

Death of Hida Kisada: year 1130

His health failing since being wounded by Fu Leng in the Clan War, Crab Daimyo Hida Kisada finally loses his struggle against death near the end of the winter. Though some see him as a traitor against the Empire for attacking Otosan Uchi during the Clan War, others (including Emperor Toturi) have come to understand his actions. In a funeral led by his son Yakamo, Kisada is given the funeral pyre of an honorable samurai. In thanks for his invaluable aid in planning the assault on Fu Leng's forces on the Second Day of Thunder, Kisada is granted minor Fortune status by Toturi I, and is now and forever the Fortune of Persistence.

Crab assault the Shadowlands: year 1130

Preparations complete, the Crab and Naga combined forces march beyond the Wall into Fu Leng's Realm. Initial combat brings remarkably light casualties for the Crab and Naga, and the beasts of the Shadowlands seem unprepared for such a large invasion party. With the assault underway, the Naga and Crab army forges its way to lost Hiruma Castle to reclaim the ancestral home lost centuries ago.

Disappearance of Toturi I: year 1130

The new peace of the Empire is shattered when the Emperor's chambers are found ruined, with blood staining Toturi's bedclothes. A thorough search of the entire city of Otosan Uchi turns up clues implicating the Scorpion.

In the absence of Emperor Toturi, his lieutenant Takuan assumes the position of chancellor of Rokugan. Bound by the tenets of Imperial Law, he commands Toshimoko to convict the Scorpion. The Emerald Champion shows mercy, and orders their exile to the Burning Sands instead of their deaths. To ensure that none of the Scorpion's famed ninja will retaliate against the Empire, Toshimoko orders all children of the Scorpion clan under the age of 12 to become the foster children of Crane houses. The Scorpion children become insurance against their clan's disobedience. Shortly after pronouncing his judgment, Kakita Toshimoko pens his final haiku standing upon a cliff near the sea. The Emerald Champion's armor and swords are found on that cliff the next dawn, along with a petition to the Fortunes to forgive him for his failure to his lord. In the absence of both the Emperor and the Emerald Champion, Shinjo Shirasu leads the Emerald Magistrates and attempts to uphold the law of the land.

Having thus faked his death, Toshimoko disguises himself as a ronin and wears a mask at all times as he begins a search for the truth. Toturi's lieutenants Ginawa and Matsu Hiroru also set out in search of their lost master.

The Kazaq visits Kyuden Hitomi: year 1130

Led by a dream, the son of the Qamar leaves the Shinomen and climbs Kyuden Hitomi. The dark lady of the Dragon Clan greets the Naga with open arms, as if he were an expected guest. The Kazaq soon emerges from Kyuden Hitomi with mystic tattoos, severed from the Akasha forever.

Naga abandon the Crab: year 1130

The retaking of Hiruma Castle complete, the banners of the Crab once again fly upon the parapets of Shiro Hiruma. As the Crab forces move to restore order to the ruined castle, a sudden shift in the Naga's attitude is apparent. Some Naga comment that their Akasha has commanded them, and the Naga quickly and silently withdraw from the land. The Crab, unsure exactly what has occurred, can only watch helplessly as their allies abandon them to stand alone, deep in the territory of the Shadowlands. Scouts are quickly dispatched to the Kaiu Wall urgently requesting more soldiers and supplies, but none of the messengers make it to their destination.

Siege of Hiruma Castle: year 1130

The forces of the Shadowlands surround the Crab now deeply entrenched in the ruins of Hiruma Castle. The oni, goblins, and trolls toy with the samurai, knowing that help from the Empire will be a long time in coming. Only the brave Third Whisker Nezumi, who bring food, water, and jade through the tunnels beneath the castle, give the Crab the slightest hope for survival.

Mantis, Scorpion and Crane relations: year 1131

Citing their charter from Emperor Toturi, the Mantis claim the right to tax and rule as regent over "unaligned lands," including the now-empty provinces of the Scorpion. Very few in the Empire know that the Scorpion have bargained with the Mantis Champion, Yoritomo, to protect the Scorpion lands until such time they can reclaim them from their exile. In order to seal the bargain,

Bayushi Aramoro, the most respected member of the Scorpion next to Bayushi Kachiko, fosters his only son to the daimyo of the Mantis. Bayushi Aramasu, Aramoro's son, arrives in Mantis lands holding Yoritomo's "payment" for the alliance — Scorpion maps of Rokugan, and other secrets the Mantis Champion demanded to further his power in the Empire.

The Mantis are escorted through Crane lands by Crane Champion Doji Kuwanan and his armies. As Yoritomo reaches the Scorpion lands at the head of his army, he turns to thank the Crane for their assistance, but finds Kuwanan has laid his own plans for the Scorpion provinces. Thinking to use the Scorpion children as a way to claim the lands for his own, Kuwanan ambushes Yoritomo's forces once their arrangement (for Kuwanan to guide Yoritomo to the Scorpion lands) has been fulfilled. Yoritomo, caught completely unprepared, is forced to withdraw.



*Moto Chagatai,
Unicorn Clan Khan*

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Though he does not realize it at the time, many of Doji Kuwanan's actions are due to poor advice from impersonators dispatched by the Lying Darkness to cause strife and chaos in the Empire. This battle thus marks the start of the "War Against the Shadow."

Naga and Monks attack the Dragon: year 1131

The purpose of the Naga disappearance becomes clear when a massive Naga army lays siege to the lower Dragon provinces. Three minor strongholds are destroyed before the Naga are halted by a sudden emergence of representatives of the Brotherhood of Shinsei. These monks, comprised mostly of former Togashi ise zumi, parley with the Naga in what is thought will be a swift end to the Naga's sudden and confusing attack. However, only days later Togashi Hoshi himself comes to stand beside the Qamar and continue the attack on Dragon lands. It is notable that Mirumoto Daini, Hitomi's own brother, chooses to side with the Naga instead of defending his sister. The war continues, with the Dragon responding slowly due to the lack of organization within the leadership of the clan. It becomes quite clear within weeks of the fighting, however, that like Hitomi, Hoshi has mastered the art of creating ise zumi, bestowing tattoos of power among their followers. Like Hitomi's followers, Hoshi's monk acolytes take his name.

Test of the Jade Champion: year 1131

In an effort to hold together the crumbling peace of the Empire, the Seppun and Otomo call the first Test of the Jade Champion in centuries. The post of the Jade Champion has long since been defunct, as its mandate to regulate spellcraft and hunt maho throughout Rokugan was seen as an affront to the Phoenix clan's power. Each Great Clan sends shugenja to claim the prize. The Championship ends with the defeat of the Unicorn's Iuchi Karasu, called "The Doomseeker," by the Lion Clan's Kitsu Okura. Rumors persist that Okura's power is owed to a dark ally, though the Lion shugenja is awarded the post.

Lion march to the Wall: year 1131

Without explanation, Lion Champion Ikoma Tsanuri gathers a legion of her most loyal soldiers and sets off to the southwest of Lion lands, directly toward the heart of Crab territory. The move surprises those Tsanuri leaves behind, including the newly initiated Jade Champion and Matsu family daimyo Matsu Ketsui. The Unicorn, in an attempt to prevent what appears to be an attack on the weakened Crab, demand an explanation that the remaining Lion cannot give. Combined with the growing reports of maho and other foul activities in Lion lands, ranking Emerald Magistrate Shinjo Shirasu attempts to investigate deep into Lion lands, only to be intercepted and forcibly escorted back to the Lion border.

Defection of the Agasha: year 1131

Outraged by the actions of their Champion, Hitomi, the Agasha argue among themselves until a clear majority emerges: they wish to leave before they are exterminated like the Togashi. Daimyo Agasha Tamori refuses to allow the Agasha to leave the clan. However, Tamori's student Gennai offers to take any who wish to follow him to the Phoenix lands to kneel before the sword of Shiba Tsukune. Within the week, fewer than a dozen Agasha stand with the Dragon clan. Agasha Gennai is rewarded by Naka Kuro with a position on the Elemental Council as Master of Air.

Shinjo Morito leaves Unicorn territory: year 1131

With the objective of carving out a destiny of his own, the ambitious Unicorn Shinjo Morito gathers a group of like-minded bushi and stakes a claim to lands once occupied by the Phoenix. As the Phoenix no longer occupy those lands, Morito holds, they no longer can protect them in the Emperor's name. Thus, by right of his superior ability to maintain and control them, they are his. The Phoenix disagree, but the strong defenses Morito has already constructed lead them to abandon the matter for the moment.

Rescue of Emperor Toturi: year 1132

Toturi I is found shackled and beaten in the ruins of Mori Kage Castle by Unicorn scouts. The forest and the castle are filled with apparitions of ghosts and shadows, which the Naga call The Foul. The truth later becomes apparent: Toturi I was held captive by the Lying Darkness to encourage the Empire to fall into chaos. The Unicorn, led by Otaku Kamoko, bring the weak and sickened Emperor to Otosan Uchi, igniting a small flame of hope in a darkened Empire.

Imperial Edicts: year 1132

Captain of the Imperial Guard Toki is commanded to take the Monkey Clan and end the fighting in the Dragon mountains by attacking the Naga. Toturi then commands the Unicorn magistrates to force the Lion to answer for their crimes in his absence — the rumors of maho have proven correct, and the Jade Champion himself had taken a hand in corrupting the heart of Lion lands. Lastly, Toturi breaks with tradition by naming the Emerald Champion without a tournament. Seppun Toshiken, a prodigy with the blade and illegitimate son of Kakita Toshimoko, is given the swords and armor of the Emerald Champion.

Shortly after his return, Toturi begins a cleansing of the Imperial City, summarily executing anyone he deems to be a "Kolot" on even the loosest evidence. Among the slain is Isawa Osugi, author of the New Tao. The former chancellor, Takuan, is horrified by his lord's actions and commits seppuku in protest.

Storms over Matsu Castle: year 1132

By the command of Toturi I, the Unicorn engage the Lion near Shiro Matsu. The Lion's corruption becomes clear as oni take the field beside Tainted bushi and shugenja under the command of Kitsu Okura, Matsu Ketsui, and Kitsu Motso. The battle is fierce, and the oni that bears Okura's name slaughters a hundred Battle Maidens single-handedly. The Unicorn are defeated, but the Lion's power is severely crippled.

Mantis Siege of Phoenix Lands: year 1132

Once again seeking to expand his power, Yoritomo lays claim to the lands of the Phoenix, claiming they are far too weak to maintain their provinces. The Mantis hope to quickly take the Phoenix under their mercy, but Shiba Tsukune views Yoritomo's movements as an act of war and responds accordingly. Still, the Phoenix are nowhere near as combat-ready as the Mantis, and Yoritomo's forces slowly force their way deeper into Phoenix territory. It is later concluded that Yoritomo's brash actions are the result of advice from shape-shifting minions of the Lying Darkness posing as trusted advisors.