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...join CLAWs or else!

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What Is Role-playing?

A Beginner's Guide

ZAC CRUMLEY

Role-playing is essentially a form of storytelling. The word literally means to take on a role and play (act) out that role. It can be thought of as a special type of theatre, a very complex board game, a formalized and adult version of pretend games played by children, or, as I prefer, a form of group storytelling. You take on the role of some one else for a time and act out that role through a story of some sort. It's escapist fun, designed to be an entertaining and enjoyable escape from your real life. A chance to put the world to one side and share a story with others, just like watching a movie or a play.

But What Is It?

To quote Wikipedia "a role-playing game is a game in which participants assume the roles of fictional characters". They then play the roles of those characters in an unscripted fictional story. Think of it as a combination of storytelling and improvised theatre, the players act as the main characters of the play and decide what those characters do and how they respond to the events of the story. These characters could be the heroes, anti-heroes or maybe even the villains of the story, but they're always the main characters around whom the story is focused. For example, if the Harry Potter series was a role-playing game, then the players would play the roles of Harry, Ron and Hermione.

Another player acts as the director/writer of the 'play'. They decide on the general direction of the story, create (and play) the minor characters and decide how the rest of the world responds to the actions of the main characters played by the other players. This player can be known as the storyteller, the Dungeon Master (DM), Game Master (GM) or any of a host of other names. To continue the Harry Potter example, the storyteller would control all of the other characters that weren't played by players and the rest of the world (Dumbledore, Snape, the weather, what Voldemort was planning, etc). The storyteller will generally decide on a loose story ahead of time and guide the players through it, although the players can (and often do) diverge from the intended story, meaning that the

storyteller will need to ad-lib parts of the story that he/she had not considered. If this all sounds very complex and formal, please be assured that it's not. Role-playing is a game, it's designed to be fun, a form of escapism, a chance to take on the role of some one else. The most important rule is to have fun, everything else is second to that. All role-playing games have some sort of rules system to resolve whether players succeed at certain tasks. For example, if a player says "I try to pick the lock on the door" there has to be some way to determine whether they will succeed or not, since the outcome is not predetermined. These almost always involve some element of randomness to keep the game unpredictable and exciting. The randomness most often comes from dice. These systems can range from very complex and realistic (possibly needing multiple rolls to determine the outcome of different types of events) to the very simple (a single roll of one dice to determine the outcome of anything). An example might be that the player rolls a six sided dice, and if they get five or six then their character successfully opens the door. The rules system is a necessary evil, required to keep the game coherent and fair for all involved.

There are two broad categories of role-playing games. Table-top role-playing which is all played verbally, and live action role-playing (LARP) in which the players physically act out their characters like actors on a stage performing a play (but without an audience).

Table-top Role-playing:

These role-playing games are played verbally and, to the observer, appear to be a complex form of group storytelling. That is, you describe the actions your character takes to the other players and they respond verbally. Generally you distinguish between things said in-character and out-of-character (just like you would as an actor in a play). For example, in-character: "I [the player is referring to their character in the first person] grab the gun from the table and begin to fire at the intruder climbing over the wall." And out-of-character: "Hey guys,

"I'm hungry, please stop the game for a moment while I go get something to eat."

There are a myriad of types and styles of role-playing, varying from the rules heavy, combat focused likes of Dungeons & Dragons to the very free-form avant-garde style popular in Scandinavia. The different styles have different things to offer that appeal to different types of players and sometimes have different expectations of how some aspects of the game are handled.

Some better known examples of these role-playing games are Dungeons & Dragons, published by Wizards of the Coast and the World of Darkness line by White Wolf.

LARPing:

Live action role-playing (LARPing) is the other main style of role-playing games. This form of role-playing is much closer to an improvised play. Instead of verbally describing what your character does, you physically act as your character, like you would for a play. The differences from a play are that it's all entirely unscripted (the outcome is not set in stone and is determined by the actions and decisions the players make for their characters) and there's no audience. In a way, the other players are the audience.

There are a number of LARP styles around the world, similar to the range seen in tabletop role-playing games. The style preferred in Cape Town (and South Africa) is like a play: the author writes descriptions of all the characters in the LARP (but does not script their actions after the start of the game) and each player is given one of these descriptions. The players read the descriptions, get into character as best they can and then improvise their actions during the actual running of the LARP.

Otherwise LARPing is very similar to tabletop role-playing. There's still some sort of rules system, and you still distinguish between in-character and out-of-character. The big difference is that you physically act

out your character instead of describing his/her actions. Other differences are that there are often more than one storyteller player and there tend to be many more players in a game than in table-top role-playing.

There aren't many formal LARPing systems that can be used as examples. The best known one is probably the Mind's Eye Theatre by White Wolf. By and large LARPs use very simplified ad-hoc rules that are created by the author.

Role-playing is a difficult thing to describe. The best way to see what it's like is to watch a game in progress. If you're still curious about any of the above and want to read more, I can recommend Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.org) as a good place to start looking for more information. Alternatively, if you want to see what it's like in action, come along to one of the many CLAWs events and see it live for yourself.



D&D Fourth Edition

a review, some months on

KARL SILBERNAGL

The evolution of Dungeons and Dragons takes another step and the release of fourth edition last year caused quite a few stirs and discussions, both good and bad. Everyone who knows of fourth edition can be broken up into two categories: Those who do like it and those who do not. From my experience, I have noted a rough generalization: those who like fourth edition are those who have actually played and those who do not like it have at most played it once. I say this because those who have actually bothered to play for any length of time, whether or not they liked fourth edition before playing, usually found themselves pleasantly surprised at the playability and ease of usage of fourth edition. I believe there are several reasons why playability has improved compared to previous editions.

First thing, it is easy to pick up the game. The minimum number of rules that you need to know and still have a decent game is greatly reduced compared previous editions. I believe that fourth edition is very rules light for anybody trying to begin the game but at the same time there is still scope to delve into the game and let advanced players get a good run of the game.

The second reason supporting good playability is combat. Combat has been streamlined several times over compared to any previous edition. The structure of combat is simple where by each player has three actions; standard, move and minor. Standard actions are used for the turn's primary action like activating a maneuver or casting a spell the move action is used for a mode of movement and the minor action usually adds flavor to the combat based on the characters class or race.

Whilst I believe, combat has added to the playability it unfortunately holds one of fourth editions largest flaws. The biggest complaint I have with Dungeons and Dragons fourth edition is that it does seem too much like an offline version of World of Warcraft. The structure of the classes and abilities of each class sometime give me this feeling as if I am in some weird pen and paper MMORPG (Massive Multiplayer Online Role Playing Game). I believe the reasons for the game feeling as if a MMORPG is that Wizards has recognized Blizzard's success with World of Warcraft and is trying to simulate it and thus appeal MMORPG players and get them to play D&D.

Another large change compared to previous edition is that the classes presented in fourth edition are catagorised into one of four roles; defender, striker, leader or controller. Some more experienced players who are very familiar with D&D 3.5 complain that they are too restricted with new class building rules. Whilst only being able to change your class every ten levels does seem restricting; each level allows you to choose a new spell or maneuver. As well as pick up nic naks like feats and ability points every couple of levels. However, despite the ability to pick and choose each class is tailored to its role usually with an option to dabble slightly in secondary role. I'm not exactly sure if the role re-enforcement is a good thing or not as whilst it does make it easier for newer players to get to grips with the game and it forces party co operation it does also make the game more MMORPG-like.

It is quite clear the Wizards has reviewed their approach



to newer players as the readability of the books has improved over second or third edition but the usage of formulas can be a bit disorientating the first time. There is a large emphasis on using a combat map and miniatures as the combat system is like a creative involved form of chess and seeing exactly where each player is relative to the next is very handy.

One of the ironies surrounding the release is that co-founder of Dungeons and Dragons Gary Gygax passed away just before the release of 4th edition and it is small open secret that Gary Gygax become less involved and

interested with the later editions and phrases were being passed round such as “He couldn’t bear to see the new release”.

Overall, I believe fourth edition is a success but with such a large emphasis on miniatures and the move to make D&D a miniature based game the system comes off extremely combat heavy. The rules do not deal that much with character development combined with the emphasis on miniatures, playing D&D fourth edition can feel more like playing Warhammer than a roleplaying game.



Saiban Blue

An L5R Campaign

ADEEB BALLA

Starring:

Garrick As Kakita Hirotada, Kolat Trained Ikoma Spymaster

Warren-kun as Bayushi Kisuke, Shosuro Shinobi, trained in the Bayushi Violator Technique

Cris as Mirumoto Kenji, Mirumoto Bushi,

Kelvin as Kakita Shiori, Kakita Bushi, and later as Moto Kuraodo, Moto Bushi

Brendan as Isawa Hoshi, Isawa Shugenja and secret Maho Tsukai, and later Doji Inada, Daidoji Harrier(SSHH! The Crane have no Ninja!)

Players who briefly graced us with their presence:

Rakesh as Doji Akihito, Kitsuki Investigator

Marc as Soshi Xarai, Soshi Shugenja, then Tamori Goku, Tamori Shugenja

Lucas as Agasha Saizo

The Story Begins

The City of Setchu to Fukuro, A Primer

The City of Setchu to Fukuro, situated on the mouth of the river Samu, was until the conclusion of the conflict dubbed, "The War Of The Spirits"[1138-1150 PF], a major trade hub for the Crane Clan, and rivalled Yasuki Yashiki and Otosan Uchi as the largest port city in the Empire. Located at the mid point of Daidoji and Kakita lands, the city and all lands for 25 miles outside the city walls were granted to Hantei XVI, the Steel Chrysanthemum, following the cessation of hostilities between The Steel Chrysanthemum and his supporters and the Toturi Dynasty and its supporters. The Previous Doji Governors' family was allowed to retain their property and were allowed to remain in the city if they so choose.

The terms of the treaty is roughly as follows:

In exchange for ceasing all attempts to overthrow the

Toturi Dynasty and renouncing all claim to the throne of Rokugan for all eternity, the Toturi Dynasty agreed to cede the lands of the city of Setchu to Fukuro to Hantei XVI. The Steel Chrysanthemum's stated desire for the city revolved around the fact his mother had been born there and he had spent a significant portion of his childhood there. In retrospect however, Hantei XVI did not overlook the strategic and financial benefits accruing from ownership of the city.

Also the Toturi Dynasty pledged to pay an undisclosed amount as a stipend for a period of not less than 50 years.

In exchange also 2 Black Scrolls was handed to the Toturi Dynasty, and that 2 remained in the hands of Hantei XVI and his administration.

While all matters of a civil nature are the province of the Hantei Principality, including taxation et al, all matters of a criminal nature are the province of Imperial representatives, the so-called Saiban Corps, who maintain law and order in the city in the name of both the Emperor and the Hantei prince. In a major concession, the right to Orders Of Appearance remain the province of the Prince or his designated representative, which has stymied the effectiveness of the organization tremendously.

All Clans are allowed to trade in the city, and between ancestors and descendants. Taxes are set and payable to the principality.

Lastly all returned spirits or the progeny have the option to swear fealty to the hantei prince or his descendants, and thus do not have to undergo the Ritual of Mortality and lose their Spirit Realm spawned abilities. If travelling through the empire all returned spirits must clearly identify themselves to the governor of the province they are travelling in, and possess valid travel papers signed by the Hantei or his designated subordinate. and approved

by the Emerald Champion, the Shogun, the Voice or the Emperor Himself [With the city's array of trade routes and travel means, combined with the small size of the Saiban, this has become impossible to police, thus providing the principality and its agents many opportunities to evade Imperial oversight.]

Those who swear fealty have all previous crimes pardoned so long as they remain in the city and in Hantei's service. Only under a case-by-case basis will the Emerald Champion grant travel papers to such an individual, and always subject to the Emperor's approval.

The city has, with the lowered taxation and its laissez faire attitude to punishing criminality, become the single largest economy on Rokugan, outstripping even Ryoko Owari. It has earned the title "City Of Vice"

In the period after the Blood Rain, and the ensuing War Of Blood the infamous Bayushi Atsuki takes up the position of Chancellor to the prince Ieyasu.

Atsuki is a Returned Spirit and infamous for having reigned as the leader of the Gozoku which in the year 391 AF was an alliance between the three most powerful politicians of their day, Doji Raigu, Bayushi Atsuki and Shiba Gaijushiko. They espoused the philosophy that the emperor as the son of heaven had to be protected from the inordinate stresses the role placed on the Imperial person.

Thus they worked to erode the power of the son of heaven and take his powers and responsibilities upon those better suited to the role, namely themselves.

Having narrowly escaped execution after his Shadowed Tower gambit to take over the the Scorpion Clan, Atsuki had inveigled himself into the most senior courtier position in the city and set himself to the task of fomenting a civil war and placing Hantei Ieyasu and his sister Sakura, upon the Throne of Rokugan.

Having approached the befriended the Shogun Kaneka, who was known for his antipathy to his brother the Emperor, Atsuki preyed upon this offering up Ieyasu as a Hantei heir of heroic virtue and untainted by the political maneuvering which Naseru the Emperor was famous for.

Also Kaneka was long able to rely on the fanatical loyalty

shown to him by the Clan Champions of the 3 most militarily powerful Clans, the Lion, the Unicorn and the Crab. If he could be convinced to declare himself for Ieyasu, the 3 Clan Champions would almost automatically pledge themselves to Kaneka.

This made civil war an almost inevitable event, which the Saiban had to stop for various reasons

When the Heroic Captain of the Saiban, Yotsu Samanosuke is assassinated by Tainted warriors his Subordinate Akodo Ichigo is assigned as Captain, and the Emperor informs the Clans to put forward candidates to vie for the 6 new magistrate positions created.

In time the following are chosen,

Kakita Hirohada, a promising Doji Courtier with a record of service in Ryoko Owari.

[Secretly Hirohada serves the Criminal Conspiracy the Kolat, and has been assigned to prevent a Hantei Dynasty by any means.]

Kakita Shiori, a kakita duelist who soon leaves the city and becomes a ronin, the better to follow the Matsu Ronin she loves,

Isawa Hoshi, a brilliant Asako Inquisitor shugenja, tormented by the death of hi family in the Blood War, and driven to practising Maho in order to avenge himself upon the servants of Fu Leng. Hoshi also secretly acts as the personal agent of the Emperor's brother, the most powerful mortal shugenja alive, and the leader of the Asako Inquisitors, Isawa Sezaru.

Mirumoto Kenji, a brilliant duelist and swordsman, coming the city to test his blades against the best history had to offer.

Doji Akihito, a Crane trained as a member of the Dragon Clan's Elite Kitsuki Investigators, on the trail of Crane warriors selling gunpowders despite the Imperial Ban.

Bayushi Kisuke, and elite Shosuro Shinobi, in Setchuo n behalf of his Master, the fanatically loyal Imperial Supporter Bayushi Paneki, to attempt to subvert the New Gozoku, and kill Atsuki if at all possible.

Soshi Xarai, the Soshi Shugenja accompanying Kisuke on his mission, despite his loathing for Shinobi in general

and Kisuke in particular.

Season One

In the First Arc the players were introduced to the various important people in the city, made the acquaintance of the Prince and his Staff and settled in.

The Magistrates realized the power and duplicity of Bayushi Atsuki, and resolved to thwart him in all ways available. Kakita Hirohada especially found himself opposing Atsuki and his agents, in the name of both Kōratu duty and personal enmity.

The year in Setchu Tō Fukuro was eventful for the heroes, and much occurred of various levels of importance.

A few weeks after they had settled in Kakita Shiori turned Ronin to accompany her true love on his wanderings through Rokugan.

A new magistrate joined, the Moto Bushi named Moto Romanov Kuraodo, of strange lineage but great skill in battle.

The group engaged in battle against the pirates, the Serpents of Sanada, when accompanying the prince on a hunting trip.

Various incidents led the group to discovering an ongoing struggle between elite Heroic agents of the famed Band of the Jade Hand, and with various agents of the Snake and Spider Clans of the Shadowlands, with their battles waged upon the streets of the Saiban's city.

It was discovered that Yotsu Samanosuke had been slain by Daigotsu (formerly Akodo) Sosuke, the long lost brother of the current captain.

The Oracle of Thunder and Hida Kisada encountered the characters, and having intimated the Dark Future that awaited Rokugan, and its link to their own fates, the group was committed to fighting the battle.

Various crimes were investigated and resolved in the interim, but the team was attacked repeatedly by various agents identified as Tainted servants of the Snake and Spider Clans, serving the New Order in the Shadowlands.

During the run up to the New Years Festival, the magistrates discovered, through an incident involving a wounded Time Traveller from the future, what was truly at stake in the city.

The Dark God Fu Leng had resurrected Iuchiban, and made him co-ruler of the Shadowlands along with the newly re-empowered Daigotsu, and in an attempt at one-upmanship, both fearsome Dark Lords were committed to getting the Dark God a new Host body. This body had to be of Hantei Blood, and a newborn at that. Thus Iuchiban had sent his agent, Jama Ton, to corrupt the prince and princess, and force them to sire a child, which would serve as Fu Leng's new host.

If the Saiban failed in preventing this blasphemous ritual, the Saiban itself would fall and half the Saiban; Isawa Hoshi, Mirumoto Kenji and Bayushi Kisuke would endure being tainted and damned to serve the powers of hell for all eternity. The Rest of the Saiban would form the core of a ragtag resistance unit, led by the son of the Shogun.

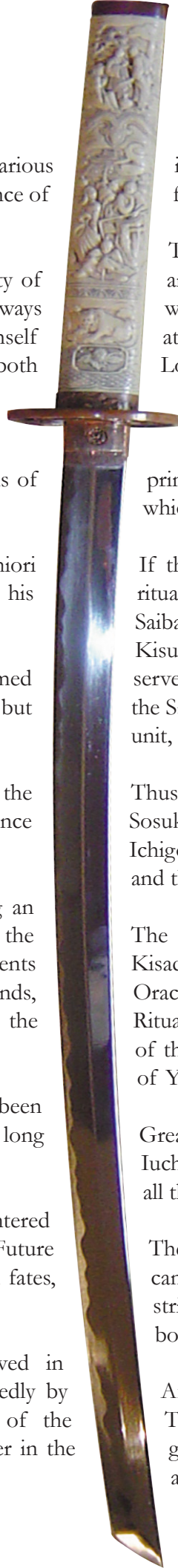
Thus Daigotsu has sent his own agent Daigotsu Sosuke (coincidentally the Saiban Captain Akodo Ichigo's twin brother) to either take control of the city and the ritual or eliminate the prince and his sister.

The magistrates found themselves aided by Hida Kisada, his Elite Band Of the Jade Hand and the Oracle of Thunder, and on the night of the Dark Ritual, the 9th Day of the Horse, the Unholiest night of the new year, battle was joined between the forces of Yomi and Jigoku.

Great was the struggle the Saiban endured, as both Iuchiban's and Daigotsu's inhuman agents pulled out all the stops to succeed.

The city was set alight, the citizens driven into a cannibalistic frenzy, Oni and Goblins of every stripe attacked, and many lives, heroes and villains both, were lost.

After the group was slain by the lethal Basilisk Technique of Daigotsu Sosuke, our heroes were given one last chance at thwarting the Snake Clan, and brought back to life by the intervention of



Osano-Wo, the God Of Thunder.

The final battle was fought by our heroes against the forces of Jama Ton and Daigotsu Sosuke, and against overwhelming odds, as the Tainted Villains unleashed the superhuman powers of the Damned. However, strengthened by their Near Death Experience, the Heroes combined their skills and defeated both groups of opponents, at the cost of Captain Akodo Ichigo's life.

In the aftermath, as a reward for his heroic struggle, and for turning the tide in the Battle, Isawa Hoshi was given a chance to redeem himself for his use of bloodmagic, and committed an honourable seppuku, and was to be re-united with his family after a period in purgatory.

Daigotsy himself congratulated the Saiban on thwarting the plans of his hated rival, and promised to keep a close eye on them,

Still the Saiban were unmoved in their determination to succeed in their mission.

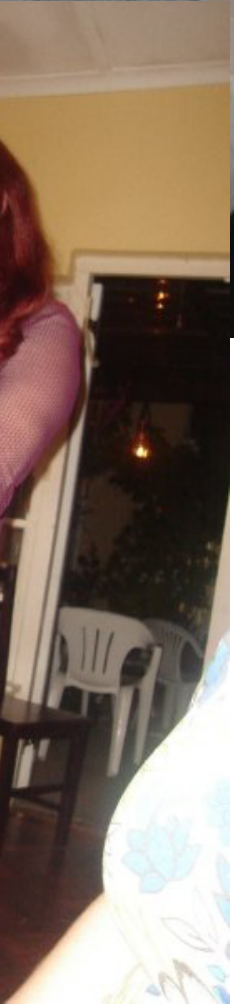
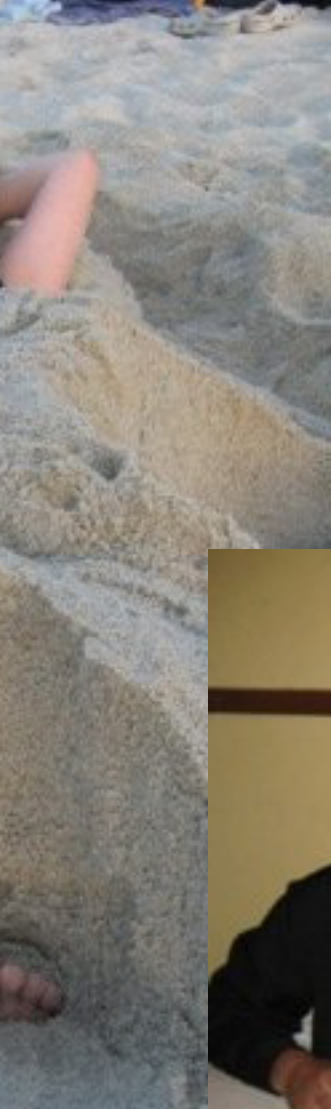
Thus the heroes stood over the bodies of their enemies and surrounded by the ruins of Setchu To Fukuro, little knowing the battle had just begun.

The Story of Saiban Blue will be concluded in the next thrilling instalment of CLAWmarks,

Make sure to reserve you copy today!







SCION

MEN PLAYING GODS PLAYING MEN

IAN KITLEY

Round about this time last year, a friend came up to me asking “Hey, have you heard about the new White Wolf system?” So, by now, most of us have heard someone say this and have learnt to ignore the frothing fan boys and the raving about how this one compares with the old one. But then I heard a few words you usually don’t, namely “Did you hear you can run American Gods with it?”

So, I will admit, I’m a Neil Gaiman fanatic and just the thought of bringing a similar story to a roleplaying environment peeked my interest. So I decided to take a look. And you can take a guess at where that led.

Setting

So for those of you that have never heard of the system before, here are the not so short cliff notes. The story behind the system is that the old godly pantheons still exist and interfere in their own small ways with the modern world as we know it. They do this by either taking on guises and walking among us, or by directing their children, otherwise known as Scions (wonder where the players fall in), to act on their behalf. Normally the gods want to further their own plans, their own vendettas, or sometimes the plans of their people, but what would a good system be like without a massive antagonist that the players can cringe at the sight of us.

Scion provides this antagonist in the form of the Titans and their spawn, who have recently escaped the collective underworld and are waging a war to defeat the gods in their own home, otherwise known as the Overworld, and on the plane they love so much, namely ours. Titans in this context refer to any mythological evil beastie, as well as a few others, so you will have Medusaie fighting beside giants, oni, and even mechanized centaurs. Hey, you haven’t lived until you’ve fought a creature with the torso of a man and a motorcycle for the rest.

As you may have gathered earlier, players take the guise of children of these ancient gods, claiming their heritage

like heroes of old. Using the powers passed on to them through the blood of their parents and with the help of mythical items used to channel these abilities, scions strive to protect mankind and the gods from the plans of the titans, and often the plans of other gods. And with luck, these children can elevate themselves to the status of demi-god, and eventually can become a god themselves.

System

So that’s the trailer, the intro, whatever else you want to call about it. What about the actual system I hear. The developers of Scion have followed the general White Wolf ideology of learning from what has come before, resulting in a number of similarities with previous systems. Fans of their superhero genre will notice nods to Aberrant and Adventure, while others will catch glimpses of the World of Darkness restart. And for those that have always liked their godhood to be epic and ridiculous, you will be pleased to notice that Exalted has made its impact too.

Simple character creation lends much from the aforementioned superhero system, using the same

three tier attribute division (namely physical, mental and social) as well as placing all the abilities into



a single box without the requirement of a set number of points being divided amongst specific subsets. What seasoned players will notice though, is that there are no backgrounds or merits, meaning that a player is free to give their character whatever history or background they want, without any real restrictions. Hopefully the storyteller will be up to the task of restricting players from having everything they could ever need.

Now comes the part that most power gamers want to know about, ie elevating yourself to the position of a child of a god. This is the not so easy part. In the core rule book alone you have six pantheons (Egyptian, Greek, Norse, Aztec, Japanese and Loa) to choose from, before even deciding on whose child you wish to be. With three more coming the companion book (namely Irish, Chinese and Hindu), this choice is not easy. Thankfully the descriptions for each pantheon give each groups ideology and this often helps players find a path. Are you for the group or for the individual? Do you wish to serve a higher ideal or the base of human emotion? Do you like to shed blood before or after you've sorted out the problem. Each pantheon still supports a large group of play-styles, so a player should not have too much trouble deciding.

Now that we've have chosen our parent, we can become enlightened. This usually refers to obtaining powers and abilities far beyond the human norm. The system splits

these into two separate types.

The first is epic attributes and their associated knacks, while the second are

boons granted to you by the gods which you may

call on.

Epics are very similar to the old Mega stats of Aberrant, with the main difference being ... okay, there isn't that much of a difference, but there is some. The main difference is how epics affect your dice pool. Instead of adding dice, like most systems, epics provide you with automatic successes in any skill you have points in. These successes follow a slightly exponential formula, but it isn't too much of a problem at lower levels. Also, each point in an epic provides you with a knack related to that sort of attribute. For example, epic perception can provide you with x-ray vision or the ability to sense ambushes before they happen. Epic strength can allow you to crush boulders or throw baseballs around the earth, while epic charisma can make you the life of the party or give your comrades that little extra they need to win. Other stats provide other inherent bonuses, some more useful than others.

Whereas epics come from the blood running through you, boons are gifts that can be channelled through items given to you by your parents or other gods. These powers allow a hero to manipulate the earth, raise storms, view the truth and commune with animals. Others allow you to prophesize amazing discoveries or see the hands of fate at work. Unlike epics though, a hero does not have access to all of these, requiring their parent to have these powers fall under their purview or to petition another god for these gifts. These boons are also often not bought in order, meaning that if a hero wished to manipulate the sky, he would not need to know the basic abilities to work great miracles.

Now, unfortunately I must confess to having lied earlier. When I said that there were no backgrounds in the system, I may have been stretching it. Heroes are given access to weapons with special properties, creatures and followers that will obey your every order, and guides to help them through trying times. The latter three are easy to understand, being things liked winged pegasi that will come to your aid, mortal or undead soldiers loyal to you, or beings such as Achilles that you can call on to speak with. Relics, or special items, are a bit more difficult to explain. These are used to channel the energies needed for the boons a hero possesses and are integral to the play style. Mythical artifacts, they provide both an amazing roleplaying element and an interesting way to customize your character.



The final bit of system I would like to touch on is combat resolution. Always a bane of most systems, this time it is no exception. Unlike White Wolf's World of Darkness revamp, which uses one roll combat, Scion retreats to Exalted's hit, damage and soak way of dealing with things. This results in a player needing to bypass an opponent's dodge ability, before being able to hurt him, which must then still bypass his ability to endure the damage. But more on that later.

Presentation

As with most White Wolf products, the Scion books are beautiful and filled with the information you need. Also as per usual, the index is a bloody nightmare, so finding that information can be annoying at times. But all in all, it feels well laid out and very quick to grasp at times.

In order to pick up and start a game, all a person needs is the Scion: Hero book. This contains all the rules and information for player creation and game play, though at times you would wish for some added definition in places. The other two books in the series, Demi-God and God, provide interesting insights into the more mythical aspects of the world, as well as added rules and abilities for higher level gameplay.

All three books contain the now trademark story at the beginning, which outside of being beautiful, also contain a number of good tips on how relics and boons work, how the gods interact with the world and their children, and how the modern world comprehends these giants of legend. Another interesting addition are six ready to play characters, as well as their stat progress through the various levels, along with a scenario for each book and six antagonists with similarly progressive stats. This allows for a definite pick up and play feel which will appeal to new players and old players alike as they attempt to get a feel for the system.

Opinions

Having given the system a few good kickings, I've been able to get an idea of how it plays and listen to a number of others give their views. So far I have found it to be a rich setting, allowing storytellers to pull from a wealth of history and mythology to weave complex stories that can stretch back thousands of years, as grudges beget wars and old promises finally begin to bear fruit. The opportunities for roleplaying abound, as players struggle to come to terms with their bigger responsibilities in the world, whilst seeing their parents wreck it and rebuild it as

they see fit. It's always entertaining to see someone realise that their parent is more childish than they are.

From a system view, it is very much like most d10 intensive systems. Scion falls neatly between NWOD's smaller dice pools and Abberant's larger, but not crazy ones. Only on occasion does it ever rival Exalted's insane numbers and that will only occur at very high levels if a player is specifically aiming for it. And since you can do crazy things without ever going there, I don't see a reason to worry. For all those power gamers out there though, I should warn you that if you are not at demi-godhood, a number of the boons and such are not terribly impressive. This is not to say that they are useless, which they are far from, just to say that as a hero, you will not be taking down a minotaur by yourself without a lot of luck. Epics are a far better option at lower levels, while not getting too over powered, too quickly.

There are exceptions to this however. Epic dexterity and epic stamina will cause much grinding of teeth for any storyteller, as the combat system allow these powers to make a player either un-hittable or un-damageable. As you may have gathered from my previous comments, I have issues with the combat system. It too often becomes a question of who will get the lucky break. The system is also not kind to firearms, preventing them from doing the same amount of damage as fists, but this can be gotten around with a few house rules and some thought.

All in all, I like the system, except when my players annoy me and I can't hit them, but I get around that by playing them off each other. Anyone who has taken a look at the system will notice I have left some things out (cough ... Legend ... cough) but I feel that this should give you an idea of what the system is like and hopefully get you to give it a try.

Until then, may your monster slaying be plentiful and madness know no ends.

Mmm, Tainty!

Alternative Shadowlands taint mechanics for L5R

ADRIANNA PINSKA

Legend of the Five Rings[1,2] is a Samurai-flavoured fantasy setting: the empire of Rokugan is supposed to be mostly like feudal Japan, but with a layer of magic and mixed East Asian sprinkles. Its resident Big Bad Supernatural Evil is the fallen kami Fu Leng. When he and his brothers and sisters fell from the heavens centuries ago, his more pleasant siblings landed somewhere nice and founded a bright, shining empire. His own landing created a crater which opened a hole to Jigoku[3], and something nasty started oozing out of it and corrupting everything that fell under its influence. This unpleasant, mostly incurable affliction is called the taint, and the large wasteland which it has created to the south of Rokugan is known as the Shadowlands. Unpleasant things lurk there - kept at bay only by the Carpenter Wall, built and patrolled by the armies of the Crab Clan. Jade is the most valuable mineral in the empire, because of its various mystic anti-taint properties.

In the good old days (the first edition of the RPG), the taint was hardcore. Player characters who got too much of it became unplayable. It made them become more and more crazy and grotesquely deformed, until they passed the point of no return and became Lost - meat puppets completely enslaved to Fu Leng's will. Corpses could be raised into this grisly state - which is why the Crab got into the habit of decapitating their fallen comrades, and cremation became compulsory throughout the empire.

The excellent first-edition sourcebook *Bearers of Jade* presents the perils of the Shadowlands as an almost Lovecraftian threat - a creeping horror from beyond which drives decent people mad, which is incomprehensible and on some level unbeatable - rather than a very large fantasy monster which has hit points and will die if you hit it enough times.

As the RPG setting and rules progressed[4] the taint became less unfathomable and horrific and more ordered and well-defined. The Shadowlands gained a pretty

human face, the Dark Lord Daigotsu[5], who gathered a city of Lost followers and eventually attempted to create a new Great Clan for them within Rokugan. While a token pocket of chaotic evil remained, most of the Shadowlands became a sort of dark, gothic mirror of samurai society, complete with an alternative life philosophy which perverted the tenets of Bushido. Now the Lost are less reminiscent of the insane cultists of Cthulhu, and act more like clerics of Cyric.

In the third edition tainted samurai retain most of their sanity throughout their taint gain; they just fall further under the sway of Evil (at least theoretically), while gaining really sweet magical powers and wearing a lot of emo eyeliner. I suspect that this is because lots of people like to play vampires, but nobody really wants to play a drooling zombie with festering sores. There are so many mildly tainted, not-too-crazy individuals running around and debating ethics that the impact of the taint has been reduced somewhat. Ostensibly the physical and mental disadvantages still exist, but they have been downplayed greatly in the recent books - and with the introduction of taint powers that essentially eliminate them, they can be avoided entirely. What was once a horrible curse is now a power boost with token drawbacks.

I would like to consolidate these two very different ways of being tainted into some kind of sensible framework. So, in the grand tradition of DMs everywhere, I have whipped out my +5 Chainsaw of Delicate Rules Modification, and attempted to create an alternative mechanic which suits the kind of games I want to run. Since I don't use the L5R system in my current game, I'm keeping all of this system-agnostic. Most of my proposed changes are to the interpretation of the setting.

There are some things I've never liked about the mechanics of the taint, even in its first-edition incarnation. A person can be tainted or not tainted. If he is tainted, he is to some degree under the influence of Evil, and although

the extent of the affliction can be reduced - with difficulty - it cannot be cured[6]. The taint thus has the potential to reduce complex questions of morality to a binary flag, much like alignment in D&D. Is he tainted? Off with his head! Yes, the Crab have tended to keep their infected warriors around for a bit longer, until they actually go nuts and go over to the Dark Side, but the rest of Rokugan isn't as tolerant - and with very good reason.

Taint is also an involuntary alignment change foisted on a character, in which the player has little say. As a character's taint increases, so does her susceptibility to being controlled by Fu Leng. The player is usually given the opportunity to resist these attempts with some kind of willpower check, but there's nothing she can do about the increasing slide towards Evil following further involuntary taint gain.

I propose an almost complete separation of a character's level of taint from her loyalty to the powers of Jigoku. She shouldn't get to have magical powers granted by Fu Leng unless she agrees to serve Fu Leng - the progression of Shadowlands powers as described in the recent sourcebooks should be reserved for those who have chosen to be evil. If a character refuses to give in to temptation, she should instead gain physical and mental afflictions as her level of taint increases, as described in the old-school *Book of the Shadowlands*: with each level of taint, either a Cthulhu-style phobia or a permanent injury or disfigurement, depending on what is most appropriate for the way she gained the taint. If she subsequently chooses to serve Fu Leng willingly, her afflictions can be replaced by an equivalent number of Shadowlands powers (or, if you prefer, she can choose to gain the power to conceal taint symptoms).

The decision to turn evil should belong entirely to the player. The DM can attempt to have the voices in the character's head persuade him, or to have mysterious agents tempt him with promises of curing his decrepitude -- but ultimately the player should have control over the moral choices of the character he plays, and such an important change should not be left to a dice roll.

Thus a character could be extremely tainted, yet retain her integrity, or be only slightly touched by the Shadowlands and yet be utterly corrupt. This would make the investigation of suspects a little more interesting. Any tainted person is a potential threat - but who is actively working against Rokugan, and who is trying to use her

unpleasant knowledge and experience to hold back the darkness? It's impossible to tell them apart with a stick of jade or a magical spell.

Nor would lack of loyalty to Fu Leng necessarily indicate that a character is on the side of good. Practitioners of maho - forbidden blood magic - harness the power of the tainted elemental kami known as kansen. They thereby expose themselves to the taint - but most of them disdain Fu Leng, and avoid giving him his due for the powers they co-opt. They are known to employ various tricks to reduce their taint gain, usually by redirecting it to hapless peasants - and the gory rituals which they practice make them every bit as villainous as the Lost.

I do think that characters who have become completely insane should - as in the old-school rules - be easy pickings for Fu Leng. At that stage they are impossible to play in any case. It is up to you whether such characters could ever potentially be brought back from the brink by a combination of taint reduction and persuasion.

Just as a character can choose to become corrupt, a servant of Fu Leng should be able to choose to renounce him. I find irredeemably evil bad guys boring - I believe that having the opportunity to convert evil characters using one's social abilities makes for more interesting gameplay. A character renouncing Fu Leng would have all of his taint powers replaced with an equivalent level of unpleasant afflictions, starting with the return of any afflictions he may have had before turning to the dark side.

If, as a DM, you are concerned that your min-maxing players will abuse this privilege to get out of sticky situations, make sure that it takes more than a statement of intent to make the switch. Fu Leng is not a very nice entity, and is unlikely to take kindly to defection. At the first sign of a minion's self-doubt he might attempt to exert his influence, and cause the disobedient servant to go on a killing spree. If the minion manages to resist the compulsion, he might find himself pursued by a couple of angry oni. And if Fu Leng's displeasure wears him down, and convinces him that it would be a good idea to beg the Dark Kami for forgiveness and return to the fold, he will probably be expected to prove his renewed loyalty in some suitably horrible fashion.

Not that the good guys are likely to be more tolerant of an ally's betrayal, or more trusting of a professed convert

to the side of light. The punishments and tests they mete out may not be as twisted, but they can be just as deadly.

Introducing these changes should not have very much impact on the system rules. All natural and magical effects which detect taint, hurt tainted creatures, reduce taint or mask the symptoms of taint should work on any tainted individual, regardless of her allegiance. No matter how loyal she is to Rokugan, her body has been corrupted by evil -- jade will burn her as much as it burns a Lost samurai.

I would suggest putting some thought into how jade petal tea is going to work in your campaign. Canonically, it completely (but temporarily) removes all physical and mental symptoms of the taint, and also renders Shadowlands powers unusable. Its limiting factors are its great expense, and the stranglehold which the Crab Clan's Kuni inquisitors keep on its sale - the better to keep an eye on anyone who starts using it.

This is unsatisfactory for various reasons. If a character can completely eliminate his unwanted taint symptoms, of course he's going to want to do it. After the initial quest to find a (legal or illegal) source for jade petal tea, which can potentially be an interesting plot point, whether a character can continue to use it is basically reduced to a repetitive economic problem - roleplaying: the accounting! Assuming he can keep using it, any interesting plot points which may have been generated by his taint symptoms simply evaporate, never to return - unless you, the DM, keep finding contrived reasons to take the tea away; something which is difficult to do without nerfing the character.

Why not treat the tea like a real medicine? Make it imperfect, and prone to affecting different people differently. You could roll on a d100 table for each taint-related power or sickness a character has, to determine what effect the tea has on that illness or power: does it eliminate it completely, reduce it by half, leave it unchanged, or aggravate it? Does it cause an unrelated side effect? You can use a similar method to determine how the tea affects the character's observable level of taint, for the purposes of spells and the jade test. What you put in the table can depend on your personal vision of how horribly untreatable (or insidiously undetectable) you want the taint to be.

The tea doesn't have to work instantaneously - it could take days, weeks or even months for it to reach its full

effectiveness. You can also vary the required dosage. You could be really evil and base it directly on the level of taint that a character has - first edition actually did this! My own house rule bases it on the level of visible symptoms: those strongly afflicted must initially take higher doses to reduce the symptoms to manageable levels, but thereafter can take a smaller, more affordable dose. If they fall off the wagon, however, it's back to a very expensive emergency course for them.

With only a bit of tweaking, you can convert the more dull and inflexible aspects of the taint into something which will provide a more interesting roleplaying experience - giving yourself more potential plot points, and your players more ways to get into trouble. There are other things that are open to creative interpretation - how maho magic overlaps with normal elemental magic, for example - but that's material for another article.

[1] <http://www.l5r.com>

[2] <http://l5r.wikia.com>

[3] Hell

[4] Rokugan's history is continually being written by the game designers, who attempt to make in-game events reflect various clans' wins and losses in the international card gaming tournaments. The setting is thus at the mercy of a large random number generator which complains a lot.

[5] Fanboys on the L5R forums endlessly debate whether the kitten-eating right hand of Fu Leng is really evil or just misunderstood. It hurts my brain.

[6] Except under very special circumstances.

MAGISTRATES OF THE KINTANI VALLEY: A CAMPAIGN SUMMARY

ADRIANNA PINSKA

Setting: Legend of the Five Rings
System: The Window, with modifications
DM: Adrianna Pinska

Players:

* Simon Cross as Doji Kamenosuke, a Crane courtier fostered to the Dragonfly clan and trained by the Shiba. He is acting as an unofficial yojimbo to his long-time friend Ishie, and is the most sociable of the magistrates.

* Sean Finnis as Togashi Nagataka, a tattooed monk of the Dragon with a young dependent named Yodo and a burden named Fuu. He likes to face dangerous creatures in hand-to-hand combat, and his skills in divination and meditation often grant him strange visions.

* Andrea Hickman as Agasha Ishie, a Phoenix shugenja haunted by the belligerent spirit of her father. She is currently investigating the properties of a mysterious alchemical substance sent to her by her grandmother.

Former Players:

* Lucas Wheeler as Tamori Yashamaru, a Dragon shugenja who went out in a blaze of glory in an underwater castle, taking his tainted uncle with him. May or may not actually be dead.

* Wayne Human as Akodo Hideo, a Lion bushi sent to strengthen the ties between the Lion and Crane. Currently attending to some unfortunate family business.

Since arriving near Ten Plum Blossoms Village, at the old Crane estate to which they have been assigned, Our Heroes have had to deal with a variety of troublesome events, such as placating the restless spirit of the former owner, Doji Kazushi, who was bitter about his lost love, and placating the restless spirits of Kazushi's swords, which were bitter about Kazushi's lack of an heir. This led them to uncover a murderous ring of maho tsukai who had been preying on travelling ronin for many years -- and to hire some relatively reliable ronin retainers to act as deputies. Later they had to reintroduce Kazushi's young granddaughter into polite society after discovering

that she had accidentally been misfiled in a geisha house; and also delivered unsent love letters to Kazushi's former lover without letting her husband know -- thus receiving an invitation to that lady's modest Winter Court.

They also assisted the wretched inhabitants of the dilapidated, unlucky village of Broken Sword, where Yashamaru did some impromptu surgery with a flaming sword; and tracked a Phoenix fugitive's trail of destruction to Eternal Shining Well, a village administered by Bayushi Yutaka, a very friendly Emerald Magistrate. There they met Akodo Hideo -- a new ally from the Lion clan -- and faced a fearsome oni which liked to lay eggs.

Upon their return to the estate they had to pursue ratling thieves who had absconded with their entire cherry crop and a holy artifact of the minor fortune of geisha. They also fended off amorous village ladies; and attempted to delay Ishie's possible marriage to her sister's fiance after her sister's disappearance in search of her lost love.

Thereafter they visited a Phoenix shugenja, Isawa Seigo, and his family at their lakeside estate near Maiden's Lake Village, before continuing to Four Oxen Village -- where the oni who escaped them was created. On the way there, they were almost but not quite mugged by the most useless bandit in the world, who ended up losing a block of opium while running away, and was later captured while trying to get it back.

On the outskirts of Four Oxen they found a taint-blasted ghost town, and a surviving witness of the terrible events of the day of the oni's birth -- when a small group of tainted conspirators was betrayed to magistrates by an ally, and a devastating battle ripped the village apart. Hideo stepped on a tainted dagger in the ruins, and was ill and delirious for most of the return trip. After a brief stay at Maiden's Lake, the magistrates returned to Ten Plum Blossoms in time to welcome Hideo's uncle, Akodo Munemori, with whom they would be travelling to the winter court of Doji Masazumi and Doji Yumiko in Breeze Through the Long Grass Village. Munemori

had recently become engaged to Masazumi's daughter, Harumi -- an arrangement which pleased neither man very much, as they were old enemies.

It transpired that Masazumi had a lot of old enemies, which became rather inconvenient for the magistrates when he was found both poisoned and stabbed in his bedchamber halfway through Winter Court. Who could have done it? Isawa Seigo, who had for many years disputed Masazumi's ownership of some Phoenix scrolls? Munemori, whose sons were killed by men under Masazumi's command during a recent war between their clans? Doji Satoshi, long denied governorship of the estate by his father's refusal to retire? The man passing himself off as the war hero Doji Tsuramatsu? Bayushi Yutaka, the seemingly friendly Scorpion invited to court by Kamenosuke? The murder was eventually deemed to have been an unintentional joint effort by Satoshi's ambitious wife Sakue and an agent of Doji Jurobei, the tainted eldest son of Masazumi's good friend Doji Akitaka. Sakue was stripped of her name and banished following a covert deal involving Yumiko and Yutaka, and Jurobei was slain by Kamenosuke in a duel.

During their stay at court the magistrates also began to hear mysterious rumours about a sinister, far-reaching tainted threat which went further than just the murder -- a threat fearsome enough to induce void kami to lie -- and investigated several thefts of jade petal tea. They became aware of a mysterious history between Masazumi's younger son, Terumoto, and Seigo's daughter, Daichi, who was revealed to be afflicted with the Shadowlands taint herself. They assisted Munemori and Harumi in forming a more cordial relationship. They discovered that the estate's hatamoto's youngest son had long been passing off a peasant's embroidery as his own. They had a frustrating run-in with three mischievous mujina in search of an old fox mask, and discovered that ancient Lion spirits were haunting the village. They discovered interesting things about various people's parentage, and tried to assist a *gaki* in moving on to a better afterlife. They rescued a small boy from a malevolent spirit which lived under the estate, and laid its previous victims to rest.

Winter Court also provided many light amusements and opportunities for self-improvement. The bushi sparred, and the shugenja practiced their craft and shared pointers. Kamenosuke won the dueling contest, and in the true spirit of his family made a lot of alliances -- even hosting a young courtiers' dinner. Kamenosuke has taken

it upon himself to learn the skills of a matchmaker and arrange a good marriage for Ishie, so that a bad one is not arranged for her. He also corresponded extensively with his beloved, a young courtier stationed in Toshi Ranbo. Ishie corresponded with her grandmother, a mysteriously long-lived alchemist, and began to uncover somewhat disturbing secrets about her work and her own role in it. Nagataka honed his meditative skills, often receiving strange visions and portents of the future, or whispers of communication from nearby spirits. He discovered that the small statue he had been given by his master was the stone prison of Sister Fuu, a surly and lazy acolyte who had clearly given offence to some powerful entity many years in the past, and whom it was now his burden to rehabilitate. Sister Fuu later turned out to be a wealth of information about ancient gossip, but not good for much else.

Some of the magistrates' duties took them outside both the village and the estate. They received word that a mysterious man with a strong resemblance to Yashamaru had been seen in the area. Yashamaru identified him as his nemesis, his heavily tainted uncle Agasha Sosuke. After he assaulted and tainted a ronin sent by Yashamaru on an errand, the magistrates found his trail and discovered that he was attempting to recover some magical artifact he had hidden in the area long before his fall from grace. They pursued him to a mythical underwater kingdom where *tsu-fish* warred with fierce lobster-women, and after negotiating an alliance between the long-time enemies, they managed to defeat him in the bowels of the lobster-women's castle -- largely thanks to Yashamaru's sacrifice. They came into possession of a small box of preserved cherries -- clearly magical, and of unknown purpose.

The magistrates also witnessed the final destruction of Oni no Mayako at the hands of Isawa Hanshiro, the son of its creator, at the cost of his soul and later his life. With its dying breath, the oni revealed that Doji Akitaka's entire family was corrupt, and that he was the old enemy who had betrayed her creator -- leaving the magistrates the daunting task of exposing and ending his evil plans to resurrect the oni to which his ancestors had pledged themselves. Kamenosuke has made a tentative alliance with Akitaka's surviving daughter, who was eager to co-operate in exchange for immunity and a chance to improve her station.

The hill where the destructive ritual took place was left corrupted, and the magistrates later cleansed it with the

assistance of Yogo Shigeri, a visiting Jade magistrate -- they had to kill a very large cockroach. Shigeri offered the magistrates some information about the Jade magistrate who had declared Jurobei not to be dangerous, and had a very friendly and non-threatening conversation with Ishie regarding further co-operation between them.

In a seemingly harmless poetry contest, which was meant to lighten the somewhat dismal atmosphere at court, the yojimbo of the Dragonfly representative, Tonbo Nadeshiko, angered the short-tempered Lion warrior Matsu Chizuko with a poem which suggested that the Lion Clan's recent war against the Dragonfly had been less than honourable. Their long-simmering conflict thus finally came to a formal duel. Unfortunately, at the crucial moment of resolution, both bushi were possessed by the spirits of their respective grandmothers, who -- it transpired -- had both been killed in an avalanche in Dragon lands before resolving their own duel of honour. Both were persuaded that it would be inappropriate for them to continue a duel to the death in their granddaughters' bodies -- but as long as their dispute remains unresolved neither seems able to leave. A diplomatic solution has tentatively been arranged: the marriage of Nadeshiko to a cousin of Chizuko. However, said cousin has obligations of his own -- he has been cursed by the fortune of marriage to suffer great misfortune if he marries before his sister, and his sister is a former bushi who retired to an isolated monastery after losing a leg.

After some debate about the ethics of dragging a warrior from her self-imposed retirement from society, the magistrates have sent an experienced Doji matchmaker to negotiate with this unlikely candidate for marriage. Meanwhile, they are travelling in the opposite direction, attempting to locate a Phoenix shugenja and his son (who is coincidentally Ichie's missing sister's missing former fiance), both of whom disappeared under mysterious circumstances, and who -- if Oni no Mayako's last testimony is to be believed -- are currently to be found in Inconvenient River Village.

Their path has led them to the suspiciously clean and well-maintained Sparkling Water By the Sunflower Field Village, where both the peasants and the Isawa lords seem to be acting very strangely. Unfamiliar bird and maple leaf motifs can be seen everywhere. The lord's daughter, Oborozukiyo, has delivered a cryptic warning to Kamenosuke during a somewhat scandalous visit. What awaits the magistrates in the village ahead?

CLASSIFIEDS

Notice!
Atsuki! You Bayushi Bastard!
From
The Setchu To Fukuro Saiban

Notice!
To the Tainted @\$holes composing the Ninja of
the Snake And Spider Clans.
YOU. HAVE. BEEN. OWNED.
Regards
The Setchu To Fukuro Saiban

Notice!
Kakita Hirotada, the Emperor...Has His Eye Upon
You.
You have been Warned!

Notice!
Hirotada!!!!
Beware! Your treading on my Dreams.
Bayushi Atsuki

Notice!
The Black Lotus Cartel,
Didn't anyone ever tell you Crime Does Not Pay,
Especially when we're involved
Regards
The Setchu To Fukuro Saiban

Notice!
The Duelists at the 1475 Setchu To Fukuro Iajutsu
Tournament.
OWNED!
Regards
The Setchu To Fukuro Saiban
(Especially From Mirumoto Kenji)

Notice!
Kenji!!!!
ONE CUT!!!!
Regards
Moto Kuraodo

Notice
HIROOOOTAAADAAAAA!!!!!!
The Emperor is watching you.

Wedding Notice,
We are please to announce the marriage of Kakita
Hirotada to the Toturi(formerly Hantei) Princess
Sakura.
Congratulations to the happy couple.
Remember Hirotada,
The Imperial Family is Watching You.

Wedding Notice
We are pleased to announce the marriage of Doji
Inada to Otomo Kachiko, the daughter of Otomo
Sunetra.

Congratulations Otomo Inada, welcome to the Family
Here's some ginseng, you'll need it

Wedding Notice

We are pleased to announce the marriage of Bayushi Kisuke to Soshi Michiko.
Here's some Rhino Horn Kiddo, your going to need it.

Wedding Notice

We are pleased to announce the marriage of Moto Romanov Kuraodo, Fist of the Khan, to Scorpion Champion Special Assistant Bayushi Rukia.
Btw Kuraodo, did you know Scorpion Girls are all Double Jointed?
And the Violator technique works in the Dark?
Good luck Kuraodo, your going to need it.

Notice

Inada,
Your Ex-Girlfriend...
Is Still Dead.
Regards
Toturi Hirotsuda

RIP

Adeeb's NPC's.
All Of Them
From
The Setchu To Fukuro Saiban

RIP

Hida Hideyoshi, Rank 8 Hida Avenger.
Yes we killed your son, most honourable one, get over it...
Oops, you're dead too. And your Hiruma Sidekick.
Good Riddance,
The Setchu To Fukuro Saiban

RIP

Farewell, Bayushi Atsuki,
This is Me, treading on Your Dreams.
From,
Kakita Hirotsuda.

RIP

9 Tainted Super-Bads belonging to Daigotsu, Daigotsu Kagetoki, Danjuro, Rosanjin, Tobei, Saemon, Juri, Kohei, Maya, and last but not least Daigotsu Sosuke.
Basilisk Eye technique yourself
M@#\$\$%^&*(ker!
Regards
The Setchu To Fukuro Saiban

RIP

7 Super-Bads belonging to Iuchiban, Jama Jun, Kaoru, Natsumi, Akira, and Lastly Jama Ton and Renji,

Blood Armour and Pseudo-Akutenshi isn't good enough.
So Long Suckers!
Regards
The Setchu To Fukuro Saiban

RIP

The Ninja of the Koga Clan
Led by Benkai No Mariko.
Sayonara Suckers
Regards
The Setchu To Fukuro Saiban

RIP

Benkai No Mariko,
All that power, so little you could do with it.
Too Bad, So Sad
Sayonara
Regards
The Setchu To Fukuro Saiban

RIP

Benkai No Mariko,
All that power, so little you could do with it.
Too Bad, So Sad
Sayonara
Regards
The Setchu To Fukuro Saiban

RIP

Iuchiban,
FOR REAL this time.
To quote Fu Leng,
"Tell Me Again, Iuchiban, Of The Contempt You Hold Me In...
Say It, To My Face!"
So Long Iuchi,
Good Riddance
Regards
The Setchu To Fukuro Saiban

RIP

The population of the Western Gaijin Nation of Rodina.
Goodbye Iteki!!!!!!
Regards
The Setchu To Fukuro Saiban

RIP

Daigotsu(Nee Hiruma) Ruri
My Fire,
My Heart is Forever Cold Without You.
Farewell
Doji Inada

RIP

Daigotsu lemitsu
Ruri only ever loved ME!!!!
Regards,
Otomo Inada

RIP

The Forest Killers AND The Serpents of Sanada.

No one ever tell you not to takeon someone wielding the Sowrd of The Hantei,
And using the Saiban for back-up?
Tsk Tsk,
Toturi (nee Hantei) Ieyasu
And
The Setchu To Fukuro Saiban

RIP

Isawa Hoshi,
Goodbye dear dear comrade,
(and Good Riddance)
Toturi Hirotsuda

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CLAWs has a number of online resources - sometimes people use them; sometimes they don't. If you only follow one of these links, make it the Cthulist subscription - it's a low-volume announcement list which will let you know (and announce!) when LARPs and other events are happening, or when a DM is looking for players.

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