity of his information.

A courtier can only probe for rumors about a specific target a number of times equal to $1 +$ her Charisma modifier (minimum of 1); after that, he would draw undue attention to himself.

Courtier Abilities (Ex): Upon gaining 4th level and every three levels thereafter (7th, 10th, 13th, 16th, and 19th), a courtier can select one special ability from the following:

Graceful Retreat: A wise courtier knows her way out of a battle erupting around her. When executing the total defense action, the courtier receives a dodge bonus to his AC equal to her Intelligence modifier in addition to the standard +4 bonus for total defense.

Windows of the Soul: The courtier can look straight into a person's eye and weaken his resolve. The target must succeed on a Will save (DC 10 + the courtier's level + her Charisma modifier). If the target fails his Will save, she suffers a -2 penalty on all saves against the courtier's abilities for 3d6 minutes. This ability can be selected twice, and its effects stack (-4 penalty, 6d6-minute duration). Targets affected by windows of the soul or who have made a successful Will save against it are immune to the effect for 24 hours. The windows of the soul ability requires a standard action that doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity.

Taunt and Rally: As a full-round action that doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity, the courtier can taunt her opponents, deriding their weakness and lauding her allies' strength. Creatures within 50 feet radius of the courtier are affected as follows: allies receive the advantages of a *bless* spell, while one enemy per every three levels the courtier has suffers the effects of a *doom* spell (DC 11 + courtier's Charisma modifier).

DC	Type of Knowledge
5	Common; well-known to the general population
10	Uncommon; widely known among well-placed individuals (e.g., innkeepers)
15	Restricted; known only to a relatively select few (e.g., low-level officials)
20	Confidential; known only to an elite (e.g., mid-ranking officials)
30	Private; known only to a handful, and potentially embarrassing if disclosed
40	Hidden; known only to one or two people, and closely guarded
50	Buried; potentially unknown even to the subject

These effects work as if cast by a cleric of the same level as the courier, and the targets must be able to hear and understand the courtier to benefit or suffer. The effects of taunt and rally last for 1 minute per courtier level. A courtier may taunt and rally once per day per point of his Charisma modifier (minimum of 1). If the courtier is attacked while using this ability, she must make a successful Concentration check (DC 10 + damage suffered), or the effect is ruined.

Voice: Once per day, a courtier making a Diplomacy or Bluff check during social interaction gains a circumstance bonus to her check equal to twice his courtier level.

Exploit Weakness: The courtier is skilled at taking advantage of her enemy's frailties. When the courtier makes an opposed check using a skill whose key ability is Charisma, Intelligence, or Wisdom, the opponent must use the modifier from his lowest score among the those three, regardless of what key ability the opposed check would usually call upon. Skill ranks modify the opponent's roll as normal, however. For example, if a courtier was opposing her Bluff skill to an opponent's Sense Motive skill, the courtier would apply her skill ranks in Bluff and his Charisma modifier as normal to the roll. Her opponent would still modify his Sense Motive skill by her ranks in that skill, but she would be forced to apply her worst modifier among her Charisma, Intelligence, and Wisdom scores to the roll.

Manipulation: The courtier is adept at pulling the emotional strings of others. Once per day, the courtier may impose an extreme emotional state on a target that can hear and understand her. The target must succeed on a Will save (DC 11+one half the courtier's level+Charisma modifier) or succumb to the emotion. This ability mimics the effects of one of the following spells, as determined by the courtier at the time of the attempt: *heroism*, *rage*, *crushing despair*, or *good hope*. Alternately, at the discretion of the Game Master, the courtier may simply attempt to awaken within the target an emotion that has no mechanical effect but that may have roleplaying consequences, such as an infatuation, a severe dislike, and so on. If the manipulation ability attempts to reproduce a spell, the effect lasts for one round per courtier level; if the effect is non mechanical in nature, it lasts for one minute per courtier level. This ability may be selected multiple times, with each additional time allowing the courtier to use this ability one more time per day. The DC for saving throws is Charisma based.

Sway Opinion: Once per day per each point of her Charisma modifier (minimum of 1), the courtier may attempt to sway a weak-willed individual. The target must succeed on a Will save (DC 11 + one half the courtier's level + her Charisma modifier) or be treated as if under the effect of a *charm person* spell. The effect lasts for one hour per courtier level, but it can't be used on creatures of a higher character level (or Hit Dice) than the class level of the courtier. The target must be able to see, hear, and understand the courtier, whose use of this ability is perfectly disguised as normal speech and subtle mannerisms.

Versatile (Ex): At 5th, 10th, and 15th level, the courtier can designate two cross-class skills to be permanent class skills.

Leadership (Ex): Courtiers of sufficient skill and prominence tend to attract hangers-on. At 9th level, the courtier receives Leadership as a bonus feat. If she already has this feat, her Leadership score increases by 3. The cohort obtained with this feat is always a samurai (a fighter) charged with the task of protecting the courtier.

The Heart Speaks (Ex): The courtier's ability to read other people becomes so ingrained as to be second nature. Beginning at 12th level, the courtier may take 20 on Sense Motive checks as a free action.

Diplomatic Immunity (Ex): A highly experienced courtier carries himself with such poise and authority that she impresses any would-be attacker. If the courtier is holding no visible weapons, has no obvious harmful intent, and hasn't yet attacked an opponent, she may force this opponent to make a Will save (DC 10 + the courtier's level + her Charisma modifier). If the opponent fails this save, he can't harm the courtier

for 1 round. He is still free to grapple, capture, or harass the courtier as long as he does no actual lethal or non-lethal damage. This ability is ineffective against opponents with an Intelligence score below 3, but as it relies on nonverbal cues, it isn't language dependent, though the opponent must be able to see the courtier. Opponents affected by diplomatic immunity or who have made a successful Will save against it are immune to further effects for 24 hours. Diplomatic immunity is an immediate action that doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity.

Overwhelming Oratory (Su): The courtier, over an entire career of sharpening her skills of persuasion, has mastered the ability to manipulate others through the spoken word. At 20th level, the courtier can, as a standard action that doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity, attempt to dominate the will of any one creature. The target creature must succeed on a Will save (DC 19 + the courtier's Charisma modifier) or be subject to a *dominate monster* spell as if it were cast by a 20th-level sorcerer. The courtier may make one attempt at overwhelming oratory per day per point of his Charisma modifier (minimum of 1).

Table 1: The Courtier

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Style and Grace, Talent, Wealth
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Iron Will
3	+1	+1	+1	+3	Gossip
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	Courtier ability
5	+2	+1	+1	+4	Versatile (2 skills)
6	+3	+2	+2	+5	
7	+3	+2	+2	+5	Courtier ability
8	+4	+2	+2	+6	
9	+4	+3	+3	+6	Leadership
10	+5	+3	+3	+7	Versatile (2 skills), courtier ability
11	+5	+3	+3	+7	
12	+6/+1	+4	+4	+8	The Heart speaks
13	+6/+1	+4	+4	+8	Courtier ability
14	+7/+2	+4	+4	+9	
15	+7/+2	+5	+5	+9	Versatile (2 skills)
16	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10	Courtier ability
17	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10	
18	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11	Diplomatic immunity
19	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11	Courtier ability
20	+10/+5	+6	+6	+12	Overwhelming Oratory



KITSUNE CLASSES

Given their propensity to mingle with human society, kitsune are free to advance in any of the character classes available to humans. It's a rare fox, however, who walks a human path the whole way, for it dilutes the power she could have by exploring her own spirit nature.

In addition to the core and prestige classes available to all player characters, kitsune have two racial classes available to them: the myobu and the nogitsune. By gaining levels in either of these classes, kitsune further their training in fox magic and have a greater chance of gaining prestige among their peers.

The myobu and nogitsune racial classes are only available to kitsune characters; not even the izuchi-mochi have enough of foxtouched blood to allow them to gain even one level in either. The two classes are mutually exclusive: once a fox pledges her loyalty to the way of the myobu or the nogitsune, she's forever forbidden from exploring the other. The only exception is a fabled ritual known to few that allows a kitsune to switch her allegiance once in her entire - and very long - life.

Like prestige classes, the myobu and nogitsune racial classes don't count when determining whether a character suffers an XP penalty due to multiclassing.

THE MYOBU

Inari is a benevolent god who looks after those who worship him, and even many who don't. With a soft spot in his heart for all living things, this god of abundance once took pity of a young fox couple and made them his servants and messengers. Soon, other foxes joined the little cult that eventually grew into the myobu, Inari's foxes.

The myobu are largely responsible for the good part of the reputation kitsune have, for when they pledge their loyalty to Inari, they become agents of good and protectors of humanity, as eccentric as that guardianship can be.

Whimsical and good natured, the myobu are free spirits that feel comfortable with humans as well as with the denizens of the supernatural world, though they're more likely to reveal their true nature to trusted

humans than to any supernatural creature, including their nogitsune cousins.

Of the kitsune, the myobu are the more organized. They have regional 'princes' that rule the shrine realms connected to a major shrine, while shrine realms connected to minor shrines are ruled by kitsune either appointed by a prince or elected by the local kitsune populace. Such titles are not as stable or static as their human equivalents. Many nobles have been known to pass their position to any random kitsune when they get tired of their responsibilities, and there's one known instance of a kitsune court being ruled by a human child for a couple of months, after which both the child and the foxes became bored with the game and returned to their usual lives.

Adventures: The adventures of the myobu almost always have to do with protecting humans or teaching them valuable lessons. Myobu often hear the call of Inari, ordering them to do something or other, but most of the time they try to do good on their own in order to advance in their spiritual training and get in the good graces of their elders and with Inari himself.

Even when championing the cause of good, the myobu are kitsune still. They'll often employ the method that brings them the most amusement and will care little if they trample a few human egos along the way, so long as their final, beneficent objective is met.

Some kitsune take their roles a little too seriously (as serious as is possible for these tricksters) and fashion themselves as fairy-tale heroes—sometimes with disastrous results but sometimes bringing great honor to themselves and Inari.

Characteristics: Myobu are gentle and good natured, learning the aspects of fox magic that will help them mingle more easily in human society and sometimes even integrate into it as kitsune, rather than as faux humans. Their sociability helps them forge tighter bonds with each other than with other creatures in their own society, and they are stronger for it. They are considered to be diplomats between the humans and the world of spirits and thereby gain prestige in both societies.

Alignment: Dedicated to defend and protect humans at the behest of Inari, the myobu are mostly allied with the forces of good. Even those that maintain a neutral stance with regard to good and evil have at least some inclination toward altruism and doing good.

Religion: More than worshippers of Inari, the myobu are his agents and respect him as their patron and superior, a tradition that dates back for millennia. The tradition began with Osusuki and Akomachi, the first foxes gifted with sentience and magic, who agreed to swear oaths to Inari and serve him. They have a healthy respect for the rest of the Shinto pantheon and avoid priests who wield true divine power and can harm the kitsune. Some myobu practice Buddhism in some way or another, which is tolerated in some courts and even encouraged in others.

Background: A myobu is often selected and begins her training when she's still an ordinary fox not yet a century old, growing up in a kind of wild reserve that the kitsune keep around the temples of Inari. In any case, it's a rare myobu who grows up without the support of other kitsune or at least vigilant observation from afar. Kitsune that grow up in the wild and away from these reserves can find their way into the myobu's ranks by encountering one of the wandering agents of Inari and agreeing to make their goals her own.

Other Classes: The myobu are holy tricksters and supernatural benefactors and are about the only kitsune that associate with priests in any positive way.



They seek the companionship of fighters and paladins for protection, but they're greatly attracted to the company of bards, druids, rangers courtiers and rogues. . They distrust wizards and sorcerers, even more so if those knowledgeable in geomancy due to the ways in which they manipulate the powers of the elements.

The Nogitsune: Myobu hold a certain condescending attitude toward their nogitsune cousins. Because they have found a higher purpose, myobu consider these rogue kitsune as wayward children that should be accepted as family, as duty demands, but their most dangerous antics shouldn't be tolerated.

A myobu cannot gain levels in the nogitsune racial class unless she becomes one. A myobu who feels disheartened about her duty to Inari and frustrated about her obligations toward humans can decide to cancel her pledge. When she becomes a nogitsune, an ex-myobu loses all class benefits except fox magic, and she also loses the tails she gained at 4th, 7th, and 10th levels. She retains her fox magic powers as well as her attack bonus, hit points, skill points, and save bonuses. She becomes a nogitsune of the same level as she had been as a myobu, gaining all the nogitsune class features corresponding to her level except fox magic powers and number of tails. She begins progressing as a nogitsune from that point on.

Role: Myobu can play many roles in an adventuring party, especially if they bring levels in other classes as well. Myobu combine aspects of many different classes, making them quite versatile: offering the ability to turn undead, social skills that suit them to investigation and subterfuge, and a smattering of magical abilities to deceive, transform and control their opponents. Skill and fox magic selection will strongly determine exactly what role each myobu will play in a party.

Game Rule Information

Myobu have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Wisdom and Charisma are the most useful abilities for the myobu due to these kitsune's holy gifts and roles as observers and mediators between humanity and the supernatural world. Like all kitsune, myobu use their Charisma score to determine the DCs of their fox magic, but a high Charisma also enhances their abilities against the undead. A high Wisdom score aids them most with their healing arts, but it's also the key ability for their diplomatic skills.

Alignment: Any non-evil.

Hit Die: d8

Class Skills

The myobu's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (local) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Knowledge (spirits) (Int)*, Listen (Wis), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), and Use Magic Device (Cha).

* **Knowledge (spirits)** is a new skill described in the Character Options chapter.

Skill Points at First Level: (4 + Int modifier) x 4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the myobu.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Myobu are proficient with all simple weapons and with the naginata, the war fan, and the tessen. Myobu are proficient with light and medium armor but not with shields.

Inari's Pledge (Ex): The myobu pledge their lives in service of the god Inari and, in return, they receive his blessing. At 1st level, myobu no longer suffer from the -2 racial penalty to saves against human divine magic. In addition, myobu gain a special blessing from Inari depending on their main character class—multiclass characters must choose one type of blessing—but, in exchange, they must serve Inari and his messengers. If myobu is the kitsune's first class level, they gain one extra use of fox magic per day.

- **Barbarian:** Inari's righteous fury can replace the barbarian's mindless rage. When he flies into a rage, the myobu barbarian can exchange the standard +4 bonus to Strength for a +4 Dexterity bonus. When doing this, the barbarian can use fox magic during a rage. (Normally, raging barbarians can't cast spells.)
- **Bard:** The music of Inari has special potency, and myobu bards can produce it. Bardic music effects last an extra number of rounds equal to the character's Charisma bonus (if any) after the effect would normally end. Effects

that normally last for up to 1 round per bard level while the bard performs and concentrates, as with the *fascinate* effect, would last up to 1 round per bard level plus a number of rounds equal to the bard's Charisma bonus as long as the bard continues to perform and concentrate. Effects that normally last a number of rounds after the ally ceases to hear the bard sing, such as inspire courage effect, would last up to 1 additional round per point of the bard's Charisma bonus after the ally ceases to hear the bard.

- **Cleric:** There are few priests of Inari more exalted than myobu priests. When the character casts a domain spell, there is a chance (35% plus 5% per point of Wisdom bonus, if any) that the spell won't be spent and the character can use it a second time (only) on that day.
- **Courtier:** In their role as diplomats, myobu receive additional benefit from their connection to their god. A myobu courtier can choose one extra courtier ability at 1st level.
- **Druid:** Kitsune are natural shapechangers, and myobu druids explore this ability even further with their wild shape ability. The forms they can assume can be a number of HD equal to their druid level plus her half of Wisdom or Charisma modifier (whichever is higher).
- **Fighter:** The preferred fighting style of the kitsune relies on agility rather than brawn. Myobu fighters learn to move quickly in armor, raising the maximum Dexterity bonus for all armor they wear by +1.
- **Monk:** Fox-style martial arts are a bizarre collection of ki projection techniques combined with seductive dancelike movements. Instead of her Wisdom modifier, a myobu monk can apply her Charisma modifier as a bonus to AC. All the other rules of the monk's armor modifiers apply.
- **Paladin:** Myobu remain kitsune still, and are much too undisciplined to embrace the path of the paladin bodhisattva.
- **Ranger:** Inari's hunters enjoy a supernatural understanding of any prey they track. A myobu ranger applies half of her favored enemy bonus for a particular type (and subtype, if applicable) of creature to the save DC of fox magic when such magic is used against the same type (and subtype) of creature.
- **Rogue:** Serving Inari doesn't keep kitsune from practicing their usual tricks and wiles; on

the contrary, they do so with divine favor. When a myobu rogue uses her sneak attack ability, she can lessen the damage in order to befuddle the target and make him careless. The target of a successful sneak attack can't make any attacks of opportunity and suffers a -2 penalty to AC when provoking such attacks himself; this penalty lasts for a number of rounds equal to the kitsune's Charisma bonus (if any) plus one for every +1d6 of sneak attack damage that she forgoes. A given creature can only be affected by this penalty once every 24 hours.

- **Sorcerer:** Kitsune are magical in nature and it's not unusual for some to channel the power of the land into powerful spells, thanks to Inari's blessing. The myobu sorcerer chooses one element (earth, fire, water, wood, or water) and gains Silent Spell as a bonus feat for spells that resonate with that element. (See the Magic chapter or the wizard class adaptation notes, above, for a list of which schools of magic correspond to each element.)
- **Wizard:** Inari rewards those kitsune with the patience to learn onmyo-do by giving them strong allies. The myobu wizard's shikigami (see the wizard class adaptation notes, above) have a +4 bonus to their Strength and Constitution.

Human Prestige: The myobu are adept at moving within human society, and they work toward improving their standing with humans as much as they do with other kitsune. A myobu's Prestige score (see the Character Options chapter) applies to humans as well as to supernatural creatures, but she still gains and loses prestige through the tricks of a kitsune.

Fox Magic (Su): At 1st level and at every even-numbered

level (2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th), a myobu gains one fox magic power of her choosing, but it must be an enchantment power or one from the following list: Dream Travel, Craft Shrine Realm, Basic Disguise, Advanced Disguise, Masterful Disguise, Ghost Body, Spirit Body, or Shrine Sanctuary. The character must meet all the prerequisites of the power before gaining it, including number of tails. Alternately, if she qualifies, she can choose any one of the three Kyubi powers. A myobu can use fox magic a number of times per day equal to her character level; in addition, she may give up one or more uses of bardic music, if she has any, for an equal number of extra uses of fox magic. (See the Magic chapter for a discussion of fox magic.)

Shared Shrine: As part of the myobu family, a myobu character is always welcome at shrines devoted to Inari and those owned by other myobu. All Inari and myobu shrines are considered to be devoted to her, and she can use the Shrine Sanctuary power to travel to any of them.

A Nose For Trouble (Sp): Being supernatural troubleshooters, the myobu learn to recognize when something out of the ordinary is the source of trouble. By spending one use of fox magic, a myobu character can detect the presence of particular sorts of creatures or effects. The area of effect is a 60-foot-radius emanation centered on her. As she gains myobu levels, she learns to recognize different sorts of creatures and effects, but she can only scan an area for one sort each time she uses this ability. This ability requires a standard action (that does not provoke an attack of opportunity) to activate, and the character can maintain the effect through concentration for a number of rounds equal to twice her myobu level. This ability works similarly to

Table 2: The Myobu

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+2	+0	+2	Inari's Pledge, human prestige, fox magic (1st power)
2	+1	+3	+0	+3	Fox magic (2nd power)
3	+2	+3	+1	+3	Shared shrine, A Nose For Trouble (magic)
4	+3	+4	+1	+4	Fox magic (3rd power), additional tail
5	+3	+4	+1	+4	Turn undead, art of healing 1d8
6	+4	+5	+2	+5	Fox magic (4th power), A Nose For Trouble (creatures)
7	+5	+5	+2	+5	Additional tail, art of healing 2d8
8	+6/+1	+6	+2	+6	Fox magic (5th power), A Nose For Trouble (supernatural)
9	+6/+1	+6	+3	+6	Art of healing 3d8
10	+7/+2	+7	+3	+7	Fox magic (6th power), additional tail, Sense Destiny

detect magic and *detect evil*, and, in fact, it makes use of tables associated with those spells.

- **At 3rd level**, the myobu can detect the presence, strength, and lingering effect of magic auras as per the *detect magic* spell, except that the duration and area of effect are as noted above. In addition, this ability detects spellcasters within the area of effect. Use the table for the *detect evil* spell to determine aura power, with clerics, druids, wizards, and sorcerers treated as “evil clerics” and other spellcasters as “evil outsiders.” The lingering auras of spellcasters can be detected in the same way that those of dissipated spells and destroyed magic items are by the *detect magic* spell.
- **At 6th level**, the myobu can sense the presence of fey, undead, and outsiders, although she can only focus on one type per use of this ability. This detection ability includes beings possessing or inhabiting other bodies. Treat fey as “evil creatures” and all outsiders as “evil outsiders” for the purpose of determining the strength of their auras on the *detect evil* aura power table. The lingering auras of these creatures can be detected in the same way that those of evil creatures are by the *detect evil* spell.
- **At 8th level**, the myobu can sense disturbances in the flow of magic, enabling her to detect incorporeal, invisible, and ethereal creatures as well as the elements of geomantic arrays and shrines (see the Character Options and Magic chapters). Treat incorporeal, invisible, and ethereal creatures as “magic items” (with the creature’s HD taking the place of caster level) for the purpose of determining the strength of their auras on the *detect magic* aura power table. The lingering auras of these creatures can be detected in the same way that those of magic items are by the *detect magic* spell.

Additional Tail: At 4th, 7th, and 10th level, the myobu gains an additional tail regardless of her Prestige score. The additional tails she gains from the myobu class don’t affect the target Prestige score at which she can gain additional tails. (See the Character Options chapter for more information about prestige.)

Turn Undead (Su): A myobu gains the power to channel Inari’s will to repel the undead. She can turn undead as a cleric of the same level as her myobu

level. Unlike monks who have the Exorcism ability, the myobu’s ability only functions against undead.

Art of Healing (Sp): A myobu gain a special power from Inari that allows her to heal wounds. At 5th level, the myobu can cure 1d8 points of damage by expending one use of fox magic. This amount increases to 2d8 per use at 7th level and 3d8 per use at 9th level. In other respects, this ability works the same as the *cure light wounds* spell.

Sense Destiny (Su): An extension of the detecting abilities of the myobu, sense destiny is a unique gift awarded only to the most accomplished foxes. It has no mechanics in and of itself. The myobu gains the ability to sense the importance of any object or person she touches (intentionally or accidentally) in the grand scheme of things. She has only a vague idea of what that destiny will be and no real clue as to when it will manifest (though she’ll sense the urgency of immediately impending destinies), only that the subject is worth keeping an eye on. This ability allows myobu to recognize the future shogun when patting a peasant boy’s head, know that a seemingly worthless statuette will save the world if placed on the steps to trip an evil priest, and the like. This ability would potentially allow characters to recognize that an NPC they meet will play an important role in an adventure, but not precisely which adventure. The Game Master determines who or what inspires these impressions, and under what circumstances, so that players don’t have their characters go about touching everything they encounter.

THE NOGITSUNE

Of the two paths available to kitsune that explore their spiritual nature to the fullest, the way of the nogitsune offers the most freedom and personal gratification, yet dark perils also await some who follow it. The nogitsune are fully aware of their place in the spiritual world, but they owe allegiance to no one but themselves, pursuing no goal save those their own ambitions dictate.

These heathen foxes exist for themselves and run the gamut from charming and playful pranksters to evil

tormenters. What they have in common is a selfish streak that colors their actions, for almost everything they do is for their own gain. Even those nogitsune that do favors for humans and for others ultimately have a selfish goal. They accept shrine offerings as down payments on future bribes, as strokes to their egos, or as ways to place people in their debt.

The legends of evil kitsune stem mostly from the actions of the nogitsune, among whose numbers are true demons, though it'd be wrong to label all nogitsune as agents of darkness.

The nogitsune have little to no organization. A single powerful fox or a pack of such individuals will claim a territory (sometimes contending with the myobu) and will keep all other kitsune away. The largest nogitsune clans are formed by a half-dozen such packs and are ruled through a brutal meritocracy in which pack leaders continually vie for the title of lord of their little patch of land.

Adventures:

Nogitsune lead a life of adventure by choice. Naturally curious and unbound by any stricture or divine mandate, they are free to stick their noses anywhere and everywhere, and they do so at their whim. The wandering foxes as well as those who establish dens are always looking for the next big thrill, targeting humans for pranks or undertaking great missions that will bring them amusement. It's not rare for nogitsune to join human adventurers in their missions, often spicing things up by making situations more difficult behind their companions' backs. Sometimes nogitsune will target a person or group that annoys them,

making it their goal in life to bring them to ruin, or at least make them miserable for a little while.

Characteristics: Nogitsune are artisans of chaos, rogues with supernatural tools with which to wreak havoc and satisfy their smallest impulses. They have the power to confound people not only with fox magic but also with their own developed powers that allow them to strike from the shadows and return to them to avoid capture, which just serves to augment the legends of their exploits. Since they lack the support of a large group like the myobu, the nogitsune have learned to employ covert combat tactics, utilizing their magic and trickery to deceive and harm their victims.

Alignment: A nogitsune has no allegiance save to herself. While some nogitsune prefer to be left alone and venture out to have a little harmless fun, a few are truly evil and exist only to bring grief to everyone around them, deriving their fun from the suffering of others. A nogitsune must have a non-lawful alignment.

Religion: These foxes are not called heathens for nothing. Their selfishness extends to their spirituality, and they recognize no gods or spirits as real authorities. A few do revere spirits of chaos and destruction like the god Susano-o, but most of them rely only on their own strength.

Background: A kitsune can become a nogitsune at any point after attaining her second tail; she just needs to acknowledge the desire to embrace the strife inherent in her blood. There's no initiation, no ritual, and no recognition



necessary. The nogitsune is the natural path for most kitsune, one that is often solitary but nonetheless highly satisfactory for the foxes.

Other Classes: Nogitsune will most likely associate with bards, courtiers, rogues, sorcerers, and fighters and steadfastly avoid clerics, especially if they are human. They find the discipline of monks, paladins, wizards, and good-aligned clerics incomprehensible and sometimes even repulsive. They treat druids, barbarians, and rangers as curiosities and a good challenge.

The Myobu: The nogitsune believe their cousins to be mere dogs in the service of Inari, slaves to alien ideals and, in general, self-deluded fools. However, they're still family, and they must be made to see that subservience isn't the way of the kitsune.

A nogitsune can't gain levels in the myobu class unless she becomes one. A nogitsune that repents and seeks enlightenment can decide to convert and pledge to Inari. When she becomes a myobu, an ex-nogitsune loses all her class benefits other than fox magic and also loses the tails she gained at 4th, 7th, and 10th levels, if applicable. She retains her base attack bonus, hit points, skill points, and save bonuses. She becomes a myobu of the same level as she was a nogitsune, gaining all the myobu class features corresponding to her level, except fox magic powers and additional tails. She begins progressing as a myobu from that point on.

Role: Nogitsune have a wide selection of skills and abilities that make them best suited to being scouts for the party. They also mimic many of the stealthy and covert aspects of a rogue, allowing them to take on the roles a rogue would in an ordinary party. Their combat ability relies on stealth, so they are most effective using their sneak attack ability rather than wading directly into melee. Nogitsune also make ideal infiltrators and investigators in social situations.

Game Rule Information

Nogitsune have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Dexterity and Charisma are the most useful abilities for the nogitsune due to their life of trickery and deceit, which demands that they be able to fool others and escape when their tricks go sour. Like all kitsune, nogitsune use Charisma to determine the DCs of their fox magic. Dexterity complements their roguish pursuits and aids them in combat.

Alignment: Nogitsune can have any non-lawful alignment.

Hit Die: d6

Class Skills

The nogitsune's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Decipher Script (Int), Disable Device (Int), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (local) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Knowledge (spirits) (Int)*, Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Open Lock (Dex), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex), Use Magic Device (Cha), and Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at First Level: (8 + Int modifier) x 4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 8 + Int modifier.

* Knowledge (spirits) is a new skill described in the Character Options chapter.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the nogitsune.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Nogitsune are proficient with all simple weapons as well as the following: kunai, nekode, ninja-to, shuriken, and war fan. Nogitsune are proficient with light armor but not with shields.

Fox Magic (Su): At 1st level and at every even-numbered level (2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th), the nogitsune gains one fox magic power of her choosing, but it must be an illusion or enchantment power. The character must meet all the prerequisites of the power before gaining it, including number of tails. Alternately, if she qualifies, she can choose any one of the three Kyubi powers. A nogitsune can use fox magic a number of times per day equal to her class level; in addition, she may give up one or more uses of bardic music, if she has any, for an equal number of extra uses of fox magic. (See the Magic chapter for a discussion of fox magic.)

Master Trickster (Su): The nogitsune are masters of trickery and acquire magic that only furthers their

learned talents. By spending one use of fox magic, a kitsune can achieve one of the following effects, gained at different levels:

- **Distraction:** Beginning at 1st level, a nogitsune can momentarily distract a single target who fails a Will save (DC 10 + nogitsune's level + nogitsune's Cha modifier). The target is fascinated for a number of rounds equal to the nogitsune's Charisma bonus (minimum of 1). In other respects, this ability functions as the bardic music ability of the same name.
- **Distant Fingers:** Starting at 3rd level, a nogitsune can perform a Sleight of Hand check to lift an object from a person without actually having to touch her target. She can perform this check at a distance equal to 2 feet per nogitsune level. Taking something from another creature requires the nogitsune to make a DC 20 Sleight of Hand check. The opponent makes a Spot check to detect the attempt, opposed by the same Sleight of hand check result the nogitsune achieved when she tried to grab the item. An opponent who succeeds on this check notices the attempt, regardless of whether the nogitsune got the item. However, the opponent's Spot check suffers a -1 penalty for every 2 feet of distance the nogitsune is from her opponent.
- **Touch of Chaos:** Beginning at 5th level, a nogitsune can open a lock as a free action simply by touching it, provided that the DC to open the lock is no higher than 20 plus the character's nogitsune level.

Table 3: The Nogitsune

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+2	+2	Fox magic (1st power), master trickster (distraction)
2	+1	+0	+3	+3	Fox magic (2nd power)
3	+2	+1	+3	+3	Shadow lair, master trickster (distant fingers)
4	+3	+1	+4	+4	Fox magic (3rd power), additional tail
5	+3	+1	+4	+4	Fox bite +1d6, master trickster (touch of chaos)
6	+4	+2	+5	+5	Fox magic (4th power)
7	+5	+2	+5	+5	Additional tail, fox bite +2d6, master trickster (hide in plain sight)
8	+6/+1	+2	+6	+6	Fox magic (5th power)
9	+6/+1	+3	+6	+6	Fox bite +3d6
10	+7/+2	+3	+7	+7	Fox magic (6th power), additional tail



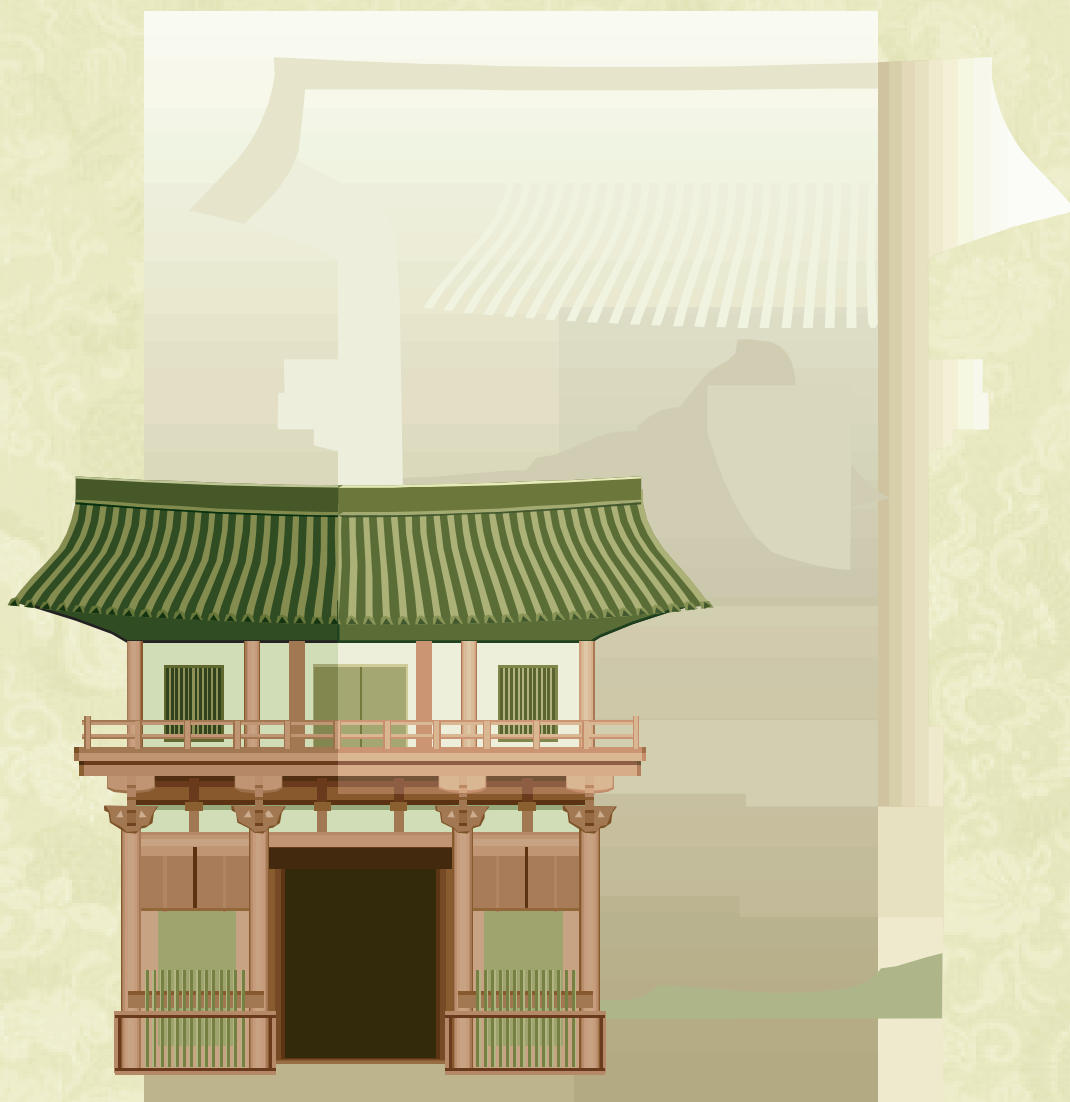
- **Hide in Plain Sight:** Starting at 7th level, a nogitsune can use the Hide skill even while being observed. As long as she is within 10 feet of some sort of shadow, a nogitsune can hide herself from view in the open without anything to actually hide behind. She can't, however, hide in her own shadow.

Shadow Lair (Sp): Owing to the lack of a permanent home, a nogitsune learn to carve instant hideouts. Once per day, a nogitsune of 3rd level or higher can create an extra dimensional space like the one created by the *rope trick* spell, except that it lasts one hour per nogitsune level plus the nogitsune's Charisma modifier, and the space is only big enough to accommodate two persons (or about six foxes) comfortably.

Additional Tail: At 4th, 7th, and 10th levels, a nogitsune gains an additional tail regardless of her Prestige

score. The additional tails she gains from the nogitsune class don't affect the target Prestige score at which she can gain additional tails. (See the Character Options chapter for more information about prestige.)

Fox Bite (Su): A nogitsune can cause a spiritual wound at the same time that she attacks, increasing any damage she causes. When a target would be denied his Dexterity bonus to AC (whether he actually has a Dexterity bonus or not) or when the nogitsune flanks him, she can spend one use of fox magic to deal extra damage equal to +1d6 at 5th level, +2d6 at 7th level, and +3d6 at 9th level. This damage counts as being dealt by a magic and/or chaotic weapon for purposes of overcoming damage reduction, and it stacks with the extra damage from a sneak attack. It doesn't multiply on a critical hit.





3

CHARACTER OPTIONS

PRESTIGE

The kitsune and the human inhabitants of the Yonhosu Valley value certain traits, practice certain skills, and study certain magic that aren't options in the core d20 fantasy rules. This chapter describes a set of new rules designed to evoke the mood and represent the customs in the Yonhosu Valley, including skills, feats, character traits such as Prestige and Weaknesses, and systems describing the kitsune's tricks and the power of shrines.

These rules are optional and modular; you can add them to any of your games (including *Kitsunemori* games, of course) or simply ignore them or emulate their effects through roleplaying or existing rules.

One of the most important concepts regulating the interactions between the people of the Yonhosu Valley as well as the surrounding empire is *face*. People go through incredible pains to maintain face against all sorts of depredations, and making a rival lose face can sometimes be more damaging than sticking a dagger in his back.

The playful kitsune aren't exempt from this. While they place a lot less importance than do humans on appearances and dignity, they, too, have a social measure by which they award respect and which eventually allows them to gain more tails and increase their power.

Both races' conceptions of honor, social standing, and personal achievement can be summed up in a new trait called Prestige. Prestige measures a character's standing among his peers in terms of personal reputa-

tion and public regard. A poor ronin down on his luck can hold high prestige due to his adamant adherence to his code of honor, while a rich merchant can be infamous for his corrupt dealings. The ronin's prestige eventually helps him as the people come to listen to his counsel and may even give him things for free out of pity and respect; the rich merchant will see his fortune dwindle as he finds it more difficult to find willing trade partners.

The Prestige Score

Prestige is in some ways like an ability score. It ranges from 3 on up and incurs the same modifiers as an ability score of the same number. All characters start play with a Prestige score equal to 10 plus their Charisma modifier. Unlike a normal ability score, however, a character can't raise his Prestige score through the standard ability score increases at every level divisible by four; gaining and losing Prestige depends on the character's actions and how he's perceived by society.

Prestige Checks

Using Prestige involves Prestige checks, which is simply 1d20 + the character's Prestige modifier against a DC set by the Game Master. Prestige checks are useful mostly in social encounters, but famous samurai have been known to subjugate an opponent by sheer personality and reputation.

A character can make a Prestige check in the following situations.

First Impression: When introducing himself to a new group of people, a character can make a Prestige check to see whether his name and bearing make a good first impression. The DC for this check depends

on the size of the group and how well-informed it's likely to be.

The DC for the check can be lowered by one or two steps if the character is a native of a given region. Success means the target group recognizes the character's name and reputation. The group's reaction is dependent on the specific circumstances of the character's known reputation, how the character's fame has led him to be viewed, and so on.

DC	Example
5	The court at a capital city, where news and gossip travels quickly
10	The halls of a government office or a popular tavern in a small city
15	The streets or the marketplace of a small city
20	A checkpoint outpost with heavy traffic
25	The streets of a large town
30	A small-town gossip

Staredowns: Nobles, merchants, and even peasants practice the fine art of the staredown as an alternative to duels. People make use of their reputation as well as their strength of personality to impress others and force them to back down. Both contestants must be willing to enter a staredown, which usually happens after negotiations begin to turn sour. The challenger must state that he stares deeply into his opponent's eyes and projects his presence forward. The challenged can accept the staredown and force his gaze back at the challenger, or simply avert his eyes and concede. (A successful DC 25 Bluff check allows the character to save face by pretending he didn't notice his opponent initiate a staredown.)

Both contestants make opposed Prestige checks, adding their Charisma modifier and ranks in Intimidate to their rolls. The loser is forced to avert his eyes and loses the staredown. Both contestants make a separate Prestige check after the winner is established to see if he gains or loses face by the staredown's outcome (see Prestige Fluctuation, below). Additionally, the loser suffers a -2 penalty to Will saves against the victor; the loser suffers the same penalty on Charisma-based skill checks against the victor as well as against any witness to the staredown's outcome. This penalty lasts for one minute per the victor's character level.

Courtly Ways: Manners and etiquette are very important not only in the secluded halls of mansions and

palaces but also in the streets of towns and villages. Of course, the rules of behavior change in each environment, growing more complicated the higher one moves up the social ladder. A person can navigate through the ways and manners of any given group by relying on his Prestige, letting his reputation and natural grace guide him through the attendant social complications. Whenever a character is faced with a group that has a hostile, unfriendly, or indifferent attitude to him, he can make a Prestige check, adding his Diplomacy modifier to the roll. A successful check means that he's able to behave in a manner consistent with his station and still command the respect of the group he's interacting with. The DC for this check depends on the complexities of the target group's etiquette.

Success means that the character presents himself correctly in the environment, and the attitude of the target group improves by one step.

DC	Complexity
5	Simple; there are only a few customs to keep track of, and a good reputation is more important than observing them precisely (examples: a group of friends, an army unit, a small village)
15	Moderate; a few unspoken rules govern social interactions, but they're fairly easy to pick up (examples: a tavern full of regulars, a small guild, the staff of a large household)
25	Complex; although there are many rituals and set rules of conduct, they're documented and widely accepted (examples: the halls of a samurai (or ninja) clan household, a large guild, the staff of a castle)
35	Byzantine; the already complicated rules of interaction and allegiance are made still more difficult to negotiate by secret deals, ambiguous intentions, and festering plots (examples: the courts of provincial lords and the kingdom itself)

Pulling Rank: Besides the official ranks found in armies, bureaucracies, guilds, and other organizations, there are more informal markers of personal authority and position, as reflected by Prestige. A person of low official rank but high Prestige is much safer in his position than an immediate superior with lower

Prestige, for example, and many governors seek the favor of low-ranking but highly reputed members of their court. To attempt to pull rank on a superior or someone in authority through Prestige, a character makes a Prestige check, adding in his Charisma modifier, against a DC equal to 10 + his target's Will save bonus + his target's Prestige. Success means that the character has successfully pulled rank on his target, impressing him with his Prestige. The character can give one command that involves his target's official duties or capabilities, and the target must obey it to the best of his ability. This command can't cause the target to lose face or put himself at obvious risk, although the fact of being cowed into submission in public may be enough to cause the target to lose face. Though this effect is nonmagical, the limitations on the kinds of commands that a character can issue are similar to those imposed on the *suggestion* spell.

Leadership: Characters who have the Leadership feat add their Prestige modifier to their Leadership score.

Prestige Fluctuation: The last and most important application of the Prestige check is to determine whether a character's Prestige score goes up or down due to circumstances. Whenever a character is in a situation that could gain or lose him Prestige, he makes a Prestige check, with the DC equal to his current Prestige score. Success on the check yields the most favorable outcome possible: if the character had risked losing Prestige, he instead saves face and doesn't lose Prestige; if he had a chance to increase Prestige, he bolstered his standing and his Prestige score. With each Prestige check, a character always gains or loses just one point. See below for the circumstances that can occasion this sort of Prestige check.

GAINING AND LOSING PRESTIGE

Prestige is based on subjective values held dear by society, and thus a character gains and loses Prestige as a function of his interaction with other people. A character increases his Prestige when his deeds and his behavior make others regard him with higher esteem and respect, but he may lose it when things happen that make him look bad in his own and others' eyes.

In the human society of Yonhosu Valley, Prestige translates as face and honor. A samurai may be a

coward and a spineless manipulator, but if he manages to keep a respectable facade and no one witnesses his true nature, he may have a high Prestige and a false reputation. Of course, by behaving in an honorable manner, a samurai is much more likely to increase or maintain his Prestige.

Basing her decision on the character concept and the social environment, the Game Master decides when social interactions cause a character to potentially gain or lose Prestige. At that point, the player makes a Prestige check (see above). Most of these situations will have to do with choices the character faces between acting honorably or dishonorably in the eyes of others, regardless of his true intentions. The Game Master decides whether the Prestige check must be made to try to gain Prestige or to prevent losing it.

The presence of witnesses may influence whether a Prestige check is necessary, as news of the character's actions can spread and affect his Prestige. However, the Game Master can call for a Prestige check even when no one sees the character act, as Prestige is also a function of the character's bearing and presence, but this should be limited only to extreme circumstances.

Examples of events that would cause a Prestige check to gain or lose Prestige are provided next.

Characters who have very high personal standards, such as samurai and priests, are subject to Prestige checks more often than are commoners. For all their infamy, shinobi, too, are accountable to their clan and follow their own set of rules.

Situations that call for a Prestige check are not always clear cut, and some can pose choices between two wrong decisions or two right ones, the only difference being that one may be worse or better than the other. The random element built into the Prestige check takes this ambiguity into account, allowing a character to sometimes keep his Prestige even when he does something apparently dishonorable and vice versa.

KITSUNE PRESTIGE

Kitsune don't adhere to the mores of human society; however, they, too, have Prestige to maintain among their peers. The foxes are at some disadvantage when mingling in human society, for they generally have no Prestige among humans since they usually assume a



The character can gain Prestige when he ...	The character can lose Prestige when he ...
spares an enemy's life.	kills an enemy who's surrendered.
gives to another something that he obviously needs himself.	refuses to offer aid when it would cost him nothing to give it.
swallows his pride when he's obviously right but his superior is wrong (samurai).	rebukes his immediate superior harshly and openly.
stands in harm's way to protect another.	uses others as a shield.
tells the truth even if it's harmful to him.	is caught in a lie.
displays generosity by giving money to the less fortunate.	is caught stealing or possessing stolen property.
defeats an enemy stronger than him.	uses his strongest attack against a weak target.
stays behind to cover his allies' retreat.	runs away first when circumstances don't require him to go first.
gives a moving speech or performance.	is publicly ridiculed.
completes a mission against incredible odds.	fails an easy mission.
survives a suicidal mission.	survives a mission that was supposed to be suicidal by betraying comrades.
renders judgment fairly on a contested issue.	demonstrates an unfair and unreasonable bias.
creates an outstanding item with his craftsmanship skills.	creates a mediocre or poor item even though his skill is great.
upholds the interests of his family, clan, or guild above his own.	Lets his personal interests come between his duties to lord, clan and family.

new identity with each foray into human settlements. As a result, a kitsune typically can't use a Prestige check with humans to make a good first impression, pull rank, and so on unless she's taken care to create a stable human identity, in which case her Prestige applies to interactions with humans as normal. (See the myobu class for more on kitsune that develop long-term roles in human society.)

Kitsune make Prestige checks as normal to increase or avoid losing their Prestige score, but (except as noted above) only when their actions involve kitsune society. They can lie, cheat, betray, and cajole humans without any dent to their Prestige. On the contrary, many of the

tasks appointed by Inari or undertaken at their own whim *involve* lying, cheating, betraying, and cajoling humans.

However, all Prestige rules may apply when kitsune deal with others of their kind as well as with other supernatural races, such as the tanuki and the tengu (see Chapter VII: Forest Denizens for more information on the tanuki and tengu).



The Nine Tails

Humans use word-of-mouth and personal bearing to properly convey Prestige, but kitsune have a physical and very visible way to demonstrate just how important they are: their tails. Kitsune grow additional tails according to their rank and Prestige, with the maximum known number of tails being nine (although it's rumored that certain enlightened kitsune can surpass this number).

A kitsune grows her second tail when she turns a century old. At this point, she becomes sentient and gains the first of the kitsune racial powers. From that point on, she gains the rest of her tails through effort.

The kitsune's tails aren't merely cosmetic or useful for social occasions. The number of a kitsune's tails are also a measure of her magical power. All of the powers listed as fox magic depend on the number of tails the kitsune has, and most powers are unavailable for foxes with few tails (see Chapter V: Magic for more details on Fox Magic).

A kitsune gains a new tail when she reaches a particular Prestige score (or through advancing in one of the two kitsune racial classes); she doesn't lose the tails she has gained in this manner even if her Prestige

Prestige Score	Benefit
10	2nd tail
12	+1 tail
15	+1 tail
18	+1 tail
22	+1 tail
26	+1 tail
30	+1 tail
35	+1 tail
every +5	+1 tail

drops below the level at which she gained a tail (but she also can't gain a new tail by rising again to a Prestige score that has already awarded her a tail). For example, Kiyone is a young nogitsune with a Prestige score of 14. She brought a corrupt priest to ruin through seduction and claimed the priest's most prized possession for her court as a trophy. Because she completed a difficult task with a maximum of suffering for her target (something that nogitsune admire), she makes a Prestige check (DC equal to her current Prestige score of 14) to gain a point of Prestige and bring her Prestige score high enough to qualify for a new tail. She rolls a 16, thus gaining a new Prestige point and increasing her score to 15. She's now a three-tailed fox. Should her Prestige score drop below 15, she doesn't lose her third tail, but she will not gain a new one when she obtains a Prestige score of 15 again.

The Kyubi

Kitsune that earn their ninth tail receive the title of kyubi, the only rank that all kitsune truly aspire to. Kyubi command great power and their accomplishments demand respect from all other kitsune and a fair amount of it from other supernatural races: kyubi gain a +5 bonus to all Charisma-based checks involving kitsune and +2 bonus when other supernatural races are involved.

TRICKERY AND DECEIT

If it seems that the kitsune's main pastime is taunting humans, that's because it is. Even the myobu, which are charged by the god Inari to protect and look after humans, are given free rein as to the methods they use, which include as much trickery and deception as do the elaborate and malicious pranks of the nogitsune.

Trickery is a central value in the culture and very nature of both kitsune factions. Fox magic is merely a tool of deception, and the planning and execution of tricks is a ritual as honored and respected as the tea ceremony is among humans: both are marks of distinction and good breeding.

Not as preoccupied with killing things that encroach on their lands as humans are, kitsune gain fame by playing tricks—mostly on humans, though other magical races are also fair game. Whether it's required for a mission assigned by an elder or Inari himself, or just something done on a whim by the kitsune, pulling off a successful trick grants the fox a chance to grow stronger and more respected among her peers

The process of executing a trick is relatively simple: conceive it, design it, set it up, pull it off, and reap its rewards.

The Beginning

Many things move a kitsune to trickery. The most straightforward is a directive from the god Inari; more subtly, a kitsune may be seeking revenge for a real or imagined slight, or she may just be feeling whimsical and in the mood for a good prank on a beautiful morning.

Whatever the motivation, the kitsune always have a purpose behind their time and effort. Tricks resulting from an order from Inari often involve teaching valuable lessons to the targets or indirectly benefiting

Inari's worshippers. Individual goals, by contrast, are as varied as the kitsune's personalities. A righteous myobu could have in mind to force a greedy landlord to miss collecting the rent from a needy family, while a jealous nogitsune might wish to drive away all girls who get close to the young samurai she's secretly in love with.

Kitsune trickery is a way for the Game Master to allow players to share in adventure planning. The Game Master only sets up the situation, either as an edict from Inari or simply a situation that the characters that compels the characters to act. After that, the Game Master works with the players to plan a trick.

Step One: Trick Design

When a kitsune decides what he wants to accomplish with a trick, he next defines how to proceed. The trick's goal includes variables such as the target, the length of the execution, the severity of the outcome, and the effort it'll take to set it all up. While the target and actual methods of tricking him are entirely up to the player, the rest of the variables can be summed up in the trick's Encounter Level. The trick's EL is based on how hard it'll be for the kitsune to pull it off, not how hard the trick is to resist by the target; thus, it takes into account the target's Challenge Rating. A trick's EL is equal to the target's CR + the target's Prestige modifier – the kitsune's Prestige modifier.

Tricking targets with an Intelligence score of 3 or lower or that are mindless grants no rewards. Tipping a cow for the sake of tipping a cow is neither fun nor instructive as far as the kitsune are concerned. Tipping a cow in order to get on a farmer's nerves, however, is another story.

Designing a trick involves breaking it apart into a series of challenges and tests that the target must pass (although he's supposed to fail, from the kitsune's perspective). Each challenge is like a trap, with its own Challenge Rating depending on its effects and how difficult it is to overcome; obviously, the kitsune will want to make challenges of appropriate difficulty for her target or which add up to match the target's EL (including the Prestige modifier). There are two types of challenges in a trick:

Static Challenge: A mechanical trap, an illusion, an ambush executed by accomplices—anything that a kitsune must set up

in advance is a static challenge. The good thing about static challenges is that the trickster can take as much care as he wants in setting them up. Use the list of traps found in the core d20 fantasy rules as a guide for determining the CR of a static challenge.

Dynamic Challenge: Creating weird noises with fox magic to confuse the target, tripping him into ice-cold water, lying about his cart being hauled off by authorities for violating a nonexistent law—anything that the trickster must do in front of his target or directly to him is a dynamic challenge. The advantage of this type of challenge is that the trickster can see how the trick is working and compensate for any weaknesses in the plan. The CR of a dynamic challenge depends on the type of activity involved.

The character decides how many challenges of each kind his trick will include. The kitsune uses the CRs in order to add challenges together that add up to her target's character level. Note that these challenges need not happen in quick succession. The best of tricks can take days, months, and sometimes even years to come to fruition. The Game Master can give modifiers to the target's roll to resist a kitsune's challenge depending on how well he's done in previous challenges, either a bonus because he's starting to see through the fox's trickery or a penalty if he seems eager to fall for the deceit, such as a seduction.

Use the Encounter Numbers table in the core d20 fantasy rules to determine a trick's final EL, either by choosing the EL and deciding how many events of a given CR it takes to meet that EL or by deciding

Challenge	CR	Example
Opposed skill check	Half the kitsune's level	The kitsune tries to lie about something to her target (Bluff vs. Sense Motive)
Saving throw (vs. fox magic)	Half the kitsune's level + the kitsune's Cha modifier	The kitsune weaves an illusory banquet hall around his target.
Saving throw (vs. traditional spellcasting)	1 + spell level	The kitsune casts a spell she learned from a character class.
Single physical attack (doesn't devolve into full-fledged combat)	Kitsune's base attack bonus	The kitsune rolls between her target's legs to trip him.
Staged combat (deals only nonlethal damage)	Half the kitsune's character level	The kitsune is disguised as a bandit and tries to mug his target.

on the events and their CR first and then checking what EL they add up to. All the events lead to the final challenge, the punchline, that yields the final outcome of the whole trick. The punchline should have the highest DC of all the events. CR's and EL's are calculated to reflect challenges appropriate for a four-member party, not an individual, and so players and Game Master's should adjust Challenge Ratings and Encounter Levels to reflect the number of kitsune involved in the trick (whether it be an individual fox or a nogitsune pack of four or more).

Step Two: Crafting Static Challenges

Once the kitsune defines the aims of his trick as well as the means to achieve it, he sets to work. Preparing and installing the trick's static challenges is a matter of time and resources, which the kitsune must spend in utter secrecy lest his victim suspect something. In general, setting up a static challenge takes $1d6+1$ days, with the costs varying wildly according to the trick's specifics. On average, a static challenge will require the kitsune to spend a number of gold pieces equal to $(1d6 + \text{the challenge's CR}) \times 10$. For each extra day that the kitsune is willing to spend preparing the challenge beyond the minimum, he can reduce the preparation cost by 5 gp; alternately, he can spend an extra 15 gp to reduce the challenge's setup time by one day.

Use the system to design and create traps in the core d20 fantasy rules to figure out the difficulty of creating a static challenge, paying particular attention to the DC necessary to avoid its effect. Since the static challenge isn't necessarily a trap, the kitsune can use any Craft, Knowledge, or Profession skill that applies to the challenge. For challenges involving the manipulation of people, the kitsune may use Bluff, Intimidate, or Diplomacy to manipulate and lure humans into a trap.

Investing Experience: To reap the social and mystical benefits of a trick, the kitsune must imbue the process with her life force. She must invest a number of experience points equal to twice the gold cost of setting up the challenge. She must do this with each and every challenge in the trick, and she can't spend so much experience in this way that she would drop

in level. If she fails to spend the requisite experience on a challenge, all XP invested in other challenges that are part of the same trick return to her, and the trick proceeds as normal, but it won't help the kitsune advance in power and Prestige among other kitsune. Depending on the trick's outcome, the kitsune has a chance to recover this invested experience.

Step Three: Everything Comes Together

The stage is all set, and it's time for the curtain call. The trickster goes over his checklist one more time and steps into the spotlight. If he didn't include any dynamic challenge, he only has to lure his target to the site of his first static challenge and let things go from there. If he did include dynamic challenges, it's time to put them into action.

As stated earlier, a dynamic challenge is based on the use of powers or opposed skill checks and doesn't need much preparation beyond any element needed to launch the event, such as using a magic item in the vicinity of the target.

A well-designed trick has the victim going from challenge to challenge. These can be spaced apart as long as the trickster wants, but it's inadvisable to have too much time pass between challenges or the point of the trick may get lost over time. Long breaks between challenges must be carefully considered, planned for and designed.

Step Four: The Punchline

It's hard to predict what's going to happen with a trick, and both the trickster's player and the Game Master should wing it together, following the trick's design as closely as possible so that when the victim meets the final challenge, the punchline is revealed for all to see. The punchline is nothing more or less

Table 4: Trick Rewards

The target of the trick ...	Target's prestige check modifier	Kitsune's prestige check modifier	Invested XP recovered (kitsune only)
Loses all of the challenges	-2 (to retain)	+2 (to gain)	100%
Loses half or more of the challenges	-1 (to retain)	+1 (to gain)	75%
Loses fewer than half of the challenges	+0 (to retain)	+0 (to retain)	45%
Wins all of the challenges	+1 (to gain)	-1 (to retain)	0%

than the in-game consequences of the kitsune's trick; it isn't itself a challenge but rather a description of what happens when the kitsune achieves or fails to achieve his objective. The traveler wakes to find that the gambling house he lost all his money at was just an illusion; the merchant discovers that the silk he "swindled" from an ailing seamstress is nothing but hay; or the brutish samurai who treated his new, lovely bride with his usual carelessness finds that she has a soft, tawny tail or two.

As tricks get more complex, the chance that things won't go as planned also increases, and it's not always possible to foresee the final result of the tricking. The victim may fall for it completely, or he may defeat a couple of the challenges and still fall for it, or he may lose all the checks and saves only to not fall for it at the end.

To help ensure fairness, each challenge is handled in the same way as a normal encounter; it should be possible for each challenge to succeed or fail. The Game Master should keep track of who wins each challenge. If the target defeats a challenge (beats the DC), award him one fifth of the XP that would normally be awarded for defeating a creature with a CR equal to that of the challenge. If the target fails, the kitsune receives one tenth of the XP that would normally be awarded for defeating a creature of the target's CR + the target's Prestige modifier.

Once the trick is done, both the kitsune and his victim make a Prestige check to see whether each gains or retains a Prestige point. The check is modified depending on the trick's outcome, according to the Trick Rewards table. The last column refers to the XP that the kitsune invested in setting up the static challenges (see Step Two, above). Depending on how well the trick worked for him, the kitsune recovers all, some, or none of the invested XP. If he didn't invest the requisite XP in the static challenges, he gains no XP from challenges won, nor does he make a Prestige check to gain or retain Prestige; his trick only has in-game roleplaying consequences and doesn't contribute to his record of success.

SHRINES

Geomancy is a subtle but powerful form of magic that the onmyouji have learned to harness well. But the onmyouji are not the sole purveyors of geomantic energy. Peasants have at least an intuitive understanding of geomancy, and for the mystical denizens of the Fox Forest geomancy is a natural aspect of life. Lines

of power crisscross the land, pooling mystical energy where they intersect and molding the "personality" of places through their configurations. Geomancers try to identify these power flows and to use geomantic arrays to try to shape and harness this power. The simplest and most successful tool in this pursuit is the shrine.

Shrines serve two purposes: to offer homage to a particular deity, spirit, or group of such beings and to cap the land's power flows. Guided by a rudimentary (and most often instinctual) sense for the spots where such power wells up, village wise men and women instruct their neighbors to erect a simple shrine at certain points in their town, along the roads, and in the surrounding wilderness. Geomancers and onmyouji, on the other hand, have the precise knowledge and tools needed to measure and track this phenomenon, and the shrines built with their guidance glow with power channeled from the land.

A shrine can be as simple as a rock carved with the symbol of a deity and adorned with ceremonial ribbons or as elaborate as a full-blown temple complex with several buildings, gardens, and walkways. The power that the shrines collect doesn't simply pool within them but, through the shrines' construction, is given a purpose and an outlet into the physical world. A shrine devoted to a deity pools the land's power and absorbs the energy from the worship and offerings it receives, granting this power in return to the deity as well as to its servitors. A shrine built at a key geomantic nexus can balance the power flows in the land, ensuring bountiful harvests, fostering the good health of neighboring people, and even preventing the incursion of ghosts and other spirits.

Because of this power, the kitsune are always eager to have shrines erected in their honor. By divine mandate, they can't build shrines for their personal use, for anything they build must honor a greater kami (whether Inari or another deity). Most kitsune will plant suggestions in the minds of humans, prompting them to build kitsune shrines. This effort yields mixed results; as it's very hard to build a shrine devoted only to the myobu or to the nogitsune, most kitsune shrines end up benefiting both factions.

Some heroic and legendary kitsune have shrines erected and dedicated to them by villages they have protected, families they have saved from ruin, and the like. The kitsune use shrines dedicated to them for a

variety of purposes. Most of these relate to increasing the effectiveness of their fox magic, but other purposes include replenishing their energies and, in the case of those kitsune that sustain themselves with magic, satisfying their dietary needs (see the Flaws section to follow later in this chapter for more details on the bizarre eating habits of some kitsune).

Shrine Power

A shrine has a Power Rating from 1 (weakest) to 10 (strongest). In contrast to many things magical, the size of a shrine does matter. A PR 1 shrine is generally little more than a simple carved rock or an adorned tree, while a PR 10 shrine is a large temple with a full staff of priests, shrine maidens, and caretakers. A shrine's PR will determine its possible uses as well as the potency of such effects.

Geomantic Potential

Mystical power exudes from every living thing as well as from the land itself. This energy forms its own currents and flows, some of them stronger than others. Any given area has a Power Rating just like a shrine, but this power exists untapped and unusable by anyone save the most powerful and talented mystics. To tap into an area's geomantic power, a character must build a shrine or create a geomantic array (see the Magic chapter).

Erecting Shrines

Contrary to common belief, shrines can be built anywhere—it's just that certain spots are much more auspicious than others. The first step in erecting an effective shrine is identifying the best possible spot to locate it. Roll 1d10 to determine the Power Rating of the general area in which the shrine will stand; alternately, the Game Master may assign a rating when dealing with places of particular spiritual importance.

Surveying: The character in charge of locating the shrine makes a Knowledge (geomancy) check with a DC equal to 15 + the area's maximum Power Rating. (Knowledge [geomancy] is a new skill, described below.) The more powerful the potential of an area, the more difficult it is to pinpoint the ideal location for a shrine as the immense eddies and currents of power can be confusing.

Success means that the character located the most auspicious spot for the shrine, allowing him to potentially build a shrine with a Power Rating equal to the area's Power Rating. A shrine's PR can never exceed 10 however. Failure means that the shrine builder missed the most auspicious spot. Roll 1d4 and subtract the result from the area's Power Rating to determine the maximum Power Rating (minimum 1) of any shrine built there.

Should a shrine be built without surveying the area's geomantic potential first, roll 1d4–3. If the result is negative, subtract it from the area's Power Rating to determine the shrine's maximum PR; if it's positive, add it to the area's Power Rating instead. (The latter represents a possible stroke of luck a planner can have when simply choosing a site at random.)

Dedicating: Shrines aren't general sources of power; they always have a purpose. The most common purposes are worshipping and propitiating a deity or spirit being, although more general purposes include



warding against ghosts and evil spirits, ensuring bountiful harvests, and honoring ancestors. Before starting construction, the builder must dedicate a shrine to *something* or else the craftspeople (or designers) won't know what shapes, symbols, and images to use in construction. The larger the shrine, the more purposes to which it can be dedicated. A shrine can be dedicated to a number of purposes equal to one third of its Power Rating (rounded up). Shrines can be dedicated to Amaterasu, kitsune, Inari, Kwannon, ghost wards, tengu, evil ghost worship, and Susano-o, for example.

Crafting: After a spot has been selected and a shrine's purposes determined, it's time to begin construction. As mentioned before, the shrine's size factors into its Power Rating, as does the geomantic expertise of the crafter during the shrine's construction. The maximum Power Rating for a shrine depends on the original geomantic survey (or lack thereof) discussed above. In other words, a shrine properly sited after a geomantic survey has a maximum Power Rating equal to the Power Rating of the land on which it is to appear. That doesn't mean, however, that the shrine must be of a certain size. A smaller and simpler shrine will have a lower Power Rating than the maximum possible, while a gigantic temple complex won't be able to exceed the land's Power Rating.

Maintaining a Shrine

The shrine's initial structure gives the area's power a conduit and resting place, bringing good fortune to the people in the area, but every shrine must receive some sort of maintenance in order for the geomantic arrangements to hold true and continue to channel the area's power.

Shrines require continual care, whether it's just changing the flowers and retying the ribbons on a PR 1 shrine, or trimming the foliage and replacing the roof tiles on the buildings of a PR 10 shrine.

Maintenance costs one twentieth of the initial construction cost per month; this monthly cost includes both materials and salaries for any staff needed. At the end of each month that the shrine isn't maintained, roll 1d20 against a DC equal to the shrine's PR +8. Failure means that the shrine loses one point of PR. When maintenance resumes, the shrine automatically recovers one point of PR per week until

Table 5: Shrine Building

Power Rating*	Size (ft. per side)	Cost	Time to complete**	Example
1	5 ft.	20 sp	1d4 days	A rock carved with hollows for offerings and ceremonial ribbons
2	10 ft.	1 gp	2d6 days	A small, open shed with a small altar and wooden statues of the divinities involved
3	20 ft.	5 gp	1d4 weeks	A small, raised shed with simple doors and windows, with an altar and a mat for praying
4	25 ft.	10 gp	2d4 weeks	A large, raised shed with a stone altar and space for a dozen people to pray comfortably
5	30 ft.	20 gp	2d6 weeks	A small temple on top of a hill, surrounded by ribbon-tied trees and with a rough stone stairway leading to it
6	60 ft.	100 gp	1d4+1 months	A small temple guarded by a fence, with a stairway lined by spirit gates
7	120 ft.	250 gp	2d6 months	A temple with a tranquil garden and statues in auspicious geomantic locations
8	250 ft.	750 gp	2d8 months	A small temple complex with a few shrines devoted to different deities
9	500 ft.	1,500 gp	3d6 months	An average-sized temple complex with a courtyard surrounded by gardens and minor shrines
10	1,200 ft.	5,000 gp	4d8 months	A large temple complex with an extensive collection of minor temples and shrines, with accommodations for hundreds of worshippers and dozens of priests

The Shrine Building table identifies aspects of the construction of shrines of various Power Ratings.

* A shrine can't exceed its maximum PR (based on the land's PR and the shrine's site) regardless of its size, though shrines of any size can be built on a given site.

** This assumes an average crew size of 20 men.

it reaches its original rating. If a shrine's PR drops to zero, however, the power of the land stagnates and the shrine becomes useless. A new geomantic survey must be made, and a new site chosen for a new shrine, because a shrine that has its PR dropped to zero can never be reclaimed and is effectively a dead zone.

Staff at important shrines often receive stipends from the local governments to pay for shrine maintenance and salaries, while minor and simpler shrines depend for their upkeep on the generosity of neighbors.

Using a Shrine

Devotees use shrines to pray and get in touch with the divine, casting their doubts and needs to the heavens in hopes that the god or spirits the shrine is devoted to will listen.

The deities that watch over the Empire need shrines not only to gather the power that worship awards them, but also to receive the pleas of their followers so that they may respond when necessary. Inari is one of the most active deities thanks to his earthly kitsune agents, and as a result his main shrine in the Yonhosu Valley is one of the better supported, both by the donations of the faithful and government stipends (see [Chapter VI: Kitsunemori](#) for more details on the Shrine to Inari in Yamaken).

Supernatural beings as well as geomancers have more practical uses for shrines, however, for the reverence people display at them, as transitory as it can be, helps focus the area's power into a manageable form, and this is where dedicating a shrine becomes of extreme importance.

A supernatural being that has a shrine devoted to it can tap into its power (as can others as described below), putting the shrines magical energies to various uses.

Tapping into a Shrine: Before being able to use a shrine's energy, a potential user must first tap into it. This is a tapping check (1d20 + character level or total HD) against a DC equal to 20 minus the shrine's PR. A creature receives a +2 bonus if he has 5 or more ranks in Concentration or Knowledge (geomancy) (a skill described below); the bonus is +4 if he has 5 or more ranks in both skills. Human geomancers (anyone with at least 5 ranks in Knowledge (geomancy)), who are versatile and knowledgeable but usually have no shrines devoted to them, can try to tap into a shrine's power but suffer a -3 on their attempt. Supernatural creatures that try to tap into a shrine not devoted to them suffer a -6 penalty. Failure to tap a shrine

can mean one of several things: the shrine's energies may have been depleted by other users, the character failed to align his soul with the shrine's purpose, the timing of the effort was inauspicious, and so on. A character may not try to tap into a shrine for one hour after such a failure.

Shrine Uses: After a character taps into a shrine successfully, he can use its power for a variety of purposes (unless it's a special-purpose shrine; see below). A character can only successfully tap into a shrine once per day and can only tap the shrine for a single power use per day.

Health Recovery: A character recovers a number of hit points per hour equal to his character level + the shrine's PR, but he must remain in a meditative state during each hour. (This meditative state follows the same rules as those for the rest wizards require in terms of what kinds of activities can and can't be undertaken.) Instead of hit points, the character may recover a number of ability points lost to ability damage at a rate of one point per hour.

Special Abilities Recovery (Fixed): By meditating upon the shrine's energies for 10 minutes, a character can recover all daily uses of one special ability that has a fixed limit on the number of times it can be used per day, such as turn or rebuke undead. This doesn't apply to abilities that have a variable number of uses depending on character level, such as bardic music, fox magic, or Stunning Fist attacks.

Special Abilities Recovery (Variable): By meditating upon the shrine's energies for 10 minutes, a character can recover a number of uses of a special ability with a variable number of uses per day equal to 1 + one half of the shrine's PR. This effect can be used with such abilities as bardic music, fox magic, and Stunning Fist attacks.

Spell Recovery: A spellcaster can recover a number of spell levels equal to twice the shrine's PR. For example, a wizard who successfully taps into a PR 3 shrine can recover up to six spell levels (six 1st-level spells, two 3rd-level spells, one 4th- and one 2nd-level spell, or any other such combination). The spellcaster can only recover spell levels already cast that day and can't recover more than his maximum number of spells per day with this use of a shrine, regardless of the shrine's PR.

Free Spellcasting: A spellcaster can tap the shrine's mystical energies to fire off a spell he can cast, without

cost to himself; this free spell can't have a higher level than the shrine's PR-1. Spontaneous spellcasters, such as bards and sorcerers, can use this feature to cast any of their known spells, provided that the spell's level is equal to or less than the shrine's PR-1. Spellcasters who prepare their spells, such as clerics and wizards, have a choice: they can either cast for free one of their prepared spells, or they can cast a spell they haven't prepared (but are otherwise able to prepare) at the expense of a prepared spell of one level higher than the spell they're casting. (For example, a wizard can cast an unprepared (but known) 3rd-level spell by sacrificing a prepared 4th-level spell.)

Magic Focus: One spell cast or one spell-like ability used while within the shrine has its save DC increased by half the shrine's PR (minimum +1).

Magic Potency: One spell cast or one spell-like ability used by a character tapping into the shrine's power functions as if produced by a caster a number of levels higher equal to one fourth of the shrine's PR (rounded up).

Geomantic Protection: The character gains a bonus to all his saving throws while within the shrine equal to half the shrine's PR (minimum +1). This protection lasts until either noon or midnight, whichever comes sooner, or until the character moves a number of feet past the outermost border of the shrine equal to five times the shrine's PR. A character can confer this bonus on a target other than himself if the target is incapacitated or unable to make a tapping check.

Special-Purpose Shrines

A few shrines are devoted to very specific purposes that make it impossible to use them in any other way. Creating these types of shrines restricts their usefulness to a very narrow field, but they tend to be very effective within it.

A special shrine is created with the ability to provide the granted power and spells of a single cleric domain. The domain's granted power permeates the shrine's area and works constantly, granting the use of its ability to every person within the shrine's area (not past the outermost border of the shrine) without the need for a tapping check. Each person in the shrine's area can use the ability once per day (24 hours period) regardless of how often they come and go from the shrine. Some granted powers require some adaptation, and the exact workings of a shrine's granted

power are left to the Game Master. Some particularly powerful effects may require a tapping check before their use, such as the granted power of the Death or Destruction domains.

Once per day, anyone tapping into the shrine successfully (tapping check as described above) will be able to cast any one domain spell (of the domain of the shrine) as if her were a cleric of his same level (or HD). Clerics can cast one of the domain's spells as if he were a cleric two levels higher. This application obeys all the normal rules of tapping into and using shrines. For instance, a PR 5 shrine dedicated to the Healing domain would allow a 5th level human onmyouji the ability to cast a domain spell as a 5th level cleric, giving him access to *cure light wounds*, *cure moderate wounds*, or *cure serious wounds* once that day.

Smaller shrines simply don't have the power to sustain the stronger spells of a domain. A shrine can't provide a domain spell of a level equal to its PR or higher. In other words, a PR 3 shrine can't provide the domain's 3rd-level spell or any spell of a higher level. A PR 1 shrine is just too small to provide any spell power and therefore only grants access to the domain's granted power.

SKILLS

By and large, the list of skills included in the core d20 fantasy rules carries over into a *Kitsunemori* game, but there are some skills that the people of Yonhosu and the surrounding lands have developed differently than people in the average fantasy setting.

Speak Language

The standard list of languages available for characters to learn should be replaced with the following list, which enumerates the tongues of the region:

Common: The language spoken by the humans of Yonhosu and the rest of the empire.

Kitsu: The kitsune language.

Spirit: The "common" language spoken among spirits and deities. Most deities speak every language or have the means to cross any language barrier, but they talk among themselves in the spirit tongue. Lesser beings may only be able to understand their native tongue.

Draconic: The language spoken by the dragons and their brood. These creatures are very rare in *Kitsunemori* and therefore the language is very hard to

acquire. Game Masters may prohibit PCs from learning this language.

Ancient: The language in which the mudras of the onmyouji are spoken and written. It's an obscure and labyrinthine language that by its nature prevents speakers from lying but not from using metaphors and imagery.

Others: Theoretically, each of the supernatural races has its own language, so there's a tengu, a kappa, and a tanuki language that can be learned.

Hearth Wisdom (Wis)

This skill represents a character's familiarity with folk charms and remedies that, through generations of experimentation and refinement, have become minor magics. Folk magic is more about intuition than analysis, with the same charm having different ritual formulas in different villages.

Check: A character can learn or perform a charm by making a Hearth Wisdom check. You can find the full rules for hearth magic in Chapter V: Magic,

Action: Varies. To create a charm requires one hour per point of DC (i.e. a DC 25 charm would take a total of 25 hours to create, though they need not be contiguous). Learning a new charm takes at least 24 hours of observation and instruction.

Try Again: No. A character doesn't realize his charm isn't working until witnessing the consequences of the failed check, at which point he may try a new Hearth Wisdom check and begin again,

Synergy: A character with at least 5 ranks in Hearth Wisdom gains a +2 synergy bonus on Heal checks.

Knowledge (Int)

The Knowledge skills available in the core d20 fantasy rules work well in *Kitsunemori* with the following modifications:

- *Arcana:* In addition to its normal field of study, this skill also covers the relationship of the elements as well as onmyo-do.
- *Local:* This skill reflects knowledge of one of the four regions in the Yonhosu Valley. Players can put ranks in multiple Knowledge (local) skills, with each skill applying to a different region.

- *Religion:* A scholar of religious matters in *Kitsunemori* must choose an area of specialization: Shinto, Buddhism, or other. He performs Knowledge (religion) checks regarding different traditions at a –2 penalty. This skill also allows characters to identify the purpose of religious shrines.
- *The Planes:* This skill is unavailable to characters in *Kitsunemori*. The home planes of deities and demons are covered by Knowledge (religion), and knowledge of outsiders and elemental creatures falls within the domain of Knowledge (spirits), described below.

Characters in *Kitsunemori* are able to learn the following additional Knowledge skills:

- *Geomancy:* This area of knowledge concerns a deep understanding of the power flows within the land—a deeper understanding than is possible with the Knowledge (arcana) skill. Characters can make Knowledge (geomancy) checks to site, design, and tap shrines and give themselves an edge by recognizing the natural ways magic flows around them. Characters with the Knowledge (geomancy) skill may also attempt to identify the PR and uses of a shrine. Use of this skill requires a Luopan compass (see the Equipment chapter, below).
- *Martial Arts:* A character with this skill is likely to be familiar with the different fighting styles of long-established dojos as well as those of upstart independent schools. This skill also imparts an awareness of the masters and prominent students of the martial arts.
- *Spirits:* This field encompasses knowledge about the various spirit creatures and supernatural entities that prowl the countryside (and even some settlements). This includes fey creatures such as the kitsune and tanuki; the minor deities of the land; and ghosts, outsiders, and elementals.

Sense Motive (Wis)

Read Opponent: Characters can use the Sense Motive skill to attempt to correctly anticipate the actions of an opponent in combat. A character makes a Sense Motive check (DC 10 + the target's character level or HD) to gain a +2 bonus to AC or a +2 bonus to attack rolls against that opponent. This bonus lasts for a number of rounds equal to the character's Wisdom

modifier (minimum of 1). Characters with one or more levels in the Martial Artist Prestige Class gain a +2 synergy bonus to Sense Motive checks to read an opponent's stance if they have 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (martial arts).

FEATS

The following feats are available to characters in *Kitsunemori* and can be chosen normally as any other character feat. Kitsune characters may also choose from the list of Fox Magic powers to fill Feats. See Chapter V: Magic for more details on Fox Magic.

Beastspeech [General]

You can speak with animals of a certain species as if they were people, addressing their spirits directly.

Prerequisite: Fey creature or Izuchi-Mochi feat.

Benefit: Choose one species of animal (fox, dog, raven, badger, turtle, snake, etc.). You can speak with animals of the chosen species as if you were under the effects of a *speak with animals* spell.

Special: You may gain Beastspeech multiple times. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new species of animal.

Daisho Ownership [General]

You're a samurai with the right to bear your arms openly.

Prerequisites: Fighter, samurai class concept.

Benefit: You own a daisho, which consists of a masterwork katana and a masterwork wakizashi (see the [Equipment chapter](#)). Owning these weapons means that you're a samurai and that the daisho was either crafted especially for you or handed down by an honored ancestor or superior.

Special: A fighter with the samurai character concept may choose Daisho Ownership as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Deadly Arc [General]

You can draw your katana with breath-taking speed, allowing for a devastating sweep of the blade to behead your opponent.

Prerequisites: Fighter, samurai class concept, Quick Draw, Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Critical, Weapon Technique (katana), base attack bonus +15.

Benefit: When drawing your katana from its scabbard, you are able to make an attack against an opponent you threaten that, if successful, delivers automatic critical damage. If your attack roll is a natural 20 when

using a Deadly Arc, you sever your opponent's head (if it has one) and kill them instantly. Only the first attack after unsheathing the blade may be used in a Deadly Arc, all other attacks that follow (if using the full attack action) are as normal. Creatures immune to critical hits are not affected by the samurai's deadly arc. A samurai may use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 plus their Wisdom modifier.

Special: A fighter (samurai character concept) may select Deadly Arc as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Improved Ki Weapon [General]

Choose one type of weapon, for which you have already selected the *Ki Weapon* feat. You can channel your inner strength through that type of weapon to devastating effect.

Prerequisites: Proficiency with selected weapon, Weapon Focus with selected weapon, *Ki Weapon* with selected weapon, *ki strike* class ability.

Benefit: All the attacks you make with the selected weapon deal extra damage equal to the amount of unarmed damage you inflict per your monk level. An exception to the normal rules for multiplying damage, the extra damage die granted by Improved *Ki Weapon* does multiply on a critical hit. The weapon can also deliver touch spells cast upon the character by a third party.

Special: You can gain Improved *Ki Weapon* multiple times. Its effects don't stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new type of weapon.

Improved Zanshin [General]

Your mind is so relaxed and attuned to danger in combat that enemies can no longer flank you.

Prerequisites: Fighter, samurai class concept, Zanshin, base attack bonus +6.

Benefit: You can't be flanked. You can react to opponents on opposite sides of you as easily as to a single foe. A rogue cannot sneak attack you unless the rogue has at least four more rogue levels than you have fighter levels.

Special: A fighter with the samurai character concept may select Improved Zanshin as one of his bonus feats.

Izuchi-Mochi [General]

You are feytouched, with one or more kitsune in your ancestry.

Prerequisite: Human.

Benefit: You know the Kitsu language. You also gain a single fox magic power that you can use once per day per point of Charisma modifier (minimum of 1). You

are treated as a two-tailed kitsune for the purpose of choosing your power (see the Magic chapter, below). In addition, your features somehow reflect your fox ancestry; people will often say you're fox faced when you smirk or that you twitch like a fox. A person who makes a successful Sense Motive check (DC 20 + one half your Cha modifier) when meeting you has the nagging suspicion that she's dealing with an izuchi-mochi.

Special: This feat can only be selected at character creation.

Sorcerers and bards who take this feat can choose to gain an additional 1st-level spell known instead of the fox magic benefit, but they still gain the ability to speak and understand Kitsu.

Ki Weapon [General]

Choose one type of weapon, for which you have already selected the Weapon Focus feat. You become so attuned to that type of weapon that it becomes an extension of your body and soul.

Prerequisites: Proficiency with selected weapon, Weapon Focus with selected weapon, *ki* strike class feature.

Benefit: All the attacks you make with the selected weapon benefit from your *ki* strike class feature. At appropriate monk levels, these attacks are treated as magical or as lawful/chaotic for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction. (No character in *Kitsunemori* can take more than ten monk levels, hence the adamantite *ki* strike is unavailable; see the martial artist prestige class in the Classes chapter.) The weapon can also deliver touch spells the character is able to cast on himself.

Special: You can gain *Ki* Weapon multiple times. Its effects don't stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new type of weapon.

Kitsune-Bi [General]

You can produce a ball of fire out of thin air.

Prerequisite: Kitsune.

Benefit: Once per day per point of Charisma modifier (minimum of 1), you can produce a small ball of fire as per the *produce flame* spell, cast as if by a sorcerer of your character level but with a duration equal to 5 minutes (D) per character level. You only create a single source of light. The kitsune-bi doesn't actually burn anything, but as a kitsune, you can make a ranged touch attack with it for 1d4+1 points of fire damage per level or will it to ignite an inflammable substance it comes in contact with. Using the kitsune-bi in this manner immediately extinguishes it.

Kitsune Spirit [General]

You have greater access to your fox magic.

Prerequisite: Kitsune.

Benefit: You can use fox magic powers four additional times per day.

Normal: Without this feat, you can use fox magic powers once per day per level.

Special: Kitsune bards can freely mix their use of fox magic and bardic music. One or more of the extra daily uses of fox magic that this feat grants can instead be used to power bardic music effects.

Martial Arts Weapon Focus [General]

Chose one type of weapon, for which you have already selected the Weapon Focus feat. You have unlocked the secret properties behind the use of that type of weapon in the martial arts.

Prerequisites: Proficiency with selected weapon, Weapon Focus for selected weapon, Martial Artist level 1st.

Benefit: You add the selected weapon to the list of "monk" weapons with which you can use your flurry of blows ability.

Special: You can gain Martial Artist Weapon Focus multiple times. Its effects don't stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new type of weapon.

Personal Shrine [General]

You have a personal place of power devoted to you and you only.

Prerequisite: Fey or outsider type.

Benefit: You gain a shrine, erected by others and with a Power Rating of 1, as per the shrine rules described above. You gain a +2 inherent bonus in checks to tap your personal shrine, and penalties apply normally for beings trying to tap into it without your permission. You pick the shrine's location, which can't be moved and must be maintained as normal by the people who erected the shrine. You automatically receive the prayers of those who built and maintain the shrine, and you immediately know about any offerings left there; though you aren't obligated to answer prayers, a neglectful guardian spirit sees her shrine quickly deteriorate into uselessness.

Special: You can select this feat multiple times. Each time, you choose whether to gain a new PR 1 shrine in a different location or to increase an existing personal shrine's PR by 1. Multiple characters can select this feat at the same time and pool its energy to create a shared group shrine of greater power. For example, two kitsune who both gain the Personal Shrine feat may each have a PR 1 shrine, or they can choose to combine their resources to gain a single PR 2 shrine they share equally in all respects.

Shinobi Arsenal [General]

You're trained in the use of the exotic weapons of the ninja.

Prerequisites: Kitsune or rogue level 1st with ninja class concept, access to a shinobi trainer.

Benefit: In addition to any weapon proficiencies you may already have, you become proficient with the following weapons: blowgun, greater blowgun, fukimi-bari, kunai, kusarigama, nekode, ninja-to, shuriken, tamagusari, and war fan (see the Equipment chapter, below). Shinobi Arsenal is similar to the Daisho Ownership feat in the way it marks you as a particular type of individual, in this case a shinobi. If you're human, you're almost certainly part of a shinobi clan or a runaway shinobi; there's a small chance that you were trained by a shinobi master independent of any clan. If you're kitsune, you were probably trained by a kitsune warrior with skill as a shinobi trainer. More nogitsune than myobu gain this feat.

Takujo Specialization [General]

The chiming of your takujo staff acts as a weapon against evil spirits.

Prerequisite: Turn/rebuke undead or exorcism ability.

Benefit: A number of times per day equal to 3 + your Wisdom modifier (minimum of 1), you can pound your takujo on the ground, making its rings chime loudly. All creatures that would be affected by your exorcism (or turn/rebuke undead) ability that are within 30 feet of you must make a Will save (DC 10 + one half your cleric level + your Charisma modifier) or be stunned for 1 round per point of your Charisma modifier (minimum of 1).

Special: A fighter may select Takujo Specialization as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Unerring Arrow [General]

You have so mastered the art of Zen archery that you fire arrows that sail faithfully at their target.

Prerequisites: Fighter, samurai class concept, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Far Shot, Improved Precise Shot, Weapon Specialization (bow), Concentration 10 ranks.

Benefit: When you use the attack action or full attack action, you may add your Concentration skill modifier to your attack rolls. A samurai may add their Concentration skill modifier to their attack rolls a number of times per day equal to 3 plus their Constitution modifier. The bonus applies to all attack rolls made until your next turn.

Special: A fighter (samurai character concept) may select Unerring Arrow as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Warding Blades [General]

Your whirling blades can deflect the attacks of your opponents.

Prerequisites: Fighter, samurai class concept, Combat Expertise, Two-Weapon Fighting, Two-Weapon Defense, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Greater Two-Weapon Fighting.

Benefit: You have become so adept at wielding your daisho in defense, that you can deftly keep your opponents attacks at bay through expert maneuvering of your blades. When you use the attack or full attack action in combat (and you are fighting with your daisho), you can take a penalty of as much as -15 to your attack roll and add the same amount (+15 or less) to your Armor Class as a deflection bonus. This number cannot exceed your base attack bonus, and the effects on attack rolls and armor class last until your next action.

Special: A fighter (samurai character concept) may select Warding Blade as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Weapon Technique [General]

You have unlocked the hidden potential in the use of a particular weapon.

Prerequisite: Proficiency with selected weapon.

Benefit: Some martial arts schools delve deeply into the use of certain weapons, enabling their students to gain additional abilities when using the weapons beyond the extra attack and damage power of feats such as Weapon Focus and Weapon Specialization. The weapons eligible for Weapon Technique are described in [Chapter IV: Equipment](#).

Special: A fighter may select Weapon Technique as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Zanshin [General]

As a samurai, you're able to achieve a state of relaxed alertness.

Prerequisites: Fighter, samurai class concept, base attack bonus +3.

Benefit: When you gain the Zanshin feat, you remain alert and ready to react to danger regardless of circumstances. Zanshin allows you to retain your Dexterity bonus to AC (if any) even if you're caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible enemy. You still lose your Dexterity bonus if immobilized.

Special: A fighter with the samurai character concept may select Zanshin as one of his bonus feats.

FLAWS

As spirit creatures, the kitsune are prone to some odd supernatural frailties and disadvantages. Not all kitsune suffer from these flaws, and those that do may not suffer from the same ones.

Upon character creation, you can give your kitsune character up to two flaws. Each flaw taken grants you a bonus feat.

Illusory Connection: Kitsune are masters of illusion, but some become too immersed in their own magic, to the point that they tie their life force to the illusory effects they weave. You suffer when your illusions are disbelieved or dispelled, whether those illusions were from fox magic or normal spellcasting.

Every time a target of one of your illusions makes a successful saving throw against it, you suffer 1d4 points of nonlethal damage, plus 1 point per spell level or 1 point per the minimum number of tails required to produce the illusion (depending on the source of the illusion).

If your illusion is dispelled by magic, you suffer 1 point of Charisma damage.

Both forms of damage can be healed normally.

Kitsune Ball: Just as a dragon guards its precious geomantic jewel, some kitsune have a ball they must protect. This ball, made of the best quality leather available, has your power invested in it. You must hold the ball in your hands whenever you use fox magic, which means that if you ever lose the ball, you can't use any of your powers. Anyone holding your ball has a +4 bonus to all Charisma-based checks against you. If your ball is ever destroyed, you gain 1d3+1 negative levels (which has been known to kill inexperienced foxes). These negative levels don't go away until you gain a new ball. You can produce a new ball by spending one week per negative level you gained, at which point

Game Master note: The loss of a kitsune's ball shouldn't be a common event. Losing her ball is extremely traumatic for a kitsune, and it's not uncommon for a kitsune to orchestrate a revenge of truly epic proportions against the one responsible. This could quite possibly attract the wrath of other foxes, myobu and nogitsune alike.

the negative levels go away and you regain the ability to use your fox magic.

Tell Tail: Whatever form you adopt, either from your natural spell-like ability, fox magic, spellcasting, or magic items, one or more tails (see below) always show. You can make a Sleight of Hand check, with a -10 circumstance penalty, to conceal your tail beneath clothing (and your leggings must be tailor made to include a tail) as if you were concealing a light weapon.

In the highly superstitious world of *Kitsunemori*, showing a tail reveals your true identity, which can engender suspicion and hatred.

Wish Fulfillment: Kitsune that have a personal shrine are always aware of offerings and prayers to her at that shrine; it is their choice about when and how they will attend to these petitions, if they choose to comply with them at all. Kitsune with both a personal shrine and this flaw have little choice in the matter: they must answer the prayers to the best of their ability. Fortunately for them, only a few requests are earnest enough and the offering propitious enough to trigger this magical compulsion.

Once per week, the Game Master rolls 1d20 and adds the shrine's Power Rating. If the result is 15 or more, one of the prayers and offerings made at your shrine imposes a *geas* spell (lasting for 1 day per PR of your shrine or until the petition is addressed) on you, forcing you to answer the prayer as well as you can. The Game Master defines what sort of task the devotee is asking of you, which can be a good way to start adventures and new stories.

True Name: All kitsune have a true name that holds power over them, but it's a secret so closely guarded that in most cases only the kitsune himself knows what it is. You somehow have lost hold of yours. Your true name appears in a relatively popular folktale, and people who have heard your name in the story have a chance of using it to your detriment.

People must first identify you as a kitsune before trying to use your name against you. However, hearing your name tossed about casually causes a very visible reaction in you. In any situation in which people are talking about kitsune in your presence, there's a 35% chance that someone will tell the tale of one of your exploits, using your true name in the process. When this happens, you must make a Will save (DC 25) or

wince visibly every time your name is mentioned. This may raise suspicion in people, and their reactions are completely up to the Game Master. (Of course, your hasty departure may also raise suspicions.)

Figuring out your true name after identifying you as a kitsune requires a person to succeed on a *Hearth Wisdom* check (DC 20 + one half of your character level – your Charisma modifier).

For some reason, humans benefit more from knowing your true name than do other fey creatures. A fey creature using your true name against you in association with a spell or spell-like ability imposes a –2 penalty on your saving throw to resist it. (Adding in your true name is subsumed under the normal time required to cast the spell or use the ability.) A human using your true name as part of a spell, spell-like ability, or *hearth wisdom* charm (see the *Magic* chapter, below) has a chance equal to 50% +5% per point of Intelligence or Wisdom modifier, whichever is higher, to force you to fail your saving throw. If you don't automatically fail your saving throw, you still suffer the –2 penalty on it.

Special Hunger: Some kitsune are so closely attuned to their spirit nature that they can't gain nourishment from normal food. Upon gaining your second tail (at character creation), you lose your appetite for fruits, berries, and meat and instead hunger for something else altogether. Some of these hungers are marks of evil foxes and *nogitsune*, and thus this is the only flaw that may be chosen after character creation, done in order to represent your fall from *Inari's* grace.

You can go without feeding your special hunger for a week without penalty. At the start of the second week without feeding, however, you begin to suffer. In addition to any effects noted below for your particular kind of hunger, you lose 1 point of Constitution on the first day and keep losing 1 point of Constitution per day until you feed. This loss can't be healed by normal means. When you feed again, you start regaining lost Constitution at the rate of 1 point per day in addition to any normal healing of ability damage. You must then feed again as normal or begin to suffer the same effects as before.

Each type of hunger requires a different means of satisfaction. You select one and only type of hunger and do so at the time you gain this flaw.

Geomantic Ki: You gain nourishment from the ambient energy of the land, taxing your environment in the process. Your presence (although not your precise location) is noticeable to those adept at recognizing ki flows, for they see how the land loses power (a *Knowledge (geomancy)* check DC 20 will indicate that geomantic energies of an area have been depleted).

Feeding from geomantic ki is automatic for the first week that you remain in a given area (5 square miles), but eventually the ambient geomantic energies are weakened and you must begin to feed actively. At the start of every week after the first, you must make a *Knowledge (geomancy)* check (DC 20). Each week that you make a successful check, the DC increases by 1 for the next week's check, reflecting the difficulty you have in locating increasingly depleted resources. Failure means that you've drained the land of usable ki and can't feed at all that week. No further checks are made as long as you remain in this area; for all intents and purposes, this area is "dead" in terms of your ability to feed from it. That area will take 1d6 months to recover before you can feed on its energy once again.

Assuming that you haven't relocated, at the start of the second week after your failed check all spells, spell-like abilities, charms, and other sorts of magic (with the exception of items) used within that area (by you and others) lose some of their effectiveness. Magical effects with a timed duration last half as long as normal, while magical effects with an instantaneous duration allow the targets a +1 bonus to saving throws to resist them. The penalty to effects with an instantaneous duration increases by 1 every day the kitsune remains in the area, and effects with a timed duration last half again as long after every further week you remain in the area (a fourth as long as normal at the start of the third week, an eighth as long as normal at the start of the fourth week, and so on). In addition to these penalties, the kitsune suffers a –2 penalty to her feeding check every week after the first.

The kitsune must move to a different area—each area is approximately 5 square miles—to reset these penalties. Magical creatures, priests, and users of arcane magic in the area notice the reduced effectiveness of their powers, and some may hunt down the one responsible.

Moving to a new area allows the kitsune to begin feeding on its ambient energy immediately.

The power infused in a shrine realm or in heavenly planes is so great that a kitsune's feeding has absolutely no effect on them, making them safe havens for those kitsune who feed off geomantic ki.

Personal Ki: Rather than feeding off the land, some kitsune need to steal the ki of living beings. While they may subsist on the ki of animals, this is only a temporary solution—the only true nourishment comes from the ki of humans. To feed from a living being, you must make a touch attack against your target. If the touch attack is successful, then your target must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 11+ your character level+your Charisma modifier).. If your target fails its save, you feed successfully, and your victim becomes fatigued for 1d4 days. The victim must rest for twice as long as normal, for the victim has been drained of the vital energy she needs to recuperate. If the target succeeds on their save, you cannot attempt to feed off of them again for one week.

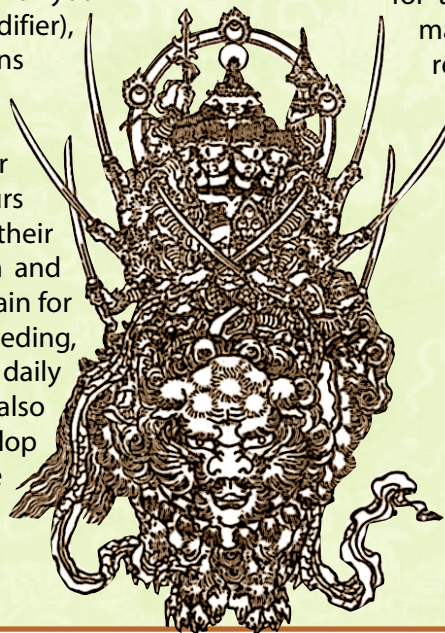
The problem with this kind of feeding is that the stronger you become, the harder it is for you to gain nourishment from lesser beings. You suffer a -1 penalty to your level check to feed for every two levels that you exceed your target's level or HD. This forces you to seek greater and more dangerous prey worthy of your power.

Dreams: A more exotic, but no gentler, form of nourishment comes from dreams. The kitsune compete with the mythic baku that feed from nightmares, so the kitsune remove the creative dreams of humans for her own sustenance. You must be within 20 feet of a sleeping target that you wish to feed from. Your target must make a Will save (DC 11+half your character level+your Charisma modifier), and if they fail the save that means that you feed successfully and your target suffers a -2 penalty to all Wisdom and Intelligence checks for 1 day until she sleeps for 8 hours again. If your target succeeds on their Will save, you fail to feed on them and cannot attempt to feed on them again for 24 hours. Unlike other forms of feeding, you must consume dreams on a daily basis instead of once per week. You also must be careful that you don't develop a pattern, for exorcists may notice when too many people complain of fretful sleep and start to suspect fox magic as the cause.

Blood: A more mundane hunger, but one that begins to tip the kitsune toward evil, is the need for blood. You can suck blood from a living victim on a successful grapple check. If you pin your target, you automatically bite into their flesh and begin to draw their blood dealing 1d4 points of Constitution damage. The victim feels tired and weak as a result, but the damage heals normally. Kitsune use all manner of subterfuge to get close enough to a victim in order to feed.

Organs: Some nogitsune become truly evil when they gain a craving for fresh organs extracted from living victims. Called gumiho, these cannibals only need to feed once per month, usually during the full or new moons, but their victims must first be killed. The most common organ to serve as food is the liver, although some gumiho may prefer the heart. As with those gumiho feeding from personal ki, you need the organ of a creature of a power comparable to yours in order to gain sustenance. If the target's character level (or HD) is higher, equal to, or up to three levels lower than yours, you gain the normal sustenance when eating the organ. If the target's level (or HD) is more than three levels lower than yours, you must make a character level check (DC 20 + 1 per every level (or HD) of difference between you and the target). If the check fails, the target is too weak for you, and you must look for another.

Souls: The pinnacle of kitsune evil is embodied by those who feed on human souls. Player characters shouldn't be able to employ this feeding method, but certain NPCs might. Only nogitsune acquire a taste for souls. The mechanics are the same as those for the hunger for organs except that no mark is left on the body, which can't be resurrected by any magic, as the soul has been consumed by the rapacious kitsune and is gone forever from existence.





4

EQUIPMENT

As a setting based in mythic Japan, *Kitsunemori* has a unique list of equipment for characters to use, from the traditional weapons of the samurai to the mystical tools of the onmyouji. This equipment follows the standard rules for the core d20 fantasy game excepted as noted.

WEAPONS

The empire to which the Yonhosu Valley belongs is experiencing a shift in the way that it carries out its business. Spreading from the imperial capitol outward, provincial lords are banning the ownership of martial and exotic weapons by the common populace, which has led to some rather unusual martial applications of common tools and new weapons born from common household items. In Yonhosu, the provinces of Toukai and Sairyuukoe enforce the ban, making it illegal for those not of the nobility to carry martial or exotic weapons openly, with punishment ranging from hefty fines to execution depending on the judge's mood and the circumstances of arrest. Concealed weapons are illegal in all of the provinces.

Some of the weapons in this chapter also appear in the core d20 fantasy rules but, due to the cultural slant of *Kitsunemori*, some of their characteristics have been changed. The most common change has been to weapon category, specifically to whether a weapon is considered simple, martial, or exotic.

Weapon Techniques

Some weapons are employed by particularly dojos or in specific martial arts techniques, which means that people with access to the right training can use these weapons in ways other than simple whacking, stabbing, and slashing. To access a weapon's special capacity, the character needs the Weapon Technique feat for that specific weapon. If a weapon has a special

capacity that can be unlocked, it will be mentioned in the weapon's description.

Simultaneously Thrown Weapons

Thrown weapons such as shuriken and kunai are small and comfortable enough that a skilled wielder with the appropriate Weapon Technique Feat can fire off several with the same hand and arm movement. Simultaneously thrown weapons use only one attack roll, but each projectile after the first suffers a cumulative -2 penalty to its attack result. For example, a shinobi throws three shuriken at a target with an AC of 15. His attack roll (after being adjusted by his usual modifiers) is 17, which means that the first and second shuriken hit the target (results of 17 and 15, respectively), but the third one doesn't (a result of 13). A character can throw a number of shuriken simultaneously equal to his Dexterity modifier (up to eight), and a number of kunai simultaneously equal to his Dexterity modifier (up to three). (He can always throw at least one.) A confirmed critical hit with simultaneously thrown weapons means that all of the projectiles hit and do double damage.

Extra damage, such as that from sneak attack or magical weapon abilities, applies only to the first projectile that hits, but other effects, such as poison, apply separately to each projectile that hits.

Note that each group of simultaneously thrown weapons counts as a single attack. If a character has more than one attack due to high base attack bonus or feats such as Rapid Shot, he can fire off a veritable barrage of these projectiles in a single round.

Martial Artist Prestige Class Weapons

Some weapons are designated as martial artist weapons, which means that a martial artist can use

them as part of a flurry of blows. The following weapons are considered martial artist weapons: bo, jitte, jo, kama, nekode, nunchaku, sai, shuriken, tonfa, and war fan.

WEAPON DESCRIPTIONS

Bo: This is a simple staff, slightly taller than an average-height person, usually polished but most often carried as a simple walking staff.

Weapon Technique: Unlocking the bo's special capacity allows a character to shift his grip on the bo's length instinctively, giving him an extra 5 feet of reach while still allowing him to use the bo to attack adjacent enemies.

The bo is a special martial artist weapon.

Bows: The bows of *Kitsunemori* are the daikyu and the yumi, which are similar to the standard composite longbow and composite shortbow in most respects. Unlike their counterparts, however, the handle on these bows is slightly off center, making the string into an asymmetrical pull for use on horseback. The arrows for these bows are also longer than those for their counterparts.

Blowgun: A long tube through which the character can fire needles, the blowgun causes little damage in and of itself, so its needles are commonly coated with poison.

Blowgun, greater: Almost as long as a person is tall and firing darts that deal more damage than blowgun needles (while still being able to carry poison), the greater blowgun is much less common than its basic counterpart, due in great part to its unwieldiness.

Daisho: A samurai's daisho is the combination of his katana and wakizashi, which are crafted at the same time. Most samurai keep the wakizashi as a backup weapon, concentrating on their katana techniques, although many practice at using both, one in each hand (requiring the Exotic Weapon Proficiency or Weapon Technique for katana to use the sword one-handed). The weapons in a daisho are a far cry from common katana and wakizashi. Daisho weapons are always of masterwork quality. A successful Knowledge (nobility and royalty) check (DC 20) can turn up one of the following facts about a daisho at first glance: the identity of its owner; the identity of its maker; or the family, clan, or daimyo that the daisho's owner

serves. The daisho is unavailable for purchase; the costs in the weapons table are given only for purposes of calculating the cost of magical katana and wakizashi that are part of a daisho. The only way to legally acquire a daisho is through the Daisho Ownership feat (see the Character Options chapter, above).

Fukimi-bari (mouth darts): Another typical shinobi weapon, these little darts can be concealed in the mouth and spat out at an opponent, usually at the face. While the darts' range and damage are minuscule, each time an opponent is struck by at least one dart, he must make a Will save (DC 10 + one half the attacker's level + attacker's Dex modifier) or lose his Dexterity modifier to AC (if any) for one round. A character can spit up to three fukimi-bari simultaneously in one attack, and can store a number of darts in her mouth equal to 3 plus her Constitution modifier (minimum of 2).

Weapon Technique: Rigorous training with this weapon allows its user to coat the darts with injury poison at no risk to herself.

Jitte: Essentially the same as a sai, the jitte has only one prong (instead of two). The jitte is considered somehow a more elegant and honorable weapon than the sai, which allows nobles to use it without losing face. The jitte does not have the sai's weapon technique option.

The jitte is a special martial artist weapon.

Jo: This is a long stick that works essentially as a club.

The jo is a special martial artist weapon.

Kama: A character can use a kama to make trip attacks. If a character is tripped during his own trip attempt, he can drop the kama to avoid being tripped.

Weapon Technique: Someone who masters the kama can attempt a disarm action as an attack of opportunity during his attacker's turn if an attacker fails to strike him with a weapon (this can be done only once a round unless the character with Weapon Technique (kama) also has Combat Reflexes).

The kama is a special martial artist weapon.

Katana: One of the most elegant and deadly blades

ever forged, the katana is the signature weapon of samurai, although a few non-samurai warriors may own one, acquired as a spoil of war, forged illegally, or taken from a fallen samurai (see The Daisho, above). The katana is a long curved blade meant to be used with both hands, although some fighting styles teach its one-handed use.

Weapon Technique: A character who unlocks a katana's special capacity is able to use it as a one-handed weapon. Taking the Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat for the katana has the same effect.

Kunai: A simple knife almost exclusively used by shinobi, the kunai has a handle that's thin and ends with a ring, which allows for various ingenious applications (such as using it as a tent stake or a rope weight) and offers a balance and fingerhold for throwing. The weapon is easily stored and concealed. Kunai can be used both as melee and thrown weapons.

Weapon Technique: Special training allows a character to throw up to three kunai simultaneously (see Simultaneously Thrown Weapons, above).

Kusarigama: This weapon combines a kama with a tamagusari, into a double weapon. A character can switch between using it as a tamagusari or a kama as a free action, although he can't use it as a kama if he uses the chain as part of an entangle, trip, or disarm attack in the same round. Optionally, the character can grab one end of the chain and whip the kama end around, effectively gaining reach attacks for the kama.

Naginata: Traditionally a weapon for female warriors and samurai wives, the naginata is also seeing use in infantry ranks. The naginata is a polearm, a long wooden shaft with a slightly curved blade on one end. Like most reach weapons, it can't be used against adjacent targets.

Weapon Technique: A skilled naginata user is deadly in combat. The naginata becomes a double weapon in the wielder's hands (with the blunt end dealing 1d6 points of

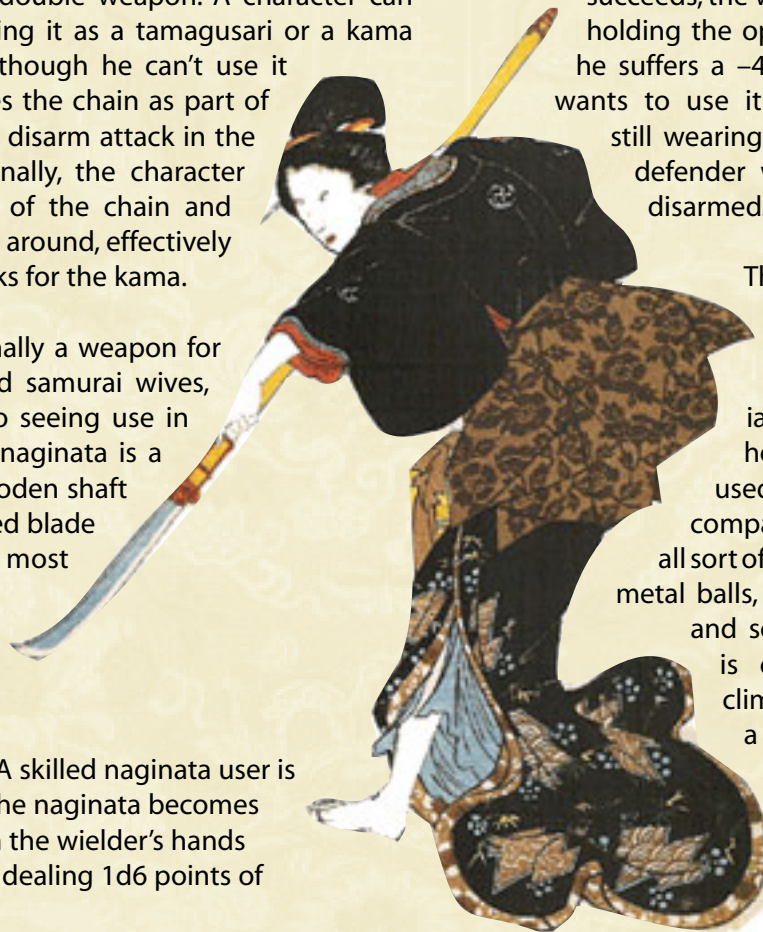
bludgeoning damage), and she can shift her hold on the weapon's shaft so that it can be used freely against any target within reach, including adjacent ones. Using a naginata as a double weapon incurs all the normal attack penalties associated with fighting with two weapons, just as if a character were using a one-handed weapon and a light weapon. The character can use either end as the primary weapon. The other end is the off-hand weapon. A character wielding this weapon in one hand can't use it as a double weapon—only one end can be used in a given round.

Nekode: A simple shinobi weapon, the nekode consists of a strap or glove worn on the hand, with three or four curved prongs coming out from the palm. The wielder can't be disarmed, and his hand attacks count as armed attacks. As is true for most shinobi weapons, the nekode has an utilitarian function: it provides the wielder with a +2 circumstance bonus to Climb checks.

Weapon Technique: A trained user can use both hands to try to disarm an opponent by latching the prongs on the weapon, gaining a +2 circumstance bonus to opposed rolls on disarm attempts. If the attempt succeeds, the wielder can choose to end up holding the opponent's weapon, although he suffers a -4 circumstance penalty if he wants to use it due to the fact that he's still wearing the nekode on his hand. A defender wearing a nekode can't be disarmed.

The nekode is a special martial artist weapon.

Ninja-to: A short utilitarian straight blade with a long hollow handle, the ninja-to is used only by shinobi. A handle compartment can be used to hide all sort of things: caltrops, poison sacks, metal balls, a kunai, a short tamagusari, and so on. The sturdy handguard is often used as an aid to climbing sheer surfaces, lending a +2 circumstance bonus to Climb checks. The ninja-to's scabbard is actually part of the weapon, open at one end to permit various



uses, including as a breathing tube, and it's sturdy enough for use as a club. *Weapon Technique:* A shinobi with special training in this weapon technique can treat the ninja-to as a light-weapon, qualifying the weapon under the Weapon Finesse Feat.

Nodachi: The nodachi is a sword that resembles a katana in shape but certainly not in size, as its blade is much longer and thicker, and its handle is twice as long. The nodachi was used mainly in cavalry combat, either by the mounted warriors or by those who wanted the reach to strike at them. It is strictly a two-handed weapon.

Nunchaku: A pair of wooden handles joined together by either a rope or a short chain, the nunchaku is a weapon derived from peasant threshers but still requires quite a bit of skill to use, as one handle is held firmly to make the other one twirl to add momentum to its impact. A nunchaku adds a +2 circumstance bonus to a character's attempts to disarm an enemy, but the user is at no risk of being disarmed in return if he fails to disarm his opponent.

The nunchaku is a special martial artist weapon.

Sai: A sharp, straight pick used for stabbing, the sai has two curving prongs that act both as a hand guard and a tool for trapping an enemy's weapon and disarming her. A character wielding a sai gains a +2 circumstance bonus on his attack roll on any attempt to disarm an opponent. *Weapon Technique:* An expert with the sai gains an additional +2 bonus (for a total of +4) on his rolls to disarm an enemy.

The sai is a special martial artist weapon.

Sasumata: This polearm is designed to capture opponents with a minimum of harm. It consists of a sturdy wooden shaft topped by a crescent-shaped blade. A wielder who hits an opponent of his size or one size smaller can initiate a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity from his opponent. As an additional option for grapple checks, the wielder of a sasumata can force the snared opponent to the ground (similar to a trip but with the grapple check replacing the opposed rolls to trip). The sasumata gives a character a +2 circumstance bonus to grapple checks but only when using the weapon to initiate a grapple.

Shuriken: These tiny weapons are the staple of the

shinobi. They can't be used in melee but are instead thrown. Due to their small size and often crude manufacture, shuriken deal little damage except in the hands of an expert. Ninja use shuriken with their sneak attack ability. If they make the sneak attack, they have the opportunity to go back into hiding as a move action with a -15 circumstance bonus to their Hide checks (rather than the normal -20 penalty to Hide while sniping), as it's almost impossible to trace the origin of a thrown shuriken. Shuriken are considered ammunition for the purpose of enchanting. Shuriken can be reused if retrieved from their target, but if they were magic, they become normal after used, as the ammunition enchantment triggers upon impact.

Weapon Technique: Special training allows a character to throw a number of shuriken equal to their Dexterity modifier with the same attack, but no more than eight per attack.

Shuriken are special martial artist weapons.

Takujo: More than a weapon, the takujo is the tool of priests and monks. It's a staff with one end topped by a metal ring, from which other rings hang on either side. The takujo chimes softly as its rings strike each other, a feature that a few powerful priests use in their exorcisms and spiritual practices.

Tamagusari: Also called manrikigusari, konpi, or simply kusari (depending on its length and the shape of its bearings), this weapon is a length of chain with one or two weighed ends. It can be used as a reach weapon by throwing one of the ends toward an opponent or as a double weapon (but not as both in the same round). The most common use for the tamagusari is to entrap opponents. Used in this way, the tamagusari deals no damage but gives its wielder a +2 circumstance bonus on any roll to trip, disarm, or grapple.

Tetsubo: A great club studded and ringed with steel, the tetsubo is a simple yet devastating weapon.

Tanto: A small knife that usually complements a samurai's arsenal as a backup weapon, the tanto can also be seen at the waists of nobles and other rich persons. It's common for women to have a tanto hidden somewhere in their clothing. Such weapons usually lack a hand guard and are true works of art, as the handle and scabbard mesh into a single wooden piece with a continuous design.

Tessen: Both a weapon and armor, the tessen is a thick, wide instrument with a handle, making it resemble a fan. It can be used to strike with the off hand. The tessen can't be used as a weapon in the same round that it provides its user a bonus to AC.

Tonfa: Another weapon that evolved from peasant tools, the tonfa is a short wooden club with a handle jutting out perpendicularly about a quarter way up the club's length. This weapon can be wielded in such a way as to cover the user's forearm and act as a shield of sorts. The character

gains a +1 bonus to his AC when fighting defensively and a +2 bonus to AC when using the total defense action while using a tonfa. Using a tonfa in each hand (incurring the normal two-weapon fighting penalties) increases this bonus to +2 and +3, respectively.

Weapon Technique: An expert tonfa wielder can treat this weapon as a light weapon and can switch between its offensive and defensive uses with a flick of the wrist (as a free action), granting the user a constant +1

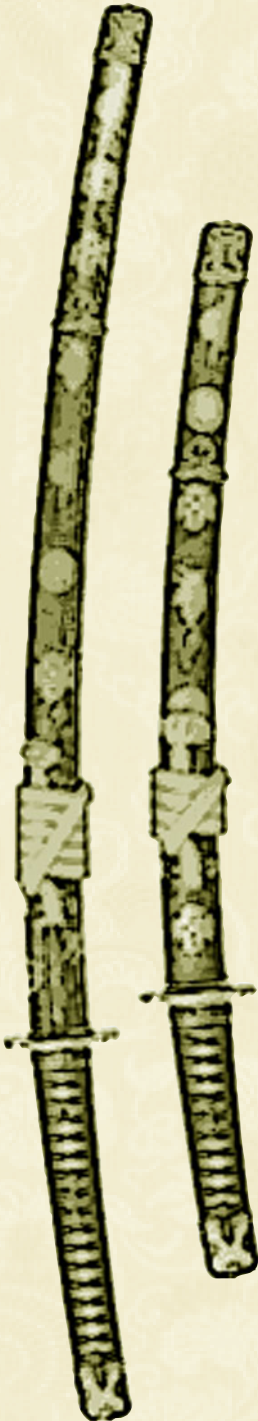


Table 6: Kitsunemori Weapons

<i>SIMPLE WEAPONS</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Dmg (S)</i>	<i>Dmg (M)</i>	<i>Critical</i>	<i>Range Increment</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Type</i>
Unarmed Attacks							
Nekode	5 sp	1d3	1d4	x2	—	2 lbs.	Piercing
Light Melee Weapons							
Jitte	5 sp	1d3	1d4	x2	—	2 lbs.	Bludgeoning
Kama	5 sp	1d4	1d6	x2	—	2 lbs.	Slashing
Nunchaku	3 sp	1d4	1d6	x3	—	2 lbs.	Bludgeoning
Sai	5 sp	1d3	1d4	x2	—	2 lbs.	Bludgeoning
Tanto	3 sp	1d3	1d4	19–20/x2	—	1 lbs.	Piercing
One-handed Melee Weapons							
Jo	—	1d4	1d6	x3	—	2 lbs.	Bludgeoning
Tonfa	5 sp	1d4	1d6	x3	—	2 lbs.	Bludgeoning
Two-handed Melee Weapons							
Bo	—	1d4/1d4	1d6/1d6	x2	—	4 lbs.	Bludgeoning
Takujo	10 sp	1d4	1d6	x3	—	4 lbs.	Bludgeoning
Yari	5 gp	1d6	1d8	x3	—	5 lbs.	Piercing
Ranged Weapons							
Blowgun	1 gp	—	1	x2	10 ft.	2 lbs.	Piercing
Needles (20)	1 gp	—	—	—	—	—	—
<i>MARTIAL WEAPONS</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Dmg (S)</i>	<i>Dmg (M)</i>	<i>Critical</i>	<i>Range Increment</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Type</i>
Light Melee Weapons							
Daisho, wakizashi	310 gp	1d4+1	1d6+1	19–20/x2	—	3 lbs.	Slashing
Tessen	12 gp	1d3	1d4	x3	—	2 lbs.	Bludgeoning
Wakizashi	10 gp	1d4	1d6	19–20/x2	—	3 lbs.	Slashing
One-handed Melee Weapons							
Ninja-to	5 gp	1d4	1d6	19–20/x2	—	3 lbs.	Slashing
Two-handed Melee Weapons							
Daisho, katana	400 gp	1d8+1	1d10+1	19–20/x2	—	6 lbs.	Slashing
Katana	35 gp	1d8	1d10	19–20/x2	—	6 lbs.	Slashing
Naginata1	10 gp	1d8	1d10	x3	—	15 lbs.	Slashing
Nodachi	50 gp	1d10	2d6	19–20/x2	—	7 lbs.	Slashing
Sasumata1	8 gp	1d3	1d4	x2	—	8 lbs,	Slashing
Tetsubo	8 gp	1d8	1d10	x2	—	8 lbs,	Bludgeoning

Exotic Weapons	Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Light Melee Weapons							
Kunai	2 sp	1d2	1d3	x3	10 ft.	1 lb.	Piercing
Kusarigama ¹	5 gp	1d4	1d6	x2	—	5 lb.	Bludgeoning and Slashing
War Fan	30 gp	1d4	1d6	x3	—	3 lbs.	Slashing
Two-handed Melee Weapons							
Tamagusari	6 gp	1d6	2d4	x2	—	6 lbs.	Bludgeoning
Zanbatou	80 gp	2d6	2d8	x3	—	25 lbs.	Slashing or Bludgeoning
Ranged Weapons							
Blowgun, greater	10 gp	1d2	1d3	x2	—	4 lbs.	Piercing
Darts (10)	1 gp	—	—	—	—	1 lb.	—
Fukimi-bari	1 gp	—	1	x3	5 ft.	—	Piercing
Shuriken	1 gp	1	1d2	x2	10 ft.	1/20th lb.	Piercing

¹ Reach weapon

shield bonus to his AC (whether he's using one or two tonfa). This bonus stacks with the one provided by the weapon's normal use while fighting defensively and during total defense.

The tonfa is a special martial artist weapon.

Wakizashi: A short sword with a slightly curved edge, the wakizashi is the katana's companion blade in a samurai's daisho. This sword is also popular among members of the noble class who aren't members of the warrior class but who want a mark of status. As a martial weapon, the wakizashi is subject to imperial ban except for the samurai and nobles who are exempt.

War Fan: A weapon favored by kunoichi (female shinobi) as well as noble ladies and not a few male courtiers, the war fan is made with the same craftsmanship as a normal fan, from very cheap models using canvas to the more expensive ones with rich silk and lace brocades with gold filigree. What these models have in common is that the fan's spikes are made of metal and end in razor-sharp points, which can slash a target when the fan is opened or stab him when it's closed. When the fan is first brought into melee, the wielder can make a Bluff check opposed by his target's Sense Motive check; if successful, the wielder gains a +4 circumstance bonus to all attack rolls with the war fan for 1 round.

Weapon Technique: An advanced user can open and close the fan in a dizzying pattern as he fights. When doing this, he can take a penalty from -1 to -5 to

his attack roll (player's choice, though the penalty can't exceed the character's base attack bonus). In exchange, he gains a dodge bonus to AC equal to the attack penalty, as the display makes it difficult for the opponent to judge where to strike. These changes to attack rolls and AC last until the character's next action.

The war fan is a special martial artist weapon.

Yari: This weapon is a polearm that combines the qualities of a short lance (for dealing double damage during a mounted charge and triple damage in case of a critical hit on a mounted charge) and a regular polearm that can be set against a charge.

Zanbatou: This legendary weapon is known to exist but is rarely seen in actual combat. The zanbatou is an imposing large slab of metal the size of a person, more than an inch thick, and about a palm and a half wide, with a long, sturdy handle. Any potential wielder must have a Strength score of 17 or higher or suffer a -4 penalty on attack and damage rolls. This penalty is on top of any nonproficiency penalty.



Standard d20 Fantasy Weapons

The following is a list of standard d20 fantasy weapons that can be found in *Kitsunemori*:

Battleaxe
Chain, spiked
Club
Dagger
Dart
Gauntlet, spiked
Glaive
Guisarme
Handaxe
Javelin
Longbow, composite (daikyu)
Longspear
Mace, light or heavy
Net
Shortbow, composite (yumi)
Shortspear
Siangham
Sling
Sword, short
Trident
Warhammer
Whip

ARMOR

One interesting difference in the way armor is worn in *Kitsunemori* compared to a standard fantasy setting is that buckles are generally replaced with ingenious but simple knots and straps. Metal armors are customarily lacquered to prevent rust. Most *Kitsunemori* armors are also much lighter than their standard counterparts, which means less protection but greater mobility.

Samurai Armor

The armor of the samurai is composed of several pieces that can be worn in different combinations. Many samurai dispense with some of the pieces depending on what kind of combat situations they expect to face. Poor samurai and ronin are able to wear only what they can obtain without the resources of a daimyo to support them. Some of the pieces may even be worn by non-samurai, as they're easy to reproduce.

The armor worn on the torso determines the base Armor Class for the suit. Additional pieces may be used to provide additional

armor bonuses; however, the effects of additional pieces on maximum Dexterity bonus, armor check penalty, and arcane spell failure chance are also cumulative.

Whether the base armor for samurai is light or medium is determined by the material of the do; additional pieces can make light and medium armor heavier. The following table shows under what circumstances the armor becomes a different weight depending on how many pieces beyond the do are worn. For example, Toshio is a young warrior wearing a leather do, which qualifies as light armor. He adds a pair of leather kote, metal sune-ate, wakibiki, and sode. The armor increase to medium for wearing four extra pieces but, since one is made of metal, the armor becomes heavy. Should Toshio replace the metal sune-ate with a leather substitute or removes the kote or the sode, the armor becomes medium.

Do: This basic part of the armor covers the wearer's chest and lower torso, its weight hanging across the shoulders with some support on the hips. The design of the do varies greatly from craftsman to craftsman, but most of these variations are merely cosmetic.

Haidate: This piece of armor resembles a skirt and is made with the same design as the do it complements. It covers the waist to the top of the knees, and it's not very popular except during full-scale warfare, as it limits mobility and is uncomfortable to wear while mounted.

Kabuto: These metal helmets are quite elaborate, with widely flaring neck guards in the back and curled-back sides that resemble wings. Decorative horns are common.

Table 7: Samurai Armor Type

Armor	Base weight
Do, leather	Light
Do, metal	Medium
Number of additional pieces ¹	Effect on base weight
Up to 3	None
4-5	+1 category (light becomes medium, medium becomes heavy)
6-7 ²	+2 categories (light becomes heavy)
Any of the extra pieces is metal	+1 category (maximum heavy)

¹ mempo and sune-ate do not count as additional pieces in determining armor weight.

² only possible with a leather do.

Kote: The equivalent of bracers, kote overlap the yugake to protect the wrists and back of the hands. They are usually made of either leather or chain, with splints of metal for additional protection. (The splints don't make leather kote metal for the purpose of calculating armor weight.)

Mempo: A metal faceplate often carved and decorated to resemble a demonic face, a mempo gives the wearer a more fearsome appearance as well as the ability to better hide pain and reactions to enemies, granting the wearer a +2 bonus to Intimidate and Bluff checks. The mempo doesn't count as an extra piece when determining armor weight.

Sode: These shoulder guards are made from laced-together metal plates and strips of lacquered leather, and are often large and ornate. The sode extend from slightly above the elbow to just past the shoulders.

Sune-ate: The equivalent of greaves, these pieces protect the shins from the knee to the ankle either

with leather reinforced by short iron strips or with segmented metal slats. (The iron strips don't make leather sune-ate metal for the purpose of calculating armor weight.)

Wakibiki: Designed to protect the armpit area, these guards are made from leather with small metal plates attached. The pair ties around the neck and across the chest to distribute the weight around the torso.

Yugake: These are leather gloves with hardened thumb and forefinger to assist in drawing the powerful daikyu bow. The yugake give the user a +1 bonus to initiative rolls when firing a bow at least during the first round.

Masterwork Samurai Armor: Masterwork armor for a samurai is never crafted in piecemeal fashion but only as a whole set. The number and types of pieces in the set is determined by the player and can't change once established. If pieces from a different suit of armor

Table 8: Samurai Armor

Armor	Cost	Armor Bonus	Maximum Dex Bonus	Armor Check Penalty	Arcane Spell Failure Chance	Speed		Weight ¹
						(30 ft.)	(20 ft.)	
DO								
Leather	10 gp	+2	+6	0	10%	30 ft.	20 ft.	10 lbs.
Metal	75 gp	+3	+5	0	15%	30 ft.	20 ft.	15 lbs.
HAIDATE								
Leather	10 gp	+1	-1	+0%	.	25 ft	15 ft.	5 lbs.
Metal	50 gp	+2	-2	-2	+5%	20 ft.	10 ft.	10 lbs.
KOTE								
Leather	10 gp	+1	-1	-1	+5%	—	—	3 lbs.
Metal	50 gp	+2	-1	-1	+10%	—	—	6 lbs.
SUNE-ATE								
Leather	15 gp	+1	-1	-1	—	—	—	5 lbs.
Metal	50 gp	+2	-2	-2	—	—	—	10 lbs.
Wakibiki	10 gp	+1	-1	-1	+10%	—	—	5 lbs.
Sode (metal)	30 gp	+1	—	-1	+5%	—	—	5 lbs.
Yugake (leather)	10 gp	—	—	—	—	—	—	1 lb.
Kabuto (metal)	50 gp	+1	—	-1	+5%	—	—	5 lbs.
Mempo (metal)	25 gp	—	—	—	—	—	—	5 lbs.

¹ Reach weapon

(even a masterwork or magical one) are added to the set, the masterwork advantage is negated. The extra cost and time for crafting the masterwork component is a one-time expense for the whole suit of armor, regardless of the number of pieces. The decrease in the armor check penalty is 1 regardless of how many pieces are worn.

Enchanting Samurai Armor: The do is the only part of the armor that may receive an enchantment in a full armor set. Other pieces may be enchanted but only if they are used along with nonmagical armor. When two or more enchanted pieces are worn at the same time, only the highest magical armor bonus applies, and any special abilities any of the pieces might possess cease to work until the wearer takes off the extra pieces.

Other Armor

Aside from samurai armor and its piece combinations, there are a few other armor models available, although not many since warfare in the empire of *Kitsunemori* relies on mobility and skill rather than on heavy protection. In addition to the new armors described below, the table includes kinds of armor from the core d20 fantasy rules that can be found in this setting.

Ashigaru Armor: This is the armor worn by the rank-and-file infantry troops and militia members. It's composed of a light breastplate and thigh protector made of laced metal plates, a pair of sune-ate, and a light helmet.

Shinobi Armor: The traditional apparel of ninja on a

mission, these opaque black clothes include thick padded garments, a pair of light kote, a hood, and a mask to conceal the wearer's identity. Some shinobi armor comes with a metal head guard to protect the forehead. Shinobi armor provides a +2 bonus to Hide checks in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination and a +2 bonus to Move Silently checks.

Tessen: Both a weapon and armor, the tessen is a thick, wide instrument with a handle, making it resemble a fan. It can be used to strike with the off hand. The tessen can't be used as a weapon in the same round that it provides its user a bonus to AC.

GOOPS

The other equipment found in the core d20 fantasy rules generally has an equivalent in *Kitsunemori*. Clothing has the same categories and costs but a unique look, with all binding and securing done by ribbons, sashes, and the like, which are meant to be tied in simple yet secure knotwork.

Ceremonial Ribbon: A length of white cotton rope tied in an elegant knot around columns or trees surrounding a shrine or a sacred place, these ceremonial ribbons are often replaced by cheaper rice paper equivalents. These ribbons are a tool for hearth magic and in simple geomancy (see the Magic chapter, below).

Gi: Often a companion of the hakama, the gi is a full jacket that is tied by a single cord at the waist. A

Table 9: Other Armor

Armor	Cost	Armor / Shield Bonus	Maximum Dex Bonus	Armor Check Penalty	Arcane Spell Failure Chance	Speed		Weight ¹
						(30 ft.)	(20 ft.)	
Light armor								
Ashigaru	25 gp	+3	+5	-1	15%	30 ft.	20 ft.	15 lbs.
Padded	5 gp	+1	+8	+0	5%	30 ft.	20 ft.	10 lb.
Shinobi	15 gp	+2	+8	+0	0%	30 ft.	20 ft.	8 lbs.
Studded leather	25 gp	+3	+5	-1	15%	30 ft.	20 ft.	20 lb.
Chain shirt	100 gp	+4	+4	-2	20%	30 ft.	20 ft.	25 lb.
Shields								
Tessen	12 gp	+1	—	—	5%	—	—	1 lb.
Shield, tower	30 gp	+4	+2	-10	50%	—	—	45 lb.

properly worn gi is tucked into the hakama, and its lapels are worn so that they surround the neck neatly; informal and even vulgar styles of wearing them allow for a wider opening at the front. In winter, many people wear several layers of these garments made for that use.

Hakama: These long, flowing pants tie at the waist at both the front and the back using long bands and are slit open along the hips for mobility. There are several models of hakama—some for everyday use, others purely ceremonial—and styles for both genders. Women can wear hakama without much in the way of social repercussions, although it's considered more proper to wear any sort of kimono. Hakama for women are most often seen on shrine maidens and samurai wives during martial practice, not on common women. Some hakama better suited for travel and combat are also tied at the knee and are not as loose.

Kimono: The kimono is a long robe worn by both genders, with sleeve and hem lengths determining gender, age and social status. They can be made from rich brocades with gold embroidery or humble linen. The kimono is worn with a wide sash called an 'obi'. Like the kimono, the obi can be lavish or simple.

Luopan Compass: A tool imported from faraway lands, the Luopan compass is the principal device used by geomancers to chart the flows of magical essence. Performing Knowledge (geomancy) checks without a Luopan compass imposes a -4 penalty. A masterwork compass, on the other hand, grants a $+2$ bonus to all Knowledge (geomancy) checks.

Magatama: These semiprecious, semimagical stones are said to be a gift from the gods and a part of their regalia. Thus, magatama are treated with great reverence. Onmyouji believe that the magatama are formed when high concentrations of environmental ki shape the surrounding stone, the magatama's type being determined by the ki's elemental resonance. Onmyouji use magatama as part of their magic and thus prize them greatly (see [Chapter V: Magic](#) for more details on magatama).

A magatama is a tear-shaped crystal with a depression or hole in the middle at its thickest part. Its surface is slightly translucent, and its color is determined by the elemental resonance that it responds to. There are five types of magatama: blue (water), red (fire), green (wood), yellow (earth), and pearl white (metal). They're

very expensive due to their rarity and the demand for them among fledgling wizards.

Musical Instrument: Popular musical instruments include the **sho** (mouth organ), **hichinki** (oboe), **so** (harp), **biwa** (lute), **kakko** (drum), and **taiko** (drum). A masterwork instrument grants a $+2$ circumstance bonus on Perform skill checks involving its use and is a sign of status. Prices for these instruments are identical to those found in [Core Rule Book I](#), pg. 128.

Paper Strips: Sold in stacks, these long strips of paper are about one palm wide and are used in a variety of disciplines, most often magic and exorcisms. The strips are blank, allowing the owner to scribble her spell or prayer on it prior to use.

Shrine Offering: A typical shrine offering consists of a bowl of foodstuffs or sweets, effigies, prayer strips, and other items of worship. Offerings are a very real tool for folk magic, used at shrines to bring about good fortune and to honor the spirits of ancestors as well as more whimsical spirits, such as the kitsune (which love the sweets left for them at their shrines). See the [Magic chapter](#) for more details on offerings and their use in hearth magic.

Torii "Spirit Gate": This large structure is a tool of priests and geomancers alike. It's an arch with two columns sustaining a slightly more elaborate headpiece. Most large shrines have a series of spirit gates leading to their sacred grounds. Although their use was inaugurated by geomancers, they work under such simple principles that they can be used for hearth magic, divine magic, and geomancy with equal ease. (See the [Magic chapter](#) for details.)

Traveler's Hat: A straw, conical piece of headgear with a very wide brim, the traveler's hat is extremely comfortable during the rain season, as its brim is wide enough to protect the wearer from precipitation. The most common type allows the user a free field of vision, the brim stopping at the forehead, but there are models that completely cover the wearer's head and have a "window" to allow him to see where he's going. A piece of cloth hanging around the brim further protects the wearer from the environment and helps hides his identity. This latter type of hat is mostly associated with monks and official couriers.

Shinobi Tools

The following items, while usable by anyone who can get her hands on them, are more popular among the ninja. Their public use may draw suspicion on the character.

Black Silk Rope: This 60-foot length of rope is made from black-dyed silk strands. It's thinner and lighter than normal rope and twice as strong, and it's almost impossible to notice when used at night (Spot DC 40).

Blinding Powder: Blinding powder comes in a tightly packed mixture carried in small paper containers, which can be quickly crunched then thrown at an adjacent target as a ranged touch attack. Using a blowgun or a tube to deliver the powder creates a small cloud filling two 5-foot squares in front of the attacker. Anyone exposed to the powder must make a Fortitude save or be blinded. There are three potencies, each with its own cost and effects.

Type	Fortitude DC	Duration of blindness	Craft (alchemy) DC
Type I	15	2	15
Type II	20	1d4+1	20
Type III	22	6	20

Face Paint: Made from crushed herbs and charcoal, face paint is used by shinobi to darken their features and provide improvised camouflage. The paint provides a +2 bonus to Hide checks, and an application lasts 8 hours or until the character takes a bath or is immersed in water for more than 10 minutes. A single jar holds five applications.

Silk Cord: Shinobi make use of 40 foot long silk cord that is very hard to notice (Spot DC 25) and can help in setting up traps and alarms. It can have more unorthodox uses, such as being dipped in contact poison that then drips from a roof onto an unsuspecting victim. The kunai's ring ending comes in handy for securing tripwire.

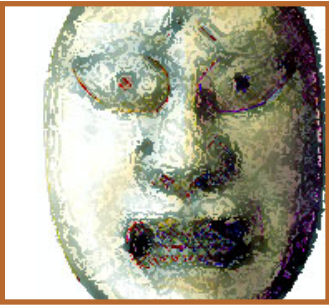
Smoke Grenade: A small stone-shaped device, the smoke grenade detonates upon striking any surface. The detonation doesn't have any damaging effect, but the grenade releases a large amount of smoke around its point of impact, covering a 10-foot-radius area for 1d4+1 rounds. Over this period, the smoke provides concealment, which shinobi use to hide and slip away. A smoke grenade requires a Craft (alchemy) check (DC 25) to make; the crafter need not be a spellcaster.

Tube: This small and narrow tube has several common uses. As a breathing aid, it allows a character to swim just under the surface of a body of water for as long and as fast as he can swim on the surface

using the Swim skill. (Since the character is already underwater, failing his Swim check by 5 or more has no effect; however, this breathing method can't be used in combat.) It also can be used as an improvised blowgun but with a -2 penalty to attack rolls. The tube can also aid in firing fukimi-bari mouth darts, increasing their range increment to 10 feet. A less common use is as poison delivery system: the character pours a vial into one end and the poison drips out slowly from the other. The tube can also be used to fire blinding powder at an enemy's face.

Table 10: General Equipment

Item	Cost	Weight
Hakama	2 sp	2 lbs.
Gi	1 sp	2 lbs.
Kimono - simple	1 gp	4 lbs.
Kimono - elaborate	100 gp	4 + lbs.
Traveler's hat	5 cp	—
Magatama	50 gp	1 lb.
Paper strip (20 feet)	8 sp	—
Shrine offering		
Simple	5 sp	2 lbs.
Basic	1 gp	5 lbs.
Moderate	5 gp	10 lbs.
Abundant	20 gp	50 lbs.
Luxurious	100 gp	80 lbs.
Torii - Spirit gate	50 gp	1 ton+
Ceremonial ribbon		
Rice paper	1 sp	—
Cotton	5 sp	1 lb.
Luopan compass	30 gp	1 lb.
Luopan compass, masterwork	60 gp	1 lb.
Shinobi Tools		
Smoke grenade	5 gp	1 lb.
Face paint (5 applications)	1 gp	1 lb.
Blinding powder (1 dose)		
Type I	5 gp	—
Type II	15 gp	—
Type III	30 gp	—
Tube		
Bamboo	2 sp	—
Wood	5 sp	—
Metal	1 gp	1 lb.
Black silk rope	25 gp	5 lbs.
Silk cord	10 gp	1 lb.



5

MAGIC

The world of *Kitsunemori* doesn't have flying castles. Dragons do not roam freely in the sky; they're mostly asleep or hiding in their patch of the spirit world. Yet magic is real and more common than many people are comfortable with. Only a scant few priests have the faith and enlightenment to wield divine magic, and only the onmyouji can harness the power of the land for their arcane spells. Additionally, there are a few more options that common (and not-so-common) folk have for taking magic into their hands.

The magic system described in the core d20 fantasy rules works normally with the few changes to the spellcasting classes detailed in the Classes chapter, above. In addition, this chapter adds three new magic systems: *hearth magic*, consisting of a few traditional charms and small rituals found in the possession of village elders and a few knowledgeable people; *geomancy*, the art of understanding the power flows in the land, wielded by the onmyouji to help with their normal spells; and *fox magic*, the unique powers of the kitsune.

HEARTH MAGIC

There are common truths that the people are aware of regarding the supernatural. Ghosts don't like salt, ancestors can be sought with offerings, small deities can be placated with shrines, certain herbs have mystic medicinal properties, and evil spirits can be warded against with a few choice blessings and small prayers. The collection and employment of these simple charms is called *hearth magic*. Hearth magic is mostly practiced by commoners; a few nobles use it as well but furtively, for it's seen as unwholesome superstition and in any case foolish given the aristocracy's access to *real* magical power in the form of high priests and the remaining onmyouji.

Learning Hearth Magic

Any person with the right upbringing can practice hearth magic. Unlike spellcasting, hearth magic is a traditional tool that regular folk have access to. This weak form of magic is steeped in folklore rather than the product of rigorous training or obscure knowledge. A character with ranks in the Hearth Wisdom skill is considered to have absorbed such teachings from his surroundings or from actual apprenticeship with a village shaman. A powerful oral tradition keeps hearth magic alive in each generation.

The individual powers available for hearth magicians are called charms. Charms consist of small rites, prayers, and ritual ingredients that vary greatly from practitioner to practitioner, creating a veritable chaos that so far has prevented hearth magic's evolution into a more powerful form. Those who wish greater magical potency should seek to join a temple or learn onmyou-do.

All charms have a rank prerequisite, which is the minimum number of ranks a character must have in



the Hearth Wisdom skill before she can learn or use the charm. Each charm type has a different kind of prerequisite.

A character automatically knows a number of charms equal to her ranks in the Hearth Wisdom skill, up to the point where she achieves her 5th rank, at which point she must learn new charms differently. The character from then on must expose herself to the charm's use by another hearth magician or at least be witness to its results or effects. After that, the charm can be purchased by spending a skill point. This skill point is lost and doesn't increase the character's ranks in the Hearth Wisdom skill.

Because of the idiosyncratic manner of hearth magic, characters can't attempt to aid another on a hearth magic skill check to create a charm or ward.

Designing Charms

Hearth magic doesn't have the kind of unified body of lore that onmyou-do or divine magic have. This leads to some redundancy and inefficiency that magic spells have already dispensed with. Rather than present a list of specific effects, this section presents a system with which to design a great variety of charms. This doesn't mean that a hearth magician can improvise her effects on the spot; on the contrary, hearth magic is made up of tried-and-true formulas in such a way that two identical effects with a single different parameter (such as duration or target) count as two different charms, each of which must be learned separately. Altering the charm's rite by trying to change a parameter on the spot renders the charm useless, for such improvisations are the purview of real spellcasters.

Once you design a charm with any of the following subsystems, it becomes a single charm whose parameters can't be changed.

The different powers wielded by hearth magicians are divided into four categories:

- **Blessings and curses:** Small charms of luck and good fortune.
- **Healing charms:** Minor magics that restore health to a person or animal.
- **Wards:** Charms that protect rooms, homes,

and people from intrusion, tampering, and even the presence of evil spirits and other sources of harm.

- **Worship charms:** Small rituals directed to gods and spirits in the hopes of attracting or diverting their attention and gaining their intercession.

Practicing Hearth Magic

Enacting a charm entails performing a ritual whose "casting time" depends on the charm itself and using up ritual components of varying quality. There are charms that can only be used at a shrine of a specific Power Rating or higher. Charms require the character to make a Hearth Wisdom check at the end of the rite's enactment. For some charms, meeting or exceeding the charm's DC means that the charm works, while failure means simply that the charm doesn't work. Other charms don't have a fixed DC but instead measure their effectiveness by the Hearth Wisdom check result.

Materials: Each charm's description indicates whether any materials are needed for its enactment. Some charms have specific requirements, such as a particular herb, a statuette in the likeness of a particular deity, a paper strip, or ribbons. Others will simply list a type of ritual offering (simple, basic, moderate, abundant, or luxurious; see the [Equipment chapter](#) for prices and description). These materials must be ready and available at the beginning of the charm's enactment.

The character can go above and beyond in the case of charms with a ritual offering requirement. By making an offering of greater quality than the one needed (e.g., basic instead of simple), she can help ensure her



success as she implores the spirits to attend her rite. For each ritual offering category used that exceeds the charm's requirement, add a +2 bonus to the Hearth Wisdom check.

Shrines: As stated above, some charms can only be enacted at a shrine. The charm's description will list the minimum power rating that the shrine must have in order to power the charm. (Most hearth magic functions in PR 1 shrines.) As with ritual offerings, enacting a charm at a shrine more powerful than necessary grants a +2 bonus for each point that the shrine's rating is superior to the charm's requirement.

WARDS

Wards are meant to protect the people from the sometimes whimsical, sometimes downright hostile supernatural world. While lacking the power to repel truly powerful demons or ward off evil spirits for a long time, hearth wards are effective in keeping minor supernatural nuisances away from common folk.

Wards are among the most numerous charms practiced by hearth magicians, for there are specific wards for different types of creatures and purposes. Rather than list all the different variations, the following ward design system can help you to create specific wards, which must be learned separately.

Learning a Ward: To learn a ward, a character must have a number of ranks in Hearth Wisdom equal to 5 plus the ward's modifier (minimum of 1).

Enacting Wards: Like every other charm, a ward is erected with a Hearth Wisdom check, modified by the sum of the modifiers associated with the ward's parameters (which are decided upon when designing the charm). Instead of the character creating the charm having to meet or exceed a generic DC common to all wards, the skill check result becomes the DC for the Will saving throw that the target must make to resist the ward's effects.

The ritual to enact a personal ward lasts a number of minutes equal to 10 plus any positive modifier for the specific ward (see the Ward Design table, below). Area wards require 1 additional minute per 10 ft. in the area's side.

Materials: A ward requires one of two types of materials depending on whether it protects an area or a person. Area wards must have their perim-

eters marked with sutra-inscribed prayer strips pasted on vertical surfaces, ceremonial ribbons tied around the trunks of trees or posts, and/or spirit gates (which denote the access route; see **Subject**). The length of one side of an area determines how many material anchors the ward needs: one prayer strip for every 20 feet, one ceremonial ribbon for every 40 feet, or one spirit gate for every 100 feet. Characters can combine strips, ribbons, and spirit gates as desired.

Personal wards require a small token upon which the charm's power is focused. The warded person (or persons) must carry this token at all times, or the ward won't protect him. (Kitsune have great fun conning their intended victims into abandoning their wards.) The token must have some spiritual significance, such as a small figurine of the god Inari or a stick with a prayer strip wrapped around it.

The time and effort needed to inscribe prayer strips and tie ceremonial ribbons are included in the Hearth Wisdom check, but carving spirit gates and making personal tokens requires a separate Craft check.

Designing a Ward

To design a specific ward, select the parameters and add all the associated modifiers together. The total modifier will be applied to the Hearth Wisdom check when enacting the ward.

Target: This parameter defines who or what will be affected by the ward. Different wards work on fey, outsiders, and undead, which, being spiritual creatures, are easier to affect by magic. Less common wards operate against aberrations, humanoids, animals, and insects. The ward affects all members of the target's type, but there are other wards that focus their effect upon specific species (such as ghost wards that don't affect wraiths or any other undead, or kitsune wards that don't affect any other fey) or even specific individuals. More specialized wards are subsets of the general types, and all modifiers are cumulative. Thus, when designing such a ward, determine the modifier for the general target type first and then apply any additional modifiers. For example, a ward against a specific individual of the monstrous humanoid type would have a net target modifier of +2 (–4 for the monstrous humanoid type, +2 for a specific species, +4 for a specific individual).

Optionally, a ward can be erected to protect not against creatures but against spells, supernatural

abilities, and spell-like abilities. In this case, the Hearth Wisdom check result becomes the DC for a caster level check (instead of a Will save). Being a weak form of magic, wards offer but slight resistance against true spellcasting. Should a spellcaster attempt to cast a spell through a ward, and he succeeds on his caster level check, he defeats the ward, and it is destroyed regardless of its parameters.

Subject: This parameter defines what the ward is supposed to protect: a person, a group of persons, or an area. People and areas require different materials, as described above. When a spirit gate is present, the arch beneath the gate is the only point through which a target creature can attempt to break through. The rest of the area's perimeter is inviolate.

Effect: This parameter establishes what the ward actually does to the affected target that tries to enter the warded area or harm the warded people. The target must make a Will save against a DC equal to the Hearth Wisdom's check result. Success means that the target ignores the ward's effect (see Duration, below). If the save fails, the target suffers the ward's effect.

- *Alarm:* When enacting an area ward, identify the person who will sense when the target creature enters the warded area. The person (or persons) protected by a personal ward will be alerted when a target creature is within 60 feet. Such personal charms are useful for detecting kitsune in disguise.
- *Hindrance:* When entering the warded area or interacting with the warded person (or persons), the target creature suffers a -1 morale penalty on all its rolls (attacks, saves, skill checks, etc.).
- *Repulsion:* The target creature is unable to enter the warded area or touch the warded person (or persons).
- *Damage:* When entering the warded area or touching the warded person (or persons), the target suffers 1d2 points of holy damage (or unholy, if the ward is targeted against good creatures).

Duration: This parameter determines how long the ward affects (or attempts to affect) the target once the target interacts with it. One-time wards disappear the moment that the target touches them, whether he suffers the effects or not. Continual wards keep affecting the target for as long as he remains inside

the area or in contact with the person (or persons), forcing a new Will save every minute or every round (which can be both a blessing and a curse).

Maintenance: This parameter establishes how long the ward remains in place. This is measured by rolling 1d4+1 and assigning a time unit (such as 1d4+1 minutes to 1d4+1 years). A one-time ward with a maintenance time measured in months, for example, can remain in place for up to 5 months until it is triggered, at which point it disappears. Permanent wards are so powerful that they never wear off and they must have at least one spirit gate focusing their magic.

Area modifiers: Being static, area wards allow a few options to increase their power, such as taking advantage of a shrine's power or using extra materials. The ward must have the shrine as the center of its area. Also, the shrine can use extra materials; apply the bonus for each prayer strip, ceremonial ribbon, or spirit gate in addition to the minimum necessary.

Destroying a Ward

A ward can be rendered useless by the simple act of breaking or otherwise spoiling its materials. Removing prayer strips and ribbons and damaging spirit gates can destroy a ward by reducing the amount of materials below the minimum necessary to maintain the ward. A creature targeted by and aware of the ward can try to destroy its materials, but he must make a Will save against the ward's DC and with a -8 morale penalty to even touch the ward's materials. For destroying of materials in a ward, refer to Core Rule Book I, pg. 166 for the hardness and hit points of the materials.

LORE CHARMS

Village elders are revered for the wisdom and insight they've gained through their long lives, and those who practice hearth magic have even more resources at their disposal, for the spirits of ancestors favor those who pay their proper respects.

Lore charms are little prayers and rites that beseech the spirits of ancestors to impart their wisdom upon the practitioner. These charms are complicated, require great knowledge of the ways of the ancestors, and aren't very common among hearth magic

Table 11: Ward Design	
Target	Modifier
Fey	-2
Outsiders (demons and devils)	+0
Outsiders (other than demons and devils)	-2
Undead (incorporeal)	+0
Undead (nonincorporeal)	-1
Humanoids, monstrous	-4
Humanoids, evil nonhumans	-6
Animals	-8
Aberrations	-4
Vermin	-6
Specific Species	+2
Specific Individual	+4
Supernatural abilities	-4
Spell-like abilities	-8
Spells	-12
Subject ¹	Modifier
Single person	+3
Group of persons	-1 per add'l person
Area, tiny (10 square ft.)	+2
Area, small (20 square ft.)	+0
Area, medium (40 square ft.)	-1
Area, large (80 square ft.)	-2
Area, huge (160 square ft.)	-4
Area, gargantuan (350 square ft.)	-8
Area, colossal (1,000 square ft.)	-16

practitioners other than village elders, shamans, and their disciples.

Learning a Lore Charm: To learn a lore charm, a character must have a number of ranks in Hearth Wisdom equal to the charm's DC -2.

Enacting a Lore Charm: To enact a lore charm, make a Hearth Wisdom check against a DC depending on the particular charm's design. Success grants the character the requested information; failure generally just means that the rite didn't work. A result of 1 in the Hearth Wisdom check, however, means that the character receives false or misleading answers.

The ritual to enact a lore charm lasts a number of minutes equal to four times the charm's DC.

Effect	Modifier
Alarm	+4
Hindrance	+2
Repulsion	+0
Damage	-4
Duration	Modifier
One-time	+4
Continual (every minute)	+0
Continual (every round)	-4
Maintenance (1d4+1 units)	Modifier
Minutes	+4
Hours	+2
Days	+0
Weeks	-2
Months	-4
Years	-8
Permanent	-20
Area Modifiers	Modifier
Enacted on a shrine	+3 per PR
Extra prayer strip	+1
Extra ceremonial ribbon	+2
Extra spirit gate	+15

¹Area wards require a prayer strip every 20 ft., a ceremonial ribbon every 40 ft. or one spirit gate every 100 ft.; personal wards require one portable token per person affected.

Materials: Lore charms require quite a bit of power. Most of it is provided by the spirits of ancestors or protectors of the area where the charm is enacted, which means that they must be propitiated with the right ritual offering. The stronger charms even require a shrine's power to thin the walls between the physical world and the world of spirits, and enacting such charms is impossible in other areas. Determine the charm's DC and find the minimum ritual offering quality (see the Equipment chapter, above) and shrine Power Rating. Using a greater offering or a more powerful shrine adds a bonus to the Hearth Wisdom check as described in Practicing Hearth Magic, above.

Designing a Lore Charm

To design a specific lore charm, determine the base DC based on the subject and modify that DC with the other parameters' modifiers. Use the resulting DC for the Hearth Wisdom skill check.

Subject: This parameter defines about whom or what that information is sought. A charm consists of a single question about a creature, a person, or a situation (called an augury). When the subject is a creature or person, the subject's personal power can make it more difficult for the character to glean information about it, him, or her; therefore, the Challenge Rating or level (as appropriate) modifies the base DC. The only mechanics-related information a lore charm can reveal is the subject's level or HD and a single extraordinary, supernatural, or spell-like ability the subject possesses. Lore charms are intended to uncover more general information such as locations, intentions, and threat level.

Auguries' base DC is adjusted by situational variables. An augury can concern people or creatures as long as the topic of the augury relates specifically to a situation rather than to the creature or person.

Seeking a creature's or person's true name is a category in itself and is much more difficult than asking about mundane questions.

Accuracy: This parameter defines how direct the answer is that the character receives. An ambiguous answer is a riddle that might mean several things. A vague answer could be interpreted in a couple of ways. A suggestive answer points the character in the right direction without giving a clear answer. An informative answer provides useful facts. An exhaustive answer leaves no room for doubt.

Distance: This parameter is determined by how far the subject is from the character, either in terms of physical distance or some other measure. The categories of near, far, and distant are malleable and subject to the Game Master's interpretation since the concept of distance can also relate to how close a relationship the character has with the subject. For example, a loved one on the other side of the world can be considered far rather than distant given the emotional connection the two people share.

Time: This parameter concerns whether past or future, near- or long-term information is sought. Information about the past is much easier to glean, from the spirits' point of view, even though insight into the future is possible. As with distance, categories can change depending on how connected the character is to the subject. A question about the character's distant ancestors might, at the Game Master's discretion, involve a +1 DC modifier instead of the usual +2 (for

distant past) because of the direct connection the information has to the character herself.

Table 12: Lore Charm Design

Subject	Base DC
Creature	10 + CR
Person	15 + level
Augury	25
True Names	25 + CR
Accuracy	DC modifier
Ambiguous	-4
Vague	-2
Suggestive	+0
Informative	+5
Exhaustive	+10
Distance	DC modifier
Near	+0
Far	+3
Distant	+6
Time	DC modifier
Present	+0
Recent past	+1
Near future	+2
Distant past	+2
Far future	+4



Healing Charms

Although hearth magicians are popular for their wards, they're much more appreciated among the common folk for their healing techniques, as priests with divine healing powers are more the exception than the norm in *Kitsunemori*. Hearth healing is very limited in scope and acts as a complement to the Heal skill. Healing charms help healers find the herbs they need, pray to the proper deities and spirits for help, and perform minor miracles that still fall short of divine healing magic.

Learning a Healing Charm: To learn a healing charm, a character must have a number of ranks in Hearth Wisdom equal to half the healing charm's DC and also have at least 5 ranks in the Heal skill..

Enacting a Healing Charm: This type of hearth magic creates tools to facilitate the Heal skill and can't be used on its own. To enact a healing charm, make a Hearth Wisdom check with a DC depending on the particular charm's design. Success gives the character

a bonus on the subsequent Heal skill; failure simply means that the charm didn't work. The ritual to enact a healing charm requires a number of minutes equal to the charm's DC.

Materials: Healing charms require special herbs and folk remedies that are the equivalent of ritual offerings in cost and availability. The Hearth Wisdom check for a healing charm represents the availability of the materials in the character's inventory as well as his efforts to recognize and get the materials. Find the charm's DC and find the minimum ritual offering quality. A healing charm also benefits from being enacted at a shrine as if it had a PR 0 requirement. Using a greater offering or enacting the ritual at a more powerful shrine adds a bonus to the Hearth Wisdom check as described in Practicing Hearth Magic, above. These materials are expended regardless of success in making the charm.

Charm DC	Ritual Offering
Less than 10	Simple
10–15	Basic
16–20	Moderate
21–25	Abundant
25 +	Luxurious

Designing a Healing Charm

Healing charms are the simplest to design: simply determine the base DC depending on the purpose and modify it according to the desired bonus to the subsequent Heal check.

Purpose: Every healing charm has a very specific purpose corresponding to the different applications of the Heal skill, whether it's caring for a particular type of damage, curing a specific disease, or countering a particular poison. There is no panacea charm that applies to all poisons or diseases. However, a charm can be enacted that allows the character to make a Heal check with the charm's bonus to treat magical diseases and poisons as if they were mundane.

Bonus: This is the bonus that the Heal check enjoys after the charm's rite is successfully performed.



Table 13: Healing Charm Design

Purpose	Base DC
Long-term care	
Hit point damage	12
Ability score damage	14
Treat Poison	Poison's save DC
Magic poison	Poison's save DC +2
Treat Disease	Disease's save DC
Magic disease	Disease's save DC +2
Bonus	DC modifier
+1	+0
+2	+2
+3	+4
+4	+6
+5	+8

Worship Charms

In a world full of spirits and deities, common folk have had to learn a few measures in order to deal with the supernatural in the absence of the protection afforded by true priests. Village elders developed worship charms in order to communicate with the spirits and try to gain their favor. From such attempts at communication arose the need for wards to protect mortals when negotiations turned sour.

Worship charms bridge the gap between hearth and divine magic, and it's not uncommon for country priests to practice it along with their religious duties.

Learning a Worship Charm: To learn a worship charm, a character must have a number of ranks in Hearth Wisdom equal to half the charm's DC.

Enacting a Worship Charm: Worship charms are religious rites that put the character in contact with the supernatural. To enact a worship charm, make a Hearth Wisdom check against a DC dictated by the charm's design. Success means that the rite works as intended (though the desired outcome may still not be achieved; see below), while failure generally means that the character just lacked the strength or knowledge to enact the rite properly. A result of 1, however, means that the character angered the spirits and suffers a –5 morale penalty to all Hearth Wisdom checks pertaining to worship and lore charms until the next full moon. If the character is a divine spellcaster, he also suffers a –2 penalty to all caster level checks and to the save DCs of his spells for the same period of time.

The ritual to enact a worship charm requires a number of minutes equal to twice the charm's DC.

Materials: Worship charms require ritual offerings as well as shrines. Offerings take the form of the spirit or deity's favored iconography, foodstuffs, incenses, and the like. While a worship charm can be enacted at any shrine, the spirits and deities much prefer it if the shrine in question is devoted to them. Enacting a charm at a shrine dedicated to a deity or spirit other than the one targeted (see the Character Options chapter, above) results in a -4 circumstance penalty to the Hearth Wisdom check. Find the charm's DC and find the minimum ritual offering quality and shrine PR. Using a greater offering or enacting the ritual at a more powerful shrine adds a bonus to the Hearth Wisdom check as described in Practicing Hearth Magic, above. The materials used to create the charm are expended regardless of the charms success.

Charm DC	Ritual Offering	Shrine PR
Less than 10	Simple	—
10–15	Basic	—
16–20	Moderate	1
21–25	Abundant	2
More than 25	Luxurious	3

Designing a Worship Charm

The key aspect to designing a worship charm is the kind of creature the character is trying to contact. This provides a base DC, which is modified by what the character wants to achieve.

Target: This parameter relates to what sort of entity the prayers and offerings are directed. Rituals can direct their energy toward any creature of a particular type or be directed toward a specific being. Worship charms can only target spiritual beings, so when designing the charm the character must decide upon a specific species of fey creatures (such as kitsune or tanuki), benevolent ghosts, or other kinds of 'spirits' such as elementals or outsiders (including demons and devils). A charm can be designed to contact a specific individual of the above types; this sort of rite must include the being's name (though not necessarily the true name), with all the offerings tailored to that individual's tastes. Deities can only be contacted individually, for there's no rite that can target deities in general.

Effect: This parameter is established by what the

character is trying to achieve by communing with the supernatural. Even a successful Hearth Wisdom check doesn't force the subject to do anything; successful worship charms simply present the option to the subject. Deities are powerful enough that they can afford to divert a modicum of their attention in order to respond to a worship charm, but mortal creatures such as kitsune can have other things on their agendas and decline to answer at all.

Spiritspeech: This rite enables the character to speak the tongue of spirits, making him able to communicate with the subject creature type in unambiguous terms, as if he were a native speaker of the language. This effect is unnecessary for communicating with deities, who can understand every language.

Propitiation: This rite is, in crude terms, a bribe. The offerings and prayers are meant to endear the subject to the character's pleas and have no further effect other than to get on the subject's good side. If the rite is successful, the character gains a bonus to all Charisma-based checks involving the subject as well as to the Hearth Wisdom checks for other worship charms directed to the same subject. The bonus is equal to +2 plus 1 per every 5 points that the Hearth Wisdom check result exceeds the rite's DC.

Summoning: This rite beseeches the subject to appear before the character. However, the subject must travel under her own power. If helpful, the charm does provide the traveling subject with some benefits, however. First, she always knows in which direction to travel. Second, her travel time to the character is cut in half. Finally, she gains a +5 bonus to any check related to any magics or powers she uses to get to the character's location; these powers or magics do not count towards the spending of spell slots, uses of a power, and so on. For example, if a worship charm was used to summon a powerful myobu sorceress, any spells she might use to travel to the charm's creator (i.e. *overland flight*, *teleport*, etc.) are not counted towards her daily allotment of spell slots, but are rather "free" while under the charms summons.

Communion: This charm puts the character in direct contact with the subject via a telepathic link. The charm's creator can only communicate with the subject in a language she already knows. The subject is free to deny the contact or end it at any moment, but the character is aware of this fact. If this charm fails with a natural 1, in addition to attracting the subject's anger,

the character suffers a mental backlash that causes 1d6+1 points of Wisdom damage and 1d4 points of Charisma damage. The character is not aware of anything happening around the subject, but a subject submitting to the link can see and hear what happens within a 60-foot radius centered on the character.

Atonement: This is an after-the-fact equivalent to propitiation that looks to appease the spirits or gods because of a transgression the character (or another character) committed. It has the same effects as propitiation, although it's harder to enact due to the anger of the subject. Any further results depend on what the character does and says to the subject.

the charm's design; failure simply means that the charm didn't work.

The ritual to enact a lore charm requires a number of minutes equal to the charm's DC.

Materials: Blessings and curses require ritual offerings and benefit from (but don't require) the power of shrines. Any shrines used must be devoted to good deities or purposes (in the case of blessings) or evil or calamitous ones (in the case of curses); treat the charm as if it had a PR 0 shrine requirement. A blessing or curse always has a material anchor that takes the form of a token appropriate to the charm's

Table 14: Worship Charm Design

Subject	Base DC
Fey creatures (specific species only)	20
Ancestors (ghosts)	15
aberration, outsider, and undead types and creatures with the shapechanger or extraplanar subtypes (specific type only)	15 + average species' CR
Specific being	25 + CR
Deity	45
Effect	DC modifier
Spiritspeech	+0
Propitiation	+1
Summoning	+2
Communion	+3
Atonement	+4

Blessings and Curses

These versatile charms are those that grant blessings or impose curses on a target. The most common blessings and curses have general uses such as facilitating childbirth, ruining a crop, granting good luck, and the like. They're the most powerful charms, as they border on true magic in effect if not in execution, but they pale in comparison to truly powerful spells.

Blessings and curses are the trademarks of witch doctors and shamans, and many charge for their services.

Learning a Blessing or Curse: To learn a blessing or curse, a character must have a number of ranks in Hearth Wisdom equal to half the charm's DC.

Enacting a Blessing or Curse: To enact a blessing or curse, make a Hearth Wisdom check against a DC dictated by the particular charm's design. Success gives the bonus or imposes the penalty specified in

nature. Tokens for blessings must always be carried by the recipient, while tokens for curses must always be on the enacting character's person. Tokens for area blessings or curses must be planted in the area's center. Separation for more than 10 minutes in any case ends the charm.

Use the charm's DC to determine the minimum ritual offering required. Using a greater offering or enacting the ritual at a shrine adds a bonus to the Hearth Wisdom check as described in Practicing Hearth Magic, above. The materials used in the creation of the charm are expended regardless of success.

Charm DC	Ritual Offering
Less than 10	Simple
10–15	Basic
16–20	Moderate
21–25	Abundant
25 +	Luxurious

Designing a Blessing or Curse

The base DC for a blessing or curse depends on the target. This DC is then adjusted by the modifiers associated with the parameters of the charm (determined by its design).

Target: This parameter concerns who or what is the intended recipient of the blessing or curse. Most blessings and curses are focused on a single target; hearth magic is simply not all that powerful. When trying to bless or curse an area, the token must be planted at the area's center, possibly sharing space with the center of a shrine. In this case, the blessing's or curse's effect grants its bonus or penalty to all creatures in the area; those trying to avoid a curse's effect must succeed on a Will save every round (DC 10 + curse's severity). Once someone makes a successful save, he's no longer affected by an area curse for 24 hours. Destroying or moving the token for an area charm ends the charm. Personal tokens may move without impediment, but destroying the personal token does effectively end the charm. A target under a curse connected to a personal charm can make a Will save (DC 10 + curse's severity + cursing character's Wis or Cha modifier-whichever is higher) when the charm first comes into effect and at the end of each day, with success freeing the target for good and destroying the charm.

Severity: This parameter defines the bonus or penalty that the blessing or curse imposes on the target or area. There is no way to make this number higher than 3.

Effect: This parameter concerns the type of roll or value affected by the charm; no single charm can affect more than one type of roll or value. A blessing or curse can affect only a specific category of saving throw (Fortitude, Reflex, or Will) in the same way that it must target a specific skill. (Craft- and Profession-related checks are the most common focus for area blessings and curses.)

Duration: This parameter establishes how long the blessing or curse affects the target once the charm is in place.

Extra Materials: Like wards, blessings and curses can benefit from prayer strips and ceremonial ribbons, though the latter only affect area charms. Since there is no minimum number necessary, including these ingredients can provide a very necessary boost in power. The maximum reduction to the charm's DC from extra materials is -5.

Table 15: Blessing and Curse Design

Target	Base DC
Humanoid	15
Supernatural creature	20
Area	10 +1 per 10 ft. on the side
Severity	DC modifier
+1/-1	+0/+2
+2/-2	+2/+4
+3/-3	+4/+6
Effect	DC modifier
Attack rolls	+2
AC	+1
Particular saving throw	+2
Skill check (choose skill)	+1
Duration	DC modifier
1d4x10 minutes	+0
1d4 Hours	+2
1d4 Days	+5
1 season	+10
Extra Materials ¹	DC modifier
Every 5 prayer strips	-1
Every 2 ceremonial ribbons	-1
1 The maximum reduction to the charm's DC from extra materials is -5.	

Geomancy

Onmyo-do relies on the wizard's understanding of the elements, their interactions, and the way that power flows through the land. One of the tools of magicians is geomancy, the knowledge of the land's magical nature.

Unlike hearth magic, which is a complete (if very basic) system of magic, geomancy is simply a subdiscipline of onmyo-do—a tool for spellcasting in the manner of verbal, somatic, and material components. While wizards can do without practicing geomancy, few dispense with such a valuable tool.

Geomancy has three main tools to achieve its effects: the knowledge of elemental resonance, affinity, and enmity; the knowledge to create geomantic arrays; and the possession of the mystical stones known as magatama.

The Tao of Elemental Resonance

According to onmyo-do, everything in creation resonates with one or more of the elements (wood, fire, earth, metal, and water), and that is as true for the land as it is for the body. Each element governs certain types of magic and phenomena and, by manipulating the relationships of affinity and enmity, onmyouji can favor or block magic as they wish.

Elemental Magic: All kinds of magic, whether spells or abilities, have an elemental resonance according to their school as described in the core d20 fantasy rules. Each element governs a few magic schools and subschools as follows:

- *Wood:* Transmutation, Conjunction (healing, creation).
- *Fire:* Evocation (fire, force), Illusion (figment, glamor).
- *Metal:* Conjunction (calling, summoning, teleportation), Divination (all), Illusion (shadow).
- *Water:* Evocation (all but fire and force), Enchantment, Illusion (pattern, phantasm).
- *Earth:* Abjuration, Necromancy.

Geomantic Potential: Every patch of land, whether wild, cultivated, or built upon, resonates with one or more elements. As described in the Character Options chapter, spiritually strong locations have a Power Rating that shrines and geomantic arrays can take advantage of. Shrines simply tap this energy, but geomancy can exploit the land's elemental resonance as it is or manipulate it.

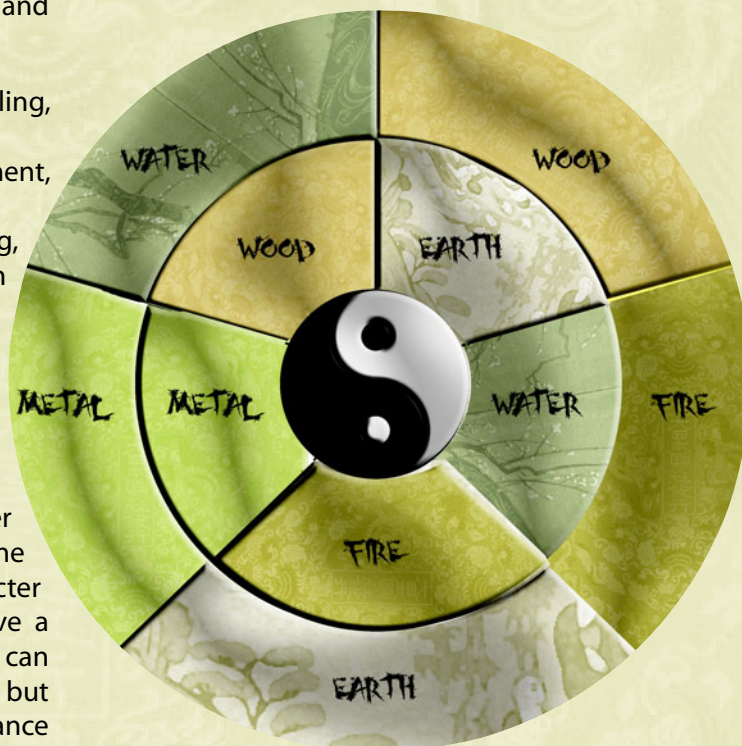
The elemental resonance of a location is fairly easy to identify. Wood-attuned locations will be teeming with life and are often in heavy woodland. Fire resonance exists in scorched lands, volcanoes, sandy deserts, and hot springs. Earth is strong in rocky terrain as well as in symmetrical structures (whether they're natural or artificial). Metal resonance exists accompanies mineral deposits as well as areas rich with magic and the supernatural. Water reigns primarily in lakes, rivers, the oceans, and places of high humidity.

When in doubt, a character can make a Knowledge (geomancy) check to identify a site's elemental resonance (DC 20 – the site's Power Rating). The Game Master decides beforehand both the PR and the elemental resonance of a site.

Elemental resonance is expressed between paren-

theses next to a site's PR. For example, a rich woodland setting could be a PR 3 (wood) site, while a hot spring might be PR 2 (fire, water). Like Power Rating, elemental resonance has no discernible effect unless there's either a shrine or a geomantic array to channel its energy.

Enmity and Affinity: The elements interact with each other in terms of enmity and affinity. An element is the enemy of another if it overcomes it, while it's affiliated with another when it generates it. The circle of the elements is as follows:



These relationships can be used by geomancers to provide bonuses or penalties to magical effects triggered inside an active geomantic array. The effects of active elemental resonance are measured as bonuses or penalties relative to the site's PR. In the following table, find the site's elemental resonance and follow the row until you find the element that corresponds to the spell or magic ability that a character or creature is trying to attempt while affected by the geomantic array. The bonus or penalty applies to a variety of effects as described in Using Arrays and may represent different values. For example, if an onmyouji attempts to cast a *fireball* spell (Fire resonance) in a geomantic array whose site resonance is Wood PR 5, then the bonus applied to that spell is +5, which means that while within the array the onmyouji could opt for the *Magic Focus* use and increase the *fireball's* save DC by 5.

Table 16: Elemental Influence

Site's /Array's Resonance	Magic's Resonance				
	Earth	Water	Fire	Metal	Wood
Earth	+PR+1	-PR	—	+PR	+PR-1*
Water	+PR-1*	+PR+1	-PR	—	+PR
Fire	+PR	+PR-1*	+PR+1	-PR	—
Metal	—	+PR	+PR-1*	+PR+1	-PR
Wood	-PR	—	+PR	+PR-1*	+PR+1

* Minimum of +0

Geomantic Arrays

The underlying structure of geomancy lies in its arrays. A geomantic array can take many shapes, but all are calculated to channel and maximize the flows of magical power for a particular purpose. The most obvious array is one in which lines of elemental relationship etched into the ground connect niches holding icons of the corresponding elements, while a more subtle one can be simply a room with the furniture arranged in such a manner as to facilitate the flow of *ki* in the way that the geomancer wants.

Most of the artificial gardens found in lords' mansions were designed by geomancers, making them into ideal spots to meditate. Some siege engineers never start building a fortress before getting the advice of or collaborating fully with an expert in geomancy, who designs everything from the foundations to the final battlements in accordance with the principles of onmyo-do.

Creating Arrays

The purpose of a geomantic array is to harness the energy in a specific location and turn it to the practitioner's benefit or his enemies' detriment. Creating a geomantic array entails a simple Knowledge (geomancy) check, with a base DC of 15 for an array covering an area 10 feet per side. Add a +1 to the DC for every additional 10 feet added on either side, so a 10-foot-by-30-foot area has the same DC (17) as a 20-foot-by- 20-foot area.

Setting up an array requires a number of minutes equal to 10 plus the skill check's DC. The character can reduce the difficulty by using ritual offerings as part of the array.

Failure simply means that the character set up something wrong and the array doesn't work. The character realizes this immediately, as he fails to

sense the awakening of the location's elemental resonance, and may try again with a +2 to the DC. Success means that the geomantic array awakens the site's resonance. Failure allows another attempt, but the DC is increased by another +2. The +2 increase to DC is cumulative per attempt.

An array has the elemental resonance of the original site, so a PR 3 (water) site would have the corresponding bonuses and penalties: +2 to earth magic, +4 to water magic, -3 to fire magic, no influence on metal magic and +3

to wood magic. Talented geomancers can change the site's elemental influence by adding a +2 to the Knowledge (geomancy) check DC for every element removed in the circle of enmity from the original site's element. Turning the site's water resonance to fire, for example, increases the DC by +2, but turning it to earth increases the DC by +8.

The character can also increase the power of the array, raising the site's original PR by 1 for every +4 increase to the Knowledge (geomancy) check DC.

Destroying or Altering an Array

An array is always static, and altering the array in any way changes the flows of power and nullifies

Table 17: Array Creation

Effect	Knowledge (geomancy) DC
Array covering a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. area; array is of the same PR and elemental resonance as the underlying site	15
Additional 10 ft. on a side	+1 per additional 10 ft.
Second and subsequent tries to create the array	+2 each successive attempt
Changing the elemental influence...	
...by one element to the right	+2
...by two elements to the right	+4
...by three elements to the right	+6
...by four elements to the right	+8
Increasing the site's PR	+4 for every +1 increase in PR
Ritual offerings	
Simple	-1
Basic	-2
Moderate	-3
Abundant	-4
Luxurious	-5
Spirit gate (only on sites with at least 50 ft. on a side)	-3

the array's effect. Any character can recognize he's inside or in the presence of a geomantic array with either a Wisdom check or a Knowledge (geomancy) check, with the DC equal to the DC for creating the array. It requires a second check (with the same DC) to recognize what the elemental resonance of the site is and what components in the environment are part of the array. If the second check is successful, only the intent to disrupt the array is needed to move an element out of the way and destroy the array.

A geomancer that encounters a preexisting array can attempt to alter its elemental resonance after identifying its components. He must make a Knowledge (geomancy) check with a DC equal to the original array's creation DC +3 for every element in the circle of enmity that he moves the array away from its original resonance. It takes a number of minutes equal to the new DC to make the proper alterations. For example, if an onmyouji encounters a geomantic array, he must first make a Knowledge (geomancy) check to recognize that he's in the presence of an array. The DC for his Knowledge (geomancy) check is 15 (the DC for creating the array originally was 15), and if successful he can then make a second check at the same DC (15) to determine what the elemental resonance of the site is and what components in the environment are a part of the array. If the second Knowledge (geomancy) check is successful, he is able to identify the array as a PR 7 Earth resonance. He then can make a third check to alter the array and shift its resonance to a fire resonance (DC 15 + 4 for moving the array two elements to the right from earth=19). It will take the onmyouji 19 minutes to make the necessary adjustments, and if he succeeds on this third check, the array now has a PR 7 Fire resonance.

Using Arrays

Using an active array in true spellcasting is very similar to using a shrine, but much more advantageous to those with the knowledge of geomancy. A spellcasting character (only) can tap into a geomantic array with a successful Knowledge (geomancy) check against a DC 20 – the array's PR (if different from the site's PR)..

Most array effects are produced only after a successful check to tap the array. The only array effect that's always active is the relation of enmity between the site and any magic performed within its confines. Magic that suffers a penalty from the site's enmity has its save DC reduced by the elemental influence rating. For example, fire magic (i.e., evocation [fire, force] and

illusion [figment, glamor] magic) has its save DC reduced by 2 inside a PR 2 (water) array, since water overcomes fire in the circle of elemental enmity.

Array Uses: After a character taps into a geomantic array successfully, he can use it for a variety of purposes. A character can only successfully tap into a particular array once per day per point of Intelligence modifier (minimum of 1), and can only utilize one array use per tapping. The benefit gained from a geomantic array varies depending on the type of magic that the character tries to use inside it. Instead of using the site's PR, use the elemental influence modifier (found on the Elemental Influence table) that results from comparing the site's (or the array's if it has been altered) elemental resonance with the resonance of the magic being attempted. Negative penalties resulting from the elemental influence between the resonance of a spell cast and the resonance of the array makes array uses impossible, but the spell's DC is reduced accordingly .

For example, metal magic has a penalty instead of a bonus inside a wood array and has no benefit or disadvantage for being cast inside an earth array. So, an onmyouji casting scrying (a metal spell) inside of a PR 8 wood array would have his spell's save DC reduced by 8.

Metamagic Potency: A successfully tapped geomantic array effectively grants a caster a number of "extra" caster levels with which to power metamagic feats he already has. The "extra" caster levels are only useful for powering metamagic feats. The number of levels granted is equal to the elemental influence modifier. A character can decide to apply any number of metamagic feats he knows to any spell he casts inside an array and pay for the feat with the granted caster levels instead of using up higher-level spell slots. Within the array's effect, casters who need to prepare their spells can apply metamagic feats spontaneously to their spells, while spontaneous spellcasters cast metamagic-enhanced spells with normal (i.e., unpenalized) casting times. The caster must apply the extra levels to spells cast while in the array within one hour, after which point any unused spell levels dissipate and are useless.

For example, a sorcerer casting *fireball* inside a PR 4 (fire) array temporarily gains 5 extra levels because *fireball* is fire magic (which resonates strongly with this



type of geomantic array). He can cast a empowered (+2 levels), maximized (+3 levels) *fireball* but, instead of the spell requiring an 8th-level slot as would normally be the case, the sorcerer uses the 5 extra levels provided by the array. If he were to cast *wall of ice* (a water spell), he would only gain 3 extra levels.

The character can use the extra levels the array grants in conjunction with increasing the spell's slot in order to create truly spectacular effects.

Metamagic Improvisation: A character casting a spell of the same element as a geomantic array gains the ability to apply one metamagic feat that he doesn't know to that spell. The spell uses up a spell slot one level higher than would normally be the case for the given feat. The character can't use this array ability at the same time as metamagic potency, above.

Magic Focus: One spell or spell-like ability cast within the confines of the shrine has its save DC increased by the elemental influence modifier.

Magic Potency: One spell or spell-like ability cast by a character tapping into the array functions as if cast by a character of a higher level. The character adds the elemental influence modifier to his caster level (or the ability's caster level, if it's fixed) for that one spell or spell-like ability.

Elemental Protection: The tapping character gains a bonus to all his saving throws within the confines of the array against spells of a specific element. The bonus is equal to the array's PR but only applies against spells that belong to an element up to twice removed from the array's resonance in the circle of elemental enmity. For example, when tapping an earth array, the character gains the save bonus only against water or fire spells (since earth overcomes water and water overcomes fire).

The Wall Between Worlds: When using a geomantic array to summon or banish an outsider, the character gains a bonus to all caster level and Charisma-related checks against the target creature equal to the site's unmodified PR (not the array's modified PR is different from the site's original PR).

Creation Potency: A character who creates a magic item inside a geomantic array can simulate a higher caster level to meet the creation's caster level prerequisite. The elemental resonance of the highest-level spell

required in the item's creation becomes the item's elemental resonance. Treat that spell as magic cast within the array's confines. The character adds the elemental influence modifier to his caster level. If the item doesn't have any spells as prerequisites, the caster level bonus is equal to the site's unmodified PR.

Creation Resources: A character who creates a magic item inside a geomantic array can use the elemental resonance to replace material costs. The elemental resonance of the highest-level spell required in the item's creation becomes the item's elemental resonance. Treat that spell as magic cast within the array's confines. The geomantic array can substitute the cost of materials in the creation process by 50 gp per point of elemental influence modifier. If the item doesn't have any spells as prerequisites, the array provides 30 gp x the array's PR toward item creation material costs. The cost substitution can never bring the creation cost lower than 0 gp.

Geomantic Arrays and Shrines

The structures that are part of a major shrine not only work to channel the shrine's energy but they can also serve as the components of a geomantic array, awakening both the powers of the shrine and of the land's elemental resonance. The checks to make the shrine and create the geomantic array are performed separately.

A character can only tap into either the shrine or the array, not both at the same time, although he's free to switch from one to the other at the start of each round as a free action. However, if he switches, all continual benefits he'd activated previously cease to confer their boon (i.e. if the tapping creature had tapped the shrine to activate the *Health Recovery* option, then switches a few rounds later to the geomantic array's *Metamagic Potency* use, the healing benefits of the shrine instantly stop and would require another successful tapping to reactivate). Shrine and array effects that cover the entire area passively (such as an array's relationships of elemental enmity) continue to work at all times, and both operate simultaneously.

Magatama

The magatama are mystical crystal stones that resonate strongly with the five elements even if they aren't magical in and of themselves. Shaped like a tear with a hole in the middle, magatama are used by onmoyuji in place of material components to power their spells,

the type depending on the resonance of the magic they're trying to cast. They must hold the magatama in a free hand and against bare skin to channel its resonance into their magic.

Magatama are very hardy minerals and can be found in nature in places of strong elemental resonance. They can also be crafted by skilled geomancers in very complex geomantic arrays.

Finding a Magatama: To find a naturally formed magatama, a wizard must first travel to a site with strong elemental resonance (PR 3 at least). Shrines and preexisting geomantic arrays don't produce magatama since their energy is already directed and harnessed. The wizard must make a Knowledge (geomancy) check with a DC equal to 30 minus twice the site's PR to locate the most likely place where a magatama would form given the land's geomantic configuration. The chance that a magatama can be found there equals 5% multiplied by the site's PR. If there is a magatama there, it may require some digging, as many grow underground. If there's no magatama, the character can look again in the same place in 1d4 weeks. He doesn't need to make a second Knowledge (geomancy) check since he's already identified the spot, but he needs to roll again for the chance for a magatama to be present. The elemental resonance of a magatama is the same as the site it's formed in.

Artificial Magatama: Geomancers learn to make their own magatama. Novice onmyouji receive their first ones from their masters, the types according to the preferred sorts of magic the students profess. To make a magatama, an onmyouji creates a special geomantic array channeling the right elemental resonance for the type of magatama he wishes to create. The array creation check has a DC of 20 modified by the same factors as normal arrays but unable to use the same benefits and bonuses (see Creating Arrays, above). The materials necessary for the array cost 250 gp. Once the cost is paid and the Knowledge (geomancy) check to create the array is successful, a new magatama of an elemental resonance matching that of the array will slowly form over one week.

Using Magatama

Aside from being material components of arcane spellcasting, magatama can be used together, using the relations of affinity and enmity between elements to create a series of improvised effects, pouring the character's own energy into the magatama to awaken their elemental resonance.

Using a magatama in this way deals one or more points of either Wisdom or Charisma damage (player's choice) to the character as he gives of his own soul. Humans can't tap into their own being indiscriminately to power a magatama. A human geomancer can only suffer a maximum of 1 point of ability damage for every 5 ranks in Knowledge (geomancy) that he possesses. For example, a character with 6 ranks can only suffer 1 point of ability damage to empower a magatama, while a character with 15 ranks can suffer up to 3. Pouring essence into a magatama is a free action that complements the action of spellcasting, and can only be done once per day.

A character can't tap into a geomantic array at the same time that he pours power into a magatama, and any passive geomantic effects don't stack with a special magatama effect. The magatama can only utilize one effect per use.

Improvised Potency: By holding an auspicious magatama in his left hand while he uses his right one for the spell he's casting, the wizard can use the relationships of affinity to empower a spell. The element of the auspicious magatama must be the same as the spell's elemental resonance in the circle of affinity, meaning that the auspicious element generates the spell's element. If an onmyouji is using Improvised Potency to cast a water spell such as *charm monster*, he must hold his water megatama in his left hand. For every point of ability damage that the character endures, his spell's save DC increases by 2.

Counterspelling: A wizard witnessing an opponent casting a spell or using a spell-like ability may feel helpless to counter it if he hasn't learned the right spell or ability, but if he has the right magatama for the job, he can still try. A successful Spellcraft check to identify the spell being cast or ability being used by an opponent also identifies the spell's or ability's elemental resonance. If the character has a magatama of the element that overcomes the spell's or ability's element in the circle of enmity, he can pour essence into the stone and spend any prepared spell or spell slot of the same level or higher to instantly counter the spell or ability. He suffers a minimum of 1 point of ability damage to achieve this, but, if he's able to suffer more damage, he can enhance the countering. For every point that he spends above the first, the required spell or spell slot can be of one level lower than the spell to be countered.

Improvised Arrays: If time is pressing, an onmyouji can rush the creation of a geomantic array by using his precious magatama instead of the required components (see Creating Arrays, above). He can make a Knowledge (geomancy) check as normal using the Array Creation Table, but he must possess the proper magatama: one each for the element corresponding to the site, the element he wants the array to have, and the element that overcomes the site's elemental resonance in the circle of enmity. If the site and the array are to have the same elemental resonance, he needs the magatama that corresponds to the element that generates the site's element in the circle of affinity. He must place the magatama in a perfect triangle surrounding the area where he wants to create the array, risking their loss in the process. If he fails the Knowledge (geomancy) check, he will not know until he attempts to place his magatama in the triangle. After placing the last magatama, if his Knowledge (geomancy) check was successful, the array will activate its resonance at the beginning of the next round, at which point the character suffers 1 point of ability damage. If the check was unsuccessful, one of the three magatama is destroyed (roll at random to determine which magatama is destroyed).

The improvised array remains active for a number of rounds equal to one third of the character's total Knowledge (geomancy) bonus.

Fox Magic

One of the favorite pastimes of the kitsune is to befuddle humans, whether just for laughs or with wicked intentions. As if the gods intended for them to play the role of tricksters, the kitsune can learn a variety of powers that aid them in their favorite activities of cajoling and deceiving. The variety of tricks they

can pull off and the different degrees of expertise they can display has confused the brave scholars who try to document and classify just what the fox spirits are able to do—something that the foxes find tremendously amusing.

Despite the variety of effects the kitsune are capable of creating with their magic, it can be said that they only have three powers from which everything else branches out: weaving illusions, ensnaring minds, and transforming their bodies. These three abilities form the core of fox magic; the rest is just details.

Learning Fox Magic

Only kitsune and the foxtouched Izuchi-mochi can learn fox magic, for it's something that runs in the blood and can't be taught if the spark isn't already there. Fox magic powers are basically feats that grant or expand the kitsune's abilities of illusion, enchantment, and transformation. Kitsune can acquire these feats as characters normally do or as features of the myobu or nogitsune racial classes. Stronger powers require a kitsune to have advanced not only in personal power but also in prestige and recognition among her peers and therefore can't be learned unless the kitsune has a certain minimum number of tails.

Using Fox Magic

To use a fox magic power, the kitsune simply expends one of her daily uses of fox magic and determines the effects. A character has one use of fox magic per character level; he may also expend a use of bardic music (if she has any) to instead power a fox magic power. Some powers, particularly the illusions, are very flexible and open ended; the Game Master should adjudicate the results based on the exact description that the player provides.

The save DC against fox magic powers is equal to 10 + one half of the kitsune's character level plus her Charisma modifier.

Unless otherwise noted, using a fox magic power is a standard action that doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity.

Power Description

Name [Elemental Resonance]: This gives the power's name and its elemental resonance for purposes of geomantic resonance.

Duration: This indicates how long the power remains in effect. *Concentration* means that the kitsune must

MAGATAMA AND FOX MAGIC

Kitsune's powers obey the laws of magic and have elemental resonance according to the school of magic that their effects belong to. Being spiritual creatures already, kitsune can use magatama to empower their fox magic as well as any spellcasting they may have learned, but without actually needing to have any ranks in Knowledge (geomancy). The ability damage that humans incur when using a magatama's essence is the same for kitsune.

spend a standard action concentrating on the effect each round. The power stops the moment that he uses his standard action to do anything else except maintaining the effect, and that concentration can be disrupted exactly as one would disrupt concentration on a spell.

Range: This specifies how far from the character the effect can reach.

Prerequisites: Most powers require that a kitsune have learned one or more other powers previously as well as have a minimum number of tails.

Effect: This lists the power's effect and manner of use

Options chapter, above) can never disguise their tails with their transformation or illusion powers.

Basic Illusion [Fire]

You can create simple illusions that fool only the gullible.

Prerequisites: Two-tailed kitsune.

Duration: Concentration.

Range: 50 ft. + 5 ft. per character level.

Effect: You can create one false stimulus: a static visual image, a simple sound, a faint smell, a change of temperature, or a phantom taste. The illusion can only exist within an area of 20 ft. by 20 ft.

Table 18: Fox Magic Powers

Tails Required	Illusion	Transformation	Enchantment
2	Basic Illusion	Basic Disguise	Amiable Mien
3		Masterful Liar, Fox Charm	Animal Shape
4	Advanced Illusion, Lasting Illusion, Sensory Alteration	Advanced Disguise	Forceful Action, Mental Illusion
5	Ephemeral Illusion	Ghost Body	Puppet Strings, Fox Madness
6	Masterful Illusion, Dream Travel	Greater Animal Shape, Inanimate Shape	Forged Memories
7	Craft Shrine Realm	Masterful Disguise, Shrine Sanctuary	
8		Mythic Shape	Possession
9	Kyubi no Maboroshi	Spirit Body, Kyubi no Henshin	Kyubi no Sayuu

Illusion Powers

With these powers, the kitsune is able to create false perceptions that attempt to fool one or more senses. Creatures encountering an illusion only get a saving throw to recognize it as illusory when they study it carefully or interact with it in some fashion. Even when a person successfully saves against the illusion, the illusion remains in place to potentially fool others.

A failed saving throw indicates that a character fails to notice something is amiss. A character faced with proof that an illusion isn't real needs no saving throw. If any viewer successfully disbelieves an illusion and communicates this fact to others, each such viewer gains a saving throw with a +4 bonus.

Note that except for the Inanimate Shape power, kitsune with the Tell Tail flaw (see the Character

point he's allowed a Will save (DC 10). If he succeeds, the illusory damage disappears; if he fails, he's stunned for 1d4 rounds and only then does the illusory damage disappear.

Advanced illusions can combine up to two stimuli (such as an image that can speak or feels warm, or a false scent that belongs to a voice). The illusion can exist in an area of 50 ft. by 50 ft.

Masterful Illusion [Fire]

Your illusions are decidedly hard to distinguish from reality.

Prerequisites: Six-tailed kitsune, Basic Illusion, Advanced Illusion.

Duration: Concentration.

Range: 400 ft. + 40 ft. per character level.

Effect: As per Advanced Illusion, but the stimuli

are lifelike and incredibly convincing. You can create multiple illusions combining all five senses, such as full illusory landscapes complete with fauna, weather effects, sounds, and so on. The illusion can exist in an area 200 ft. by 200 ft.

Ephemeral Illusion [Metal]

Your illusions have a measure of reality.

Prerequisites: Five-tailed kitsune, Advanced Illusion.

Effect: You can give your illusions a measure of reality by suffering Charisma damage or expending additional uses of fox magic. Each point of Charisma damage or additional use of fox magic gives an illusion a 20% portion of real substance (maximum of 60%). The percentage is applied to all the characteristics of the illusory creature or object: it has a corresponding percentage of the simulated creature's or object's hit points (and hardness, if applicable), any attacks deal a corresponding percentage of the damage dealt by the real creature's attacks, and so on, as relevant. The target of an attack by an ephemeral illusion can make a Will save (DC 10 + one half of your level + your Cha modifier) to realize that, as real as it seems, the ephemera is just an illusion and the damage is negated. The target then becomes immune to the illusion's effect. Unlike normal illusions, if a target fails his Will save, the damage dealt by the ephemera is real, up to the effect's percentage.

Lasting Illusion [Wood]

Your illusions can sustain themselves.

Prerequisites: Four-tailed kitsune, Basic Illusion.

Duration: Varies; see text.

Effect: You've learned how to make your illusions last longer than concentration by suffering Charisma damage or expending additional uses of fox magic. The damage or extra expenditure must happen at the same time that the illusion is created, and the new duration, once set, can't be changed. The more Charisma damage you suffer or extra fox magic uses you expend, the longer the illusion will last.

Sensory Alteration [Fire]

You can change the sensory properties of something.

Prerequisites: Four-tailed kitsune, Basic Illusion.

Effect: Instead of creating stimuli out of nowhere, you can change existing stimuli. You can twist words being spoken, make someone invisible, fake a new appearance, change the smell of something, and so on. The scope and range of these changes correspond

to your highest level of ability with illusions (Basic, Advanced, or Masterful). Targets of your Sensory Alteration get a Will save (DC 10 + one half of your level + your Cha modifier) to disbelieve the effects.

Dream Travel [Water]

You can enter others' dreams.

Prerequisites: Six-tailed kitsune, Basic Illusion, Advanced Illusion, Masterful Illusion.

Duration: From sunset to sunrise.

Range: 400 ft. + 40 ft. per character level.

Effect: By concentrating on a single target, you can separate your spirit from your body and enter the target's dreams. You can choose to be a passive observer of whatever dream you see or try to influence it. You can influence dreams simply by using your illusion powers to mold the dream's reality, and the save DCs for your illusion and enchantment powers gain a +4 circumstance bonus. While dream traveling, your body is vulnerable—any damage it takes forces your spirit back into your body. If you're attempting to induce a nightmare, you must attempt to alter the dream through your illusions five times, and the target must fail his saving throw at least three of those times; if that happens, the target suffers the effect of a *nightmare* spell.

The target must be asleep in order for this power to work.

If you have the special hunger (dreams) weakness, you can feed from your victim while inside the dream, gaining a +4 bonus to your opposed Will save, but you can't induce dreams or nightmares during the same night.

If you travel inside a nightmare, regardless of whether you created it, there's a 5% chance of being eaten by Bake, the Eater of Dreams (see Chapter VII: Forest Denizens for more information on [Baku-the Eater of Dreams](#)). Game Masters determine whether a sleeping creature is dreaming or experiencing a nightmare.

Craft Shrine Realm [Metal]

You can make a permanent home out of ephemera.

Prerequisites: Seven-tailed kitsune, Ephemeral Illusion.

Duration: Permanent.

Range: 10 ft.

Effect: You can craft a shrine realm, an illusory home that exists outside of the physical world. To do this,

you must be attuned to a shrine and must anchor the realm's existence to it. You can create as many entrances as you wish. These entrances connect the shrine realm to the physical world, and you can set the conditions that will open the entrances. (Some kitsune leave back doors open on purpose just so they can receive surprise—and surprised—visitors.) The shrine realm occupies a volume whose maximum dimensions depend on both your and the anchoring shrine's power. Multiply the shrine's PR by your character level, then multiply that by 50 ft. to obtain the dimensions of the volume's side. The shrine realm can be anything you wish in terms of appearance and configuration, and you can change the realm with a standard action.

The creation of a shrine realm takes a number of minutes equal to the shrine's PR multiplied by your character level. At the end of the crafting, you sacrifice a use of fox magic to the realm, meaning that your daily allotment of fox magic is reduced by 1 for as long as the shrine realm exists. You can craft more than one shrine realm, but each of them reduces your daily allotment of fox magic by 1 for as long as the realm exists. You can dissolve a shrine realm at any time and immediately recover the daily use of fox magic invested in it. A shrine realm also disappears when the kitsune that crafted it dies. Any creature inside the shrine realm when it disappears is expelled into the real world via one of the entrances.

Kyubi no Maboroshi [Fire, Metal, Wood]

Your illusions simulate reality.

Prerequisites: Nine-tailed kitsune.

Effect: When you gain your ninth tail, you become almost a deity. All your illusions have a 40% ephemeral substance should you so wish, and each use of fox magic you have counts as two for the purpose of augmenting the potency of some of your powers. By investing one use of fox magic indefinitely, any illusion with a 100% ephemeral substance becomes real permanently or until you choose to dispel it and recover the invested use of fox magic. When using Dream Travel, you can choose to use the power again to hop to a different dreamer (as long as both dreamers are within 100 miles of one another) and when you leave the last dream, you can make your body join your spirit and appear next to the last dreamer. Game Master approval and oversight in these cases is essential.

Transformation

All kitsune can transform their fox bodies into a human disguise, but some of them expand this ability and

make their bodies truly malleable, becoming capable of changing their appearance not by illusions but in reality. There are some kitsune that take the trick further and learn to assume the shapes of beasts of the natural and spirit world.

Note that except for the Inanimate Shape power, kitsune with the Tell Tail flaw (see the **Character Options** chapter) can never disguise their tails with their transformation or illusion powers.

Basic Disguise [Wood]

You can make yourself look like another person.

Prerequisites: Two-tailed kitsune.

Duration: 1d4x10 minutes + 10 minutes per point of Cha modifier.

Effect: As a standard action, you can transform your body and clothes into that of any humanoid, gaining a +10 on Disguise checks. You can't reproduce the appearance of any specific individual. You can reproduce things such as uniforms and clothing of any quality, but you must have seen first whatever you're trying to reproduce. Equipment created with Basic Disguise is nonfunctional; disguised equipment retains its normal characteristics regardless of appearance. (Thus, a disguised sword has the damage and characteristics of the dagger it actually is.) You can only disguise yourself as a person of roughly your own size and build, but you can become someone of any age and either gender.

Optionally, you can choose to disguise only a single piece of equipment. The object assumes its original shape as soon as it leaves your possession.

You can abandon a disguise at will as a free action.



Damage/uses	New duration
1	1d8 rounds after the character stops concentrating.
2	1 round per character level after the character stops concentrating.
3	1 minute per character level after the character stops concentrating.
4	1 hour per character level after the character stops concentrating.
+1	Programmed illusion: the illusion will remain latent for 1 day per point of Charisma modifier (minimum of 1) until triggered by an event of the kitsune's specification; the illusion then lasts for the duration specified in the table.

Advanced Disguise [Wood]

Your disguises are more convincing and intricate.

Prerequisites: Four-tailed kitsune, Basic Disguise.

Duration: 1d4 hours + 1 hour per point of Cha modifier.

Effect: Your disguises grow more complete and harder to distinguish, granting you a +15 bonus on Disguise checks. You can now reproduce the appearance of specific persons, but interaction with people familiar with the individual can make a Spot check (versus your Disguise check) or a Sense Motive check (versus your Bluff check) every minute they are interacting with you to recognize that something is amiss, especially if you act "out of character." You can only reproduce what you have seen, so the disguise will be missing any hidden birthmark or other detail that you don't know about.

You can abandon a disguise at will as a free action.

Masterful Disguise Power [Wood]

Your disguises are as good as reality.

Prerequisites: Seven-tailed kitsune, Basic Disguise, Advanced Disguise.

Duration: Permanent until dispelled.

Effect: You gain the ability to reproduce an individual down to the most obscure detail, including those that you're unaware of. You don't gain any bonus to Disguise checks; instead, you can take 20 as a free action on all your Disguise checks when using this power. When you're disguised as a specific individual, you can make a character level check (DC 20) in order to use her magic to bluff a situationally appropriate response when questioned about things the real-life subject knows but you don't. Should your check succeed, you don't gain any knowledge or insight, but you find a way that satisfies your questioner to avoid revealing yourself as an impostor.

You can abandon a disguise at will as a free action.

Animal Shape [Wood]

You can transform into an animal.

Prerequisites: Three-tailed kitsune, Basic Disguise.

Duration: 1 hour per character level.

Effect: You have the ability to turn yourself into any Small or Medium animal and back again. Your options for new forms include all creatures with the animal type that you're familiar with. This ability functions like the *polymorph* spell, except as noted

here. Changing form (to animal or back) is a standard action and doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity. You can freely change into your original fox or humanoid forms as a standard action, ending the effect, but you can only assume one other animal form per use of fox magic. You lose your ability to speak while in animal form because you're limited to the sounds that a normal, untrained animal can make, but you can communicate normally with other animals of the same species as your new form.

Greater Animal Shape [Wood]

You can transform into a wider range of species.

Prerequisites: Six-tailed kitsune, Basic Disguise, Animal Shape.

Duration: 1 hour per character level.

Effect: As Animal Shape, but you can now turn into any animal from Tiny to Huge size, and you retain your ability to speak.

Inanimate Shape [Wood]

You can transform into inanimate objects

Prerequisites: Six-tailed kitsune, Basic Disguise, Advanced Disguise.

Duration: 1 hour per character level.

Effect: You gain the ability to become an inanimate object of Small to Large size. This object can be anything that you can think of: terrain features, furniture, weapons, clothing, tools, and so on. You retain your hit points (making for an incredibly sturdy piece of paper or particularly weak wall) but gain the object's hardness. While disguised as an object, you perceive everything around you within 60 feet, feel no pain, and can't move under your own power. If disguised as a piece of usable equipment, such as a weapon or suit of armor, you have all the characteristics of a mundane version of it and can reproduce the appearance of any specific object. In other words, you

can disguise yourself as a magic sword, but you have none of the magic sword's abilities. This is the only power unaffected the Tell Tail flaw.

Mythic Shape [Wood]

You can become legendary creatures.

Prerequisites: Eight-tailed kitsune, Basic Disguise, Advanced Disguise, Animal Shape, Greater Animal Shape.

Duration: 1 hour per character level.

Effect: As Greater Animal Shape, but you can now assume the shape of magical beasts as well as animals, and the size range of your mythic and animal transformations extends from Fine to Gargantuan. You gain the form's extraordinary abilities that depend on its anatomy, but you don't gain any that depend on an innate feature, nor do you gain any supernatural or spell-like ability (though the kitsune can fake these with illusion and enchantment powers).

Ghost Body [Metal]

You can transform your body into the stuff of spirits.

Prerequisites: Five-tailed kitsune.

Duration: 1 round per character level.

Effect: You can become incorporeal for the effect's duration.

Spirit Body [Metal]

You can take your body into the spirit world.

Prerequisites: Nine-tailed kitsune.

Duration: 10 minutes per character level.

Effect: You can become ethereal for the effect's duration.

Shrine Sanctuary [Metal]

You can transmigrate your body to your shrine realm.

Prerequisites: Seven-tailed kitsune, Ghost Body, Craft Shrine Realm.

Duration: Instantaneous.

Effect: You concentrate for a full round and, if you're not interrupted, your body disappears and reforms at a shrine realm that either you created or at which you are welcomed. In the latter case, the realm's owner is instantly aware of your arrival even if he's not inside the realm.

Kyubi no Henshin [Wood, Metal]

You can transform into anything.

Prerequisites: Nine-tailed kitsune.

Duration: 1 day per character level.

Effect: When you gain your ninth tail, your powers of transformation ascend to new heights. You can reproduce the appearance of a specific individual, the

disguise is flawless. You gain all the mannerisms and memories of your subject for the duration of the disguise, except for very obscure or closely guarded secrets. You gain all the abilities of any species you imitate, including any special quality that's classified as a supernatural or spell-like ability, but only one such attack form. You gain your choice of one supernatural or spell-like ability of an object or piece of equipment that you disguise yourself as (with the exception of artifacts), and your Spirit Body power allows you to travel to the Astral Plane.

Enchantment

Foxes are notorious for their ability to play with and twist human minds. Humans tell stories of how a fox girl seduced a brave warrior, but such a power is only the slightest indication of what a kitsune is capable of—kitsune have a much larger repertoire of enchantments.

Amiable Mien [Water]

People immediately take to you.

Prerequisites: Two-tailed kitsune.

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: 50 ft. + 5 ft. per character level.

Effect: You usually use this power when first entering a room full of people to make yourself instantly likeable, charming, and attractive. Creatures you encounter can make a Will save (DC 10 + one half your character level + your Charisma modifier) or become well-disposed toward her, although they're not under a compulsion and are free to reach their own opinion of you (NPC's have their attitudes adjusted two categories more favorably, and PC's are under a *charm person* effect for 1 hour per character level of the kitsune).

Masterful Liar [Water]

You can make the most blatant lie have the ring of truth.

Prerequisites: Three-tailed kitsune.

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: Personal.

Effect: When you use this power, you gains a +20 bonus on your next Bluff check you make, including a check to feint in combat.

Forceful Action [Water]

Your words are very influential.

Prerequisites: Four-tailed kitsune, Amiable Mien.

Duration: Instantaneous.

Range: 50 ft. + 5 ft. per character level.

Effect: You can force a target to follow a single order

as per the *suggestion* spell. Forceful Action only works on humanoids.

Puppet Strings [Water]

You can take control of another's actions or words.

Prerequisites: Five-tailed kitsune, Amiable Mien, Forceful Action.

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 round per one half your character level.

Range: 100 ft. + 10 ft. per character level.

Effect: You concentrate on a target and attempt to take control of its body. The target must have an Intelligence score of 3 or higher, and you must be able to see it or perceive it in some way. The target makes a Will save (DC 10 + one half your character level + your Charisma modifier) to resist your initial influence and, if the target's initial save is successful, you can't attempt to use this power on it again for 24 hours. If the target fails, you then decide whether you will take control of the target's body or words, and you may not change this choice after it's made.

When controlling the target's words, you can make the target say anything you want using the target's own voice, which prevents the target from casting spells or uttering command words. When controlling the target's body, you can dictate how the target uses its standard action each round, but the target is free during its move action and can speak normally.

You must concentrate more than is typical for powers to maintain this effect, and you therefore may not move during a round except to take a 5-foot step. The target makes a Will save at the end of every round to try to break your grip. If one of these subsequent saves is successful, or if you relinquish control or the duration expires, the target becomes immune to this power for 24 hours.

Fox Charm [Water]

You have amazing powers of seduction.

Prerequisites: Three-tailed kitsune, Amiable Mien.

Duration: 1 hour per character level.

Range: 50 ft. + 5 ft. per character level.

Effect: By speaking a few seductive words to a target that would normally be attracted to your (real or disguised) gender, you cast a charm to ensnare the target's will and affections. This power works like the *charm person* spell, except that the feelings the target has are amorous and lustful in nature rather than just friendly.

Mental Illusion [Water]

Your illusions happen only in your target's mind.

Prerequisites: Four-tailed kitsune, Basic Illusion.

Duration: Concentration, up to one round per character level.

Range: 100 feet + 10 feet per character level.

Effect: When you weave an illusion with any illusion fox magic power, you can project the illusion so that it appears only inside your target's mind instead of out in the open. You can add 1 additional sensory component to a mental illusion effect beyond the maximum you can normally display with your current level of illusion powers. A mental illusion can affect a number of targets equal to 1 + your Charisma modifier – minimum of 1. You can add 1d10 extra targets by spending an additional use of fox magic, and you can remove targets or add targets (up to your maximum) as a free action during any round while the illusion lasts. All targets gain an initial Will save to resist the mental illusion and, if unsuccessful, one additional Will save 5 rounds later to come to their senses.

Fox Madness [Water]

You can confuse the minds of others.

Prerequisites: Five-tailed kitsune, Amiable Mien, Forceful Action.

Duration: 1 round per character level.

Range: 50 ft. + 5 ft. per character level.

Effect: You cause a target to behave erratically as per the *lesser confusion* spell. By spending three uses of fox magic instead of one, you can affect all enemies within range as per the *confusion* spell.

Forged Memories [Water]

You can insert false memories on your victims.

Prerequisites: Six-tailed kitsune, Amiable Mien, Forceful Action, Mental Illusion.

Duration: Permanent.

Range: Touch.

Effect: You can forge the memories of a target as per the *modify memory* spell, except that you must touch your target for a full round and the memories can span 10 minutes per point of your Charisma modifier – minimum of 10 minutes.

Possession [Earth]

You're able to replace a person's soul with your own.

Prerequisites: Eight-tailed kitsune, Amiable Mien, Forceful Action, Puppet Strings.

Duration: 1 hour per character level.

Range: 100 ft. + 10 ft. per character level.

Effect: You're able to possess the body of a victim, overriding his mind and will and occupying them as your own. The target must succeed on a Will save (DC 10 + one half your character level + your Charisma modifier) or be possessed by you. This power works like the *magic jar* spell, except that your body disappears and enters your victim completely. Alternately, you can, after a failed Will save by your target (same DC as above), enter a target's body and simply ride along without him noticing; this enables you to perceive everything your host perceives for the duration of the effect.

Kyubi no Sayuu [Water, Earth]

Your dominion over others is absolute.

Prerequisites: Nine-tailed kitsune.

Effect: When you gain her ninth tail, you become almost a deity. You can use your enchantment abilities on multiple targets. You double the number of targets you can affect with abilities that already affect more than one target; for abilities that normally affect only one target, you can now affect a number of additional targets equal to your Charisma modifier (minimum of 2). The Puppet Strings power now allows you to control both actions and words when focused on a single target. The only exception to the increase in target numbers is the Possession power, which still only affects one target but instead gains a duration of 1 day per character level.





6 KITSUNEMORI

The name “Kitsunemori” does not appear on any map, but everybody knows that the extensive woodlands that cover more than half of the Yonhosu Valley are the domain of the playful and dangerous fox spirits, and therefore people refer to it as the Fox Forest; Kitsunemori.

People rightly use the name Kitsunemori, for these woods are truly infested by the kitsune, drawn to the forest ages ago by the unusually strong geomantic nodes scattered throughout.

That the kitsune live in the woods is no secret; everyone from regional governors to lowly peasants knows that to travel deep into the forest is to invite disaster. Unwary travelers could have the great misfortune of stumbling upon the entrance of a kitsune’s home, or be accosted by a pack of nogitsune, or fall prey to one of the many other dangers of the Fox Forest. Many cautionary tales have been woven into the fabric of life in the provinces, detailing what happens when someone attracts the attention of the foxes. Folk tales, nursery rhymes, and even poetry feature stories of the kitsune, depictions ranging from accurate to absurdly mistaken.

Humans try to coexist with the magical forest that surrounds them, showing a healthy respect for the spirits of the forest. Regardless of whether the inhabitants of the nearby forest are friendly or threatening, humans give the forest a wide berth and avoid the areas they know to be prowled by the supernatural. Because they interact with the magical world even when they are not aware of it, the inhabitants of the Yonhosu Valley have developed a series of odd customs and superstitions that many outside the valley consider irrational. However, these peculiar traditions are much more effective than even the people of Yonhosu

believe them to be, because the supernatural world is all around them, and it is listening.

This chapter describes the world of *Kitsunemori*, from the workings of heaven and hell (or at least how they are perceived by the people) down to the workings of villages and towns. *Kitsunemori* is designed to be played as a standalone setting, but it could conceivably be inserted into any campaign world with an Asian flavor, or which has a region inspired by Asian fantasy.



Details on the some aspects of the setting are left intentionally vague to give you the liberty to make them up or to use an existing setting where you would wish to insert the Yonhosu Valley.

Ametsuchi: The Pillars of Heaven and Earth

The name that the people of Yonhosu and the surrounding empire give to the world, the heavens and hells is **Ametsuchi**, which refers to the totality of their universe in which their world is only a small island in a vast sea. Unlike many Western belief systems, the heavens aren't exclusively viewed as a reward for pious souls in the afterlife, nor is hell seen simply as a land of eternal torment for the wicked.

Instead, the heavenly realm is home to supernatural spirits and gods, while hell is the "underworld" and abode of evil spirits and demons. Souls are not rewarded in heaven or punished in hell, but bound to the Great Wheel of Existence to be reincarnated time and again. The only true release from the Great Wheel comes when a soul attains Nirvana, though some souls reside in other planes as they await the call to be reborn. Heaven and hell are not seen as final destinations, but parts of a great continuum that comprises the universe.

The different planes that comprise Ametsuchi are so close to one another that they sometimes overlap in areas of high magical potency, creating passages between worlds called 'Crossings'. At a Crossing, the unwary might pass instantaneously from one world to another and find themselves at the pinnacle of heaven or in the depths of hell. Crossings also sometimes serve as the staging points for invasions from the supernatural world.

The Crossings

While not rare, natural entrances to the other worlds are still uncommon and do not last long. Artificial crossings, however, can persist by the will of the ones who created them. Shrine realms are the most common example of these entrances, since those who created them set up one or more doorways for their own use, as well as to trap unwary travelers. Some Crossings exist

intermittently, and appear at certain key times of year, only to disappear until that time of year comes again.

A few known permanent Crossings are known throughout the lands, and all of them are sealed by magic and carefully guarded, for it is not proper for mortals to venture foolishly into the lands of the gods. Undoubtedly, in a land so rich in geomantic energy, there may be permanent Crossings yet unknown and undiscovered.

There is such an intimate relationship between the land and the planes where Crossings occur that scholars remain undecided as to whether it is the spiritual world that changes the land, or it is the nature of the land that calls to the spirit world to form a Crossing. For example, Crossings into Yomi, the world of decay and death, form only in the midst of swamps or barren and dead lands. Meanwhile, any Crossings into the home of the Dragon King may be reached only through rivers and spots deep in the ocean.



A crossing is a gateway between worlds that exhibits no obvious physical phenomenon to mark them as such. They are not visible to the naked eye, but appear as a blinding, bright wall of light to those who can perceive magical auras (as through a *detect magic*, *arcane sight*, *true seeing*, or similar spell or effect). Crossings link two specific points in two different worlds, and once fixed never move. Travel through a Crossing is nearly instantaneous (effectively a free action) and possible from either point, allowing creatures to travel freely back and forth. Crossings vary in size, but occur as a flat plane with only two dimensions: height and width. A creature must fit completely within the Crossing's dimensions to pass through it, and will not be transported if it occupies more space than the Crossing's opening.

Passing through a Crossing is a disorienting experience, leaving the traveler dazed for one full round following. Those who have journeyed through a Crossing claim that the experience is akin to being doused in ice water, while still others maintain that it is similar to being pierced by a thousand tiny needles. Physical sensations associated with a Crossing often express some aspect of the plane being traveled to. For instance, a Crossing into the ethereal plane might be accompanied by euphoric sensations of flight, while a Crossing into the Elemental Plane of Fire might cause travelers to feel momentarily as though their flesh is melting from the bone. All perceptions associated with passing through a Crossing, no matter how unpleasant or enjoyable, have no actual physical effect. They are merely ephemeral experiences of the mind, and those who pass through a Crossing suffer no ill effects except disorientation from the incident that leaves them momentarily dazed. Mindless creatures suffer none of the disconcerting effects of the Crossing and are not dazed by passing through.

KNOWN PERMANENT CROSSINGS:

- A Crossing exists in the Torayama Mountains, guarded by the sohei temple fortress. The Crossing is located in a large cave blocked by a gigantic boulder. It leads to **Yomi**, the world of death and decay.
- Another Crossing is submerged deep in Kokoro-mizuumi, in the north where it meets the Ketsueki-kawa that leads to the dwelling of Ryujin, the Dragon King.
- In the southern hills of Toukai, a Crossing of enormous size is under constant watch. Heavily warded by powerful magics, the

Toukai Crossing leads to **Meifudo** and is believed by many kitsune scholars to be the Crossing used by Hanumachi ages ago to gain entrance to the material plane. Despite the wards that prevent travel through the Toukai Crossing, the land is tainted for a mile around it. The earth is utterly barren and wildlife is driven into a mad fury when in the vicinity. For this reason, the Shinto temple assigned to guarding the Toukai Crossing never keeps sentries in place at the Crossing for very long, and regularly rotates the guard several times a day. Rumors abound of priests left too long guarding the Crossing, driven mad by the whispered voices emanating from the Crossing's threshold.

- Now camouflaged by an ancient stand of trees, a Crossing in the Kitsunemori of Yamaken exists and is protected by a myobu clan of kitsune who have erected a shrine realm nearby. For centuries, these myobu have watched over the Crossing, which leads to the home of Inari. Long ago, Inari forbade the kitsune from using the Crossing except under only the most desperate of circumstances. No kitsune or human has passed though the Crossing for over a hundred years, and neither Inari nor any other celestial has used the Crossing to reach the material plane in millennia.

KNOWN INTERMITTENT CROSSINGS:

- A Crossing opens annually at the mouth of the Ketsueki-Kawa where it meets the sea. Every year at the beginning of **Bommatsuri**, the Festival of the Dead, a huge Crossing opens to the underworld and allows the spirits of the dead a temporary reprieve. They may roam and enjoy their former home for three days. At the conclusion of the Festival of the Dead, three days later, the souls must return through the Crossing.

Crossings are the sole purview of the Game Master with the only exception being shrine realm entrances. As plot devices, Crossings can be both a useful and versatile tool for the GM. Parties of player characters can be swept away to another dimension, and a Crossing may even become the focus of entire adventures.

The highest realms of Ametsuchi are the homes of the gods; the celestial planes. Five realms stand atop all the rest and are unreachable by even lesser deities,

for they are the homes of the five great spirits that were born at the same time as Ametsuchi. These five gods gave birth to all the others and commanded them to create all the things in the universe under the principles of Truth, Reason and Principle.

The greater deities reside in **Takamagahara**, the High Celestial Plane, led by Amaterasu. Each god and major spirit has his or her own spiritual realm; the largest ones are entire worlds ruled by one of the major deities, and the smaller ones are actually the shrine realms created by kitsune as well as other spiritual beings.

All of the planes where spirits reside are known collectively as the spirit world, or **Kaminokai**, and only the most learned individuals distinguish between them. The ethereal and astral planes are considered to be endless seas that lap the shores of Kaminokai, and yet at the same time a part of the spirit world.

Countless points of confusion surround planar mechanics, and only the most astute onmyouji possess any comprehensive understanding of complex dimensional relationships in Ametsuchi. For instance, the relative proximity of the celestial realms to the material plane; in some parts of the land and on some particular dates, common people are far more likely to stumble upon a Crossing to the home plane of a major deity than to cross into the ethereal or astral planes.

To the learned, the astral plane is the bridge to reach the celestial planes, but the lower ones can be reached through entrances that exist in the ethereal plane.

The underworld is divided in two: **Yomi** and **Meifudo**. Yomi, the shadowy land of the dead, is presided over by the god, Emma-O. Almost indistinguishable from the land of the living, Yomi is an exact duplicate of the material plane but there no sun lights the day and no moon illuminates the night. Instead, Yomi is a land of eternal darkness. Visitors to Yomi must not eat the food found there, else they will be trapped in Yomi until the end of time. Those souls confined to Yomi appear as decaying versions of their mortal selves, except for the souls of dead children and the unmarried. Those souls of innocent children, and youths who died too young to marry, find refuge in a part of Yomi known as **Sai-no-kawara**, or "The Dry bed of the River of Souls". There, the young may play and build towers of stone with one another under the watchful protection of Jizo, god of children. Jizo guards the children,

keeping at bay the demons and depraved souls who hunger for their innocence. Under certain circumstances, Jizo has been known to remove souls from Yomi and return them to the material plane. However, it is rare and known only in legend, for when Jizo does remove a soul he incites the wrath of Emma-O. The great variety of hells that are home to an equally great variety of demons, are grouped together and known collectively as **Meifudo**. For the people of *Kitsunemori* there is no distinction between a devil and a demon, they are both evil creatures intent on causing harm.

The Kami

The word "kami" describes a wide variety of beings considered to be divine. The great gods are kami just as a spirit that protect a single household. In terms of mechanics, kami includes outsiders (both native and alien), elementals, many fey creatures and even a few undead (particularly ghosts representing ancestral spirits). The Shinto pantheon of kami (and Buddhist bodhisattva's) includes thousands of deities and spirits, and only a fraction of them are featured here.

The Courts of the Kami: Most of the greater and lesser deities have established courts to both serve and amuse them, as well as to carry out tasks relating to their celestial duties. Such courts group together several minor deities with both greater and lesser spirits. Humans are careful not to cross a spirit they know to be associated with a local court, for it would invite the wrath of the entire group.

Shinto and Buddhist Kami: The Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the Buddhist faith have attained power and status equal to that of the kami in the Shinto religion. It is not uncommon to find shrines that honor both a Shinto kami and a Buddhist soul who share mutual goals. In the celestial spheres, the Shinto kami recognize the power and wisdom of their Buddhist counterparts and welcome them into their midst with little to no conflict. This relatively amicable relationship between the deities of two different faiths is due to the like-minded tenets and values of both. Buddhist kami preach and represent a way of life that is perfectly compatible with the worship of the Shinto kami. Shinto kami, who for their part are not typically jealous, are members of an immense pantheon where the worship of multiple gods is customary. They show little concern for whom else their faithful revere, as long as the faith of their followers holds true.

Greater Deities

The “greater deities” are the most powerful and eldest kami that oversee the land. The largest and most powerful shrines have been erected in their honor. Their powers can change the destiny of the whole empire, and possibly the universe.

Izanami

Domains: Death, Destruction, Earth.

Alignment: Chaotic evil.

Izanami is the creator goddess who made the world in concert with her husband, Izanagi. However, she died in childbirth when delivering Kagutsuchi, the god of fire. Consumed in flames as she birthed the god of fire, Izanami now resides in Yomi. Furious with her husband for failing to rescue her from the land of the dead, Izanami has vowed to destroy 1,000 lives every day in her unrestrained desire for vengeance.

Izanagi

Domains: Healing, Protection, Magic.

Alignment: Lawful good.

Izanagi is the creator god who begot most of the world through his wife, Izanami. After his wife died in childbirth, Izanagi attempted to rescue her from Yomi, but the sight of her putrefied body horrified him and he ran away, blocking the entrance to the land of the dead with a great rock. Every day, Izanagi creates 1,500 new lives to offset the ones his dead wife destroys.

Amaterasu

Domains: Sun, Good.

Alignment: Lawful good.

Born from a tear fallen from Izanagi’s eye, Amaterasu is the Sun Goddess and bringer of life. She is gentle and

caring, but occasionally shy and a stickler for proper etiquette and ritual. She watches over the empire through the royal family, her mortal descendants and divine emissaries.

Tsukuyomi

Domains: Law, Moon, Water.

Alignment: Lawful neutral.

The Moon God was born from a tear fallen from Izanagi’s other eye, and he is the Lord of the Night. Purity is a paramount virtue for Tsukuyomi, although he tends to have an amoral disregard for behaviors that he considers deviant.

Susano-o

Domains: Chaos, Destruction, Trickery.

Alignment: Chaotic neutral.

The God of Sea and Storms was born when Izanagi blew his nose. He is uncouth, barbaric, rude and the utter antithesis of his siblings in terms of etiquette and politeness. Exiled from the heavens on more than one occasion, he loves to taunt mortals, creating mischief wherever he goes.

Kwannon

Domains: Healing, Good, Protection.

Alignment: Neutral good.

A Buddhist kami, Kwannon is the incarnation of mercy, caring for all living things and guiding them towards enlightenment and a happy life. Kwannon achieved enlightenment, but rather than ascending to Nirvana she chose to remain in the world to aid others in their journey towards truth.

Lesser Deities

Some “lesser deities” are more popular than their greater counterparts in specific localities, but they cannot compare to the true power of the greater kami.

Bimbogami

Domains: Evil, Trickery.

Alignment: Chaotic Evil.

Bimbogami, god of poverty, is described as a filthy old man that brings poverty and ill-fortune to all he encounters.

Ekibiogama

Domains: Evil, Death.

Alignment: Chaotic evil.

Ekibiogama is the god of pestilence and disease. He delights in blighting crops, spreading sickness, and

Readers should note that while all of the kami, Buddhas and bodhisattvas are based on actual gods many of whom are still worshipped in the modern world, the versions presented here are fictional. History, myth and folklore have been drawn upon to create a pantheon of gods for use in game-play in Kitsunemori. While the names and features of the deities presented here are those of real-world gods, they should in no way be viewed as representations of historical truth. Aspects of real deities are blended with pure fabrication to create useful and interesting alternatives to the standard deities provided in the Core Rulebooks.

infecting the healthy. Corruption and contamination are the hallmarks of Ekibiogama.

Emma-O

Domains: Law, Death, Knowledge.

Alignment: Lawful neutral.

Emma-O is a Buddhist deity of the Underworld. Sometimes he resides in Meifudo, and at other times in Yomi. He is considered to be the king of Hell by Buddhists, and an extremely important deity of Hell by Shintoists. Emma-O is the judge of the dead, and weighs the sins of souls sentenced to the Underworld. He has no pity, yet always offers impartial judgment. Emma-O is invoked as a bogey-man by mothers to scare their children into right behavior.

Fudo

Domains: Fire, Knowledge, Protection.

Alignment: Chaotic good.

Fudo is a fiery god who lives on a volcano and is tremendously knowledgeable and wise.

Futen

Domain: Air

Alignment: Neutral.

The God of Wind stands atop mountains, long white beard whipping in the wind. Futen carries the several winds trapped in a bag, which he unleashes when the time is right.

Hachiman

Domains: War, Protection.

Alignment: Lawful neutral.

Hachiman is the principal god of war. Where Bishamon is the patron of warriors, Hachiman instead deals with every aspect of warfare and conflict.

Hoderi

Domains: Water, Travel.

Alignment: Lawful neutral.

Hoderi is a god of fishing and the great-grandson of Amaterasu. He is also brother to Hoori.

Hoori

Domains: Animal, Travel.

Alignment: Lawful neutral.

Brother to Hoderi and great-grandson of Amaterasu, Hoori is the god of hunting. He once tried to fish as a challenge to his brother Hoderi and ended up meeting and marrying Otohime, the dragon spirit daughter of the Dragon King Ryujin.

Inari

Domains: Plants, Travel, Protection.

Alignment: Neutral good.

Inari, the God of Rice, has expanded his areas of influence by also becoming a protector of humanity, providing not only nourishment but also security. Long ago, Inari recruited the aid of kitsune to act as his agents and messengers. Inari is a good-natured deity with the best intentions in mind.

Jizo

Domains: Protection, Good, Healing.

Alignment: Neutral good.

Jizo is a venerable protector of mankind with the ability to bring souls back from Yomi with a snap of his fingers. He's exceptionally fond of children, and shields them from harm in Yomi. In many places, Jizo is recognized as the God of Children.

Kagutsuchi

Domains: Fire.

Alignment: Chaotic evil.

Kagutsuchi is the progeny of Izanagi and Izanami. During his birth, Kagutsuchi's flaming body ignited the body of his mother, Izanami. His mother was engulfed in flames and she died as a result. Crazed with grief, his father drew a sword and cut Kagutsuchi into eight



pieces. From the bits of Kagutsuchi's corpse emerged eight yamatsumi (mountain kami). Kagutsuchi's soul continues on in the underworld where his aimless anger produces wild firestorms.

Kojin

Domains: Plant, Healing, Protection.

Alignment: Lawful good.

A tree-deity, Kojin is the goddess of the kitchen and everything that happens there. She resides in an enoki tree, and it is custom to not throw away old dolls but to offer them to Kojin by placing them on the roots of an enoki tree.

Koshin

Domains: Luck, Travel.

Alignment: Neutral.

The god of roads is a kami to whom every traveler would be wise to pay homage. Travelers offer little straw horses to Koshin for a safe journey.

Marisha-Ten

Domains: War, Sun, Trickery

Alignment: Chaotic neutral.

A goddess war and victory, Marisha-Ten is also a goddess of light, the sun and moon. In her desire to surpass her elders and superiors, Amaterasu and Tsukuyomi, Marisha-Ten seeks triumph in battle at almost any cost. Employing her eight blade wielding arms and army of ferocious boars, she makes use of deceitful tactics, particularly the arts of invisibility and stealth to gain victory over her enemies.

Monju-Bosatsu

Domains: Good, Knowledge, Protection.

Alignment: Lawful neutral.

A Buddha of education and enlightenment, he bears a sword to cut through all obstacles.

Okuninushi

Domains: Knowledge, Healing, Magic.

Alignment: Lawful neutral.

A patron of onmyouji as well as monks, he is a god of both healing and sorcery.

Raiden

Domains: Air, Fire.

Alignment: Chaotic neutral.

One of the most important god of lightning and thunder, Raiden still bows to Susano-o as the lord of storms. Raiden is master to Raiju (see below), who he rouses during thunderstorms to do the masters bidding.

Ryujin

Domains: Animal, Magic, Water.

Alignment: Lawful neutral.

The Dragon King is the lord of the seas and its creatures (although he stays clear of Susano-o), but also commands the lesser dragons of rivers and lakes. He is not quite popular in the landlocked Yonhosu Valley, but the river dragons do serve him, and thus many people send offerings to him down the rivers' currents.

The Seven Lucky Gods

These seven kami are jovial and easygoing, spreading good fortune in their respective fields of interest.

- **Benten**

Domains: Luck and Good.

Alignment: Neutral good.

Benten is the goddess of love, eloquence, wisdom and the fine arts. She is the spiritual patron of artists and performers.

- **Bishamon**

Domains: Luck and War.

Alignment: Neutral good.

Bishamon is the patron of the warriors.

He is depicted in full armor with a spear in hand.

- **Daikoku**

Domains: Luck, Animal, Plant.

Alignment: Neutral good.

A fat god of wealth and patron of farmers, he carries a sack of rice and is followed by a rat companion.

- **Ebisu**

Domains: Luck, Animal, Water.

Alignment: Neutral good.

Daikoku's son, Ebisu, is the patron of fishermen.

- **Fukurokuju**

Domains: Luck, Knowledge, Protection.

Alignment: Neutral good.

The god of wisdom and longevity, he appears as an old man with a very high forehead.



- **Hotei**

Domains: Luck and Good.

Alignment: Neutral good.

Hotei is another god of wealth, but also the god of laughter and the happiness found in contentment.

- **Jurojin**

Domains: Luck, Good, Law.

Alignment: Lawful good.

A god of the happiness found in the old ways.

Shoko-o

Domains: Death.

Alignment: Chaotic neutral.

One of the ten kings of Hell, though not actually a demon, Shoko-o is among the rulers of the Underworld. Unlike Emma-O, his sphere of influence includes only a small part of the Underworld. Shoko-o seeks to extend his authority, and so allies himself with demons to tip the balance of power in the Underworld in his favor.

Uzume

Domains: Good, Plant, Healing.

Alignment: Neutral good.

A goddess of fertility, merriment, dance and the arts, she is famous for performing a dance for Amaterasu to lure her back into the world. In an age before man, Amaterasu fled from the world despondent over her endless conflict with her sibling Susano-o. As Amaterasu, the incarnation of the sun, sealed herself in a cave, the world was plunged into darkness. Kami from all corners of existence attempted to reason with Amaterasu and coax her out of her hiding place, but she categorically refused. Fearful that the sun might never rise again, the other kami asked Uzume to help. Uzume hung a huge bronze mirror from a tree outside the cave in which Amaterasu was hiding. Then clad in flowers and leaves, Uzume overturned a washtub and began to dance on top of it, drumming with her feet. Amaterasu was unmoved, and so Uzume finally cast off the leaves and flowers to dance naked. The kami howled with laughter and delight, and aroused Amaterasu's curiosity. As Amaterasu peeked from her dark hiding place, rays of light escaped the cave and were reflected in the large bronze mirror. The Sun Goddess was dazzled by her own reflection, and kami took advantage of the moment by seizing and dragging Amaterasu from the cave. The joy and merriment inspired by Uzume's dance lifted Amaterasu's spirits and her depression lifted. Agreeing to restore her light to the world, Amaterasu returned to the sky and Uzume was forever after acknowledged as the

Bringer of the Dawn. Uzume is the patron of dancers and entertainers, and is honored as the originator of dancing.

Spirits

These divine beings are not quite deities, but their power and origin are comparable. Some are individuals, while others are a species. They may have shrines devoted to them but they do not offer special favor to anyone worshipping them.

Hotoke: These are the spirits of dead Buddhas, and spirits of important figures. Every hotoke is a distinct individual.

Koki-Teno: Koki-Teno is a female kitsune whose origins are shrouded in mystery. She is revered by the foxes after Inari, with the nogitsune being her most devout followers. Little is known about Koki-Teno, and her intentions are unclear, but she is admired by kitsune, myobu and nogitsune alike. She is a symbol of the divine possibilities inherent in the spirit foxes, and ambitious kitsune look to her example.

Otohime: The daughter of Ryujin, she is a dragon that regularly assumes the form of an extremely beautiful young woman. She is also wife to Hoori, kami of hunters.

Raiju: A thunder beast that belongs to Raiden. Raiju can take many forms, but travels the sky as a ball of fire and lightning. His thunderous roar rumbles through the clouds during storms. Usually calm and at rest, Raiju becomes agitated during thunderstorms and leaps about the sky, striking out at trees, fields and even buildings. Buildings struck by lightning are believed to have been raked by Raiju's claws. Legends speak of Raiju and his many odd behaviors, the strangest of which is probably his habit of sleeping in human navels. If Raiju is provoked by a storm while resting on a person's stomach, they can be severely harmed, and so superstitions dictate that people sleep on their stomachs during bad weather to deny Raiju their navel.

Sennin: Wise mountain hermits that have acquired tremendous supernatural powers and insight. They have attained such power that they are no longer completely human, and are sometimes referred to as "the Undying". Sennin possess the secrets of immortality, and so are sought by the avaricious, desperate and fearful to answer questions on the mysteries of life and death.

The Empire

The lands surrounding the Yonhosu Valley are referred to only as “the empire” for two main reasons: the first is to leave details open for you to insert *Kitsunemori* into an existing campaign, and to provide you with a blank canvas on which to paint your own setting around this book.

The empire resembles Japan in the period between the Heian period, when the emperor was all-powerful and the arts flourished, and the Sengoku period, when the emperor lost all power and warlords fought for the title of Shogun, the general who truly ruled the land. The Sengoku period is the beginning of the era of samurai dominance, which would consolidate all power in the warrior class during the Tokugawa (or Edo) period, which brought some stability to the land.

LOCAL DEITIES

The Yonhosu Valley is home to a number of minor gods and important spirits, who are in charge of portions of the land. They will be mentioned in boxed texts throughout the description of the four provinces of Yonhosu.

Imperial Government and Culture

The empire is governed by an emperor, a member of the divine imperial line tracing its origins to the goddess Amaterasu. The imperial authority is derived from their divine blood, though it has become dilute and poorly evidenced in the reigning emperor.

The emperor is an absolute monarch who rules over the entire country as the head of a complex bureaucracy, yet at the same time, he is also the traditional high priest who maintained peace for the land and people by paying tribute to the deities and sounding out their will.

This dual nature of the emperor is further reflected in the central government, which is headed by twin agencies—the **Dajokan** (Council of State) and the **Jingikan** (Office of Deities). The Dajokan’s jurisdiction is the various and diverse practical aspects of administration, while the Jingikan is a kind of parallel bureaucracy for the worship of the deities. Almost all provincial governments closely mimic this dual-bureaucracy.

Potential bureaucrats are required to study at a central college and to pass prescribed examinations. Throughout their term of office, a bureaucrats performance is carefully scrutinized once a year, and their rank and position is adjusted according to the results of the inquiry. Provincial officials undergo the same level of scrutiny, and every bureaucrat in the Yonhosu Valley prepares for the coming of the state examiner.

The provinces are divided into three types of administrative division: the **koku** (province), the **gun** (county), and the **sato**, or **ri** (village), to be administered by officials known as **kokushi**, **gunji**, and **richo**, respectively. The posts of **kokushi** are usually filled by members of the central bureaucracy, but remote provinces like those in the Yonhosu Valley often have members of prominent clans appointed instead. The posts of **gunji** and **richo** are always staffed by members of respected local families.

The emperor rules the empire from a far-off and fabled city, referred to as the Capitol. The Capitol is the true center of the empire’s activity and its seat of power.

Imperial Court

The imperial court is filled with courtiers from all over the empire, and a bevy of ambassadors from abroad.

Court life, once a rich and vibrant center for art and culture, has devolved into pettiness and decadence. Empty ritual and a shallow observance of custom have replaced traditional values. Surrounded by sycophants, the emperor is all but unaware that his empire is unraveling around him. The imperial coffers are being rapidly depleted by numerous functionless government appointments distributed in return for favors, the lavish lifestyle of the imperial family and the building of shockingly expensive palaces throughout the Capitol and surrounding countryside.

The imperial bureaucracy is showing signs of bloating, corruption and inefficiency. Provincial governors are finding it easier to simply ignore the Capitol and its tax collectors, governing their ‘Han’ as they desire. Once trusted advisors of the emperor, the mystical onmyouji are increasingly marginalized at court and are fleeing the Capitol in astounding numbers as they portent the growing cloud of chaos darkening the empire’s future. Even as the emperor’s power wanes, the waxing power of warlords threatens to sunder the empire.

A Threat to the Empire

Warlords are the military officers in the emperor's army and the heads of samurai clans. These warlords may or may not have a land of their own, having inherited their position from generations of forbearers rather than being appointed by the emperor or his bureaucrats. The further their lands are from the Capitol, the more autonomy they enjoy, and a few have even begun to fight one another for land. In the empire's periphery, it is the warlords who hold the real power even if the province has a court-appointed governor. A few provincial governors are aware of the rising tide against the emperor and are trying to adapt. They vie for the favor of the local warlord or build up their own local power, since they sense that soon clout at the imperial court will be worthless.

Provincial Government

Governors (kokushi) are the "official" rulers of a province; consisting of a few are notable locals but most are aristocrats and courtiers from the Capitol, their authority backed up by imperial edict. Close to the Capitol, governors are mostly imperial cronies who cajoled their title through bribes and flattery, while those in the periphery are likely to have offended a superior in the imperial court, their appointment being an unofficial exile from the Capitol. Governors are responsible for levying and collecting taxes from the local population, and sending a portion of the revenues to the Capitol. Many governors are cheating the imperial government, delivering only a fraction to the Capitol and keeping the rest. This further impoverishes the Capitol, contributing to its gradual decline. Some provincial governors not only send a meager trickle of tax monies to the Capitol, but also pour funds into their own treasuries rather than repair roads and build public works as their position requires. As a result many of the provinces languish in disrepair. As public payrolls dry up, all but major roads are left unpatrolled and are beset with bandits.

Each governor holds court in a palace that may be humble and utilitarian or grand and ostentatious, depending greatly on the province's history and the disposition of the current ruler. Each provincial court is designed in imitation of the imperial court in the Capitol, with various local ministers vying for influence in addition to (or in place of) their everyday work. Courtiers abound in the provincial courts, some of them with actual official duties, others simply carving out a niche for themselves through pure guile. Regardless of position, all courtiers play the

game of influence and intrigue; a game with the very real stakes. Gossip, bribes and favors are the currency used to buy into the game, and winning means rising through the ranks of power. In addition to the local ministers and courtiers, a provincial court is host to numerous imperial representatives and envoys from other governors. Most imperial agents see a trip to the provinces as tedious, bordering on a punishment for some slight at the imperial court. Provincial courts entertain envoys from other governors out of courtesy, fully aware that the envoys are spies, but are bound by civility and rules of hospitality not to turn their guests away.

Social Hierarchy and Upheaval

Society is highly hierarchal and stratified. The landed aristocracy, with the imperial family at its apex, is the ruling and highest class. The aristocracy, many of whom claim direct descent from a major or minor kami, lead lives of luxury on the proceeds of their estates.

The aristocracy was the undisputed ruling class for countless centuries, until the emergence of a new power in the land; the warrior, or samurai, class. Originally seen as servants to the emperor and powerful aristocrats, the samurai clans were duty-bound to serve their masters. However, in recent decades the younger members of the imperial family and low-ranking aristocrats disaffected by the imperial monopoly of high government offices began to take up posts as officials in the provinces. There they settled permanently, acquiring lands of their own, and establishing power-bases of their own. They were among the first daimyo, or 'great names'. In order to protect their territories and expand their power, daimyo began gathering samurai around them, and to organize local inhabitants into service. As the power of daimyo and the samurai class grows, they become an ever increasing threat to the supremacy of the aristocrats.

Consequently, as these men of true martial prowess and considerable autonomy emerged, the slightest incident involving any one of them has begun to provoke armed conflict. In the Akaki province, the Taira clan, led by the warlord Taira Masatsuka no Hitoshi, has effectively seized the reigns of power from the provincial governor. Employing a sizable army of samurai, Taira no Hitoshi surrounded the provincial palace in Akaki only a few years back. After a short siege of thirteen days, the provincial governor, Hagiwara no

Koto, surrendered the province to Hitoshi without conflict. However, other provincial governors from the Yonhosu Valley roused their local daimyo and samurai to fight the seditious Hitoshi. After many months of bloody conflict, the other provinces were unable to suppress the rebellion, and finally a compromise was reached. The provincial governor has been restored to the palace, where he is given nominal administrative duties and is effectively a figure-head, while the surrounding provincial governors are now forced to acknowledge Hitoshi as the Lord of Akaki. Even now many provincial officials hope that the emperor will come to their aid and remove the warlord from power, fearful that he might seek to extend his power into their provinces.

TAIRA CLAN

Taira was an honorary surname granted by the emperor to former members of the imperial family when they became subjects. One such ex-member of the imperial line was the grandfather of Taira no Hitoshi, who left the Capital many years ago to establish himself in the Akaki province. In the ensuing years, the Taira clan in Akaki has accumulated great wealth and power. Now, with Hitoshi at its head, the Taira clan effectively rules the entire Akaki province, and threatens to invade the rest of the Yonhosu Valley.

A burgeoning merchant class is quickly accumulating great prestige, wealth and power, even if legally they are still considered to be part of the peasant class. Money is the source of their power, as well as the network of connections and contacts they have built in the course of their business. The merchants have begun to organize craftsmen under their protection, specializing in one trade or another. The richest merchants have been able to hire trained warriors for their private retinues, and more than a few have contacts with one of the shinobi clans who are employed to carry out the disreputable activities merchants wish to remain hidden. These merchants still rely on the power of their clan for their survival, for it only takes an angry warlord to wantonly sever a merchant's head without fear of reprisal, but beheading the provincial governor's esteemed provider of valuable goods could have adverse consequences for the warlord in question.

The priesthood stands somehow apart from the power struggle, but the monks are not immune to it. The

largest temple in the Capitol is well known for its corrupt monks –although none will speak this openly. However, the level of decadence is significantly lower inside most temples, as position is based more on faith, enlightenment and merit rather than worldly means and strength of arms. Monks do take care of the communities that surround their temples and shrines, offering spiritual relief from the hardships of everyday life. Monks have no power in the empire's government, even less so as the spiritual niche is filled by the onmyouji, the emperor's magical advisors whose political clout is dissipating at the same rate as the Capitol's hold on the rest of the land.

Outside of palaces, mansions and temples, at the lowest wrung on the social ladder stand the peasantry. The common folk try to lead their lives as best they can, working the land and eking out a meager existence. Peasants are considered a part of the land, and a peasant might never leave the patch of land they were born to in their entire life. Survival is accomplished only through arduous work, and most of a peasant's life is spent in labor. Largely illiterate, the peasantry relies on oral tradition to pass on their stories, history, knowledge and wisdom. Despite their demanding lives and relative isolation, the peasants of the Yonhosu Valley can sense the restlessness of their world. The peasantry is all too keenly aware of events among their betters through a network of gossip spread from province to province by word of mouth. Much of what is spoken is true, but events are just as often exaggerated or even fabricated. Commoners have very few rights, for disputes are decided by local officials whose whim dictates an outcome as much as any law, although there *are* laws in place that are supposed to ensure people live happily and safe. When a commoner comes into conflict with anyone with the smallest amount of influence or power, it will be the commoner who will most likely lose. In towns and villages that are too remote to see a continued presence from government officials or troops, the people have formed their own impromptu governments, with village elders making decisions for the whole community.

Two powerful organizations sprung from the rank and file of the commoners: the shinobi and the yakuza. Both the shinobi and yakuza operate outside the standard social structure, and are seen as criminals, but their invaluable services make them a valuable if loathsome part of society. Shinobi clans began as entire communities that were driven off their lands

or thoroughly abused by the authorities, which were prompted to go into hiding and eventually developed their unique techniques and expertise. It has not been too long since the shinobi started operating officially, but their relative obscurity gives rise to many unfounded legends about their powers.

The yakuza are not a single organization, but is more akin to a widespread fellowship of organized criminals. Yakuza gather into gangs under a strong leader and claim a territory or a line of illicit business. They identify each other with particular greetings, identifying their position in their gang by the details of the greeting, such as which hand is lower than the other. In many places, the yakuza are the de facto authority in absence of any official government representation, and in other areas they actually *defend* the commoners from the depredations of warlords and provincial governors.

Another group that stands apart from normal social order is the onmyouji. Within the imperial court, these sages and mystics once held enormous power and sway in matters of state. As advisors to emperors past, the onmyouji enjoyed unprecedented access to the emperor, and were the only individuals in the empire who could speak their mind in front of the emperor with impunity. They were once greatly valued and respected, considered members of the ruling class, if not officially part of it. Yet in recent years, the authority of the onmyouji has greatly diminished. At court, their archaic ways and enigmatic prophecies are increasingly considered unfashionable by a progressively shallow aristocracy. The emperor no longer calls on these trusted counselors to his ancestors, finding their honest guidance to be impudent and their warnings of impending disaster exasperating. Consequently, many onmyouji have departed the Capitol, some to enter secluded study, others to find a niche for themselves in the provinces.

Etiquette

Strict rules of etiquette prevail at all levels of society not just in the Capitol but in the provinces as well. Respect for tradition and honor are core values that form the foundation of the entire society. It is expected that people show proper respect to those of higher station, to unquestioningly obey the orders of a superior, and to be faithful to duty. Individuals are expected to serve the good of their family, clan, guild or organization to the exclusion of their personal desires and needs. Dishonor reflects not only on a

single person, but onto everyone with whom they are associated, and so abiding by one's duty is of supreme importance.

One of the basic tenets of etiquette in the empire are the concepts of **tatemae** and **honne**. Honne represents a person's true feelings, while tatemae is the face you present to the world. While they do not ignore their feelings, the inhabitants of the Yonhosu Valley and the empire beyond consider tatemae to be more important in maintaining a harmonious society. One always considers every word, gesture and expression and how it might affect your 'face', or prestige. Overt displays of extreme emotion are discouraged, and a kind of reserved stoicism is the prevailing attitude in polite society.

Specific variations of language are reserved for different social situations, such as **keigo** which is used when addressing an elders or superior. Courtiers have developed a fast, clipped form and almost breathless form of communicating with superiors to display deference.

Great respect must be paid to priests and holy men, regardless of their behavior not matter how improper or uncouth.

Bowing is an important greeting and sign of respect. Informal situations might call for a simple nod of the head, but formal circumstances introduce great complexity in bowing. The depth and number of bows depends on the formality of the situation and the relationship between the people.

Rules of hospitality are assiduously followed. Being invited to someone's home is an honor, and it is polite to bring a gift, which is usually an inexpensive food item that should be wrapped. It is customary to remove one's shoes and don slippers once entering a home. Politeness abounds when it comes to hospitality, and it is common for a guest to casually invite unfamiliar acquaintances to their homes. However, the invitation is extended out of politeness, and everyone involved would be greatly embarrassed if a guest showed up unannounced.

Eating is steeped in conventions and ritual. Before eating, it is customary to wash one's hands to purify. Chopsticks are the implements used for eating exclusively, and it is highly impolite to use them for anything other than putting food in your mouth.

They should never be used for pointing at someone or moving dishes around the table, and they should never be stuck into a bowl of rice as this is only done at a funeral. There will sometimes be a small object to rest the chopsticks on when not putting food in the mouth. When eating certain foods, such as noodles, it is permissible to slurp loudly. In fact, it is widely believed that slurping even improves the flavor. Eating on the street is considered impolite, and is avoided whenever possible. However, strangely enough, spitting and urinating in public are more acceptable by comparison.

The people of the Yonhosu Valley are usually a quiet and reserved people, except when they're drunk. Drinking is both recreational and widespread. Saki, a rice wine, is the drink of all levels of society and comes in a variety of qualities. The traditional toast is '**Kampai**', which literally means 'dry glass'. Social gatherings always provide saki to guests, and great quantities may be imbibed before an event ends.

Communal bathing is a long-standing practise in the Yonhosu Valley, where people visit one of its hundreds of **onsen** (hot springs) to bathe. A person is expected to wash outside the bath before getting into the hot water to soak. A strong sense of community is shared at the bath, and it is not uncommon for people to scrub each other's backs. **Sento** (public bath houses) can be found in large settlements and provincial Capitols far from a hot spring. Sento and onsen are almost always separated by sex but mixed bathing can still be found in a few remote villages.

Game Masters and players should refer to the section on Prestige in Chapter III for more details on etiquette and how interactions affect one's standing in society.

The Arts and Recreation

Much of the art and entertainment of the Yonhosu Valley have been imported from or imitate those of the Imperial Capitol.

Gardening is a prevalent pass-time for the aristocracy, samurai and merchant class. Individual gardens range from extravagant splendor to simple beauty, with stone bridges, miniature waterfalls and even ponds full of exotic fish. A well-designed and maintained garden is a source of pride for the affluent, and the homes of most aristocrats and merchants alike are likely to have a garden included. Even some common folk keep humble gardens, though few can afford the materials and time required.

The drinking of tea is an integral part of daily life in the Yonhosu Valley. Among aristocrats the drinking of tea has been elevated to an art form and the tea-ceremony is a sign of refined elegance. Tea houses can be found throughout the Capitol and provinces, with décor ranging from simple and rustic to elaborate gold-plated interiors. The tea-ceremony itself is highly ritualistic. Guests enter the tea-house through the garden while the host (which could be a daimyo, wealthy merchant or high government official for instance) must pass through a separate entrance made deliberately low, forcing the host to crouch low; an expression of humility. Once everyone is seated, an exquisite meal is then served with the tea service at the center. The brewing of the tea is extremely formal, and the host performs the 'kata of tea' comprised of ritualistic and precise gestures intended to impress and enthrall the guests. Every aspect of the tea-ceremony is exquisite and beautiful, from fine pottery to the expert flower arrangements. The tea-ceremony offers an activity that establishes the attendants as aesthetes and distinguishes them from the less refined. Additionally, the tea-ceremony yields political and social benefits as well. At a tea-ceremony, valuable information is gathered, alliances are solidified, commercial agreements forged, and political bonds strengthened.

Poetry is a pass-time and artform of the aristocracy. The **waka**, consisting of 31 syllables, was an indispensable part of the daily lives of the aristocracy, and proficiency in verse-making was counted an essential accomplishment for a courtier. **Renga**, a form of collaborative poetry where groups contribute parts of the verse to create a whole poem, is particularly popular among young aristocratic women.

Music and dance are important to all strata of society in the Yonhosu Valley and empire at large. **Gagaku**, or "elegant music", is instrumental music and singing performed in the Imperial Court and exported to the provinces. The musicians who perform gagaku belong to hereditary guilds, and train apprentices in their exacting skills. Gagaku musicians play the **sho** (mouth organ), **hichinki** (oboe), **so** (harp), **biwa** (lute), **kakko** (drum), and **taiko** (drum). **Bugaku** is a collection of traditional dances from the Imperial court performed not just at the Capitol but in the provincial capitols throughout the empire. The movements in bugaku are highly conventionalized and set to the beat of a drum. The position of hands, arms and feet are stylized and the choreography is simple sequence

of geometric patterns performed in elaborately carved masks. Gagaku and bugaku performances often accompany one another. Traditional songs and dances can be found among the lower classes as well, though they are less refined and more varied than aristocratic forms.

Calligraphy among the literate is considered a great skill and art form. Perfectly formed characters are much admired, and writing is done with great consideration. **Sumi-e**, a form of ink painting, is also quite popular among aristocrats and samurai.

Games of chance and strategy are quite popular as well. **Go** is a much-loved game among samurai in which opposing armies of white stones attempt to surround and capture black stones on a board. The game is as much recreation as it is a lesson on strategy. **Shogi** is a chess-like game that builds on go and adds a tactical dimension to the game.

Sports too have their place in society, like the game of courtly football called **kemari**. Kemari is a noncompetitive sport involving the passing of a pig-skin ball and keeping it in the air without tackling opponents.

A Place in History

Once proud and powerful, the empire had shaped the course of history, but is now slowly decaying into a third-rate nation. The empire's once great imperial line has become somewhat decrepit, focusing in on itself and obsessing over its own courtly amusements. A sickening kind of narcissism now holds the empire in its awesome grip, and with the growing military culture seizing ever greater control, the empire teeters on the edge of chaos.

Revered tradition is the only bond keeping the empire together, but already many prepare for the coming storm while still others try to tip the scales in their favor.

The Yonhosu Valley is not exempt from these tumultuous times, although its inhabitants have seen only a glimpse of the events unfolding outside the mountain ranges that isolate them. The warlike clans that hold power in the four provinces are largely autonomous and the Taira of Akaki don't even bother bowing to the Capitol any longer. The provincial governors watch as their power erodes and threatens to collapse beneath them. Some have resigned themselves to the inevitable, while others are improvising solutions.

The common people are aware of the current state of affairs, but barely concern themselves since their situation will hardly change regardless on who holds the reins of power. However, some peasants are unsatisfied with the direction their provinces are taking, and have begun to secretly organize.

The encroaching anarchy in the empire is being echoed in the land itself. Travel within and between the provinces has grown more dangerous. As tax revenues are being siphoned off to fatten the purses of the wealthy, roads are being left in disrepair and patrols are growing ever more infrequent. Bandits, emboldened by the breakdown in authority, are accosting travelers on roads once perfectly safe. Travelers face not only the danger of outlaws, but also inexplicable accidents and disappearances along many roads attributed to a sudden surge of activity in the supernatural world.

The kitsune have taken notice and have begun to focus their efforts on the escalating crisis. The myobu are already working hard to protect the faithful among the common folk, while the nogitsune exploit the troubles for their own pleasure and profit.

Life, once firmly entrenched in tradition and lawful order, is rapidly changing and not for the better.

The Yonhosu Valley

Isolated geographically from the rest of the empire, the Yonhosu Valley stands with forbidding mountain ranges surrounding it. To the east, the peaks of the **Torayama mountains** rise into the clouds. To the north and west the **Shirokage mountain** chain stands littered with ancient ruins from a bygone age. To the south, the rocky shore meets the stormy ocean waters of the **Arashi-Enkai**. The shore is bordered by jagged cliffs, rolling hills and perilous sand bars. Only the **Toukai-Uchikai** (Bay of Toukai) is navigable and deep enough to accept trading vessels, but many ships avoid the shores of the Yonhosu Valley altogether, their captains wishing not to subject their craft to unpredictable storms and treacherous rocks.

Eons of erosion and ancient glaciers carved the valley out of the native stone, and the valley is now home to four distinct provinces, or "han": Akaki, Sairyuukoe, Toukai and Yamaken. Flowing out of the mountains and winding its way through the provinces on its way

to the ocean is the **Ketsueki-Kawa** (Blood River), the largest of all rivers in the Yonhosu Valley. The Ketsueki-Kawa splits and forks many times, joining with other rivers, and even pooling into the **Kokoro-Mizuumi** (Heart Lake). The lake is so named due to its shape and the many rivers which flow to and from its waters like veins and arteries. At the center of Kokoro-Mizuumi is the like named **Kokoro-shima** (Heart Island), which serves as the provincial capitol of Sairyuukoe.

Access to the Yonhosu Valley is limited to strenuous travel up the Ketsueki-Kawa or the handful of hazardous mountain passes that connect the provinces to the empire beyond. During the winter months, the mountain passes are congested with snow and ice, becoming impassable until the spring thaw. The valley can also be reached by sailing into the Toukai-Uchikai from the sea, but few merchants will brave the risky waters and tempestuous storms. So, the provinces are left most of the year to fend for themselves, and experience almost total autonomy.

Although the humans claim the whole of Yonhosu as their own, they share the land with a variety of unofficial neighbors whose territories they dare not trespass. Out of superstition and a healthy respect for the supernatural powers that inhabit the valley, the real domain of the humans is limited to the villages, cities, farmlands, roads and a few patches of woodland that they are allowed to occupy by the creatures of the forest.

The **Kitsunemori**, or Fox Forest, blankets almost half of all the land in the Yonhosu Valley and deep in the trees the kitsune rule. It is important to note that the kitsune are by no means alone in Kitsunemori, quite to the contrary they too share the forest with numerous other uncanny denizens. However, in most areas it is the kitsune who are the unspoken authority. A virtual spider web of human roads runs through the Kitsunemori, and almost all are warded against spirits by prayer strips and ceremonial ribbons. Only the boldest traveler will trek down a path unmarked and unwarded, for the creatures of the forest do not take kindly to intruders.

For countless centuries a lasting, if tense, peace has existed between the humans and the beings of the forest. Human settlements respected the boundaries of the forest, and the most of the forest spirits avoided human contact. Throughout history, events can be found where either humans tread where they did not

belong or some beast was not satisfied with keeping to the trees, and conflict erupted. Mischievous kitsune have played innumerable pranks on humans, and more than a few humans have wandered into forbidden territory over the years, but rarely is lasting harm done. However, of late, more supernatural creatures are venturing into human communities, and most with more than mischief in mind. Meanwhile, more and more humans no longer respect the long-established borders and are recklessly logging ancient parts of the forest. Tensions are mounting, and humans are distrustful of not just strangers but even their friends and neighbors, as it's well known that the majority of spirit beings can disguise themselves as human.

In these already uncertain times, the mounting hostility between human civilization and forest creatures is only fueling the fire that threatens to consume the Yonhosu Valley. Disorder and discord fills the land, and a long-forgotten enemy reaps the rewards, lurking in wait for the right time to emerge.

The Toukai Han

"The Toukai were first to arrive here in the Yonhosu Valley, and they never tire of reminding you."

- Excerpt from the very secret and personal journal of Imamura no Kohei, scribe to Toukai no Koto, obtained for purposes of blackmail by the Yabun-Tsume.

Ancient History

The Toukai Han is the oldest human settlement in the Yonhosu Valley. Hundreds of years ago, the Toukai clan traveled down the Ketsueki-Kawa in search of new territory. No one had ever voyaged to the rivers end. The "blood river" had been named for the countless lives of explorers lost on failed expeditions of the mighty river. A member of the Toukai clan (whose name has been erased from history but forever after referred to as the One Who Will Not Be Named) had greatly shamed his family, and committed seppuku, but the remaining clan sought to start life anew far from the Capitol and the echoes of disgrace that were inevitably to haunt them if they stayed. Few places in the empire remained unexplored, and the only two options left to the Toukai clan were to brave the potentially fatal Ketsueki-Kawa or go out to sea and hope to find safe harbor in a distant land. It was the wisdom (though some call it folly) of Toukai no Kazu,

the surviving younger brother of the One Who Will Not Be Named, that convinced the clan to take their chances with the river. An imperial official and long-time friend of the Toukai clan, fearing that they were surely to die on their journey, tried to dissuade the clan from departing the Capitol. Unable to convince Toukai no Kazu to stay, he took pity on the clan and as a final favor he proclaimed that whatever land the Toukai clan discovered would become a "Han" of the empire, with the Toukai as its governors.

The Toukai set forth, calling on a variety of kami to protect them on their journey. One kami, Zocho, heard their pleas and shielded them from harm as they traveled south down the river, calming the waters and guarding them from attack. Once the clan reached the mouth of the Ketsueki-Kawa where it meets the ocean, they got out of their boats and thanked Zocho, profusely, adopting him as their patron kami.

Fated Meetings

Soon after settling at the mouth of the river, however, they were beset by demons. Terrified, the Toukai ran into the forest where they encountered a kitsune for the first time. The kitsune, Osusuki, offered the Toukai clan sanctuary in his shrine realm.

History records, through epic poetry and song, a time of cooperation and mutual benefit between the kitsune and the Toukai clan, as together they battled the demon threat. United, the humans and kitsune vanquished the demon army, and liberated the valley. It is difficult to track history to the point at which kitsune and human collaboration broke down, as no written records survive and only song and poems recount the deterioration in relations. Within a few decades, the Toukai clan and the kitsune parted ways and entered into an informal agreement. The humans agreed to keep to the southern hills and along the Ketsueki-Kawa, and the kitsune would return to their forest. Throughout subsequent centuries, humans and kitsune came into conflict on occasion, but the two populations remain mostly divided.

Distrust of kitsune has festered among the Toukai, and today the spirit foxes are viewed as something between mischievous menace and wicked fiend. Some humans in Toukai even consider the kitsune evil demons, likening them to the very threat they once battled cooperatively.

A Flood of Sorts

After driving the demons out of the Yonhosu valley, the dangers of the Ketsueki-Kawa were reduced to the occasional white-water rapid or sharp-rocked jetty. Once word returned to the Capitol that the Toukai had survived the journey and had settled in a lush valley, humans began to pour into the Yonhosu Valley. Within a few decades, what was later to become the Toukai Han was brimming with a number of clans. Some of these new clans headed into other parts of the valley, searching for fertile land and fresh prospects. These peoples were later to found the Akaki, Sairyuukoe and Yamaken Han.

Recent History

Today, the Toukai Han had grown to become a powerful and affluent province. Richest among the Han of the Yonhosu Valley, Toukai is highly commercial, having established trading agreements with the Capitol and other provinces of the empire. Bountiful harvests of grain and other trade goods are shipped regularly up the Ketsueki-Kawa, and Toukai is renowned throughout the empire for having among the finest rugs and silk brocades available. Toukai owes much of its fame and fortune to the talent of its weaver families, who have passed their secrets on from generation to generation, and the abundance of mulberry bushes and silk worms in the southern hills.

Merchants have amassed staggering fortunes and the emerging merchant-class holds unprecedented power and influence in the Toukai Han government, using their ample resources to ensure that officials abide by their will. Utterly corrupt, the provincial governor regularly accepts astounding bribes from the merchants, and in return he allows them to operate as they wish, smuggling illegal goods and employing questionable business practices with complete impunity. The governor, **Toukai no Kozue**, lives in a massive palace built atop a hill overlooking the Toukai-Uchikai. His family is large and live a highly indulgent lifestyle. Toukai no Koto's provincial court has been meticulously fashioned after that of the Capitol, and no expense is spared to emulate the emperor's court. Much like in the Capitol, the provincial coffers are being bled of resources by the Toukai clan who claim as their birthright the indisputable right to ruling the Han. Were it not for the robust economy of the Han, thanks to the industrious merchant-class, the Toukai Han would be facing the same fate as the Capitol. However, the constant infusion of gold in return for allowing the merchants free reign is still

not sufficient to fund the provinces needs. Roads, once well-patrolled, have become unsafe for travelers. Merchant caravans can afford to hire guards, but the average citizen now travels the Toukai Han in fear of brigands. Fortunately, the wards placed on the roads ages ago remain intact and continue to protect most roadways from supernatural incursion, but without regular maintenance it is only a matter of time until the protective magics wither and eventually flicker out completely.

The Shinto priesthood in Toukai enjoy sizable government subsidies, and boast to have among the finest shrines in all of the Yonhosu valley. This is true to a point, as Toukai does have the largest and most elaborate temples in the valley, but there are shrines in other provinces that contain considerably greater geomantic power. Among the many duties of the Shinto priesthood in Toukai is the responsibility for guarding the Toukai Crossing. The priests honor this obligation with unflagging devotion, and while no demon has reported to have passed through the Crossing in centuries, the Shinto priesthood of Toukai treat the Crossing as though it were still active. Sentries are posted at the Crossing day and night, though they are rotated frequently to avoid the peculiar and undesirable effects of the Crossing's influence on the land.

Along the shore, hills and cliffs of the Toukai-Uchikai, a great city has developed over the centuries and stretches along the entire bay. A myriad of houses, shops and tea-houses crowd the city. At the entrance to the bay itself stands a truly massive building, the Toukai House of Light. No mere lighthouse, the Toukai House of Light is a soaring tower carved right out of the surrounding granite cliffs. The House of Light is almost two hundred feet in height and is perched high atop the cliffs at the mouth of the Toukai-Uchikai. A fire rages in the uppermost chamber, surrounded by hundred of polished silver mirrors. The keepers of the House of Light brag that their light is so high and so bright that it can be seen in the Imperial Capitol on a dark night.

Society and the Darker Side of Commerce

The aristocracy, with the Toukai clan at its head, and the merchant-class are effectively equals in society within the Toukai Han, though the aristocrats do still hold to a scant few rights that they refuse to share with the wealthy merchants. Aristocratic families are the only individuals, other than priests, who are permitted in certain shrines and are the only individuals allowed to preside over affairs of state.

The peasantry enjoys few rights and freedoms, and they toil tirelessly to harvest the many valuable crops of the Toukai Han. Some among the common folk have seen the meteoric rise and incredible success of the merchant-class, and seek to improve their fortunes as kind. With the merchant-class now firmly established in the Toukai Han, the aristocrats and merchants have a strangle-hold on commerce. However, some enterprising peasants have joined the ranks of the Yakuza and are establishing a considerable power-base in the Toukai Han. Yakuza gangs have begun to extort smaller merchant businesses, having set up protection rackets. Other smaller Yakuza gangs have built up illicit businesses, and now operate a string of dens of iniquity offering everything from whores to

Zocho

Domains: Law, Protection, War
Alignment: Lawful neutral

Zocho, the patron kami of the Toukai clan, is one of the four guardian kami who keep the world safe from demon attack. He is known as the guardian of the South. Unbeknownst to the Toukai clan, so many people died on the Ketsueki-Kawa because the Yonhosu valley was teeming with demons. The kitsune of the valley had fought a prolonged war with the demons, and were slowly losing ground. When the Toukai clan decided to leave the empire proper and their shame behind, it was Zocho who placed the suggestion in Toukai no Kazu's mind that the clan should attempt to travel down the Ketsueki-Kawa in search of new territory. Zocho

hoped that the Toukai, desperate to escape their humiliation, would not run in the face of the demon threat, but join with the kitsune to battle the fiends and claim the Yonhosu Valley for the Toukai clan.

It was also Zocho, disguised as an imperial official and long-time friend of the Toukai clan, who ensured that whatever land the Toukai found would become part of the empire.

Toukai no Kazu nor any of the Toukai clan have ever known of Zocho's true intentions to exploit their shame in order to rid the Yonhosu Valley of the demon infestation. They have, however, remained faithful to Zocho as their patron kami, and actively protect the Toukai Crossing from demon invasion to this day.

gambling to controversial pit-brawling. Toukai has an unknown number of Yakuza gangs that are all loosely allied through **Kuro-Kimiko**, or “Black Kimiko”, the rarely seen but immensely influential leader of the Yakuza in the Toukai Han. She is a ruthless criminal, but unquestionably a competent leader. Ruling through fear and intimidation, Kuro-Kimiko has consolidated the Yakuza into a formidable force in Toukai. She is not above bribing the provincial government to avoid the pressure of law-enforcement, and has most of the constables in Toukai on her payroll.

Kuro-Kimiko and her Yakuza are not the only criminal element in Toukai. Working from the shadows and preferring to remain anonymous, the Yabun-Tsume Clan (Night Claw Clan) operates out of Toukai and has been working in the Han almost since its inception. Strictly limited to members of the clan, these shinobi are highly secretive and frighteningly efficient. Employed by provincial officials, daimyo, merchants and even the Yakuza, the Yabun-Tsume are firmly entrenched in the Toukai Han and fabulously wealthy. They have shinobi bases of operation scattered throughout the Han, cleverly disguised as honest businesses and even masquerading as temples. In order to maintain complete secrecy, the Yabun-Tsume is organized in ‘cells’ of five to a dozen shinobi, and a cell might only know of one or two other Yabun-Tsume cells. Most of the Yabun-Tsume have never met one another, and only a deftly executed hand gesture will identify a Yabun-Tsume to another. The Yabun-Tsume are led by the enigmatic **Warai-hito** (Laughing Man), a cunning and flawless assassin. It is said that his victims never see him, but they all hear his quiet laughter as their life is snuffed out.

YABUN TSUME CLAN (Night Claw) Shinobi clan

Rumors abound about the activities of the shinobi in the Toukai Han; some are true, mostly the gruesome ones. Should one wish to contact and employ the Yabun-Tsume, it is believed that leaving a message with Rintaro the weaver will put you in contact with the shinobi clan. A shinobi agent will make themselves known to any inquirer within a few days, after they have had an opportunity to thoroughly surveil the potential client.

The Akaki Han

“Till the field and plant with care, praise the great Toyo-Uke-Bime and she will provide. We have lived by these words for centuries. But with so many plowshares turned to swords, what will become of our fair land?”

- Quote from a speech given by Fuchida no Ami, Miko of the grand shrine to Toyo-Uke-Bime in the Akaki Han, before her arrest on charges of sedition.

Ancient History

As word spread through the empire that the Toukai clan had traveled the Ketsueki-Kawa and not only survived but found a virgin river valley, the Akaki clan were quick to uproot themselves and head for the Yonhosu Valley. Among the first newcomers to the newly established settlement at the mouth of the Ketsueki-Kawa, the Akaki were opportunists of the highest order. The land, having been recently liberated from the demon threat, was a virtual paradise. Akaki clan members quickly began to grab huge tracts of land and claim it as their own. At first, the Toukai were content with sharing the fertile riverland with their neighbors, but as the century wore on and more pioneering clans flooded the fledgling Toukai Han, the Toukai clan grew impatient with the greedy Akaki settlers.

Calling upon the imperial mandate that all land the Toukai discovered became a Han under their control, the Toukai attempted to reclaim the territory swallowed up by the Akaki. The imperial government interceded, but much to the chagrin of the Toukai well-placed Akaki back in the Capitol used their considerable influence and wealth to sway the outcome. By imperial edict, the Akaki clan was granted a portion of the Yonhosu Valley to govern and occupy as a province. In order to reduce the tension between the Akaki and the Toukai, the imperial government created the Akaki Han in the lush forests of the northern Yonhosu Valley far from the Toukai Han in the south. The two han were forced to share a border, however, and disputes over the boundary rage on to this day.

The Akaki Han, established in the north, was rich in red pine and lumber of many kinds. A deep lake fed by a river draining from the Shirokage Mountains was discovered and called **Ao-Mizuumi-no-Kita** (Blue Lake of the North), and there the Akaki built their provincial capitol.

Newly established in the Akaki Han, the clan members began to fell entire forests to clear land for agriculture and settlement. Farmer and Shinto priests called upon Toyo-Uke-Bime to aid in locating the best areas for planting, and through her divine favor the Akaki identified huge tracts of land with incredible potential. The only obstacle the Akaki faced was that all of this land was forested and had to be cleared, which the Akaki did with astonishing speed.

Almost immediately, they came into conflict with the kitsune, who opposed their efforts to decimate the Kitsunemori. Much bloodshed and animosity ensued, but after many years of battle without decisive victory for either side, the Akaki clan and kitsune declared a truce. Together they created areas within the Akaki Han for human habitation and others for the kitsune. That agreement was honored and enforced by the provincial governors of the Akaki Han for centuries, but a recent shift in power has brought new leadership to the province and this ancient pact is no longer honored by the humans.

TOYO UKE BIME

Domains: Earth, plant, animal.

Alignment: Neutral

The patron kami of Akaki, Toyo-Uke-Bime is the goddess of earth, food and agriculture. She delights in seeing the land tamed and made productive through plowing and planting. Though she has fallen out of favor with the current regime in power, the general populace of Akaki venerate her and beg of her munificence at planting and harvest.

Recent History

The warlord **Taira no Hitoshi**, has seized the reigns of power from the provincial governor. Followed by an impressive army of samurai, Taira no Hitoshi maintains control of the Han and has been acknowledged as the unofficial authority in Akaki for several years now. He is rapidly consolidating power around him. Hitoshi is forcing the provincial governor, now little more than a puppet, to appoint Taira cronies to the positions of gunji and richo throughout the Akaki Han.

Recently, Hitoshi ordered the construction of a huge palatial castle on the shores of the Ao-Mizuumi-no-Kita, which he plans to make his residence and seat

of power. Through a clever if appalling series of legal maneuvers, Hitoshi has managed to not only have the land granted him by the provincial governor, but to use tax revenues to build the complex.

Even as Hitoshi strengthens his hold on the Akaki Han, he looks to the neighboring provinces hungrily. Already some minor skirmishes have broken out along the Sairyuukoe border between Hitoshi's samurai and those of Sairyuukoe. Hitoshi claims that he is acting on behalf of the Akaki province in reclaiming land granted them by imperial edict centuries ago. Representatives of Hitoshi even now attend the provincial court of Sairyuukoe, attempting to convince the provincial governor there to surrender the disputed land rather than coming to blows with Hitoshi's army.

Resentment grows among the merchants and peasantry of Akaki as they toil endlessly and see their taxes funneled into Hitoshi's war chest. In response, Hitoshi has initiated a series of programs of tax relief for the peasantry, but has dramatically increased the tax burden on wealthy aristocrats and merchants.

Society and the Ruthless Acquisition of Land

Traditional social conventions are rapidly eroding in Akaki. Hitoshi and his samurai have upset the centuries-long social hierarchy, establishing themselves as a power above their station. The burgeoning warrior-class has ascended to the pinnacle of social dominance in Akaki, and in doing so have marginalized the once all-powerful aristocracy. A number of aristocrats have banded together to plot against Hitoshi and have already sent covert messengers back to the Capitol to alert the emperor of Hitoshi's rebellion. They hope and pray that salvation will arrive in the form of the emperor's army and liberate them from the haughty warlord.

As their purses dwindle under the pressure of Hitoshi's new tax structure, so too do the hopes of the aristocracy that the emperor will unseat the rebel. Recently, one clandestine mission to alert the emperor was not only intercepted by Hitoshi's forces, but they were all summarily executed publicly. So too were the men accused of employing them. Aristocrats are now terrified of taking action against Hitoshi, for fear of meeting their end by the razor-sharp blade of Hitoshi's samurai.

Merchants, too, bristle with anger and resentment

over Hitoshi's new taxes. Some few have bought a reprieve for providing valuable goods and services to Hitoshi's growing army. Recognizing the value of merchant support in the new Akaki government, Hitoshi has not slackened taxes on wealthy merchants, but has instead dangled an enticing gift before the merchants to endear himself to them. Hitoshi has offered unprecedented logging rights to numerous merchants, offering them the opportunity to deforest areas previous forbidden to humankind. The old compact between humans and kitsune, upheld by the provincial authority for centuries, is being completely ignored as Hitoshi grants ever greater swaths of forest to loggers. Merchants have responded to Hitoshi's offer in droves, and have begun to fell trees at an alarming rate. Many forest denizens have fought back against the human-wrought devastation of the trees, but the merchants travel with armed mercenaries, monks of Toyo-Uke-Bime and even a handful of newly arrived onmyouji who have effectively fought back the spirits of the forest.

Onmyouji who left the Capitol in search of new opportunities have been warmly received in Akaki. Not only have many merchants employed them for their unique talents, but Hitoshi himself has gathered around him an impressive number of onmyouji. Hitoshi recognizes the great worth of the onmyouji and their arcane arts, using them to gain advantage against his enemies. One such onmyouji who has quickly earned a dark reputation for his slaughter of the kitsune and bakemono (see [Chapter VII: Forest Denizens](#) for more details on the [bakemono](#)) in the forests of Akaki is **Kikugawa no Rosanjin**. Rosanjin has leased his services to a handful of merchants for exorbitant fees, but all reports confirm that his extensive talents merit the cost.

Hitoshi and his samurai have relentless and systematically rooted out yakuza and shinobi in the Akaki Han. The dishonorable practices of both groups are repugnant in the eyes of Hitoshi's new order, and Hitoshi has made it his mission to stamp out the taint of degradation he believes the yakuza and shinobi have infected the Han with. Penalties for thievery, smuggling and other illicit activities have become severe under Hitoshi, and countless accused yakuza and shinobi have been beheaded throughout the province. Small yakuza gangs and shinobi cells still operate in the deepest secrecy while others have simply moved out of Akaki and into other less militant Han. Those who remain must operate with great care however, as yakuza and shinobi are being used as

scapegoats by Hitoshi's men, blamed as the source of all social ills in Akaki.

Nogitsune in Akaki

Recently, a pack of nogitsune have moved into and laid claim to a portion of the Kitsunemori in Akaki. This pack, under the leadership of **Take-Odoriko** (Bamboo Dancer), has been sowing chaos and mischief throughout Akaki, as well as neighboring Sairyuukoe and Yamaken. For reasons yet unknown, this nogitsune pack has been left unharmed by logger and onmyouji alike. While myobu, bakemono, and other denizens of the forest are being murdered by the score as the loggers sweep through the forests of Akaki, these nogitsune continue to operate unabated. They seem to take great pleasure in bringing embarrassment and disgrace unto Buddhist and Shinto monks throughout the provinces. Through their elaborate tricks and illusions, they have already wrought such scandal and humiliation among the ranks of the religious orders that many prominent monks have been forced to resign their posts and retreat to the mountains to live out their lives as hermits.

Though myobu in Yamaken have been making efforts to locate and deal with Take-Odoriko's pack, they have been unsuccessful. Take-Odoriko is a sly and insidious adversary, and some diviners among the myobu believe that her uncanny ability to evade detection is categorically not kitsune magic, but from another as yet unidentified source.

The Sairyuukoe Han

"If the Kokoro-Mizuumi is the heart of the Yonhosu Valley, then the blood that flows from Sairyuukoe runs cold and unclean."

- Quote attributed to Zasu Kondo no Ukyo, leader of the warrior-monks of Mount Takenaga.

Ancient History

The Sairyuukoe clan was one of the last to arrive in the newly discovered Yonhosu Valley, migrating there a few centuries after the inception of the Toukai Han. Master navigator and ship-wrights, the Sairyuukoe clan had heard rumors from traders returned from the Yonhosu Valley that a large part of the valley was a unexplored maze of unnavigable and swamp-

choked rivers. The patriarch of the clan, Sairyuukoe no Dayu, saw great opportunity and profit for his clan in the new provinces, confident in his families ability to survey the uncharted rivers and streams of the Yonhosu Valley. Members of the Sairyuukoe clan gathered from all corners of the empire to voyage down the Ketsueki-Kawa, ready to reap the benefits of the reportedly fertile valley.

Before the clan embarked on the journey, Sairyuukoe no Dayu was visited in a dream by a great and powerful kami. In the dream, Kawa-No-Kami (God of the Rivers) appeared to Dayu in the form of a raging white-water rapid, and warned him that his clan would meet certain death in the marshes and streams of the Yonhosu Valley. An enemy lurked in the swamps, and without the protection of Kawa-No-Kami the Sairyuukoe would fall to a man. Kawa-No-Kami commanded Dayu to offer a blood sacrifice to if he wished to ensure his clan's safety. When he woke on the morrow, Dayu called the elders of his clan together and shared with them his remarkable dream-vision. Many dismissed the dream away as a fear-induced nightmare on the eve of a dangerous journey and encouraged him to pray to Baku to eat dreams like this in the future. Most of the clan, however, were convinced that Dayu had been visited with a true-dream from Kawa-No-Kami. Fathers offered their daughters for sacrifice, touting their virtue and grace. Dayu surveyed the young girls, all of whom looked terrified at the prospect of giving their lives to the Kawa-No-Kami. Disgusted by the cowardice of his clansmen, Dayu declared that no daughter would be forced to be sacrifice by her father and called upon the men of his clan for a volunteer.

KAWA NO KAMI

Domains: Water and travel

Alignment: Chaotic neutral

Kawa-no-kami, the patron kami of Saityuukoe, is the god of rivers. Though individual rivers might have kami of their own, Kawa-no-kami is their leige. During periods of flood or drought, the Sairyuukoe continued for a time to practise human sacrifice to appease the angry kami. Though the human sacrifice is no longer performed, the Sairyuukoe still regularly give offerings to Kawa-No-Kami in the form of animal sacrifice and foodstuffs sent adrift on rafts along Sairyukoe's many rivers and streams.

No man stepped forward. Appalled once again by his clan, Dayu offered himself as sacrifice. Elders of the clan tried to dissuade Dayu, but he was adamant.

At dawn on the day of the Sairyuukoe clan's journey to the Yonhosu Valley, Dayu's blood was ritually spilled into the Ketsueki-Kawa until he drew his final breath. Emboldened by the bravery of their now deceased patriarch, the Sairyuukoe clan set out down the river towards their new home.

The clan reached the Kokoro-Mizuumi without serious incident, and brought their ships unto the shores of Kokoro-shima where they began to build a great city. From their new base of operations on Kokoro-shima, the Sairyuukoe began the painstaking process of charting the many rivers of the eastern Yonhosu Valley. Rivers and streams were explored and named for prominent members of the clan, and the Sairyuukoe celebrated the success of their new endeavor.

Danger lurked near, however, and within less than a year the Sairyuukoe explorers had ventured deep into the swamps and marshes. There they first encountered the malevolent kappa, vicious turtle creatures whose very touch would completely rot objects and disintegrate the living. The Sairyuukoe were ill-prepared to combat these creatures, and human losses were devastating in the initial confrontations.

The new patriarch of the clan, Sairyuukoe no Hideo, begged Kawa-No-Kami to provide the promised protection offered in return for Dayu's great sacrifice. Kawa-No-Kami appeared to Hideo and told him of a stalk found in the swamps, a plant whose sap would offer protection against the kappa's touch. Hideo ordered a group of men to scour the swamp for this plant, harvest the stalks and bring them back to Kokoro-shima so that a poultice might be made. Once the men returned with the mysterious plant, Shinto monks reduced the sap of the stalks down into a thick paste, which was then applied in copious amount to boat-bottoms and of the skin of Sairyuukoe explorers. The paste did provide remarkable defense against the kappa's touch, and the Sairyuukoe spread through the eastern Yonhosu Valley to settle along its many rivers.

Within a few decades, the Sairyuukoe successfully mapped and settled most of the eastern Yonhosu Valley, land previously claimed by the Akaki Han. The Akaki had been unable to penetrate too deeply into the swamps, for they had no protection against the

vicious kappa, but still the Akaki insisted that all land settled by the Sairyuukoe was property of the Akaki Han and therefore its residents must pay taxes. The Sairyuukoe flatly refused to pay taxes to Akaki, and numerous bloody conflicts ensued. Eventually, the Sairyuukoe were able to petition the emperor for recognition as a province separate from Akaki. History is unclear as to whether the Sairyuukoe used bribery or blackmail to ensure a favorable result, but the emperor did acquiesce and granted the Sairyuukoe Han official status as a province and appointed the patriarch of the Sairyuukoe as kokushi (provincial governor).

Unlike in the early histories of the Toukai and Akaki Hans, the Sairyuukoe did not come into conflict with kitsune. Instead, kitsune were worshipped in some villages and prayed to for protection from the kappa.

HIDEO'S POULTICE

To this day, the formula for Hideo's Poultrice is a closely guarded secret of the Sairyuukoe, and their exclusive use of the substance provides them with a monopoly on river travel and trade in the Yonhosu Valley. The recipe is never written down, but part of a long oral tradition kept by practitioners of hearth magic on Kokoro-shima. The stores of Hideo's poultrice are heavily guarded, and villages in Sairyuukoe receive regular shipments to protect them against kappa attack and sabotage. The stalk of a special species of bamboo is used in the creation of Hideo's poultrice, which can only be found in certain swamps. The location of these swamps is also a closely guarded secret known only to the provincial governor and a handful of officials.

Hideo's Poultrice can be brewed by anyone knowing the recipe, the rituals, and obtaining the requisite materials with a successful DC 25 Hearth Wisdom check. For every mature stalk of the special bamboo, one dose of Hideo's Poultrice can be produced. One dose of Hideo's Poultrice, if smeared over one Medium object or creature, will protect it against the kappa's rot for 1d3 days. For each size category above Medium, an additional dose is required to protect the object or creature. Conversely, one dose of Hideo's Poultrice can protect two Small creatures, four Tiny creatures, eight Diminutive creatures or sixteen Fine creatures. Using more than one dose of Hideo's Poultrice simultaneously will not extend the duration of protection, as the effects do not stack, but application may be renewed for a new 1d3 days.

substances they exclusively produce and ship through the Yonhosu Valley and the empire beyond.

A great city now flourishes on Kokoro-shima and is the provincial capitol of the Sairyuukoe Han. A grand castle stands on the Kokoro-shima, the palace of the provincial governor, **Sairyuukoe no Dayu**, named for his honored ancestor. From his fortress-capitol, Dayu governs with an iron fist. Obese, physically repulsive, zealously religious, cruel and rude; Sairyuukoe no Dayu shares only the name of his proud ancestor. He is much despised by aristocrat and peasant alike, but is tolerated because of his keen mind and extraordinary business sense. Under his guidance, the Sairyuukoe Han has accumulated unimaginable wealth and enjoyed unprecedented prosperity. Despite the affluence enjoyed, the people of Sairyuukoe live in fear of Dayu's thugs, called **Kouken-agensuto-Zaigou**

(Guardians against Sin), a branch of the province's Jingikan (Office of Deities). These Guardians patrol even the most remote villages to ensure obedience to the Han. Dissenters are summarily executed and behavior deemed immoral can receive extreme and often unjustified punishment. One of the most feared among the Guardians, **Sairyuukoe no Taizo**, cousin to the provincial governor, regularly wanders the rivers and streams of the Han to root out wickedness and depravity wherever it lives. His tactics are legendary and brutal. One unconfirmed tale warns that Taizo once had an entire village put to the torch and all of its residents slaughtered for their treasonous support of rebels in the Han.

Social Unrest and Growing Discontent

Rumblings of discontent are being heard from deep within the Sairyuukoe Han, and full bellies and jingling coin purses seem to no longer satisfy some the populace who are disgusted by Sairyuukoe no Dayu, his government and his Kouken-agensuto-Zaigou. A growing resistance movement is swelling in the remote villages and mountain monaster-

ies of the Sairyuukoe Han. At the vanguard of the resistance movement are the sohei, Buddhist warrior monks, who can no longer tolerate the blatant abuses of power by the provincial government. The sohei are a brotherhood bound together by a deep religious

Recent History

Today, the Sairyuukoe clan absolutely dominates river travel and trade. Over the centuries, they have amassed incredible wealth from the many exotic plants and

DAYU'S SACRIFICE

The patriarch of the Sairyuukoe clan, Dayu (the first of his name) is still honored for his sacrifice, and his bravery is largely credited as essential to the prosperity enjoyed today. Many male children are named for him and his spirit is venerated as a kami in many villages. To make a great sacrifice in service to family is called "a sacrifice worthy of Dayu" among the peasantry, and is applied to various forms of sacrifice including financial and emotional.

faith and belief in spiritual egalitarianism. The warrior monks share religious zeal and a commitment to social equality. They are easily recognized by their wooden Buddhist prayer beads, shorn heads, and their characteristic white head cowl.

Sohei have moved into villages to stir up dissent and galvanize the peasantry and merchant-class into a fighting force to oppose Sairyuukoe no Dayu and his Guardians against Sin. Support for the resistance and the sohei is strong, but many fear that their villages will be marked as seditious and put to the torch for aiding the rebellion. The sohei have sent numerous emissaries to villages throughout the Han, but the vast majority of the warrior monks remain in their mountain temple in the Toryama Mountains. Their temple is well known to the Yonhosu Valley at large and to pilgrims from the empire at large, for it is considered a holy site where many important relics are housed, and the famous Stone Tortoise stands vigil. The sohei's **zasu** (leader), **Zasu Kondo no Ukyo**, commands the sohei from within the mountain temple. Many in the resistance movement look to the day when Ukyo leaves the mountain temple on his march towards Kokoro-mizuumi, signaling the beginning of the true revolt.

Even yakuza gangs, which out of necessity must operate clandestinely, have begun to emerge from the shadows to join in the coming rebellion.

Old Enmities and a Spider on the Wall

For centuries, great animosity has festered between Sairyuukoe and Akaki. The Akaki still see the Sairyuukoe Han as illegitimate, and many among the Akaki believe that it is their right and responsibility to reclaim the territory lost to Sairyuukoe all those years ago. The Sairyuukoe in turn see the Akaki Han as barbaric and

spiteful of the Sairyuukoe Han's vast wealth. In recent months, the forces of Taira no Hitoshi have engaged Sairyuukoe samurai along the Akaki-Sairyuukoe border. Thus far, the well-equipped samurai of the Sairyuukoe have been able to repel Hitoshi's army, but each day Hitoshi's forces grow and soon threaten to outnumber Sairyuukoe forces. In the court of Sairyuukoe no Dayu, a courtier works diligently on behalf of Hitoshi to convince the Sairyuukoe Han to surrender the disputed lands peacefully before the bloodshed increases. This courtier, **Taira no Koto**, is a distant relation to Hitoshi who arrived just a few

Sohei Temple Fortress, in the Toryama Mountains

(see map on following page.)

Standing on the peak of **Mount Takenaga** (Tall Mountain) is the home of the sohei, a Buddhist temple complex housed within a fortress. Steep stone walls called **musha-gaeshi** surround the complex, riddled with arrow slit and openings from which pots of hot sand can be thrown at would-be attackers. Additionally, just outside the stone walls are row upon row of sharp bamboo spikes driven into the ground at a diagonal to pierce the legs of intruders. The gate, or **sammon**, is located facing due northeast as superstition dictates that demon or evil attack is most likely to come from that direction. Within the outer stone wall is a large bailey, or **maru**, surrounding the inner temple. In this maru the sohei live humbly, from the most naïve acolyte to the sohei leader himself. Here they sleep, eat and train in simple stone and timber buildings. A second wall surrounds the inner temple, but this one is of timber, and ornately carved in honor of the Buddha. A second **sammon** stands in this wall as well, through the gates are rarely closed to the sohei. Within the temple complex stands the **Goju-no-to**, a many tiered pagoda where the holy relics of the Buddha are kept. Behind the Goju-no-to stands the **Kondo**, the main hall where statues and images of the Buddha are kept (including the renowned Stone Tortoise – see Chapter VII: Forest Denizens for details). The final building in the temple complex is the **Kodo**, the lecture hall where Buddhist scriptures are housed and read. The entire temple complex is filled with beautiful gardens of stone, sand and greenery. These gardens are tended by the sohei, and walkways wind and twist their way through the gardens many splendors. The sohei temple is a PR 10 shrine.

years after several decades of service in the imperial court. Unknown to either Hitoshi or Dayu, Taira no Koto is actually a spy for the emperor sent to assess the deteriorating situation in the Yonhosu Valley.

The Creatures of Kitsunemori

Much of the Fox Forest in Sairyuukoe is swamp-choked and marshy, and limited to the eastern edge of the Han. A few myobu and nogitsune packs claim portions of the Kitsunemori in Sairyuukoe, but the majority of the swamps are the undisputed domain of the kappa. Kappa are extremely territorial, and make no distinction between intruders; kitsune or human (see Chapter VII: Forest Denizens for details). There have been tales told for centuries of the Same-bito, shark men from the distant sea, who swim up the many rivers of the Yonhosu Valley to prey upon human settlements. Sightings of same-bito have increased in recent months, and a few missing merchant vessels have been attributed to same-bito attack (see Chapter VII: Forest Denizens for more details).

Villages in Sairyuukoe continue to this day to worship kitsune, and many villages have shrines to the spirit foxes. When kappa or other creatures threaten a settlement, village elders offer sacrifice of rice wine and incense at the shrines in the hopes of entreating their kitsune protectors. Myobu packs whose shrine realms connect to these shrines will come to the call and aid the humans when the need is great.

Nogitsune packs in Sairyuukoe outnumber those of the myobu, and a number of trap Crossings into shrine realms are scattered throughout the Han to snare unwary travelers and whisk them into the clutches of the nogitsune. These captives are sometimes used as slaves or play-things, though there are legends of imprisoned humans being used for more nefarious purposes.

The Yamaken Han

"We are the children of the Yamatsumi, and we will build a prosperous and bold new Yamaken Han free from the superstitious and fearful past."

- Excerpt from a speech by Kitaishi no Akihiro, governor of the Yamaken province.

Ancient History

Centuries ago, two clans set out together from the imperial center to make a new life in the Yonhosu

Valley; the Kitaishi clan and the Yamaken clan. The Kitaishi clan claimed to be the descendants of the eight yamatsumi (mountain kami) created with the death of Kagutsuchi. The Yamaken did not claim any divine ancestry, but had been highly involved with the imperial Office of Deities for countless generations. Both clans saw the burgeoning society of the Yonhosu Valley as lacking in spiritual leadership, and saw the opportunity to bring enlightened guidance to the new settlements there.

Soon after they arrived in the Yonhosu Valley, however, both clans encountered great animosity from the settlers. The Toukai and other clans saw themselves as the rightful inhabitants of the valley, and were already seeing their land divided up into different Han. They saw the Kitaishi, with their divine blood, and the Yamaken, with their strong connection to the imperial government, as interlopers come to take the land and riches that the Toukai had fought so hard for. Almost immediately, the two clans were relegated to the western edge of the Yonhosu Valley where the deepest and darkest of the Kitsunemori lay. Despite agreements not to intrude on kitsune territory, the Toukai sent the Kitaishi and Yamaken blindly into the Kitsunemori with the tools they would need to survive.

The kitsune, enraged by the human incursion, used their magics to befuddle and confuse the two clans. The clans were frightened and all but defenseless against the kitsune, but one courageous woman among the Yamaken found the will to approach their kitsune assailants. **Yamaken no Maya** went to the kitsune, begging them to end their magical assault on the clans. Many of the foxes frightened her with terrifying illusions and tricks, but she remained resolute to serve her clan. She asked the kitsune to grant her people a small portion of the forest, and in return both clans would make offerings to the kitsune twice every year at the harvest. Moved by her daring and dedication to family, the kitsune Osusuki and Akomachi agreed to her request and a unique bond was forged between humans and kitsune from that point forward.

The Yamaken were granted land along the **Ibitsu-Kawa** (Crooked River) and on the shores of the **Shimo-Mizuumi** (Lower Lake), while the Kitaishi clan were given the land surrounding the **San-Hosoi-Shushi** (Three Slender Fingers). On the banks of the Ibitsu-Kawa, the humans erected a great shrine to

Shrine to Inari *(see map on following page.)*

The shrine dedicated to Inari in Yamaken along the Ibitsu-Kawa is an architectural masterpiece, wrought of human ingenuity and divine magic. The shrine is surrounded by a four foot tall stone fence called a **tamagaki**. The fence effectively separates the sacred grounds of the shrine known as **keidai** from the profane area outside the temple. While the short fence provides little physical obstacle, it is heavily warded against evil outsiders, evil spirits and the like (*Repulsion effect, Will save DC 30 to avoid*). The walkway leading into the temple is lined with numerous **torii**, two-story tall spirit gates also similarly warded against incursion by evil. Standing guard just inside the shrine at the end of its wooden walkway are two stone temple guardians, representations of the first kitsune to serve Inari; Osusuki and Akomachi. Inside the shrine itself stands the **kaguraden**, a hall for the sacred dance and music of kagura; the **temizuya**, a font and basin for ritual purification of the hands and mouth; the **haiden**, the hall of worship where offerings are made and rituals performed; and the **honden**, which houses theshintai (sacred objects that Inari inhabits). All of the shrine grounds are covered in spectacular gardens of sand, stone, flowers and tiny streams fed by underground springs.

When lay people visit the shrine, they must first cleanse their hands and mouth then approach the haiden where they clap their hands loudly and ring a bell to announce their arrival to Inari. The visitor then puts their palms together in front of their chin and recites a short prayer, followed by sliding an offering into a slatted wooden box. Lay worshippers are rarely allowed into the haiden or honden, but each year an annual festival is held where the doors to the haiden and honden are opened to allow Inari the opportunity to mingle amongst her worshippers. During the festival, kagura (ritual dance and music) performances are held in honor of Inari and other local kami. The kagura is performed to pacify, console and entertain the kami in attendance. The miko of the shrine have special duties during the festival, and are the dancers in the kagura. Inari and the other kami in attendance are invisible to the worshippers, but the dancing miko may channel the kami and provide the deities with a mortal shell to inhabit during the festivities. Being a conduit for a kami during the festival is a great honor. The Shrine to Inari in Yamaken is a PR 9 shrine.

Inari, god of rice, nourishment and patron to both humans and kitsune. There, humans could worship Inari and share in her divine auspices. The people of Yamaken were quick to adopt Inari as their patron kami, and many villages erected shrines to individual kitsune whom they worshipped as local kami.

For many centuries, the Yamaken and the Kitaishi farmed and lived in harmony with the kitsune, providing the twice-annual harvest boon to the foxes and occasionally petitioning them for additional land as the clans grew in size. Shrines were erected throughout the Yamaken and Kitaishi territories, as well as in the Kitsunemori itself, honoring the great pantheon of Shinto kami including the kitsune. Eventually the Kitaishi clan wished to have their lands recognized as a separate Han from the Toukai and the Akaki. Most of the Yamaken clan were content to live under Toukai authority and enjoy the great physical and spiritual bounty of the Yonhosu Valley. But some among the Yamaken did not relish the thought of living under Kitaishi authority and so petitioned the imperial government to recognize their lands as a Han as well. Much political fighting ensued, and both the Toukai and Akaki interfered whenever possible to prevent the creation of two additional Han in the valley. For decades the battle over provincial recognition dragged on, until finally the Toukai and Akaki proposed a compromise. The Yamaken were obviously the more docile and agreeable of the clans, and both the Toukai and Akaki saw that a Han under Yamaken leadership would be much more pliable and easily manipulated. So, it was agreed to allow the Yamaken and Kitaishi the Yamaken Han, which would be governed by the Yamaken with representation of the Kitaishi among the new Hans many local officials. The Kitaishi were not satisfied with the compromise, but had no choice but to agree to the terms.

Recent History

The Kitaishi still hold a grudge against the Yamaken for the compromise struck centuries early that established the Han. The kokushi (provincial governor) of Yamaken is currently **Kitaishi no Akihiro**, a man who used his considerable wealth and clout to maneuver himself into the governorship. Akihiro has a new vision for the Yamaken Han, and is attempting to unravel centuries of tradition. He is encouraging new public works throughout the Han, improvements to aqueducts, new roads,

new government buildings, and the like. Akihiro has not sought permission from their kitsune neighbors however, and for the first time in memory relations with the spirit foxes is deteriorating. Akihiro preaches of a shift away from superstitions of the past, towards a future based on logic and reason. Yamaken officials and monks are desperately trying to avert disaster, working diligently to smooth over tensions when they arise and preventing Akihiro's projects where they can. The largest myobu pack in Yamaken led by **Gin-Kegawa** (Silver Fur), and the Shinto monks of Inari and other kami under the leadership of **Yamaken no Kinnojo**, are working separately to convince the people of the Yamaken Han to stand in opposition to Akihiro's plans. The two groups have met with limited success however, as the populace is torn between their traditional loyalties and the prospect of true progress in the Han.

In Yamaken, the social hierarchy is firmly in place, but respect abounds for all levels of society. The aristocracy sees the value and importance of the common folk, without whom there would be no food. The peasantry respects all social levels above them for the order and security they provide. The rising merchant class respects the aristocracy for their benevolent religious guidance and the samurai class respects all levels of society as part of the great order of the universe. Peasants in Yamaken enjoy an unprecedented amount of respect and can even own land, if only a modest patch of earth.

Shinto is the predominant religion of Yamaken, though Buddhism is greatly honored and even practiced by many. Shrines to almost any imaginable kami can be found in Yamaken, and almost every village has a shrine to a local kami at its heart. Religion, ritual, worship and belief are at the core of daily life in Yamaken. The people of Yamaken have the most regular exposure to supernatural creatures and thus are the most tolerant and respectful of the forest denizens. Yamaken also boasts the most shrines dedicated to kitsune of all the Han in the Yonhosu Valley, and they enjoy special favor from the spirit foxes.

Merchants in Yamaken trade mostly in foodstuffs and grain. Logging is expressly forbidden, and trees are felled only with permission of the kitsune. Timber for building is precious, and very expensive in Yamaken, so most of the common folk build their homes of mud brick and bamboo.

There is a strong presence of shinobi in Yamaken, though most of the population is completely unaware. The Kitsu clan is an extended shinobi family with a long tradition of contact with the myobu kitsune, and some claim that the clan may even be descended from a spirit fox. The Kitsu clan offers their services for free to the Shrine of Inari and regularly engage in sabotage of Akihiro's new public works. In stark contrast to the Yabun-Tsume in Toukai, the Kitsu clan live together in a single village in Yamaken near the Shimo-Mizuumi. Every Kitsu shinobi knows every other intimately, and trusts their fellows implicitly. A spirit of tradition and cooperation pervades the Kitsu clan, though they must still operate in secret. Their village is a collection of farmsteads set in concentric circles radiating out from a central hill on top of which a group of humble buildings and shrines stand. A casual observer would notice nothing out of the ordinary in the village, and only strenuous investigation would reveal any evidence of the shinobi. The Kitsu clan is currently headed by the acting leader, **Kitsu no Emiko**, a gifted shinobi with some kitsune blood running through her veins. While woefully under-prepared to lead the Kitsu clan, Emiko is the daughter of the former clan head who was savagely murdered only weeks ago. Squabbling among the elders of the clan is holding up the selection of a successor, and so Emiko is the provisional leader for the time being. Emiko, meanwhile, has become obsessed with tracking down her father's killer and exacting revenge.

In the Yamaken Han, the yakuza have a few small chapters mostly concerned with the smuggling of lumber. Most government officials overlook the operations of these yakuza, as they desperately need the wood for building but wish not to upset their kitsune neighbors by felling trees. Some new yakuza gangs have made inroads into Yamaken of late, dealing in more nefarious goods and offering pleasures previously available only in Toukai.

Prominent Figures in the Yonhosu Valley

GIN-KEGAWA: male kitsune Bard8/Myubo7; Medium fey [kitsune]; HD 7d8+0 + 8d6+0; hp 59 ; Init +8 (+4 Dex,+4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (+4 Dex, +5 armor, +1 deflection), touch 15, flat-footed 16; BAB +11; Grp +10; Atk +12 melee (1d10+1 plus 2d6 to evil/x3, +2 holy naginata) or +16 ranged (1d4/x2 plus 1d8 sonic, +1 thundering sling); Full Atk: +12/+7/+2 melee

(1d10+1 plus 2d6 to evil/x3, +2 holy naginata) or +16/+11/+6 ranged (1d4/x2 plus 1d8 sonic, +1 thundering sling); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA bardic music, countersong, fascinate, fox magic, inspire courage +2, inspire competence, spells, *suggestion*, turn undead; SQ *a nose for trouble* (magic and creatures), *art of healing* 2d8, bardic knowledge, entrancing beauty, flaw-wish fulfillment, fox form, honor-bound, Inari's pledge (bardic music), low-light vision, sacred shrine, seven tails; AL NG; SV Fort +7, Ref +12, Will +13; Str 8, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 19.

Prestige Score: 21

Languages: Common and Kitsune

Skills and Feats: Bluff +9 (+13 against humans), Climb +3, Concentration +4, Diplomacy +14 (+18 against humans), Disguise +12 (+14 acting in character), Gather Information +9, Heal +6, Hide +9, Knowledge (local) +3, Knowledge (religion) +3, Knowledge (spirits) +3, Listen +7, Move Silently +8, Perform (biwa) +14, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +6, Spot +4, Tumble +5, Use Magic Device +6; Kitsune-Bi (4/day, 1d4+15 fire damage), Personal Shrine (PR 1), Improved Initiative, Fox Magic (see below).

Fox Magic: 15 uses/day (23 uses pooled with uses of bardic music)

Basic Illusion, Advanced Illusion, Masterful Illusion, Ephemeral Illusion, Dream Travel, Craft Shrine Realm, Basic Disguise, Advanced Disguise. Save DC 21.

Spells Known (3/4/4/2 per day; save DC 14+spell level):

0 *dancing lights, daze, ghost sound, light, lullaby, prestidigitation.*

1st *charm person, cure light wounds, lesser confusion, sleep.*

2nd *blur, daze monster, detect thoughts, tongues*

3rd *clairaudience/clairvoyance, charm monster, dispel magic.*

Possessions: +2 holy naginata, +1 thundering sling, +2 studded leather armor, +1 ring of protection, gloves of dexterity +4, courtier's outfit, traveler's outfit, kimono-elaborate, disguise kit, scrolls of *alarm*, *animal messenger*, *detect secret doors*, *glibness*, *invisibility*, *knock*, *locate object*, *remove fear*, *see invisibility*, *silence*, *potions of pass without trace*, *protection from evil*, *spider climb*, masterwork biwa.
2,414 gp.

KIKUGAWA NO ROSANJIN: male human Wizard(onmyouji)15; Medium humanoid [human]; HD 15d4+15; hp 52; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (+6 armor, +3 deflection, +1 insight), touch 14, flat-footed 20; BAB +7; Grp +6; Atk +9/+4 melee (1d4+3/19-20x2, +3 defending dagger); Full Atk: +9/+4melee (1d4+3/19-20x2, +3

defending dagger); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA spells, summon shikigami; SQ -; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +12; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Prestige Score: 18

Languages: Common, ancient, oni and spirit.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +10, Concentration +13, Decipher Script +11, Disguise +5 (+7 in character), Gather Information +3, Heal +6, Hide +2, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (architecture&engineering) +10, Knowledge (history) +8, Knowledge (local) +5, Knowledge (nature) +9, Knowledge (nobility) +8, Knowledge (religion) +9, Knowledge (planes) +7, Knowledge (geomancy) +12, Listen +2, Move Silently +2, Sense Motive +2, Spellcraft +16, Spot +8; Augment Summoning, Combat Casting, Greater Spell Focus (conjuration), Greater Spell Penetration, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Knowledge-geomancy), Spell Focus (conjuration), Spell Penetration, Scribe Scroll, Extend Spell, Maximize Spell, Quicken Spell.

Spells Known:

0 *resistance, acid splash, detect poison, detect magic, read magic, dancing lights, daze, ghost sound, flare, light, ray of frost, disrupt undead, touch of fatigue, mage hand, mending, message, open/close, arcane mark, prestidigitation.*

1st *alarm, protection versus good, shield, mage armor, mount, comprehend languages, detect secret doors, identify, true strike, burning hands, magic missile, cause fear, ray of enfeeblement, expeditious retreat, summon monster I.*

2nd *arcane lock, protection from arrows, resist energy, fog cloud, acid arrow, summon swarm, detect thoughts, locate object, see invisibility, mirror image, command undead, scare, darkness, scorching ray, flaming sphere, shatter, spectral hand, alter self, knock, levitate, summon monster II..*

3rd *dispel magic, magic circle versus good, nondetection, stinking cloud, arcane sight, tongues, hold person, suggestion, fireball, displacement, vampiric touch, gaseous form, greater magic weapon, slow, summon monster III.*

4th *dimensional anchor, globe of lesser invulnerability, stonewall, dimension door, black tentacles, locate creature, scrying, fire shield, wall of fire, animate dead, enervation, polymorph, summon monster IV.*

5th *break enchantment, dismissal, cloudkill, teleport, wall of stone, telepathic bond, wall of force, magic jar, baleful polymorph, telekinesis, summon monster V.*

6th *antimagic field, greater dispel magic, acid fog, analyze dweomer, true seeing, circle of death, create undead, disintegrate, stone to flesh, summon monster VI.*

7th *banishment, spell turning, mass hold person, delayed*

blast fireball, mage's sword, finger of death, simulacrum, waves of exhaustion, control weather, summon monster VII.

8th *mind blank, incendiary cloud, greater planar binding, moment of prescience, greater shout, horrid wilting, iron body, summon monster VIII.*

Spells Typically Prepared: (4/5/5/5/5/4/3/2/1, save DC's 14 plus spell level, conjuration spell save DC's 16 plus spell level.)

0 *detect magic, light, mage hand, open/close.*

1st *burning hands, cause fear, comprehend languages, magic missile, true strike, summon monster I*.*

2nd *flaming sphere, acid arrow, resist energy, scorching ray, summon swarm, summon monster II*.*

3rd *arcane sight, fireball, slow, stinking cloud, vampiric touch, summon monster III*.*

4th *dimension door, enervation, black tentacles, fire shield, stonewall, summon monster IV*.*

5th *cloudkill, telekinesis, teleport, wall of force, summon monster V*.*

6th *fireball(maximized), disintegrate, greater dispel magic, summon monster VI*.*

7th *mass hold person, mage's sword, summon monster VII*.*

8th *moment of prescience, summon monster VIII*.*

* - denotes the onmyouji bonus *summon monster* spell.

Possessions: bracers of armor +6, ring of protection +3, ring of the ram (42 charges), staff of fire (36 charges), wand of invisibility (21 charges), ioun stones: dusty rose and pale lavender, potions of *cure serious wounds* (x2), *restoration, undetectable alignment* (x2) *fly, neutralize poison, scrolls of alarm, knock, locate object, remove fear, see invisibility, polymorph, trueseeing, break enchantment, create undead, courtiers outfit, travelers outfit, magatama (earth), magatama (water), magatama (fire), magatama (wood), magatama (metal).*

1,573 gp.

KITAISHI NO AKIHIRO: male human Aristocrat5; Medium humanoid [human]; HD 5d8+5; hp 27; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 armor), touch 10, flat-footed 12; BAB +3; Grp +2; Atk: +3 melee (1d4-1/19-20x2, masterwork tanto); Full Atk: +3 melee (1d4-1/19-20x2, masterwork tanto); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA - ; SQ - ; AL LN; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +6; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Prestige Score: 20

Languages: Common.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +13, Diplomacy +23, Gather Information +13, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (local) +8, Knowledge (nobility) +5,

Sense Motive +9; Negotiator, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Diplomacy).

Possessions: +1 dancing wakizashi, potion of *cure moderate wounds*, Nolzur's Marvelous Pigments, kimono-elaborate.

6,947 gp.

KITSU NO EMIKO: female human Rogue4/Sorcerer4 (ninja class concept); Medium humanoid [izuchi-mochi]; HD 4d6+8 + 4d6+8; hp 40; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+3 Dex, +4 armor), touch 13, flat-footed 14*; BAB +5; Grp +6; Atk +7 melee (2d4+2, +1 tamagusari) or +8 ranged (1d3+1, kunai-up to three thrown simultaneously); Full Atk: +7 melee (2d4+2, +1 tamagusari) or +8 ranged (1d3+1, kunai-up to three thrown simultaneously); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA sneak attack +2d6, spells; SQ evasion, spirit familiar (bat), trapfinding, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +5; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 14.

Prestige Score: 19

Languages: Common and kitsu.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +6, Climb +3, Concentration +6, Disable Device +4, Diplomacy +6, Disguise +6, Escape Artist +5, Hide +7, Jump +5, Knowledge (local) +2, Listen +7, Move Silently +7, Open Lock +7, Search +9, Sense Motive +4, Sleight of Hand +7, Spot +8, Tumble +9; Improved Initiative, Izuchi-Mochi, Shinobi Arsenal, Weapon Technique (kunai).

Fox Magic (2 uses per day): Basic Disguise

Spirit Familiar:

Diminutive Outsider (Native); HD 4; 20 hp; Init +2; Spd 5 ft., fly 60 ft. (good); AC 18 (+4 size, +2 Dex, +2 natural),

touch 16, flat-footed 16; BAB +2; Grp -15; Atk - ; FullAtk-;

Space/Reach 1 ft./0 ft.; SA deliver touch spells; SQ blindsense 20 ft., empathic link, ethereal, low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 1, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 7, Wis 14, Cha 4. **Skills and Feats:** Hide +16, Listen +8*, Move Silently +11, Spot +10*; Alertness, Stealthy.

* *the bat spirit familiar has a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Listen checks. These bonuses are lost if it's blindsense is negated.*

Spells Known (6/7/4 per day; save DC 12+spell level):

0 *daze, detect magic, detect poison, ghost sound, open/close, read magic*

1st *detect secret doors, magic missile, expeditious retreat*

2nd *spider climb*

Possessions: +1 tamagusari, six kunai, nekode, +2

leather armor, ring of *invisibility*, 2 smoke grenades, 3 doses of blinding powder-type II, 1 dose of antitoxin, potions of *cure moderate wounds* (x2), 60 ft. black silk rope, silk cord, black hakama and gi, disguise kit, courtier's outfit, traveler's outfit.

1,232 gp.

* *Kitsu no Emiko* has *Uncanny Dodge*, which allows her to apply his *Dexterity* modifier to her *Armor Class* when caught flat-footed.

KURO-KIMIKO: female human Rogue9; Medium humanoid [human]; HD 9d6-9; hp 34; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (+3 Dex, +5 armor, +1 deflection), touch 14, flat-footed 16; BAB +6; Grp +7; Atk +9 melee (1d6+2/x3, +1 nunchaku) or +10 ranged (1d6+2/x3, +1 composite shortbow of distance); Full Atk: +9/+4 melee (1d6+2/x3, +1 nunchaku) or +10/+5 ranged (1d6+2/x3, +1 composite shortbow of distance); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA sneak attack +5d6; SQ evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trapfinding, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; AL CN; SV Fort +2, Ref +9, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 8, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 14.

Prestige Score: 21

Languages: Common, thieves' cant and kitsu.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +7, Balance +4, Bluff +14, Decipher Script +10, Diplomacy +17, Disable Device +10, Disguise +12 (+14 acting in character), Gather Information +12, Hide +10, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (local) +9, Listen +10, Move Silently +12, Open Lock +12, Search +10, Sense Motive +11, Spot +7; Improved Initiative, Leadership, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Weapon Focus (nunchaku).

Possessions: +2 studded leather armor, +1 nunchaku, +1 composite shortbow of distance, ring of protection +1, hat of disguise, thieves' tools, potions of *cure moderate wounds* (x3), *jump*, *cat's grace*, *detect thoughts*, kimono.

7,782 gp.

SAIRYUUKOE NO DAYU: male human Aristocrat10; Medium humanoid [human]; HD 10d8+10; hp 55; Init -1 (-1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (-1 Dex, +3 deflection), touch 12, flat-footed 12; BAB +7; Grp +8; Atk: +9 melee (1d6+1/19-20x2, masterwork wakizashi); Full Atk: +9/+4 melee (1d6+1/19-20x2, masterwork wakizashi); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA - ; SQ - ; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +9; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 13, Int 21, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Prestige Score: 20

Languages: Common, oni and spirit.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +12, Diplomacy +14, Gather Information +12, Intimidate +15, Knowledge

(geomancy) +10, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (nobility) +10, Knowledge (religion) +10, Knowledge (spirits) +10, Listen +7, Ride +1, Sense Motive +15, Spot +9, Use Magic Device +13; Alertness, Leadership, Skill Focus (Intimidate), Skill Focus (Sense Motive), Skill Focus (Use Magic Device).

Possessions: masterwork wakizashi, ring of protection +3, headband of intellect +4, eyes of charming, gem of seeing, wand of *summon monster III* (31 charges), wand of *sending* (42 charges), kimono-elaborate.

6,426 gp.

SAIRYUUKOE NO TAIZO: male human Aristocrat4/ Fighter3; Medium humanoid [human]; HD 4d8+8 + 3d10+6; hp 49; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+2 Dex, +5 armor), touch 12, flat-footed 15; BAB +6; Grp +8; Atk: +9 melee (1d6+3/x2, +1 kama of speed); Full Atk: +9/+9 melee (1d6+3/x2, +1 kama of speed); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA - ; SQ - ; AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Prestige Score: 15

Languages: Common and spirit.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +4, Diplomacy +7, Gather Information +11, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (local) +6, Knowledge (nobility) +6, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +5, Search +4, Sense Motive +4, Spot +5; Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative, Improved Disarm, Investigator, Skill Focus (Gather Information), Weapon Technique (kama).

Possessions: +1 kama of speed, +2 studded leather armor, lantern of revealing, 4 candles of truth, potion of *cure moderate wounds* (x2), traveler's outfit, courtier's outfit.

1,497 gp.

TAIRA NO HITOSHI: male human Aristocrat3/ Fighter15 (samurai class concept); Medium humanoid [human]; HD 3d8+6 + 15d10+30; hp 132; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 23 (+13 armor), touch 10, flat-footed 23*; BAB +17; Grp +23; Atk +26 melee (1d10+12/17-20x2, +3 katana of brilliant energy) or +21 ranged (1d8+6/x3, +2 composite longbow of seeking); Full Atk: +26/+21/+16/+11 melee (1d10+12/17-20x2, +3 katana of brilliant energy) or +21/+16/+11/+6 ranged (1d8+6/x3, +2 composite longbow of seeking); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA - ; SQ - ; AL LN; SV Fort +12, Ref +8, Will +8; Str 22, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 18.

Prestige Score: 28

Languages: Common and spirit.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +10, Climb +11 (+5 in full armor), Diplomacy +19, Handle Animal +12, Intimidate +22, Knowledge (local) +5, Knowledge (nobility) +5, Listen +10, Ride +12, Sense Motive +4, Spot +6, Swim +10 (-2 in full armor); Cleave, Combat Expertise, Daisho Ownership, Deadly Arc, Dodge, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (katana), Leadership, Mobility, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Spring Attack, Weapon Technique (katana), Whirlwind Attack, Zanshin.

Possessions: +3 katana of brilliant energy, +1 wakizashi, +2 composite bow (+4 pull) of seeking, masterwork samurai armor (+2 metal do of light fortification, metal haidate, metal kote, metal sune-ate, sode, kabuto, mempo), belt of giant's strength +4, cloak of charisma +6, potions of *bear's endurance*, *cure serious wounds* (x3), *fly*, *water breathing*, hakima and gi, kimono-elaborate.
8,492 gp.

* *Taira no Hitoshi* has the *Zanshin Feat*, which allows him to apply his *Dexterity* modifier to his *Armor Class* when caught flat-footed.

TAIRA NO KOTO: male human Courtier6; Medium humanoid [human]; HD 6d6+6; hp 28; Init -1 (-1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (-1 Dex, +3 nat. armor), touch 9, flat-footed 12; BAB +3; Grp +3; Atk: +4 melee (1d6+1/17-20x2, +1 keen wakizashi); Full Atk: +4 melee (1d6+1/17-20x2, +1 keen wakizashi); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA *sway opinion*; SQ wealth, talent, style and grace, gossip, versatile (disguise & forgery); AL LN; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +9; Str 10, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Prestige Score: 19

Languages: Common and spirit.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +12, Craft (gardening) +10, Decipher Script +9, Diplomacy +17, Disguise +8 (+10 acting in character), Forgery +5, Gather Information +24, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (history) +5, Knowledge (local) +6, Knowledge (nobility) +5, Listen +11, Search +8, Sense Motive +16, Spot +10; Alertness, Iron Will (B), Investigator, Skill Focus (Gather Information), Skill Focus (Sense Motive).

Possessions: amulet of natural armor +3, +1 keen wakizashi, potion of *cure moderate wounds* and *invisibility*, courtier's outfit, kimono-elaborate.
1,426 gp.

TAKE-ODORIKO: female kitsune Nogitsune9/Rogue8; Medium fey [kitsune]; HD 9d6+0 + 8d6+0; hp 59; Init +7 (+7 Dex); Spd 40 ft.; AC 22 (+6 Dex, +4 armor, +2 deflection), touch 18, flat-footed 16*; BAB +12; Grp +12; Atk +21 melee (1d4+1d6 electricity/x2,

+2 shocking sai) or +20 ranged (1d2+1d6 cold/x2, +1 frost shuriken-up to 7 thrown simultaneously); Full Atk: +21/+16/+11 melee (1d4+1d6 electricity/x2, +2 shocking sai) or +20/+15/+10 ranged (1d2+1d6 cold/x2, +1 frost shuriken-up to 7 thrown simultaneously per attack); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA fox bite +3d6, fox magic, master trickster (distraction, distant fingers, touch of chaos, hide in plain sight), sneak attack +4d6; SQ divine vulnerability, eight tails, entrancing beauty, evasion, fox form, honor-bound, improved uncanny dodge, low-light vision, *shadow lair*, trapfinding, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +19, Will +7; Str 10, Dex 25, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 16.

Prestige Score: 25

Languages: Common, Kitsu, and spirit.

Skills and Feats: Balance +14, Bluff +11 (+15 against humans), Climb +5, Concentration +10, Decipher Script +6, Disable Device +9, Diplomacy +12 (+16 against humans), Disguise +11 (+13 acting in character), Escape Artist +12 (+14 involving ropes), Forgery +6, Hide +32, Intimidate +10, Jump +10, Knowledge (local) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Knowledge (spirits) +6, Listen +9, Move Silently +17, Open Lock +14, Search +11, Sense Motive +5, Sleight of Hand +17, Spot +9, Survival +4, Tumble +14, Use Magic Device +8 (+10 for scrolls), Use Rope +12 (+14 with bindings); Weapon Finesse, Weapon Technique (shuriken), Fox Magic (see below).

Fox Magic: 17 uses/day.

Basic Disguise, Advanced Disguise, Masterful Disguise, Inanimate Shape, Amiable Mien, Masterful Liar, Forceful Action, Puppet Strings, Possession, Fox Madness. Save DC 21.

Possessions: +2 shocking sai, +1 frost shuriken (50), gloves of dexterity +6, +2 leather armor of greater shadow, boots of striding and springing, +2 ring of protection, potions of *cure serious wounds* (x3), *jump*, *cat's grace* (x2), *detect thoughts*, *darkvision*, *periapt of wound closure*, kimono-elaborate.
5,782 gp.

* *Take-Odoriko* has *Uncanny Dodge*, which allows her to apply her *Dexterity* modifier to her *Armor Class* when caught flat-footed.

TOUKAI NO KOZUE: male human

Aristocrat7; Medium humanoid [human]; HD 7d8+7; hp 33; Init -1 (-1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 9 (-1 Dex), touch 9, flat-footed 9; BAB +5; Grp +5; Atk: +5 melee (1d6+1/19-20x2, +1 dancing wakizashi); Full Atk: +5 melee (1d6+1/19-20x2, +1 dancing wakizashi); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA - ; SQ - ; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 9, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 16.

Prestige Score: 17

Languages: Common.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +10, Bluff +13, Craft (calligraphy) +5, Diplomacy +21, Gather Information +10, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (history) +5, Knowledge (local) +6, Knowledge (nobility) +6, Listen +6, Sense Motive +9; Leadership, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Skill Focus (Sense Motive), Skill Focus (Intimidate).

Possessions: +1 dancing wakizashi, potion of *cure moderate wounds*, Nolzur's Marvelous Pigments, kimono-elaborate. 6,947 gp.

WARAI-HITO: male human Assassin10/Fighter2/Rogue5 (ninja class concept); Medium humanoid [human]; HD 10d6+10 + 2d10+2 + 5d6+5; hp 81; Init +6 (+6 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 23 (+6 Dex, +5 armor, +2 deflection), touch 18, flat-footed 17*; BAB +12; Grp +14; Atk +21 melee (1d6+5/17-20x2 plus 1 Con plus poison, +3 ninja-to of wounding) or +19 ranged (1d3+4/x2 plus poison, +1 kunai of returning-up to three thrown simultaneously) or +18 ranged (1/x2 plus poison, blowgun); Full Atk: +21/+16/+11 melee (1d6+5/17-20x2 plus 1 Con plus poison on first strike only, +3 ninja-to of wounding) or +19/+14/+9 ranged (1d3+4/x2 plus poison, +1 kunai of returning-up to three thrown simultaneously) or +18/+13/+8 ranged (1/x2 plus poison, blowgun); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA death attack, poison use, sneak attack +8d6, spells; SQ evasion, hide in plain sight, improved uncanny dodge, trapfinding, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge, +5 save versus poison; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +17, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 23, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Prestige Score: 17

Languages: Common, oni and thieves' cant.

Skills and Feats: Balance +13, Bluff +10, Climb +12, Craft (weaving) +4, Disable Device +12, Diplomacy +9, Disguise +10 (+12 acting in character), Escape Artist +17, Hide +23, Intimidate +15, Jump +9, Knowledge (local) +7, Listen +10, Move Silently +20, Open Lock +15, Search +17, Sense Motive +10, Spot +10, Tumble +13; Dodge, Improved Critical (ninja-to), Mobility, Shinobi Arsenal, Spring Attack, Stealthy, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Technique (ninja-to and kunai).

Spells Known (4/4/3/3 per day; save DC 12+spell level):

1st feather fall, jump, sleep, true strike

2nd alter self, cat's grace, invisibility, spider climb

3rd deep slumber, deeper darkness, false life, nondetection

4th clairaudience/clairvoyance, dimension door,

glibness, locate creature

Possessions: +3 ninja-to of wounding, three +1 kunai of returning, +3 leather armor of etherealness, blowgun and 40 needles, +2 ring of protection, medallion of thoughts, robe of blending, vest of escape, manual of quick action (expended), goggles of night, nekode, bag of holding-type II, 6 smoke grenades, 7 doses of blinding powder-type III, 3 doses of antitoxin, potions of *cure serious wounds* (x3), 10 doses giant wasp poison (always one dose on ninja-to at start of encounter), 8 doses deathblade poison (always one dose on each kunai at start of encounter), 40 doses blue whinnis poison (always one dose on each dart at start of encounter), 60 ft. black silk rope, silk cord, black hakama and gi, disguise kit, courtier's outfit, kimono-elaborate. 3,252 gp.

*Warai-Hito has *Uncanny Dodge*, which allows him to apply his *Dexterity* modifier to his *Armor Class* when caught flat-footed.

YAMAKEN NO KINNOJO: male human Cleric13(Shinto priest); Medium humanoid [human]; HD 13d8+26; hp 88; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (+5 armor, +4 deflection), touch 14, flat-footed 19; BAB +9; Grp +10; Atk +12 melee (1d6+2 plus 1d6 fire/x3, +1 flaming takujo); Full Atk: +12/+7 melee (1d6+2 plus 1d6 fire/x3, +1 flaming takujo); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA exorcism, spells; SQ aura, *sense the unnatural*; AL LN; SV Fort +10, Ref +4, Will +15; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 20, Cha 12.

Prestige Score: 23

Languages: Common and kitsu.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +12, Diplomacy +9, Heal +11, Hearth Wisdom +15, Knowledge (local) +4, Knowledge (religion) +6, Spellcraft +4; Extra Turning (Exorcism), Improved Turning (Exorcism), Iron Will, Maximize Spell, Takujo Specialization, Weapon Focus (takujo).

Spells Typically Prepared (6/7+1/6+1/5+1/5+1/4+1/2+1/1+1 per day; save DC 15+spell level, Domains: Plant and Protection):

0 create water, cure minor wounds, detect magic, guidance, light, purify food and drink

1st bless, command, cure light wounds, divine favor, entangle*, sanctuary, shield of faith, summon monster I

2nd aid, augury, bear's endurance, consecrate, cure moderate wounds, hold person, shield other*

3rd create food and water, cure serious wounds, dispel magic, invisibility purge, protection from energy*, remove disease

4th air walk, cure critical wounds, discern lies, neutralize poison, spell immunity*, tongues

5th *break enchantment, mass cure light wounds, scrying, spell resistance*, true seeing*

6th *antimagic field*, heal, word of recall*

7th *animate plants*, summon monster VII*

* denotes domain spell.

Possessions: +1 flaming takujo, bracers of armor +5, ring of protection +4, gloves of dexterity +2, periapt of wisdom +2, scrolls of *banishment, cure serious wounds, dimensional anchor, enthrall, find traps, gentle repose, glyph of warding, helping hand, remove blindness/deafness, restoration, silence, speak with dead, zone of truth*, incense of meditation (2 blocks), dimensional shackles, cleric's vestments. 2,443 gp.

ZASU KONDO NO UKYO: male human Cleric (Buddhist monk)3/Fighter4/Monk7 (sohei class concept); Medium humanoid [human]; HD 3d8+3 + 4d10+4 + 7d8+7; hp 80; Init +9 (+5 Dex. +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 50 ft.; AC 25 (+5 Dex, +2 monk's bonus, +4 Wis, +4 deflection), touch 25, flat-footed 20; BAB +11; Grp +17; Atk +17 melee (1d6+6 plus 1d10/x3 plus+2 and 2d6 against fey, +3 fey-bane takujo) or +13 melee (1d10+2/x2, unarmed strike); Full Atk: +17/+12/+7 melee (1d6+6 plus 1d10/x3 plus+2 and 2d6 against fey, +3 fey-bane takujo) or +13/+8/+3 melee (1d10+2/x2, unarmed strike); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA exorcism, flurry of blows, *ki* strike (magic), slowfall 30 ft., spells, unarmed strike; SQ aura, evasion, purity of body, *sense the unnatural*, still mind, wholeness of body; AL LG; SV Fort +13, Ref +12, Will +13; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 19, Cha 13.

Prestige Score: 22

Languages: Common and spirit.

Skills and Feats: Balance +10, Climb +10, Concentration +6, Diplomacy +12, Escape Artist +10, Heal +6, Hide +12, Jump +16, Knowledge (local) +1, Knowledge (religion) +2, Listen +9, Move Silently +12, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +1; Combat Reflexes (B), Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative, Improved Ki Weapon (takujo), Improved Trip (B), Improved Unarmed Strike, Ki Weapon (takujo), Takujo Specialization, Weapon Focus (takujo), Weapon Specialization (takujo).

Spells Typically Prepared (4/3+1/2+1 per day; save DC 14+spell level, Domains: Law and Good):

0 *detect magic, guidance, light, purify food and drink*

1st *bless, detect evil, summon monster I, protection from evil**

2nd *bull's strength, cure moderate wounds, aid**

* denotes domain spells.

Possessions: +3 fey-bane takujo, ring of protection

+4, gloves of dexterity +4, monk's belt, ring of improved jumping, figurine of wondrous power-ebony fly, potions of *cure serious wounds* (x3), hakima, gi and white head cowl. 1,340 gp.



CALENDAR

The calendar of the empire has been honed over thousands of years, and is based on a combination of meticulous astronomical calculations and astrological beliefs. The day on which one is born is believed to in part determine their personality, suitability for certain professions, and even their compatibility for marriage. Certain days and months were considered fortuitous, and others ominous.

Please note that while the calendar used in the Yonhosu Valley closely resembles that of ancient Japan, it has been simplified, streamlined and altered for ease of game-play (such as changes in the days of the week, combining rokuyo with the seven day cycle, and occasional name changes).

Days of the Calendar

The calendar used in the Yonhosu Valley and the empire beyond reflects a seven day week, each day named and dedicated to a particular element or astrological symbol. Each individual day is divided into twenty-four hours, every two hours of which is ruled by a corresponding animal sign (see the Years of the Calendar section to follow).

1st day – **Taiyou-Youbi** (Sun Day) – Good luck will come before noon, but bad luck is to follow after noon. Taiyou-Youbi is a good day for beginning new projects or starting anything new, as long as they are started in the morning.

2nd day – **Tsuki-Youbi** (Moon Day) – Funerals are to be avoided on this day, and ill fortune may befall friends.

3rd day – **Honoo-Youbi** (Fire Day) – The opposite of Taiyou-Youbi, the Fire Day brings bad luck in the morning and good luck in the afternoon. Honoo-Youbi is a good day to complete an activity or project, but only in the afternoon.

4th day – **Mizu-Youbi** (Water Day) – The most unlucky day, on which weddings and unions of any kind are to be assiduously avoided.

5th day – **Mokuzai-Youbi** (Wood Day) – The most auspicious day, and a good day for weddings.

6th day – **Kane-Youbi** (Metal Day) – The Hours

of the Horse (approximately 12pm to 2pm) are lucky, though the rest of the day is unlucky.

7th day – **Tsuchi-Youbi** (Earth Day) – The cycle repeats, and Tsuchi-Youbi carries the same onus of good and bad luck as the 1st day: Taiyou-Youbi.

Months of the Calendar

The calendar is also based on lunar cycles and a twelve month year.

1st month – **Mu-Tsuki** (Harmony)

2nd month – **Kisa-Ragi** (Seasonal Change of Dress)

3rd month – **Ya-Yohi** (Grass Grows Dense)

4th month – **U-Tzuki** (Summer, Plant Rice)

5th month – **Sa-Tsuki** (Rice Sprouts)

6th month – **Mi-Na-Tzuki** (Watering Month)

7th month – **Fu-Tzuki** (Month of Letters)

8th month – **Ha-Tzuki** (Month of Leaves)

9th month – **Naga-Tsuki** (Autumn Long Month)

10th month – **Kami-Na-Tzuki** (Month of No Gods)

11th month – **Shimo-Tsuki** (Month of Falling Frost)

12th month – **Shi-Hasu** (Poor-Looking Winter)

Ka-Na-Tzuki (Month of No Gods)

During the Month of No Gods, it is believed that all of the deities and kami of the land gather in a far off shrine to celebrate before the onset of winter.

Fear of attack by evil spirits and demons spikes during Ka-Na-Tzuki. In the absence of the gods, the common folk believe that they are particularly vulnerable to evil forces during the Month of No Gods.

Years of the Calendar

The calendar is based on a twelve year cycle, which repeats again and again through time. Being born in a certain year is believed to determine a person's bearing and compatibility others. Also, each twenty-four hour day is broken down into two hour blocks that are each ruled in turn by the animals listed here (i.e. the Hours of the Rat are from midnight to 2am, while the Hours of the Hours of the Dog are from 8pm to 10pm).

- 1st year – **Nezumidoshi** (Year of the Rat) – Born under the sign of the rat, people are naturally charming and quick-witted, but behind their friendly demeanor is a tenacious ambition and unrepentant self-promotion. Greed can undo someone born in the Year of the Rat if they are not cautious. Though they are hoarders by nature, they can be quite generous with their friends and family. Notorious for being sharp-tongued, people born under the sign of the rat love verbal sword-play. Curious and keen-minded by nature, people born in the Year of the Rat seek out knowledge and new experiences. People born in this Year must find a way to balance their own needs with the needs of others in order to achieve balance and true happiness in their lives. A rat's most compatible signs are the dragon or monkey.
- 2nd year – **Ushidoshi** (Year of the Cow) – Detail-oriented and methodical, people born in the Year of the Cow are dependable and tireless workers. Those born under the sign of the cow occasionally suffer from social awkwardness and tend to be introverts. Behind their stolid exterior, those born in the Year of the Cow are quite sensitive, and find great solace in friends and family. People born in this year make solid, affectionate and supportive companions, family members and lovers. The greatest flaw for those born in this year is their innate stubbornness and tendency towards inflexibility, though they tend to be unerringly honest and steadfast. As long as those born under the sign of the cow can avoid their judgmental nature, they will flourish. The most compatible signs for a person born in this year is the snake or bird.
- 3rd year – **Toradoshi** (Year of the Tiger) – An air of authority surrounds those born in the Year of the Tiger, and they are natural leaders. People gravitate towards tigers and their magnetic charm. Courageous and driven, those born under the sign of the tiger will pursue what they desire without fail. Tigers feel intensely and are very passionate, making them prone to sudden swings of mood. The unpredictability of tigers can make them either attractive or repellent to those around them. The key to happiness for those born under this sign is moderation and balance in all things. The most compatible matches for those born in the Year of the Tiger are the horse or dog.
- 4th year – **Usagidoshi** (Year of the Rabbit) – Compassionate yet timid, those born in the Year of the Rabbit are often willing to give selflessly to relationships and goals. They surround themselves with a tight support network of family and friends, and they need this solid base in order to flourish. Those born under this sign despise conflict, and will go to almost any lengths to avoid it. Rabbits are prone to pessimism, and often refuse to face their problems in life. Rabbits are contemplative, and often observe a situation from a distance rather than confronting it. With the right partner who will not abuse the sensitive nature of the rabbit, a person born under this sign can be an unbelievably supportive and loving partner. A bit of assertiveness and a well-developed sense of self will serve a rabbit well through life. Those born under the sign of the rabbit will find the most harmony with the signs of sheep and pig.
- 5th year – **Tatsudoshi** (Year of the Dragon) – A lucky sign, being born in the Year of the Dragon is most fortuitous. Dragons possess the perfect balance of fiery passion and warm kindness. They are naturally charismatic and draw people around them, and their advice is eagerly sought out. They are gifted with a tenacious intelligence that drives them towards their goals. Despite their many great qualities, the greatest threat to one born under the sign of the dragon is ego. Power is what a dragon craves, and they often believe that they are entitled to what they desire. They will take every opportunity to consolidate their power, and in defeat they lack any grace or humility. Dragons wish only to lead, and they do make natural leaders, though they must always keep their ambitions in check.

Those born in the Year of the Dragon will find greatest compatibility with the monkey and the rat.

- 6th year – **Hebidoshi** (Year of the Snake) – Known to be great diplomats, those born in the Year of the Snake are extremely popular individuals containing the perfect mixture of sociability and introspection. Snakes are considered to be lucky with money, and are usually blessed with having more than enough of it. They tend to be cautious to take action without first analyzing a situation from all angles. While seemingly charming and seductive, snake's harbor a truly reserved nature and enjoy the simple pleasures of life. A penchant for jealousy in snakes may drive off lovers and friends, but people born under this sign are known to be irresistible lovers. Instinctual and impetuous, the snake is likely to rely on intuition over logic. Possessed of great intelligence, those born under the sign of the snake are excellent workers and achieve what they set out to do. While generally generous and charming, those born in the Year of the Snake need to mitigate their less than appealing qualities with modesty. Those born under this sign will find themselves most attuned to birds and cows.
- 7th year – **Umadoshi** (Year of the Horse) – Nomadic by nature, those born in the Year of the Horse are gifted with boundless energy and a restless desire to travel. Those born under this sign suffer a paradoxical need to fit in while simultaneously needing to assert their independence and freedom. They crave love, yet may later feel trapped by it. Horses are make and scintillating company, and have a great capacity for gregariousness. Blighted with an impatient nature, horses can sometimes plough over others in their drive to take the reigns of control. Those born under this sign are self-reliant, but easily bored by tedium. Whimsical people at heart, those born in the Year of the Horse may leave relationships and situations prematurely. They are great motivators of others, and can focus on the task at hand when necessary. Once a horse is able to find a sense of inner peace and calms their wanderlust, they can find great happiness. Those born in the Year of the Horse are naturally drawn to and will find harmony around dogs or tigers
- 8th year – **Hitsujidoshi** (Year of the Sheep) – Drawn to the arts and teaching, those born in the Year of the Sheep are creative and inventive thinkers. Though they have many gifts, sheep are generally not well-organized and have difficulty with tasks that require orderliness. They are not materialistic, finding greater pleasure in their own imaginations than in worldly delights. A deep insecurity often plagues these artistic souls, creating a needy hunger for love, admiration and validation. In relationships, sheep require a great deal of reinforcement and affection, and partners of this sign must be prepared to deal with the sheep's propensity for anxiety and sensitivity at the slightest provocation. Once a sheep is able to overcome its crippling insecurities and incessant need for attention, they can find true peace. Those born under the sign of the sheep will find those born in the Year of the Pig or Rabbit to be the best matches.
- 9th year – **Sarudoshi** (Year of the Monkey) – Those born in the Year of the Monkey are naturally social creatures who relish amusement, company, and stimulation. Curious, resourceful, delightful and engaging, monkeys have no trouble building circles of friends and family though they tend to show off when given the opportunity. Hedonists at heart, those born under the sign of the monkey pursue pleasure to the exclusion of all else. This blithe self-centeredness can lead the monkey into trouble, but their glib wittiness will smooth over most problems. The monkey does not act out of maliciousness, though many people may be hurt by their lack of concern for anything but pleasure. People are attracted to the monkey's charm, but most will find that the monkey will move on when something more interesting comes along. Those born in the Year of the Monkey suffer from the need for self-indulgence to the point of excess, leading at times to problems with over-eating, alcoholism, sex-addiction and the like. Monkeys rarely show remorse for their actions, but when they do they are quite genuine in their repentance. In order to achieve balance, those born under the sign of the monkey must learn to put the needs of others before their own on occasion. A monkey will find the signs of the rat and

dragon most compatible with their care-free nature.

- 10th year – **Toridoshi** (Year of the Bird) – Sensible and keenly observant, those born under the sign of the bird are rarely caught unawares. Birds are highly attuned to their environments, and pick up on details other miss. Honest and forthright, the bird deals with everyone with complete frankness. They have little to no capacity for deception or dissembling, always presenting their true selves. Those born under the sign of the bird are naturally trusting, but tricksters should beware; the bird's vigilant attention to detail leaves little unnoticed. Birds can be perfectionists in all things, especially their appearance. They take great pride in exquisite grooming and apparel, and live for compliments. Birds keep an impeccable home, and cleanliness is paramount. They will expect all those who surround them to rise to their high standards of dress and behavior. If they are not careful, they can become quite dogmatic and boorish. Those born under the sign of the bird need to learn to be more accepting of others habits and beliefs, and to value things other than physical appearance. Birds will find they are most compatible with those born under the sign of the cow and snake.
- 11th year – **Inudoshi** (Year of the Dog) – Innately faithful and honest, those born in the Year of the Dog adhere to an exacting code of ethics. They make loyal and discreet companions, though they can have difficulty trusting others. Dogs have a very strong sense of right and wrong, and seek to address injustice wherever it is encountered. In general, those born in the Year of the Dog have little patience for small talk or social banter, preferring to dive in to issues they consider important. As a result, dogs can be quite dogmatic and zealously proselytize about their beliefs. Narrow-mindedness afflicts those born under the sign of the dog, making it difficult to relate with others. Dogs must warm up to others over time, building trust gradually. Without a firm foundation of trust, a dog is often abrasive and hypercritical in relationships. Those born in the Year of the Dog feel most comfortable when they are active, with a clear project and specific goals to work towards. Ambiguity is their greatest fear. Dogs need to learn to

become more tolerant and relaxed. They will find the greatest compatibility with those born under the signs of the tiger and horse.

- 12th year – **Butadoshi** (Year of the Pig) – Those born in the Year of the Pig are generous to a fault and have an appreciation for the finer things in life. Their preoccupation with taste and manners can often be misconstrued as snobbery, but they simply luxuriate in the finest example of humanity without any sense of superiority or elitism. Pigs care deeply for their friends and family, and their greatest pleasure in life is helping others. Those born under the sign of the pig are tremendously magnanimous, and many people will take advantage of the pig's generous nature. In sharp contrast to their kind dispositions, a pig that has been crossed can be quite spiteful when wronged by someone they love. They are playful and inquisitive people, always probing the great mysteries of life and existence. They can be mistaken for lazy, however, by those who misunderstand their great love for the simple pleasures of life. A pig will find happiness and long life when they discover that there is more to life than living for others. Those born in the Year of the Pig will find great company in the signs of the rabbit and the sheep.

HOLIDAYS AND DAYS OF IMPORTANCE

Many festivals and days of great importance are celebrated by the people of the Yonhosu Valley. They are varied and numerous, but a few are detailed here.

Bommatsuri – the Festival of the Dead

For three days in the middle of 7th month, the spirits of the dead are allowed to return to the land of the living. At sunset on the first day of the festival, quaint miniature meals are prepared for the great host of ghosts, and lanterns are hung in cemeteries and on garden gates to light the way. For three days the spirits return to wander the gardens they so loved in life, visit loved ones, and to enjoy the fullness of summer when the darkness of Emma-O's kingdom cannot be endured.

On the evening of the last day of the Festival of the Dead, preparations are made for the departure of the spirits. Thousands of little *shoryobuni* ('soul ships') are packed with food and farewells, for on that evening the high tide brings a flood of returning ghosts back to their spirit world. These tiny ships are borne by loving hands that set them on rivers and streams that feed into the Ketsueki-Kawa. With a tiny lantern lighting the prow and soft clouds of incense wafting from its stern, the little ships carry the spirits back to the mouth of the river.

That evening, the rivers and sea are luminescent with the light these souls emit, and their whispering can be heard. While the ghosts are embarking, no human ship should come near. Should one stray into the soul-covered sea, the ghosts will ask for pails. The sailors should only offer them pails without bottoms, for if they do not, the ghosts will sink their ship.

Festival of the Weaving Maiden

Particularly popular in Toukai, the Festival of the Weaving Maiden honors Tanabata (the Weaving Maiden). The festival takes place just before the Festival of the Dead, on the 7th day of the 7th month. It is customary to leave bundles of freshly cut bamboo on the roofs of houses, each bundle tied with colorful strips of paper with a poem in praise of Tanabata written on every strip. People pray on that night that Tanabata and her husband Hikoboshi might be reunited on a bridge of birds that, once a year on the 7th day of the 7th month, span the Celestial River that separates husband and wife. If the weather is clear, the bridge of birds will form and Tanabata and Hikoboshi come together, but should it rain the banks of the Celestial River would flood and the river would grow too wide for the birds to span. Wishing not to deny Tanabata the company of her husband for another year, the weavers of Toukai pray for fair weather and celebrate on that night to ensure their meeting.

San-ga-nichi – The Festival of the New Year

The three days of the New Year, or San-ga-nichi, is one of the most important festivals to the people of the Yonhosu Valley. The New Year is observed on the day after the second new moon after the winter solstice. In order to guarantee a lucky and plentiful year, the three days of the New Year Festival require strict observance of ritual. Every house, from the palace of provincial governors to the humblest peasants shack, is thoroughly cleaned and put in order. Evil spirits who may have taken up residence in the home are

put out by throwing handfuls of peas and beans out from open doorways. Houses and gateposts are adorned with straw ropes to represent the auspicious numbers three, five and seven. Special food is prepared consisting of lobster, oranges, seaweed and mirror cakes (cakes made from rice served on pure white trays and associated with the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu). Homes are also decorated with the branches of pine trees, an important symbol of long life, which are burned at the festival's end.

On the last night of the Festival, it is believed that the Treasure Ship of the Seven Lucky Gods comes to port with a cargo of magical riches. Pictures of the Treasure Ship are placed under children's pillows during the festival, in the hopes of giving the child a lucky dream.

Tango-no-Sekku – The Boy's Festival

Celebrated on the 5th day of the 5th month, the Boy's Festival inspires young boys with the qualities of a warrior. On that day, flags are seen in all directions and roofs are decorated with the leaves of iris so that both the flags of men and the flags of nature can be seen on this propitious day. Young boys are given figurines representing great heroes and ancestors. Those boys of the appropriate age and maturity are presented with ancient swords and other ancestral weapons as the heirlooms are passed from one generation to another.



GAME MASTER'S SECTION





7

THE STORY OF HANUMACHI

SPOILER ALERT!

Players should likely stop reading this chapter at this point, as what is to follow discusses the deeper currents and conflicts in Kitsunemori. Campaigns and games set in Kitsunemori will be much more pleasurable to players if they remain ignorant of the information disclosed in the remainder of this chapter. Discovering the many plots and conspiracies at play will be immensely more interesting if the players are not aware of them in advance. Game Masters should encourage their gaming group to allow these secrets to remain hidden until they are dramatically revealed.

The temptation may be great, but finding out the many twists and turns in advance may dull a player's experience of a campaign in Kitsunemori.

The choice is yours.

The Rise of Hanumachi

Hanumachi is a demon laid dormant by an ancient kitsune hero, but the seals to his prison are cracking and the kitsune of today do not remember how to imprison the demon once more. His energy is starting to corrupt spots of the forest, creating blighted groves from which evil monsters and ghosts spew out to terrorize the surroundings. The demonic taint is also manifesting in the hearts of humans and kitsune alike. This is the main "story" for *Kitsunemori*.

While the provinces deal with the many political and social struggles that plague them, the threat posed by Hanumachi goes without notice. In fact, agents of Hanumachi are exploiting the turmoil in the provinces and even promoting it. Numerous oni have infiltrated all levels of society, and are working to undermine traditional values and erode societal cohesion.

Temples are being erected and geomantic nodes are being focused on the prison of Hanumachi, tainting the geomantic flows throughout the Yonhosu Valley. Spontaneous incursions into this plane are occurring, pulling in outsiders and scarring the land. Temples great and small that pepper the valley are being destroyed outright, their monks murdered and disgraced through nogitsune guile. The nascent threat of Hanumachi is beginning to attract the attention of myobu.

Agents of Hanumachi and their Foul Exploits

While Hanumachi remains imprisoned, he is still able to work through a network of agents and spies. Chief among the agents of Hanumachi are his oni minions (see Chapter VII: Forest Denizens for details on oni). Disguised **kumo** have penetrated all of the provincial courts except that of the Yamaken Han. In Toukai, Akaki and Sairyuukoe, these demon spiders in the guise of beautiful women are seducing well-placed government officials. The kumo are using their powers to enthrall these men and bring them to disgrace and ruin. **Amanojaku**, disguised as courtiers and even servants, stalk the provincial courts probing the minds of important aristocrats and officials. From these minds, the insidious amanojaku are stealing valuable secrets, defense plans, and bits of information that can be used to promote further division and chaos in the provinces.

Humans and kitsune rank among Hanumachi's agents as well. Some serve Hanumachi out of a desire for unimaginable power or the promise of immortality, while others simply delight in the ruin and anarchy Hanumachi offers.

Warai-hito (the Laughing Man), leader of the Yabun-Tsume clan in Toukai, serves the demon-lord and has been a rabid supplicant for most of his adult life. The shinobi leader uses his many spies to gather information for Hanumachi, funneling it to the demon through amanojaku messengers. Yabun-Tsume assassins are already positioning themselves to eliminate potential threats to Hanumachi; powerful Shinto and Buddhist monks, prominent samurai, valiant myobu, legendary adventurers, and the like.

Kikugawa no Rosanjin, onmyouji to the notorious Taira no Hitoshi, is also in service to Hanumachi. Several years ago, oni agents of the demon-lord approached Rosanjin, who had already built a dark reputation in the capitol. In return for the promise of untold power and immortality, Rosanjin agreed to attach himself to Taira no Hitsohi and lead the man to disaster. He was to encourage Hitoshi in the man's desire to rule all of the Yonhosu Valley and serve him to this end. Also, Rosanjin was charged with aiding in the deforestation of Akaki. With the Kitsunemori devastated, shrines focused on Hanumachi can be erected by his oni minions to augment his strength as he attempts to break free from his prison. The many kitsune and bakemono who have died in the process seem inconsequential to Rosanjin, who kills them without either passion or remorse. Taira no Hitoshi is seemingly unaware of Rosanjin's ulterior motives, and amanojaku spies have helped to place a beautiful kumo in disguise near Hitoshi, hoping that soon she will be able to enthrall him and make him a puppet.

Take-Odoriko (Bamboo Dancer) and her nogitsune pack all serve Hanumachi's purposes, though they do not obey his as their liege, much to the demon-lord's chagrin. The nogitsune have taken advantage of the strife of the land, and are disgracing monks and leading government officials throughout Akaki and Toukai. In return for the chaos the nogitsune spread, Hanumachi has gifted Take-Odoriko and her pack with a powerful amulet that prevents detection by their enemies. The demon-lord has also instructed Rosanjin not to harm any nogitsune in his campaign to deforest the Kitsunemori. Take-Odoriko and

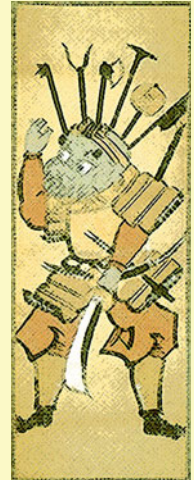
her pack will continue to work for Hanumachi so long as they find the situation entertaining.

Sairyuukoe no Dayu was been a devotee of Hanumachi for several years, and has been secretly worshipping many evil kami and demons since child-

Amanonuhoko (Heavenly Halberd of the Marsh)

The Heavenly Halberd of the Marsh is a major artifact from the time to creation. It is older than the gods, and its powers are vast. The Amanonuhoko is a +5 axiomatic adamantine holy halberd that confers onto its wielder the following powers:

- The halberd has the ability to shape reality. Once per day, the wielder of the Amanonuhoko can make one wish (functions as the *wish* spell).
- The halberd contains the power of creation itself. Three times per day, the wielder of the halberd may use each of these abilities: *minor creation*, *major creation*, *summon monster IX*. Items created and creatures summoned are manifested from the stuff of the cosmos, and are permanent. However, creatures created through the summon monster spell, though permanent, are only bound to obey the wielder of the halberd for 20 rounds, after which they are free to do as they please. The gods harken to the call of the wielder of the Heavenly Halberd. Once per day, the wielder of the halberd may call on the power of the kami of the land and perform a *miracle* (as per the *miracle* spell).
- The halberd is order-incarnate, and chaotic creatures should beware its touch. Any chaotic creature holding the halberd, or struck by it, must succeed on a DC 40 Fortitude save or be instantly removed from existence for the rest of eternity. Creatures who fail their saving throw are gone forever and cannot be brought back through any means.
- The halberd reaches into the mind of its wielder, trying to bring order to the chaos of mortal thoughts. Only a god can wield the Heavenly Halberd without fear. Anyone else wielding the Amanonuhoko must succeed on a DC 30 Will save every round or succumb to the halberd's mental intrusion. Creatures who fail their saving throw are overcome by the halberd, and their minds are condensed into the most basic of thoughts. Creatures so affected have their Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores permanently reduced to 3.



hood. Dayu desires complete dominion over the Yonhosu Valley, and one day to become emperor with the power he believes Hanumachi will grant him. Severely abused as a child, Dayu has become sadistic and cruel, but his mind remains incredible sharp and his intellect is formidable. He expertly crafted the **Kouken-agensuto-Zaigou** (Guardians against Sin) out of the Office of Deities to grant legitimacy to his boundless penchant for brutality. While some of the Guardians are undoubtedly willing servants to Hanumachi, their leader, **Sairyuukoe no Taizo** is not a follower, he is simply a fanatical madman deemed too mentally unreliable to be recruited by Hanumachi. In fact, if Taizo had any inkling that Dayu or any of the other Guardians were in service to a demon-lord, he would personally slit their throats without hesitation.

Yamaken no Kinnojo is the most surprising and unlikely servant of Hanumachi. Kinnojo is utterly disgusted by the corruption and degradation he sees infecting the empire. He has watched as all traditional values have become polluted, government corrupted, social orders tainted, and even the monkhood contaminated by the evil of the times. Nothing is pure any longer, and Kinnojo knows that even greater anarchy and misery will follow when the imperial government collapses under the weight of its own gluttony. Kinnojo sees one hope for humanity, however, and as strange as it may seem that hope is Hanumachi. Kinnojo believes that once Hanumachi is released from his prison, all of Yonhosu and even the empire beyond will unite to fight the common enemy. He believes that in the face of adversity, men will once again show their finer qualities and forego the greed and selfishness that has pervaded the times. Kinnojo dreams of a pure world to come, in which old hostilities will melt away to create new bonds of brotherhood; a world of faith, order and purity. The only way to herald that world, Kinnojo believes, is to unleash a threat onto the world that threatens to destroy the very fabric of the universe. There is no doubt in Kinnojo's mind that the world of men will eventually be victorious against Hanumachi, but he is working assiduously to break Hanumachi free from his prison to release the demon and bring in the new age. No one in Kinnojo's immediate circle has even the slightest idea of his plans, and continue to relate to him as a trusted ally and friend.

Breaking Free

Hanumachi cannot break free from his prison until enough geomantic energy has been focused on his prison. His followers must identify sites and erect shrines of great power to bolster Hanumachi's strength, but even that will not be sufficient to break the demon-lord from his cell. Hanumachi has been imprisoned in a pocket dimension that has a Crossing to the material plane that is sealed. That Crossing is located in the northern Shirokage Mountains, buried beneath tons of rock. Already, armies of oni are digging through to the Crossing, but their progress is slow and it will take more than a year before they are able to unearth the Crossing. Even then, they must obtain one legendary object before they can release their lord: **Amanonuhoko** (Heavenly Halberd of the Marsh). The Amanonuhoko is an artifact from the time of creation, given to Izanagi and Izanami to aid in the formation of the world. Myth and legend claim that it is hidden somewhere in the Yonhosu Valley, and the oni have been scouring the valley for the halberd.

Once an adequate number of shrines have been devoted to Hanumachi, his prison uncovered from beneath the rocks, and the Heavenly Halberd of the Marsh is in oni possession, then the demon-lord can be set free from his prison. Only Hanumachi himself knows of the ritual to free himself, and the use of Amanonuhoko in the process. Once all elements are in place, Hanumachi will choose a follower to gift with the precious knowledge of how to free him, and that chosen one will be loved above all others when Hanumachi is freed. Among the followers of Hanumachi, much jockeying for position and vying for favor occurs even now to be the chosen one. Some followers will stop at nothing to be the one chosen by their demon-lord.





8

ADVENTURES IN KITSUNEMORI

Suggestions for Game Masters

Game Masters wishing to run a full campaign in the Kitsunemori setting are encouraged to use any and all aspects of this supplement, and look to texts listed in this bibliography for further inspiration. Here are a few suggestions to keep in mind for Game Masters considering a campaign in Kitsunemori:

- The threat of Hanumachi is best introduced into the campaign gradually and subtly. Don't even hint at Hanumachi's involvement in the world in the first few adventures, instead simply allow the players to explore some of the world and deal with the very dramatic domestic struggles in the Yonhosu Valley. Once it appears that the characters have a fairly good grasp on what human and kitsune struggles exist in the valley, then begin to introduce clues to a bigger threat. At first, don't let the clues be too overt; stick to hints that the supernatural activity in the forests may have a strange cause, or that the actions of some NPC's have ulterior motives beyond the obvious. Then gradually lead the players to discoveries about the growing demon threat, and the many conspiracies hidden beneath the domestic turmoil.
- Keep players interested. Use as many of the creatures, mechanics, equipment and so on to entice the players into an unfamiliar and exciting fantasy world unlike those they have played in before. Build on what this supplement offers and create details for each of the Han, NPC's and monsters to add flavor to your game.
- Involve the characters in the conflict with Hanumachi. Whether they are a party of yobu and humans determined to stop the demon threat or a pack of nogitsune out to exploit the chaos, be sure that your party is intrinsically tied to the central conflict of the Kitsunemori campaign.
- Make it your own! Take what is offered in this supplement and make it your own campaign. Ideally players and Game Masters will by playing a variety of campaigns in this setting, each one unique and different.
- The freeing of Hanumachi from his prison is the central story of Kitsunemori, and should be considered in the overall arc of any campaign in this setting. When your campaign begins, less than a half dozen shrines have been dedicated to Hanumachi. In order to break free from his prison, a total PR 100 in shrines must be devoted to him. Build in adventures where the party discovers plans for a shrine or stumbles upon the construction of one. Stopping the building of shrines to Hanumachi is essential to foiling plans to free him. Of course, the party can never uncover all plots to erect these dark shrines, and so it becomes almost impossible for them to stop Hanumachi in this way, but let them pursue this track for some time to build the tension of the campaign.
- Identifying and either exposing or destroying the many oni infiltrators throughout the Yonhosu Valley is imperative to stopping Hanumachi from being set free. Kumo and amanojaku in disguise present challenging and possible recurring foes for adventuring parties. Plan adventures where the party will need to use subterfuge, social skills and cunning to navigate through courtly situations and palace compounds in pursuit of the oni. Then give them a satisfying battle with

the demon at the end of the chase.

- Locating Hanumachi's prison is also essential to the game. It is deep in the Shirokage Mountains, and should not be approached until the party is of sufficient level. Drop clues from time to time about the location of the Crossing to Hanumachi's prison.
- Finding the **Amanonuhoko** (Heavenly Halberd of the Marsh) and preventing it from falling into oni hands is crucial to stopping Hanumachi. The halberd could be anywhere, and is a great source of mystery for the campaign. Choose a hiding place that is both inconspicuous and unexpected. Also drop clues that the Heavenly Halberd of the Marsh is the only weapon that can kill Hanumachi as well.
- GameMasters will have to choose as to whether Hanumachi is stopped before breaking free, or if he is set free and must be destroyed. Both choices present interesting challenges and plot points that must be fulfilled. Only the Heavenly Halberd of the Marsh can kill the demon-lord, and the party will need both the halberd and the ability to wield it effectively in order to have any chance to succeed.

Story Seeds and Adventure Hooks

The following are a handful of story seeds to incorporate into your Kitsunemori campaign:

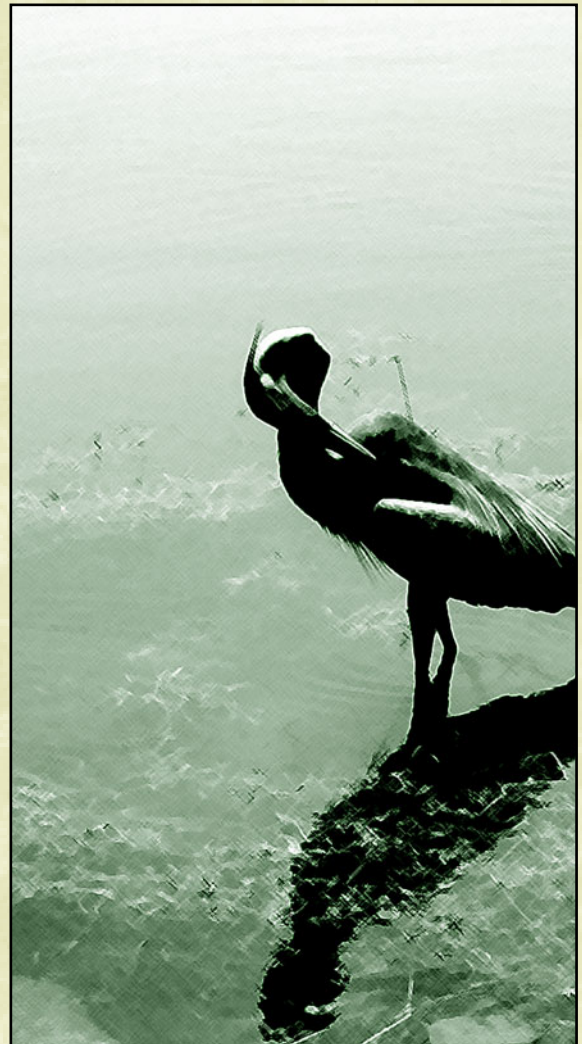
- A Buddhist monk in Akaki, once honored and trusted by the community, has been humiliated and driven from service into exile. The pieces of the puzzle just don't fit, and the party has been asked to investigate (TWIST: nogitsune are actually responsible for tricking the Buddhist monk, and plan to do so again).
- Bakemono, driven from Akaki by the slaughter there, have moved into Yamaken and a pack has abducted a young human girl. The party has been asked to locate the girl and rescue her (TWIST: the bakemono actually believe the girl is a goddess incarnate and have taken her to be their shaman).
- A gaki has laid claim to the treasury of a wealthy merchant in Toukai, and the adventurers have been asked to rid the merchant's home of the ghost in return for a healthy reward (TWIST: during the process of driving out or destroying the gaki, the adventurers discover a letter from the merchant to the Yabun-Tsume employing them to murder a prominent local official).
- An onryou has been haunting an old fortress in Yamaken for decades, killing all who enter. The party has been employed by a Shinto shrine to eradicate the haunting (TWIST: in destroying the onryou, the party might find some ancient treasure chest with a book inside detailing the history of Hanumachi and his last assault on the Yonhosu Valley).
- Common folk in a village of Sairyuukoe are disappearing in the night, their belongings left behind but not a sign of their bodies is left. The party has been asked to investigate (TWIST: a Jikininki-cursed monk has recently come to the village and is living off the hospitality of the residents during the day and devouring them by night).
- Kappa sappers have attacked a merchant supply train in Sairyuukoe, and much needed medical supplies will not reach Akaki in time to treat an outbreak of fever there. The party is asked to make haste, retrieve the medicines and transport them to Akaki (TWIST: the kappa are lying in wait for anyone coming to retrieve the medical supplies, and know exactly what they are meant for).
- In a remote village along the sea shore in Toukai, villagers claim that their children are being eaten by nearby Kijo tribes and have asked the party to hunt down the perpetrators before more children are lost (TWIST: if the players investigate, they should discover that it is not the Kijo who have been eating the children, but the hunters are actually oni that must be ambushed and destroyed).
- Loggers in Akaki have been unable to penetrate a certain grove, and some of them have been killed in their sleep as they camp near the trees. The party is asked to investigate the cause and, if possible, eliminate the threat (TWIST: initial signs should indicate that it might be nogitsune from the bite marks on the dead loggers, but further investigation reveals that the perpetrator is an ancient Ki-no-obake protecting its forest that sent animals out to murder the loggers. The party must then decide to either destroy the tree spirit or try to convince the loggers to leave the grove alone).
- A group of nukekubi has traveled to a village in Toukai where they are posing as tinkers. Many people have been found drained of

blood, and the common folk blame kitsune for the deaths. The party has been asked to hunt down the creatures responsible (TWIST: the party must locate and deal with the nukakubi, but by the light of day, how can they identify these cunning creatures?).

- A disguised shinobi agent contacts the party and attempts to set up a meeting between the characters and his employer who is interested in the party's activities regarding Hanumachi. The employer is looking to bring the party on for a mission, which promises to be very lucrative and aiding in the quest to stop Hanumachi from breaking free from his prison (TWIST: if the characters agree to the meeting, they find that the Kitsune clan genuinely wishes to hire them on a freelance basis, but the Yabun-Tsume have been following the party and there is an ambush at the meeting place).
- A tanuki village in Akaki has fought back against the loggers and refuse to leave their ancestral home. In retaliation for the suffering caused by the loggers, the tanuki have abducted a group of human merchants and are holding them hostage. They demand that the Akaki Han recognize their right to own and live in that patch of the forest, and in return they claim they will return the hostages unharmed. Taira no Hitoshi and his government, however, are refusing to negotiate, and are preparing to storm the tanuki settlement. A courtier from the Akaki provincial government secretly approaches the party and asks them to intercede and attempt to either save the hostages without bloodshed or negotiate their safe return. The courtier is offering a hefty reward if the party succeeds (TWIST: the Akaki courtier is a kitsune in disguise testing the party to see if their hearts are true and how they handle the situation. All that the party encounters is cunning kitsune magic and illusion, none of it is real. If they act honorably and without harming any innocents, the kitsune will then attempt to recruit them for additional missions against the agents of Hanumachi).
- Tengu have been venturing out of the forests of Sairyuukoe and stealing children while they sleep. A reputable merchant observed one of the tengu abducting one of his own children only a few nights past. The merchant offers the party a goodly sum to rescue his daughter

and the other missing children (TWIST: The tengu are taking the children for a bizarre ritual that will transform the young humans into tengu. The party must act quickly, or the children will be changed into the monstrous avians).

- Winter has fallen, and with it Yuki-Onna is roaming the land once again. A remote village claims that she is plaguing them night after night without fail, and they are begging any and all adventurers to help protect them (TWIST: Yuki-Onna is searching the village for the burial site of her long-dead lover, a fey-creature who died millennia ago. The spirit of the fey-creature is still bound to the land there, and is attracting Yuki-Onna's attention. The party must discover the true reason for Yuki-Onna's repeated visits, locate the buried remains of her fey lover, and exorcise the spirit that remains).





9

FOREST DENIZENS

The kitsune are not alone in Kitsunemori, even if they dominate it. The spirit foxes are accompanied by an assortment of supernatural friends and enemies:

BAKEMONO

Medium Monstrous Humanoid

Hit Dice: 1d8 + 2 (6 hp)

Initiative: +1

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 20 ft (clumsy)

Armor Class: 13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural), touch 11, flat footed 12

Base Attack/Grapple: +1/+4

Attack: Spear +4 melee (1d8+3) or sling +2 ranged (1d4+3)

Full Attack: Spear +4 melee (1d8+3) or sling +2 ranged (1d4+3)

Space/Reach: 5ft./5ft.

Special Attacks: -

Special Qualities: Blindsight 60 ft.

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +1

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 7, Wis 8, Cha 6

Skills: Listen +3, Spot +3

Feats: Alertness

Environment: Temperate forests

Organization: Pack (3 – 12)

Challenge Rating: 1

Treasure: Standard plus possessions

Alignment: Usually neutral

Advancement: 2 – 5 HD (Medium)

Level adjustment: ?

Strangely reminiscent of upright bats, the screeching of these creatures echoes eerily through the night. A thin and almost transparent membrane hangs from their arms and connects to their legs. Their wiry bodies are covered in hair, their heads dominated by enormous ears.

Bakemono are bizarre, primitive creatures. Pack hunters, they rarely are found alone, preferring the comfort of numbers. They arrange themselves in a strict hierarchy based on brute strength and force of will. Each pack has a strict pecking order, with the alpha its undisputed commander. A pack without a clear alpha will devolve quickly into chaos, and old or infirm alphas are regularly murdered by rival male.

Able to craft and wield only rudimentary weapons, the bakemono fight with stone-tipped spears and leather slings. They eagerly strip fallen opponents of arms and gear, but few among them have the aptitude to wield anything more than simple weapons. Instead they take human weapons as prizes with which to boast and elevate their standing in the pack.

Males are the pack hunters, while females are venerated and indulged. The bakemono spiritual belief system recognizes the female as the source of all life and they are thus highly revered. Bakemono packs encountering easily recognizable females of any species will leave them unharmed, and may even offer them a gift.

Nocturnal by nature, the bakemono hunt by night and sleep hanging upside-down from tree branches in the daylight hours. A lone sentry is always awake to sound the alarm should predators approach.

Bakemono are carnivores, eating mammals, insects, and grubs. They have been known to scavenge as well.

In the forests of Akaki, many packs of bakemono have been systematically exterminated by foresters who prefer to harvest logs without the interference of the wretched bakemono.

Bakemono speak bakemono.

COMBAT

Bakemono almost always travel in groups, and frequently lay in wait to ambush unwary travelers. They prefer to conceal themselves in the forest canopy and drop down on unsuspecting prey below.

Echo-location (Ex): Bakemono navigate by means of echo-location which operates as the blindsight ability, but can be rendered useless by judicious use of silence spells. Bakemono can activate their echo-location as a free action. Additionally, a bard may use a countersong to confuse and disrupt a bakemono's echo-location. When performing a countersong, the bard rolls a Perform check, and any bakemono within 30 feet of the bard must succeed on a Fortitude save with a DC equal to the bard's Perform check. If the bakemono fails its save, its echo-location is disrupted. The bakemono must make a new save each round to resist the countersong.

BAKU – THE EATER OF DREAMS

Large Outsider (Extraplanar, Incorporeal)

Hit Dice: 20d8+200 (290 hp)

Initiative: +13

Speed: Fly 120 ft. (perfect)

Armor Class: 31 (-1 size, +9 Dex, +13 deflection), touch 31, flat footed 22

Base Attack/Grapple: +20/+24

Attack: Incorporeal claw +28 melee (1d8 plus 1d6 Wisdom drain)

Full Attack: 2 incorporeal claws +28 melee (1d8 plus 1d6 Wisdom drain) and incorporeal bite +23 (2d6 plus 1d6 Wisdom drain)

Space/Reach: 10ft./5ft.

Special Attacks: Aura of exhaustion, devour dreams, spell-like abilities, wasting touch, wisdom wither

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., delve, dream dependence, dreamsense, incorporeal traits, spell resistance 31

Saves: Fort +22, Ref +21, Will +23

Abilities: Str -, Dex 29, Con 30, Int 27, Wis 33, Cha 37

Skills: Bluff +36, Concentration +33, Diplomacy +40, Disguise +36 (+38 when acting in character), Handle Animal +36, Hide +28, Intimidate +36, Knowledge (arcana) +31, Listen +34, Move Silently +32, Search +31, Sense Motive +34, Spellcraft +33, Spot +34, Survival +34 (+36 following tracks)

Feats: Ability Focus (Devour Dreams), Blindfight, Improved Counterspell, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack, Track, Quicken Spell-like ability (*greater dispel magic* and *hold monster*)

Environment: Ethereal plane

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 20

Treasure: Double standard

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 21+ HD (Huge)

Level adjustment: -

This awe-inspiring beast has the face of a lion, body of a horse, and feet of a tiger. The bizarre creature's luminescent coat glows and shimmers like beaten gold. Sinuous dark stripes swirl and slither around its equine body and mane.

Baku is otherwise known as the Eater of Dreams. As his name suggests, he feeds on the dreams and nightmares of humans while they sleep. Baku's origins are lost to history and cloaked in speculation. He rather enjoys the enigma, and so perpetuates the mystery surrounding his existence.



Day and night, Baku roams the world of man, hunting for creatures at rest. Baku will eat the dreams of any sentient creature, but prefers the flavor and imaginative imagery of human dreams. Nightmares are particularly appetizing to Baku, as he enjoys the primal emotions attached to them. When he finds a dreaming creature, he will enter their dreams invisibly and observe. If he likes the dream or nightmare, he will devour it, leaving the creature in dreamless sleep.

Some dream-dependant kitsune have run afoul of Baku, as he believes human dreams to be his undisputed domain. Usually Baku will simply scold the kitsune and send it on its way, but a few legendary kitsune have truly raised Baku's ire by beating the Eater of Dreams to an exceptionally delicious nightmare. Those kitsune who do not acknowledge Baku's supremacy have suffered greatly for it, for though Baku is neither cruel nor arrogant he refuses to compete for food.

Many a villager, plagued by recurring nightmares, has prayed to Baku to devour his dreams. Children often pray to Baku to keep nightmares away, and even a few extremely wealthy daimyo have paid to have charms crafted to beckon Baku to relieve their children of undesirable dreams.

COMBAT

Baku seeks only to feed his insatiable hunger for dreams. He will not engage in combat if it can be avoided, but will fight ferociously if his nourishment is threatened. Baku will employ his aura of exhaustion and many spell-like abilities to combat opponents.

Aura of Exhaustion (Su): Creatures in Baku's vicinity find themselves irresistibly lulled into sleep. As a free action, Baku can activate his aura of exhaustion. All creatures within 30 feet of Baku must succeed on a DC 33 Will save or fall instantly asleep for 1d8 hours. Sleeping creatures suffer the same effects and can be awakened as described in the *sleep* spell on pg. 280 of CRB I. Baku can affect an unlimited number of Hit Dice with his aura of exhaustion. Unconscious creatures, constructs, undead and creatures immune to sleep effects are impervious to the aura of exhaustion. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Devour Dreams (Su): Baku craves the dreams and nightmares of sentient creatures. At will, as a standard action that provokes an attack of opportunity, Baku can 'eat' the dreams of any dreaming creature. Baku must be within 40 feet of a sleeping target that he wishes to feed from, and the target must succeed on a

DC 35 Will save or have their dreams devoured. If the target fails the saving throw, Baku feeds successfully and his target suffers a -2 penalty to all Wisdom and Intelligence checks for one day until she sleeps again. For every dream that Baku feeds on successfully, he heals 10 hit points if damaged. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Spell-like abilities: At will – *greater arcane sight*, *comprehend languages*, *disguise self*, *greater dispel magic* (quickened up to three times per day), *hypnotic pattern* (DC 25), *identify*, *locate object*, *major image*, *mirror image*, *ray of exhaustion* (DC 26), *see invisibility*, *tongues*; 3/day – *blindness/deafness* (DC 25), *dimension door*, *fear* (DC 27), *feeblemind* (DC 28), *greater teleport*, *hold monster* (quickened-DC 28), *locate creature*, *phantasmal killer* (DC 27), *plane shift*, *protection from energy*, *prying eyes*, *rainbow pattern* (DC 27), *sending*, *summon monster VI*, *symbol of sleep*, *true seeing*, *waves of fatigue* (DC 28); 1/day – *banishment* (DC 30), *dimensional lock*, *foresight*, *insanity* (DC 30), *moment of prescience*, *scintillating pattern* (DC 31), *spell turning*, *time stop*, *waves of exhaustion* (DC 30), *weird* (DC 33). Caster level 20. The save DC's are Charisma-based.

Wasting Touch (Su): The claws and bite of Baku, while physically insubstantial, are quite deadly. Channeling his essence through teeth and claws, Baku can injure living creatures, dealing 1d8 points of damage with his incorporeal claws and 2d6 points of damage with his incorporeal bite. As with other incorporeal attacks, the Baku's wasting touch ignores armor and shields, but not deflection and dexterity bonuses or force effects. No saving throw is allowed against the Baku's wasting touch.

Wisdom Wither (Su): Baku's spectral touch saps away the wisdom of his opponents. As a free action, on each successful incorporeal bite or claw attack, Baku drains 1d6 points of Wisdom from his target unless the victim of the attack succeeds on a DC 33 Fortitude save. For each point of Wisdom drained from a victim, Baku heals one point of Wisdom damage (if any). The save DC is Charisma-based.

Delve (Su): In pursuit of dreams on which to feed, Baku can enter the mind of any sleeping sentient being. Baku must be within 40 feet of a sleeping creature to attempt a delving. The sleeping target must succeed on a DC 33 Will save or Baku is able to burrow into their thoughts as they slumber. If the target fails its save, Baku is able to prowl the sleeper's mind for 3d6

rounds. In that time, he can immediately identify if the target is dreaming, and if so, see and hear the dream as through the target's eyes and ears. Baku can also probe the deep memories of the target, retrieving from memory the answer to one question per round. Each question drawn from the target's memory allows the target an additional DC 33 Will save to resist the delving. If the target fails the save, they yield the answer to Baku's question with complete frankness and without dissembling. Though the target must answer truthfully and thoroughly if their save is failed, they can only answer the question to the extent of what they know and believe to be true, and may inadvertently offer incorrect information. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Dream Dependence (Ex): Baku craves dreams and nightmares, and cannot resist his hunger. In every twenty four hour period, Baku must successfully devour at least a dozen dreams or suffer excruciating pain. If Baku fails in feeding on sufficient dreams to sate his hunger, he sickens and takes 1 point of Wisdom damage. Baku is destroyed utterly if his Wisdom score is reduced to zero through starvation.

Dreamsense (Ex): Highly attuned to sleeping minds, Baku can intuitively sense dreaming in creatures. Baku can unerringly sense the direction and distance to any creature in a dream state within 60 feet.

DRAGON

Throughout the world, myths and legends speak of dragons and serpents to be feared and revered. The vast majority of dragons in the world of Kitsunemori slumber peacefully in their celestial abodes or deep beneath the sea, only waking to serve their liege: the Dragon King.

Some few river dragons frequent Kitsunemori, sent on errands by the Dragon King. The dragons of Kitsunemori bear a resemblance to dragons of the western tradition, but have a few notable differences that distinguish them from their fire-breathing, treasure-hoarding kin.

The traditional chromatic and metallic dragons found in CRB III do not appear in the Kitsunemori setting as they are products of occidental folkloric traditions.

RIVER DRAGON

Huge Dragon (Aquatic)

Hit Dice: 12d12+72 (150 hp)

Initiative: +10

Speed: 50 ft. (10 squares), fly 120 ft. (perfect), swim 80 ft.

Armor Class: 30 (-2 size, +10 Dex, +12 natural), touch 18, flat footed 20

Base Attack/Grapple: +12/+27

Attack: Gore +17 melee (3d8+7) or claw +15 melee (2d6+3) or bite +15 melee (2d8+3)

Full Attack: Gore +17 melee (3d8+7) and 2 claws +15 melee (2d6+3) and bite +15 melee (2d8+3) and sting +15 melee (1d8+3 plus poison)

Space/Reach: 15ft./10ft.

Special Attacks: Breath weapon, constrict 2d8+7, improved grab, poison, spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/magic, dark-vision 60 ft., geomantic jewel, immunity to cold, sleep and paralysis effects, low-light vision, SR 24, water breathing

Saves: Fort +14, Ref +18, Will +12

Abilities: Str 25, Dex 30, Con 22, Int 14, Wis 19, Cha 17

Skills: Bluff +7, Concentration +14, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +11, Escape Artist +18, Handle Animal +7, Hide +12, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (geomancy) +6, Listen +12, Move Silently +18, Search +10, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +10, Spot +14, Survival +8 (+10 following tracks), Swim +20*

Feats: Awesome Blow, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Natural Attack (gore), Multi attack, Power Attack

Environment: Rivers and lakes

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 15

Treasure: Double standard

Alignment: Usually lawful neutral

Advancement: 12 - 21 HD (Huge), 22 -36 (Gargantuan)

Level adjustment: -

This enormous serpentine creature has horns like a deer, talons like an eagle, long moustaches, and a bright jewel under its broad chin. Majestic and breathtaking, this sinuous creature's yellow-white scales shimmer endlessly.

Most dragons cannot be roused from their decades-long naps, and even when they waken few deign to travel to the land of mortals. The Dragon King, however, requires that his kindred journey to Kitsunemori frequently on errands of divine importance.

River dragons are the emissaries and messengers of the Dragon King. They swim the rivers and lakes of Kitsunemori, doing the bidding of their master. Capable and cunning, river dragons often pass through the provinces with no one the wiser. On occasion, river dragons will reveal themselves to human followers of the Dragon King, and even bestow their blessings.

All river dragons possess and carry always a jewel beneath their chins. Many foolhardy adventurers have attempted to best a river dragon and steal their jewel. Few have succeeded. The jewel confers on the wearer great acumen and power.

The habits of dragons are much speculated upon, but little understood. River dragons are intentionally reclusive, and are only seen when they wish it. While river dragons spend the bulk of their time in water, and are excellent swimmers, they are just as competent on land or in the sky.

River dragons range in coloration from a deep, burnished ochre to pale white with all variations in between. They vary in length from 22 to 32 feet in length and weigh well in excess of 10 tons. River dragons speak draconic and spirit.

COMBAT

Dragons are tremendously powerful beings, and are quite aware of their potency. Unless enraged or in great peril, they will use only as much force as is necessary to diffuse a conflict.

When called upon to fight, the river dragons will use their breath weapon to great effect, separating allies in clouds of smoldering ash. They will tear, lash, bite and sting as needed, careful not to use more strength than required. River dragons see most mortals as exceedingly fragile, and so are cautious not to decimate them unless absolutely necessary. However, creatures it perceives as an enemy will meet with the full fury of a river dragon.

Breath weapon (Su): The breath of a river dragon is a miasma of fire, smoke and ash. As a standard action that does provoke an attack of opportunity, a river dragon can breathe a 50 foot cone of burning ash. Creatures caught in the path of the breath weapon can make a Reflex save (DC 22) for half damage and to avoid the hindering effects of the burning ash. Creatures fail their saving throw take 8d6 points of fire damage and suffer additional effects. A cloud of

clinging ash remains after the dragon breathes, hanging in the air for 2d6 rounds.

Any creature who fails their saving throw is caught in the cloud has all sight obscured, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. A creature five feet away has concealment (20% miss chance) while creatures farther away have total concealment (50% miss chance and attackers cannot use sight to locate the target). Additionally the sticky ash is easily inhaled and clings to lungs, making breathing difficult. Creatures in the cloud also suffer ability damage at the rate of 1 point of Constitution per round inside the cloud, unless they hold their breath (rules for suffocation apply). Moving outside the cloud requires a successful Survival or Wisdom check (DC 22) to intuit the way out.

Any creature that makes its Reflex save takes only half damage and is able to dodge clear of the lingering cloud of ash.

A river dragon, after using its breath weapon, cannot do so again for another 1d4 rounds following.



Constrict (Ex): A river dragon can wrap its coils around an opponent and crush it to death. After a successful grapple check, a river dragon automatically envelops its opponent and deals 2d8+7 points of bludgeoning damage. Used in conjunction with the river dragons improved grab ability, it can deal constriction damage in addition to claw damage when initiating a grapple into a constrict.

Improved Grab (Ex): If a river dragon hits a Huge or smaller creature with a claw attack, it can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Poison (Ex): The sting of a river dragon's tail carries with it an insidious poison. Any creature struck by the dragons sting must succeed on a DC 22 Fortitude save or suffer 1d6 points of Dexterity damage. One minute later, the creature must succeed on another DC 22 Fortitude save or suffer 1d6 points of secondary Dexterity damage.

Spell-like abilities (Su): At will – *invisibility, misdirection, see invisibility, tongues*; 1/day – *polymorph, summon monster I*. Caster level 9th.

Geomantic Jewel (Su): Under the chin of every river dragon, one will find an exceptional many-faceted jewel. If a river dragon is slain, the jewel can be removed easily, but is inseparable from the dragon's body as long as it lives. Jewels run the gamut of colors, and come in a variety of shapes. The jewel grants its holder (or wearer) a +2 bonus to Wisdom and Dexterity as well as the ability to *fly* and *polymorph* once per day (Caster level 9th).

Water Breathing (Ex): A river dragon can breathe underwater indefinitely and can freely use all of its abilities while submerged except its breath weapon.

Skills: River dragons receive a +5 racial bonus to all Swim checks.

GHOSTS

Kitsunemori and the surrounding provinces are rife with hauntings and spirits. Ghosts arise for a variety of reasons, and each is uniquely terrifying. While ghosts are certain to be found at sites of ancient and bloody battles and burial mounds, the spirits of the dead abound throughout Kitsunemori. Some spirits, the souls of venerated ancestors, serve as clan protec-

tors in some villages, but the vast majority of ghosts in Kitsunemori are those that refuse to leave this plane out of rancor, bitterness or a burning desire for revenge. A few spirits, punished for their mortal misdeeds and severed from the Great Wheel of Existence, have even been cursed to roam the land of the living.

The ghosts detailed here are not standard ghosts as described in CRB III, though ghosts of that ilk can be found in the form of ancestral spirits. Game Masters should feel free to create additional ghosts and are encouraged to generate ancestral spirits using the ghost template in CRB III for use in their Kitsunemori campaigns.

GAKI

Medium Undead (Incorporeal)

Hit Dice: 3d12 (19 hp)

Initiative: +6

Speed: Fly 40 ft. (good) (8 squares)

Armor Class: 15 (+2 Dex, +3 deflection bonus), touch 15, flat footed 13

Base Attack/Grapple: +1/-

Attack: Incorporeal touch +3 melee (1d4 plus touch of the famished)

Full Attack: Incorporeal touch +3 melee (1d4 plus touch of the famished)

Space/Reach: 5ft./5ft.

Special Attacks: Horrifying appearance, spell-like abilities, touch of the famished

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., greed, incorporeal traits, treasure sense, undead traits

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +3

Abilities: Str -, Dex 15, Con -, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 16

Skills: Appraise +6, Concentration +5, Hide +7, Intimidate +8, Listen +4, Search +4, Sense Motive +4, Spot +4

Feats: Blindfight, Improved Initiative

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 4

Treasure: Triple standard (if guarding a horde)

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 4 – 12 HD (Medium)

Level adjustment: -

This ghostly creature appears as an emaciated human with a distended stomach, bulging eyes. The most unsettling aspect of the creature is their inhumanly small mouths and throats.

Gaki are hungry ghosts, the undead spirits of tremendously jealous and greedy people. As punishment for their mortal vices, they are cursed with a ravenous hunger for gold and treasure.

Driven by their insatiable desire for riches, gaki wander in search of great treasure troves and the estates of the wealthy. Once they have discovered a place of great wealth, they will lay claim to it. Every night, the gaki will attempt in vain to gulp down the riches. The futile effort is met with always met with failure, as the gaki's intangible hands pass through all that it touches. So, each night the gaki's hunger increases, hoping that the next night they will finally be able to satisfy their burning hunger, and slowly they are driven mad. Their madness manifests in how they frighten and torment all humans who dare to approach their claimed domain.

Gaki will not leave their haunting unless driven out or if the riches are somehow removed. If the haunting is robbed of its wealth or if the gaki is driven from the area, it will seek out another trove and lay claim to it.

Gaki speak common.

COMBAT

Gaki jealously guard and defend their treasure hordes. They will attack anyone attempting to approach or steal from their riches. They will try to frighten, trick and confuse all intruders. If trespassers in their territory do not desist despite the gaki's efforts to scare them away, the gaki will attempt to kill them rather than lose its precious fortune.

Horrifying Appearance (Ex): The gaki's countenance is grotesque and appalling. All those within 30 feet who look at the gaki must succeed on a DC 14 Will save or be frightened for 3d6 rounds. This ability is constantly in effect, but the gaki's actual appearance can be disguised or concealed by illusions, which temporarily inhibits the operation of the ability as only the gaki's natural appearance inspires fear. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Spell-like abilities (Su): 3/day – *disguise self*, *invisibility*, *minor image* (DC 15), *mirror image*, *ventriloquism* (DC 14); 1/day – *major image* (DC 16). Caster level 7th. Save DC's are Charisma based.

Touch of the Famished (Su): Living creatures hit by a gaki's incorporeal touch attack must succeed on a DC 14 Fortitude save or become famished and

overwhelmed with hunger for 1d6 rounds. Famished creatures can think of only one thing: food. Any famished creature are driven to find sustenance, and will frenziedly eat anything that is edible (and palatable to their dietary requirements) for the duration of the effect. They will devour their rations (should they have any), steal food from companions, eat surrounding foliage, and so on. They will take no other action except to feed their voracious hunger. If they are threatened, they will defend themselves, but will make every effort to extricate themselves from combat to search for food. If there is no food to be found in the area, famished creatures will then move elsewhere in a frantic hunt for something edible. Famished creatures will not eat anything that they know to be poisonous, but may unintentionally eat something poisonous to their physiology in their need to satiate their endless hunger. Only creatures that need to eat to survive are affected by the gaki's touch of the famished (i.e. outsiders do not need to eat, and are thus impervious to the touch of the famished). The save DC is Charisma based.

Greed (Ex): Gaki are irresistibly driven to possess and attempt to eat gold and treasure. If they are presented with wealth superior to their horde, they will follow it recklessly in the hopes that they might eat it. They will pursue and attempt to take possession of the wealth, using all abilities in their arsenal to do so. However, in this maddened state, the gaki's judgement is seriously impaired. The gaki suffers a -2 penalty to its Dexterity and Wisdom scores as it heedlessly chases the riches. Additionally, the gaki suffers a -2 penalty to attack rolls and skill checks. Both effects last for 1d4 hours, and the gaki will continue to pursue the object of its desire until it either obtains it or is presented with wealth of equal or greater value.

Treasure sense (Su): The gaki's desire for riches is so pervasive that it has affected the spirits very nature. As a free action, a gaki can sense the direction, distance, and gold piece value of any coins, object or collection of objects within 120 feet. The gaki's treasure sense can penetrate barriers, but it can be blocked by 1 foot of stone, 1 inch of common metal, a thin sheet of lead, or three feet of wood or dirt.

ONRYOU

Medium Undead (Incorporeal)

Hit Dice: 8d12 (52 hp)

Initiative: +3

Speed: Fly 20 ft. (poor) (4 squares)

Armor Class: 18 (+3 Dex, +5 Deflection bonus), touch 18, flat footed 15

Base Attack/Grapple: +4/-

Attack: Incorporeal touch +7 melee (2d4 plus steal breath)

Full Attack: Incorporeal touch +7 melee (2d4 plus steal breath)

Space/Reach: 5ft./5ft.

Special Attacks: Create spawn, steal breath, urami aura

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., haunting, incorporeal traits, +4 turn resistance, undead traits

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +9

Abilities: Str -, Dex 16, Con -, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 21

Skills: Bluff +16, Hide +14, Intimidate +18, Listen +11, Search +9, Sense Motive +10, Spot +14

Feats: Ability Focus (Steal Breath), Blindfight, Improved Natural Attack

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary, pair or army (3 or more)

Challenge Rating: 8

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always lawful evil

Advancement: 4 – 12 HD (Medium)

Level adjustment: -

Pale, translucent creatures of little physical substance, these strange ghosts exude an almost overwhelming aura of hatred and anger.

Onryou are vengeful ghosts created when a person is cruelly murdered. Their grudge against their killers, and their anger over the untimely theft of their life, is so powerful that they rise from the dead to exact their revenge. Onryou are utterly unable to let go of their “urami,” or grudge, against the injustice of their murder. They kill all they see, and those they kill rise again as an onryou as well. These pitiless ghosts exist to create other onryou to share in the suffering of their eternal torment.

The movements of an onryou are slow and spastic, making them somewhat easier to evade.

Onryou speak common and spirit.

COMBAT

Onryou exist to spread their suffering. They are relentlessly bent on revenge, and attempt to obtain it by killing all they see. They are resentful spirits blindly lashing out, reduced to little more than their all-consuming “urami” or grudge. Onryou kill without remorse or caution, and no amount of diplomacy or coercion will avert their murderous fury.

Create Spawn (Su): Any humanoid slain by an onryou becomes an onryou within 1d4 rounds.

The body of the slain humanoid remains intact and inert, but its spirit is ripped from its body and perverted through the onryou’s hate and transforms into another onryou. Spawn are under the control of the onryou that created them and remain enslaved for all of eternity. Onryou spawned in this way do not retain any of the abilities they had in life.

Steal Breath (Su): Living creatures hit by the onryou’s melee touch attack must succeed on a DC 16 Fortitude save or begin to suffocate. Creatures that fail their saving throw have their breath stolen by the onryou. They cannot breathe, and may soon die to rise again as an onryou themselves. When the creature fails its saving throw, she begins to suffocate, falling immediately unconscious (0 hit points). The next round, the creature is allowed another DC 16 Fortitude save. If it succeeds, the creature is able to gasp for breath, but is still unconscious and at 0 hit points. If it fails, the creature drops to -1 hit points and is dying. In the final round, the creature is allowed a final DC 16 Fortitude save. If it succeeds, it is able to breathe but is still unconscious and at -1 hit points. If it fails, the creature suffocates and dies. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Urami Aura (Su): As a free action, the onryou can radiate its Urami Aura, bathing creatures in the area in an overwhelming assault of crushing hatred and anger. Creatures within 30 feet of the onryou are affected, and must succeed on a DC 19 Will save or be overcome with irrational emotions for 3d6 rounds. Creatures who fail their save are amazingly angry and filled with hate, severely impairing their judgment. For the duration of the effect, and as long as the affected creature remains within 30 feet of the onryou, they suffer a -2 penalty to AC, Wisdom and Charisma scores. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Haunting (Ex): Onryou are bound to a specific site; the location of their murder. They are unable to pass beyond the boundary of their haunting, which encompasses an area of 30 feet per Hit Dice of the onryou. Creatures attempting to force the onryou beyond the edge of its haunting will find that it is impossible to remove the onryou through any means except its destruction.

Turn Resistance (Ex): An onryou has a +4 turn resistance.

JIKININKI – The Corpse-eating Priest

Jikininki Human Form

3rd level Human Ex-Cleric

Medium Humanoid (Human, Shapechanger)

Hit Dice: 3d8+6 (19 hp)

Initiative: -1

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armor Class: 9 (-1 Dex), touch 9, flat footed 9

Base Attack/Grapple: +2/+3

Attack: Takujo +4 melee (1d6+1)

Full Attack: Takujo +4 melee (1d6+1)

Space/Reach: 5ft./5ft.

Special Attacks: -

Special Qualities: Alternate form, special hunger

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +0, Will +5

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 9, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 13

Skills: Concentration +9, Diplomacy +3, Heal +4, Hearth Wisdom +4, Knowledge (religion) +2, Spellcraft +2, Spot +3

Feats: Weapon Focus (Takujo), Skill Focus (Concentration), Brew Potion

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 1 1/2

Treasure: Possessions

Alignment: Usually lawful neutral

Advancement: by character class

Level adjustment: -

Jikininki – Alternate form

THE SHAPE

Huge Ooze (Shapechanger)

Hit Dice: 10d10+70 (125 hp)

Initiative: -5

Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares), climb 20 ft.

Armor Class: 3 (-2 size, -5 Dex), touch 3, flat footed 3

Base Attack/Grapple: +7/+18

Attack: Slam +9 melee (2d6+6 plus 2d6 acid)

Full Attack: Slam +9 melee (2d6+6 plus 2d6 acid)

Space/Reach: 15ft./10ft.

Special Attacks: Acid, constrict 2d6+6 plus 2d6 acid, improved grab, pseudo-pod

Special Qualities: Alternate form, blindsight 60 ft., ooze traits, special hunger

Saves: Fort +10, Ref -2, Will -2

Abilities: Str 19, Dex 1, Con 24, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1

Skills: Climb +12, Jump +9

Feats: -

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 6

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 11-18 HD (Huge), 19-26 HD (Gargantuan)

Level adjustment: -

JIKININKI – HUMAN FORM

By the light of day, this creature appears to be an ordinary Buddhist priest.

Buddhist priests who have fallen from grace and foully dishonored their faith, the Jikininki are stripped of their powers and cursed to transform into the 'Shape' each night. The Shape is an amorphous, mindless fiend that hungers voraciously for the lifeless bodies of the dead. These corpse-eating ex-priests can find no other nourishment. Ordinary food has lost all of its appeal. But as night falls, they begin to crave human flesh. With the darkness, their bodies melt into a huge undulating puddle of ooze; the Shape.

Found in long abandoned grave yards, the corpse-eating ex-priests shun civilization out of fear for what the Shape might do in the night. Should there be no corpses to feed on, the Shape may turn to living flesh, and so the cursed ex-priests wander the fringes of the provinces searching for carrion.

Many Jikininki are penitent, doing what good they can to restore their good karma and reverse the taint afflicting them. However, they still stay clear of situations that would bring people within the reach of the Shape at night. Other more insidious Jikininki

The Curse of the Jikininki

Any Shinto or Buddhist priest may come under the curse of the Jikininki if they have grossly disgraced themselves and committed heinous acts against their faith. At the Game Master's discretion, the curse may be applied to any non-evil priest, but they must do more than simply act contrary to their alignment of the dictates of their faith. In order to suffer the curse, and be blighted as a corpse-eating priest, they must commit acts unprecedented wickedness and depravity.

The priest offered here is merely an example of one penitent priest so cursed, and who hopes to find salvation once again. Game Masters should feel free to apply the Jikininki template to other priests as they see fit.

continue to pose as active Buddhist priests, traveling the country-side for more nefarious purposes. Instead of seeking ways to remedy their karma, these cursed ex-priests scout out small villages or settlements where they offer their services. Accepting the hospitality of these unsuspecting people, these Jikininki stay the night, and when the sun sets the Shape comes forth to devour the sleeping populace.

Jikininki, in their human form, speak common.

COMBAT

Most Jikininki avoid contact with humans. They are endeavoring to reconnect with Buddhist teachings, and so they abhor violence and destroying life, thus why they attempt to unleash the Shape on bodies of the dead rather than the living. Should a penitent Jikininki encounter humans close to dusk, he will try to flee at top speed to prevent being in proximity when the sun sets. Generally, a penitent Jikininki will avoid combat at all costs. Less repentant Jikininki are likely to seek out human companionship during the day to ensure a feast for the Shape later.

Alternate Form (Su): The Jikininki are cursed to transform every night into the Shape. They have absolutely no control over this change. They cannot will it to stop or force themselves into the metamorphosis. It is entirely involuntary. When the sun rises, the Jikininki revert to their human forms and have only vague disjointed memories of the Shape's nighttime feasting.

Special hunger (Ex): Ordinary food and drink no longer nourish the Jikininki. In their human form, they do not eat or drink during the day. They find the sight, taste and smell of food nauseating. However, as the sun begins to set, the Jikininki begins to yearn for human flesh. Once night falls and the Shape is released, it then feeds on flesh throughout the night. Its hunger is insatiable, and the Shape will feed continuously until the first rays of dawn color the sky.

JIKININKI – ALTERNATE FORM "THE SHAPE"

This shape resembles an undulating blob of grey-black liquid, its tentacle-like pseudo-pods whipping about in search of flesh.

COMBAT

The Shape is a mindless mass with a singular goal: to feed. Nothing will deter the Shape in its tenacious pursuit of flesh.

Acid (Ex): The Shape secretes a digestive fluid that rapidly dissolve flesh, leaving all other matter unharmed. Any melee hit or constrict attack deals acid damage.

Constrict (Ex): On a successful grapple check, the Shape deals automatic slam and acid damage.

Improved Grab (Ex): If the Shape hits a Huge or smaller creature with a slam attack, it can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it gets a hold on its opponent and can constrict.

Pseudo-pod (Ex): At will, the Shape can extend a tentacle-like portion of itself to grab opponents. As a standard action that does provoke an attack of opportunity, the Shape can use a pseudo-pod to lengthen its reach to 20 ft. for one round.

Alternate Form (Su): The Jikininki are cursed to transform every night into the Shape. They have absolutely no control over this change. They cannot will it to stop or force themselves into the metamorphosis. It is entirely involuntary. When the sun sets, the Jikininki melt into the Shape and only revert to their human forms once the sun has risen again.

Blindsight (Ex): The Shape's semi-permeable outer membrane is an extremely sensitive organ capable of locating prey through scent and vibrations within 60 feet.

Special hunger (Ex): Ordinary food and drink no longer nourish the Jikininki. In their human form, they do not eat or drink during the day. They find the sight, taste and smell of food nauseating. However, as the sun begins to set, the Jikininki begins to yearn for human flesh. Its hunger is insatiable, and the Shape will feed continuously until the first rays of dawn color the sky.

KAPPA

Medium Fey

Hit Dice: 4d6+15 (29 hp)

Initiative: +3

Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares), swim 30 ft.

Armor Class: 17 (+3 Dex, +4 natural), touch 13, flat footed 14

Base Attack/Grapple: +2/+8

Attack: Claw +4 melee (1d4+2)

Full Attack: 2 claws +4 melee (1d4+2) and bite -1

melee (1d6+1)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Improved grab, poison, rot, touch of lethargy

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/cold iron, low-light vision

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +5

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 16, Con 17, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 9

Skills: Hide +10, Intimidate +5, Listen +8, Move Silently +10, Search +6, Spot +8, Survival +6, Swim +12*

Feats: Improved grapple, Toughness

Environment: Temperate aquatic/marshes

Organization: Solitary, pair of clutch (3-8)

Challenge Rating: 3 1/2

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually neutral evil

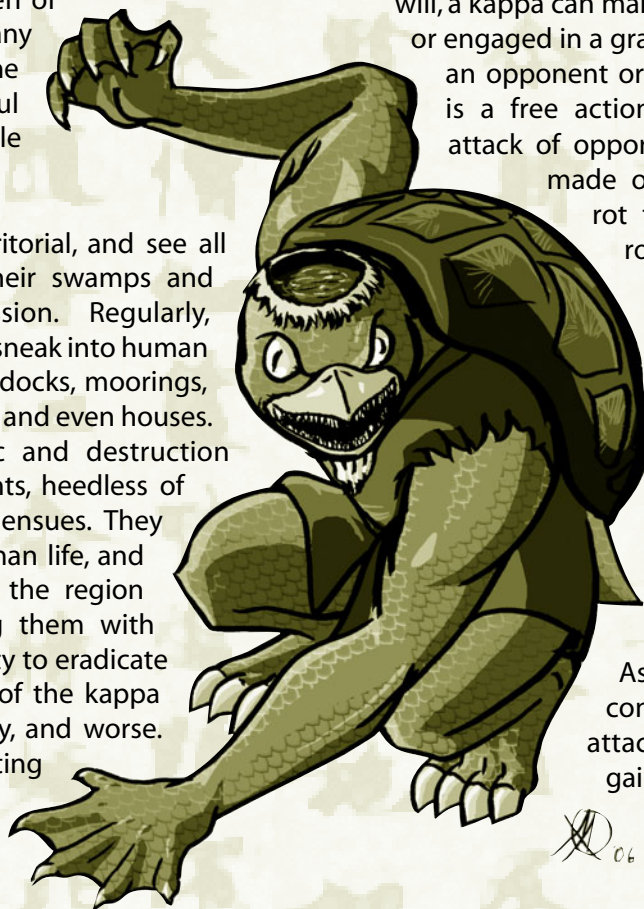
Advancement: 5-12 (Medium)

Level adjustment: +3

This bizarre creature strongly resembles an upright turtle, and stands at just over four feet tall. Loose grey-green skin covers its limbs, its trunk is sheathed in a hard shell and a beak-like mouth sprouts from its strangely crested head.

These cruel beasts are the bane of all river travelers. No denizen of Sairyuukoe travels the many rivers and streams of the region without a watchful eye for the vicious turtle fairy called 'kappa'.

Kappa are extremely territorial, and see all human incursion into their swamps and rivers as acts of aggression. Regularly, kappa led by sappers will sneak into human settlements to sabotage docks, moorings, tools, ropes, boat bottoms and even houses. Kappa will wreak havoc and destruction among human settlements, heedless of the chaos and death that ensues. They have little regard for human life, and see their sovereignty of the region as indisputable, imbuing them with the right and responsibility to eradicate all invaders. The touch of the kappa can cause severe lethargy, and worse. The kappa excrete a rotting secretion from their skin, causing almost instantaneous decay in organic materials.



Webbed feet and clawed hands make the kappa both capable swimmers and formidable foes.

Kappa speak kappa and spirit.

COMBAT

Kappa will attempt to grapple with their opponent and use their touch of lethargy to slow them down. Once their victims are slowed, the kappa will maintain the grapple and continuously emit their rotting secretion onto their sluggish captives. Kappa will also attempt to attack weapons, shields and armor with their rotting secretion to rob their opponents of valuable protections and offense.

Improved Grab (Ex): If a kappa hits a Medium or smaller creature with a claw attack, it can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Rot (Ex): Kappa can excrete a putrid secretion from their skin that will cause all organic matter to decay. Organic matter includes all living and dead animal and vegetable matter, and so affects not only flesh but also wood, leather armor, fabrics, and the like. At will, a kappa can make a touch attack (while in melee or engaged in a grapple) to expel their secretion on an opponent or object. Expelling the secretion is a free action which does not provoke an attack of opportunity. Any creature or object made of organic matter will begin to rot for 1d4 points of damage per round in contact with the kappa. Creatures and objects may make a Fortitude save (DC 15) to take half damage for each round in contact with the kappa's secretion. The save DC is Constitution based.

The kappa's rot damage ignores hardness, but inorganic materials are impervious to the secretion's decaying effect. As the kappa must make direct contact with a creature, anyone attacked by the kappa's secretion gains any applicable armor bonus (but not natural armor bonuses) to avoid being hit, but the kappa may choose to target a

creature's armor instead and make a sunder attempt to destroy it before attacking the creature itself. A kappa can combine its rot ability with a grapple or claw attack as a single standard action, or as part of a full-attack.

Touch of Lethargy (Su): The threat of decay is not the only danger of the kappa's touch. A kappa may also attempt a touch of lethargy, sapping away a creature's vitality. To deliver a touch of lethargy, as a standard action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity, a kappa can make a touch attack against an opponent. If successful, the creature touched must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or be slowed for 7 rounds, as the *slow* spell (Caster level 7th). Additionally, any creature affected by the *slow* effect must make another Fortitude save (DC 15) after 7 rounds have elapsed or then be fatigued for the next 7 rounds. All save DC's are Constitution based.

Skills: Kappa receive a +4 racial bonus to all Swim checks.

KIJO

Large Giant

Hit Dice: 4d8 + 12 (30 hp)

Initiative: -1

Speed: 30 ft. base (6 squares), 20 ft in hide armor

Armor Class: 16 (-1 size, -1 Dex., +8 natural), touch 8, flat footed 16

Base Attack/Grapple: +3/+13

Attack: Slam +9 melee (1d8+9)

Full Attack: Slam +9 melee (1d8+9)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Roar

Special Qualities: Low-light vision

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +0, Will +0

Abilities: Str 22, Dex 8, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 8, Cha 7

Skills: Climb +4, Listen +2, Spot +2

Feats: Improved Natural Attack (B), Power Attack, Great Fortitude

Environment: Temperate hills and mountains

Organization: Solitary, pair or hunting pack (3-7)

Challenge Rating: 3 1/2

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually chaotic neutral

Advancement: 5 - 9 HD (Large), 10 - 13 HD (Huge)

Level adjustment: -

This hulking giant stands at over 10 feet tall. Its thick, craggy hide has a pebbly texture and a tawny grey complexion. Its heavily muscled arms end in fists like

boulders, which drag on the ground as they stalk the hills of the Yonhosu Valley.

These giant-kin are dim and slow, but monstrously strong and durable. Kijo hunting parties roam the southern hills of the Yonhosu Valley searching for prey. In general, kijo do not kill wantonly, but when food is scarce or they feel threatened they will fight savagely for survival.

The kijo are omnivores, and will frequently scavenge when hunting is unsuccessful. Kijo eat large game like deer, but have been known to feed on cows and horses, bringing them into conflict with humans at times.

Among the kijo, females are physically larger and largely responsible for the hunt. Arranged in loosely knit tribes, with duties for the tribes survival divided among its members. Males tend to the rearing of young as well as building and maintenance of shelters, while the females prowl the land in search of food.

The kijo's rocky hide is prized as an herbal medicine. It is believed, when mixed in tea, to be a cure for impotence. For this reason, kijo are occasionally hunted by ruthless merchants. Entire tribes have been known to be decimated for their hides. Whether or not the hide of a kijo has any real curative properties is a source of heated debate amongst hearth magicians, but even while the deliberation ensues an unknown number of kijo are being slaughtered and skinned.

Kijo speak giant.

COMBAT

Kijo tend to avoid contact with humans, and will stay well away from known settlements. If they encounter humans, the kijo will below and roar to scare them away. The fool-hardy who insist on challenging a kijo will soon find, however, that they are difficult opponents. If a kijo feels threatened, it will fight viciously to defend itself.

Roar (Ex): The roar of the kijo can be heard for miles among the southern hills, sending creatures scurrying to hide in terror. At will, the kijo may bellow a mighty roar that can stun its opponents. Any creature within 30 ft of a kijo when it roars must make a Will save (DC 15) or be stunned for one round by the force of the cry. A kijo's roar is a standard action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

KI-NO-O-BAKE

Small Plant

Hit Dice: 2d8 + 4 (13 hp)

Initiative: -1

Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares)

Armor Class: 16 (+1 size, -1 Dex., +6 natural), touch 10, flat footed 16

Base Attack/Grapple: +1/-3

Attack: Slam +2 melee (1d3)

Full Attack: Slam +2 melee (1d3)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Leaf weave, snagging roots, spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Immovable, low-light vision, plant traits, tremorsense 60 ft., vulnerable to fire

Saves: Fort +5, Ref -1, Will +3

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 10

Skills: Hide +7, Listen +8, Move Silently +4, Spot +8

Feats: Alertness

Environment: Temperate forests

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: None

Alignment: Usually neutral good

Advancement: 3 - 6 HD (Medium), 7 - 10 HD (Large), 11 - 14 HD (Huge), 15 - 18 (Gargantuan)

Level adjustment: -

Covered in thick, rough bark with branch-like limbs sprouting from its trunk, this creature appears to be an animated dwarf tree similar to the bonsai. Countless gnarled roots trail behind the creature.

The animate spirits of trees, ki-no-o-bake are the guardians of Kitsunemori. They shamble low to the ground, dragging their root systems behind them as they journey in search of a grove to make their home.

Ki-no-o-bake begin life as ordinary seedlings but are soon touched by the innate power of the land. Often they grow near nodes of geomantic energy. As saplings, they rise out of the earth and spend their early years on a quest for the perfect spot to take root. They wander the land seeking a grove or patch of forest in need of care and protection. Once a ki-no-o-bake has finally found the ideal forest to watch over, they will settle into the ground and allow their root system at long last to sink into the earth. Acting as sentinels, they patrol their chosen woods and are ever watchful for the intrusion of evil spirits.

In their travels, ki-no-o-bake keep away from human

settlements. Ki-no-o-bake are acutely aware of their surroundings, but not very mobile, so they utilize all of their skills to avoid human contact. As Ki-no-o-bake grow in size beyond Large, their roots dig deep into the ground and they become fixed to a single spot.

Ki-no-o-bake speak common and spirit.

COMBAT

Ki-no-o-bake assiduously avoid combat, especially when they are still saplings. They will hide from enemies, using their control over the woods to tangle and trip opponents as they escape. Only in dire circumstances will ki-no-o-bake attempt to injure a living creature, that is unless that creature is attempting to harm their forest. Any creature damaging trees over which a ki-no-o-bake is warden will rue the day. Ki-no-o-bake will stop at nothing to ensure the safety of their chosen home, ruthlessly killing any creature that threatens the health and well-being of their tree brethren.

Leaf Weave (Su): At will, ki-no-o-bake can call upon the surrounding forest to weave a net to entangle an opponent. As a ranged touch attack, a ki-no-o-bake can cause leaves, twigs, branches and brambles to animate and envelop a target within 60 feet. Creatures caught in the leaf weave take a -2 penalty on attack rolls and a -4 penalty to their Dexterity score, can move at only half speed, and cannot charge or run. Casting a spell with somatic components while caught in the leaf weave is tricky, and spellcasters must succeed on a DC 15 Concentration check or be unable to cast the spell.

A creature caught in a leaf weave can break free or escape. The leaf weave has 10 hit points and can be broken through with a DC 25 Strength check. Escape is also possible with a DC 20 Escape Artist check (a full-round action).

Leaf weaving is a standard action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Snagging Roots (Ex): At will, a ki-no-o-bake can use its root system to snag and trip up their opponents. When using the snagging root attack, the ki-no-o-bake is treated as having the Improved Trip Feat. The ki-no-o-bake must first make a melee touch attack as a standard action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity (+6 to hit). If the attack succeeds, the ki-no-o-bake must make a Strength check (+4 bonus as the ki-no-o-bake's root systems makes them

especially stable) opposed by the defenders Dexterity or Strength check (whichever ability has the higher modifier). Defenders receive a +4 bonus for every size category they are larger than Medium or a -4 penalty for every size category smaller than Medium. The ki-no-o-bake receives a -4 penalty for every size category they are smaller than Medium and a +4 bonus for each size category larger than Medium (as many of the elder forest wardens grow to immense sizes). The defender gets a +4 bonus if it has more than two legs or it otherwise more stable than an ordinary humanoid (i.e. dwarves). If the ki-no-o-bake succeeds, they trip the defender. If they lose, unlike a normal failed trip attack, the defender may not immediately attempt to trip the ki-no-o-bake in reaction.

Spell-like abilities (Su): 3/day – *hide from animals* (DC 14), *summon nature's ally I*, *summon nature's ally II*, *obscuring mist*, *plant growth*, *speak with plants*. Caster level 9th. Save DC's are Wisdom-based.

Immovable (Ex): Ki-no-o-bake can dig deeply into the ground with their roots and hold their ground. As a move equivalent action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity, a ki-no-o-bake can fix themselves to the earth beneath them (provided they are standing on soil) and become incredibly difficult to move. The ki-no-o-bake receives a bonus equal to five times their Hit Dice against any attempt to grapple, lift, push, bull rush, over run, throw, trip, or otherwise move the ki-no-o-bake against its will by any means (physical or magical). The ki-no-o-bake may remain in place and immovable for a number of minutes equal to twice their Hit Dice. Ending the immovability is a move equivalent action. Ki-no-o-bake larger than Large become immovable permanently and cannot choose to end the effect.

Tremorsense (Ex): The ki-no-o-bake's roots are extremely sensitive and aware of even the most minute vibration. They have effective tremorsense out to 60 feet while they are in contact with the ground.

Vulnerability to Fire (Ex): Ki-no-o-bake are essentially small, uprooted trees animated by its spirit. Their wooden bodies are extremely vulnerable to fire, taking half again as much (50%) damage as normal from the effects of fire and fire spells, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, or if the save is a success or a failure.

MOON FOLK

Small Fey

Hit Dice: 4d6 (14 hp)

Initiative: +6

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armor Class: 18 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +5 Deflection bonus), touch 18, flat footed 16

Base Attack/Grapple: +2/-2

Attack: Masterwork shortbow +5 ranged (1d6) or masterwork jo +4 melee (1d6)

Full Attack: Masterwork shortbow +5 ranged (1d6) or masterwork jo +4 melee (1d6)

Space/Reach: 5ft./5ft.

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/cold iron, resistance to electricity and cold 10, low-light vision, Wind-walking, Nimbus of the Moon, Night terror, Oath-bound, vulnerability to sunlight

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +9

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 19

Skills: Concentration +7, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +8, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (nature) +2, Knowledge (arcane) +2, Knowledge (geography) +2, Sense Motive +14, Spellcraft +4, Spot +4

Feats: Negotiator, Improved Initiative

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary, pair or band (3 – 12)

Challenge Rating: 3

Treasure: Standard plus possessions

Alignment: Usually lawful neutral

Advancement: By character class

Level adjustment: +4

These creatures resemble diminutive humans with bone white skin and lustrous black hair. Their eyes are larger and darker than those of an ordinary human, and a pale luminosity surrounds their bodies.

Beloved children of Tsukuyomi, the Moon Folk are denizens of the night sky. They caper through the clouds, watching human strife with heavy hearts from their cities in the sky. The Moon Folk are natural negotiators and lovers of order, and they seek to soothe discord wherever they find it.

The Moon Folk spend their moonlit nights invisibly wandering the skies in search of conflict. If they discover humans in argument or even in armed struggle, they will climb down from the sky and attempt to mediate, sometimes after many nights of surreptitious observation. Taking on a false guise, the Moon Folk will seek to resolve the dispute. If their

initial efforts fail, the Moon Folk will resort to using their magical gifts to chide and even intimidate the guilty parties into reconciliation.

Devotees of Tsukuyomi, the moon god, the Moon Folk enjoy the god's unique blessings but also suffer agonizing punishment should they be caught by the sun's rays. When night retreats and dawns light seeps into the sky, the Moon Folk withdraw to their cloud cities where they slumber safe from the sun.

The Moon Folk stand at between 3 and 3 ½ feet tall and weigh only 40 to 45 pounds. Their skin is pale as bone, and their hair a lustrous black. Male Moon Folk cannot grow beards, and are somewhat feminine in their appearance. Both males and females dress simple clothes crafted from a sheer, luminescent clothe called "moon clothe" which they weave themselves. Moon clothe seems to dance and slither about their bodies, an effect that some humans may find disorienting.

Moon Folk speak common and the moon folk tongue, which is more sung than spoken.

COMBAT

Moon Folk abhor violence and avoid armed conflict, preferring diplomacy whenever possible. When negotiations fail, they will resort to invoking their Night Terror to cow their foes. They will use their telekinesis ability to disarm and trip their opponents. If combat is inescapable, they prefer to maintain a safe distance from their enemies by walking to great heights from which they can rain arrows.

Wind-walking (Su): One of many blessing from their patron, Tsukuyomi, Moon Folk tread on air as if it were solid ground. Constantly in effect, the uncanny wind-walking ability of the Moon Folk allows them to climb into the sky and play among the clouds, but it also prevents them from ever coming into contact with the ground, hovering instead just a few inches above the surface. This ability operates as the *air walk* spell.

Night terror (Su): As a standard action, the Moon Folk may take on a fearsome countenance, sending fear rippling through all those who surround them. Any creature within 30 feet of the Moon Folk must succeed on a DC 16 Will save or be shaken for 2d4 rounds. The save DC is Charisma based.

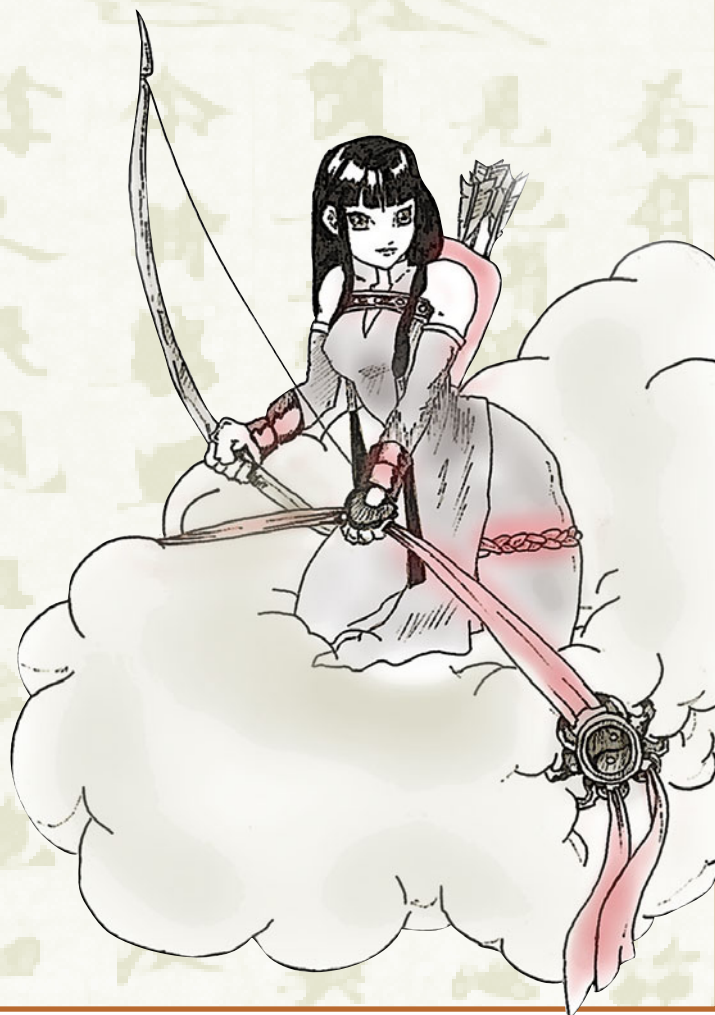
Nimbus of the Moon (Su): The sacred light of the moon surrounds and protects the Moon Folk, shedding pale light in a 30 foot radius (Moon Folk may temporarily

dismiss and reactivate the nimbus as a free action). Additionally, the Nimbus of the Moon provides a +5 deflection bonus to AC and +5 sacred bonus to Will saves.

Oath-bound (Ex): The Moon Folk are wary to give their word, for when they do, they are compelled to keep their promise. When one makes a promise, the Moon Folk is under the effects of a *geas* spell in regards to that promise, with the consequences afflicting her when she breaks that promise and until she makes amends or resumes the promised action. This magical enforcement does not last more than a year and a day if no time scale was specified in the promise.

Spell-like abilities: At will - *open/close, mage hand, comprehend languages, disguise self* (DC15); 1/day - *gust of wind, protection from arrows*; 3/day - *knock, invisibility, mirror image, tongues, telekinesis* (DC 19). Caster level 9th. The save is Charisma based.

Vulnerability to sunlight (Ex): An ancient grudge between the sun goddess, Amaterasu, and the moon god, Tsukuyomi, force the two to dwell apart and be separated by day and night. While Tsukuyomi rules the night,



his silvery radiance bathes the Moon Folk in protective light. However, if the Moon Folk venture out under the light of the sun, the wrathful Amaterasu punishes the Moon Folk for their patron deity's misdeeds. Any Moon Folk exposed to direct sunlight suffers great pain and fatigue, losing one point of Constitution damage for every hour they are in the sun. This damage cannot be removed through magical means, but only after the Moon Folk has basked in the pale light of the moon for a number of hours equal to their stay under the sun. Moon Folk are affected normally by spells and spell-like abilities which simulate sunlight, and do not suffer an additional damage or effects. It is only the fury of Amaterasu that harms them.

Skills: The Moon Folk receive a +2 racial bonus to Diplomacy and Sense Motive checks.

NUKEKUBI

NUKEKUBI – Human Form

Medium Abberation

Hit Dice: 2d8+3 (12 hp)

Initiative: +3

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armor Class: 13 (+3 Dex), touch 13, flat footed 10

Base Attack/Grapple: +1/+1

Attack: Tanto +4 melee (1d4)

Full Attack: Tanto +4 melee (1d4)

Space/Reach: 5ft./5ft.

Special Attacks: Death-head

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., defenseless, vulnerable to sunlight

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +3

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 11

Skills: Craft (any) +7*, Hide +6, Listen +3, Move Silently +6, Search +5, Spot +4

Feats: Weapon Finesse

Environment: Any

Organization: Couple or family (3 – 8)

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: Standard plus possessions

Alignment: Always lawful evil

Advancement: by character class

Level adjustment: +2

NUKEKUBI – Death-head Form

Tiny Abberation

Hit Dice: 1d8+3 (7 hp)

Initiative: +3

Speed: 60 ft. (perfect)

Armor Class: 17 (+2 size, +3 Dex, +2 Insight), touch 17,

flat footed 14

Base Attack/Grapple: +0/-8

Attack: Bite +6 melee (1d6 plus blood drain)

Full Attack: Bite +6 melee (1d6 plus blood drain)

Space/Reach: 2 ½ ft./ 0 ft.

Special Attacks: Blood drain, night shriek

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., Fast healing 5, vulnerable to sunlight

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +2

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 11

Skills: Hide +14, Listen +3, Move Silently +6, Search +5, Spot +4

Feats: Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (bite) (B)

Environment: Any - nocturnal

Organization: Couple or family (3 – 8)

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: Standard plus possessions

Alignment: Always lawful evil

Advancement: as above

Level adjustment: -

NUKEKUBI – Human form

These creatures appear indistinguishable from ordinary humans.

Nukekubi appear as normal humans, but by night their heads detach smoothly from their bodies and fly about in search of human prey. By day, the nukekubi try to blend in with human society, often living in groups and masquerading as families. The only way to distinguish a nukekubi from an ordinary human is the line of peculiar red symbols around the base of their necks where the head detaches. The symbols, however, are easily concealed by clothing or jewelry.

The nukekubi are poorly understood creatures. Even the nukekubi themselves are ignorant of their true origins, they know only that they are born of foul sorcery and little else is certain. Their oral history, a mixture of bizarre myths and legendary tales never recorded in written form for fear of discovery, serves as the basis for nukekubi society.

Nukekubi "families" are in actuality hunting parties that ally themselves for mutual protection and benefit. These families stay together for many years and travel frequently to avoid detection. They most often pose as traveling craftsmen or merchants, never staying in one area for too long lest they begin to rouse suspicion.

Little is known of nukekubi physiology, only that the human body and death-head live in some symbiotic relationship. Reproduction occurs rarely, as gestation takes over thirteen months and infant mortality among the nukekubi is extremely high; all the better for humanity's sake. The nukekubi only feed at night, when the death-head pursues their sole source of nourishment: blood.

Nukekubi speak common and nukekubi.

COMBAT

Nukekubi spend their daylight hours not only posing as humans and working their craft, but they also investigate the local population for prospective prey. If they are threatened, they will defend themselves, and their dark secret.

Death-head (Ex): When night falls, the nukekubi release their death-heads to feed. As a standard action that does provoke an attack of opportunity, the nukekubi can detach their heads from their bodies, which can then move independently. The death-head hungers for the blood of the living, and hunts for potential victims under cover of darkness. The nukekubi death-head is detailed below.

Defenseless (Ex): The nukekubi have one great weakness. While their heads are of hunting, their bodies are inanimate and helpless. In this state, the nukekubi's body has an effective Dexterity, Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma score of 0. Any creature attacking a nukekubi while its head is away may make an automatic coup de grace. If their heads do not return to their bodies by sunrise, they both will die. For these reasons, the nukekubi take great care in hiding and protecting their bodies while on the hunt. The nukekubi death-head can rejoin its body as a standard action that provokes an attack of opportunity.

Vulnerable to sunlight (Ex): If the sun rises, and the nukekubi has not rejoined with its head, its body will begin to dissolve into a slimy black ichor. The nukekubi's body will take 1d8 points of damage per round of exposure to sunlight until it dissolves completely. Damage dealt to the nukekubi body by exposure to sunlight cannot be healed except through magical means.

Skills: Nukekubi, in their human form, may have any one Craft skill, which they use to gain entry and acceptance into human communities.

NUKEKUBI – Death Head Form

Their shrieking call piercing the air, these flying human heads race through the night sky.

COMBAT

The nukekubi death-head hungers for the blood of the living, but is sly and cunning in its hunt. It will hide in shadowed alcoves and niches waiting for prey to come close. The death-head will toy with its prey, setting up strategic situations that favor the nukekubi before striking. Whenever possible, the nukekubi will pursue weak and young humans, paralyze them with its night shriek, then drain it of life-blood. The death-head will endeavor to keep away from large groups where it is more vulnerable to attack.

Blood drain (Ex): A nukekubi death-head can drink the blood from a living creature by making a successful bite attack, dealing 1d4 points of Constitution drain. On each such successful attack, the nukekubi can drain an additional 1d4 Constitution, until the creature reaches a score of zero Constitution and is killed. A nukekubi must feed on blood nightly, draining at least 1d10 points of Constitution before it is satiated. A nukekubi may drain more blood than required to survive, but can never drain more than twice its own Constitution score in a single night. Once satisfied, the nukekubi death-head will fly, bloated from the hunt, back to its body. A nukekubi that does not drain sufficient blood in a given night will suffer 1d4 points of Constitution damage when rejoining with its body. The following evening, the nukekubi death-head may recover 1 point of lost Constitution for each point of Constitution drained from a living victim.

Night shriek (Su): The piercing cry of the nukekubi death-head can paralyze its prey, making it easier to feed upon. All creatures within 30 ft. who hear the nukekubi shriek must make a Will save (DC 11) or be paralyzed for 1d4 rounds. The nukekubi will attempt to feed on creatures paralyzed by its Night Shriek. As a standard action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity, the nukekubi can use its Night Shriek up to five times per night. The save DC is Charisma based.

Fast Healing (Ex): A nukekubi death-head heals 5 points of damage each round.

Vulnerable to sunlight (Ex): If the sun rises, and the nukekubi death-head has not rejoined with its body, it will begin to dissolve into a slimy black ichor. The nukekubi death-head will take 1d8 points of

damage per round of exposure to sunlight until it dissolves completely. Damage dealt to the death-head by exposure to sunlight cannot be healed except through magical means, and is not affected by their fast healing.

Skills: The nukekubi death-head has a +8 to Hide checks from its Tiny size, but loses the Craft skill of its human form.

ONI

Oni are demons bent on destruction and domination. Under the leadership of Hanumacki, the oni hordes swept over much of the universe in ages long ago. If not for the imprisonment of the demon lord Hanumachi, the oni may have conquered all of existence. However, once Hanumachi was sealed in his prison, the oni armies fell into anarchy and were easily swept back into their hellish home of Meifudo.

The oni are tenacious beasts, and have never relinquished their ambitions to rule all of creation. Many oni have plotted for eons to situate themselves in positions of power in human society, all to situate themselves for future victory.

Even now, unbeknownst to most of the world, the oni plot to free Hanumachi from his prison. With Hanumachi once again their leader, they hope to at long last achieve the victory that the kitsune robbed them of millennia before.

Oni subtype: Many demons in Kitsunemori belong to the peculiar race known as "oni". Oni manifest in a multitude of physical appearances, but they are all united in their insatiable desire for destruction. Killing an oni is astonishingly difficult, but there are a few attacks it can do little to defend against.

Traits: An oni possesses the following traits, unless otherwise noted in the creature entry:

- Immunity to fire and poison.
- Resistance to acid 10, cold 10, and electricity 10.
- Fast Healing – Wounds dealt to oni heal with extraordinary speed. The amount of their fast healing is

described in the creature entry.

- Vulnerability to sonic attacks – Oni hate loud noises and are exceptionally vulnerable to sonic attacks, taking half again as much (50%) damage as normal from the effects of sonic spells, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, or if the save is a success or a failure. Additionally, oni suffer a -2 to all saves versus bardic music.

- Oni have no need for sleep, but they do breathe and eat (they are carnivorous, and experience an intense craving for the flesh of humans and kitsune).

AKA-ONI

Medium Outsider (Chaotic, Extraplanar, Evil, Oni)

Hit Dice: 3d8+6 (19 hp)

Initiative: +1

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

Armor Class: 17 (+1 Dex, +6 natural), touch 11, flat footed 16

Base Attack/Grapple: +3/+6

Attack: Slam +6 melee (1d4+3) or bite +4 melee (1d6+1 plus disease)

Full Attack: 2 slams +6 melee (1d4+3) and bite +4 melee (1d6+1 plus disease)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Disease-blood boil

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 5/cold iron or good, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 1, immunity

to fire and poison, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, scent, vulnerability to sonic attacks

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +3

Abilities: Str 17, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 4, Wis 10, Cha 9

Skills: Climb +4, Hide +4, Intimidate +3, Listen +4, Move Silently +4, Search +2, Spot +4, Survival +6 (+8 when following tracks)

Feats: Multiattack, Track

Environment: Meifudo

Organization: Solitary, pair, band (3-12), troop (13-36), army (37 or more)

Challenge Rating: 2 1/2

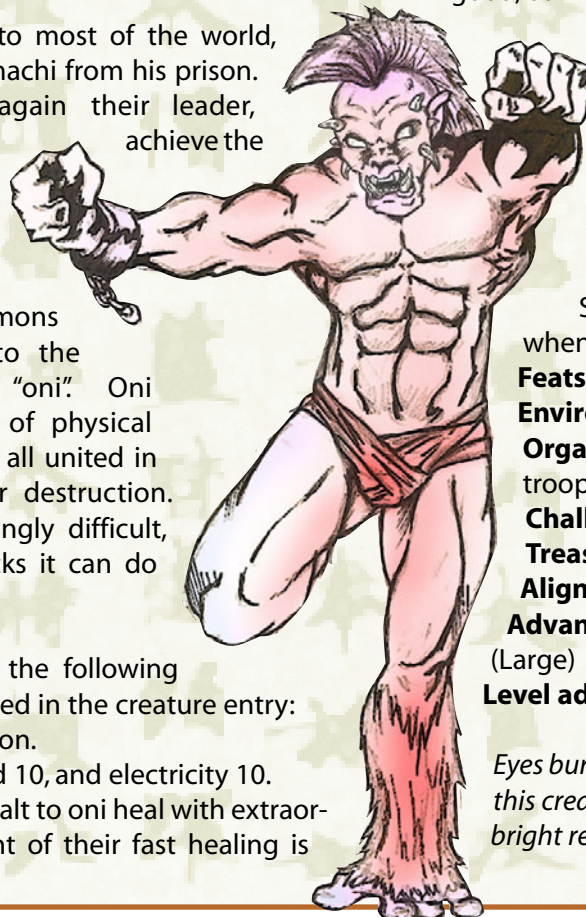
Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 4 – 8 HD (Medium), 9 – 12 (Large)

Level adjustment: -

Eyes burning with the ferocity of a wild animal, this creature is a savage and feral beast. Their bright red, tough hide is covered in the scars of



countless battles. A mouth-full of frothing fangs snaps hungrily at anything that passes near its maw. A mass of white hair sprouts from their heads, and thick chains trail from their wrists.

Aka-oni, the “red demons,” are little more than rabid brutes. Of barely more than animal intelligence, and brimming with hellish rage, the aka-oni must be meticulously trained by their handlers. Unsupervised, aka-oni will go into a frenzied and uncontrollable rampage. Aka-oni handlers, the amanojaku, are uncompromising disciplinarians and are known for their harsh treatment of the aka-oni. Aka-oni are almost always kept in chains, and only released from bondage when their handlers want to unleash them on an enemy. Some akuma and kumo have been known to keep aka-oni as pets, having commanded the handlers to first beat the aka-oni into docile submission. It is unclear just how much of the aka-oni’s ferocious nature is inherent, and how much is the result of cruel treatment by their handlers. Regardless, the aka-oni are vicious monsters, and they delight in spreading misery and pain everywhere they roam.

The keen scent of the aka-oni has led to their use as trackers, especially in the hunt. Handlers will keep them on their chains, as the aka-oni ceaselessly pursue a trail. Once they track down their quarry, the aka-oni is usually released, but never if the target is desired alive. The aka-oni, when chasing down a target, whips itself into a blood frenzy. Once released, it must taste blood before its fury will subside.

Aka-oni know only a handful of words and commands in the oni tongue.

COMBAT

When not fettered, the aka-oni are ferocious combatants. They will savagely attack anything in sight, thus they are rarely unattended during combat. Handlers are almost always close by commanding the aka-oni. An aka-oni without a handler will kill and maim any creature it can, usually feasting to well beyond satisfaction on the corpses.

An aka-oni’s natural weapons, as well as any weapons it wields, are treated as chaotic-aligned and evil-aligned for purposes of overcoming damage reduction.

Blood Boil (Su): The frothing, disease-ridden fangs of the aka-oni carry a stupefying and deadly disease. Any creature who suffers the bite of an aka-oni must

succeed on a DC 13 Fortitude save or be infected by blood boil. Those infected feel as though fire is coursing through their veins. Blood boil is excruciatingly painful and both mentally and physically debilitating. Blood boil – supernatural disease, bite, Fortitude DC 13, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Con and 1d3 Int. Blood boil will continue to assault the victims immune system until the infected creature either succeeds on a daily saving throw or their Constitution and/or Intelligence score is reduced to zero. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Fast Healing (Ex): An aka-oni heals 1 points of damage each round so long as it has at least 1 hit point.

Scent (Ex): The aka-oni possess an acute sense of smell, and can follow tracks by scent. Their scent ability operates as described in CRB III, pg. 314.

AKUMA

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Extraplanar, Evil, Oni)

Hit Dice: 17d8+153 (225 hp)

Initiative: +5

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Armor Class: 31 (-1 size, +5 Dex, +17 natural), touch 15, flat footed 25

Base Attack/Grapple: +17/+31

Attack: +1 flame burst falchion +28 melee (2d4+11/15-20x2 plus 1d6 fire) or slam +20 melee (1d8+5 plus 4d6 flame)

Full Attack: Primary +1 flame burst falchion +24/+19/+14/+9 melee (2d4+11/16-20x2) and off-hand +1 flame burst falchion +24/+18 melee (2d4+11/16-20x2) or 2 slam +20 melee (1d8+5 plus 4d6 flame)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Eruption, eyes of flame, flame burst falchion, pounce, spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/cold iron or good, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 10, flames, immunity to fire and poison, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, SR 27, vulnerability to sonic attacks

Saves: Fort +19, Ref +15, Will +16

Abilities: Str 30, Dex 21, Con 28, Int 19, Wis 22, Cha 24

Skills: Bluff +25, Climb +28, Concentration +29, Diplomacy +16, Hide +21, Intimidate +27, Jump +15, Knowledge (any two) +13 each, Listen +24, Move Silently +23, Search +22, Sense Motive +25, Spellcraft +10, Spot +25, Tumble +20, Use Magic Device +12 (+14 scrolls)

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical (falchion), Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Two-Weapon

Fighting, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (falchion)

Environment: Meifudo

Organization: Solitary or tormentors (1 akuma, 1 kumo, and 3-8 aka-oni)

Challenge Rating: 18

Treasure: Standard coins; double goods; standard items, plus two +1 *flame burst falchions*

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 18 – 32 HD (Large), 32 - 54 (Huge)

Level adjustment: -

Terrifying to behold, this gigantic fiend wields two wickedly curved swords. Wildly dancing flames wreath its skull-like head, and where other creatures have eyes, the akuma's eye cavities instead burn with tiny points of unholy light.

Among the oni, few are more feared or as powerful as the akuma. These wild sword-wielding monsters are the generals in Hanumachi's army of evil. Demons of awe-inspiring might, the akuma are not merely the commanders of demonic armies of oni, but full combatants themselves. Akuma wish to share in the massacre and bloodshed, wading into the fray alongside their minions.

When delicacy is necessary, the akuma usually delegate such tasks to their subordinates, frequently the amanojaku or kumo. Akuma favor direct confrontation to subterfuge, but recognize the need for clandestine action. They simply have little desire to participate in any activity that will not bring them further glory in battle.

Hungry for power, the akuma constantly bicker with and undermine one another. The akuma all vie for supremacy, forging provisional alliances to prevent their enemies from gaining advantage. In the absence of Hanumachi and his absolute authority, the akuma have reverted into a pack of egotistical tyrants. The division and discord among the akuma has largely contributed to the inability of the oni to organize into a cohesive force.

An akuma is a truly massive creature, standing at almost 12 feet in height and weighing more than two tons. Its body is a dense collection of the bones of thousands of creatures, and ivory in color. Most akuma dress themselves in lavish and outlandish styles to assert their authority among other oni and to impress their human sycophants.

Akuma speak common, draconic, spirit, the oni tongue,

which consists of barely audible sibilant whispers, hissing, and murmurs.

COMBAT

The akuma lust for battle, and will swiftly enter into melee without hesitation. Few creatures can withstand the assault of an akuma, but if an akuma finds itself equally matched or outnumbered they will withdraw and use its ranged abilities from a distance to ingenious effect.

An akuma's natural weapons, as well as any weapons it wields, are treated as chaotic-aligned and evil-aligned for purposes of overcoming damage reduction.

Eruption (Su): As an act of retribution or desperation, an akuma can channel the fires of hell through its own body and erupt into a devastating firestorm. Once per day, as a full-round action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity, an akuma can "burn" Constitution to feed the flames of a raging inferno that erupts from its body for 2d10 points of



damage for every point of Constitution burned. The Constitution loss is an ability drain, and if the akuma burns its Constitution score to zero, it dies. Anything within 100 feet of the akuma when it erupts is caught in the blast, but can succeed on a DC 27 Reflex save for half damage. Half of the damage dealt by the eruption is fire and the other half is corrupted damage (as if affected by the Corrupt Spell meta-magic feat). An eruption leaves the akuma in an severely weakened state, and so they almost always ensure that their minions are available for protection. Akuma may also teleport away immediately after they erupt. Some few akuma may sacrifice themselves to gain a strategic advantage for their armies, though this is rare, as their selfish natures usually preclude such an act. More likely than not, if the akuma kills itself in an inferno, it is out of a desire for final vengeance. All of the akuma's possessions, including their two *+1 flame burst falchions*, are destroyed in the firestorm. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Eyes of Flame (Su): At will, an akuma may, as a standard action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity, release twin flaming rays of white-hot energy from its eyes. An akuma must succeed on a ranged touch attack (+21 ranged) to hit a target with its twin rays. Two creatures can be targeted (one ray on each) but each ray requires a separate ranged touch attack roll (+21 ranged on each), and both targets must be within 15 feet of each other. All targets must be within 60 feet of the akuma. Each ray deal 8d6 points of damage to a target, half of which is fire damage and the other half is corrupted damage (as if affected by the Corrupt Spell meta-magic feat). The akuma's eyes of flame attack does not allow a saving throw, but is affected by spell-resistance.

Flame Burst Falchion (Su): Every akuma carries two wickedly curved *+1 flame burst falchions*, gifts from their lord, Hanumachi. As the akuma are Large creatures, they are able to wield a falchion in one hand, while a Medium creature would need two.

Pounce (Ex): When an akuma makes a charge, it can follow with a full attack action.

Spell-like abilities (Su): At will-*greater dispel magic*, *greater teleport* (akuma and 50 pounds of objects only), *word of chaos* (DC 24); 3/day - *blasphemy* (DC 24), *unholy aura* (DC 25), *unholy blight* (DC 21), *magic circle against good*; 1/day- *implosion* (DC 26). Caster level 17th. The save DC's are Charisma-based.

Fast Healing (Ex): An akuma heals 10 points of

damage each round so long as it has at least 1 hit point.

Flames (Su): The head of an akuma is wreathed in flames which spread to engulf their entire body when in combat. As a free action, the akuma can sheath themselves in these flames. Anyone grappling with an akuma takes 4d6 point of fire damage each round. Additionally, when wreathed in flames, the akuma's slam attack deals 4d6 points of fire damage in addition to its 1d8+5 bludgeoning damage.

AMANOJAKU

Medium Outsider (Chaotic, Extraplanar, Evil, Oni)

Hit Dice: 7d8+14 (45 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares)

Armor Class: 18 (+8 natural), touch 10, flat footed 18

Base Attack/Grapple: +7/+7

Attack: Claw +5 melee (1d6-2)

Full Attack: 2 claws +5 melee (1d6-2)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Coerce, spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/cold iron or good, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 5, immunity to fire and poison, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, SR 18, telepathy 100 ft., vulnerability to sonic attacks

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +8

Abilities: Str 7, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 24, Wis 16, Cha 20

Skills: Bluff +13, Concentration +10, Decipher Script +10, Diplomacy +14, Disguise +13 (+15 when acting in character), Forgery +12, Gather Information +15, Hide +5, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +15, Knowledge (geomancy) +15, Knowledge (history) +15, Knowledge (nature) +11, Knowledge (spirits) +15, Knowledge (nobility) +11, Knowledge (the planes) +11, Listen +7, Move Silently +5, Search +17, Sense Motive +15, Spellcraft +15, Spot +11, Use Magic Device +9 (+13 scrolls)

Feats: Ability Focus (Coerce), Combat Expertise, Investigator

Environment: Meifudo

Organization: Solitary, pair or squad (3-8)

Challenge Rating: 7

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 8 - 24 HD (Medium)

Level adjustment: -

Ugly, squat and lumpy, this malformed creature shambles slowly forward. Unseen waves of mental energies

emanate from the strange creature, compelling all who see into obedience.

Amanojaku are the spymasters, torturers, trainers and masterminds of the oni. Their impressive array of mental abilities uniquely suits them to subterfuge and reconnaissance. Among the oni, the amanojaku hold special assignments that they covet. They generally stay well away from combat, preferring clandestine operations.

As interrogators, the amanojaku know few equals. Probing the minds of enemies, the amanojaku unearth priceless information without anyone being the wiser. Amanojaku, expertly disguised, position themselves in situations that will bring them near their target. Minds are laid bare before the amanojaku, and they revel in dark secrets and forbidden thoughts.

Amanojaku are handlers and trainers of the aka-oni. They exert their will on the aka-oni, compelling the wild creatures to obey. Abusive by nature, the amanojaku regularly beat the aka-oni they handle. Despite the ease with which they manipulate the pathetic aka-oni with their remarkable mental skill, amanojaku relish cruelty and sadism.

Occasionally, amanojaku are sealed inside Shinto temples where they serve grudgingly as protectors. It is odd that an evil being would be allowed in a Shinto temple; however it has been done on rare occasions when the amanojaku's abilities are essential in flushing out imposters and spies. Amanojaku imprisoned in Shinto temples must be bound through special rituals to prevent them from doing mischief.

COMBAT

Feeble and reluctant combatants, amanojaku avoid combat whenever possible. If they are forced into a confrontation, they rely on their damage reduction and energy resistances to protect them while they attempt to extricate themselves from the melee. Amanojaku will utilize their mental abilities to restrain and dominate their opponents. If an amanojaku feels it is in control of a situation, they will exploit the opportunity to cause agony and suffering.

An amanojaku's natural weapons, as well as any weapons it wields, are treated as chaotic-aligned and evil-aligned for purposes of overcoming damage reduction.

Coerce (Su): Once per day, an amanojaku can invade the mind of a creature, infiltrating its thoughts and

subverting its will. As a standard action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity, the amanojaku may attempt to coerce a creature within 120 feet. The target of the amanojaku's mental assault must succeed on DC 22 Will save or be readily coerced. If the creature fails its Will save, they become a puppet to the amanojaku. Effectively, this ability functions as the *dominate monster* spell, except that the amanojaku can coerce a creature of no more than twice its hit dice. The save DC is Intelligence –based.

Spell-like abilities (Su): At will – *clairaudience/clairvoyance, comprehend languages, disguise self, detect thoughts* (DC 19), *greater dispel magic, see invisibility, tongues*; 3/day – *charm monster* (DC 21), *charm person* (DC 18), *confusion* (DC 21), *daze monster* (DC 19), *deep slumber* (DC 20), *dimension door, hypnotism* (DC 18), *lesser geas, scrying*; 1/day – *mind fog* (DC 22). Caster level 15th. The save DC's are Intelligence-based.

Fast Healing (Ex): An amanojaku heals 5 points of damage each round so long as it has at least 1 hit point.

Telepathy (Su): An amanojaku can communicate telepathically with any other creature within 100 feet. They can address multiple creatures simultaneously, but with some difficulty. It is not necessary for the targets have a language for the amanojaku to communicate with it telepathically, though the complexity of thoughts and images communicated will be somewhat limited if the target does not have a language, limiting exchanges to rudimentary ideas and simple concepts.

KUMO

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Extraplanar, Evil, Oni)

Hit Dice: 9d8+56 (94 hp)

Initiative: +5

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 20 ft.

Armor Class: 22 (-1 size, +5 Dex, +8 natural), touch 14, flat footed 18

Base Attack/Grapple: +8/+17

Attack: Claw +12 melee (1d6+4)

Full Attack: 2 claws +12 melee (1d6+4) and bite +10 melee (1d8+2 plus poison)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Enthrall, improved grab, poison, rake, rend, web, spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/cold iron or good, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 5, immunity to fire and poison, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, electricity

10, spider climb, SR 21, tremorsense 60 ft., vulnerability to sonic attacks

Saves: Fort +12, Ref +11, Will +8

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 21, Con 22, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 23

Skills: Bluff +16, Concentration +14, Diplomacy +14, Disguise +16, Escape Artist +11, Hide +15*, Intimidate +18, Jump +12, Knowledge (nobility) +9, Listen +12, Move Silently +20*, Perform (dance) +20, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +11, Spot +16, Survival +7

Feats: Cleave, Multiattack, Persuasive, Power Attack

Environment: Meifudo

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 11

Treasure: Double standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 9 – 15 HD (Large), 16 – 25 (Huge)

Level adjustment: -

From the waist up this creature appears to be beautiful human women with long thin arms ending in vicious claws. Below the waist, it has the body of a monstrous spider.

Spider demons, the kumo, are masters of intrigue, and find great pleasure in luring men to ruin and death. Many a striking woman at court or dancing girl in a tea house have been kumo in disguise, enticing prominent men into their fatal traps. A kumo in human guise will use its immense beauty and charm to seduce men and rob them of their wealth, honor and finally their life. Kumo hunt humans in their own cities and villages, as well as the forests and mountains of the Yonhosu valley. While among humans, they will use their unique abilities to assume human appearance for a short time and lure men to secluded areas where they then begin to consume them; mind and body. Kumo delight in embarrassing and humiliating their prey before devouring them. The calculating kumo will tempt their victims away from their wives and family, beguile them into forsaking their duties, and even despoiling their honor; all for the unimaginable pleasure promised them by the kumo. Only once the kumo is assured that they have utterly ruined a man will they feast on his flesh.

High in the forest canopy, kumo also wait for prey. There they set their webs as traps for those foolish enough to stumble into the kumo's lair.

Kumo speak common, spirit and the oni tongue.

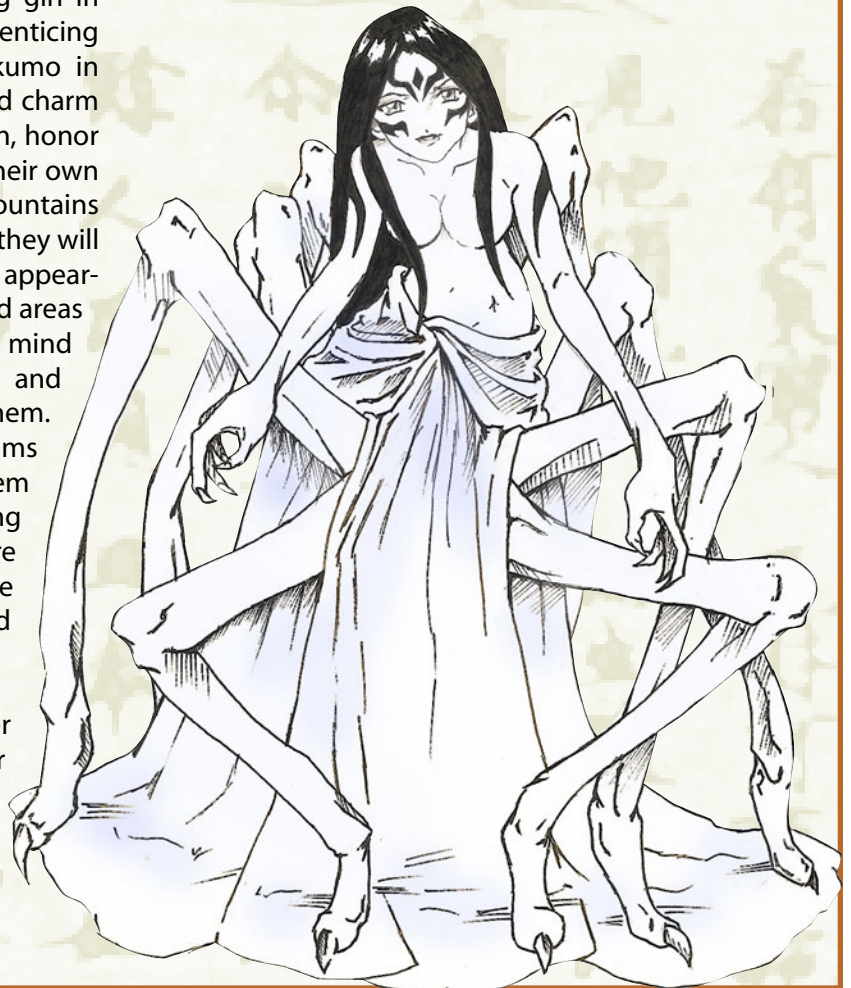
COMBAT

Kumo are resourceful and crafty creatures, and avoid direct confrontation in favor of manipulation. They seek to maintain advantage against their opponents by employing any and all of unique abilities before ever entering into melee combat. They will enthrall as many opponents as they can to use as pawns against other foes, and weave their entangling webs to slow their enemies.

Once engaged in melee, the kumo will attempt to rake and rend, finally biting them to immobilize their opponents.

A kumo's natural weapons, as well as any weapons it wields, are treated as chaotic-aligned and evil-aligned for purposes of overcoming damage reduction.

Enthral (Su): By performing a bizarre undulating dance, a kumo can weave an intoxicating spell and utterly enthrall all who see her. As a full-round action, a kumo may attempt her enthralling dance. First, the kumo must make a perform check to determine the effectiveness of her hypnotic dance. A highly successful roll will add potency to the effect, while a poor roll



will weaken it. Anyone within 30 ft. of a kumo when she finishes her dance must succeed on Will save or be spellbound. DC is determined by the Perform check divided in half (raw d20 roll plus Perform skill modifier divided in half). For instance, should the kumo roll a 17 + 20 perform skill modifier for a total of 33 divided by 2 (rounded down), then the Will save would be a DC 16. However, should the kumo roll a 2 + 20 perform skill modifier for a total of 22 divided by 2 then the Will save DC is significantly reduced to a DC 11. All who fail their Will save are enthralled and remain so for 2d6 days. Enthralled creatures perceive the kumo as having unearthly beauty and can deny her nothing. They will stare adoringly at the kumo and take no actions except those dictated by their new mistress. An enthralled creature is oblivious to all other creatures except the kumo and ignore everyone but her (though they will defend themselves against creatures attacking them). They long for nothing more than to please the kumo and do her bidding in the hopes of garnering her affection. The kumo is able to issue one *suggestion* (DC same as initial DC as determined by Perform check) per round as a free action to anyone she has enthralled. Enthralled creatures must be able to understand the language spoken by the kumo to obey her *suggestion*, and if they cannot comprehend they will simply stand in place and stare at her. Should an enthralled creature resist a command they still remain enthralled for the full duration and may still succumb to a subsequent *suggestion*. Creatures under the kumo's spell will even willingly approach the kumo and embrace her if so commanded. The enthralling effect will only be broken by a successful *dispel magic* roll (effective Caster level 12th), *break enchantment*, successful exorcism attempt, the duration elapses, or if the kumo attacks the enthralled creature. Enthralled creatures will make no attempts to break their own enchantment, or that of any others enthralled by the kumo while under her spell. At any given time, a kumo may have enthralled creatures totaling no more than three times its Hit Dice (for example a 9 HD kumo can have a total of 27 Hit Dice of enthralled creatures at any given time).

Improved Grab (Ex): If a kumo hits a Large or smaller creature with a claw attack, she can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Poison (Ex): Kumo have a poisonous bite. Anyone bitten by a kumo must succeed a Fortitude save (DC 20) or succumb to paralysis. Subjects are paralyzed for 2d4 rounds. The save is Constitution based.

Rake (Ex): Attack bonus +12 melee, damage 1d6+4. A kumo can attack a grappled foe with both claws with no penalty.

Rend (Ex): A kumo that hits with both her claw attacks latches onto her opponent's body and shreds the flesh. The attack automatically deals an extra 2d6+6 points of damage.

Skills: Kumo receive a +4 racial bonus to Move Silently and Spot.

* Kumo have an additional +8 bonus to Hide and Move Silently checks when using their webs.

Spell-like abilities (Su): 3/day – *daze*, *greater dispel magic*, *hold person*, *polymorph* (medium humanoid form only, no limit on duration), *touch of idiocy*. Caster level 12th. All saves are Charisma based.

Web (Ex): Kumo often lie in wait among their webs or high in the forest canopy, then lower themselves silently on a strand of silk for a surprise attack. The kumo's webbing is strong enough to support herself and one additional creature of the same size. The kumo can throw a web eight times per day, which is similar to attacking with a net but has a maximum range of 60 feet with range increments of 10 feet, and is effective against targets up to one size category larger than the kumo.

A creature entangled by the kumo's web can free themselves as a standard action with a successful Escape Artist check (DC 20) or break free with a Strength check (DC 28). The DC's are Constitution based, and the Strength check DC includes a +4 racial bonus.

Kumo may also weave webs to ensnare creatures. Webs can be woven from 5 to 20 square feet, and may be woven at any angle as long as there are two or more solid and diametrically opposed points (such as floor and ceiling, forest floor and tree trunk, etc.). Any creature approaching the web must succeed on a DC 20 Spot check to notice the web or they are caught in the trap and become entangled as though by a web attack as described above. Creatures attempting to break escape or break free gain a +5 bonus if the entangled creature has a surface to walk on or something to grab while pulling their way out. Each five foot section of web has 12 hit points and have damage reduction 5/-.

A kumo can traverse its own webs at its climb speed as well as sense and locate any creature touching even a single strand.

Fast Healing (Ex): A kumo heals 5 points of damage each round so long as it has at least 1 hit point.

Spider climb (Su): This ability is constantly in effect and functions as the *spider climb* spell of the same name except that the kumo need not have its hands free to use the ability (as it uses its many legs to skitter across almost any surface).

Tremorsense (Ex): A kumo can detect and pinpoint any creature or object within 60 feet in contact with the ground, or within any range in contact with her webs.

SAMEBITO

Large Monstrous Humanoid (Aquatic)

Hit Dice: 7d8+21 (53 hp)

Initiative: +3

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), swim 50 ft.

Armor Class: 17 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +5 natural), touch 12, flat footed 14

Base Attack/Grapple: +7/+15

Attack: Bite +11 melee (1d8+6)

Full Attack: Bite +11/+6 melee (1d8+6)

Space/Reach: 10ft./5ft.

Special Attacks: Powerful charge 4d6+6

Special Qualities: Blindsight, blood tears, fish out of water, keen scent, resistance to cold 10

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +6

Abilities: Str 19, Dex 17, Con 16, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 7

Skills: Listen +6, Search +3, Spot +6, Survival +4, Swim +12

Feats: Weapon Focus (bite), Swim-by Attack, Track

Environment: cold aquatic

Organization: Solitary, school (2 – 5) or pack (6 – 11)

Challenge Rating: 5

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually chaotic neutral

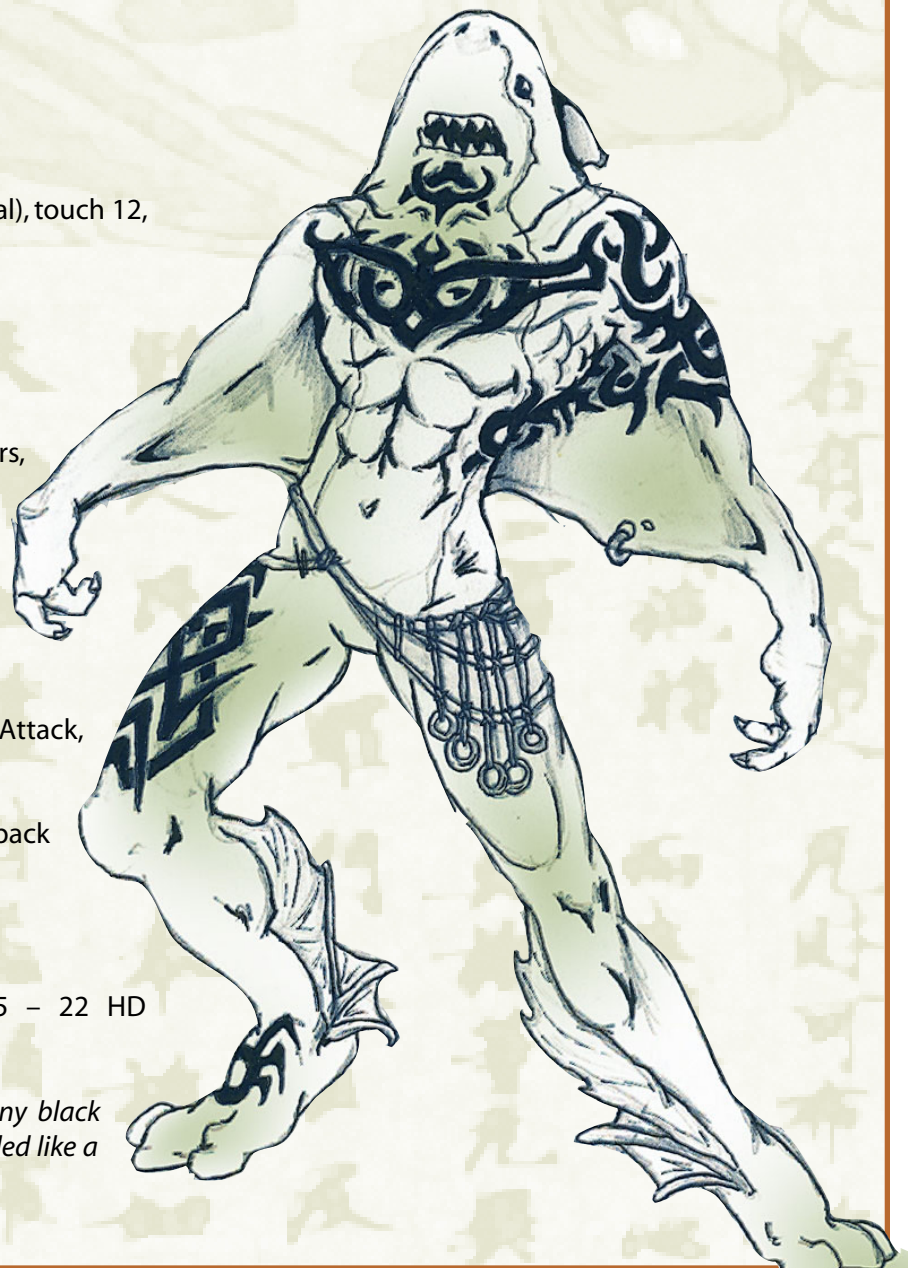
Advancement: 8 – 14 HD (Huge), 15 – 22 HD (Gargantuan, swim only)

Level adjustment: -

This creature has the body of a man, ebony black skin, eyes that glow like emeralds, are bearded like a dragon, and the head of a shark.

Samebito are enigmatic and savage monsters. They are universally feared for their ferocity, yet they are simultaneously coveted by those brave enough to challenge them. For reasons unknown that can only be attributed to their peculiar physiology, the samebito shed tears of blood, and when they touch the ground they convert to rubies.

Little is known about samebito society as a whole, as they live deep beneath the waves and only young male hunters have ever been seen. Adolescent samebito must prove themselves as hunters, accumulating trophies from ever more challenging and dangerous prey. Hunting parties will venture up rivers and occasionally into lakes to attain trophies from creatures not found in the open sea to augment their prestige amongst the samebito. Samebito have even



been known to come up on shore to bring down a tempting trophy.

Adolescent samebito hunters are easily recognized by their intricate tattoos. For each conquest, the samebito's tribal tattoo is extended to cover more of its skin. Great hunters are almost entirely covered in spiraling patterns.

Samebito speak samebito and can speak with sharks.

COMBAT

When a samebito or a hunting pack journeys onto land in pursuit of prey, they will work cohesively to grapple their opponent and drag it into the water. Once underwater, the samebito will then ferociously attack their prey. Samebito will not venture far from waters edge, unless they are confident of a quick kill or enticed by an irresistible trophy.

Powerful Charge (Ex): As a samebito closes on its prey, it will often begin the hunt by charging its quarry. The samebito will dart through the water to slam into its prey while biting down hard with its many rows of serrated teeth. Clamping down its jaws, the samebito then violently thrashes, savagely shredding the flesh of its prey and even tearing off its limbs. In addition to the normal benefits and hazards of a charge, this allows the samebito to make a single bite attack with a +11 attack bonus that deals 4d6+6 points of damage.

A samebito can only make a powerful charge when underwater.

Blindsense (Ex): A samebito can locate creatures underwater within a 30-foot radius. This ability works only when the samebito is underwater.

Blood tears (Su): Samebito shed tears of blood, which turn into rubies upon contact with earth. These rubies are jealously hoarded by the samebito, though they have been known to use them in bargaining under desperate circumstances. Samebito can produce up to 12 tears a day. A single tear will transform into a 50gp ruby upon contact with the ground.

Fish Out of Water (Ex): In the water, the samebito are formidable hunters, however on land they are out of their element. When out of the water, a samebito can "hold its breath" for a number of rounds equal to twice its Constitution score. After this period of time, the samebito must make a DC 10 Constitution check

every round in order to continue "holding its breath." Each round, the DC increases by 1.

When the samebito finally fails its Constitution check, it begins to suffocate. In the first round, it falls unconscious (0 hp). In the following round, it drops to -1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, it dies.

Keen Scent (Ex): A samebito can detect creatures by scent in a 180-foot radius and detect blood in the water at ranges up to one mile. Out of water, their scent ability is much more limited and can only detect creatures within a 30-foot radius (effected by wind as described in CRB III, p. 314).

Skills: A samebito has a +4 racial bonus on Swim checks. It can always take a 10 on any swim check, even if distracted or endangered. Also, it can use the run action while swimming if it swims in a straight line.

Feats: A samebito has the Swim-by Attack Feat which operates just as the Flyby Attack Feat (as described in the CRB III, p.303) only when the samebito is underwater.

SHIKIGAMI

Fine Outsider (Native)

Hit Dice: 4d8 + 4 (22 hp)

Initiative: +6

Speed: fly 60 ft. (perfect)

Armor Class: 24 (+8 size, +6 Dex), touch 24, flat footed 18

Base Attack/Grapple: +12/-17

Attack: -

Full Attack: -

Space/Reach: 0 ft./ 0 ft.

Special Attacks: -

Special Qualities: Blur, darkvision 60 ft., damage reduction (see below), ethereal, evasion, magical enhancement, SR (see below), vulnerability to anti-magic

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +10, Will +12

Abilities: Str 1, Dex 22, Con 13, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 10

Skills: Escape Artist +10, Hide +31, Listen +7, Move Silently +15, Search +5, Sense Motive +9, Spot +11

Feats: Alertness, Stealthy

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: see below

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutra;

Advancement: 5-20 HD (Fine)

Level adjustment: -

Almost too small to see with the naked eye, this creature appears to be a wispy ball of smoke that flickers in and out of sight.

Shikigami are enigmatic creatures, poorly understood even by the onmyouji who summon them. For thousands of years, the onmyouji have summoned these spirit creatures to aid in spellcasting. Many ancient texts discuss the strange symbiotic relationship between onmyouji and shikigami. Some postulate that shikigami may be the spirits of long-dead onmyouji returned to assist their brethren. Others suggest that the spirit creatures may be completely unaware of their ability to enhance spells. Regardless of the many opinions on the subject, the shikigami faithfully appear when successfully summoned and confer their unique enhancements. Where shikigami dwell when they are not serving an onmyouji is a great mystery, as no shikigami has ever been seen in nature when not summoned.

Shikigami appear as wispy balls of mist, and can be hued from the entire spectrum from red to violet. Onmyouji have observed that for some unknown reason, they tend to consistently summon shikigami of the same color. This phenomenon remains unexplained, but like most things concerning shikigami is a source of debate among scholars of the arcane.

Shikigami are nearly insubstantial and only about one inch in diameter.

COMBAT

Shikigami are poor combatants, having no physical forms of attack, but they are incredibly dexterous and difficult to target. They rely on their many defensive qualities to keep them safe in combat, and will immediately hide once summoned to prevent detection. If a shikigami is near death, it will become ethereal and attempt to hide from its attackers.

Blur (Ex): Shikigami are constantly shifting and wavering, providing them with a natural *blur* effect (20% miss chance) that is not countered by *true seeing* and affects non-visual senses like blindsense and blindsight. Additionally, shikigami have no scent.

Damage Reduction (Ex): Shikigami have variable damage reduction. The type of damage reduction is

determined by the onmyouji who summons the creature. If the onmyouji summons them to confer a +2 bonus to save DC's, then the shikigami has damage reduction 5/-. If the onmyouji summons the shikigami to confer a +4 bonus, then the shikigami has damage reduction 5/magic. If the onmyouji summons the shikigami to confer a +6 bonus, then the shikigami has damage reduction 10/magic.

Ethereal (Su): A shikigami can become ethereal at will and remain so for as long as it wishes. It is important to note that a shikigami must be manifested and non-ethereal to confer its bonus to save DC.

Evasion (Ex): Shikigami are exceptionally agile and preternaturally attuned to danger around them. If it makes a successful Reflex save against an attack that normally deals half damage on a successful save, it instead takes no damage.

Magical Enhancement (Su): Shikigami confer bonuses to the save DC's of spells cast by the onmyouji who summon them. They can grant a +2, +4 or +6 bonus to the save DC's as determined by the summoner. The shikigami must remain material and within 120 feet of the onmyouji to confer its bonus. While it is summoned and manifested, the shikigami will attempt to stay close to the onmyouji, though it will hide whenever possible and only move to remain in proximity to the summoner or to avoid danger.

Spell Resistance (Ex): Shikigami have variable spell resistance. The amount of spell resistance is determined by the onmyouji who summons the creature. If the onmyouji summons them to confer a +2 bonus to save DC's, then the shikigami has spell resistance 16. If the onmyouji summons the shikigami to confer a +4 bonus, then the shikigami has spell resistance 18. If the onmyouji summons the shikigami to confer a +6 bonus, then the shikigami has spell resistance 20.

Vulnerability to Antimagic (Ex): Shikigami are extremely vulnerable to antimagic. If exposed to an antimagic field, the shikigami is instantly destroyed. Additionally, as a summoned creature, the shikigami can be dispelled (DC 11+onmyouji caster level). Dispelling a shikigami does not destroy it, but it does disappear and stop conferring its bonus to the onmyouji.

Challenge Rating: A shikigami's Challenge Rating is

variable. The Challenge Rating is determined by the onmyouji who summons the creature. If the onmyouji summons them to confer a +2 bonus to save DC's, then the shikigami has a Challenge Rating of 3. If the onmyouji summons the shikigami to confer a +4 bonus, then the shikigami has a Challenge Rating of 5. If the onmyouji summons the shikigami to confer a +6 bonus, then the shikigami has a Challenge Rating of 7.

TANUKI

Small Fey

Hit Dice: 2d6+4 (11 hp)

Initiative: +3

Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares), burrow 10 ft.

Armor Class: 15 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +1 natural), touch 14, flat footed 12

Base Attack/Grapple: +1/-3

Attack: Claw +4 melee (1d2)

Full Attack: 2 claws +4 melee (1d2) and bite -1 melee (1d3)

Space/Reach: 5ft./5ft.

Special Attacks: Rage, spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Hardy, low-light vision, scent

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +4

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Skills: Bluff +7, Disguise +7, Escape Artist +9, Listen +5, Spot +5, Survival +5

Feats: Track (B), Weapon Finesse

Environment: Temperate forests

Organization: Solitary, pair or cete (3-5)

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually chaotic neutral

Advancement: 7 – 12 HD (Medium)

Level adjustment: +2

Akin to a wild badger, this creature stands on two paws rather than four. Its eyes and manner bespeak an intelligence far greater than any mere animal.

Tanuki are spirit folk out to trick humanity and reap great pleasure in the process. Irascible and impetuous, the tanuki are prone to rash decisions. They are more likely to act out of instinct rather than reason. They enjoy the mischief they wreak, and get very aggravated if

anything or anyone stands in the way of their amusement.

A tanuki, once wronged, is a persistent foe. Out for revenge, a tanuki once fed a man's wife to him in a soup.

Tanuki can be found throughout Kitsunemori, but they do not have the numbers of the prolific kitsune. Tanuki and kitsune regularly compete with one another, undertaking verbal duels, contests of magic and skill, and plotting against humans to score the ultimate trick.

Once a tanuki is resolved on a course of action, they are nearly impossible to dissuade. Stubbornness and pride will prevail over their impulsive nature, and they will doggedly continue on their path. They will track a human across all of Kitsunemori before they will admit defeat to a rival kitsune.

The appetite of the tanuki is legendary. They will eat anything they can chew, and they absolutely adore sweets.

Tanuki speak common and tanuki.

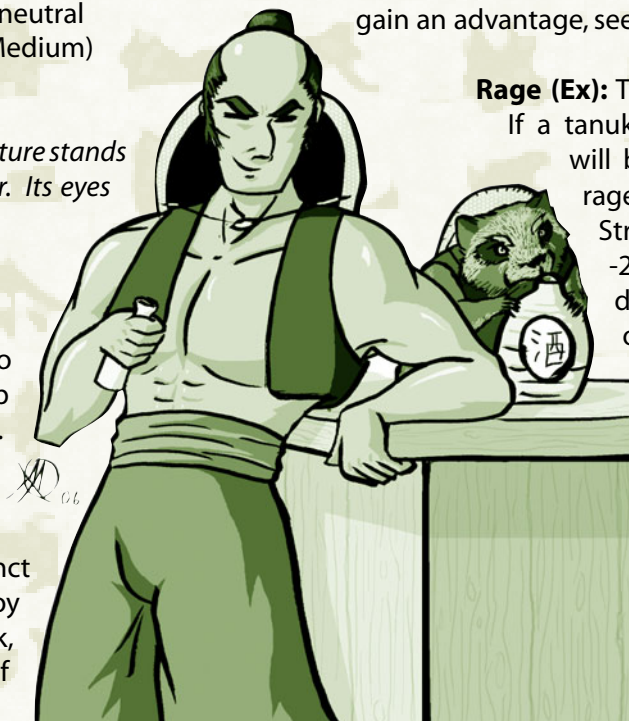
COMBAT

Tanuki are able combatants, and do not shy away from melee when confronted. They are more than willing to go toe-to-toe in combat with creatures much larger than themselves, and rarely retreat from a challenge. Tanuki will employ their supernatural abilities to deceive and bewilder their opponents to gain an advantage, seeing no shame in trickery.

Rage (Ex): The tanuki temper is legendary.

If a tanuki takes damage in combat, it will become berserk and fly into a rage on its next turn, gaining +4 to Strength, +4 to Constitution, and -2 to Armor Class until its rage dissipates. The tanuki will furiously savage its opponent for a number of rounds equal to 3 plus the tanuki's (newly improved) Constitution modifier. Tanuki can enter into a rage once per day.

A tanuki can work itself voluntarily into a rage without taking any damage by raking



TEMPLE GUARDIAN

its claws across its chest, barking and shouting curses. A successful Constitution check (DC 13) is necessary to allow the tanuki to drive itself into a rage.

Spell-like abilities (Su): 3/day – *ghost sound* (DC 11), *disguise self* (DC 12), *minor image* (DC 13), *ventriloquism* (DC 12). Caster level 5th. The save DC's are Wisdom based.

Hardy (Ex): Tanuki are tenacious and robust creatures for their size. A tanuki's base land speed is 20 feet, and its burrow speed is 10 feet. However, tanuki can move at these speeds even when wearing medium or heavy armor or when carrying a medium or heavy load. Tanuki are proficient with light and medium armor and proficient with all simple weapons.

Skills: A tanuki has a +4 racial bonus on Escape Artist checks.

TANUKI AS CHARACTERS

Size: Small

+2 to Dexterity and Constitution, -4 to Charisma
20 ft. (6 squares), burrow 10 ft.

Low-light vision

Skills: A tanuki has a +4 racial bonus on Escape Artist checks.

Hardy (Ex): Tanuki are tenacious and robust creatures for their size. A tanuki's base land speed is 20 feet, and its burrow speed is 10 feet. However, tanuki can move at these speeds even when wearing medium or heavy armor or when carrying a medium or heavy load.

Spell-like abilities (Su): 3/day – *ghost sound* (DC), *disguise self* (DC); 1/day – *minor image* (DC), *ventriloquism* (DC). Caster level 5th.

Rage (Ex): The tanuki temper is legendary. If a tanuki takes damage in combat, it will become berserk and fly into a rage on its next turn, gaining +4 to Strength, +4 to Constitution, and -2 to Armor Class until its rage dissipates. The tanuki will furiously savage its opponent for a number of rounds equal to 3 plus the tanuki's (newly improved) Constitution modifier. Tanuki can enter into a rage once per day.

A tanuki can work itself voluntarily into a rage without taking any damage by raking its claws across its chest, barking and shouting curses. A successful Constitution check (DC 13) is necessary to allow the tanuki to drive itself into a rage.

Automatic Languages: Tanuki, common.

Favored class: Barbarian

Temples and shrines of sufficient size and importance may have a guardian, most likely created in an age beyond memory. These mammoth carvings are infused with a portion of the shrines power, and animated to protect the site from intruders.

Unlike golems, temple guardians are not created through binding unwilling spirits to the artificial body nor is it subject to the will of its creator. The stone used in the carving of a temple guardian possesses inherent spirit, and the guardian's creator will only use a stone willing to impart its spirit to the construct. A temple guardian is then animated through intricately carved symbols that harness and focus the geomantic energies of the shrine.

The temple guardian is an autonomous, pre-programmed construct given specific instructions by its creator (who is most likely now long since deceased). Most temple guardians are programmed to attack any evil entity entering the shrine's perimeter.

Temple guardians come in many shapes and sizes, from the stone foxes that stand vigil at the Shrine of Inari in Yamaken to the stone tortoise that safeguards the Buddhist temple of the sohei in the Torayama Mountains.

STONE TORTOISE

Huge Construct

Hit Dice: 22d10+40 (161 hp)

Initiative: -1

Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares)

Armor Class: 26 (-2 size, -2 Dex, +20 Natural), touch 6, flat footed 26

Base Attack/Grapple: +16/+34

Attack: Slam +24 melee (2d8+10)

Full Attack: 2 slams +24 melee (2d8+10)

Space/Reach: 15ft./15ft.

Special Attacks: Stomp, trample 2d8+15

Special Qualities: Construct traits, damage reduction 10/adamantine, darkvision 60 ft., detect evil, immunity to magic, low-light vision

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +8

Abilities: Str 31, Dex 8, Con -, Int -, Wis 11, Cha 1

Skills: -

Feats: -

Environment: Shrines and temple grounds

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 13

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 23-31 HD (Huge), 32-46 HD (Gargantuan)

Level adjustment: -

This enormous stone tortoise is nearly 16 feet long and almost as tall. Expertly hewn from granite, the creature's body is carved with a myriad of mysterious symbols.

High in the Torayama Mountains, before the sohei stronghold stands a statue of immense proportions. Carved from the local granite countless centuries ago, this monumental stone effigy protects the Buddhist temple from evil.

Ordinarily, the giant stone tortoise stands motionless for months or years, presenting no evidence that it is in fact quite animate. Only when an evil entity attempts to gain entrance to the temple does the stone tortoise rumble to life.

Among the largest, and oldest, temple guardians ever fashioned, the stone tortoise is legendary and attracts Buddhist pilgrims from throughout not only the provinces but even the imperial center beyond.

The sohei are proud of their guardian, and honor his spirit regularly.

Temple guardians cannot speak nor understand any language. They are completely oblivious to attempts to communicate.

COMBAT

Temple guardians are not subtle combatants, and have little finesse. They will stomp, trample and slam whatever creature they perceive as evil until either the creature leaves the temple grounds or is destroyed.

Stomp (Ex): At will, the temple guardian can stomp mightily on the ground, sending a shockwave rippling through the earth. All creatures within 30 feet must succeed on a DC 21 Reflex save or be thrown off their feet and knocked prone. Only creatures in direct contact with the ground are thus affected by the guardian's stomp. Stomping is a standard action that provokes an attack of opportunity. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Trample (Ex): The temple guardian can crush opponents in its path. As a full-round action, the temple

guardian can move up to twice its speed and run over any opponents in its path that are Large or smaller. Any creature (of the appropriate size) whose space is completely covered by the temple guardian's space is caught in the path and trampled for 2d8+15 points of bludgeoning damage.

If the temple guardian runs over only some of a target's space, the target creature can make an attack of opportunity against the temple guardian with a -4 penalty to the attack roll. If the temple guardian tramples into an illegal space, it returns to the last legal position it occupied, or the closest legal position if there is a legal position closer than the position they last occupied.

Trampled creatures can attempt attacks of opportunity, but these attacks receive a -4 penalty. If trampled creatures do not make attacks of opportunity, they may instead attempt a DC 31 Reflex save to take half damage. The temple guardian, when trampling, can only deliver damage to each target creature once per round no matter how many times its movement takes it over a creature.

Detect Evil (Su): Temple guardians can sense the presence of evil within the perimeter of the shrine they protect. They need not concentrate to use or activate this ability, rather they are immediately and always aware of the presence, power and location of any and all evil entities within the shrines confines. Temple guardians are not adversely affected by the strength of an evil aura. This ability is always in effect, but can be temporarily dampened or nullified as it is a supernatural ability. The temple guardians ability to detect evil extends to the astral and ethereal planes.

Immunity to Magic (Ex): A temple guardian is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. In addition, specific spells and effects have a peculiar effect on temple guardians.

Similar to a stone golem, a *transmute rock to mud* spell slows a temple guardian (as the *slow* spell) for 2d6 rounds, with no saving throw. However, a *transmute mud to rock* spells heals a temple guardian of any lost hit points.

A *stone to flesh* spell does not physically transform a temple guardian, but it does temporarily negate its damage reduction and immunity to magic for 1 full round.

A *stone shape* spell cannot alter the form of the temple guardian but it can, for a short time, modify the carvings that focus the geomantic power of the shrine into the guardian. For one full round, the temple guardian's Strength score temporarily suffers a penalty equal to the caster level of the spellcaster casting *stone shape*. Multiple castings of *stone shape* in the same round do not stack.

A *stoneskin* spell cast on a temple guardian increases its damage reduction to 20/adamantine for the full duration of the spell and will not be discharged by damage prevented. Multiple castings of *stoneskin* do not stack.

A *stone tell* spell cast on a temple guardian works as normal, allowing the spellcaster to 'speak' to the spirit of the stone from which the guardian was carved.

TENGU

Medium Monstrous Humanoid

Hit Dice: 6d8 + 18 (45 hp)

Initiative: +10

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 60 ft. (average)

Armor Class: 20 (+6 Dex, +4 Insight), touch 20, flat footed 14

Base Attack/Grapple: +6/+8

Attack: Masterwork katana +11 melee (1d10+3) or claw +4 melee (1d4+1) or bite +4 melee (2d6+1)

Full Attack: Masterwork katana +11/+6 melee (1d10+3) and bite +4 melee (2d6+1) or 2 claws +4 melee (1d4+1) and bite +4 melee (2d6+1)

Space/Reach: 5ft./5ft.

Special Attacks: Iron teeth, pounce, tengu-kakushi

Special Qualities: Avian grace, darkvision 60 ft., DR 10/bludgeoning (bird-boned)

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +11, Will +5

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 23, Con 16, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 6

Skills: Hide +14, Listen +4, Move Silently +14, Spot +6

Feats: Power attack, Weapon Focus (katana), Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative (B)

Environment: Temperate forests and mountains

Organization: Pair or flock (3 – 12)

Challenge Rating: 6

Treasure: Standard plus possessions

Alignment: Usually chaotic evil

Advancement: 7 – 12 HD (Medium)

Level adjustment: -

Resembling huge, pale crows, this creature has both arms and wings covered in opalescent black feathers. This monstrous beast is slightly taller than a human, but is dressed in a strange human fashion. The sharp katana blade it wields appears to have been crafted by a master.

The tengu are fierce avian bi-pedal humanoids. Tengu are capricious and cunning predators, stalking the dense forests and mountains of the Yonhosu valley for unsuspecting prey. Villagers who travel too far into the forest are often abducted by the tengu, sometimes never to be seen again, unwary children ranking among their favorite quarry. Those who do return wander, dazed, and have no memory of their time amongst the tengu.

The tengu are proud sword masters, and enjoy challenging blade-wielding humans to battle. They are coarse, haughty and quick to anger. History and legend have no clear record of where the tengu came from, but myths and rumors speak of their being spawned from foul sorcery.

Tengu speak common and tengu.

COMBAT

Tengu rely on stealth and speed,



and prefer to ambush their prey whenever possible. They will swoop in and attack their quarry, destroy their weapons and shields, then attempt to fly out of melee range. If they feel threatened, they will charge their opponents and devastate them with a flurry of sword blows. While their talons are formidable, the tengu prefer to utilize their ferocious bite and katana in combat.

Avian Grace (Ex): A unique aspect of their avian birthright, the tengu are preternaturally fast and acutely alert to danger. They receive a +4 insight bonus to the AC and Improved Initiative as a bonus feat.

Bird-boned (Ex): Due to the tengu's avian anatomy, their bones are hollow and extremely vulnerable to attack. As a result, bludgeoning weapons circumvent the tengu's damage resistance.

Iron Teeth (Ex): A tengu's beak is lined with immensely sharp and powerful teeth. When a tengu attempts to sunder a weapon or shield with its bite, it is considered to have the Improved Natural Attack and Sunder feat. Additionally, the tengu's teeth are incredibly dense, allowing a tengu to ignore an object's hardness when sundering.

Pounce (Ex): When a tengu makes a charge, it can follow with a full attack action.

Tengu-kakushi (Su): A tengu's vicious attacks are not its only weapons. By gazing into the eyes of a victim, the tengu can exert its will and attempt to take possession of the creature. Use of this ability is a standard action, does not provoke an attack of opportunity, and the target must be within 30 feet of the tengu. Any creature that the tengu targets must succeed on a Will save (DC 15) or succumb to the tengu's control as though by a *dominate person* spell (Cast level 9th). A single tengu can only rule over the will of one victim at a time, and when the creature is released from the tengu-kakushi (after the spell has elapsed or they are otherwise freed) they remember nothing of their mental captivity and suffer 1d4 points of temporary ability damage to Intelligence and Wisdom.

Skills: Tengu receive a +4 racial bonus to Move Silently and Hide.

YUKI-ONNA

Medium Fey (Cold)

Hit Dice: 9d6+36 (67 hp)

Initiative: +3

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Armor Class: 20 (+3 Dex, +7 natural), touch 13, flat footed 17

Base Attack/Grapple: +4/+9

Attack: Claw +9 melee (1d4+5 plus 1d6 cold)

Full Attack: Claw +9 melee (1d4+5 plus 1d6 cold)

Space/Reach: 5ft./5ft.

Special Attacks: Breath weapon, improved grab, kiss of winter, winter's wrath

Special Qualities: Gaseous form, immunity to cold, low-light vision, vulnerability to fire, winter's stride, wreath of snow

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +9

Abilities: Str 21, Dex 16, Con 19, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 24

Skills: Bluff +13, Diplomacy +17, Intimidate +17, Hide +17, Listen +13, Move Silently +17, Search +11, Sense Motive +11, Spot +13, Survival +9 (+11 to follow tracks)

Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Stealthy, Track

Environment: Temperate forests

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 9

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always neutral evil

Advancement: 10 – 22 HD (Medium)

Level adjustment: -

This woman of astounding beauty drifts across the snow with an unearthly grace. Her hair is the color of ice, and a white mist curls around her blue lips.

Yuki-Onna, the Lady of the Snow, appears each winter somewhere in the Yonhosu Valley. While the people of the provinces huddle around the hearth for warmth and struggle to survive the bitter winter cold, Yuki-Onna stalks the snowstorms in search of unsuspecting prey who venture even for a moment from their homes.

The Toukai clan encountered Yuki-Onna during their first winter in the Yonhosu Valley, and she has returned without fail with the advent of each new winter season. Until the first spring thaw, she prowls the valley, moving from province to province. She moves with a deadly quiet, and the only warning of her arrival is the snow that suddenly falls whenever she is near. Mothers frighten their children with cautionary tales of Yuki-Onna throughout the winter, warning them not to play when the snow is falling for they will become another victim to the Lady of the Snow.

Yuki-Onna is a woman of great beauty, and many a

man has hungered for her kiss though few suspected they would perish for the touch of her lips.

Where Yuki-Onna dwells between winters is a source of great speculation among scholars, and there are as many different theories as there are snowflakes in winter. During the winter months however, any sighting of Yuki-Onna is announced publicly to warn the populace, and many people leave their homes only when absolutely necessary. Unfortunately, efforts to track and destroy Yuki-Onna have always failed as she leaves no trail as she passes over the snow.

Superstition suggests that carrying a torch or other source of flame will keep Yuki-Onna at bay, though the effectiveness of this approach is unverified.

Yuki-Onna speaks common and spirit.

COMBAT

Yuki-Onna is a capable combatant, and she will take any opportunity to deprive life and warmth from the living. Once in her vice-like grip, opponents will find their energy rapidly drained away. Yuki-Onna is not unwise, however, and will frequently use guile and deception to convince potential prey to approach her. She will employ her formidable charm and beauty to lure men to her icy embrace. If threatened, she will use her breath weapon against her opponents. In the event that she is outnumbered, overmatched or overpowered, she will turn into a white mist to escape her enemy.

Breath Weapon (Su): Yuki-Onna's breath is a mist of white smoke, like a freezing blast of wind. Once every 1d4 rounds, she can breathe a 30 foot cone of icy wind. Any creature caught in the cone takes 8d6 points of cold damage, but only take half damage if successful on a DC 18 Reflex save.

Improved Grab (Ex): If Yuki-Onna hits a Medium or smaller creature with a claw attack, she can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Kiss of Winter (Su): The touch of Yuki-Onna's lips drains life and warmth from her victims. If Yuki-Onna successfully grapples and pins an opponent, she kisses them and drains their life energy, bestowing 1d4 negative levels. Each round that Yuki-Onna successfully holds an opponent pinned, she may continue to kiss them and deliver 1d4 negative levels each round. For each negative level bestowed, Yuki-Onna gains 5 temporary hit points. Yuki-Onna can use her kiss

of winter once per round, and must meet the above listed conditions.

Winter's Wrath (Su): Yuki-Onna deals an extra 1d6 points of cold damage each time she hits an opponent with a claw attack. Additionally, any creature struck by Yuki-Onna's claws must succeed on a DC 18 Fortitude save or be stunned for one round from the shockingly cold touch.

Gaseous Form (Su): As a standard action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity, Yuki-Onna can evaporate into a white mist, which operates just as the *gaseous form* spell (Caster level 12th).

Winter's Stride (Ex): Yuki-Onna can move over snow and ice at her normal speed without any impairment. Also, she leaves no trail and cannot be tracked.

Wreath of Snow (Su): Yuki-Onna is constantly wreathed in a halo of snowfall, which serves as the only warning of her approach. Snow falls in a 60 foot radius around Yuki-Onna, which obscures sight. The snowfall obscures all sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. A creature 5 feet away has concealment (20% miss chance on attacks) and creatures farther away have total concealment (50% miss chance). Fire spells temporarily burn away the snow within the fire spell's area for 1d4 rounds. A *wall of fire* burns away the snow in the area it does damage. Yuki-Onna's sight is not hampered by her own wreath of snow.





GLOSSARY

Akaki 1) One of the provinces or "han" of the Yonhosu Valley. Blanketed by the lush redpine forests of the north, this province is the lumber center of the valley. Currently, the provincial governor of Akaki, is little more than a figurehead, and the Akaki Han is unofficially ruled by the warlord, Taira no Hitoshi.

2) The Akaki clan was the first clan to settle the Akaki Han.

Aka-oni - Aka-oni, the "red demons", are little more than rabid brutes. Of barely more than animal intelligence, and brimming with hellish rage, the aka-oni must be meticulously trained by their handlers. Aka-oni are almost always kept in chains, and only released from bondage when their handlers want to unleash them on an enemy. It is unclear just how much of the aka-oni's ferocious nature is inherent, and how much is the result of cruel treatment by their handlers.

Akomachi - The first she - fox to become a kitsune and swear an oath to serve Inari.

Akuma - Among the oni, these wild sword-wielding monsters are the generals in Hanumachi's army of evil. Demons of awe-inspiring might, the akuma are not merely the commanders of demonic armies of oni, but full combatants themselves. Terrifying to behold, this gigantic fiend wields two wickedly curved swords. Wildly dancing flames wreath its skull-like head, and where other creatures have eyes, the akuma's eye cavities instead burn with tiny points of unholy light.

Amanojaku - Amanojaku are the spymasters, torturers, trainers and masterminds of the oni. Their impressive array of mental abilities uniquely suits them to subterfuge and reconnaissance. They generally stay well away from combat, preferring clandestine op-

erations. Ugly, squat and lumpy, these malformed oni shamble more than walk.

Amanonuhoko - The Amanonuhoko, otherwise known as the Heavenly Halberd of the Marsh, was given to Izanagi and Izanami to aid in the creation of the universe. The halberd is order-incarnate, and an artifact of truly awesome might.

Amaterasu - Born from a tear fallen from Izanagi's eye, Amaterasu is the Sun Goddess and bringer of life. She is the venerated progenitor of the imperial line.

Ametsuchi - Ametsuchi is the name that the people of Yonhosu and the surrounding empire give to the world, the heavens and hells. It refers to the totality of their universe, in which their world is only a small island in a vast sea.

Ancient - The language in which the mudras of the onmyouji are spoken and written. It's an obscure and labyrinthine language that by its nature prevents speakers from lying but not from using metaphors and imagery.

Ao-Mizuumi-no-Kita - The Blue Lake of the North, Ao-Mizuumi-no-Kita is the site of the provincial capital of the Akaki Han.

Arashi-Enkai - The ocean that surrounds the southern shores of the Yonhosu Valley is known as Arashi-Enkai. Prone to intense storms, these tempestuous waters are avoided by sailors.

Ashigaru Armor - Ashigaru armor is the armor worn by the rank-and-file infantry troops and militia members of the Yonhosu Valley. It's composed of a light breastplate and thigh protector made of laced metal plates, a pair of sune-ate, and a light helmet.

Bakemono - Strangely reminiscent of upright bats, the bakemono are pack hunters that infest the Kit-sunemori. In the forests of Akaki, numerous packs of bakemono are being slaughtered in the slow march towards deforestation there.

Baku - Baku, the Eater of Dreams, stalks sleeping prey to devour their dreams and nightmares. He is a creature of immense power and has the face of a lion, body of a horse, and feet of a tiger.

Benten - Benten is the goddess of love, eloquence, wisdom and the fine arts. She is the spiritual patron of artists and performers.

Bimbogami - Bimbogami, the god of poverty, is described as a filthy old man that brings poverty and ill-fortune to all he encounters.

Bishamon - Bishamon is the patron of warriors. He is depicted in full armor with a spear in hand.

Biwa - The biwa is a musical instrument akin to a lute.

Bodhisattva - Bodhisattva are individuals who attained the peak of enlightenment, but chose not to ascend to Nirvana in order to remain in the world to aid others.

Bommatsuri - Bommatsuri is the much-celebrated and mystical Festival of the Dead. For three days in the middle of 7th month, the spirits of the dead are given a brief respite from the underworld and allowed to return to the land of the living.

Buddhism - Buddhism espouses a path to personal enlightenment and honors the Buddha, a being who transcended the mortal coil and dispenses infinite wisdom from the heavens, with many lesser enlightened beings (bodhisattva) acting as agents in the world of mortals. The central aim of Buddhist practice is to end the cycle of rebirth (or reincarnation) through the awakening of an individual to ultimate truth (or dharma) and the eventual achievement of peace and liberation (called Nirvana).

Bugaku - Bugaku is a collection of traditional dances from the Imperial court performed not just in the Capital but in the provincial capitals throughout the empire.

Bushi - Bushi are professional warriors, but not necessarily samurai. They are competent soldiers in the

armies of feudal warlords, bodyguards to ministers, or even members of a palace guard.

Bushido - The "way of the warrior," or bushido, is a code of conduct and a way of life for the samurai. It's an unwritten code, a collection of maxims handed down through the generations. Strict adherence to the principles of bushido is required of every samurai.

Butadoshi - Known as the Year of the Pig, Butadoshi is one year of a twelve-year cycle followed in the Yonhosu Valley.

Chugi - One of the seven virtues of bushido, chugi calls on the samurai to exemplify loyalty.

Courtier - An attendant at the imperial or provincial court, who may have a post as diplomat, negotiator or minister of some kind.

Crossings - A Crossing is a passage between worlds. Most Crossings are temporary or intermittent, but a few are thought to be permanent and are always kept under heavy guard. Crossings, even those that are open for a short time, have a direct effect on the land on which they appear. A Crossing to Meifudo may blight the land and wither crops while a Crossing to Takamagahara might increase the yield of harvests and cause flowers to bloom.

Daikoku - Daikoku is a fat god of wealth and patron of farmers. He carries a sack of rice and is followed by a rat companion.

Daikyu - In the Yonhosu Valley and the empire beyond, the daikyu is a popular composite longbow used in hunting and warfare.

Daimyo - Literally translated as 'great names', daimyo are powerful feudal lords who have amassed considerable wealth and power. The term daimyo is also used to refer to the leading figures of some clans, also called "warlords". Daimyo are served by samurai.

Daisho - The daisho, which consists of a masterwork katana and a masterwork wakizashi, are the quintessential weapons of the samurai. Daisho were often handed down by an honored ancestor or superior.

Dajokan - The Dajokan is the Council of State with jurisdiction over the various and diverse practical aspects of administration in both the provinces and the empire, while the Jingikan (Office of Deities) is a kind

of parallel bureaucracy for the worship of the deities.

Dharma - Dharma is ultimate truth, and the principle by which the universe is ordered.

Do - This basic part of samurai armor covers the wearer's chest and lower torso. The do's weight hangs across the shoulders with some additional support at the hips.

Dojo - A special type of school that teaches a specific art form, from flower arranging to the martial arts, is called a dojo.

Ebisu - Ebisu, son to Daikoku, is the patron of fishermen.

Ekibiogama - Ekibiogama is the god of pestilence and disease. He delights in blighting crops, spreading sickness, and infecting the healthy.

Emma-O - Emma-O is a Buddhist deity of the Underworld. Sometimes he resides in Meifudo, and at other times in Yomi. Emma-O is the judge of the dead, and weighs the sins of souls sentenced to the Underworld.

Festival of the Weaving Maiden - Particularly popular in Toukai, the Festival of the Weaving Maiden honors Tanabata (the Weaving Maiden). The festival takes place just before the Festival of the Dead, on the 7th day of the 7th month.

Fudo - Fudo is a fiery god who lives on a volcano and is tremendously knowledgeable and wise.

Fukimi-bari - mouth darts used by shinobi spies and assassins.

Fukurokuju - The god of wisdom and longevity, Fukurokuju appears as an old man with a very high forehead.

Futen - Futen is the god of wind. He stands atop mountains, long white beard whipping in the wind. Futen carries the several winds trapped in a bag, which he unleashes when the time is right.

Fu-Tzuki - The "Month of Letters"; Fu-Tzuki is the 7th month in a 12-month annual cycle.

Gagaku - Gagaku, or "elegant music", is instrumental music and singing performed in the Imperial Court and exported to the provinces.

Gaki - Gaki are hungry ghosts, the undead spirits of tremendously jealous and greedy people. As punishment for their mortal vices, they are cursed with a ravenous hunger for gold and treasure.

Geomancy - The study of the intricate relationships of the five elements (wood, water, fire, earth, and metal), and how they manifest in geomantic power flows and nodes, is known as geomancy. Geomancers are those who practice geomancy.

Geomantic Arrays - A geomantic array can take many shapes, but all are calculated to channel and maximize the flows of geomantic power for a particular purpose.

Geomantic Ki - The ambient energy of the land is known as geomantic ki.

Geomantic Node - Also sometimes referred to as a geomantic nexus, a geomantic node is an area where power flows in the land connect creating a tremendous geomantic potential. Many shrines and temples are erected on geomantic nodes.

Geomantic Potential - Geomantic potential is the raw potential power rating of the land, which remains untapped.

Geomantic Power Flows - Invisible but potent rivers of geomantic energy are called power flows. They run through the land, intersect and flow from one location to another.

Gi - 1) One of the seven virtues of bushido, gi calls on the samurai to exemplify rectitude or justice.

2) Often a companion of the hakama, the gi is a full jacket that is tied by a single cord at the waist.

Gin-Kegawa - Silver Fur, or Gin-Kegawa, is the leader of the largest Myobu pack in Yamaken whose shrine realm is connected to the Inari Shrine.

Go - Go is a much-loved game among samurai in which opposing armies of white stones attempt to surround and capture black stones on a board. The game is as much recreation as it is a lesson on strategy.

Goju-no-to - The goju-no-to is a many tiered pagoda in Buddhist temples where the holy relics of the Buddha are kept.

Gun - A gun is a county in a province or han.

Gunji - A gunji is an administrator responsible for governing a county.

Hachiman - Hachiman is the principal god of war.

Haidate - A haidate is a piece of armor, which resembles a skirt and is made with the same design as the do it complements. It covers the waist to the top of the knees, and it's not very popular except during full-scale warfare, as it limits mobility and is uncomfortable to wear while mounted.

Haiden - The haiden is the hall of worship in a Shinto shrine where offerings are made and rituals performed.

Hakama - These long, flowing pants tie at the waist at both the front and the back using long bands and are slit open along the hips for mobility.

Han - A "han" is a local governmental structure that describes the area over which each local government can exercise its power.

Hanumachi - Hanumachi is a demon imprisoned millennia ago by an ancient kitsune hero, but the seals to his prison are cracking and the kitsune of today do not remember how to imprison the demon once more.

Ha-Tzuki - The "Month of Leaves", Ha-Tzuki, is the 8th month in a twelve-month annual cycle.

Hearth Wisdom - Hearth Wisdom is a skill that represents a character's familiarity with folk charms and remedies that, through generations of experimentation and refinement, have become minor magics. Folk magic is more about intuition than analysis, with the same charm having different ritual formulas that are idiosyncratic to each village.

Hebidoshi - Known as the Year of the Snake, Hebidoshi one of twelve years in the repeating cycle of the calendar used in the Yonhosu Valley.

Hichinki - The hichinki is a musical instrument similar to an oboe.

Hideo's Poultrice - A remarkable substance used by the people of Sairyuukoe to protect against the rotting touch of kappa. The formula for Hideo's Poultrice is a closely guarded secret, and Sairyuukoe's exclusive

use of the substance provides them with a monopoly on river travel and trade in the Yonhosu Valley. The recipe is never written down, but part of a long oral tradition kept by practitioners of hearth magic on Kokoro-shima.

Hitsujidoshi - Known as the Year of the Sheep, Hitsujidoshi is one of twelve years in the repeating cycle of the calendar used in the Yonhosu Valley.

Hoderi - Hoderi is a god of fishing and the great-grandson of Amaterasu. He is also brother to Hoori.

Honden - Part of the Shinto shrine where theshintai (sacred objects that kami inhabit) are housed.

Honne - Honne represents a person's true feelings, while tatemae is the face you present to the world.

Honoo-Youbi - Also known as Fire Day, Honoo Youbi is the 3rd day of the 7-day week. The opposite of Taiyou-Youbi, the Fire Day brings bad luck in the morning and good luck in the afternoon. Honoo-Youbi is a good day to complete an activity or project, but only in the afternoon.

Hoori - Brother to Hoderi and great-grandson of Amaterasu, Hoori is the god of hunting. He once tried to fish as a challenge to his brother Hoderi and ended up meeting and marrying Otohime, the dragon spirit daughter of the Dragon King Ryujin.

Hotei - Hotei is another god of wealth, but also the god of laughter and the happiness found in contentment.

Hotoke - Hotoke are the spirits of dead Buddhas, and spirits of important figures. Every hotoke is a distinct individual.

Iaido - A component of samurai weapon training, this martial art is all about drawing a weapon first to deal maximum damage in as little time as possible.

Ibitsu-Kawa - Called Ibitsu-Kawa, the Crooked River rambles through the southern region of Yamaken and pours into the Shimo-Mizuumi. Many of the larger settlements in Yamaken are along the banks of the Ibitsu-Kawa.

Inari - Inari, the God of Rice, has expanded his areas of influence by also becoming a protector of human-

ity, providing not only nourishment but also security. Long ago, Inari recruited the aid of kitsune to act as his agents and messengers. Inari is a good-natured deity with the best intentions in mind.

Inudoshi - Known as the Year of the Dog, Inudoshi is one year on the twelve-year cycle of the calendar used in the Yonhosu Valley.

Izanagi - Izanagi is the creator god who begot most of the world with his wife, Izanami.

Izanami - Izanami is the creator goddess who made the world in concert with her husband, Izanagi. She now resides in Yomi, she seeks only to destroy life in a fit of vengeful rage to spite her husband, Izanagi, who failed to rescue her from the underworld thousands of years ago.

Izuchi-Mochi - Izuchi-Mochi are fey-touched humans, with one or more kitsune in their ancestry. They often exhibit unusual abilities and proclivities.

Jikininki - Buddhist priests who have fallen from grace and foully dishonored their faith, the Jikininki are stripped of their powers and cursed to transform into the 'Shape' each night. The Shape is an amorphous, mindless fiend that hungers voraciously for the lifeless bodies of the dead. These corpse-eating ex-priests can find no other nourishment. Ordinary food has lost all of its appeal. But as night falls, they begin to crave human flesh. With the darkness, their bodies melt into a huge undulating puddle of ooze; the Shape.

Jin - One of the seven virtues of bushido, jin calls on the samurai to exemplify benevolence.

Jingikan - The Office of Deities, the Jingikan is one-half of the parallel bureaucracy with the Dajokan. The Jingikan is responsible for matters relating to the worship of the deities.

Jitte - Essentially the same as a sai, the jitte has only one prong instead of two.

Jizo - Jizo is a benevolent protector of mankind with the ability to bring souls back from Yomi with a snap of his fingers. He's exceptionally fond of children, and shields them from harm in Yomi. In many places, Jizo is recognized as the God of Children.

Jo - This a long stick works essentially as a club.

Jurojin - Jurojin is a god of the happiness found in the old ways.

Kabuto - Kabuto are elaborate metal helmets with widely flaring neck guards in the back and curled-back sides that resemble wings. Decorative horns are common.

Kagura - Ritual dance and music performances held in honor of kami. The kagura is performed to pacify, console and entertain the kami in attendance.

Kaguraden - Part of a Shinto shrine, the kaguraden is a hall for the sacred dance and music of kagura

Kagutsuchi - Kagutsuchi is the progeny of Izanagi and Izanami. During his birth, Kagutsuchi's flaming body ignited the body of his mother, Izanami. His mother was engulfed in flames and she died as a result. Crazed with grief, his father drew a sword and cut Kagutsuchi into eight pieces. From the bits of Kagutsuchi's corpse emerged eight yamatsumi (mountain kami). Kagutsuchi's soul continues on in the underworld where his aimless anger produces wild firestorms.

Kakko - The kakko is a drum used in musical performances.

Kami - Kami are sacred spirit beings worshipped in Shinto, which range from powerful deities to ancestral spirits.

Kaminokai - All of the planes where spirits reside are known collectively as the spirit world, or Kaminokai, and only the most learned individuals distinguish between them.

Kampai - Kampai is a traditional toast in the Yonhosu Valley, which literally means 'dry glass'.

Kami-Na-Tzuki - The "Month of No Gods" is the 10th month in a twelve-month annual cycle. During the Month of No Gods, all the kami travel to a far off shrine to celebrate before the onset of winter. Due to the absence of the gods, the people of the Yonhosu Valley believe that they are particularly vulnerable during this month.

Kane-Youbi - Known as Metal Day, Kane-Youbi is the 6th day in the 7-day week. On Kane-Youbi, the Hours of the Horse (approximately 12pm to 2pm) are considered lucky, though the rest of the day is unlucky.

Kappa - These cruel turtle-beasts are the bane of all river travelers in the Yonhosu Valley. No denizen of Sairyuukoe travels the many rivers and streams of the region without a watchful eye for the vicious turtle-fairy called 'kappa'. Kappa are extremely territorial, and see all human incursion into their swamps and rivers as acts of aggression. Kappa will wreak havoc and destruction among human settlements, heedless of the chaos and death that ensues.

Katana - One of the most elegant and deadly blades ever forged, the katana is the signature weapon of samurai, although a few non-samurai warriors may own one, acquired as a spoil of war, forged illegally, or taken from a fallen samurai.

Kawa-No-Kami - Kawa-no-kami, the patron kami of Sairyuukoe, is the god of rivers. Though individual rivers might have kami of their own, Kawa-no-kami is their liege. During periods of flood or drought, the Sairyuukoe practiced human sacrifice to appease the angry kami. Though the human sacrifice is no longer performed, the Sairyuukoe still regularly give offerings to Kawa-No-Kami in the form of animal sacrifice and foodstuffs sent adrift on rafts along Sairyuukoe's many rivers and streams.

Keidai - The sacred grounds of the shrine known as keidai are separated from the profane areas outside the shrine.

Keigo - A specific use of speech, which is used when addressing an elder or superior.

Kemari - A game of courtly football, kemari, is a non-competitive sport involving the passing of a pig-skin ball and keeping it in the air without tackling opponents.

Ketsueki-Kawa - The Blood River, Ketsueki-Kawa, is the largest of all rivers in the Yonhosu Valley. The Blood River earned its name from the countless people whose blood flowed down the river when the Yonhosu Valley was still beset with demons.

Kijo - These giant-kin are dim and slow, but monstrously strong and enduring. Kijo hunting parties roam the southern hills of the Yonhosu Valley searching for prey. In general, kijo do not kill wantonly, but when food is scarce or they feel threatened they will fight savagely for survival. These hulking giant stands at over 10 feet tall. Its thick, craggy hide has a pebbly texture and a tawny grey

complexion. Its heavily muscled arms end in fists like boulders, which drag on the ground as they stalk the hills of the Yonhosu Valley.

Kikugawa no Rosanjin - A prodigious onmyouji who is in the employ of the daimyo, Taira no Hitoshi. Rosanjin has leased his services to a handful of merchants for exorbitant fees, but all reports confirm that his extensive talents merit the cost.

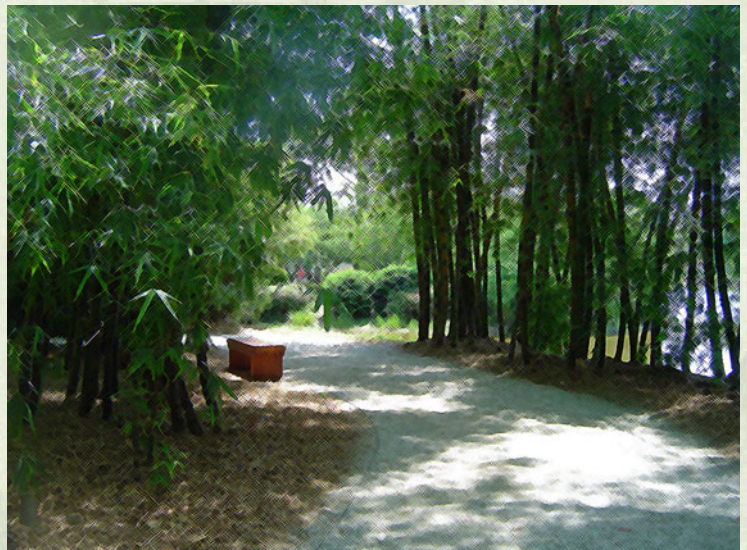
Kimono - The kimono is a long robe worn by both genders, with sleeve and hem lengths determining gender, age and social status.

Ki-no-o-bake - The animate spirits of trees, ki-no-o-bake are the guardians of Kitsunemori. They shamble low to the ground, dragging their root systems behind them as they journey in search of a grove to make their home. Covered in thick, rough bark with branch-like limbs sprouting from its trunk, ki-no-o-bake appear to be an animated dwarf tree similar to the bonsai.

Kisa-Ragi - The "Seasonal Change of Dress," Kisa-Ragi is the 2nd month in a twelve-month annual cycle.

Kitaishi clan - The Kitaishi clan are the descendants of the eight yamatsumi (mountain kami) created with the death of Kagutsuchi. Along with the Yamaken clan, they helped to found the Yamaken Han.

Kitaishi no Akihiro - Akihiro is the patriarch of the Kitaishi clan who used his considerable wealth and clout to maneuver himself into the governorship of the Yamaken Han. His plans for substantial change in the han are being met with stiff resistance by traditionalists.



Kitsu - The language spoken by kitsune is called 'kitsu'.

Kitsu Clan - A shinobi clan with deep ties to the kitsune, the Kitsu operate out of a village in Yamaken.

Kitsu no Emiko - Emiko is a gifted shinobi with some kitsune blood running through her veins. She is the acting leader of the Kitsu clan. While woefully under-prepared to lead the Kitsu clan, Emiko is the daughter of the former clan head who was savagely murdered a short time ago. While the clan elders squabble over the selection of a new leader, Emiko controls the clans covert activities.

Kitsune - Once ordinary foxes, kitsune are mischievous spirit creatures who dominate the Kitsunemori. Kitsune are roughly divided into two camps; the Myobu and the Nogitsune.

Kitsunemori - The Fox Forest, Kitsunemori, blankets almost half of all the land in the Yonhosu Valley and deep within the trees the kitsune rule.

Kodo - A part of Buddhist temples, the kodo is the lecture hall where Buddhist scriptures are housed and read.

Kojin - A tree-deity, Kojin is the goddess of the kitchen and everything that happens there. She resides in an enoki tree, and it is custom to not throw away old dolls but to offer them to Kojin by placing them on the roots of an enoki tree.

Koki-Teno - Koki-Teno is a female kitsune whose origins are shrouded in mystery. She is revered by the foxes after Inari, with the nogitsune being her most devout followers. Little is known about Koki-Teno, and her intentions are unclear, but she is admired by kitsune, myobu and nogitsune alike.

Kokoro-Mizuumi - The Kokoro-Mizuumi (Heart Lake) is fed by the Ketsueki-Kawa and is the largest lake in the Yonhosu Valley.

Kokoro-shima - The Heart Island, Kokoro-shima, stands in the center of the Kokoro-Mizuumi. The provincial capital of the Sairyuukoe Han stands on the island.

Koku - A koku is a province of the empire.

Kokushi - Kokushi are provincial governors in the empire.

Kondo - In a Buddhist temple, the kondo is the main hall where statues and images of the Buddha are kept.

Koshin - The god of roads, Koshin, is a kami to whom every traveler would be wise to pay homage. Travelers offer little straw horses to Koshin for a safe journey.

Kote - The equivalent of bracers, kote overlap the yugake to protect the wrists and back of the hands. They are usually made of either leather or chain, with splints of metal for additional protection

Kouken-agensuto-Zaigou - The Guardians against Sin, Kouken-agensuto-Zaigou, ostensibly patrol the Sairyuukoe Han to ensure the moral health and security of the province. However, the Guardians are mostly cruel thugs who abuse their authority.

Kumo - Spider demons, the kumo, are masters of intrigue, and find great pleasure in luring men to ruin and death. Many a striking woman at court or dancing girl in a tea house are kumo in disguise, enticing prominent men into their fatal traps. A kumo in human guise will use its immense beauty and charm to seduce men and rob them of their wealth, honor and finally their life. While among humans, they will use their unique abilities to assume human appearance for a short time and lure men to secluded areas where they then begin to consume them; mind and body. Kumo delight in embarrassing and humiliating their prey before devouring them. The calculating kumo will tempt their victims away from their wives and family, beguile them into forsaking their duties, and even bespoiling their honor; all for the unimaginable pleasure promised them by the kumo. From the waist up this creature appears to be beautiful human women with long thin arms ending in vicious claws. Below the waist, it has the body of a monstrous spider.

Kunai - A simple knife almost exclusively used by shinobi, the kunai has a handle that's thin and ends with a ring, which allows for various ingenious applications (such as using it as a tent stake or a rope weight) and offers balance and finger-hold for throwing.

Kunoichi - The kunoichi are female shinobi.

Kuro-Kimiko - Kuro-Kimiko, or "Black Kimiko", is the

rarely seen but immensely influential leader of the Yakuza in the Toukai Han.

Kusarigama - The kusarigama combines a kama with a tamagusari into a double weapon.

Kwannon - A Buddhist kami, Kwannon is the incarnation of mercy, caring for all living things and guiding them towards enlightenment and a happy life. Kwannon achieved enlightenment, but rather than ascending to Nirvana she chose to remain in the world to aid others in their journey towards truth.

Kyubi - Kitsune that earn their ninth tail receive the title of 'kyubi', the only rank that all kitsune truly aspire to. Kyubi command great power and their accomplishments demand respect from all other kitsune.

Kyubi no Henshin - Kyubi no Henshin, Master of Transformation, is a power available to only the mightiest of kitsune.

Kyubi no Maboroshi - Kyubi no Maboroshi, Master of Illusion, is a power available only to the mightiest of kitsune.

Kyubi no Sayuu - Kyubi no Sayuu, Master of Domination, is a power available only to the mightiest of kitsune.

Kyuudo - The Zen art of archery, kyuudo concentrates on the use of the bow, although it's more reflective and meditative than dexterous.

Lotus - The lotus is a sacred flower of Buddhism with the power to ward off evil spirits.

Luopan Compass - A tool imported from faraway lands, the Luopan compass is the principal tool used by geomancers to chart the flows of geomantic energy.

Magatama - A magatama is a tear-shaped crystal with a depression or hole in the middle at its thickest part. Believed to be precious gifts from the gods, magatama are treated with great reverence. Onmyouji believe that the magatama are formed when high concentrations of geomantic ki shape the surrounding stone, the magatama's type being determined by the ki's elemental resonance. The magatama's surface is slightly translucent, and its color is determined by the elemental resonance that it responds to. There are five types of magatama: blue (water), red (fire), green (wood), yellow (earth), and pearl white (metal).

Marisha-Ten - A goddess war and victory, Marisha-Ten is also a goddess of light, the sun and moon. In her desire to surpass her elders and superiors, Amaterasu and Tsukuyomi, Marisha-Ten seeks triumph in battle at almost any cost. Employing her eight blade wielding arms and army of ferocious boars, she makes use of deceitful tactics, particularly the arts of invisibility and stealth to gain victory over her enemies.

Maru - A maru is a bailey inside of a fortress of keep.

Meifudo - The great variety of hells that are home to an equally great variety of demons, are grouped together and known collectively as Meifudo.

Meiyo - One of the seven virtues of bushido, meiyo calls on the samurai to exemplify honor and glory.

Mempo - A metal faceplate often carved and decorated to resemble a demonic face, a mempo is a component in samurai armor.

Miko - Caretakers of shrines, the miko have a variety of duties depending on the size and nature of the shrine. Being both priestess and shrine maiden, a miko always wears a white kimono, a symbol of her purity. Miko are dancers in kagura, channeling kami through their bodies.

Mi-Na-Tzuki - The "Watering Month" is the 6th month in a twelve-month annual cycle.

Mizu-Youbi - Known as Water Day, Mizu-Youbi is the 4th day in the 7 day week. The most unlucky day, Mizu-Youbi is the day on which weddings and unions of any kind are to be assiduously avoided.

Monju-Bosatsu - A Buddha of education and enlightenment, he bears a sword to cut through all obstacles.

Moon Folk - Beloved children of Tsukuyomi, the Moon Folk are denizens of the night sky. They caper through the clouds, watching human strife with heavy hearts from their cities in the sky. The Moon Folk are natural negotiators and lovers of order, and they seek to soothe discord wherever they find it. They resemble diminutive humans with bone white skin and lustrous black hair. Their eyes are larger and darker than those of an ordinary human, and a pale luminosity surrounds their bodies. Sunlight scalds the flesh of the Moon Folk, who pay for the deep animosity between Tsukuyomi and Amaterasu.

Mount Takenaga - Mount Takenaga, the Tall Mountain, is the home of the mountain temple-fortress of the sohei in Sairyuukoe.

Mu-Tsuki - "Harmony" is the 1st month in a twelve-month annual cycle.

Musha-gaeshi - Musha-gaeshi are steep stone walls that surround a fortress of castle.

Myobu - The Myobu are kind-hearted kitsune that serve the god Inari and are worshipped by humans. Packs of myobu are scattered throughout the Yonhosu Valley, living in shrine realms connected to the lands' many shrines and temples.

Naga-Tsuki - "Autumn Long Month" is the 9th month in a twelve-month annual cycle.

Naginata - The naginata is a polearm; a long wooden shaft with a slightly curved blade on one end.

Nekode - A simple shinobi weapon, the nekode consists of a strap or glove worn on the hand, with three or four curved prongs coming out from the palm. Nekode are used as aids in climbing.

Nezumidoshi - Known as the Year of the Rat, Nezumidoshi is one in a twelve-year cycle of the calendar used in the Yonhosu Valley.

Ninja - Ninja are the shadow-warriors of shinobi clans. They are known for their covert activities.

Ninja-to - A short utilitarian straight blade with a long hollow handle, the ninja-to is used only by shinobi. The handle compartment can be used to hide all sort of things: caltrops, poison sacks, metal balls, a kunai, a short tamagusari, and so on.

Nintenryuu - The nintenryuu, a component in samurai weapon training, teaches the wielding of two swords at the same time, traditionally a katana and a wakizashi.

Nirvana - Nirvana is impossible to define directly, as it can only be experienced or realized. Nirvana translates as "extinction" or "extinguishing" and is considered to be the culmination of one's journey towards spiritual liberation. Nirvana has the connotation of stilling and peace. Nirvana is not a place or a state, but an absolute truth to be realized. A person can reach nirvana without dying. When a person who has realized nirvana

dies, his death is referred as his 'parinirvana', his fully passing away, as his life was his last link to the cycle of death and rebirth, and he will not be reborn again. Buddhism preaches that the ultimate goal and end of existence is realization of nirvana. What happens to a person after his parinirvana cannot be explained, as it is outside of all conceivable experience.

Nodachi - The nodachi is a sword that resembles a katana in shape but certainly not in size, as its blade is much longer and thicker, and its handle is twice as long.

The Nogitsune - The nogitsune are the opposite of kindly myobu. These malicious foxes take great delight in causing trouble for humans. The nogitsune are free spirits that don't enforce any rules upon their members, making them more a loose coalition of like-minded individuals than a true organization. Nogitsune run the gamut from mischievous pranksters to evil troublemakers that prey on humans for sport.

Nukekubi - Nukekubi appear as normal humans, but by night their heads detach smoothly from their bodies and fly about in search of human prey. By day, the nukekubi try to blend in with human society, often living in groups and masquerading as families. Nukekubi are nearly indistinguishable from ordinary humans. The only way to distinguish a nukekubi from a human is the line of peculiar red symbols around the base of their necks where the head detaches. The symbols, however, are easily concealed by clothing or jewelry.

Nunchaku - A pair of wooden handles joined together by either a rope or a short chain, the nunchaku is a weapon derived from peasant threshers but still requires quite a bit of skill to use effectively.

Okuninushi - A patron of onmyouji as well as monks, he is a god of both healing and sorcery.

Oni - Oni are a type of demon from Meifudo bent on destruction and domination. Oni come in a variety of sizes and shapes, but they are united in their thirst for bloodshed and chaos.

Onmyo-do - Onmyo-do is a mystical art focused on the teachings of the Tao (the understanding of the yin and yang), geomancy (the relationships among the five elements of wood, fire, metal, water, and earth), and the summoning of shikigami (guardian spirits aid in spellcasting).

Onmyouji - These wizard-priests of the empire are practitioners of onmyo-do. In recent times, they have fallen out of favor with the imperial court and are moving into the provinces in search of new opportunities.

Onryou - Onryou are vengeful ghosts created when a person is cruelly murdered. Their grudge against their killers, and their anger over the untimely theft of their life, is so powerful that they rise from the dead to exact their revenge. Onryou are utterly unable to let go of their "urami," or grudge, against the injustice of their murder. They kill all they see, and those they kill rise again as an onryou as well. These pitiless ghosts exist to create other onryou to share in the suffering of their eternal torment.

Onsen - Hot springs that abound in the Yonhosu Valley. They are often used for communal bathing.

Osusuki - The first he - fox to become a kitsune and swear an oath to serve Inari.

Otohime - The daughter of Ryujin, she is a dragon that regularly assumes the form of an extremely beautiful young woman. She is also wife to Hoori, kami of hunters.

Prestige - Prestige is a measure of a person's reputation in society.

Power Rating - A shrine, geomantic array or site has a Power Rating of between 1 and 10 (1 being the weakest and 10 the strongest), which measures the geomantic power of the area.

Raiden - One of the most important gods of lightning and thunder, Raiden still bows to Susano-o as the lord of storms. Raiden is master to Raiju, who he rouses during thunderstorms to do the masters bidding.

Raiju - A thunder beast that belongs to Raiden. Raiju can take many forms, but travels the sky as a ball of fire and lightning. Usually calm and at rest, Raiju becomes agitated during thunderstorms and leaps about the sky, striking out at trees, fields and even buildings. Buildings struck by lightning are believed to have been raked by Raiju's claws.

Rei - One of the seven virtues of bushido, rei calls on the samurai to exemplify respect.

Renga - A form of collaborative poetry where groups contribute parts of the verse to create a whole poem,

renga is particularly popular among young aristocratic women.

Ri - A 'ri' is a village, also sometimes called a 'sato'.

Richo - A richo is a village administrator responsible for the governing of the village.

River Dragon - Most dragons cannot be roused from their decades-long naps, and even when they waken few deign to travel to the land of mortals. The Dragon King, however, requires that his kindred journey to Kit-sunemori frequently on errands of divine importance. River dragons are the emissaries and messengers of the Dragon King.

Ronin - Becoming ronin is one of the worst fears of samurai. A ronin is a samurai rendered masterless by the ruin or fall of his master, or after the loss of his master's favor or privilege. It is also a term used for samurai who had lost their masters in wars. Ronin who lose their daimyo in war may join the service of other victorious daimyo without dishonor. Ronin are objects of ridicule and humiliation, particularly among the aristocracy and other samurai.

Ryujin - The Dragon King is the lord of the seas and its creatures, although he stays clear of Susano-o. He also commands the lesser dragons of rivers and lakes. He is not terribly popular in the landlocked Yonhosu Valley, but the river dragons do serve him, and thus many people send offerings to him down the rivers' currents.

Sai - A sharp, straight pick used for stabbing, the sai has two curving prongs that act both as a hand guard and a tool for trapping an enemy's weapon and disarming her.

Sai-no-kawara - Known as "The Dry Bed of the River of Souls," Sai-no-kawara is the resting place of children and the unmarried.

Sairyuukoe - 1) A Han of the Yonhosu valley that is riddled with river that criss-cross its land, creating an extremely efficient transportation and communication network.

2) The Sairyuukoe clan was the first clan to settle the Sairyuukoe Han.

Sairyuukoe no Dayu - The provincial governor of the Sairyuukoe Han, named for his honored ancestor. He is

a cruel and wicked man who has brought both financial prosperity and social oppression to Sairyuukoe.

Sairyuukoe no Taizo - Cousin to the provincial governor, Taizo regularly wanders the rivers and streams of the Han to root out wickedness and depravity wherever it lives. His tactics are legendary and brutal. He is a true religious fanatic.

Samebito - Samebito are enigmatic and savage monsters. They are universally feared for their ferocity, yet they are simultaneously coveted by those brave enough to challenge them. For reasons unknown that can only be attributed to their peculiar physiology, the samebito shed tears of blood, and when they touch the ground they transform into rubies. Samebito have the body of a man, ebony black skin, eyes that glow like emeralds, are bearded like a dragon, and the head of a shark.

Sammon - A sammon is the outer gate to a Buddhist temple.

Samurai - 1) While the word samurai is sometimes reserved for warriors, it's often applied to the members of a warrior's immediate family as well as to his entire household. The samurai were servants, first and foremost, to their masters (daimyo). Strict adherence to bushido was required of every samurai.

2) The samurai-class, or warrior-class, is a rapidly growing segment of society with substantial clout and power.

San-ga-nichi - The three days of the Festival of the New Year, or San-ga-nichi, is one of the most important festivals to the people of the Yonhosu Valley. The New Year is observed on the day after the second new moon after the winter solstice.

San-Hosoi-Shushi - San-Hosoi-Shushi, the Three Slender Fingers, are three long lakes in north-western Yamaken.

Sarudoshi - Known as the Year of the Monkey, Sarudoshi is one year in a twelve year cycle observed in the Yonhosu Valley.

Sasumata - This polearm is designed to capture opponents with a minimum of harm. It consists of a sturdy wooden shaft topped by a crescent-shaped blade.

Sa-Tsuki - "Rice Sprouts" is the 5th month in a twelve-

month annual cycle of the calendar used in the Yonhosu Valley.

Sennin - Sennin are wise mountain hermits that have acquired tremendous supernatural powers and insight. They have attained such power that they are no longer completely human, and are sometimes referred to as "the Undying". Sennin possess the secrets of immortality, and so are sought by the avaricious, desperate and fearful to answer questions on the mysteries of life and death.

Sento - Sento are public bath houses in major urban area of the Yonhosu Valley.

Sepukku - Sepukku is a form of ritual suicide by disembowelment. It is used by warriors to avoid falling into enemy hands, and to assuage shame. Samurai can also be ordered by their daimyo to commit seppuku. Samurai are also allowed to commit seppuku rather than be executed in the normal manner. The main point of the act is to restore or protect one's honor as a warrior.

Shi-Hasu - "Poor-Looking Winter" is the 12th month in a twelve-month annual cycle of the calendar used in the Yonhosu Valley.

Shikigami - Spirit creatures that assist onmyouji in spellcasting, shikigami are enigmatic creatures.

Shimo-Mizuumi - Called the "Lower Lake", Shimo-Mizuumi is in the southern portion of Yamaken.

Shimo-Tsuki - "Month of Falling Frost" is the 11th month in a twelve-month annual cycle of the calendar used in the Yonhosu Valley.

Shin - One of the seven virtues of bushido, shin calls on the samurai to exemplify honesty.

Shinobi - Also known as ninja, shinobi are the shadow warriors of legend. Unencumbered by the strict code of conduct that limits the samurai, shinobi employ tactics that utilize stealth, deception and covert action. The shinobi are most often organized into clans, and live lives of secrecy.

Shintai - Shintai are sacred objects housed in Shinto shrines, which are inhabited by kami. Kami use the shintai as a conduit into the material world.

Shinto - Known as "the way of the gods", Shinto is an

animistic religion that honors a multitude of gods and sacred spirits called kami.

Sho - A sho is a musical instrument that resembles a mouth organ.

Shogi - Shogi is a chess-like game that builds on 'go' and adds a tactical dimension to the game.

Shoko-o - One of the ten kings of Hell, though not actually a demon, Shoko-o is among the rulers of the Underworld. Unlike Emma-O, his sphere of influence includes only a small part of the Underworld. Shoko-o seeks to extend his authority, and so allies himself with demons to tip the balance of power in the Underworld in his favor.

Shrine - Shrines serve two purposes:

1) to offer homage to a particular deity, spirit, or group of such beings and

2) to cap the land's geomantic power flows. A shrine has a Power Rating from 1 (weakest) to 10 (strongest). Typically, the Shinto religion uses shrines while

Shuriken - These tiny weapons are the staple of the shinobi. They can't be used in melee but are instead thrown.

So - The so is a musical instrument like a harp.

Sode - Sode are shoulder guards made from laced-together metal plates and strips of lacquered leather. They are often large and ornate. The sode extend from slightly above the elbow to just past the shoulders.

Sohei - Sohei literally means "warrior monk," and the order is composed of Buddhist monks who have dedicated themselves to honing not only their spirit but also their bodies.

Spirit - The "common" language spoken among spirits and deities is called spirit. Most deities speak every language or have the means to cross any language barrier, but they talk among themselves in the spirit tongue.

Spirit Companion - Sorcerers in Kitsunemori do not have traditional familiars but instead have spirit companions, native outsiders who spend most of their time ethereal. Spirit companions can manifest for short periods of time.

Sumi-e - A form of ink painting, sumi-e is quite popular among aristocrats and samurai.

Sune-ate - The equivalent of greaves, sune-ate are armor pieces that protect the shins from the knee to the ankle with either leather reinforced by short iron strips or with segmented metal slats.

Susano-o - Susano-o, the God of Sea and Storms, was born when Izanagi blew his nose.

Taiko - A taiko is a drum.

Taira clan - Taira was an honorary surname granted by the emperor to former members of the imperial family when they became subjects.

Taira no Hitoshi - Taira no Hitoshi, a powerful warlord-daimyo, has seized the reigns of power from the provincial governor in Akaki. He is now the unofficial ruler of the Akaki Han, and he looks hungrily to the rest of the Yonhosu Valley.

Takamagahara - Otherwise known as the High Celestial Plane, Takamagahara is home to the greater deities who are led by Amaterasu.

Taira no Koto - A courtier in the Sairyuukoe court, Taira no Koto is a distant relation to Hitoshi. Koto arrived just a few years ago, after several decades of service in the imperial court. Taira no Koto is a spy for the emperor sent to assess the deteriorating situation in the Yonhosu Valley.

Taiyou-Youbi - Called the "Sun Day," Taiyou-Youbi is the 1st day in the 7-day cycle. It is believed that on Sun Day, good luck will come before noon, but bad luck is to follow after noon. Taiyou-Youbi is a good day for beginning new projects or starting anything new, as long as they are started in the morning.

Take-Odoriko - The leader of a large pack of nogit-sune, Take-Odoriko (Bamboo Dancer), has been sowing chaos and mischief throughout Akaki, as well as neighboring Sairyuukoe and Yamaken.

Takujo - More than a weapon, the takujo is the tool of monks. It's a staff with one end topped by a metal ring, from which other rings hang on either side. The takujo chimes softly as its rings strike each other, a feature that a few powerful priests use in their exorcisms and spiritual practices.

Tamagaki - Shinto shrines are surrounded by a short stone or wooden fences called tamagaki. These fences establish the boundaries between the sacred space within the shrine and the profane areas without.

Tamagusari - The tamagusari is a length of chain with one or two weighed ends.

Tango-no-Sekku - Celebrated on the 5th day of the 5th month, Tango-no-Sekku (the Boy's Festival) is intended to inspire young boys with the qualities of a warrior.

Tanto - A small knife that usually complements a samurai's arsenal as a backup weapon, the tanto can also be seen at the waists of nobles and wealthy merchants.

Tatemaie - Tatemaie is the face you present to the world, while honne represents a person's true feelings.

Tatsudoshi - Known as the Year of the Dragon, Tatsudoshi is one in the twelve-year cycle observed in the Yonhosu Valley.

Tanuki - Tanuki are spirit folk out to trick humanity and reap great pleasure in the process. Irascible and impetuous, the tanuki are prone to rash decisions. They are more likely to act out of instinct rather than reason. They enjoy the mischief they wreak, and get very aggravated if anything or anyone stands in the way of their amusement. A tanuki, once wronged, is a persistent foe. Out for revenge, a tanuki once fed a man's wife to him in a soup. Akin to a wild badger, tanuki stand on two paws rather than four.

Temizuya - Inside of Shinto shrines, the temizuya is a font and basin for ritual purification of the hands and mouth.

Temple Guardian - Temples and shrines of sufficient size and importance may have a temple guardian, most likely created in an age beyond memory. These mammoth carvings are infused with a portion of the shrines power, and animated to protect the site from intruders. A temple guardian is then animated through intricately carved symbols that harness and focus the geomantic energies of the shrine.

Tengu - The tengu are fierce avian bi-pedal humanoids. Tengu are capricious and cunning predators, wielding expertly-crafted katana, and stalking the dense forests and mountains of the Yonhosu valley for unsuspecting

prey. Villagers who travel too far into the forest are often abducted by the tengu, sometimes never to be seen again, unwary children ranking among their favorite quarry. Those who do return wander dazedly and have no memory of their time amongst the tengu.

Tessen - Both a weapon and armor, the tessen is a thick, wide instrument with a handle, making it resemble a fan.

Tetsubo - A great club studded and ringed with steel, the tetsubo is a simple yet devastating weapon.

Toridoshi - Known as the Year of the Bird, Toridoshi is one in the twelve-year cycle observed in the Yonhosu Valley.

Toyo-Uke-Bime - The patron kami of Akaki, Toyo-Uke-Bime is the goddess of earth, food and agriculture. She delights in seeing the land tamed and made productive through plowing and planting. Though she has fallen out of favor with the current regime in power, the general populace of Akaki venerate her and beg of her munificence at planting and harvest.

Tsuki-Youbi - The "Moon Day", Tsuki-Youbi is the 2nd day in the 7-day cycle. Funerals are to be avoided on this day, and ill fortune may befall friends.

Tsukuyomi - The Moon God, Tsukuyomi, was born from a tear fallen from Izanagi's eye. He is the Lord of the Night.

Tonfa - A weapon that evolved from peasant tools, the tonfa is a short wooden club with a handle jutting out perpendicularly about a quarter way up the club's length.

Toradoshi - Known as the Year of the Tiger, Toradoshi is one in a twelve-year cycle observed in the Yonhosu Valley.

Torii - Spirit gates, called torii, are large arches used as tools by priests and geomancers alike. It's an arch with two columns sustaining a slightly more elaborate headpiece. Most large shrines have a series of spirit gates leading to their sacred grounds.

Toukai - The oldest of the provinces in the Yonhosu Valley, Toukai is the commercial center of the valley. The people of Toukai are considered shrewd and not very trustworthy.

Toukai no Kozue - Toukai no Kozue is the provincial governor of the Toukai Han.

Toukai-Uchikai - The Bay of Toukai, Toukai-Uchikai, is navigable and deep enough to accept trading vessels, but many ships avoid the shores of the Yonhosu Valley altogether, their captains wishing not to subject their craft to unpredictable storms and treacherous rocks.

Tsuchi-Youbi - The "Earth Day," Tsuchi-Youbi is the 7th day in the 7-day cycle. Tsuchi-Youbi carries the same onus of good and bad luck as the 1st day: Taiyou-Youbi.

Umadoshi - Known as the Year of the Horse, Umadoshi is one in a twelve-year cycle observed in the Yonhosu Valley.

Usagidoshi - Known as the Year of the Rabbit, Usagidoshi is one in a twelve-year cycle observed in the Yonhosu Valley.

Ushidoshi - Known as the Year of the Cow, Ushidoshi is one in a twelve-year cycle observed in the Yonhosu Valley.

U-Tzuki - "Summer" or "Plant Rice" is the 4th month in a twelve-month annual cycle of the calendar used in the Yonhosu Valley.

Uzume - A goddess of fertility, merriment, dance and the arts, she is famous for performing a dance for Amaterasu to lure her back into the world. Uzume is the patron of dancers and entertainers, is honored as the originator of dancing, and is acknowledged as the Bringer of the Dawn.

Waka - Consisting of 31 syllables, waka is a form of poetry popular among the aristocracy.

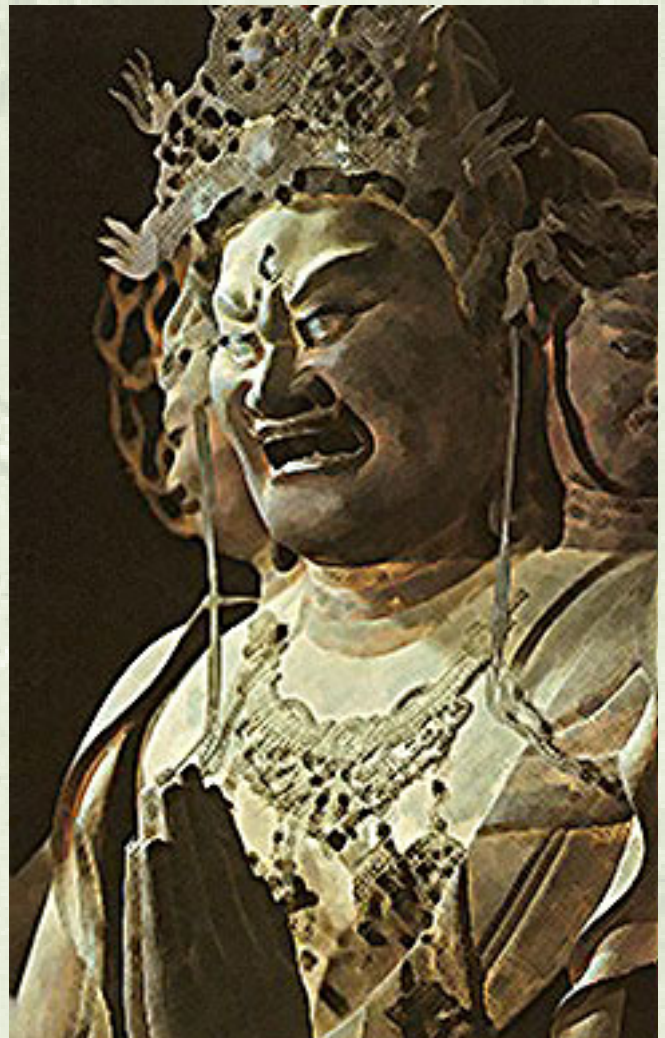
Wakibiki - Designed to protect the armpit area, wakibiki are guards made from leather with small metal plates attached. The pair ties around the neck and across the chest to distribute their weight around the torso.

Wakizashi - A short sword with a slightly curved edge, the wakizashi is the katana's companion blade in a samurai's daisho. This sword is also popular among members of the noble class who aren't members of the warrior class but who wear the weapon as a mark of status.

War Fan - A weapon favored by kunoichi (female shinobi), aristocratic ladies and a few male courtiers, the war fan is made with the same craftsmanship as a normal fan, from very cheap models using canvas to the more expensive ones with rich silk and lace brocades with gold filigree. What all these models have in common is that the fan's spikes are made of metal and end in razor-sharp points, which can slash a target when the fan is opened or stab him when it's closed.

Warai-hito - Known as the Laughing Man, Warai-hito is a cunning and flawless assassin. It is said that his victims never see him, but they all hear his quiet laughter as their life is snuffed out. Warai-hito is the leader of the shinobi Yabun-Tsume clan.

Yabun-Tsume Clan - Called the Night Claw, or Yabun-Tsume clan, this shinobi clan operates out of Toukai and has been working in the Han almost since its inception.



Ya-Yohi - "Grass Grows Dense" is the 3rd month in a twelve-month annual cycle of the calendar used in the Yonhosu Valley.

Yakuza - The elite of the criminal underworld is known as the yakuza. The yakuza doesn't describe a monolithic criminal organization with overarching goals and methods, but rather a great number of gangs and minor groups that operate within a similar variety of traditions and customs.

Yamaken - 1) The thickest part of Kitsunemori lies within the borders of the Yamaken Han. A haven for mystics and religious people, Yamaken has a great number of shrines and geomantic power nodes, which brings the people good fortune.

2) The Yamaken clan (along with the Kitaishi clan) were the first humans to settle in the Yamaken Han.

Yamaken no Kinnojo - The Shinto high-priest of the Shrine to Inari in Yamaken, Yamaken no Kinnojo is a powerful Shinto monk who seeks to purify the Yonhosu Valley.

Yari - A yari is a polearm that combines the qualities of a short lance (for dealing double damage during a mounted charge and triple damage in case of a critical hit on a mounted charge) and a regular polearm that can be set against a charge.

Yomi - Yomi is the shadowy land of the dead, and is presided over by the god Emma-O.

Yonhosu Valley - The Yonhosu Valley is an ancient river valley bordered by the Torayama Mountains on the east and the Shirokage mountain chain to the north and west.

Yu - One of the seven virtues of bushido, yu calls on the samurai to exemplify courage.

Yumi - A yumi is a composite shortbow used as a weapon and for hunting in the Yonhosu Valley.

Yugake - Yuagake are leather gloves with hardened thumb and forefinger to assist in drawing the powerful daikyu bow.

Yuki-Onna - Yuki-Onna, the Lady of the Snow, appears each winter somewhere in

the Yonhosu Valley. This woman of astounding beauty drifts across the snow with an unearthly grace. Her hair is the color of ice, and a white mist curls around her blue lips.

Zanbatou - This legendary weapon is known to exist but is rarely seen in actual combat. The zanbatou is an imposing large slab of metal the size of a person, more than an inch thick, and about a palm and a half wide with a long, sturdy handle.

Zanshin - Zanshin is a relaxed state of alertness, which all samurai aspire to attain. It allows samurai to immediately react to danger without hesitation.

Zasu - The head warrior-monk of a monastery is called a 'zasu' or leader.

Zasu Kondo no Ukyo - Commanding the sohei from within their mountain temple, Zasu Kondo no Ukyo leads the warrior-monks and the resistance movement in Sairyuukoe.

Zen - Zen is a branch of Buddhism that extols a life of strict discipline and meditative reflection.

Zocho - Zocho, the patron kami of the Toukai clan, is one of the four guardian kami who keep the world safe from demon attack. He is known as the guardian of the South.





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INDEX

- A**
- aka-oni 163, 164, 166
 - Akaki 8, 9, 13, 108, 109, 112, 114, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 124, 139, 140, 143, 144, 145
 - akuma 163, 164, 165
 - Amanojaku 139, 166
 - Amaterasu 10, 18, 54, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 137, 159, 160
 - Ametsuchi 100, 101, 102
 - Arashi-Enkai 112
 - Autumn Long Month 133
- B**
- bakemono 6, 118, 140, 143, 145, 146
 - Baku 92, 119, 146, 147, 148
 - Bamboo Dancer 118, 140
 - Benten 105
 - Bimbogami 103
 - Bishamon 104, 105
 - Black Kimiko 116
 - Blue Lake of the North 116
 - bodhisattva 10, 26, 38, 102
 - Bommatsuri 101
 - Buddhism 8, 10, 13, 18, 55, 101, 112, 114, 118, 123, 124, 126, 139, 141, 143, 173
 - bushi 11, 18, 27, 28, 32, 52, 56, 57, 64, 75, 85, 88, 89, 90, 102, 105, 107, 109, 110, 118, 127, 128, 140, 171, 172
 - bushido 11, 18, 27, 28, 32, 52, 56, 57, 64, 75, 85, 87, 89, 90, 92, 105, 107, 109, 110, 115, 127, 128, 140, 171, 172
- D**
- Daikoku 105
 - daikyu 65, 70, 71
 - Dajokan 107
 - do 69
 - dojo 8
 - dragon 61, 104, 106, 134, 136, 149, 150, 169
- E**
- Earth Day 133
 - Ebisu 105
 - Edo 107
 - Ekibiogama 103, 104
 - emperor 11, 118, 107, 108, 109, 110, 120, 123, 141
 - exorcism 24, 60, 131, 132, 168
- F**
- Festival of the Dead 101, 136, 137
 - Festival of the Weaving Maiden 137
 - Fire Day 133
 - fox form 11, 18, 27, 28, 32, 52, 56, 57, 64, 75, 85, 87, 89, 90, 102, 105, 107, 109, 110, 118, 127, 128, 140, 171, 172
 - Fukimi-bari 65, 69
 - Fukurokuju 105
 - Futen 104
- G**
- Gaki 151
 - geomancy 8, 10, 18, 30, 31, 64, 112, 113, 114, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 123, 139, 140, 141, 143, 144, 155
 - gi 72, 73, 129, 130, 131, 132
 - Go 11, 112
 - Grass Grows Dense 133
 - gun 107
 - gunji 107, 117
- H**
- Hachiman 104
 - haidate 70, 71
 - haiden 124
 - hakama 72, 73
 - Hanumachi 101, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 162, 164, 165
 - Harmony 133
 - Heian 8, 107
 - Hideo's Poultice 120
 - Hoderi 104
 - honden 124
 - honne 110
 - Hoori 104, 106
 - Hotei 106
 - Hotoke 106
 - House of Light 115

I

laido 30
Inari 6
Izanagi 103, 104, 141
Izanami 103, 104, 141

J

Jikininki 143, 153, 154
Jingikan 107, 120
Jitte 65, 68
Jizo 102, 104
Jo 65, 70
Jurojin 106

K

kabuto 70
kaguraden 124
Kagutsuchi 103, 104, 105, 123
Kaminokai 102
Kampai 111
kappa 16, 123, 143, 155, 156
keidai 124
keigo 110
kemari 112
Ketsueki-Kawa 101, 113, 114, 115, 116, 119, 137
ki-no-o-bake 157, 158
kijo 156
Kitaishi no Akihiro 123, 124
kitsu 56
kitsune ball 30, 58, 60, 130
Kitsu no Emiko 126, 129
Kojin 105
Koki-Teno 106
Kokoro-Mizuumi 113, 118, 119
Kokoro-shima 113, 119, 120
koku 107
kokushi 107, 108, 120, 124
Koshin 24, 105
kote 70, 71, 72, 130
kumo 139, 140, 163, 164, 167, 168, 169
Kunai 66, 69
kunoichi 7, 21, 28, 29, 69
kusari 67
Kwannon 54, 103
Kyuudo 30

L

Laughing Man 116, 140
Luopan compass 57, 73, 74

M

magatama 27, 73, 84, 88, 89, 90, 128
manrikigusari 63
Marisha-Ten 105
Meifudo 101, 102, 104, 162, 164, 165, 167
mempo 72, 73, 130

Metal Day 133
Monju-Bosatsu 105
Month of Falling Frost 133
Month of Leaves 133
Month of No Gods 133
Moon Day 133
Moon Folk 158, 159, 160
musha-gaeshi 121
myobu 11, 18, 27, 28, 32, 52, 56, 57, 64, 75, 85, 87, 89, 90, 102, 105, 107, 109, 110, 118, 127, 128, 140, 171, 172

N

Nekode 66, 68
nine tails 46
Ninja-to 66, 70
Ninjutsu 28
Nintenryuu 30
Nirvana 100, 103
Nodachi 67, 68

O

Okuninushi 105
One Who Will Not Be Named 113, 114
onmyouji 11, 18, 27, 28, 32, 52, 56, 57, 64, 75, 85, 87, 89, 90, 102, 105, 107, 109, 110, 118, 127, 128, 140, 171, 172
Onryou 152
onsen 111
Otohime 104, 106

P

Poor-Looking Winter 133
power nodes 8, 10, 18, 30, 31, 64, 112, 113, 114, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 123, 139, 140, 141, 143, 144, 155
Prestige 26, 29, 31, 43, 39, 40, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 58, 64, 111, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132

R

Raiden 105, 106
Raiju 105, 106
Renga 111
ri 107
Rice Sprouts 143
richo 107, 117
river dragon 149, 150
Ryuujin 101, 104, 105, 106

S

Sai-no-kawara 102
Sairyuukoe 8, 10, 18, 30, 31, 64, 112, 113, 114, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 123, 139, 140, 141, 143, 144, 155
same-bito 123
samurai 11, 18, 27, 28, 32, 52, 56, 57, 64, 75, 85, 87, 89, 90, 102, 105, 107, 109, 110, 118, 127, 128, 140, 171, 172
sasumata 67
sato 107
Seasonal Change of Dress 133

Sennin 106
shikigami 27, 28, 39, 127, 171, 172
shinobi 18, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 28, 29, 47, 60, 64, 65, 66, 67, 69, 72,
74, 109, 110, 116, 118, 126, 140, 144
Shinto 6
Shogi 112
Shoko-o 106
Silver Fur 126
sode 70, 71, 130
sohei 30
Stone Tortoise 121
sune-ate 71
Sun Day 133
Susano-o 41, 54, 103, 105, 106
Sword Saint 31

T

Taira no Hitoshi 108, 109, 117, 121, 130, 140, 144
Takamagahara 102
Take-Odoriko 118, 130, 140
takujo 24, 60, 67, 131, 132
tamagaki 124
tamagusari 60, 66, 67, 128
tanto 67, 128
tanuki 6, 26, 48, 61, 82, 144, 172, 173
tatemaie 110
temizuya 124
temple guardian 173, 174, 175
tengu 6, 26, 48, 54, 57, 144, 175, 176
tessen 38, 68, 71, 72
tetsubo 67
The Boy's Festival 137
The Heavenly Halberd of the Marsh 140
Tokugawa 107
torii 73
Toukai-Uchikai 112, 113, 114, 115
Toyo-Uke-Bime 116, 117, 118
Tsukuyomi 103, 105, 158, 159

U

Uzume 106

W

waibiki 71
waka 111
wakizashi 18, 30, 33, 58, 65, 68, 69, 128, 129, 130, 131
ward 726, 77, 78
Watering Month 133
Water Day 133
Wood Day 133

Y

yakuza 11, 18, 27, 28, 32, 52, 56, 57, 64, 75, 85, 87, 89, 90, 102,
105, 107, 109, 110, 118, 127, 128, 140, 171, 172
Yamaken 8, 10, 13, 18, 55, 101, 112, 114, 118, 123, 124, 126,
139, 141, 143, 173
yari 18, 30, 33, 58, 65, 68, 69, 128, 129, 130, 131

Year of the Bird 136
Year of the Cow 134
Year of the Dog 136
Year of the Dragon 134, 135
Year of the Horse 135
Year of the Monkey 135
Year of the Pig 135, 136
Year of the Rabbit 134
Year of the Rat 134
Year of the Sheep 135
Year of the Snake 135
Year of the Tiger 134
Yomi 100, 101, 102, 103, 104
Yonhousu Valley 5, 6
yugaka 71
Yuki-Onna 144, 176, 181
yumi 65, 70

Z

zanbatou 69
Zanshin 30, 58, 60, 130
zasu 30, 121
Zocho 114, 115



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