

The Opal Dojo: Way of the minor Clans

In this dojo are collected the styles and methods of the minor clans of Rokugan. As each of these groups has its own unique flavor and character, a bit of history for each clan is provided in addition to the standard dojo features.

THE MANTIS CLAN

History of the Mantis

After Osano-wo declared his second son to be his heir, Kaimetsu-uo and his mother left the Crab clan. They traveled east, eventually reaching the great Earthquake Bay (remember that in these early years the Crab Clan was much smaller, and situated more to the south). Here Kaimetsu-uo and his mother's followers settled on the shore, becoming the protectors of several fishing villages that dotted the coast. The young samurai stewed in his anger. He respected his father's decision, but could not console his mother who insisted her honor had been besmirched. As a young man he spent most of his days angry and confused. He was a storm without a shore to break against.

Two years passed. The small band became more adept at survival along the coastline. Kaimetsu-uo continued to hone his bushi skills, his anger still without focus. He often went to sea with the peasant fishermen, seeing in it a mirror for his own restlessness. His life changed entirely one week as he sailed across the bay. From the small craft he spotted several larger ships making for the mouth of the inlet. He commanded the small ship to meet them, curious why they were there. When his ship came alongside, a mass of wako <pirates> swarmed on to his ship. He easily killed every man that came within reach, but the combined efforts of the pirates from the other two ships overwhelmed his fishermen crew, and the small boat was rapidly breached and began sinking. Rather than face capture, the lone samurai leaped into the waters with a curse. Several hours later he managed to swim to the shore.

Exhausted and nearly naked, Kaimetsu-Uo reached the village he called home. The carnage was overwhelming. Three more ships, as large as those he had seen earlier lay burning on the beach. Pirates, samurai and peasant bodies lay scattered around the village. One of his retainers found him there, staring from the edge of the village. That day he learned that his mother had died, leading the charge that finally drove the pirates back to their ships.

From that day on Kaimetsu-uo had a purpose. Samurai and peasant worked side by side clearing the rubble and rebuilding the village. Then they started to make ships. They weren't terribly good at it at first, but as months became years, the peasants became more skilled shipwrights and Kaimetsu-uo's samurai became more deadly marines. They sailed up and down the coast, killing pirates wherever they found them. Crab and Crane lord alike welcomed Kaimtsu-uo into their homes when his ship paused in its search. Fueled by their goodwill, his people prospered.

When Osano-wo was murdered, it was Kaimetsu-uo who pursued his killer into the lands of the north, and with over half his followers he stormed the gates of the Phoenix. When he returned to the south with the head of his father's murderer and a boatload of Isawa tribute, there was rejoicing throughout the Crab provinces exceeded only by the festivals of their tiny neighbors. Those who survived the siege swore undying fealty to Kaimestu-uo, and the Kamae <Scythe Inlet> family was born.

Generations would pass before any further great changes would seek out the people who would one day become the Mantis Clan. The Kamae peasants continued to refine their ship-working skills, and the Kamae family's dojo flourished, learning to transmit the methods of their ferocious founder. It was the sixth Hantei (on the advice of the Crane) who commanded the Kamae to search the eastern seas for other lands much as the first Hantei had sent the Unicorns into the northern wastes to discover what surrounded his lands. The Kamae set about the task with great vigor but found nothing within the limited reach of their vessels. The Emperor was pleased to learn that no enemies could come from that quarter and turned his attention elsewhere. A small misunderstanding had occurred. The Kamae had told the Emperor's liaison that they had not found land yet- not that they had finished looking. Their search continued. The son of that daimyo built the improved ship that his son finally found the Islands of Spice and Silk with.

The eighth Hantei Emperor was quite startled to find an exuberant pack of peasant sailors and clanless samurai had come to Ootosan Uchi seek audience with him in his grandfather's name. Startled but fascinated, he listened to their tale. At first he could not believe such a strange story could be anything more than a ruse, and a flimsy one at that! When an old advisor of his grandfather was summoned he learned the truth of it. Moved by the samurai's dedication, he granted the family leave to form a clan and told them to take the Mantis as the symbol of their family, recognizing the patience that had kept them searching for new lands for two generations without a word of encouragement from the emperor. Having learned of the island chain, the Emperor declared the islands would be the new Mantis fiefdom, in exchange for exploring it, paying taxes on any colonies there, and keeping in touch this time.

The Mantis clan took up residence in the archipelago and continued their shipbuilding. Armed with their secret shipbuilding knowledge, their more central location made them major players in the coastal trade routes that were forming. The Mantis' star was on the rise when four consecutive years of terrible storms wrecked their ports and shipyards. No one else's ships or captains had the skills to reach the Mantis islands. Largely cut off from the main land for several years, they suffered terribly. Humbled by their plight the Mantis shared many of their naval secrets when contact was re-established. It was at this time that every able-bodied Mantis bushi was sent to the mainland to work as mercenaries and ronin. The impoverished Mantises were desperate, not for gold coins, but for the food it represented. Within a generation the Mantis clan had recovered, but it had become tradition that young bushi, following their genpuku ceremony, should go to the mainland to try their hands as ronin.

The Mantis Clan's darkest hour came when their Clan Champion, one Kamae Rioshida launched an ill-conceived coup attempt against the Son of Heaven. The Hantei withdrew his favor from the Mantis Clan, and it was only the isolation of their lands that kept the Lion from exterminating the clan over the next three years. The bulk of the family were pushed to the limit containing the handfuls of Lion warriors who managed to fight their way past Mantis ships in Doji and Yasuki vessels hired only at great cost. Meanwhile, several dozen Mantis bushi and diplomats worked feverishly on the mainland, trying to restore the Mantis' reputation and parading the head of Rioshida before the five great Clan Champions (Lion excepted). Then, in a bloody ritual of mass seppuku, thirty-one of the best and bravest of the Mantis clan spilled out their lives before the gates of Ootosan Uchi. Mollified by their deed, and mindful of the encouragement of four of the Clan Champions (including the enigmatic Dragon Champion), the Emperor relented, and the Lion were recalled. These thirty-one samurai are considered the greatest heroes of the clan since the days of the founder. In their memory, the Mantis maintain an elite guard, numbering exactly thirty-one members.

The Kamae Family

Descendants of Kaimetsu-uo, the Kamae have gone on to become some of Rokugan's most renowned sailors and traders. To supplement the silk trade and support their tradition of humility, many hire out to other clans as mercenaries. To show their humility they do not use their family name while living the traditional two years as a ronin.

Benefit: +1 Strength

The Kamae Bushi School

In addition to their cunning swordsmanship, the Mantis have adopted the kama as one of the preferred weapons of their clan for its resemblance to a mantis claw. When fighting with kama they have an abrupt striking style that resembles the attack of the mantis. Indeed, the whole Mantis fighting style tends to alternate without warning from periods of near-immobile defensive postures to furious attacks. For this reason Mantis characters (bushi or otherwise) use their Reflexes in place of their Agility when attacking with kama. Kamae characters may purchase the Blood of Osano-wo Advantage for two less CPs than normal (3 CP instead of 5).

Benefit: +1 Reflexes

Penalty: Must take the Bad Reputation (Ronin) Disadvantage until reaching second rank.

Beginning Honor: 2, plus 0 boxes

Skills: Athletics, Battle, Commerce, Defense, Kama-jutsu, Kenjutsu, and Sailing

Techniques

Rank 1: The Way of the Mantis

The fighting style of the Mantis reflects the patient ferocity of the insect from which they take their name. For each previous turn the bushi has declared Full Defense, he may roll and keep an extra die on either an Attack roll or Damage roll. He must decide how to distribute these extra dice as part of his declaration of actions for the turn (attack or damage, possibly splitting them between the first attack or second if he has multiple attacks per turn). The maximum number of extra dice gained from this technique is equal to the bushi's School Rank, and dice not used on the first turn attacking after having declared Full Defense are lost. The bushi also reduces any penalties from unstable footing (such as the swaying of a ship's deck or earthquake spell) by a number of dice equal to his School Rank.

Rank 2: Voice of the Storm

Same as in WotMC.

Rank 3: Victory's Price

All his life Kaimetsu-ou walked a delicate balance between his mother's bushido, his father's iron pragmatism, and his own inner rage. His descendants sometimes find themselves throwing honor to the wind in the pursuit of victory. The bushi may sacrifice a point of honor (one box) to gain a void point that must be spent on the same turn. Only one point may be sacrificed for any action, technique, or roll, but more than one point can be sacrificed per turn if the bushi chooses. This extra void point(s) may not be used on any rolls involving Honor. This honor point may only be regained by honorable behavior, which often leaves the bushi struggling to be better than he is.

Rank 4: The Praying Stance

The bushi has learned the dreaded praying stance. Mantis bushi train vigorously to master the use of a weapon in their off-hand. If the bushi has a one-handed weapon in each hand he rolls initiative separately for each and gets an attack with each weapon every turn. Both attacks must be the same sort (either Full Attack or Normal Attack), and the order in which the bushi declares his action is based on the higher of the two rolls. The weapon in the off hand only suffers a -1 die penalty (instead of the usual -2 dice) unless the bushi is ambidextrous.

Your Outfit: Bushi

(All items are of average quality unless otherwise noted): Daisho, Kama, Light Armor, Armor Chest, Traveling Pack, Fine Kimono, Pick any one weapon, 3 Koku

Kamae Shugenja School

The shugenja of the Mantis Clan trace their blood back to Osano-wo, the thunderer. Their magic tends to be flashy and violent. Because of its small size, this school has only three ranks.

Benefit: +1 Perception

Beginning Honor: 1, plus 5 boxes

Kamae Shugenja receive a free raise for damage on all spells

Skills: Calligraphy, Courtier, Meditation, Sailing, Spellcraft, Theology, and pick any one Bugei skill

Beginning Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, plus 3 Water, 2 Fire, and 1 Air

Your Outfit: Shugenja

Basic outfit

Ancestors

Kamae Nobuo (6 points)

The founder of the Mantis Clan's shugenja School, the first Kamae Nobuo personified the grand, excessive style of the school he created. He cast spell of such force that the scrolls he employed literally burst into flames. His descendants tend to share his overzealousness in spell casting. A shugenja who has this ancestor may overextend his powers, gaining two free raises on any Water or Fire spell, however, the scroll he is using is destroyed in the casting, and the shugenja may not cast that spell again for a number of days equal to its mastery level. The shugenja must have a scroll of the spell at hand to draw upon this benefit (characters who have Innate Ability may not employ this benefit when casting from memory, but the free raises are cumulative with that granted by the Innate Ability Advantage).

Nemurani

Ancestral Kama of the Mantis Clan

These two blades were given to the Kamae daimyo when he was granted the right to form a clan. They are of extraordinary craftsmanship, and have several magical abilities in addition to the benefits for their quality. They do 3k3 damage and are so perfectly balanced that the user re-rolls any 1s on initiative rolls. When used in a single strike duel, the opponent does not gain a bonus for using a katana against them, and the wielder may make an additional focus. The blades are seemingly drawn to key moments in history. While involved in mass battles the wielder gains the Great Destiny Advantage, and may spend a void point to gain a Heroic Opportunity on the Battle Events Table.

Who's Who in the Kamae Family

Kamae Chujitsu - Mantis Soldier (Kamae Bushi 2, H-1, G-2)

Kamae Daikua - Mantis Scout (Kamae Bushi 2, H-1, G-2)

Kamae Denkyu - Mantis Guardsman, Captain of "the Mantis House Guard" (Kamae Bushi 4, H-2, G-6)

Kamae Furikae - Mantis Standard Bearer (Kamae Bushi 2, H-2, G-3)

Kamae Hasagawa - Mantis Mercenary (Kamae Bushi 2, H-2, G-2)

Kamae Hogosha - "Voice of the Alliance", Mantis Advisor (Kasuga Advisor 4, H-1, G-7)

Kamae Kamoto - Mantis Strategist (Kamae Bushi 4, H-3, G-5)

Kamae Kanbe - Mantis Mercenary (Kamae Bushi 2, H-2, G-2)

Kamae Komori - Mantis Summoner (Kamae Shugenja 2, H-2, G-3)

Kamae Makashi - Mantis Mercenary (Kamae Bushi 2, H-1, G-2)

Kamae Masasue - Mantis Mercenary (Kamae Bushi 3, H-1, G-2)

Kamae Nobuo - Head of the Kamae Shugenja School (Kamae Shugenja 3, H-1, G-6)

Kamae Nodoteki - Mantis Master of Fleets (Kamae Bushi 2, H-2, G-5)

Kamae Okan - Head of the Kamae Bushi School (Kamae Bushi 4, H-1, G-6)

Kamae Ranambe - Mantis Shugenja (Kamae Shugenja 2, H-1, G-3)

Kamae Takuni - Mantis Pilot (Kamae Bushi 3, H-1, G-3)

Kamae Tsuyu - Mantis Duelist (Kamae Bushi 3, H-1, G-4)

Kamae Yoritomo - "The Son of Storms", Champion of the Mantis Clan (Kamae Bushi 4, H-3, G-8)

Kamae Yukuo* - Captain of the Storm Legion (Kamae Bushi 4, H-1, G-7)

THE WASP CLAN

History of the Wasp

In the earliest days of the empire, more than any other Kami, Bayushi surrounded himself with followers. Two families not often associated with the Scorpion of today were the Goju and the Hachiya. It was Goju that accepted Soshi's gifts after the first Day of Thunder, and at both Bayushi and Hantei's request formed the original ninja. A good friend to both Bayushi and Goju, Nogoten was one of the first

Rokugani to take up the yumi as a weapon of the samurai class. He taught his followers of the purity and discipline needed to master this powerful weapon. Nogoten is less well remembered (indeed, it is almost never spoken of outside the family shrines of the Scorpion) as the man who introduced Lord Bayushi to the concept of 'poison'. He and Shosuro experimented endlessly with various substances that could kill man or goblin with a single scratch. The two of them turned these discoveries into powerful weapons against the armies of the Dark Kami. Shosuro favored the short blade, getting as close as possible to the opponent before a brush of her knife silenced them forever. Nogoten crafted a mighty bow with which he could kill man or ogre at 500 paces. Nogoten begged to serve as Bayushi's Thunder, but in the end Shosuro went into the darkness armed with her knife dipped in the finest of their efforts.

The Hachiya family might have remained a part of the Scorpion to the present day if not for a quarrel between the Scorpion Clan Champion and the Daimyo of the Otomo family. The Otomo had a long-standing rivalry with the Scorpion, as the Scorpion obstinately refused to be used and manipulated by the Otomo. While the Otomo daimyo knew the Bayushi were utterly loyal to the Hantei, their cunning defense of the throne seemed to overshadow his own efforts. He tried several schemes to discredit the Scorpion clan, but the Imperial Court was well aware of the Scorpion Clan's, and the Champion in particular's loyalty to the Emperor. The Otomo daimyo succeeded only in weakening his own position. He licked his wounds and over the course of several years conspired to discredit the ninja, the Bayushi family's secret spies. He eventually was able to convince the Hantei that the ninja were no longer under the full control of the Bayushi Daimyo. His own staged incidents lead credibility to his claims, and no ranking ninja could come forward to defend their performance. In the end the emperor (at Otomo's urging) commanded that the ninja be disbanded, their functions turned over to imperial hands. Outraged and outmaneuvered, the Scorpion Champion order all heads and senior members of the ninja to come forward publicly, and declare their true loyalty to the emperor, erasing the shame of the emperor's mistrust. Over four thousand ninja simultaneously revealed themselves and committed seppuku in a single blood-soaked afternoon. Three of them were highly placed staff in the imperial palace. The emperor was so shocked at the enormity of the ninja and the depth to which they had penetrated every clan, that while he publicly apologized to the Scorpion daimyo, he privately decreed that there were to be no more ninja employed on his behalf.

Despite the seemingly ignoble manner of their founder, Nogoten's descendants had long had a streak of junshin that sometimes put them at odds with their kin. When the Bayushi daimyo quietly accepted the Hantei's edicts, sacrificing the Goju to the foolish games between him and the Otomo daimyo things came to a head. The Nogoten publicly repudiated the Scorpion Clan. Their family daimyo took a new name, Hachiya to further demonstrate the finality of his decision. Hachiya Aihara, the head of the family renounced his oaths to the Scorpion Champion and recalled his family to their eastern provinces. The Champion tried to mollify Aihara, but his words fell on deaf ears. He threatened Aihara, but the newly christened Hachiya were adamant. He even started to march on Aihara, when shuriken from the shadows, arrows from the sky, and more than a few harsh words from the heads of the other Scorpion families convinced him to let the Hachiya go with good grace. Between the lose of two families, he is still considered the most disastrous Champion the Scorpion has ever seen. Whether the newly formed "Wasp" clan (taking their name from another animal with a dangerous sting) owed its swift recognition to the subtle influence of the Otomo family is a matter of bitter speculation for the Bayushi.

The history of the Wasp Clan has been a checkered one. Many important ties with the Scorpion remained even after the split. Nogoten and Shosuro were good friends, and their families have long felt kinship. Similarly Nogoten was amongst the first to see past Yogo's curse and welcome him into the clan like a true brother. The Bayushi on the other hand will always feel the sting of Aihara's treachery (as they see it) and the Soshi tend to agree. The Wasp then have been at the heart of many of the Scorpion's internal struggles, and the brunt of more than a few Bayushi diplomats' schemes. Similarly, the Lion have never seen beyond the Hachiya family's earlier reputation as assassin who kill the unwary with poisoned arrows shot through the highest castle window. The Wasp's continued mastery of the yumi is simply proof to them that they may have changed men, but they have not changed their ways. Few of the other major clans pay them much heed. In the last few years Hachiya Arimune, Champion of the Wasp has joined in an alliance with his southern neighbors. The Three Man Alliance with the daimyo of the Fox and Sparrow clans has strengthened the Wasp position measurably. Whether the other daimyo will find the increased attention of the Bayushi to be worth Wasp forces bolstering their borders has yet to be determined.

The Hachiya Family

These former Scorpions still show signs of their early heritage. By the standards of the Lion there is hardly a difference between them and their former masters the Bayushi. More moderate observers note that while the Hachiya sometimes place expedience before honor, on the whole they are more reliable and more honest than the average Scorpion. One thing everyone acknowledges is that the Wasps have produced some of the finest archers in the empire for generations. Trading in political favors related to admission to their dojo has been a key part of the Wasp's continuing success. Members of the Hachiya family receive one extra CP if they take the Bad Reputation Disadvantage, as the Bayushi never overlook an opportunity to discredit the children of Aihara. Also, due to their blood ties, Hachiya may take the Yogo Curse disadvantage, gaining 2 CP.

Benefit: +1 Perception

The Hachiya Archer School

Fletchery is largely considered a peasant skill in Rokugan. However, the Hachiya have raised it to an art form where their clan is concerned. Hachiya samurai craft new arrowheads with much the same care and ritual as lavished on swords by the rest of Rokugan. They also create arrowheads as works of art and spiritual offerings. Many such points decorate shrines throughout southern Rokugan. When you go through arrows at the furious pace a Wasp archer can, it is only common sense that you know how to prepare your own or repair strays gathered from the battlefield. This is considered a bushi school.

Benefit: +1 Reflexes

Beginning Honor: 1, plus 5 boxes

Skills: Defense, Fletchery, Hunting, Kenjutsu, Kyujutsu, Mountaineering, and Stealth

Techniques

Rank 1: The Way of the Wasp

The young Hachiya practices art of kyu-do relentlessly, learning to use the slightest details to guide his arrow to its mark. He may keep a number of additional dice on all Kyujutsu rolls equal to his School Rank and uses his Perception Trait when computing arrow damage (rather than the fixed Strength:2 that other archers face).

Rank 2: Fury of the Swarm

With experience and instruction, the bushi's grace and speed with the bow continue to grow. At this rank the bushi may make an extra attack each turn if all of his attacks are with Kyujutsu.

Rank 3: Sting of the Wasp

The bushi learn to take full advantage of an enemy's inattention or distance, unleashing a flurry of strikes or a torrent of arrows on his enemies. The bushi gains an extra attack on any turn that he himself is not targeted with an attack. If he is attacking with a bow (and no one is shooting back), this results in him making three attacks per turn.

Rank 4: The Arrow Knows the Way

The Wasp's mastery of the Rokugani snap-shooting style is complete. He may spend a void point and forego all other attacks this turn to make one single, perfect shot with his bow. This shot automatically goes first (with the exception of characters employing Daidoji-2) and automatically hits without an attack roll. As there is no Target Number for this attack, he cannot make any raises in the traditional manner, but he is entitled to any free raises he may have and for each additional void point spent on this attack he gains two free raises. Use of this technique is only limited by the archer's available void points.

Your Outfit: Archer

(All items are of average quality) Daisho w/stand, Daikyu or Yumi, 50 arrows (any combination of types), Light Armor w/ helm, Armor Chest, Traveling pack, Kimono, 2 Koku

Ancestors
Nogoten
Hachiya Aihara

Nemurani
Nogoten's Bow
Tsuruchi's Arrow

Who's Who in the Hachiya Family

Hachiya Kishiko* - Wasp Soldier (Hachiya Bushi 2, H-3, G-2)
Hachiya Masatsu - Champion of the Wasp Clan (Hachiya Bushi 3, H-2, G-7)
Hachiya Mukami - Captain of the Hachiya House Guard (Hachiya bushi 4, H-1, G-5)
Hachiya Naokazu - Retired Wasp General (Hachiya Bushi 4, H-1, G-6)
Hachiya Tsuruchi - Head of the Hachiya Archer School (Hachiya bushi 4, H-2, G-6)

THE FOX CLAN

History of the Fox

The Fox clan more than any other maintain their history as an oral tradition. The Libraries of Kyuden Kitsune contain the family lore but little history. While the Ikoma and Asako have compiled many of their tales and try to match events against their own detailed histories, the Fox simply shrug their shoulders and tell the next generation the stories that were handed down to them...

Fortunes of the Fox

The Lady Shinjo was exploring the edge of a forest in the southern part of what is now Scorpion territory. The sounds of bellowing ogres drew her and her band of retainers a short distance into the wood. There she saw a woman in a short robe dodging the blows of two ogres. Shinjo drew her sword and prepared to ride to the woman's aid, but Otaku laid her hand on Shinjo's and shook her head. Startled, Shinjo nodded, agreeing to watch.

The flicking snap of the woman's sword drew a few drops of blood with each twisting strike, but it was clear her blows only served to enrage the brutes further. Snarling, they smashed trees and splintered thick bamboo as the woman danced around them. Shinjo gasped as the lithe figure darted between the two monsters! With a bone twisting thud and a hideous snap the two ogres' blows landed... each killing the other. Shinjo's eyes went wide at the way the slip of a woman had slain two of her brother's most potent creations, but Otaku just smiled.

"Who are you?" she wondered aloud.

Lightly, the woman pivoted and dropped to the ground. "I am called Kitsune, most powerful Kami-sama!"

Shinjo dismounted and approached Kitsune. "You know me then?" she asked.

"No my lady."

"Then why do you name me Kami?"

Kitsune blinked. "Because you smell of the sky, my lady."

Otaku laughed out loud.

The Lady Shinjo had a new vassal, and a new friend, when she rode out of the wood.

The Ki'rin March

When Shinjo set out to explore the world for her brother Hantei, Kitsune went to her master with downcast eyes. Even worse, Otaku's daughter was there already.

"What troubles you my friend?"

"Oh my Lady! You know that some of us... Some of us must stay behind."

"I know that a few have chosen to. There is no dishonor in it."

Otaku only snorted.

"My lady. I am... am one of those who must stay."

"What? Kitsune, when did you decide this?"

"Before I was born I think. The emperor will need the Ki'rin before you find what you seek. And the Ki'rin who stay will need me."

No matter how much her lady's frown hurt her, it was Otaku's glare that cut to the bone.

"I see."

All of the Ki'rin who remained in Rokugan swore fealty to the house of Kitsune when Shinjo departed. Some say it was to give unity to those who would preserve the Ki'rin's lands while their Champion wandered. A few say it was because Otaku Shiko insisted that cowardice should have a single name.

In the Lion's Den

The Ki'rin who stayed behind settled in to wait. Too few in number to expand upon the handful of holdings in Shinjo's lands, they contented themselves with maintaining a single small castle (one that is today, ironically occupied by the Otaku family) and the surrounding villages. The empire was much younger then, and many barbaric tribes of men who had not joined the Kami still roamed the western expanse. With the departure of Shinjo and the bulk of the Ki'rin's armies they became more bold. There raids wore down the strength of Kitsune's followers until at last they were forced to seek the aid of the Lion Clan to the south. The Lion were eager to repel any invasion and thereby prove their loyalty to the emperor. In a series of glorious campaigns they drove the encroaching tribes back to the farthest mountains. With the lands secure by hind their lines, their merchants and peasants began to filter into the spaces that had once been Shinjo's alone. The children of Shinjo could not deny that the sons and daughters of Akodo had earned a place in the northern plains. Feeling surrounded and overwhelmed, a cunning Kitsune lord brokered a deal with the daimyo of the Matsu. The Lions would strike deep into Scorpion territory and the Kitsune would fill in the gaps. With their superior woodland lore, the Kitsune would make the recapture of a certain southern forest too costly for even the mighty Scorpion Clan. Much to the Lion's surprise the entire Kitsune family followed in the tracks of their invasion, securing the forest that lady Kitsune once called home.

The Scorpions are still scratching their heads over what exactly happened...

The Battle of Sleepy River

When the terror of Iuchiban and his Bloodspeakers rose a second time, all the Clans gathered to put down this menace. The Isawa read portents in the stars that suggested that Iuchiban would only be defeated if the children of the eight Kami united against him. With the bulk of the Ki-rin gone, it fell to the Kitsune to carry the banner of Shinjo into battle against the blood sorcerer.

Iuchiban learned of the Phoenix scrying, and determined to use it to his advantage. The Kitsune were few. They could prove to be the weak link of the prophecy. As the battle raged, Iuchiban sent his trusted hatamoto Suru to crush the Kitsune.

Suru nearly succeeded.

With their daimyo slain and the ancestral sword of the Kitsune broken, the banner of the Ki-rin would have fallen without the timely arrival of the samurai of the Hare clan. In a fierce charge, the Usagi warriors scattered Suru's forces and killed the Bloodspeaker general. When the battle was finished the foul sorcerer and his legions were crushed, but the price had been high for Rokugan's defenders, particularly the Ki'rin. Barely a third of the Kitsune still lived.

Forest Spirits

The Kitsune withdrew to their lands to heal and rest. Their real troubles were about to begin. The tales of Suru's demise were twisted and confused by the poets of the great Clans. The deeds of the Hare Clan were attributed to the Kitsune. The Usagi family, slighted and all but forgotten, turned their anger on the "ungrateful" Kitsune. Raids and pillaging met little resistance from the weakened family. In their most audacious plan, the Usagi persuaded the Scorpion that the lands of the Kitsune were virtually undefended and ripe for the picking. Some say that the cunning forest spirits inspired the young Kitsune daimyo Fujita. Others say it was his wife. Whatever the source, he devised a sly plan to save his people from the Scorpion's greed. Journeying to Otsan Uchi, he petitioned the Emperor to form a new Clan. The Emperor,

grateful for the Kitsune's sacrifices in the recent battle granted the petition and the Fox Clan was born. Further, he persuaded Hantei to recognize their borders and granted them freedom from incursion for the lifetime of kitsune's newborn daughter. Scorpion and Hare alike gnashed their teeth as the Lady Kitsune Uona was (despite an adventurous life and several attempts on it) to live to the age of 71. From this was born the phrase 'A Fox's Bargain', or any deal with unexpected consequences. The Scorpion Clan eventually turned their interests elsewhere, but the Hares and Foxes would continue to skirmish to the present day. The Scorpion may have had the last laugh however. In the final battle before the Emperor's proclamation, the Scorpion managed to seize the remnants of the Kitsune family sword. While the Fox received a new blade from the emperor's hand, the Fox have long sought the weapon of their founder...

The Kitsune Family

The portion of the Ki-rin clan that chose to remain in Rokugan banded together into a single family under the leadership of Lady Kitsune (whom some speculate was a prophet or a foxwife...). Centuries later the family would give up their claims as the Ki-rin Clan and would become the Fox Clan.

Family Benefit: +1 Intelligence. Kitsune characters may take Way of the Land for the home province for a single CP. They may also accept 1-3 Taboo Disadvantages as described in WotMC.

The Kitsune Bushi School

Much to the surprise of some of the larger schools of swordsmanship, the Kitsune bushi trains in the arts of command and leadership from his earliest days. The Foxes bolster their meager numbers with ronin and higher than average numbers of ashigaru. This means the few loyal Fox bushi available are often placed at the head of troops much earlier in their lives than their Great Clan counterparts.

Benefit: +1 Agility

Beginning Honor: 2, plus 5 boxes

Skills: Defense, Herbalism, Hunting, Kenjutsu, Leadership, Stealth, and Pick any one skill

Techniques

Rank 1: Way of the Fox

The fox is a wily, crafty opponent. The Fox bushi's fighting style is sinuous and fluid, ducking and twisting out of harm's way. Fox bushi use their Agility instead of Reflexes to determine the TN to be hit by melee attacks. Their tricky and deceptive motions allows them to spend a void point to completely change their action after all other actions have been declared in a combat turn. Changed actions still resolve in the order rolled.

Rank 2: Desperate Wager

A Fox knows no limits when it comes to reckless bravado and daring-do. The bushi may make any number of raises on a roll. This ability may be used a number of times per day equal to the bushi's School Rank.

Rank 3: Lay of the Land

The Fox's mastery of woodsman lore is complete. The bushi keeps an additional number of dice equal to her School Rank for the Herbalism, Hunting and Stealth Skills while in a natural setting.

Rank 4: Dance of Silk and Steel

The Fox bushi's quickness and grace now allows her two attacks per turn.

Your Outfit: Bushi

(All items are of average quality) Daisho w/ stand, Light Armor w/ helm, Traveling Pack, Several Maps, Kimono, and 2 Koku

The Kitsune Shugenja School

Like their bushi brethren, Kitsune shugenja must learn the arts of war simply to protect their homes. While the bushi assume leadership roles, the shugenja focus on support magics for their often under-skilled army. Do to its small size, the Kitsune Shugenja School has only 4 Ranks.

Benefit: +1 Perception

Beginning Honor: 2, plus 0 boxes

Kitsune shugenja receive a free raise to reduce casting time on all spells

Skills: Calligraphy, Defense, Herbalism, Hunting, Meditation, Naginata, and pick one high skill

Beginning Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, Counterspell, 3 Water, and 2 Earth

Your Outfit: Shugenja

(All items are of average quality) Nagamaki, Wakizashi, Scroll Satchel, Traveling Pack, 2 Kimonos, and 2 Koku

Ancestors

Lady Kitsune

Kitsune Fujita

Nemurani

The Kitsune Nagamaki

Who's Who in the Kitsune Family

Kitsune Ariko* - Fox Guardsman (Kitsune Bushi 2, H-3, G-3)

Kitsune Diro - Fox Bushi (Kitsune Bushi 3, H-2 G-4)

Kitsune Diro - Fox Shugenja (Kitsune Shugenja 3, H-2, G-4)

Kitsune Fusaki - Head of the Kitsune Shugenja School (Kitsune Shugenja 4, H-2, G-6)

Kitsune Ryosei* - Fox Shugenja (Kitsune Shugenja 2, H-1, G-3)

Kitsune Ryu - Champion of the Fox Clan (Kitsune Shugenja 4, H-1, G-8)

Kitsune Shudo - Head of the Kitsune Bushi School (Kitsune Bushi 4, H-2, G-5)

Kitsune Tsuke - Fox Shugenja (Kitsune Shugenja 3, H-2, G-4)