



WAY OF THE DAIYO

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THE CITY OF TSUMA, 10 YEARS AGO

The bustling city was finally settling down. The annual swell of visitors had already begun to ebb following the conclusion of the Topaz Championship earlier that day. Only the best and brightest young samurai from each clan were invited to participate in the Championship, and once per year the eyes of the Empire turned to the quiet, uneventful town of Tsuma, nestled in the Crane provinces near the Lion border. The Emperor himself had been in attendance, and his high praise of the contestants galvanized everyone involved. The competition had been one of the closest in recent memory, and more than a few young samurai received prestigious appointments as magistrates, soldiers, and other duties following the ceremony.

Although peace and quiet was returning to the city, there were still pockets where the excitement and activity had not yet died away. One such pocket was the House of the Red Lotus, a tea house ironically reputable for its sake and entertainment. Open only for a month before and after the Championship, the House was owned by a wealthy doji merchant patron that used it purely to maintain connections among high ranking members of other clans, and to forge alliances with the samurai who would serve as tomorrow's leaders. To the contestants, of course, this mattered little. It was a time of celebration, as the few who remained in town were amply demonstrating.

The serving girl approached a large table demurely. "May I bring you something else, samas?"

A young man bearing the Crab mon smiled warmly at her. "Yes, thank you. Please bring us three additional bottles of sake. My friends and I have much to celebrate this evening." He discreetly placed a handful of coins in the girl's hand. "Thank you for your exquisite service this evening."

The serving girl blushed and bowed deeply, then turned and returned to the kitchen. The Crane woman sitting next to the young man frowned, but it was not a severe expression. "You are not what I have been taught to expect from the Yasuki, Kurama-san."

Yasuki Kurama smiled again. "You haven't had much exposure to the Yasuki who live among the Crane, Orihime?"

"No," the Kakita samurai-ko admitted. "I have rarely traveled to the southern provinces, and there have been few Yasuki admitted to

my lord's court."

"This entire experience has been very enlightening for me as well," Kitsu Samatsu added, her lovely features serene as always. "I had not met representatives from many other clans before arriving here. Now I discover that the absolutes I have heard all my life are rarely as simple as I had imagined." She turned to another woman sitting at the table. "And you, Hiriko-san?"

The Scorpion might have smiled, but it was impossible to determine behind the simple cloth mask that covered the lower half of her face. "I think that there is little that can be taken for granted," she said cryptically. "I have been fortunate enough to receive an appointment to serve the governor of Ryoko Owari, and I plan to assess every situation with a fresh eye."

"Congratulations," the final contestant at the table offered with a nod of his head. "I find it hard to imagine someone more suited to such responsibility."

"Thank you, Taiji-san," Hiriko returned to the young Phoenix warrior. "I assume you were offered a position amongst your family as well?"

"I was," Taiji said proudly. "I will join the guard at Shiro Shiba upon my return home. I do not feel worthy of such an honor, but I will do my best."

"Anyone who could defeat me in a duel is more than worthy,"

Orihime said with a great smile.

"Personally, I will be much happier training with the Ninth Imperial Legion than guarding a house. It feels too... uneventful."

"You mean boring," Kurama added with a laugh. "And I thought I was the diplomat!"

Amazingly, the fierce samurai-ko blushed. "I did not wish to insult."

"There is no insult," Taiji insisted. "Yours is a great spirit, Orihime. You were meant for battle. I have a quieter soul." He smiled at Samatsu. "Perhaps I was a shugenja in a previous lifetime."

The shugenja returned his smile. "Perhaps so." She stopped the serving girl from pouring any sake into her cup, instead pouring another cup of tea. "I am looking forward to beginning my service to the temple in my lord's province. I visited it often as a child."

Kurama nodded. "I recall my visits to my lord's castle alongside my father. I dreamed of serving there one day. Now it seems I shall have my chance."

"We all shall," Orihime said. She lifted her glasses. "I drink in your honor, friends. I have enjoyed meeting you, and will remember this day forever. Thank you for sharing it with me."

Each of the comrades lifted their glasses and saluted one another.

Doji Nagumo sat in the rear of the room, regarding the different patrons with a bemused expression. After a few moments, he turned



to his comrade with a crooked grin. "Every year a new group of them. Some things never change, eh?"

"Maybe," Kakita Dairu admitted. "It's hard to say. Some years it seems as though you can see the hand of fate moving among the contestants. Last year's group, I doubt many of them came to much. These, however..." he trailed off. "Time will tell, I suppose."

"You, my friend, are ridiculously serious," Nagumo said with false disgust. "By the Fortunes, drink more sake until we can have a reasonable discussion."

WHAT IS WAY OF THE DAIRUO?

The world of the samurai is a complex one, with powerful generals, influential governors, and learned priests each playing their part in the rule of the Empire. Most player characters begin their careers as relatively minor cogs in the machinery that makes up Rokugan. It is not uncommon for a starting character to serve as a soldier, low-ranking diplomat, or a magistrate. However, there comes a time when a character must ascend to new levels of responsibility. Success brings rewards, and in Rokugan rewards generally come with an increase in social station. A soldier might become a general. A diplomat might become an Imperial ambassador. A magistrate who once protected the city may eventually come to govern it.

A player character who has earned a new level of responsibility might find that he no longer has the time or freedom to wander the Empire as he once did. Should this event herald the end of a campaign? How sad it would be if such a resounding success brought a beloved character's brilliant career to an end. Certainly a high-ranking samurai might occasionally be called away from his duties from time to time but there is no reason that those duties cannot become a part of the campaign. Using the new options provided in this book, a character who now has a hand in the rule of the Empire will find that his adventures (and his troubles) have only just begun.

STATIONS

This book introduces five new Stations to which a character can aspire. Each of these stations describes the various roles that high-ranking characters can fulfill. These Stations are as follows:

The Ambassador — Achieving this Station implies that the character has been appointed the important role of representing his clan in court. This Station can be found in any role where the political stakes are high (such as hatamoto to a Clan Champion, a member of the Imperial Court, or a clan marriage arranger). This role implies bureaucracy and the exchange of favors over direct government (which is the Governor's domain). Unlike other Stations, an Imperial Ambassador is likely to constantly face others of his Station, matching wits against them or seeking favors from them. Courtiers are most likely to be found in this position.

The Warlord — Achieving this station implies that the character has made his way through military hierarchy, and has command of a significant number of troops. Bushi are

most likely to be found in this position. A Warlord will likely find himself under the command of a higher ranking Warlord, or even ally with multiple Warlords to form a larger army, ranking from a Gunso to a mighty Rikugunshokan.

The Sensei — Achieving this Station implies that the character has sufficient mastery of his school's techniques that he has been asked to teach them to the next generation. It is a Sensei's duty not only to teach, but to maintain the honor of his school and guard the secrets of his technique from outsiders. A true master of this Station may even seek to create new techniques of his own, or even new schools. Large, well-established schools generally have multiple teachers with this Station, and a starting character will most likely begin as a junior instructor at one of these. Though senseis exist in every of school, the Sensei Station described in this book focuses primarily on bushi.

The Temple Keeper — Achieving this station implies that the character has gained a great deal of influence and responsibility within the Empire's religious community. Such characters have either been given domain over their own temple or have become the leader of a religious sect. It is the duty of such a character not only to maintain good relations between the clergy and lay people, but also to continue with his intellectual pursuits. Research, both mystical and mundane, is the Keeper's duty. Members of this sect are invariably shugenja or monks.

The Governor — Achieving this Station implies that the character has been awarded rulership of an area, most likely a small village to begin with. Of all the Stations, this one is most likely to be awarded to player characters of undistinguished of background, though those with a background as magistrates, diplomats, or law enforcement officials are most likely to be chosen for this position. It is not unheard of for Governors to combine their resources to rule a single area, such as a city with numerous smaller districts.

GLORY AND STATUS

Rokugan is a rigidly structured society. Every individual has a designated place within the Celestial Order, and must recognize that place. While one's birth has a substantial effect on one's lot in the world, one's actions do not go unnoticed. A minor bushi who performs a heroic deed might find himself granted a position as a magistrate or provincial governor. These concepts are important to the Stations introduced in this book and many of the other new mechanical options. Any player or non-player character can thus describe his place in Rokugani society using two attributes — Glory and Status.

Both Status and Glory are measured on a scale of Ranks from one to ten. Each Rank is divided into ten points, and when ten points are gained a character's Status or Glory increases by one Rank.

STATUS

Status is a measure of an individual's niche in Rokugan's society, their political rank relative to everyone else. Status is a rigid measurement of an individual's importance, reflective of the

duties they perform. An Emerald Magistrate has more Status for example than a ji-samurai guarding a small barley farm.

One must obey the commands of an individual with higher status, assuming that individual also has authority. Higher Status implies greater importance, but does not always indicate authority: a high ranking Crane samurai cannot command a low ranking Lion, though that Lion must show his superior respect. If an individual is commanded by two individuals who both have authority over him, he must obey the person with higher Status.

A samurai owes such obedience to those who outrank him within his family as well as the Champion of his clan. Usually a samurai will also obey those who have superior Status from other families within the same clan as a gesture of courtesy, but this is not always the case (among such internally divisive clans as the Phoenix, for example, this is somewhat rare). Soldiers and magistrates must also obey their superior officers, regardless of what family (or clan, in the case of the Imperial Legions) they hail from. The Imperial Families have authority over everyone whom they outrank in Status (and in the Emperor's case, that's everyone).

Guests in a household are a special case, as the lord of the house does hold limited authority over them. In truth, this is not a measure of Status but a gesture of courtesy. While in another samurai's home, it is best not to wear out one's welcome by violating his commands, as a disrespectful guest can always find his welcome revoked. Likewise, samurai of higher Status will often avoid undermining their host's command of the household while visiting.

Within and beyond the samurai caste, Status reflects the larger social structure. Peasants and eta have low status, below the standard scale as most player characters are samurai. Minor Clan samurai have lower status than Great Clan samurai. Imperial Family members have higher status on the average than Great Clan samurai. No one has equal Status to the Emperor. When facing a member of a group with significantly higher Status it is wise to be obedient and helpful, even when that individual has no direct authority over you. In truth this is more a matter of common sense and discretion than a necessary aspect of Status. A Crab peasant, for example, might be terrified by a Unicorn bushi's demands to surrender his rice harvest, but will likely refuse to do so as such an act would be disloyal to his Crab lords.

EFFECTS OF STATUS

Disobeying your superior leads to an immediate loss of Honor (between one point and one Rank depending on the severity of the disobedience). Whether the superior's commands are dishonorable are not a factor — disobedience is disobedience. Further, disobedience may lead to an immediate demotion of a character's status (even death if a peasant or eta disobeys a samurai).

STATUS RANKS

Status ranges on a scale from 10 to -10. The following table lists the minimum Status for each individual rank. A character that has a position listed on this table could potentially have higher status if he has received other promotions. A character who serves in multiple roles will have Status equal to the highest ranking role.

Note that a samurai's status does not always carry an associated title. A samurai with Status 5 might be a city governor, or he may merely be a respected authority with Status 5 (and thus the right to command other samurai of lower status).

Samurai with Status of 7 or higher, however, must have one of the titles listed below or a new title created by the Emperor.

Samurai Status Ranks

The Emperor	10
The Empress	9.9
Shogun	9.9
Voice of the Emperor	9.5
The Emperor's Children	9.4
Seppun/Otomo/Miya Daimyo	9.3
Emerald Champion	9
Jade Champion	9
Imperial Chancellor	9
Imperial Advisor	9
Great Clan Daimyo	8
Minor Clan Daimyo	7.5
Imperial Herald	7
Family Daimyo	7
Rikugunshokan (military rank — General)	7
Hatamoto (daimyo's honored retainer)	6
Provincial Governor	6
Shireikan (military rank — Commander)	6
City Governor	5
Taisa (military rank — Captain)	5.5
Chui (military rank — Lieutenant)	5
Vassal Family Daimyo	5
Karo (advisor to a lord)	4.7
Emerald Magistrate	4.5
Clan Magistrate	4
Gunso (military rank — sergeant)	3
Average Imperial Family Member	3
Diplomat	2
Gokenin (small estate manager)	2
Shisha (Imperial messenger)	2
Nikutai (military rank — corporal)	1.5
Average Great Clan/Minor Clan Samurai	1
Hohei (military rank — Private)	1
Ji-Samurai (Vassal Families)	0.5
Ronin (see sidebar)	N/A
Exile	N/A
Ninja (see sidebar)	-10

Heimin (Peasant) Status Ranks

Monk (see sidebar)	0
Ashigaru (professional peasant soldier)	0.4
Doshin (peasant village officers)	0.3
Budoka (peasant warrior)	0.2
Farmers, Woodsmen, Fishermen	0.2
Craftsman	0.1
Akindo (merchants, peddlers)	0.1
Peasant Levy	0.0
Exile	N/A

Hinin (Eta) Status Ranks

Entertainer, Geisha	-1
Leatherworker, Butcher	-4
Torturer	-5
Gravedigger	-8
Exile	N/A

GAINING STATUS

Status may only be awarded by a samurai with higher Status, and is always indicative of a promotion. Status may only be rewarded by an individual with authority over the recipient. For example, a Hohei in the Lion armies can never be promoted by a Crane family daimyo. If that same Lion, however, became an Emerald Magistrate then the Emerald Champion (a Crane) could grant him any Status increase he deemed appropriate.

Certain individuals such as high-ranking members of the Imperial Families, the Imperial Chancellor, the Shogun, the Voice of the Emperor, and the Emperor can award Status to anyone if only they have the desire to do so. This happens rarely, as Clan Champions resent having their subordinates promoted without their permission (except in the case of the Emperor, of course, whose will is never disputed).

Increase of Status is never random, nor is it a guaranteed reward for services to the clan. In some cases, an increase in Status can be punishment, granting a lazy courtier a stressful position as chief magistrate of a small lawless city or forcing a brash bushi to spend a winter protecting the Emperor's favorite peacocks. For the most part, an increase in Status is a desirable thing, as a samurai with high Status gains more opportunities to serve his clan. For some, this is reward enough. Others seek high Status as a doorway to Glory (as fame is easier to obtain for those in important positions). Dishonorable individuals see high Status as simply a means for personal gain.

LOSING STATUS

Loss of Status indicates decline in social standing. Status may be revoked by an individual with higher status and authority over the subject. While there is no limit to how much Status can be removed at one time, a samurai cannot be reduced below Status 0.5 and peasants may not be reduced below Status 0.

An individual who believes he has been stripped of Status unjustly is within his rights to plead his case to someone with higher Status than the one who demoted him. If the demotion was in fact unjust, such an act causes a loss of Honor (1 point for every five points of demotion in Status) for the individual who performed the demotion. Naturally there may be other affects as well. A samurai who goes about unjustly demoting his inferiors may find himself demoted in turn, or even the target of an angry challenge once his actions are proven to be unjust.

Of course this works both ways — a person who is demoted fairly and complains to a higher power will lose 1 point of Honor for every five points of Status loss. In addition, he will be publicly shamed for decrying his fair punishment. The person who originally demoted him may also seek satisfaction for the insult of appealing a just demotion by proposing a duel.

Loss of Status can also be voluntary. Anyone who wishes to do so may report to their superior and formally denounce their Status. In most cases to openly deny one's duty is viewed as a cowardly act, and almost carries equal loss of Glory and Honor. There are always exceptions to this, of course, the most notable of these being retirement. To deny status is not automatic; one's superior must approve of the denouncement. If the act is not approved, Glory and Honor are still lost as usual. If the character wished to denounce his status for an honorable reason (such as a skilled officer who wishes to remain with his troops rather than in the court, a war hero who recognizes he would make a poor governor, or an elderly samurai simply wishing to retire) and his request is denied, it might lead his superior to look foolish (causing a possible loss of Glory and/or Honor).

THE EMPEROR AND STATUS

The Emperor stands outside the rules for normal Status losses and gains. He may award or remove as much Status as he wishes from whomever he wishes at any time with no reper-

cussions relating to his own status. He may promote a peasants or eta to the level of samurai, or demote a samurai below samurai status. The Emperor rarely does such things, as such acts cause disruption, but the option is his. If the Emperor

RONIN, EXILES, AND STATUS

Ronin are outcasts, abandoned by Rokugani society. As their place in the Empire's social structure is a Gray area, they effectively have no Status Rank (not even a 0). No one owes them fealty and they owe authority to none in turn. They are technically samurai, however, and can command all peasants and eta as if they had a Status of 1. This is not to say that ronin are without any sense of organization or duty — many ronin form brotherhoods with a distinct chain of command. However, this authority is not officially recognized, and thus they have no Status.

A ronin who is granted fealty immediately regains Status appropriate to his new duties. In addition, the Emperor can waive a ronin's loss of status even if he serves no lord directly, and has done so for at least one ronin family (the Yotsu, who gain Status normally).

Exiles have been ordered to leave their clan's territory upon pain of death. These individuals are usually not welcome in other provinces either, and are forced to take their chances on Exile's Road or be on the run from vengeful magistrates forever. As such, exiles also have no Status. An exiled peasant or eta who is welcome in another clan's land regains Status appropriate to his former duties. An exiled samurai may regain Status as a member of that clan, or he may become a ronin, depending on the situation.

NINJA AND STATUS

Ninja are the foulest sort of criminal in existence, a living violation of Imperial Decree. The Status rank listed here is that of a ninja whose existence as such is known to the Empire at large. Naturally, most ninja are wise enough not to advertise their existence in such a manner and thus their Status reflects some other position they hold.

promotes someone to Status 7 or above, he also traditionally invents a new title for them to describe their new duties, even if these titles are entirely honorary.

GLORY

Glory is a measure of an individual's personal fame, resulting from personal accomplishment. Where Status is an objective, rigid trait, Glory is subjective and often fluctuates wildly depending on a character's location and deeds. A renowned duelist, for instance, would have a greater amount of Glory than a minor clerk in the Imperial Libraries. The Emperor has a surprisingly low Glory, as the chances of him being recognized outside the Imperial Capital and without his retinue are slight. Of course an Emperor otherwise renowned for heroic activities (such as Toturi and his children) would be far more easily recognized.

High Glory does not confer automatic obedience from those with lower Glory, but it does command respect. A heroic bushi recognized across the Empire might find that even samurai from rival clans are willing to come to his aid. This can be a burden as well, as a hero's Glory often causes him to be recognized even when he does not wish it, and others may



seek fame by challenging a hero's prowess.

While Glory is a trait unaffiliated with Status, gaining Glory often leads to increased Status. Rokugan is a land that dearly loves its heroes, and those who accrue high Glory will often be promoted to positions of influence. Likewise, those who publicly perform villainous acts and accumulate negative Glory can look forward to a reduction in Status.

EFFECTS OF GLORY

A character's Glory affects both how likely he is to be recognized and how influential he is with others.

Recognition works as follows: any time a character meets people for the first time, the GM makes an automatic Charisma check (DC 35) for him to see if he is recognized (the character may choose to add a Void Point to this roll). This DC is reduced by the character's current Glory Rank $\times 5$. If this roll is successful, then those present recognize the character and are more or less aware of his past exploits. If the roll fails, they do not necessarily disbelieve the character is who he seems to be, but they are not particularly impressed. A character may reduce the recognition DC by 10 simply by introducing himself. If the character is introduced by a mutual acquaintance or presents legitimate proof of his identity, the roll is automatically successful (at most major courts, official heralds make certain everyone is recognized). A gains a +1 circumstance bonus to the total of any social skill check once he is recognized, +2 if his Glory is Rank 5 or higher.

Recognition works as follows: any time a character meets people for the first time, the GM makes an automatic Awareness roll vs. TN 60 for him to see if he is recognized, automatically keeping the highest dice rolled (the character may choose to add a Void Point to this roll). This TN is reduced by the character's current Glory Rank $\times 5$. If this roll is successful, then those present recognize the character and are made aware of his past exploits. If the roll fails, they do not necessarily disbelieve the character is who he seems to be, but they are not impressed either. A character may reduce the recognition TN by 10 simply by introducing himself. If the character is introduced by a mutual acquaintance or presents legitimate proof of his identity, the roll is automatically successful (at most major courts, official heralds make certain everyone is recognized). A character may add his Glory Rank to the total of any social skill roll once he is recognized.

INFAMY

If a character is known for behaving in a dishonorable or criminal manner, then the GM may rule that his Glory immediately becomes an equally negative amount, known as Infamy. Infamy works exactly as Glory does for the purposes of being recognized (though people tend to be terrified rather than honored to meet the character) and adds its Rank as a bonus to any attempt to intimidate someone or to any social rolls against other characters who also have Infamy. Characters with Glory may not apply their Glory as a bonus to social skills against a target with Infamy, but may apply it as a bonus to an intimidation attempt against them.

Acts that would normally cause a character to gain Glory grant a negative amount of Infamy points, and acts that would decrease Glory instead grant a positive amount of Infamy. (Winning battles and defeating opponents only serve to make

a villain more terrifying.) Only if the character publicly redeems himself does his Infamy become Glory again. Actual remorse is not a factor — a despicable villain can achieve hero status simply by being forgiven by the Emperor, and simply continue his villainous activity under this new guise. Note that Infamy is not grounds for punishment in and of itself (many famous samurai are infamous), but those who recognize a character's Infamy will keep an eye on him and be quick to react if they think that he is up to something.

GLORY RANKS

Like Status, Glory ranges on a scale from 10 to -10. The following table is a rough guide to determining a character's Glory. This is only a guideline, as Glory can fluctuate wildly. Note that Glory Ranks listed on the following table are a minimum. This means that a character that has fulfilled this requirement has his Glory increased to this amount, if it is below this amount. After this time, Glory increases and decreases normally.

For the most part, Glory is independent of status. It is entirely possible (albeit unlikely) that even a peasant could become a great hero and achieve great Glory. It is equally possible that a legendary samurai might have greater Glory than the Emperor, or that even the Emperor could descend into the depths of infamy.

A quick look at the table will also reveal that the easiest way to obtain Glory in Rokugan is through a successful military career. Rokugan is, after all, a land of warriors.

Glory Ranks

Legendary Hero (Seven Thunders, Shinsei)	10
Emerald Champion	8
Great Clan Daimyo	8
Jade Champion	7
Renowned Major War Hero (Clan War, War of Spirits)	7
Empire — Famous Playwright, Poet, Artisan	6
Family Daimyo	6
Famous Craftsman	6
Imperial Chancellor	6
Imperial Herald	6
Shogun	6
Voice of the Emperor	6
Rikugunshokan (military rank — General)	6
Shireikan (military rank — Commander)	5
War Hero (winning army)	5
The Emperor	4
The Empress	4
Imperial Advisor	4
Minor Clan Daimyo	4
Seppun/Otomo/Miya Daimyo	4
Taisa (military rank — Captain)	4
War Hero (losing side, but conducted self honorably)	4
Chui (military rank — Lieutenant)	3
Emerald Magistrate	3
The Emperor's Children	3
Geisha	3
Gunso (military rank — sergeant)	3
Hatamoto (daimyo's honored retainer)	3
Imperial Legionnaire	3
Provincial Governor	3
City Governor	2
Clan Magistrate	2
Karo (advisor to a lord)	2
Monk (see sidebar)	2