

MUTANT

CHRONICLES

V



3RD EDITION

MISHIMA

SOURCE BOOK

MÖDIPHIUS™
ENTERTAINMENT

FFA™



Mayama

Seti

akirenko

gouki

Sangoku

Nakajima City

Suri

MERCURY



oni

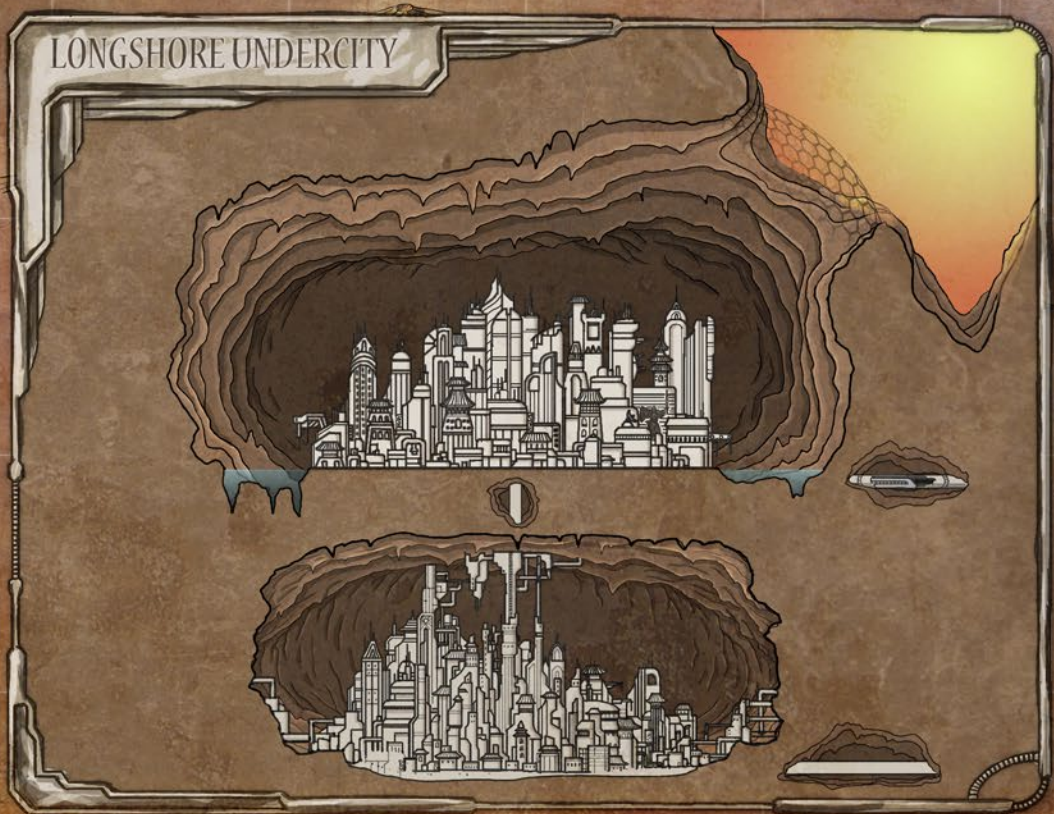


Tambu

Kirin

Fukido

Longshore



Zata

tome



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DEDICATION

In accordance with the Mishima principle of filial piety, this book is dedicated to my mum and dad.

THANKS TO

My wife Carolina for her patience, encouragement, and advice on giant robots. Patrick Hudson for his advice and suggestions – happily appropriated – on Mishima's model workers, who were in no small part inspired by his novel Panoptica. Josh O'Connor, Chris Birch, Gobion Rowlands & the Modiphilus crew.

Published by: Modiphilus Entertainment Ltd. 35 Turneville Road, London, W14 9PS. info@modiphilus.com

Find out more about Mutant Chronicles at www.mutantchroniclesrpg.com,
www.facebook.com/mutantchroniclesrpg and www.modiphilus.com

Modiphilus Entertainment Product Number: MUH050010. ISBN: 978-1-910132-32-6

MÖDIPHILUS™
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MISHIMA

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the *Mishima Guidebook*. If you're a long-time devotee of **Mutant Chronicles**, you'll find all the iconic Mishima stuff that you know and love, plus lots of new and expanded material. If this is your first time visiting the **Mutant Chronicles** worlds, then hopefully all of this will be new and exciting. There's all kinds of stuff in here: underground cities, mystic ninjas, giant robots, samurai with assault rifles... you'll love it.

Mishima are the original outsiders among the megacorporations. Long before Cybertronic was the germ of an idea, Mishima was striking out on its own path. Picking holes in the shaky foundations of the Brotherhood and saying "no thanks". Keeping its distance from the other corporations. Presenting a blank, hostile face to the outside world as a way of protecting the corporate family.

From the outside, the Mishima corporation appears monolithic – closed off from everyone else, all its citizens alike, obsessed with pursuing collective goals before the individual. Nothing but po-faced, suicidally dedicated samurai and faceless, obedient workers. *That's what they*

want everyone to think. Under the umbrella of the Mishima holding company, everyone agrees on some core principles, but after that each keiretsu is its own own culture, many with their own languages. Each clan and work unit, each planet and city, is unique. As, of course, is each person – contrary to the stereotypes.

Bauhaus, Capitol or Imperial might pride themselves on their individualism when compared to Mishima. But from the Mishima point of view, as an individual you can only truly make a difference, only truly count as a person, when you accept and take responsibility for the consequences of your actions on others – both those around you and those yet to be born. The cash you might accumulate during your own lifetime, the luxury goods with which you feather your nest, are only short-term gains, valueless unless you share them. Because in the long run, we're all dead.

Other corporations strive for profit. Mishima strives for prosperity.

Choose loyalty. Choose a legacy. Choose the Mishima way.



The Navy of Quanto in the midst of a training exercise.

CHAPTER 04

MISHIMA OVERVIEW

CORPORATE STRUCTURE: TECHNO-FEUDALISM

Mishima is a mass of individual conglomerates called keiretsu – which are further divided into subsidiaries and part-owned companies – tied by historical and contractual allegiances to the Mishima System Holdings Group.

At the very top is the Mishima family itself, headed by the Overlord and the Lord Heirs. Beneath it are the great families of the samurai – the warrior and management caste – who hold powers of life and death over the commoners beneath them. Within the samurai caste, each keiretsu is headed by a daimyo who commands the lords of lower-status samurai families.

The keiretsu are diversified conglomerates encompassing divisions across a far-reaching portfolio of industries. They often produce enough diverse products to sustain their workforce and facilities without any need for supplies from outside their own keiretsu. Each division of a keiretsu is managed by a lower status samurai family.

Within the Mishima corporation, the keiretsu and their sub-divisions compete with one another constantly. In theory, this leads to ever greater quality and craftsmanship as each company strives to outdo its competitors. However, all too often this competition breaks down into actively sabotaging rivals' efforts, or even physical violence. Keiretsu regularly make alliances, signing contracts and memoranda of understanding to work together on a specific project, or for one to supply the other with needed resources. Subsidiaries of different keiretsu may also do the same. These extra-mural alliances seldom last more than a few years. Mishima culture encourages people do keep favours in-house.

Each lord is a shareholder in the Mishima System Holdings Group and runs a particular business concern or municipal district, commanding samurai-caste executives and the commoners below. By tradition and contract law, each lordship resides with a particular family from one generation to the next. Escape clauses allow the Mishima family to void a lordship contract and award it to another recipient under specific circumstances. The more powerful the samurai family, the more difficult it is for these escape clauses to be activated. The most powerful families are those who held the strongest bargaining positions at the time their lordships were awarded, or renegotiated their contracts with the Group in times of strife. These daimyos' hereditary contracts are virtually ironclad.

The lowest rungs of the samurai class can effectively be stripped of their status and business holdings at the whim of their superiors. Their executive positions depend on meeting targets and receiving satisfactory annual performance reviews, which are the purview of their liege lord. As a result, it is common for an unsuccessful subordinate to have his fiefdom taken away and given to a more favoured samurai.

A samurai has near total discretion over his assigned fiefdom's budget and activities. Revenues are usually invested in the core business and on hiring warriors to serve the ruling samurai and his liege. Providing as many soldiers as possible to serve his lord is one of the prime methods by which a samurai may gain prestige.

THE OVERLORD AND THE LORD HEIRS

Long ago, during the First Dark Legion War and the years before, the Overlord was the supreme leader of the Mishima corporation. His word was law and his decisions – once promulgated – could not be challenged. After him the most powerful figures in the whole corporation were the Lord Heirs, one of whom would be named the Overlord's successor, taking over the reins of power after the incumbent's death or retirement.

As is common in Mishima families, the Overlord would often adopt an outsider into his family, usually if he had fewer than three heirs among his close family. The adoptee, usually a favoured retainer, would be granted all the privileges, rights, and obligations of one of the Overlord's own children.

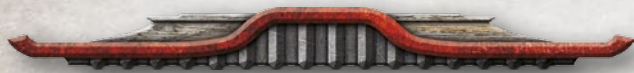
By tradition each Lord Heir is given responsibility for Mishima operations on one of the three core planets, while the Overlord oversees the corporation as a whole from his palace on Luna. The Overlord appraises the performance of the Lord Heirs and chooses the most able to succeed him as Overlord. The new Overlord would then appoint a new Lord Heir of his own choice to take over the fiefdom he left behind.

In recent years this system has atrophied to the point where boardroom infighting threatens the stability of the entire Mishima corporation. The power of the Lord Heirs has grown astronomically, while the power of the Overlord has withered. Real power now lies with the Lord Heirs. Overlord Nagoya, the incumbent, is little more than a figurehead. A frail, embittered old man, partially crippled and weak in mind and spirit, he lives out his days surrounded by a court

of scheming advisors, many of whom are in the pay of one Lord Heir or another, sometimes two.

No one knows which of the Lord Heirs the Overlord intends to name as his successor. Might he do the unthinkable and go to his grave without naming a successor at all? Whichever of them does win out is certain to try to keep hold of their existing power, privileges, and armies as well as those of the Overlord. This would virtually guarantee open civil war with the other two Lord Heirs.

The three Lord Heirs hate one another to a degree that has already brought Mishima to the verge of civil war. They battle in countless skirmishes, intrigues, and assassinations, ignoring their father's pleas for reconciliation. The other corporations do their best to encourage this rivalry, stirring up trouble and hoping to finally see the breakup of the Mishima corporation. Only Mishima's traditions of loyalty and unity against outsiders have so far prevented civil war.



THE LORD HEIRS

The most powerful of all the lords of Mishima, the Lord Heirs are wealthy beyond comprehension, and are able to influence events across the solar system. Each is served by hundreds of thousands of fanatical warriors, and each hates the others with the burning fury of as many suns.

The Lord Heirs are all children of Overlord Nagoya, but by different mothers. Moya, the most senior, is the child of the Principal Consort Nanako.

Lord Heir Moya, Prince of Soil and Governor of Mercury, rules Mishima's homeworld with an iron fist. Eldest of the Lord Heirs, he controls a majority of Mishima's business empire. He is a brilliant, ruthless business operator with an insatiable appetite for power and wealth. Until recently, Moya was intimately involved in the day-to-day management of his portion of the Mishima empire. But two years ago, after his three sons were killed in combat with the Dark Legion, he withdrew to his Garden of Celestial Delights and now sees no one but his innermost circle of advisors and hatamoto.



Tea Houses are often used for secluded meetings.

Rumour has it that he has gone mad after decades of paranoia, and insulates himself from the outside world by dealing only with a fawning court of parasitic yes-men, leaving his grand vizier Lord Nozaki to run Mercury.

Some say that Nozaki is behind Moya's hermit-like existence, secretly feeding Moya a steady stream of poisons to keep him pliable. Others claim he is an evil wizard in the service of the Dark Apostles. Such gossip is whispered at best, for Lord Nozaki has spies everywhere and his enemies have a tendency to disappear in the night. Dark cults, in contrast, seem to be on the rise in the underworlds of Mercury.

Lord Heir Maru, Prince of Water and Governor of Venus, is a military man and the youngest of the Lord Heirs. A grim figure driven by a slavish devotion to the samurai virtues, his bravery and strategic genius inspire a fanatical loyalty in his followers. Maru never expected to become Lord Heir, but he ascended to the position after the untimely death of his elder brother Tora, the eldest son of the Overlord by Noble Wife Chihhi. Until that time Maru was the general of his brother's armies, and had fought on the front lines of every war zone on Venus.

Though his lands are rich in resources, Maru must devote much of his revenue to military expenditures – a necessary evil on war-torn Venus. He would have little time for the intrigues of his siblings, but he knows that one of them was responsible for his brother's death, and every minor victory brings him closer to unmasking the killer and taking his revenge.

Lord Heiress Mariko, Princess of the Skies and Governor of Mars, is the most independent-minded of the Lord Heirs. Charismatic but cruel, she is a deadly enemy but a devoted friend. Unlike her brothers, she supports the Brotherhood and enjoys its favour in return. Mariko fills her court with Brothers and like-minded individuals, and from time to time actually listens to the spiritual advisors the Brotherhood sends to her palace on Mars.

She balances this against a stringent adherence to the cultural practices of Mishima in order to stay onside with her more traditionally minded daimyos. Her supporters suggest she is trying to repair the centuries-old split between Mishima and the Brotherhood. Those less sympathetic say she is merely trying to keep hold of all the support she can get.



HISTORY

BEGINNINGS ARE A DELICATE TIME

The story of Mishima begins during the Fall of Earth, when Mishima Heavy Industries was able to use its technical advantages in the fields of space and hostile environment technology as leverage in a series of unequal deals that created a business hegemony. Simply put, Mishima had the spaceships, so if you wanted to get off the planet, you gave it what it wanted. In the chaos and panic of humanity's exodus to Luna, that deal was good enough for hundreds of corporations and millions of customers, who found themselves locked into multi-generation exclusivity deals with the company, now operating as the Mishima System Holdings Group umbrella organisation.

THE CHILD OVERLORD

During the Dark Symmetry era, an unexpected death in the family left a teenage girl, Lady Setsuko, in control of Mishima. She is known in folklore as the Child Overlord, and became the subject of many plays and stories. The former Overlord Yoritomo had retired in favour of his son Yoichiro. But shortly after his ceremonial contract signing for the positions of CEO, Marketing Director, and President for Life of Mishima System Holdings Group, Yoichiro died in a suspicious boating incident on Venus. The Mishima family pleaded with Yoritomo to come back from retirement, but his letter of resignation, as accepted by the board, specifically prevented him from doing so. The position of Overlord went instead to Yoichiro's oldest cousin, the fourteen-year-old Lady Setsuko.

An astute and eloquent child, Setsuko was nonetheless out of her depth as Overlord. The Mishima family was outmanoeuvred in a number of backroom deals, and forced to concede key executive powers to the powerful Fujiwara clan.

Lady Setsuko turned to her uncle for help. Secluded in a monastery at the bottom of an always-dark crater at Mercury's northern pole, Yoritomo was beyond the reach of the family's enemies. From there he called in favours and dispatched agents, and the Mishima family began to fight back against Fujiwara and its allies.

The subsequent boardroom struggle affected the whole corporation: family turned against family, daimyo against daimyo, one subsidiary against another. Price wars wrecked markets, factories were sabotaged, and Mishima fortunes took a dive as tensions simmered just short of all-out war. When the Mishima clan regained the upper hand, decades later, it reunited the position of Overlord with those of President and Chairman of the Board, and the Lord Heirs system was established to ensure the family maintained a strong grip on the corporation.

MISHIMA OVERVIEW

WARRING FAMILIES

That strong grip seemed to count for little a century later, when the Mishima corporation was almost torn apart in the Underworld War. A dispute between the Akirenko and Jongibae keiretsu escalated into a planetwide war involving all the daimyos of Mercury, and extending to numerous locations across Mishima holdings on other planets.

The conflict between Akirenko and Jongibae began over an intellectual property dispute regarding tie-in merchandise for the tenth anniversary of a popular TV series, *Kinjo no Hito*. This quickly became a pretext for military conflict between the neighbouring provinces, and open war broke out. In the end there was no clear victor. Both sides fought themselves to exhaustion, and returned to the status quo ante bellum with a prideful, unstated ceasefire.

During the conflict Overlord Mishima Kitano did nothing to stop the fighting. This complacent attitude gave tacit permission for keiretsu to pursue private wars, and they did so with little hesitation. Skirmishes broke out wherever negotiations over disputed properties had stalled, and more and more daimyos were drawn in through mutual defence treaties. Although the fighting between Akirenko and Jongibae was over, war spread to the rest of Mishima.

Although militarily strong, the Mishima clan had too few troops under its direct control to undertake police action when every part of the planet was at war. And the Overlord was unwilling to make full-on attacks against keiretsu who were, after all, not strictly speaking rebelling. Overlord Kitano hoped the Underworld War would simply peter out. It was not to be. The war raged on, and while the lords of Mishima were busy fighting their brothers, the other corporations began to take advantage. Bauhaus quietly occupied Mishima border territories on Venus. Capitol more noisily bombed undefended Mishima settlements on Mars before occupying them with ground forces.

Kitano was saved, after a fashion, by Daimyo Suriga, who transported virtually his entire army from Venus to Mercury and began to pacify and disarm the warring factions on the Overlord's behalf. But his aid came with a price. Suriga was put in sole control of Mishima's military forces and given the title Supreme Commander. With control on the ground of a now peaceful Mercury, Suriga soon sidelined the Overlord into a position of irrelevance, and instituted a strongly centralised regime.

Suriga was the first of a line of Supreme Commanders who were the de facto rulers of the whole Mishima corporation for two centuries. Although these rulers got their power from being military commanders, their regime became known as the Twilight of the Samurai. Their desire for strong control over the entire corporation

meant that the armed forces were soon limited to those directly under the Supreme Commander's command, and 90% of the samurai class found itself in non-military or low-status occupations: filing clerks, entertainment agents, mall security and the like.

When the Dark Legion emerged from hibernation, the Supreme Commander of the day was ill prepared. His forces were spread thinly and failed to make any dent in the invading forces. After a year of falling back in front of the Dark Legion, the keiretsu demanded the right to reinstate their private armies, and the Supreme Commander had no choice but to accede to their wishes in a dramatic summit at Longshore called *The Fall of the Curtain*.

The private armies sprung into action against the Dark Legion at once, almost as if they had been maintained and kept in training secretly for several years. Where the Supreme Commander's corps had failed, the diverse tactics of the separate keiretsu, and their greater numbers, succeeded. The Dark Legion were driven back, though far from eliminated. In the chaos, the Mishima family secured key alliances and reminded leading keiretsu of long-standing contractual commitments. The Overlord and Lord Heirs regained control of the corporation.



Hatamoto practice in front of their Lord Heir's palace.

CREATING A CHARACTER

Mishiman characters can be created using the variant rules in this chapter, rather than those in the rulebook. Many of the differences are essentially superficial – providing details more appropriate to a Mishiman character – but this section also provides numerous alternative options specific to Mishiman characters, including new education options, new careers, and new event tables.

The process of creating a Mishiman character is essentially the same as creating any character, and follows the same Lifepath Decisions as described in the *Mutant Chronicles* core book. This chapter will provide additional options for many of the decision points. Obviously, these options are only available to characters who come from the Mishima corporation.

DECISION THREE, STATUS

Mishiman characters should roll on the following table to determine their Social Status. Of particular importance is the divide between samurai and commoners – this has significant implications in terms of the character's careers. Social Status entries marked with * are subject to Persecution, meaning that they are the subject of particular scorn and unpleasant scrutiny by the samurai.

- 1) Roll 2d6 and consult the Social Status Table. If a 6-8 is rolled, you may choose freely between 'Commoner: Guildsman' or 'Samurai: Ronin/Life'.

You may pay one Life point to select any result up to and including 'Samurai (High Shareholder)'.

You may pay two Life points to select the 'Samurai Lord' result.

- 2) Based on your roll, you receive the items listed in the Equipment Table. Whether your character maintains this standard of living or moves up in the world is dependent on the nature of the campaign being played.

VASSAL OF MISHIMA (CITIZEN TALENT)

All Mishiman characters automatically receive this talent during character creation. Possessing this talent marks the character as a born-and-raised member of the Mishima corporation. The character has a place within the fabric of Mishiman society, with all the advantages and responsibilities that accompany it.

When legally purchasing any item manufactured by the Mishima corporation or one of its many keiretsu or subsidiaries, the character may reduce the Restriction Rating and Cost by one. All Mishimans of samurai rank have the power of life and death over their subordinates, but must abide by strict codes of conduct or lose face amongst their peers and betters. While Mishiman commoners have no particular rights, they also lack the responsibilities that burden their betters.

SOCIAL STATUS TABLE

ROLL	SOCIAL STATUS	ATTRIBUTE BONUS	SKILLS	EARNINGS RATING
2	Commoner: Faceless*	+1 Physique and Agility	Survival	0 (Impoverished)
3-5	Commoner: Worker	+1 Physique and Strength	Resistance	1 (Meagre) plus 1 Asset
6-8	Commoner: Guildsman Samurai: Ronin/Life*	+1 Physique and Strength	Mechanics (Guildsman) or Close Combat	2 (Average) plus 2 Assets
9-10	Samurai (Low Shareholder)	+1 Agility and Strength	Observation	3 (Comfortable) plus 3 Assets
11	Samurai (High Shareholder)	+1 Mental Strength and Personality	Persuade	4 (Affluent) plus 4 Assets
12	Samurai Lord	+1 Awareness and Personality	Lifestyle	5 (Wealthy) plus 5 Assets

SOCIAL CLASS IN MISHIMAN SOCIETY

Mishiman society is extremely rigid, with strict divisions between the different social castes. This has an impact upon the way a character will be created and identified, and upon the opportunities available to him. Many education choices, careers, and martial arts schools will be identified as commoner or samurai only, or will have different effects when taken by a samurai or a commoner.

FACELESS

Grouped in amongst the commoners, the faceless are deemed so unworthy as to be shunned even by the dregs of society, and seldom have many career options. Those who do manage some degree of advancement do so in spite of the oppression they face, struggling for even the tiniest degree of respect. Most try to find their way out of Mishiman society, seeking opportunities as freelancers or itinerant workers in free cities like Fukido or Luna, though few ever manage to leave Mishiman domains.

Most faceless are unemployed. A few who find work do so at the sufferance of their employers, performing thankless tasks that other employees are loathe to do, or being taken on as temporary workers during particularly busy periods of the financial year.

WORKER

The labourer class of Mishima comprises a wide variety of roles, from the relatively free retail workers of the cities and rural farm labourers, to the strictly controlled industrial workers of the factories and mines. The majority of Mishiman workers live hand to mouth and work gruelling hours as cogs in the mighty Mishima machine. They are the backbone of the corporation. Though the samurai rule, the vast numbers of the worker caste have a strong influence on the fortunes and policy of the corporation. The samurai need them and know they cannot push them too far.

The majority of commoners are workers, typically found in basic careers such as Corporate Worker, Technical, Farmer/Frontiersman, or occasionally Military.

GUILDSMAN

Mishima's wealthier commoners belong to guilds that provide them with technical skills and an 'iron rice bowl' – that is, a career path from cradle to grave. There are guilds for every trade – doctors, engineers, courtesans, baristas, accountants, and merchants.

Though still commoners – and thus limited in their potential for advancement – guildsmen tend to have better jobs and better wages than the lesser workers.

SAMURAI

Needless to say, samurai receive the best opportunities, though their choices are somewhat restricted by notions of public perception – certain roles in society are unseemly for those of high birth, requiring that guildsmen be relied upon to perform skilled tasks that are beneath the concern of a samurai.

PERSECUTION

Because the rulers of Mishima long ago banned commoners from learning anything that might prove threatening to the lords, commoners are prohibited from studying Ki powers, bearing arms, and all manner of other activities. This has not stopped commoners from studying the martial arts or Ki powers, or from acquiring forbidden weapons, but it means that they are persecuted by the authorities, and must engage in such illegal acts in secret. Similarly, Ronin and Life Samurai must tread carefully, for their shameful status makes other Samurai wary of their presence.

If a character belongs to a group that suffers persecution, make a Persecution test whenever you roll on either the Adolescent Events or Career Events table. This is a simple d20 roll. If the result is five or less, this persecution has had a significant impact upon the character's life. The character gains an Enemy (a single Mishiman of samurai rank who has discovered his activities), and must go into hiding or go on the run in order to elude him. This is in addition to whatever result you roll on that Events table.

Further, once in play, a character who belongs to a group subject to Persecution adds one to the Repercussion range of any Command, Lifestyle or Persuade tests made when interacting with any samurai – his illicit activities mean that he must be more cautious when dealing with those of the ruling class, and even a small slip can spell disaster.



DECISION FOUR, ENVIRONMENT

Determine the character's Environment normally. The Mishiman Environment Table provides a number of additional examples for what each type of environment may be for a Mishiman character.

RESULT	MISHIMA
Luna City	Tai-Show Industrial Port or Cherry Blossom District
Heritage World	Mercury: Longshore, Akirenko, Tambu
Heritage Foothold	Mars: Hosokawa or Sensomachi
Heritage Hotspot	Venus: Quanto
Orbital/Minor Heritage Location	Southern Banners (Mars)
Sequestered	7 Sages Temple, Diplomatic Compound, Research Base

DECISION FIVE, EDUCATION

Because Mishiman society is more strictly ordered than most, determining a Mishiman character's education is handled slightly differently. Mishiman characters have two Education tables: one for commoner characters, and one for samurai. The kinds of education opportunities that are available to the ruling caste of Mishiman society are quite different to those available to the common workers. In either case, roll 2d6 on the relevant table.

In either case, you may pay one Life point to pick from one of the Education Tables instead of rolling. You may still only select results from the table applicable to your status – a commoner character cannot spend a Life point to pick from the Samurai Education Table, and vice versa.

Characters whose social status is faceless must always take the 'Grew Up On The Streets' education. Education results marked with a * are unique to Mishima, and are explained in full in this chapter. All other results can be found in the **Mutant Chronicles** core book, though this section provides some additional background to suggest how those educations fit into Mishiman society.

Unless otherwise noted below, these Educations function exactly as described in the **Mutant Chronicles** core book. Differences will be explained fully.



EQUIPMENT TABLE			
SOCIAL STATUS	ITEMS OF INTEREST (PICK ONE)	APPAREL	RENTED LODGINGS
Commoner: Faceless*	A battered pack of cards, a postcard from Luna, a battered hip flask.	Threadbare, dirty rags	A sheltered spot outside an inn or wine house.
Commoner: Worker	A headlamp, a pocketknife, a lighter, a military issue wristwatch, a travel pass.	Basic company-issue overalls.	A bed in an overcrowded dormitory.
Commoner: Guildsman	A set of well-used precision tools, a video of your grandfather meeting someone important, a ticket to Luna – 50% paid, a fast food chain discount card.	Basic, well-worn clothing, some of which you bought yourself.	A single-room family apartment.
Samurai: Ronin/Life*	A treasured scroll or flag with the logo of your company.	A modest wardrobe of worn-out respectable clothing.	A room in a clean but spartan hotel.
Samurai (Low Shareholder)	Employee of the Month trophy, lifetime subscription to a TV channel package, a copy of a poem rendered in a master's calligraphy.	A modest wardrobe of respectable clothing.	A small apartment in the centre of the city.
Samurai (High Shareholder)	VIP card from a flashy members-only club, master-crafted sword from a grandparent, a family portrait.	A large wardrobe of stylish, fashionable clothing.	A large townhouse with excellent security.
Samurai Lord	An heirloom sword hung on the wall, a globe of Mercury made of platinum and gems, ceremonial court robes worn by a celebrated member of the family, bejewelled statue of a Sage.	An extensive wardrobe of bespoke, ultra-fashionable clothing.	An airy, elegant mansion with extensive gardens.

CREATING A CHARACTER

COMMONER EDUCATION TABLE

ROLL	RESULT
2	Pick Result From Commoner Education
3	Technical Pre-Career Training
4	Creative Pre-Career Training
5	Teenage Draft
6	Rural/Colonial Education
7	Technical OTJ Training
8	Clerical Education
9	Teenage Draft
10	Technical Pre-Career Training
11	Taught By A Sage*
12	Pick Result from Commoner Education

SAMURAI EDUCATION TABLE

ROLL	RESULT
2	Pick Result From Samurai Education
3	Management Experience
4	Post Graduate Technical
5	Management Experience
6	Bushido Training*
7	Management Experience
8	Officer Trained
9	Post Graduate Scientific
10	Management Experience
11	Temple Upbringing*
12	Pick Result from Samurai Education

GREW UP ON THE STREETS

You grew up outside of the comfort and security of a work unit, being forced to fend for yourself. You are shunned and avoided by most Mishimans, and are unlikely to find much favour in society.

TECHNICAL OTJ TRAINING

The majority of factory work and other semi-skilled labour is performed by people who were raised into the life. If you work in a factory, it is likely that your family does too, and has done for generations, and you would have learned the ins and outs of your trade from them.

RURAL/COLONIAL EDUCATION

Life out on the frontiers and in the fields may seem like a thankless task growing up, but the wilderness tends to offer freedoms that life in the big cities cannot provide. A rural upbringing may be looked upon as backwards by many in the cities, but it provides a healthy and rounded existence.

CLERICAL EDUCATION

You attended one of the countless public schools that exist in many fiefs to educate the commoners in the skills necessary to carry out an office job for the rest of their lives. A pervasive culture has grown up around public school existence, a clichéd nostalgia that idealises its monotonous drudgery.

TEENAGE DRAFT

You were picked out at a young age as being stronger, quicker, or more dangerous than your peers, and for that, you were raised to bear arms in defence of your lord's domain. You will probably go on to become ashigaru, or you may turn the discipline and physical conditioning to manual labour. At the very worst, your familiarity with violence may make you useful to the Triads.

TECHNICAL PRE-CAREER TRAINING

Whether because you were born to one of the guilds, or because your skills were identified at a young age, you were quickly apprenticed to an experienced guildsman, and set about learning his trade.

CREATIVE PRE-CAREER TRAINING

You have always been creative, and artistic ability is regarded as a virtue, so an education to hone those natural talents was obvious. Commoner art is regarded poorly by samurai, but the Mishiman media empire runs as much on the productions of commoners as on the niche entertainments of their betters.

TAUGHT BY A SAGE

Wandering sages often linger in communities to pass on their wisdom to others, and you were lucky enough to receive that wisdom. You spent much of your childhood studying at the feet of

the wise and knowledgeable, giving you a far greater appreciation of the world than many of your peers.

At the GM's discretion, Mishiman characters may choose Brotherhood Apprenticeship (see page 46 of the *Mutant Chronicles* core book) if they roll or pick Taught By A Sage. This is most applicable for Mishimans that come from Mars, as the Brotherhood still has a significant presence in Lady Mariko's territories.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
0	1	1	2
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
0	2	3	1

Mandatory Skills: Education, Willpower, Persuade, Observation, Resistance.

Elective Skills: Insight, Athletics, Close Combat.

Talents: Select one talent from any of your Mandatory Skills or Insight.

Career: Academic

Equipment: One set of average-quality robes, a small symbol of one of the Seven Sages.

BUSHIDO TRAINING

You spend your formative years learning the arts of blade and rifle, and studying the virtues that define the warrior lifestyle. Most keiretsu honour those who study warfare, and there are many opportunities for a skilled warrior to progress.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
2	2	2	0
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
1	0	2	1

Mandatory Skills: Education, Close Combat, Observation, Acrobatics, Athletics.

Elective Skills: Ranged Weapons, Willpower, Resistance.

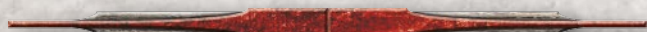
Talents: Select one talent from any of your Mandatory Skills or Willpower.

Career: Military

Equipment: Pair of light military shoulder pads, one set of good quality smart business attire.

MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

An internship in the management of a powerful keiretsu can be a valuable way to start a career, and such opportunities are plentiful. These internships are akin to management apprenticeships, and provide extensive practical experience.



POST-GRADUATE TECHNICAL/SCIENTIFIC

It is relatively uncommon for a samurai to enter a technical field, but some matters are too sensitive to entrust to even the most talented guildsman. The finest schools and the most skilled teachers are available to the elite, allowing them to achieve great levels of mastery.

CREATIVE EDUCATION

The samurai lifestyle is more than war and bureaucracy, and there has always been a strong appreciation for artistic talent amongst the samurai. Those who choose to hone such talents can find employment in the media, or pursue lives of creative endeavour. The best amongst them can see their works sought after by the rich and powerful.

OFFICER TRAINED

Where many samurai seek out leadership in industry, or mastery of war, some seek a broader mastery, becoming great leaders on and off the battlefield. Only a few have the talent for such demanding work.

MANAGERIAL EDUCATION

A few young samurai undergo extensive training in matters of business and management, studying the intricacies of finance, politics, and economics. These few tend to go far within the business hierarchy of the corporation.

TEMPLE UPBRINGING

The character was raised not in a school or apprenticed to a master, but within one of numerous temples devoted to the Seven Sages' teachings. Such samurai tend to focus far more closely on the virtues and ideals of existence, as espoused in those teachings, rather than on the minutia of business. While those raised in a temple are seldom likely to thrive in the boardroom, they are welcomed in the courts of many daimyo as warrior-scholars, and many eventually become Hatamoto.

At the GM's discretion, Mishiman characters may choose Brotherhood Apprenticeship (see page 46 of the *Mutant Chronicles* core book) if they roll or pick Temple Upbringing. This is most applicable for Mishimans that come from Mars, as the Brotherhood still has a significant presence in Lady Mariko's territories.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
1	0	2	1
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
0	1	3	2

Mandatory Skills: Education, Willpower, Close Combat, Observation, Resistance.

Elective Skills: Insight, Athletics, Unarmed Combat.

CREATING A CHARACTER

Talents: Select one talent from any of your Mandatory Skills or Insight.

Career: Military

Equipment: One set of ornate robes, a personal shrine devoted to one of the Seven Sages.

Special: The character may re-roll one d20 when attempting to find a master, see page 34.



ADOLESCENT EVENT

The following table replaces the normal Adolescent Event Table for Mishiman characters, but functions in the same way. You may spend one Life point to re-roll or, with GM approval, pick the result. Some of the results provide suggested character Traits, which can be triggered to gain Chronicle points (See Chapter 9: Chronicle Points in the *Mutant Chronicles* core book). There are many more Traits you could have, so you can also use these as inspiration and pick your own based on the Adolescent Event. In addition, each event can trigger optional effects that allow you to customise your character further.

ADOLESCENT EVENT TABLE

ROLL	ADOLESCENT EVENT	SUGGESTED CHARACTER TRAITS	OPTIONAL EFFECTS
2	Family Obliterated: Your entire family displeased your liege lord and was executed as a result, leaving you as the only survivor.	Vengeful	Reduce your Earnings Rating by two, to a minimum of zero. If you are a commoner, you are now faceless. If you are a samurai, you are now ronin. You are now subject to Persecution.
3	Overlord Displeased: Your family displeased the Overlord, one of the Lord Heirs, or someone similarly important.	Social Pariah	Your family's name is infamous amongst the Mishiman elite; your Social tests amongst them are one difficulty rank higher.
4	Family Demoted: For some failure, real or perceived, your family was disgraced and lowered in rank.	Deeply Shamed	Reduce your social status and Earnings Rating both by one step. Samurai cannot be reduced lower than ronin, while commoners can be reduced to faceless.
5	Accursed Bloodline: Your family labours under an ancient curse, and many generations of misfortune.	Reckless Ambition	You start each session with one fewer Chronicle point. At the GM's discretion, certain prestigious deeds may lift this familial curse.
6	Bad Reputation: Your family has acquired a bad reputation, which may lead your peers and betters to insult your lineage and remind you endlessly of the events that caused your family to lose its good name.	Bad Reputation	Increase the Repercussion range of any Command, Lifestyle, or Persuade test made to interact with another Mishiman by one.
7	Impoverished: Your family has fallen upon hard times.	Spendthrift	Reduce your Earnings Rating by one.
8	Hikikomori: At some point during your adolescence, you became withdrawn from society, and you became hermit-like in your isolation.	Doesn't Play Well With Others	You gain one bonus Momentum on all skill tests outside of combat, but cannot use Momentum from the group pool.
9	Ancient Feud: Your family has a long-standing feud with another family of similar standing. They will stop at nothing to settle this feud and all scions of both your family and theirs are bound to this enmity from birth.	Holds a Grudge	Gain the rival family as an Enemy.

ROLL	ADOLESCENT EVENT	SUGGESTED CHARACTER TRAITS	OPTIONAL EFFECTS
10	Wandering Master: In your youth, you encountered a wandering master of a Martial Arts school, who taught you some of the fundamentals of his school's techniques. You cannot forget this event, and will not let others forget it either.	Insufferable	You reduce the experience point cost of any Ki power you purchase by 50.
11	Prophecy of Glory: Your early life was shaped by the words of a diviner or fortune teller, foretelling great things for you.	Egotistical	Your confidence and certainty means you have one more Mental Wound.
12	Devoted Employee: Even as a child, you worked hard and helped to support your family, work unit, and keiretsu.	Workaholic	You may re-roll 1d20 on any Lifestyle test made to acquire an item, but increase the Repercussion range of all untrained skill use by one.
13	Ferocious Reputation: As a youth, you personally acquired such a fearsome reputation that people still think twice about crossing you.	Intimidating	On a successful Persuade test when attempting to intimidate someone, you may spend one Momentum to inflict one Dread on the target. However, Persuade tests to befriend or calm others increase in difficulty by one step.
14	Inemuri Expert: You have mastered the art of falling asleep briefly in almost any situation – at your desk, while standing on a train, leaning against a wall, or anywhere else. It is invaluable for those who work twenty hours a day, but it does not compare to a full night's sleep.	Tired All The Time	You may re-roll one d20 when making a Resistance test against sleep deprivation.
15	Thin Skinned: You have always been prideful, and your sense of honour will allow you to suffer no indignity or insult.	Easily Offended	Your pride allows you to reduce the difficulty of any Willpower test against mental trauma by one step, to a minimum of one. However, you also gain one Enemy, a peer who you perceive as having slighted you.
16	Ki Negative: You have no talent for or understanding of the mystical whatsoever. This limitation has always been a source of shame and frustration.	Frustrated	You cannot learn any Ki powers at any point.
17	Tunnel Rat: You have a knack for navigating the caverns and tunnels of Mercury.	Agoraphobic	You may re-roll 1d20 on any Survival test made to navigate or survive in a subterranean environment. However, you increase the difficulty of Survival tests made to navigate or survive in other environments by one step.
18	Allergic Reaction: Whether through a quirk of genetics or a problematic exposure during your youth, you react poorly to a number of toxic substances.	Severe Allergies	All Resistance tests made to resist the effects of artificial substances have their difficulty increased by one step.
19	Triad Initiation: You were inducted as an apprentice in one of the Triads. Whether or not you want it, you are still considered an affiliate of theirs.	Friends in Low Places	You may freely choose the Criminal Primary Career. You are often called upon to perform favours – no questions asked – for your brothers in the Triads, but you can ask for a favour in return for any favour you perform.
20	Owed a Debt of Honour: Someone in high places owes your family a debt of honour. You can call upon this debt once, for almost any purpose.	Name-Dropping	During character creation, this counts as a single additional Life point. If not used during character creation, you may use it to gain three bonus Momentum on a single Lifestyle test.

ROLL	ADOLESCENT EVENT	SUGGESTED CHARACTER TRAITS	OPTIONAL EFFECTS
21	Martial Arts Training: You studied the arts of warfare during your childhood, preparing you to embrace advanced techniques as an adult.	Hard-Hearted	You may re-roll a single d20 on any test to find a master during character creation. See page 34.
22	Hero: Your actions revealed the activities of a traitor or another faction.	Enemy	Gain an Enemy in a random faction (if Mishima is rolled, the enemy is someone who has betrayed Mishima). Your actions see you rewarded and promoted; increase your Earnings Rating by one.
23	Model Employee: You have a knack for being in the right place at the right time, claiming responsibility for successes while creatively distancing yourself from failures.	Sneaky	You may re-roll one d20 on a Lifestyle or Persuade test made to deceive or present a success as your own. However, you increase the difficulty of all Command tests by one, because your subordinates do not trust you.
24	Gifted Student: You took to your studies extremely well, and have always had a knack for coming up with the right answer... much to the irritation of those around you.	Smart Ass	Dark Symmetry points spent to gain additional dice on Education test grant 2d20 instead of 1d20, but increase the difficulty of Command and Persuade tests by one step.
25	Otaku: You obsess about one particular subject or topic, and know far more about it than most.	Obsessive	Nominate a single narrow field of interest. Gain a single bonus Momentum on Education tests relating to your chosen field of interest.
26	Internal Calm: You use meditation techniques to focus on any upcoming challenge by tuning out all distractions.	Optimistic	Gain one bonus Momentum on the Willpower test when attempting a Shake It Off Action.
27	Blind Obedience: Your devotion to your keiretsu's senior management is unswerving. You follow orders from your superiors to the letter, to the detriment of critical thinking or self-preservation.	Loyal to a Fault	You may re-roll 1d20 on any Willpower test to resist coercion or influence from another – even from supernatural sources. However, you increase the difficulty of Education skill tests by one due to your blind adherence to your managers' dogma.
28	Hwabyeong: as a result of constant unfair pressure at school, to which you were unable to respond, you suffer from bouts of severe depression punctuated by outbursts of anger.	Repressed Rage	Roll 1d20 at the start of each session. On a roll of 1-5, gain one additional Chronicle point that session. On a roll of 16-20, gain one fewer Chronicle point than normal that session. On any other result, there is no change.
29	Contact with the Underworld: You spend a lot of time with the wrong kinds of people, either due to a rebellious streak or circumstances at home. Your friends taught you how to survive on the streets, how to steal, beg, rob, or other 'useful life lessons'. You may or may not have cut ties with your old associates, but they certainly remember you.	Bad Company	You are comfortable working on the wrong side of the law, and know how to communicate with people. You gain one bonus Momentum on successful Persuade and Thievery tests made to interact with the criminal element, including gang members, and the faceless.
30	Prosperous Work Unit: Your parents and their colleagues were part of a particularly wealthy and successful keiretsu, and everyone receives some of the benefit.	Solving Problems With Money	Increase your Earnings Rating by one.

ROLL	ADOLESCENT EVENT	SUGGESTED CHARACTER TRAITS	OPTIONAL EFFECTS
31	Tawra: You became involved in the practice of tawra, ritualised street fighting between gangs of high school students after important exams. You still carry with you some scars and tall tales from that time, and you have lost little of your viciousness.	Merciless	Your familiarity with violence increases your melee bonus damage by +1
32	Natural Ki Power: You have a wellspring of mystical power within you, as if you were born with a stronger connection to the world.	Unemotional	You gain one automatic success on any test to find a master during character creation.
33	Addicted: There is something you cannot get enough of. What is it? You will take risks to satisfy your craving.	Addict	Availability tests for procuring your addiction are Difficulty 1.
34	Toxin Resistance: Your body is very resistant to artificial substances.	Nothing Helps The Pain	All Resistance tests for artificial substances are reduced by one level of difficulty.
35	Heirloom Sword: Your character possesses an ancient and valuable heirloom, a katana forged by a legendary smith. If he is a commoner, the weapon was recovered from a battlefield by an ancestor. If he is a samurai, then the weapon is part of your family's legacy. In either case, the blade must be restored before it can be used.	Live By The Sword	The character possesses a Mushashi Blade, a katana with one special property (see page 79), determined randomly. The blade cannot be used until it has been properly restored by a swordsmith, requiring an acquisition test for a Restriction 3, Cost 15 service. Possession of any katana is illegal for those who are not samurai, but a commoner bearing a Mushashi Blade can easily use it to bargain for almost anything.
36	Legacy of Honour: You come from a family that has served bravely and honourably for generations, and its service has not gone unnoticed.	Unyielding Honour	The respect your family is given provides a certain degree of freedom. You may ignore the first Persecution check, or the first time you become Dishonoured, during character creation. During play, you gain one bonus Momentum on Lifestyle tests when acting openly and honourably.
37	Family Promoted: Your family was promoted in rank in exchange for some favour to a daimyo, or the meritorious deeds one of your relatives.	Prideful	Increase your Earnings Rating by one. Further, increase your Social Status by one step. Commoners cannot be promoted above guildsman. Samurai cannot be promoted above noble. If you cannot be promoted further (because you are a guildsman or noble), gain a favour from your daimyo instead.
38	Minor Mutation: There is something quite cool you can do, but it got you in trouble a few times before you learned to hide it. What is it? Why did your parents tell you never to tell anyone about it? You try not to use it much as you get killer headaches afterwards. Mutants are subject to Persecution.	Mutant	Pick the top talent of any skill tree. You can pay a Chronicle point to use this ability; however, you take a D2 mental assault afterwards from the pain it causes. Describe how your mutant heritage allows you to do this. See the Mutants & Heretics Handbook for expanded rules.
39	Resistant to Pain: Your control over your body allows you to endure what others cannot.	Unsympathetic to the Weak	Determine your wounds from the next best row of the wounds table.

ROLL	ADOLESCENT EVENT	SUGGESTED CHARACTER TRAITS	OPTIONAL EFFECTS
40	Significant Mutation: You are changing, and you can feel it. There has been something going on inside your body since you were a kid; you have these odd dreams, and you're afraid people will think you are corrupted or something. What one thing about you is different from other people that you have to hide? Mutants are subject to Persecution.	Mutant	Pick the top talent of any skill tree. You can pay a Chronicle point to use this ability. Describe how your mutant heritage allows you to do this. See the Mutants & Heretics Handbook for expanded rules.

DECISION SIX, PRIMARY CAREERS

For the most part, Mishiman characters use the same Primary Careers as others, and determine their Primary Career in the same way – rolling or choosing from the tables on page 60 of the *Mutant Chronicles* core book, with the option of replacing that result with a free career option from the character's Education.

This section provides additional background information on what different Primary Career options may represent for Mishiman characters, as well as alternative Primary Careers for the Corporate Worker, Military, and Police options.

UNEMPLOYED

In Mishiman culture, the unemployed are regarded almost as poorly as outsiders are – to have no place within the hierarchy and no purpose in the service of the Overlord is a great shame. As the vast majority of Mishimans enter the workforce immediately as soon as their schooling ends, often performing the same job as their parents, few become unemployed except through grave misfortune or horrific disgrace. Samurai in this position frequently end up losing their shares and status, becoming masterless ronin, while unemployed commoners may end up becoming faceless.

CORPORATE WORKER

The white-collar worker is a mainstay of Mishiman culture, with commoners of all ranks providing the bulk of these employees, overseen by samurai managers within each work unit. Commoner 'salarymen' and the lowest ranks of samurai management are amongst the most common form of Corporate Worker.

CORPORATE WORKER (SALARYMAN)

Commoner characters who enter the Corporate Worker Primary Career become salarymen, slaving away in a small office cubicle.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
0	1	1	2
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
2	1	2	2

Mandatory Skills: Lifestyle, Observation, Stealth.

Elective Skills: Persuade, Willpower, Education.

Signature Skill: Lifestyle, Observation, Persuade, Education.

Talents: Select one talent from Mandatory Skills.

Equipment: One corporate quality suit or a basic urban survival kit.

Earnings Rating: 1

CORPORATE WORKER (JUNIOR MANAGER)

Samurai characters who enter the Corporate Worker Primary Career become junior managers, overseeing the activities of a small work unit.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
1	1	0	2
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
1	2	2	2

Mandatory Skills: Lifestyle, Education, Persuade.

Elective Skills: Command, Willpower, Close Combat.

Signature Skill: Command, Lifestyle, Persuade, Education.

Talents: Select one talent from Mandatory Skills.

Equipment: One good quality suit, Shinken.

Earnings Rating: 3

TECHNICAL (REPAIRMAN)

Although technicians and repairmen are regarded more frequently as commoner's careers than ones befitting a samurai, they are vital parts of Mishiman industry. Technical guilds represent the majority of skilled and semi-skilled tradesmen in Mishiman settlements, with guildsman engineers forming the top of the hierarchy. Samurai who learn technical crafts are frequently doing so only as a means towards another end: most commonly meka operators and fighter pilots, or management roles in manufacturing keiretsu.

FARMER/FRONTIERSMAN

Working the newest frontiers of Mishiman business is tough work, and requires all levels of Mishiman society to contribute. Commoners tend to work the land, forming the bulk of any frontier or agricultural work unit, while samurai are given responsibility for parcels of land and the produce they generate, often as a reward for service. Frontiersmen roles in particular are regarded as prime

opportunities for samurai to prove their business acumen and develop a new subsidiary within their keiretsu.

MILITARY

Technically, all samurai are military personnel: any samurai can be called to military service at a moment's notice, and they are the only ones permitted to bear most forms of weaponry and armour. However, some samurai take warfare as their primary vocation. Further, they are not the only ones who fight for Mishima. An increasing number of keiretsu employ ashigaru, peasant-soldiers whose greater numbers are used to support the well-trained and well-equipped samurai.

MILITARY (BUSHI)

Samurai characters who enter the Military Primary Career become Bushi, continuing their studies in the arts of warfare until they are deemed ready to step into battle. They cannot entirely neglect the arts and the study of business, for such things are as much a part of the samurai tradition as mastery of the sword, but their focus is primarily upon skill-at-arms.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
2	1	2	0
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
1	1	2	2

Mandatory Skills: Education, Close Combat, Willpower.

Elective Skills: Acrobatics, Lifestyle, Observation.

Signature Skill: Education, Close Combat, Acrobatics, Observation.

Talents: Select one talent from Mandatory Skills.

Equipment: Ballistic Nylon training clothes, pair of medium military shoulder pads, Shinken.

Earnings Rating: 4

MILITARY (ASHIGARU)

Commoner characters who enter the Military Primary Career become ashigaru, serving as foot soldiers in the armies of their liege lord. The new class of commoner warriors live to prove themselves in battle. By showing exceptional valour in the service of their companies, a select few just might be elevated to the ranks of the samurai. Many more die before that can happen, as they are considered highly expendable by their commanders.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
2	2	1	2
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
2	1	1	0

Mandatory Skills: Athletics, Close Combat, Ranged Weapons.

Elective Skills: Survival, Acrobatics, Resistance.

Signature Skill: Athletics, Close Combat, Ranged Weapons, Survival.

Talents: Select one talent from Mandatory Skills.

Equipment: Ashigaru Padding, Yari Shogun Assault Rifle.

Earnings Rating: 2

POLICE

Officially, all law enforcement in Mishiman territory is the responsibility of samurai known as magistrates, and there are different orders of these enforcers in each city and on each world where Mishimans dwell. In addition to the order provided by samurai, many communities of commoners may appoint watchmen. These individuals help tend to disputes and criminal matters that are beneath the attention of the samurai, and while they have no official power, their presence is vital for maintaining the peace.

POLICE (MAGISTRATE)

Samurai characters who enter the Police Primary Career become Magistrates, enforcing their lord's will upon the people of his territory.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
1	1	2	2
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
1	0	2	2

Mandatory Skills: Athletics, Observation, Persuade.

Elective Skills: Command, Close Combat, Ranged Weapons.

Signature Skill: Athletics, Observation, Persuade, Ranged Weapons.

Talents: Select one talent from Mandatory Skills.

Equipment: Ballistic Nylon uniform, heavy civilian shoulder pads, wakizashi.

Earnings Rating: 2

POLICE (WATCHMEN)

Commoner characters who enter the Police Primary Career become Watchmen, helping maintain the peace in their communities.

ATTRIBUTE IMPROVEMENTS			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
1	1	2	2
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
1	0	3	1

Mandatory Skills: Athletics, Observation, Persuade.

Elective Skills: Stealth, Close Combat, Treatment.

Signature Skill: Athletics, Observation, Persuade, Close Combat.

Talents: Select one talent from Mandatory Skills.

Equipment: Symbol of status, baton.

Earnings Rating: 2

CRIMINAL

Given the relative inconsistency of law enforcement throughout Mishiman society, the criminal element is extremely pervasive. The presence of the Triads – and their illicit arrangements with the keiretsu – mean that criminal activities are an inescapable fact of life in some Mishiman holdings, though the worst excesses are kept under control for the sake of business. The overwhelming bulk of criminals are commoners, but more than a few less-than-scrupulous samurai indulge in criminal activities.

MEDICAL

The majority of medical professionals in Mishiman society are guildsmen. Non-guild commoners tend to be first responders assigned to particular workplaces – factories, offices, mines, etc – or paramedics

working for local hospitals. Guildsmen make up the overwhelming majority of nursing staff and doctors. It is a relatively rare samurai who takes up medicine, though there is some demand for doctors of noble birth amongst samurai who refuse to be treated by a commoner.

ACADEMIC

Academia is a difficult field to get into for people of any class. However, the respect afforded to those who pursue knowledge and wisdom is considerable, and the scholarly tend to be well-regarded regardless of their origins.

MEDIA

The Mishiman media empire is colossal, and employs people from all walks of life. Mishiman media is produced primarily by

KASPAR LUITEN GAIJIN HATAMOTO



Born of a Bauhaus émigré family in the caverns of Akirenko on Mercury, Kaspar Luiten would have grown up to simple manual labour in a factory, or would have been forced out as a freelancer – as someone of gaijin origins could never hope to rise within the rigid caste structure of Mishima. But when he turned eighteen, he stumbled across a young Mishiman man trapped in an alley by five sword-wielding, black-clad figures. Several dead bodyguards surrounded the man. It was obvious that in a few moments the young Mishiman would be joining them in death. Without regard for himself, Kaspar charged in and attacked the black-clad men. When it was all over, two of them lay dead and the others had fled. Kaspar lay badly wounded in the alley, but the young Mishiman was unharmed. It was only later that Kaspar discovered that he had saved the life of Lord Heir Maru. Despite the protestations at court, he was rewarded by Lord Maru by being made both a samurai and Hatamoto for the young Lord Heir. Since then he has forged a career as one of the Lord Heir's foremost agents, becoming far more than a simple Hatamoto. His skill at diplomacy has grown to match his skill in combat.

WOUNDS:

- ◀▶ **Head 3**
- ◀▶ **Arms 4**
- ◀▶ **Serious Wounds 6**
- ◀▶ **Mental Wounds 8**
- ◀▶ **Torso 8**
- ◀▶ **Legs 6**
- ◀▶ **Critical Wounds 4**

SOAK: Ballistic Nylon-lined Business suit: (Torso 1, Arms 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- ◀▶ **Katana (melee):** 1+**7**, Unbalanced, Parry 1
- ◀▶ **Wakizashi (melee):** 1+**6**, 1H, Parry 1
- ◀▶ **Unarmed Strike (melee):** 1+**4**, 1H

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH		PHYSIQUE		AGILITY		AWARENESS	
10		8		8		10	
COORDINATION		INTELLIGENCE		MENTAL STRENGTH		PERSONALITY	
10		8		8		11	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	2	2	-	2	1	2	2	2	-	1	1

- ◀▶ **HG-25 handgun (ranged):** Range C, 1+**6**, Semi-Automatic, Unbalanced, Close Quarters, Knockback

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◀▶ **Authority Earned:** Kaspar is a forceful individual, his voice and demeanour heavy with the certainty of one whose status is hard-earned. He may attempt a Command test, with a difficulty equal to the number of NPCs he wishes to influence. If he succeeds, the targeted NPCs may not take action against Kaspar, and increase the difficulty of all other tests by one step, until the end of Kaspar's next turn. Further, he may re-roll one d20 when making a Command test.
- ◀▶ **With the Voice of Lord Maru:** Kaspar is well-connected, and moves in powerful circles. He gains two bonus Momentum on all Lifestyle tests while within Mishiman territories, and may attempt a Daunting D3 Lifestyle test to secure the support of senior samurai within the service of Lord Heir Maru's court.
- ◀▶ **Gunslinger:** When making an attack with a ranged weapon, Kaspar may re-roll three **↑** Further, he may spend a Restricted Action to increase his rate of fire, allowing him to spend one more Reload with that weapon than would normally be allowed. Finally, when he spends Momentum to perform a Swift Strike with a ranged attack, there is no increase in difficulty for the additional action taken.

the part of society that consumes it. Newspapers are the media of the samurai, and thus only a samurai could properly produce the articles they want to read. Radio and TV productions, while guided by a daimyo's policies, will be made more by guildsmen, who understand the kinds of programming that their fellow commoners consume.

CORPORATE EXECUTIVE

The overwhelming majority of executives in Mishima are samurai. This should come as little surprise, considering the structure of Mishiman society. However, they are not the only ones with authority. The various guilds all have their own internal hierarchies, and require their own managers and their own leaders to oversee and negotiate how they operate.

SHIP CREW

The fleets of the Lord Heirs require large numbers of personnel, drawn from all walks of life. Samurai tend only to serve in command roles and as fighter pilots, leaving the majority of the roles to commoners and guildsmen.

INTELLIGENCE

Corporate espionage – both between the individual keiretsu and between Mishima and the other corporations – is big business. Given the diverse range of potential targets, Mishimans from all walks of life are employed to spy upon the competition, from powerful samurai to lowly commoners.



Kaspar Luiten, Bauhaus-born and Mishiman-trained Hatamoto of Lord Heir Maru, strode into the meeting room high up in the Luna skyscraper. He wore his formal suit as if it were his armour, the katana and wakizashi that were the mark of his rank worn tucked into a blood red sash at his waist. He was accompanied by two other Mishima representatives. Three Bauhaus executives chatted amongst themselves, sipping black coffee and studiously ignoring the new arrivals. They were going to delay and play for time while continuing to strip mine the resources in the land they had illegally seized from his master, Lord Heir Maru on Venus, under the pretext of 'peacekeeping'. Kaspar knew the game well, and also knew how to circumvent it. He signalled to his two aides and they took up positions on either side of the door. There would be no interruptions.

He pulled the pistol from his holster and fired. The bullet exploded the coffee cup of the lead 'negotiator', spraying the dark, bitter liquid all over the man's exquisite suit. The startled silence that followed let Kaspar know he had their attention.

"The next round will pass through what you laughingly call a brain,



Thanks to Kaspar Luiten

Sagielli." The shock on the Bauhausers was writ large and they made to stand up. A casual wave of the pistol convinced them to stay seated. "Before you ask, no one will be coming to your aid. My troops detected probable Heretic activity in this very building and, shocked and appalled at the potential danger to our close ally Bauhaus, have begun interrogations. They are under strict orders to shoot anyone who attempts to leave on sight. I have it on good authority – me – that if required, we will kill every. Single. Person. Here."

Baron Siegfried Sagielli spluttered out a challenge, "Are you mad? You cannot do that!"

"Oh but we can, and we have, Baron. Let us just call it a 'peacekeeping action'." Kaspar pulled out a chair and sat, casually placing his pistol on the table in front of him. "Now that we have that out of the way, let us turn our attention to Venus..."

CAREER EVENT TABLE

ROLL	CAREER EVENT	GAME EFFECT
2	You were poisoned by a chemical spill, fallout in the Kirin Mutant Zones, or exposure to solar radiation on the surface of Mercury.	Toxic contamination. The treatment will cost fifty Assets and until then you count as having wounds equal to one level lower on the Wounds Table.
3	You have been marked for death by the Shadow Walker Cult. Why? And how are you not dead yet?	Gain an Enemy in the Shadow Walker Cult.
4	You have changed your identity, moved away from your family, and are living under an assumed name. Why?	Gain one Enemy in a position of authority or a Heretic Cult.
5	You have a powerful enemy, one who holds seniority over you though, fortunately, is not a direct superior able to command you. What happened?	Gain an Enemy, and the Trait: Pursued by the Powerful
6	Your family has been embroiled in scandal, and you bear the burden of the recompense to the slighted party.	You are Dishonoured (see page 26), and may not continue in this Primary Career. Gain a Criminal Record, and a Debt to an important samurai.
7	Guilty or not you have been sentenced to death for committing a serious crime. What are the terms of your stay of execution?	You are Dishonoured (see page 26), and may not continue in this Primary Career. Gain a Criminal Record, and a Debt to an important samurai.
8	You have an intense rivalry with a Mishima employee of equal rank to you. Who are they and how does your rivalry manifest?	You have a rival within your faction with whom you have a conflict.
9	You find yourself in a brief, illicit relationship with someone higher or lower ranking than yourself. If anyone found out, the scandal would be considerable.	Gain the Trait: Shameful Liaisons
10	You saw something you should not have, and the local Triads made an example of you. What did you see, and why did they allow you to live?	Gain a Debt to one of the Triads.
11	You are connected to an attempt to defraud your keiretsu and demoted to the most menial tasks available to your class.	You are Dishonoured (see page 26), and may not continue in this Primary Career. Gain a Criminal Record.
12	You were involved in a shooting 'accident'. Who shot you and why is it suspicious?	Roll a random body location. You have a gunshot wound that has healed poorly in that location. Gain the Trait: Old War Wound.
13	Your activities have been under scrutiny, watched by the agents of a daimyo, cult leader, or triad master. They always seem to be nearby. What do you think they are looking for?	Gain the Trait: Under Surveillance.
14	You had the opportunity to travel far away from home. Where did you go and what made you come back home?	Gain the Trait: Foreign Ideas, and a contact in another keiretsu or another corporation.
15	They are on to you! Who are they and what have you done?	Gain a trait: Paranoia.
16	You discovered an act of treachery against the keiretsu but you are keeping your mouth shut. What hold does the perpetrator have over you that keeps you silent?	Gain the Trait: Blackmailed.
17	You suffered greatly in order to preserve your honour. What was your sacrifice?	Gain the Trait: Honour At Any Cost.
18	Your work unit was abandoned, cut off from contact with your keiretsu for a long period of time.	Add 1d6 years to your career and gain a Trait: Uncomfortable Amongst Strangers.
19	You volunteered to be a test user for an advanced cyberware item. It is a real boon, most of the time.	Gain Trait: Technical Difficulties. Gain a single Cybernetic implant, but reduce the Reliability by one.
20	You earned the ire of a superior and were reassigned, as well as gaining an enemy. What did you do?	You are Dishonoured (see page 26), and may not continue in this Primary Career.
21	You have a wealthy and pliable benefactor.	Increase Earnings Rating by one whilst they are still your patron, but also gain the Trait: Patron's Agenda.

ROLL	CAREER EVENT	GAME EFFECT
22	You foiled a foreign plot on your own or with a group of friends. Why didn't you report it to management?	Gain an Enemy in another corporation. Gain five Assets worth of 'liberated equipment'.
23	You were one of just a few survivors from a massive tunnel collapse, in which many people died. You lost something in the collapse, and brought something out with you. What were they?	Something terrible happened, but you survived. You gain one favour from a useful contact, one Enemy made during the disaster, and one Asset as compensation for the trauma. You also have an issue with enclosed spaces, gaining the Trait: Claustrophobia.
24	You broke an oath or otherwise publicly failed to live up to your class' obligations. What was so important to make you do that?	You are Dishonoured (see page 26), and may not continue in this Primary Career. Gain one Ally or five Assets.
25	You aided a magistrate in quelling an incident of public unrest, and have gained his confidence.	Gain a favour with a senior magistrate.
26	Your deeds earn you great recognition, and an accompanying increase in prosperity. Re-roll if faceless.	Increase Earnings Rating by one, to a maximum of five. If your Earnings are already five or higher, gain a favour from your daimyo instead.
27	You have a friend in a foreign corporation. How did you meet? How do you explain this suspicious friendship to others?	Randomly select one corporation, re-rolling a result of Mishima. You have a contact from that corporation who owes you a favour. You also have the Trait: Foreign Ideas.
28	A close colleague or friend was a Heretic or a rebel, and the authorities demanded your aid in stopping them. Did you help them or not?	Gain a favour from either the Heretic friend, or someone in a position of authority, depending on whether you aided your friend or not.
29	You were taken prisoner by a daimyo who is a rival to your own. Why did they let you go?	Gain a Debt to a member of the other daimyo's organisation.
30	You spent time on retreat in a secluded temple. Who did you meet there, and what did they teach you?	You gain one automatic success on a test to find a master.
31	You stumbled upon someone's secret hideout. Whose was it and what did you discover there?	Gain a single item worth no more than five Assets. This item is distinctive and missed by its owner. Gain the item's owner as an Enemy.
32	You defeated an enemy in a fight, and took something strange and interesting from their body. What was it?	Gain a single item worth no more than ten Assets
33	Because of your work unit's hard work, everyone received a bonus. For commoners, this comes as scrip usable at Mishiman stores, while for samurai it comes as dividends on their shares.	Gain five Assets.
34	You stood in for someone as their champion in a duel. Who did you represent, and why?	Gain the character you represented as an Ally.
35	You received a big windfall when an older relative died, either because they willed it to you or the person who died was next in line ahead of you. The inheritance is potentially life-changing, but other relatives are extremely envious.	Gain five, ten, or fifteen Assets. Gain one rival – an envious relative – for every five Assets gained.
36	You became involved in a Model Worker reality show, whether or not you wanted to.	Gain one free Momentum on successful social skill tests, but all Stealth tests to go unnoticed in a populated area increase in difficulty by one step.
37	You suffered a serious injury in the line of duty. Your determination to carry on has increased, but you are less able than you once were.	All movement-related skill tests increase their difficulty by one step, but all Willpower tests reduce their difficulty by one step. Treatment to remove the penalty to movement-related skill tests costs fifty Assets.
38	Someone close to you committed seppuku. Who was it, and how were you involved in the events leading up to their suicide?	Gain two Assets, bestowed by the will of the character who committed seppuku.

ROLL	CAREER EVENT	GAME EFFECT
39	You have recurring dreams relating to a traumatic event in your past. Nightmarish or benevolent, you often must take time to distinguish dream from real events when you awake.	Gain the Trait: Vivid Dreams
40	You are one in a million, possibly literally, and have been named Employee of the Year. How did you win this mark of excellence?	Increase Earnings Rating by one, to a maximum of five. If your Earnings are already five or higher, gain a favour from your daimyo instead. Further, increase your character's Social Status – if the character is a commoner, they become a life samurai. If the character is a samurai, they increase in rank (life/ronin to low shareholder, low shareholder to high shareholder, high shareholder to noble). If the character is already a samurai noble, gain a favour from your daimyo instead.

ICONIC RULES FROM THE CORE RULEBOOK

The most ubiquitous and definitive of Mishiman careers can be found in **Chapter 5: Character Lifepaths** chapter in the *Mutant Chronicles* core book.

CORPORATE SAMURAI

The warrior-managers of Mishima's samurai caste can be broadly split into two types: those who are soldiers through and through, and those who focus on the corporation's business affairs.

The former type are usually from lower ranking samurai families. They exist to fight for their lords and obey orders, carrying them out to the best of their ability. When not on active duty these warriors train hard and play hard.

Business-focused samurai must also be ready at a moment's notice to take arms when they are commanded to do so. However, they spend far more time on their business affairs: overseeing production quotas, attending meetings, and so forth.

When using the character creation rules in this book, change the prerequisites of

the Corporate Samurai Iconic Career to: Mishiman, Samurai (Low Shareholder) status or higher.

TRIAD ENFORCER

The pledged associates of the Triad crime outfits come into contact with all levels of Mishima society through their vice, smuggling, and extortion rackets. At the rank of enforcer, an associate is allowed a degree of autonomy from his master, having attained a high degree of trust, familiarity with the codes of his Triad, and an easy way with threatened violence.

SHADOW WALKER

Industrial spies, corporate extraction specialists, and sometimes killers. Their name comes from the dreaded Shadow Walker Cult – a heretical order of assassins suppressed many years ago, or so Mishima management would have its employees believe. The more mundane shadow walkers are dangerous enough in their own right.

Extensively trained in stealth, espionage, and combat, shadow walkers are the ultimate deniable assets, hired by corporate lords desperate enough to cross the boundaries of honour.

CAREER EVENTS

As with normal character creation, roll to determine career events after each Primary or Iconic Career phase. The following table provides a range of career events more suitable to Mishiman characters.

DISHONOUR

Mishiman characters are seldom simply fired from their employment, and the circumstances that force a character from his career are also sources of great shame, preventing future advancement and causing him to be shunned by his peers. If you are dishonoured, you may retain all the benefits of this career but may not repeat or extend this Primary or Iconic Career unless you spend two Life points (in addition to any other costs) and lose one Earnings Rating. If this is not your fourth Primary Career, you may enter another career next.



ICONIC CAREERS

The following iconic careers are specific to Mishiman characters, and represent particular elite groups and powerful organisations within the Mishima corporation. They function in all ways as all Iconic Careers do, though they are all restricted purely to Mishiman characters.

DEMON HUNTER



In order to provide the people of Mishima with the defence they sorely need against the Darkness, the Order of Demon Hunters was founded during the Neronian Schism. Each Demon Hunter is rigorously trained upon Mercury's Forbidden Isle, and not everyone survives the process. Those who emerge triumphant are mighty warriors against the forces of Darkness, permitted to wield some of the mightiest weapons and clad themselves in the mightiest armour. They are given the absolute freedom of all Mishiman realms, the better to hunt down Heretics and monsters.

Prerequisites: Willpower Expertise 2, Mishiman, may not already be a student of a martial arts school.

Difficulty: 3

Mandatory Skills: Close Combat, Ranged Weapons, Willpower.

Elective Skills: Heavy Weapons, Insight, Mysticism.

Signature Skill: Close Combat, Ranged Weapons, Insight, Willpower.

Talents: Two talents from Close Combat, Ranged Weapons, Willpower, or the Demon Hunter Ki powers tree.

Equipment: Kariudo powersuit, pair of Darkslayer katana, Dragonfire heavy machine gun, Mystic talisman.

Earnings Rating: 4

Special: All Demon Hunters automatically become students of the Demon Hunter martial arts school. A Demon Hunter's Corruption Soak increases by one.



VOID WASP



An elite order of samurai fighter pilots, the Void Wasps began within the Amida keiretsu, and it has spread amongst the war-fleets of each of the Lord Heirs. Each Void Wasp chooses to focus his skills upon the deadly dance of airborne and voidborne warfare, rather than upon the more traditional arts of sword and gun.

Prerequisites: Any Samurai, Pilot Expertise 2, Mishiman.

Difficulty: 2

Mandatory Skills: Pilot, Space, Ranged Weapons.

Elective Skills: Survival, Vacuum, Gunnery.

Signature Skill: Pilot, Space, Vacuum, Gunnery.

Talents: Two talents from Pilot, Space, or Gunnery.

Equipment: Suzumebachi-class Interceptor, vac suit.

Earnings Rating: 4



CREATING A CHARACTER

NOBLE



The elite of Mishima, the high shareholders, are born to the boardroom. As well as holding positions of senior responsibility within their keiretsu, these scions of power are formidable warriors, for they train with the best instructors and have access to top-of-the-line equipment.

When called up for war, high shareholders are expected to assume positions of command. Many noble clans send their children to military academies to prepare them for this duty. Unfortunately, for the foot soldiers of the Mishima armies, just as many noble clans do not bother, assuming that noble blood is qualification enough for the rigours of command.

Prerequisites: Samurai (High Shareholder) or better, Mishiman.

Difficulty: 3

Mandatory Skills: Close Combat, Command, Lifestyle.

Elective Skills: Ranged Weapons, Persuade, Willpower.

Signature Skill: Close Combat, Lifestyle, Command, Willpower.

Talents: One talent from Close Combat, Command, or Lifestyle.

Equipment: Kote powersuit, daishō (katana and wakizashi), Shogun assault rifle, bespoke faction business suit, ten Assets.

Earnings Rating: 6



HATAMOTO



These samurai may not be from the highest-status families, but they enjoy great prestige, for they are the most trusted retainers of their lords. A hatamoto serves directly under the daimyo of a keiretsu, a Lord Heir, or the Overlord himself. Hatamoto serve as their daimyos' personal bodyguards, and are also trusted with the most delicate and important duties, such as conveying secret messages, protecting vital resources, and looking after family members and visiting dignitaries.

Prerequisites: Samurai only, Mishiman.

Difficulty: 3

Mandatory Skills: Close Combat, Ranged Weapons, Willpower.

Elective Skills: Unarmed Combat, Persuade, Lifestyle.

Signature Skill: Close Combat, Unarmed Combat, Persuade, Willpower.

Talents: Two talents from Close Combat, Persuade, or Willpower.

Equipment: Kote powersuit, daishō (katana and wakizashi), Shogun assault rifle, three Assets.

Earnings Rating: 4

Special: When representing his Daimyo, a Hatamoto may use his master's Social Standing in place of his own.



GUILD MASTER



The master craftsmen of the guilds are those who have been recognised as experts in their craft. They are accorded great respect within their guild, and by outsiders if their trade is a prestigious one, such as swordsmithing, music, or engineering. Masters are entitled to vote on resolutions at guild meetings and to set up their own businesses without prior permission from the guild – only the local daimyo's assent is needed.

Prerequisites: Any commoner, Education Expertise 2, Lifestyle Expertise 1, Mishiman.

Difficulty: 2

Mandatory Skills: Education, Lifestyle, Persuade.

Elective Skills: Mechanics, Science, Education.

Signature Skill: Education, Lifestyle, Mechanics, Science.

Talents: Two talents from Education, Lifestyle, Mechanics, or Science.

Equipment: Symbol of office, ten Assets.

Earnings Rating: 5

Special: A Guild Master is regarded as having a higher social status than any other commoner.



RONIN



Legions of masterless samurai wander the realms of Mishima and beyond, making a living as mercenaries, spies, bandits, and enforcers. Much persecuted, these dregs of the samurai caste are still skilled warriors who must be treated with caution. This character type represents a samurai who, willingly or not, has settled in to the uncertain lifestyle of the ronin. For one who has only recently become masterless, any of the other samurai-caste archetypes may be used to reflect the character's experiences and training.

Prerequisites: Any Samurai, Mishiman.

Difficulty: 1

Mandatory Skills: Close Combat, Ranged Weapons, Survival.

Elective Skills: Stealth, Persuade, Willpower.

Signature Skill: Close Combat, Ranged Weapons, Survival, Willpower.

Talents: One from Close Combat, Ranged Weapons, or Survival.

Equipment: Sode battlesuit, daishō (katana and wakizashi), Shogun assault rifle, survival kit (any one environment)

Earnings Rating: Reduce to 3, if higher

Special: A ronin, being masterless, no longer benefits from the social standing or business contacts of his samurai heritage, and is regarded as having a lower social status than any other samurai. A ronin is subject to Persecution.



MODEL WORKER



The biggest celebrities on Mishima TV are the model workers – reality show stars whose heavily directed day-to-day lives are broadcast by the keiretsu as propaganda to encourage harmonious behaviour in the viewership. The most successful model workers succeed because they are able to make their lives interesting while navigating the numerous and constantly shifting content guidelines of the censorship board.

Prerequisites: Any commoner, Mishiman.

Difficulty: 2

Mandatory Skills: Education, Lifestyle, Persuade.

Elective Skills: Mechanics, Observation, Athletics.

Signature Skill: Observation, Persuade, Education, Mechanics.

Talents: Two talents from Education, Lifestyle, or Persuade.

Equipment: Mobile phone, high-quality versions of work-appropriate clothing.

Earnings Rating: 4

Special: Equipment provided by the career is provided by the production company, and can thus be removed at a moment's notice should the character's ratings fall below acceptable levels. The character's fame means that he is likely to be recognised on the street by Mishiman commoners.



INSPECTOR-MAGISTRATE



The inspector-magistrates of Mercury are empowered to act as police, judge, jury, and – when necessary – executioner. Formed to replace the Panopticon AI system after the coming of the Dark Symmetry, the inspector-magistrates work for the Ga-Mon Office, which serves the Lord Heir directly to ensure order through the Mercurian provinces. The majority of inspector-magistrates are assigned to a district and conduct street patrols. They may later rise in the ranks to command positions or to detective teams.

Though they have jurisdiction throughout Mercury, they must often deal with interference from intransigent daimyos and lords, and the competing interests of local police forces.

Prerequisites: Any Samurai, Military or Police Primary Career, Mishiman.

Difficulty: 1

Mandatory Skills: Close Combat, Observation, Persuade.

Elective Skills: Thievery, Ranged Weapons, Willpower.

Signature Skill: Close Combat, Observation, Persuade, Ranged Weapons.

Talents: One talent from Close Combat, Observation, or Persuade.

Equipment: Sode battlesuit, daishō (katana and wakizashi).

Earnings Rating: 3



MARTIAL ARTIST



Students of Mishima's unique martial arts schools are trained not only in combat techniques but also in the use of Ki powers. Commoners and members of suppressed schools are frequent targets of persecution from the authorities.

Prerequisites: Student of any martial arts school, Mishiman.

Difficulty: 1, 2, or 3

Mandatory Skills: Close Combat, Unarmed Combat, Willpower.

Elective Skills: Acrobatics, Education, Observation.

Signature Skill: Acrobatics, Close Combat, Unarmed Combat, Willpower.

Talents: A number of Talents from the character's Martial Arts School equal to the difficulty chosen to enter the career.

Equipment: School training garb, two Assets.

Earnings Rating: 1

Special: The character has devoted his life to the study of the martial arts. For non-samurai characters, this is normally done in secret and may lead to Persecution if their studies become known.



SHADOW WALKER CULTIST



Active members of the dreaded Shadow Walker Cult are trained to be unstoppable assassins. Raised to be killers and spies from birth, these children of the shadows are never permitted to leave the organisation, though they may appear to take other careers as part of a disguise.

Taking this career means that the character is not only a member of the Shadow Walker Cult, but always has been – the character's public life is a façade established by the cult.

Prerequisites: Stealth Expertise 2, Mishiman, may not already be a student of a martial arts school.

Difficulty: 2

Mandatory Skills: Acrobatics, Observation, Stealth.

Elective Skills: Close Combat, Insight, Thievery.

Signature Skill: Acrobatics, Close Combat, Observation, Stealth.

Talents: Two talent from Acrobatics, Close Combat, or Stealth.

Equipment: Katana, Whisper machine pistol, Shinobi robes, shuriken (3 Reloads), blinding powder (5 uses), mortuary enzymes.

Earnings Rating: 3

Special: The character may attempt to find a master of the Deathbringer Martial Arts School.



CREATING A CHARACTER

THE WAY OF THE SEVEN SAGES

THE WAY

To understand Mishima culture one must understand the Way, a set of precepts for living developed and expounded by the revered figures known as the Seven Sages.

The Way is founded upon four core principles.

The first and greatest virtue is loyalty, first to your lord, then to your keiretsu and corporation. In this world of bitterness and betrayal, where death waits at every turn, the bond of loyalty is the only security a person can truly have.

The second virtue is honour. To have honour is to maintain a good name for yourself, your lord, and your family. It is to tolerate no slight on your reputation – a blow must be repaid with a blow. To have honour is to show no weakness to your enemies or those of your lord.

No warrior is afraid to die well, for this is a boon to his family's honour. It is truly shameful to die a coward. It dishonours your ancestors, shames your family, and besmirches the reputation of your company.

The third virtue is obedience. You must obey the commands of your management, instantly. If you consider its orders dishonourable, or that to carry them out would bring dishonour on you and your family, you may request permission to commit ritual suicide instead of carrying them out. This permission may or may not be granted. The greatest shame is to fail in your duty to your manager.

Finally, the Way teaches respect for tradition, and that you must honour those who have gone before you. This refers to your elders and ancestors, as well as to the heroes and saints of the past, and to the mighty Ancients who reshaped the planets of the solar system to make life possible for mankind.

These teachings are the glue that holds Mishima society together, constantly reinforced by parents, teachers, peer pressure, media, and company propaganda.

The Way also teaches how to regulate and harness the spiritual energy within oneself known as Ki, and how to use it to achieve superhuman powers. These techniques are employed extensively by the samurai caste, and rely on tremendous mental and physical discipline. This focus on self-discipline may be the reason that the samurai of Mishima count fewer Heretics in their ranks per capita than almost any other social class in the human worlds.

THE COMING OF THE SEVEN SAGES

Long ago, Mishima was as devoted to the Brotherhood as any other corporation. The samurai looked unquestioningly to the Cardinal for guidance and protection from the Dark Soul and its agents. That began to change during the time of the Neronian Heresy and the Age of the Six Cardinals. In that era of strife, the human worlds were torn apart by war, as rival claimants vied for the Cardinal's throne. As brother fought brother, and the power of the Art faded, Mishima began to move away from the Brotherhood and chart its own course.

In this age of schism, the Seven Sages came to the people of Mishima and began to preach a new way forward. The Sages guided Mishima away from the Brotherhood's teachings, away from its corruption and fratricidal bloodshed. Some say they were renegade Mystics of the First Directorate. Some say they were Heretics sent to lead Mishima astray. Their followers say they were true guiding lights for mankind, if only mankind would have eyes to see it.

They found a willing audience among the samurai of the time with their bold assertion that the Brotherhood had no monopoly on wisdom, and that anyone could be trained to use the powers of the Art. The Seven Sages founded schools where they taught the secrets of the Art to any who had the strength of mind and perseverance to learn them. And, more importantly for Mishima's history, they taught a new philosophy of honour and mutual obligation that bound the corporation together in a turbulent era.

The Seven Sages denied that their philosophy was entirely new. Their point of view was that they were reviving Mishima's ancient heritage, the birthright its people brought with them from the dead Earth. These were the old, true ways that served Mishima's forefathers well before the Age of Catastrophe, in good times and bad. Hundreds of mystic schools blossomed in the safe haven of Mishima territory, many formed by renegade philosophers fleeing the oppression of the Brotherhood. Several of the rival Cardinals declared the entire Mishima corporation apostate and launched unsuccessful crusades to destroy Mishima. These attacks fostered a strong distrust of outsiders in the formative years of today's Mishima culture.

By combining the powers of the Art that the Seven Sages taught with the ancient martial arts they already possessed, the warriors of Mishima were able to create powerful new methods of combat that tapped into the warrior's own inner energy and used that energy

to fuel astonishing feats. These powers gave Mishima's forces the edge they needed in that age of constant war to defeat all who tried to take Mishima's ancestral holdings. Even today, these strange powers distinguish the warriors of Mishima from all others in the human worlds.

The teachings of the Seven Sages appealed to the samurai. As a warrior caste, they saw the eminently practical benefits of using the Art to overcome the enemies that beset Mishima on all sides. The combat applications of meditation were of less practical value to the workers, so while many turned to the Seven Sages' spiritual teachings, a great many continued to obey the word of the Cardinals. The Brotherhood exploited this loyalty to foment a series of commoner uprisings against the ruling class, all of which were savagely suppressed and extinguished what sympathy for the Brotherhood remained among the samurai once and for all. After the rebellions the commoners were disarmed, and the foundations of the present rigid class system were laid.

By the time the Brotherhood schisms ended, the philosophy inculcated by the Seven Sages was thoroughly entrenched in the Mishima way of life. There was no way back in for the Brotherhood short of destroying the whole corporation – a task beyond even the Brotherhood and perhaps, going on previous form, the other corporations combined.

Equally, the power of the reunified Brotherhood was too great for Mishima to simply ignore. The Overlord and Cardinal came to an accommodation. Mishima purged the obviously heretical schools and allowed the Brotherhood to send observers to watch over the corporation, in return for the official tolerance of the Brotherhood for the Mishima way of life. Since then Mishima has been a perennial outsider among the corporations, too strange to be trusted, too powerful to be ignored.

YUROJI, THE FIRST SAGE

The first of the Seven Sages was Yuroji, a Mishima-born Brotherhood Mystic. He saw the violence of the Neronian Schism and realised that while the Brotherhood gave practical advice on what actions to take in order to stave off the Darkness, it gave no nourishment to the kind of inner life that would bring about harmony in the soul, sufficient in itself to withstand the depredations of the Dark Soul.

Realising he needed more exposure for his philosophy if it was to spread and bring enlightenment to humanity, Yuroji approached the Overlord of Mishima and offered to teach his samurai the secrets of Ki-enhanced combat. He lived for fifty years, and helped to formulate the basic principles of the Way. He taught that, with sufficient restraint and discipline, any person could attain enlightenment. He helped the Overlord to rediscover much of Mishima's ancient culture, thus strengthening the corporation's shared identity.

In traditional iconography, Yuroji is represented as a gaunt ascetic in long black Brotherhood robes, with a halo of golden light around his head.

KANJI, THE SAGE OF BOUNDLESS GOOD FORTUNE

One of Yuroji's first disciples was the young Brotherhood Mystic named Kanji. It is said that everyone who crossed paths with Kanji enjoyed good luck. He was a charismatic teacher who shared the Way with everyone he met. It is said he even talked an Inquisitor sent to capture him into becoming a disciple of the Way.

Kanji is represented as a smiling fat man with a glowing white halo.

YORAMA, THE SAGE OF BATTLE

Said to be the first samurai to achieve enlightenment under the tutelage of Yuroji, Yorama was an invincible warrior who perfected the combat techniques that are the most common applications of the Way in battle today. Perhaps more than anyone else, Yorama was instrumental in ensuring that the samurai became devotees of the Way. He is regarded as the paragon of the samurai virtues.

Yorama is portrayed as a huge samurai with an intense red halo.

NOMURA, THE SAGE OF PROSPERITY

A senior trading partner of the keiretsu owned by his family, Nomura turned his mastery of meditation into an analytical tool that helped him come out ahead on the markets and build the Nomura keiretsu into the wealthiest on Mercury. One day he returned from a retreat newly enlightened, and extolling the virtue of prosperity over profit. He renounced the quest for material goods as an end in itself and donated all his personal wealth to the Overlord for the betterment of the Mishima corporation.

Nomura formulated the fundamental trading strategies that Mishima follows to this day. He is the patron Sage of administrators, merchants, and gamblers.

Nomura is portrayed as a bearded man with a scale in one hand and a jewel in the other, and a bright blue halo.

YIZO, THE SAGE OF WISDOM

Yizo formulated the Four Concepts after the Great Rebellion. She preached a doctrine of total loyalty and obedience to one's lord manager, the principles that have helped Mishima survive the years of turmoil. Yizo is represented as a shaven-headed woman in traditional samurai dress with a pale blue double halo.

MARAMA, THE SAGE OF HARMONY

Marama laid down the rules for harmony within the home, teaching that children must cherish and obey their parents, and that family should be held paramount. She was a peacemaker who brought harmony wherever she went.

THE WAY OF THE SEVEN SAGES

Marama is depicted as a tranquil, smiling woman in her middle age, with green clothing and a green halo.

TORONAGA, THE SAGE OF JUSTICE

Toronaga was a renegade Inquisitor who became the first Demon Hunter. She hunted down and destroyed heretics in the Mishima realms in ruthless pursuit of vengeance for her family, murdered by servants of the Dark Apostles. She founded the Order of Demon Hunters.

Toronaga is depicted as a towering young woman in black Demon Hunter armour, with a blazing orange halo.

KI POWERS

For centuries, the strange powers wielded in battle by the warriors of the Mishima Corporation have made them feared opponents. They have also caused great concern among the Inquisitors of the Brotherhood's Second Directorate, who suspect that these Ki powers may be evidence of a new form of corruption caused by the Dark Apostles, festering within Mishima beyond the Brotherhood's reach. Most samurai who use Ki powers show no sign of succumbing to Darkness – indeed, many have greater resistance to its wiles than ordinary people. The secretive nature of the outlaw dojos means that little information is available on those commoners who wield Ki powers.

Ki powers come in many forms, but ultimately all derive from the teachings of the Seven Sages and their disciples. Most forms of Ki power tap into the personal spiritual energy of their user, enabling the user to focus that inner strength into accomplishing feats of prowess that are astonishing to those unfamiliar with Mishima's traditional practices. Most such abilities require tremendous inner power on the part of the user, and can be draining – but the benefits can be enormous.

Most martial schools name their techniques after the Seven Sages, in honour of their founding role in the study of Ki powers. Some teachers believe that each Ki power actually draws directly on the cosmic energies of one of the Seven Sages, who have ascended to a higher state of being. A few Ki powers are named after strange, legendary creatures referred to in the books of the Ancients. These archaic animal names are used to pay homage to humanity's heritage, and specifically those traditions of the past now embraced by Mishima.

ACQUIRING KI POWERS

In most cases, Ki powers must be learnt from an instructor. A very few people manage to learn Ki powers without a teacher, but such individuals are exceedingly rare. Ki powers are seldom taught to those who aren't citizens of Mishima.

OUTLAW DOJOS

Because of the ban of commoners learning Ki powers – or even, under some lords, learning martial arts at all – dojos catering to commoners must operate in secret. Common fronts for these outlaw dojos include:

- ◆ ballroom dance studios
- ◆ message parlours
- ◆ estate agents
- ◆ pet shops
- ◆ laundries

Bauhaus geneticists speculate that the ability to use Ki powers is the effect of a new mutation within the human gene pool, and that their use within the Mishima corporation is becoming more common as this mutation is spread with each successive generation of Mishima children. The Brotherhood blames its failure to recreate Ki powers from stolen manuals on a difference in mindset. Without being brought up in the alien thought patterns of a Mishima childhood, the Brotherhood experts say, it is impossible to make one's mind work in the necessary deviant ways.

In theory, anyone can learn to wield his Ki, so long as he has the correct training. In game terms, training in the use of Ki powers is represented by a variety of talent trees that only Mishiman characters are permitted to learn. Each talent on these talent trees is a Ki power, in one of two forms.

CHARACTER CREATION

When a Mishiman character enters a career, the player may choose for him to seek out a master. Individual masters belong to one of a number of schools of martial arts, which each have their own restrictions and requirements for entry, but all require a skill test. A character can spend one or more Life points on this test, with each Life point spent contributing one success to this test. Failing this test means that the character does not succeed in finding a master willing to teach him, but he may try again during his next career.

Some careers available only to Mishiman characters may automatically provide training in Ki powers, while some masters may be more or less accessible to characters of certain social standings, educations, or careers. Alternatively, certain character events can provide access to a master.

Once a character finds a master willing to train him, he has full access to the talent tree associated with his master's school, and may choose a talent from that tree whenever he would gain a talent from his current or any subsequent careers.

Once a character has found a master during character creation, he may not seek out another – while leaving a school, and joining another is possible, it cannot be done during character creation. As a result, it may be preferable not to seek out a master until a later career, as some schools are tied specifically to certain careers.

Seeking out a master during character creation is an option available only to characters who belong to the Mishima corporation (any character with the Vassal of Mishima talent, see page 11).

DURING PLAY

Seeking out a master during play is a matter of roleplay more than mechanics – it requires talking to the right people, asking the right questions, and successfully persuading a master that you are worthy of tutelage. Each school has its own requirements and standards that help determine the kinds of person they are willing to accept as students. Each school has a Restriction and Cost value, which are treated in exactly the same way as purchasing an item. In this case, these values represent the expense and effort required to contact the right people. Schools that cater specifically to a single career (Demon Hunter, Deathbringer) can only be sought out by members of that career.

A character who has already found a master – whether during character creation, or afterwards – may continue to purchase talents from his school's talent tree. Alternately, he may choose to leave his current master and seek out another. Attempting to join a new school is no different to seeking out a master initially, though some schools have natural rivalries that prevent students moving from one to the other, while others are restricted to certain cults or professions. These restrictions, naturally, prevent a character from joining certain schools in later life – a character could attempt to lie about his past training, but the consequences for being discovered are severe.

A character who has left one school to join another may no longer purchase talents from his former school's talent tree. Further, a character who has left one school and is seeking a new master increases the Restriction rating of his new school by one: each school is justifiably paranoid of outsiders coming to steal their secrets, and thus they are naturally reluctant to accept the students of other schools.

In theory, any character may seek out a master during play, even if the character is not Mishiman. However, those who do not possess the Citizen of Mishima talent will often find the process of finding a willing master to be far more difficult – there are few masters willing to teach an outsider, and few outsiders who display the proper aptitudes and mindset to embrace a master's teachings. A character with a Mishiman heritage (but who is not a Citizen of Mishima) increases the Restriction of a martial arts school by one. An outsider – who has no connection to Mishima whatsoever – increases

the Restriction and Cost of a martial arts school by two. Further, barring extraordinary circumstances, characters from outside the Mishima corporation are *never* considered to be samurai, and are always subject to Persecution.

ATTAINING MASTERY

A character who has purchased all the Ki powers from a single school's talent tree is considered to be a master, and may now begin teaching students of his own. Further, at the GM's discretion, he may purchase any Ki power from this chapter, at a base cost of 800 experience points each, so long as he has had the opportunity to study that technique in some way (obtaining instruction manuals, learning from another master, etc).

MASTERS & KI SCHOOLS

Most people who learn to use Ki powers do so by finding a master willing to teach them. Some masters dwell alone and accept only a handful of students, sometimes only one at a time, whom they select carefully and train with intensively. Many more are instructors at the great dojos of the major martial arts schools, found in every Mishima territory.

Almost all samurai lords employ a Blademaster, whose duties include the instruction of worthy retainers in the Ki powers of his martial arts school. As such, all samurai can automatically choose to belong to the Blademaster's school. The schools are common enough that there is no need to go to great lengths in search of a teacher.

Finding a Master is not so easy for commoners, because it is forbidden on pain of death for both teacher and student, for any commoner to be taught Ki powers. That doesn't mean it is impossible for a commoner to find a Master, but it is significantly more dangerous due to the inherent risk involved.

Certain Masters will only teach commoners. Many will only teach samurai. Others will have more idiosyncratic criteria. Some Masters and schools are at loggerheads with others, and by joining such a school the new student automatically acquires an entire set of implacable foes. All Masters belong to a particular martial arts school – although they may be the only teacher in that school – and will only teach its techniques, even if they personally happen to know others.

No one may study with more than one Master at one time. Teachers demand that students focus solely on their set of techniques, and any student who tries to moonlight and take on an extra set of classes will be dismissed from both schools if they are found out. Even rival teachers not on speaking terms will hear about what has happened on the martial arts grapevine and eject the two-timing student as well.

A student may choose to leave his Master at any time, whether because he finds he is making no progress with his training, or because he has had a more attractive offer from another martial arts school. This frees him up to learn with another master, but a student may never join a school that is the enemy of any school to which he has previously belonged.

SCHOOLS OF MARTIAL ARTS

The martial arts schools of Mishima exist to pass on the bodies of knowledge and technique that their masters have accrued over generations, since the time of the Seven Sages. Every martial arts school teaches not only a way of fighting but also a way of thinking, sometimes going so far as to claim for itself an entire philosophy of living. The school's masters impart its philosophy and code as they teach its fighting techniques, aiming to produce well-rounded students that are a credit to their academies when they graduate and go out into the world.

Each school of martial arts is presented as follows:

REQUIREMENTS: This section describes the requirements for entry to a given school. This will normally be some combination of social status and career, but other requirements may exist. This section also notes if students of the school are subject to Persecution (page 12).

ENTRY TEST: This entry lists the skill test – including the difficulty of that test – needed to enter the school during character creation.

COST: This entry describes the Restriction and Cost of entry for the school, required for any character entering the school during play.

STRICTURES: This heading lists the major strictures and standards of the school – the code of conduct expected of its students. This will also list any notable rivalries that the school has.

TALENT TREE: Each school has a unique talent tree, which lists the Ki powers available to students of that school. The powers themselves are not specific to individual schools – most are present in at least two different schools – and as a result, the power entries do not list all the prerequisites for purchasing them, as these will vary depending on which school's talent tree a character is using. In all cases, a character must learn the talents from the top of the chart, working down along each path. In all ways, these are purchased in the same way as normal talents, as described on page 75 of the *Mutant Chronicles* rulebook. All Ki powers are considered to be Willpower talents.

BLADEMASTER

Founded during the Great Rebellion by the legendary samurai Narita, the Blademaster school has become the most common and popular among the Mishima ruling class.

This school teaches all the standard techniques that a samurai may expect to encounter in duels with his peers.

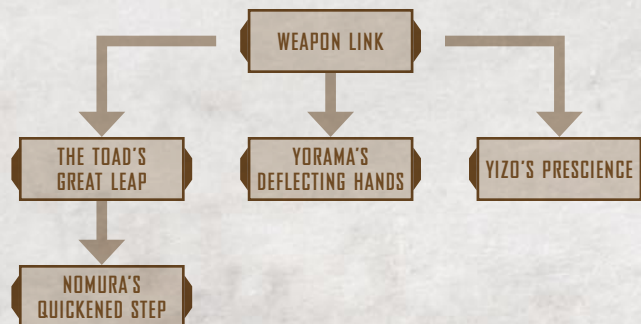
REQUIREMENTS: Samurai only.

COST: Restriction 1, Cost 4

ENTRY TEST: None – samurai characters can always find a master of this school.

STRICTURES: As the single most common school of martial arts present in Mishiman society, the strictures of the Blademaster School are the ideals of the samurai caste, stressing frugality, loyalty to one's masters, mastery of noble and martial arts, and honour to the death. Students of the Blademaster School are expected to be exemplars of the samurai way of life.

BLADEMASTER TALENT TREE



CELESTIAL PATH

The Celestial Path school teaches its followers restraint, self control, and peacefulness. Its followers are enjoined to use their powers and abilities only in self-defence. This has made the school popular with those commoners who seek out Ki powers and want to be able to defend themselves without attracting too much attention from vengeful class-conscious samurai.

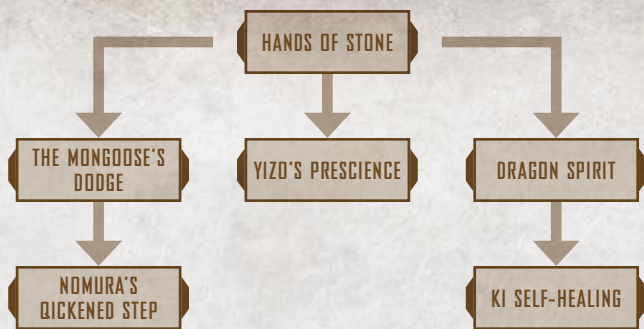
REQUIREMENTS: Commoner or less only. Practitioners of the Celestial Path are subject to Persecution.

COST: Restriction 2, Cost 8

ENTRY TEST: Average D1 Willpower test.

STRICTURES: Students of the Celestial Path are urged to be circumspect, self assured, and peaceful, and never to strike out except in defence of self or others. Those who act rashly or due to strong emotion, or who seek to harm another, are held in low regard by Masters of the Celestial Path.

CELESTIAL PATH TALENT TREE



DARK MYSTICS

This school is actually a front for a cult of the Dark Apostles. See **Chapter 09: Mishima & the Darkness** for more details.

REQUIREMENTS: Heretic career – characters finding a Dark Mystic as a master are Heretics, and learn Dark Gifts rather than Ki powers. Dark Mystics – and all Heretics in Mishiman society – are subject to Persecution

DEATHBRINGER

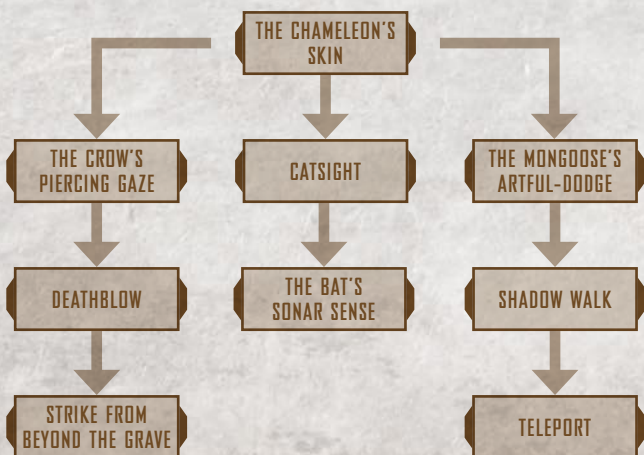
The techniques of the Deathbringer school are the preserve of the Shadow Walker Cult. The training focuses on stealth, evasion, and cold-blooded murder.

REQUIREMENTS: Shadow Walker Cultist career only.

COST: N/A – only characters in the Shadow Walker Cultist career may learn Ki powers from this school.

ENTRY TEST: Average D1 Willpower test.

DEATHBRINGER TALENT TREE



STRICTURES: The Shadow Walker Cult is extraordinarily secretive, and expects nothing less than absolute secrecy and absolute loyalty from its membership, particularly with regards to the secrets of the Deathbringers, the deadly elites within the cult who are practitioners of this school's powers. A character cannot leave the Deathbringer school, or the Shadow Walker cult, to study at another school.

DEMON HUNTER

This school, found only on the Forbidden Isle on Mercury, teaches the ancient and mysterious art of hunting and killing demons.

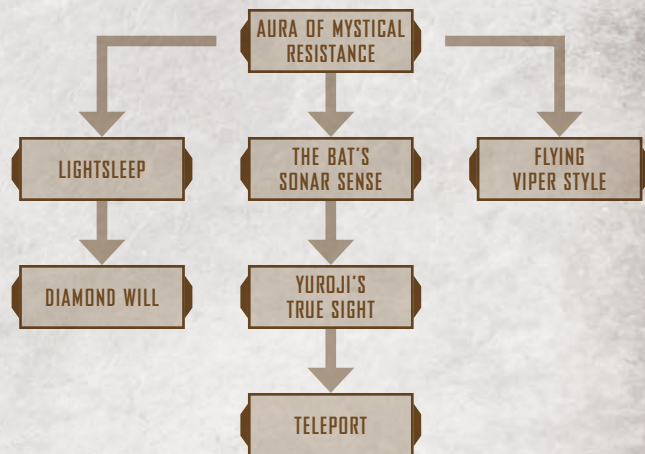
REQUIREMENTS: Demon Hunter career only.

ENTRY TEST: None.

COST: N/A – only characters in the Demon Hunter career may learn Ki powers from this school.

STRICTURES: Demon Hunters swear to oppose the Darkness in all its forms, wherever it may be found. A failure to combat the forces of Darkness – or worse, to become corrupted by it – is considered to be the greatest shame and dishonour for a Demon Hunter. A character cannot leave the Demon Hunter school to study at another – to do so would mean compromising his battle against the Darkness.

DEMON HUNTER TALENT TREE



DRAGON BOXING

The Dragon Boxers is one of the most notorious of all martial arts schools. Its members meet in secret dojos throughout the Mishima realms under the aegis of the Black Dragon Society. It accepts only commoners as students, and its members have a fearsome reputation as brawlers and fist fighters. Many members go on to become Triad enforcers. The Dragon Boxers school is the sworn enemy of the Storm Warrior school.

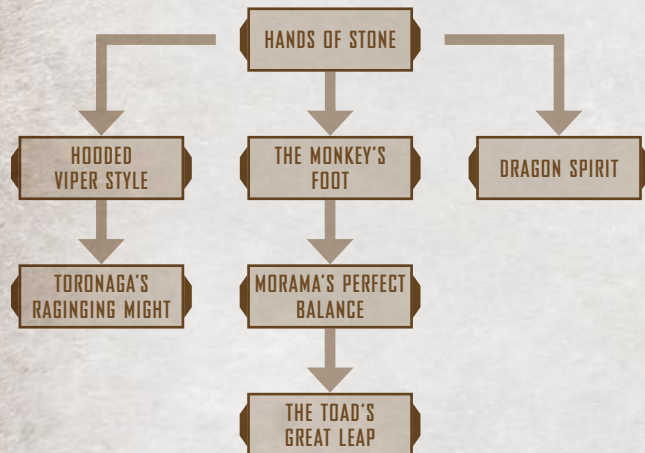
REQUIREMENTS: Commoner or lower; Criminal Record or Criminal career; must not have been a student of the Storm Warrior school.

ENTRY TEST: Average D1 Willpower test.

COST: Restriction 3 (Illegal), Cost 8

STRICTURES: Other than absolute loyalty to the Black Dragon Triad, few strictures exist for Dragon Boxers.

DRAGON BOXER TALENT TREE



GREY MYSTICS

Famed as scholars of the abstruse, the Grey Mystics pursue the more esoteric reaches of the Ki power spectrum. They teach both samurai and commoners, and are a unique exception to the law governing commoners and Ki powers. Commoners may join the Grey Mystics but must swear a more strict oath of allegiance to their samurai lord, wear an identifying marker at all times, and report for additional duties for six hours per week during their free time.

REQUIREMENTS: None. The Grey Mystics School does not discriminate.

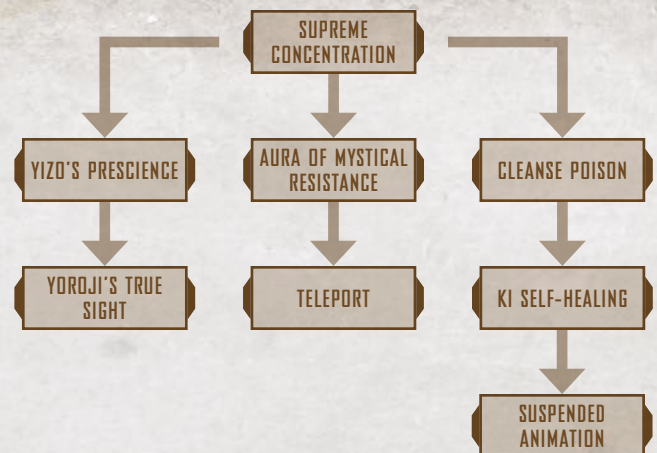
ENTRY TEST: Challenging D2 Willpower test.

COST: Restriction 4, Cost 12

STRICTURES: Grey Mystics must swear absolute fealty to a local Lord – an oath above and beyond the normal expectations of loyalty – and must pursue the accumulation of wisdom and



knowledge. **GREY MYSTICS TALENT TREE**



HUNTING TIGER

The school of the Hunting Tiger teaches its disciples to attack swiftly, stealthily, and only when success is all but guaranteed. It relies on agility and lightning-fast strikes.

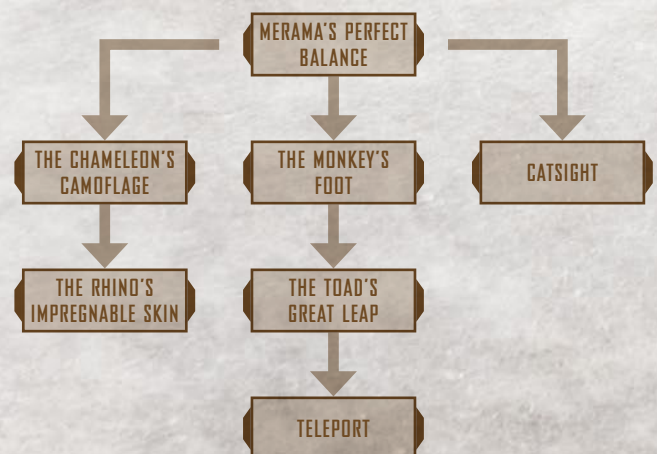
Hunting Tiger techniques are often taught by solitary wandering masters, and the school accepts both samurai and commoner students. Samurai tend to learn a version that focuses on sword use, while commoners usually learn the school's unarmed techniques.

REQUIREMENTS: None. Commoners studying the Hunting Tiger school are subject to Persecution.

ENTRY TEST: Average D1 Willpower test.

COST: Restriction 3, Cost 8

HUNTING TIGER TALENT TREE



STRICTURES: Students of the Hunting Tiger School are taught restraint and patience, to act at the optimal moment. While they are not bound to use their skills only in self-defence, acting rashly or without proper consideration is considered to be conduct unbecoming a student of the school.

STORM WARRIOR

Attack is the best form of defence and only the strong survive; such is the philosophy of the Storm Warrior school. Storm Warrior masters concentrate on pure combat ability, and its disciples are famous for their brutality in war and everyday life. This school's masters will accept both samurai and commoners as students. The Storm Warriors are the sworn enemies of the Dragon Boxers.

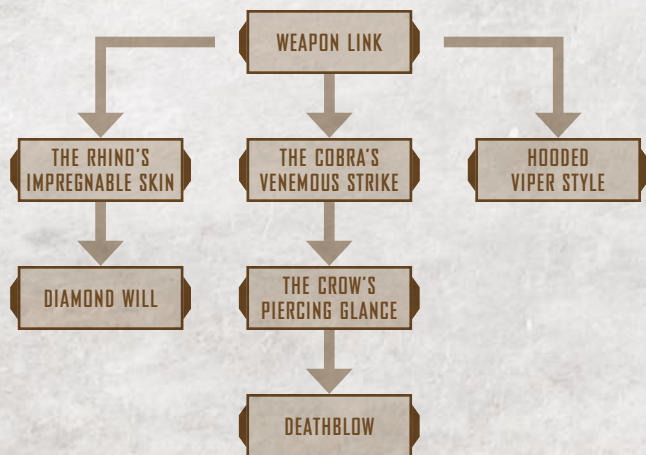
REQUIREMENTS: Must not have been a student of the Dragon Boxer school. Commoners studying at the Storm Warrior school are subject to Persecution.

ENTRY TEST: Average D1 Willpower test.

COST: Restriction 3, Cost 8

STRICTURES: The Storm Warrior school emphasises might over all else. They show no mercy, give no quarter, and have no respect for those who cannot defend themselves. Acts of charity and kindness are looked upon with scorn.

STORM WARRIOR TALENT TREE



TATTOOED MAN

This martial arts school is only open to pledged members of the Triads, teaching them to stalk and kill their enemies with a wide variety of weapons. Disciples of the Tattooed Man are noted for their psychoactive tattoos, which they make visible as a show of bravado when it comes time to kill their victims.

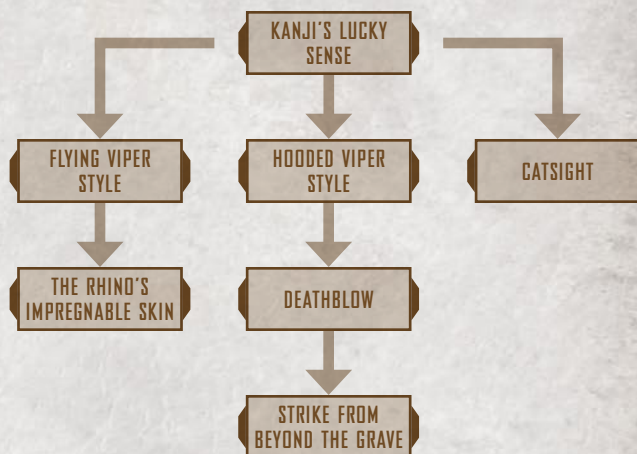
REQUIREMENTS: Membership of the Triads.

ENTRY TEST: Average D1 Willpower test.

COST: Restriction 3 (Illegal), Cost 8

STRICTURES: Those who are taught the ways of the Tattooed Man must swear absolute and unending loyalty to their master, and to the Triads. None who have broken this bond, or shared the school's secrets with an outsider, have survived.

TATTOOED MAN TALENT TREE



WHITE MYSTICS

This unusual school originated as a group of renegade Brotherhood Mystics of the Second Directorate. In the time of the Neronian Heresy, it was a group of renegades who taught the secrets of the Art to any who had the capacity to learn them. Students of this school do not learn Ki powers. Instead, they learn to use the Art just as if they were Mystics of the Brotherhood. They learn the Art from their masters and then roam the human worlds as wandering holy men and women. Of course, the Brotherhood regards them as heretics and the Inquisition captures or kills them whenever possible.

The White Mystics dedicate their lives to helping the poor, the suffering, and the innocent. This often brings them into conflict with Mishima's ruling samurai class.

REQUIREMENTS: None. White Mystics are subject to Persecution.

ENTRY TEST: Challenging D2 Willpower test.

COST: Restriction 4 (Illegal), Cost 15

STRICTURES: White Mystics are held to a high standard, expected not only to protect others from the threat of the Darkness, but also

to aid the poor, the innocent, and those who are suffering. Acts of charity and the protection of the helpless are the primary concerns for White Mystics.

WHITE MYSTIC TALENTS

White Mystics do not learn Ki powers. Rather, a character studying as a White Mystic gains the Mystic talent, and may purchase Art talents. The character may only purchase Art talents from a single Aspect of the Art.



USING KI POWERS

Ki powers come in two broad categories – **Abilities** and **Techniques**. An **ability** is a passive capability that requires no particular effort to use: it is either always on, or it activates automatically when needed. Abilities are essentially talents, though their effects are somewhat more supernatural than those of most talents are.

A **technique** requires effort and concentration to employ – a Standard Action and a Willpower test, with a difficulty determined by the power attempted. Further, a Willpower test to use a technique increases its Repercussion range by an amount equal to the technique's base difficulty, which stacks with any other increases to the Repercussion range. If the character would have a larger Repercussion range due to Dread, that range is used instead.

Rolling a Repercussion when performing a technique has the normal effects, but possible Complications for such powers include gaining a point of Dread or Fatigue, as body and mind are knocked out of harmony.

Each ability and technique lists a number of alternative names. As they are practiced by many different schools, most Ki powers are known by several names, depending on the tradition that particular version comes from.

ABILITIES

As described above, abilities are passive abilities that are either always active, or which activate automatically when needed. Abilities require no tests to use, nor do they require an action. All abilities list a prerequisite – a single skill rating necessary to purchase the talent. This is in addition to any other abilities and techniques on a school's talent tree. The cost of any Ability is determined by its place in a given school's talent tree, as with normal talents. They are considered to be Willpower talents."

THE BAT'S SONAR SENSE

ALSO KNOWN AS: The Bat's Echoes (Deathbringer), The Blind Swordsman, Inexorable Gaze (Demon Hunter).

PREREQUISITES: Observation Expertise 2

The character has trained until his senses are so keen that he does not need to see his target to hit it. When making a melee or ranged attack, he no longer increases the difficulty because of darkness or other visual impairments such as fog or smoke. This ability does not affect penalties caused by a weapon's range category.

CATSIGHT

ALSO KNOWN AS: Watchful Shadow (Deathbringer), Tiger's Golden Eyes (Hunting Tiger), Maau Mukgwong (Tattooed Man).

PREREQUISITES: Observation Expertise 1

The character can see clearly in dim light, much as a cat does. If there is even the tiniest amount of light, tests he attempts do not increase in difficulty due to poor lighting.

CLEANSE POISON

ALSO KNOWN AS: Impurity Washed Away (Grey Mystic).

PREREQUISITES: Willpower Expertise 1.

The character has such great control over his body's internal Ki flow that he can alter his biological balance to neutralise any poison or disease. Whenever a poison or disease would require him to make a Resistance test, he may attempt a Willpower test instead. Further, he gains one bonus Momentum on tests to resist the effects of poisons and diseases for each rank of Willpower Focus he possesses.

DRAGON SPIRIT

ALSO KNOWN AS: Transcendent Flesh (Celestial Path), Scales of the Serpent (Dragon Boxer).

PREREQUISITES: Willpower Expertise 2

The character is impervious to extremes of temperature. He automatically succeeds on all Resistance tests made to resist the effects of hot or cold environments, and does not suffer damage from sources of extreme heat or cold, such as flamethrowers or the Burning status effect. The Initial damage of weapons with the Incendiary quality still harms the character as normal, unless that damage was caused by a flamethrower – he is immune to fire, but a flaming bullet is still a bullet.

FLYING VIPER STYLE

ALSO KNOWN AS: Scouring Tempest of Lead (Demon Hunter), Fei Zukse Kyun (Tattooed Man).

PREREQUISITES: Ranged Weapon Expertise 2

The character has been trained to use a gun in each hand, wielding them as extensions of his own body. When wielding a ranged weapon in each hand, he gains one bonus Momentum, which must be spent towards the Swift Attack Momentum Spend. If he has both Flying Viper Style and Hooded Viper Style, he may mix and match between ranged and melee weapons as desired, though he still only gains one bonus Momentum, not one from each ability.

HANDS OF STONE

ALSO KNOWN AS: Strike of the Avalanche (Celestial Path), Dragon's Claws (Dragon Boxer).

PREREQUISITES: Unarmed Combat Expertise 2

The character has honed his bare hands in to deadly weapons that can shatter stone. He may parry any melee attack with his unarmed attacks, and his unarmed attacks deal 1+**T**3 damage, with the Stun and Vicious 1 qualities.

HOODED VIPER STYLE

ALSO KNOWN AS: Dragon's Lashing Tail (Dragon Boxer), Lightning Strikes Twice (Storm Warrior), Faanchantau Kyun (Tattooed Man).

PREREQUISITES: Close Combat Expertise 2

The character been trained to wield a pair of blades, or to combine his unarmed prowess with his blades. The weapons must be wielded one handed (though they do not have to be one-handed weapons). When using a melee weapon in each hand (which may include an unarmed attack), he gains one bonus Momentum, which must be spent towards the Swift Attack Momentum Spend. If he has both Flying Viper Style and Hooded Viper Style, he may mix and match between ranged and melee weapons as desired, though he still only gains one bonus Momentum, not one from each ability.



The martial artists can call upon ki-powers to keep the darkest of creatures at bay.

KANJI'S LUCKY SENSE

ALSO KNOWN AS: Fun-zi ge Gatgam (Tattooed Man).

PREREQUISITES: Insight Expertise 2

The character is preternaturally alert. Whenever danger threatens, he is ready for it. When an unknown peril threatens the character, the GM may choose to gain one Dark Symmetry point and inform him of the threat. This warning comes in different forms for different characters – one character may have the hair on the back of his neck stand on end when danger is near, while another may find that their stomach grumbles or an old war wound aches as danger approaches.

LIGHTSLEEP

ALSO KNOWN AS: Restful Vigil (Demon Hunter).

PREREQUISITES: Willpower Expertise 1

This ability enables the character to sleep and yet remain aware of his surroundings. While he is asleep, he does not increase the difficulty of any Observation tests made to detect threats, and is immediately and automatically aware of any character that comes within Reach. Further, a character with this ability needs only four hours of sleep, rather than eight, to count as having a full night's rest.

MARAMA'S PERFECT BALANCE

ALSO KNOWN AS: Dragon's Perfect Flight (Dragon Boxer), Tiger's Sleek Pelt (Hunting Tiger)

PREREQUISITES: Acrobatics Expertise 1

This power gives the character perfect control over his balance. He can run along tightropes, telephone wires, or narrow ledges at full speed without falling, reducing the difficulty of all Acrobatics tests by one step for every rank of Acrobatics Focus he possesses, to a minimum of one. Further, he gains additional Soak against falling damage equal to his number of ranks of Acrobatics Focus.

THE MONGOOSE'S DODGE

ALSO KNOWN AS: Step Between Blades (Celestial Path).

PREREQUISITES: Acrobatics Expertise 2

The character has trained to the point that he dodges incoming attacks by reflex rather than conscious effort. He is not required to spend a Dark Symmetry point in order to attempt a Dodge Response Action. If he has a means of taking more than one Response Action, this ability only benefits the *first* Dodge Response Action attempted each turn – any additional Dodges must be paid for as normal.

THE MONGOOSE'S ARTFUL DODGE

ALSO KNOWN AS: Untouchable Step (Deathbringer).

PREREQUISITES: Acrobatics Expertise 2

The character moves with impossible swiftness, becoming a blur of motion as he eludes attacks. He may make an additional Response Action each turn (costing one Dark Symmetry point as normal), but this second Response Action may only be a Dodge.

THE WAY OF THE SEVEN SAGES

THE RHINO'S IMPREGNABLE SKIN

ALSO KNOWN AS: (Hunting Tiger), The Uncaring Storm (Storm Warrior), Sai ge Gin Pei (Tattooed Man).

PREREQUISITES: Resistance Expertise 2

The character has toughened his body with special training to the point where it seems impervious to pain. He gains one additional Soak to all locations.

STRIKE FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE

ALSO KNOWN AS: Unyielding Assailant (Deathbringer), Yau Fanmou Jihau Daagik (Tattooed Man).

PREREQUISITES: Willpower Expertise 3

An arcane ritual has sealed the character's spirit into his body for a short time after death. When he dies, his spirit will animate his body and ruthlessly pursue its killers. Upon death, his body remains animate, suffering one Mental Wound at the start of each round. The character ignores the effects of any and all injuries he has suffered. Once he can suffer no more Mental Wounds, his body finally dies.

WEAPON LINK

ALSO KNOWN AS: Awaken the Sword's Spirit (Blademaster), Rite of Attunement (Storm Warrior).

PREREQUISITES: Close Combat Expertise 1 or Unarmed Combat Expertise 1

The character has forged a bond with a chosen melee weapon, which may be his unarmed strike. This weapon inflicts an additional +1 damage. This ability may only be taken once, but he may change the weapon this ability is linked to, with a day-long ritual.

TECHNIQUES

Techniques are active abilities, requiring concentration and time to perform. The cost of any Technique is determined by its place in a given school's talent tree, as with normal talents. They are considered to be Willpower talents. All techniques are presented in the following format:

PREREQUISITES: This is a single skill that must be possessed before the technique can be learned, regardless of the school from which it was learned.

DIFFICULTY: The difficulty of the Willpower test used to perform the technique.

ACTION: The action required to perform the technique in combat. This is frequently a Restricted Action, but some techniques may differ.

DURATION: This heading describes the amount of time the technique's effects will last. This will commonly be described as a number of minutes. There are two other common possibilities here: techniques with an Instant duration, which take effect immediately

and have essentially permanent effects like damage or healing, and techniques that are maintained through concentration. Duration for Ki techniques functions identically to duration for the Art of the Light, which is explained in detail on page 170 of the *Mutant Chronicles* core book.

BASE EFFECT: The normal effects of the technique.

MOMENTUM: Any specific uses for Momentum that apply to a given technique.

DIAMOND WILL

ALSO KNOWN AS: Meditation of Kyudo (Demon Hunter), Unyielding Tempest (Storm Warrior).

PREREQUISITES: Willpower Expertise 2

DIFFICULTY: Challenging D2

ACTION: Free Action

DURATION: Concentration

BASE EFFECT: This technique enables the practitioner to block out pain entirely. While this technique remains in effect, the character may ignore any status effects and conditions caused by injury or Dread (up to and including death)—both those he already possesses, and those he may suffer while the gift remains in effect. The injuries remain, and the character can still suffer damage as normal, but the penalties and hindrances caused by those injuries are suppressed while this technique remains in effect. This technique also renders the character immune to any powers or effects that are reliant on pain or other sensation; he is temporarily inured and oblivious to all physical sensation, and has no sense of touch.

MOMENTUM: When performing this technique, Momentum generated may be used for the following additional effects:

- ◆ For each Momentum spent, the character gains one Soak to all locations. Up to three Momentum may be spent on this.
- ◆ For each Momentum spent, the character may recover one Dread.

AURA OF MYSTICAL RESISTANCE

ALSO KNOWN AS: Spirit Armour (Demon Hunter), Deny the Sorcerous Touch (Grey Mystic).

PREREQUISITES: Insight Expertise 2

DIFFICULTY: Average D1

ACTION: Response Action

DURATION: Instant

BASE EFFECT: The practitioner has been trained to resist all external mystical influences. This technique can be performed as a Response Action to resist the effects of a supernatural power targeting the character. If successfully performed, this technique increases the difficulty of any power used against him by one, or adds one additional d20 to any roll made to resist a power's effects.

MOMENTUM: When performing this technique, Momentum generated may be used for the following additional effects:

- ◆ For each Momentum spent, the character gains one Soak to all locations against the effects of damaging supernatural powers.
- ◆ For two Momentum, a power used against the character increases in difficulty by an additional rank, or adds one additional bonus d20 to an opposed roll made to resist a power's effects.

THE CHAMELEON'S SKIN

ALSO KNOWN AS: Step Into Dusk (Deathbringer), Predator's Guise (Hunting Tiger).

PREREQUISITES: Stealth Expertise 1

DIFFICULTY: Average D1

ACTION: Standard Action

DURATION: Concentration

BASE EFFECT: This technique enables the practitioner to become virtually invisible as long as he remains perfectly still. While this technique remains in effect, the character gains two bonus Momentum on all Stealth tests to go unseen. The technique's effects end immediately when the character moves. This technique is a secret known mainly to the Shadow Walker cult and certain other secret societies.

MOMENTUM: When performing this technique, Momentum generated may be used for the following additional effects:

- ◆ For each Momentum spent, the character gains one additional bonus Momentum on Stealth tests made while the power remains in effect.

THE COBRA'S VENOMOUS STRIKE

ALSO KNOWN AS: Touch of Lightning (Storm Warrior).

PREREQUISITES: Unarmed Combat Expertise 2

DIFFICULTY: Average D1

ACTION: Restricted Action

DURATION: One round

BASE EFFECT: The character focusses all of his will and fury into his fist until it boils and seethes with energy. This enables him to strike with terrifying force. The character's next unarmed strike gains the Vicious 3 quality, but the character must make a successful unarmed strike before the end of his current turn, or the effect is wasted.

MOMENTUM: When performing this technique, Momentum generated may be used for the following additional effects:

- ◆ For each Momentum spent, the character's next unarmed strike inflicts one additional damage.
- ◆ For each Momentum spent, the character may apply one of the following qualities to his next unarmed strike: Knockdown, Spread 1, Stun, or Toxic 2.

THE CROW'S PIERCING GLANCE

ALSO KNOWN AS: Assassin's Scrutiny (Deathbringer), The Lightning's Path (Storm Warrior).

PREREQUISITES: Insight Expertise 1

DIFFICULTY: Average D1

ACTION: Restricted Action

DURATION: One round

BASE EFFECT: This technique allows the practitioner to use his Ki to guide his strikes or shots to any weak points in his enemy's armour. The character's next melee or ranged attack within Close range gains the Armour Piercing 1 weapon quality, but the character must make a successful attack before the end of his current turn or the effect is wasted.

MOMENTUM: When performing this technique, Momentum generated may be used for the following additional effects:

- ◆ For each Momentum spent, the character increases the rating of the Armour Piercing quality by one.
- ◆ For one Momentum, the character's next attack gains the Gruesome or Vile quality.

DEATHBLOW

ALSO KNOWN AS: Touch of Finality (Deathbringer), Storm's Crescendo (Storm Warrior), Ziming Daagik (Tattooed Man).

PREREQUISITES: Close Combat Expertise 2

DIFFICULTY: Challenging D2

ACTION: Restricted Action

DURATION: One round

BASE EFFECT: The character focusses his Ki into making his next blow a deadly one. The character's next melee attack inflicts two additional damage, but he must make a successful attack before the end of his current turn or the effect is wasted.

MOMENTUM: When performing this technique, Momentum generated may be used for the following additional effects:

- ◆ For each Momentum spent, the character's next melee attack inflicts one additional damage.
- ◆ For one Momentum, the character's next attack gains the Vicious 1 quality. For each additional Momentum spent, the quality's rating increases by one, to a maximum of Vicious 3.

KI SELF-HEALING

ALSO KNOWN AS: Heaven's Endless Vigour (Celestial Path), *Reiki* (Grey Mystic).

PREREQUISITES: Resistance Expertise 1

DIFFICULTY: Average D1

ACTION: Standard Action

DURATION: Instant

BASE EFFECT: The practitioner sends waves of energy throughout his body that heals wounds, reknits torn flesh, and soothes pain. When this technique is successfully used, he may immediately heal two wounds, starting with the most severe (Critical first, then Serious, then Light).

MOMENTUM: When performing this technique, Momentum generated may be used for the following additional effects:

- ◆ For each Momentum spent, heal one additional wound.
- ◆ For each Momentum spent, recover one Dread.
- ◆ For one Momentum, the character may target one character within Reach, who receives the benefit instead.

THE WAY OF THE SEVEN SAGES

THE MONKEY'S FOOT

ALSO KNOWN AS: Serpent's Elusive Step (Dragon Boxer), Hunter's Swift Evasion (Hunting Tiger).

PREREQUISITES: Acrobatics Expertise 1

DIFFICULTY: Average D1

ACTION: Restricted Action or Response Action

DURATION: One round

BASE EFFECT: This technique enables the character to perform incredible acrobatic feats with supernatural ease. He may use this power as a Restricted Action to avoid attacks or as a Response Action when he suffers falling damage. If used as a Restricted Action, the character moves to any point within his current zone (including into Reach), or into any adjacent zone (but not into Reach), and increases the difficulty of any attacks against him by one step until the start of his next turn. If used as a Response Action against falling, he gains **↑3** Soak against the damage suffered.

MOMENTUM: When performing this technique, Momentum generated may be used for the following additional effects:

- ◆ For each Momentum spent, the difficulty of attacks against the character increase by a further step.
- ◆ For one Momentum, the character gains one bonus Momentum on his next attack roll against a character who attacked him and missed while this power was in effect.

MONURA'S QUICKENED STEP

ALSO KNOWN AS: Warrior's Swiftess (Blademaster), Heaven-Sent Motion (Celestial Path).

PREREQUISITES: Athletics Expertise 1

DIFFICULTY: Average D1

ACTION: Restricted Action

DURATION: One round

BASE EFFECT: The character focusses all of his inner strength on enhancing his quickness, enabling him to move at impossible speeds. This technique must be used at the start of the character's turn, before any other actions are attempted. If successful, the character gains one additional Standard Action this turn.

MOMENTUM: When performing this technique, Momentum generated may be used for the following additional effects:

- ◆ For two Momentum, the technique's duration changes to Concentration, granting additional actions each turn while it is sustained
- ◆ For two Momentum, the character's gains a second additional Standard Action this turn.

SHADOW WALK

ALSO KNOWN AS: N/A

PREREQUISITES: Stealth Expertise 2

DIFFICULTY: Challenging D2

ACTION: Standard Action

DURATION: Instant

BASE EFFECT: By stepping into any patch of darkness, the character may vanish and reappear in any other area of darkness

or shadow. The character steps into one area of shadow at the start of this action, and then emerges from any other area of shadow within line of sight and Medium range. Only the Shadow Walker cult teaches this technique.

MOMENTUM: When performing this technique, Momentum generated may be used for the following additional effects:

- ◆ For one Momentum, the character may attempt a Stealth test to hide once he has emerged at the destination. For each additional Momentum spent, this Stealth test gains one bonus Momentum.
- ◆ For one Momentum, the destination may be any other area of shadow within line of sight and Long range.

SUPREME CONCENTRATION

ALSO KNOWN AS: Perfect Clarity (Grey Mystic).

PREREQUISITES: Willpower Expertise 1

DIFFICULTY: Average D1

ACTION: Standard Action

DURATION: Concentration

BASE EFFECT: When using this technique, the character's clarity and attention increase considerably, greatly augmenting his prowess. Choose a single general skill for which the character already has at least one rank of Expertise. The character gains a single rank of Expertise in that skill, which stacks with those he already possesses, to a maximum of Expertise 5. Multiple uses of this technique do not stack.

MOMENTUM: When performing this technique, Momentum generated may be used for the following additional effects:

- ◆ For each Momentum spent, increase the number of ranks of Expertise granted by one.
- ◆ For each Momentum spent, gain a rank of Focus in the chosen skill. This stacks with any focus the character already possesses for that skill, to a maximum of Focus 5.
- ◆ For one Momentum, allow an advanced skill to be selected, instead of a basic skill. The Mysticism skill may not be selected.

SUSPENDED ANIMATION

ALSO KNOWN AS: Endless Perfect Sleep (Grey Mystic)

PREREQUISITES: Willpower Expertise 2

DIFFICULTY: Average D1

ACTION: Standard Action

DURATION: See below

BASE EFFECT: This power enables the character to shut down all his normal bodily functions. His heart rate slows, his breathing becomes almost imperceptible, and he requires virtually no air or sustenance. In suspended animation, he can survive for up to an hour without air, and can survive for ten times as long as normal without food or water. If he is poisoned or under the effects of a disease, entering suspended animation pauses the effects of that poison or disease. While in suspended animation, the character is effectively asleep, and will not be aware of his surroundings unless he also has the **Lightsleep** power. When he enters suspended

animation, he must determine how long he will remain in this state before waking up normally.

MOMENTUM: When performing this technique, Momentum generated may be used for the following additional effects:

- ◆ For each Momentum spent, the character gains the benefits of a single day's rest during the course of his suspended animation. Only one Momentum may be spent on this for every full hour of the suspended animation.

TELEPORT

ALSO KNOWN AS: First Master's Step (Deathbringer), Single Step Through The Void (Demon Hunter), Shunkan Ido (Grey Mystic).

PREREQUISITES: Willpower Expertise 3

DIFFICULTY: Challenging D2

ACTION: Restricted Action

DURATION: Instant

BASE EFFECT: This technique enables a character to move from one location to another in an instant, without crossing the intervening space. If this technique is successfully performed, the character moves immediately to any point within Medium range that he is able to perceive in some way, ignoring all intervening terrain and obstacles.

MOMENTUM: When performing this technique, Momentum generated may be used for the following additional effects:

- ◆ For two Momentum, the character may instead move to any point within Long range that he is able to perceive.
- ◆ For two Momentum, gain the benefits of an Exploit Weakness action on the character's next attack.

THE TOAD'S GREAT LEAP

ALSO KNOWN AS: Karumijutsu (Blademaster), Soaring Dragon Leap (Dragon Boxer), Tiger's Pounce (Hunting Tiger).

PREREQUISITES: Acrobatics Expertise 1

DIFFICULTY: Average D1

ACTION: Restricted Action

DURATION: Instant

BASE EFFECT: The character focusses his Ki into a mighty leap. He can immediately leap to any adjacent zone, including into Reach of an enemy, even where the zone being entered is above or below his starting point. During this jump, the character leaps over all difficult and dangerous terrain between those points (obstacles that are enclosing, such as a roof, or airborne, such as toxic gases, cannot be ignored in this way – the GM's discretion applies).

MOMENTUM: When performing this technique, Momentum generated may be used for the following additional effects:

- ◆ For each Momentum spent, the character adds $\uparrow 1$ to the damage of a melee attack before the end of his turn.
- ◆ For one Momentum, the character's landing creates a shockwave, forcing every enemy within Reach of the character to attempt an Average D1 Athletics test or be knocked prone. For one additional Momentum, this test becomes a Challenging D2 Athletics test.

TORONAGA'S RAGING MIGHT

ALSO KNOWN AS: Fury of the Dragon (Dragon Boxer).

PREREQUISITES: Athletics Expertise 2

DIFFICULTY: Challenging D2

ACTION: Restricted Action

DURATION: One minute

BASE EFFECT: The character focusses all his Ki into augmenting his strength to superhuman levels. If this power is successfully used, he gains one rank of Supernatural Strength while the technique remains in effect (see page 273 of the *Mutant Chronicles* core book for details). This grants one automatic success on all Strength tests, as well as increases all damage he inflicts with melee attacks by one. As this benefit is temporary, it does not increase the character's wounds.

MOMENTUM: When performing this technique, Momentum generated may be used for the following additional effects:

- ◆ For two Momentum, the character gains one additional rank of Supernatural Strength, which in turn grants one additional automatic success on all Strength tests and increases melee damage by a further plus one.
- ◆ For one Momentum, the character's melee attacks gain the Knockback quality while this technique remains in effect.
- ◆ For each Momentum spent, the technique's duration increases by an additional minute.

YIZO'S PRESCIENCE

ALSO KNOWN AS: Zanshin (Blademaster), Perfect Awareness (Celestial Path), The Turn of the Worlds (Grey Mystic).

PREREQUISITES: Insight Expertise 1

DIFFICULTY: Average D1

ACTION: Free Action

DURATION: Concentration

BASE EFFECT: The character's awareness of his surroundings and the events around him are honed to supernatural perfection. When this technique is performed, the character becomes perfectly aware of everything and everyone within Close range. This includes creatures – even ones hidden or invisible – as well as any uses of supernatural powers, and extends through walls and other obstacles.

MOMENTUM: When performing this technique, Momentum generated may be used for the following additional effects:

- ◆ For one Momentum, the character's awareness covers everything and everyone within Medium range. For three Momentum, the character's awareness instead covers everything and everyone within Long range.
- ◆ For each Momentum spent, the character gains one bonus Momentum on all Observation and Insight tests made to discern the nature of creatures, objects, and supernatural phenomena within the area of his awareness.



YORAMA'S DEFLECTING HANDS

ALSO KNOWN AS: Wall of Blades (Blademaster).

PREREQUISITES: Close Combat Expertise 2

DIFFICULTY: Average D1

ACTION: Free Action

DURATION: Concentration

BASE EFFECT: The character focusses his mind so that he can knock aside the bullets of his enemies. This technique grants the Full Defence 1 quality to any one melee weapon the character is currently wielding (which may include his unarmed strike), for as long as the technique remains in effect.

MOMENTUM: When performing this technique, Momentum generated may be used for the following additional effects:

- ◆ For each Momentum spent, the character may increase the Full Defence rating granted by this technique by one.
- ◆ For two Momentum, the character gains an additional Response Action each turn while this technique is in effect. This additional Response Action still costs a Dark Symmetry point as normal.

YUROJI'S TRUE SIGHT

ALSO KNOWN AS: Unrelenting Gaze (Demon Hunter), Truth of the World (Grey Mystic).

PREREQUISITES: Insight Expertise 3

DIFFICULTY: Challenging D2

ACTION: Free Action

DURATION: Instant

BASE EFFECT: The character's mystically attuned senses see things as they are. If this technique is successfully used, the character's senses will not be fooled by deception or concealment: invisible and hidden people will appear in plain sight, disguises will not fool him, and supernatural powers used to deceive will be obvious to him. Even hidden objects and secret doors are as clear as day, and normally-invisible uses of supernatural powers are apparent.

MOMENTUM: When performing this technique, Momentum generated may be used for the following additional effects:

- ◆ For one Momentum, the character gains the ability to discern the presence of corruption or stigmata, becoming distinctly uneasy in their presence.



The two samurai noticed a hidden threat using Yizo's Prescience.

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

The cultures of Mishima are numerous and diverse. Each keiretsu, company, and geographic region is unique, influenced by its living situation and the long-standing traditions passed down through the generations. Having said that, when the keiretsu signed up to be part of the Mishima family centuries ago, they took on certain cultural touchstones that remain common to every Mishima employee today, and form the basis of the corporation's business principles and codes of conduct.

HONOUR

Above all else, Mishima society is governed by the principle of honour – and its counterpart, shame. You win honour by excelling in your field, by serving your company well, and by supporting your family. A person of honour is a person who can be trusted. A trustworthy person wins contracts and endorsements, promotions and rewards. This in turn brings more honour, in a positive

THE FINAL CUT

When facing a complete loss of honour and all else is lost, many samurai choose to commit seppuku, ritual suicide, rather than bring shame upon their families and work units. This ceremonial disembowelment is usually performed in front of witnesses, and consists of plunging a blade – usually the samurai's signature wakizashi – into the abdomen and slicing from left to right before being decapitated by the samurai's 'second'.

Ritual suicide is used by samurai warriors to avoid the shame of capture by the enemy, or to wipe out the shame associated with a dishonourable act. Samurai may also be ordered by their lords to commit seppuku as a punishment, which is considered less grave than execution. In general, samurai must obtain permission to carry out the act.

Commoners are never expected or ordered to commit seppuku. Their honour code is distinct from that of the samurai, and contained in a separate chapter of Mishima's official handbook for employees.

reinforcement cycle. The corporate management handbook recommends that daimyos be free with the promise of such reward and judicious with its application, lest they run out of honours to bestow. The greatest daimyos are masters of making their samurai desire even sideways promotions and 'up-titling', where they get the same job but a more impressive job title.

Honour is, to some degree, shared with one's family and work unit. The merits of one reflect well on the others. But where glory is concentrated in the person who wins it, shame is positively contagious. Fail to perform your duties, show cowardice on the battlefield, or demonstrate inadequate filial piety in your family relationships, and your loss of honour will tarnish those around you by association. This collective responsibility creates tremendous peer pressure on individuals, and goes a long way towards ensuring that Mishima employees are reluctant to rock the boat in any way.

Outside observers of Mishima culture note that this social model is based entirely on public perception rather than inculcating an interior moral code. Therefore, Mishima employees are motivated to avoid being seen to act wrongly, rather than to avoid specific actions in themselves.

FAMILY

Ever since the corporation's early days in the exodus from Earth, Mishima has been a family concern. The first Overlord was the founder of the Mishima dynasty, and his descendants have ruled the corporation ever since.

This dynastic structure extends throughout Mishima culture. The majority of long-term production and supply contracts within the corporation permit, or require, each party to pass on his side of the deal to a named inheritor, invariably a family member. Property and land is handed down in a similar fashion, although technically all Mishima land belongs to the Overlord and contracts of tenancy in perpetuity are granted instead of selling land outright.

Mishimans have a deeply ingrained respect for their elders, which informs the pre-eminent place tradition holds in the culture, and the custom of following the same career path as your forebears. The family is held to come before all else, even obeying your lord. Disobedience may be punished by death, but that death brings no dishonour if it comes about in the defence of your family.

A POUND OF FLESH



During the Dark Symmetry Era, a practice sprang up among the common people and lower echelons of the samurai that took respect for elders to extreme lengths. A group called the Warimata Children encouraged “filial cannibalism”. There are many recorded instances in this time of children cutting off pieces of their own flesh, preparing it in meals – usually soup – and serving it to parents who were either mortally ill or in dire financial straits.

The Warimata Children believed that doing so would transfer the child’s ki energy to the parent, bringing them improved health or fortune. Amid accusations of heresy, the group was suppressed by the authorities and its ringleaders executed.

“In serving his parents a filial son reveres them in daily life; he makes them happy while he nourishes them; he takes anxious care of them in sickness; he shows great sorrow over their death; and he sacrifices to them with solemnity.”

- Marama, *Sage of Harmony*

LOYALTY

The traditional emphasis on the family is extended to one’s superiors in the Mishima corporation. As the child is subordinate to the parent, the younger brother to the elder, so all are subject to the Overlord – the father of the corporation. The daimyos must look to him and treat him with the respect and deference due to a father, while guiding and protecting the lords and retainers beneath them as they would their own children. This model applies all the way down the Mishima hierarchy.

Loyalty is particularly important to the samurai, who swear to serve their liege lords faithfully unto death. Dying in the service of one’s lord is the most honourable act a samurai can perform.

THE PRINCIPLES OF RIGHT ACTION

Yizo, Sage of Wisdom, taught that social disorder stems from a failure to perceive and correctly order the world. She taught that to achieve proper order, every member of society must act in accordance with their role so as to bring about sei-meï, the “correctness of names”.

According to the Sage, correct living and efficient corporate governance require that all classes of employees act in accordance with what they ought to be, so that the reality of things accords with the implications given by their names. In short, a manager must act as a true manager; a daughter-in-law must be all that her

role demands; a warrior must embody the attributes of the true warrior; the street sweeper must conform to the ideal of one who sweeps streets.

Each person has social and corporate standings designated by the names given to them, and with each of these names come responsibilities and duties. Following orders from one in authority over you means you are showing them respect, and therefore following sei-meï.

Sage Yizo outlined three key relationships that must attain sei-meï to achieve prosperity: parent and child; elder and younger; manager and subordinate.



MISHIMA SOCIETY

Mishima society is rigidly stratified. Every Mishima employee must pay tithes to his or her superior: commoners to their executives, executives to their lords, a lord to his daimyo, and the daimyo to the Lord Heir to whom he owes fealty – or, in a handful of cases, directly to the Overlord, who also receives tribute from the Lord Heirs.

THE ELITE

At the very top of Mishima’s samurai caste, *Overlord Nagoya* is the highest ranking individual in the entire corporation. Outwardly revered as the head of the firm, Mishima does everything in his name. All treaties are signed in his name, war is declared in his name, and the banknotes bear his seal. But in truth the real power is held by the Lord Heirs.

The *Lord Heirs* are responsible for Mishima’s fortunes on their respective worlds: Moya controls Mercury, Maru rules on Venus, and Mariko leads Mishima Mars. Theoretically, each is the ultimate authority over any Mishima activity on their assigned planet, but recently Mishima Mars subsidiaries have begun operating on Venus and vice versa, and an entire Venesian province has declared its allegiance to Lord Heir Moya on Mercury.

Beneath the Lord Heirs are the heads of the keiretsu, the **daimyos**. In theory, all daimyos are of equal rank, but in fact their status varies based on the wealth and resources of their keiretsu, the number of troops they can field, and their age and esteem in the eyes of their peers. Success as a general or skills at politics and intrigue are the two main routes to achieving prominence among the daimyos. Outsiders usually translate the title of daimyo as “warlord” or “lord commander”.



Both the Hatamoto and corporate samurai are formidable warriors in their own right.

Beneath the daimyos are the lesser, but still senior, executives known as **lords**. Each lord swears allegiance to a daimyo and rules a portion of his industrial domain in his name. Variations of rank or status between lords depend as much on the economic or military power of their daimyos as the acumen of the lords.

All daimyos and lords have *hatamoto*, their closest retainers. Originally this title referred only to the personal bodyguard of the Overlord himself, but the term has spread into general usage. A hatamoto is a retainer deemed sufficiently trustworthy to be allowed to wear weapons in his master's presence and act as his bodyguard on the battlefield. Within the Mishima territories a hatamoto is assumed to speak with the authority of his master and may give orders to any lesser executives or workers. Hatamoto form an elite executive class within the corporation, and to be made hatamoto is one of the greatest honours a samurai may be granted. The position is not hereditary, though sons of hatamoto stand a better chance of achieving the distinction. On the battlefield, hatamoto form an elite honour guard for their master.

THE SAMURAI

Making up the vast majority of Mishima's warriors and administrators, the samurai are the distinctive public face of the corporation. By custom and decree, only samurai are permitted to carry the paired

swords of the daisho or to own battlesuits. Only they are allowed to carry weapons in public, and they need tolerate no slur on their honour from any commoner.

The warrior-managers of Mishima's samurai caste can be broadly split into two types: full-time soldiers, and those who focus on business affairs.

The former type are usually from lower ranking samurai families.

They exist to fight for their lords and obey orders, carrying them out to the best of their ability. When not on active duty these warriors train hard and play hard.

Higher-ranking samurai must also be ready at a moment's notice to take up arms as and when they are commanded to do so. However, they spend far more time on their business affairs: overseeing production quotas, attending meetings, and so forth. They are considered more valuable in this role than on the battlefield, and so they are only called to arms in times of dire need.

A samurai is within his rights to kill a commoner for any insult, real or imagined. However, if the commoner in question is subordinate to another samurai, and gave no insult, this may constitute misappropriation of company resources and prompt a duel of

honour. For this reason, samurai must be very careful when travelling through areas operated by another keiretsu, and usually bring at least one junior executive or intern with them to act as a witness to the correctness of the samurai's actions.

Samurai may call on their subordinates for military as well as financial support. If a subordinate cannot pay or otherwise make restitution, the superior may seize property in recompense, or assign it to another, more favoured vassal.

Demotion from the samurai class is virtually unheard of, but potential loss of status within the class lies in wait as punishment for even the slightest failure. Association with a samurai shamed in this way carries a stigma of its own, and such a cloud can hang over a person's family, work unit, or military squadron for years. Samurai so punished frequently choose to commit ritual suicide rather than bring dishonour on their colleagues and loved ones.

The majority of samurai are shareholder samurai, and form the basis of the hereditary warrior-executive caste. Their shareholder agreements entitle them to dividend payouts, varying degrees of influence over the corporation, and very occasional votes on

matters of corporate governance. Shareholder samurai are able to pass on their shares and concomitant status to their descendants, which is how they are able to form family clans within the corporation.

The least prestigious of this class are the low shareholders. They own shares only in the subsidiary that employs them. High shareholders own stock in the umbrella corporation and perhaps other subsidiaries of the keiretsu. Very rarely a particularly prominent samurai may even be a shareholder in the Mishima System Holdings Group itself.

At the bottom of the corporate samurai caste, higher only than the masterless ronin, are the life samurai. Barely one in a hundred samurai are part of this class, owning no shares but still employed by a keiretsu and permitted the honour of carrying the daishō. The children of life samurai do not automatically gain samurai status. There are two ways to become a life samurai: be one of the rare commoners promoted to samurai status, or be demoted from the ranks of shareholder samurai by having your assets stripped as punishment for failing your lord. Neither of these paths affords life samurai much respect.

CELEBRITY SAMURAI



At the beginning of the Dark Symmetry Era, the craze for samurai reality TV was at its height. Celebrity samurai in shows such as *Jaji Kaigan* turned their lives and battles into hugely popular reality shows that were screened across the system 24 hours a day, filmed and live-streamed from floating camera drones that documented nearly everything the samurai did.

Jaji Kaigan recorded its highest ever viewing figures in its final episode, when the camera drones following young, attractive samurai Kai and Yuri were corrupted by the power of the Dark Apostles and murdered the TV idols with their newly-sprouted spikes and tentacles. The show was immediately cancelled by the daimyo of Red Sun, and the producers were ordered to commit seppuku.

Fearing for their own lives, the production teams behind similarly popular reality series such as *Longshore de Okonawa Reta* and *Watashi wa Samuraida – Koko Kara Watashi o Shutoku!* hurriedly took their shows off the air.

In recent years the reality genre has regained popularity, but the subjects are almost exclusively commoners, and advanced recording technology is avoided as a safety precaution.

SAMURAI CLOTHING

In everyday life, the samurai caste favour smart business attire and formal suits, even when relaxing off-duty. Understated colours predominate, with exquisite detailing used to mark the wearer out as a person of taste and refinement.

In battle, samurai warriors decorate their armour with the logos of the Mishima corporation and their keiretsu. Wealthy samurai, or those fully funded by their daimyos, need go no further, though many choose to add personalised calligraphy inscriptions and ornamentation. Samurai armour is often brightly coloured in the livery of the wearer's clan or keiretsu.

The bulk of shareholder samurai must maintain their equipment with the aid of money from advertisers or by endorsing products in return for free supplies of weapons and armour. In addition to their keiretsu and Mishima logos, these samurai bear the slogans and marks of restaurant chains, car manufacturers, TV shows, and other sponsors on their armour and banners. In general, the poorer the samurai, the more sponsor logos they have plastered all over them.

Life samurai find it hard to attract such sponsors and so must generally make do with whatever low-grade gear they can get from the company armoury.

BUSHIDO IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

The traditional code of conduct for Mishima executives, derived from the Way of the Seven Sages, is known as bushido, taking its name from a similar code developed in ancient times.

Exactly what constitutes true bushido is a matter of no small debate among the samurai. Every major school of thought identifies at least three of the following as bushido's key tenets:

- ◆ Integrity
- ◆ Courage
- ◆ Benevolence
- ◆ Respect
- ◆ Honesty
- ◆ Honour
- ◆ Loyalty

Few schools hold that all of these are indispensable to the true samurai. Many add other principles such as revenge, rationality, or obliteration of the self. A rare few even remove honour from the list, saying that honour is a social construct that flows from truly living bushido, and not a principle to be pursued in itself.

Along with wounded pride and excessive amounts of sake, differences in opinion on the matter of bushido are one of the chief inciting factors of duels between samurai.

DUELS

The only way to settle a serious dispute between individual samurai is a duel. For something minor, like a dispute over some business matter or jogging someone's tea cup with your elbow, an apology or a compromise is fine. But when pride is at stake, only single combat will suffice.

Any samurai may challenge any other. However, it is rare for challenges to cross the boundaries between high and low shareholders, or for shareholders to duel life samurai. For the higher ranked samurai there is little glory, if any, in defeating the lower, and the lower-ranked samurai will face widespread opprobrium for not knowing his place, regardless of the duel's outcome.

A commoner may not challenge a samurai, and for a samurai to duel a commoner is gravely dishonourable. Commoners may fight one another, but these are not considered lofty matters of honour by Mishima culture. They're just fights.

Both challenger and challenged may, if they choose, appoint a second to monitor proceedings and ensure that proper conduct is observed. Part of the second's role is to confer with his opposite number to see if there is any way an accommodation can be reached and the duel called off without damage to either side's reputation.

ARMS AND ARMOUR

It is standard practice to duel unarmoured in order to speed the process and to ensure that the emphasis is on martial prowess rather than who has the superior equipment. Exceptions are made when

the armour is central to the dispute – for example, if the quality of his keiretsu's battlesuits has been insulted, a samurai may issue a challenge to duel in kote armour.

There are two main weapons used in samurai duels. In close combat, the sword. The type of sword does not matter, for it is believed that every type of sword has both advantages and disadvantages. Thus, a sword duel may be fought with a single katana or wakizashi, the paired daisho, or a two-handed no-dachi, without both fighters having to use the same weapons. Other duelling weapons include warhammers, wooden staffs, and spears.

Close combat duels are the most common, as they do not require much space or preparation time.

For ranged combat duels an appropriate battlefield must be obtained – one that provides ample room to move around and outflank the enemy, with extensive cover to use, and which is empty of non-combatants. Forests, mountains, and abandoned urban areas are the most commonly used. At an appointed time each combatant enters the duelling area from opposite sides, wearing locator tags monitored by each side's seconds to ensure they do not go out of bounds, and the duel begins. Sniper duels are the most common ranged combat of this kind, comprising 90% of ranged duels between samurai.

It is the prerogative of the challenged party to decide on the weapons to be used, within a broad category. For example, a challenged samurai may call for swords, sniper rifles, or pistols, but he may not specify wakizashi, Ayabe-class rifles, or revolvers.

STAKES

According to the wishes of the challenger, the duel may be fought to one of four conclusions.

FIRST BLOW: Each combatant has one shot at harming the other. In a close combat duel this means that the two fighters stand with weapons sheathed, within reach of one another. They adopt a ready stance and wait for the moment to strike. When it comes, they try to draw and strike in one swift, flowing motion.

This type of combat is often concluded in the ready period. After observing his opponent's stance, a samurai can conclude that his enemy's technique is superior. He may then stand with feet together, bow, and concede the duel. This is considered a resolution that brings honour to both parties.

In a ranged duel, fighting to first blow means that each combatant literally gets one shot. If you miss, you're out of luck. This may be conducted as a cat and mouse game of stealth, with each warrior trying to get the drop on his enemy. With short-ranged weapons it often takes the form of a straight-up quick draw contest.

FIRST BLOOD: In this case the duel ends as soon as one combatant is wounded, even if that wound is very minor.

TO WOUNDING: The duel is over when one combatant is too seriously wounded to continue fighting.

TO THE DEATH: In the most serious of duels the fight is not over until one combatant is dead.

It must be noted that unless a duel is to the death it is gravely dishonourable to deliberately kill your enemy. You are not, however, required to harm your chances of winning by taking care not to kill him.

GOLD DOUBLOONS

Mishima officially has its own currency called the gold doubloon, but it is seldom used even within the corporation. Salaries are not accepted in doubloons, and other corporations will not handle them at all. They can only be exchanged for other currencies at designated *Bureaux de change*. The official exchange rate against the Cardinal's Crown is one to one, though you'd be lucky to get one for three. The real question is why the doubloon continues to exist at all.

COMMONERS

Forming the base that holds up the great tottering edifice of Mishima are the commoners. They are divided into a complex array of ranks according to their profession, though commoners do not pay tithes to other commoners, and this system varies from one keiretsu to another.

The bewildering variety of commoner ranks may be usefully simplified into two broad categories. The elite of the commoners are the guildsmen – the professional class that provides skilled labour and technical expertise. Virtually every profession has its own guild, from courtesans to biotech engineers. Each guild teaches valuable skills to its member apprentices and regulates its profession on its planet. They usually have local guildhouses where members can meet, and guildsmen in general are well-off and literate. Even the Lord Heirs must take into account the wishes of the guilds to some extent, for they are vital cogs that make Mishima's industry run.

The other type of commoner, by far the majority of Mishima employees, is the worker. This vast herd of unskilled and semi-skilled employees do the brute labour of the corporation. They are provided for by their keiretsu and indoctrinated from birth in proud and ancient

traditions of their corporation. These commoners have a meagre standard of living, but most of their needs are met, if only barely.

Every commoner is assigned a work unit at birth – usually the same as his mother or father – which becomes an extended family. Outside of operational hours work units eat and socialise together, and most commoners must obtain permission from their unit managers to travel, take leave, or even to marry.

Upward mobility is rare, though meritorious deeds or the favour of the powerful can bring it about. For a commoner family to rise to the samurai class is sufficiently rare for people to know their place, but just common enough to encourage ambition and hope.

Despite the seemingly grim lot of these commoners, they are surprisingly loyal to the samurai. In the past many outsiders have tried to incite worker rebellions. A few have succeeded, but overall Mishima's workers show less propensity to revolt than the commoners of Baushaus despite their similar living conditions.

Well-meaning experts have suggested several possible explanations for this. The first is that the commoners are cowed by the sheer violence and brutality of the samurai, and it is true that order in Mishima's honour-based society, among both samurai and commoners, rests heavily on the threat of swift and disproportionate revenge for misdemeanours. Another is that the commoners are trained from birth to look up to the samurai and see themselves as inferior.

Finally, Mishima workers are often completely isolated from outside influences, especially on Mercury. Mishima employees work for Mishima, buy Mishima, read Mishima, and sleep Mishima. There is no way for outside ideas to enter Mishima society, and what the commoners know of the outside world comes to them through the filter of Mishima media, which paints anything not Mishima as evil and treacherous.

SAGES

The status of sage is one of great honour in Mishima society. The common conception of a sage is that of an old, wizened man who speaks wisdom in gnomic utterances. Some sages genuinely are like this. Others are not. In fact, almost anybody could be a sage. The defining characteristic of sages is that they possess a deep understanding of how to control and use the personal energy known as ki. They may wield this power in the service of mankind, or stand aside from the struggle against the Dark Apostles and devote their lives to meditation and the perfection of their techniques. In either case, their understanding gives them the potential to be great teachers and innovators. Sages can create devices charged with their powers, and often show great understanding of the world around them. Their wisdom and counsel is often sought out by those in need.

Very rarely, sages acquire such wisdom and mastery over their inner ki that they achieve a higher state of consciousness. Such individuals are called Enlightened Ones. Some say these men and women have become one with the universe. Even the Lord Heirs heed their words. But the Enlightened Ones do not often involve themselves in the affairs of mankind any longer.

THE KEIRETSU AS CULTURE

The fundamental building block of Mishima is the keiretsu. The keiretsu are corporations within the corporation, forming entire societies under the umbrella of the Mishima brand. While the keiretsu have many things in common, each one is a unique culture. Many speak entirely different languages, though all employees learn the Mishima language, which is still the corporation's universal *lingua franca*.

In the typical keiretsu every working day begins with a work unit meeting. This is a short meeting – everyone stands – which may be more or less formal. In a formal meeting, the most senior samurai in the work unit reads out the day's status reports and work targets. In the less formal style, used by smaller, more specialised work units, it is a chance for the team to catch up with one another over coffee and find out how their projects are going. In all cases, the meeting begins with the senior samurai reading out the company's basic management objectives from a scroll. These are the fundamental principles of each keiretsu's business philosophy, and can vary greatly.

SURITOMO BASIC MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Recognizing our responsibilities as industrialists, we will devote ourselves to the progress and development of society, and the well-being of people through our business activities, creating prosperity and enhancing the quality of life throughout the solar system.

AMIDA BASIC MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

We vow always to provide total customer satisfaction. We vow to produce top quality products at reasonable prices. We vow to be unstinting in our efforts to improve product quality.

NOTABLE KEIRETSU

MERCURY

SURITOMO

An industrial powerhouse that makes everything from samurai battlesuits to meka to rocket trains.

AKIRENKO

Chiefly focused on food products and home appliances, the Akirenko keiretsu has recently been experimenting with bionics, creating its own versions of Cybertronic technology.

KIMOYA



A major player in the transportation and telecoms industries during the Dark Symmetry Era was the Kimoya keiretsu. Kimoya built the Tubeway which, then as now, ran beneath Longshore with hundreds of lines under the city centre and spurs running off to the major islands. Most of the spur lines are only accessible to the military and a few high-ranking nobles with the access codes. In times of emergency, the Tubeway enables the authorities to move troops and rescue workers around the city quickly and secretly. The Tubeway links to the Great Elevator, giving access to the Undercity and the rocket-railways.

Two centuries ago the Kimoya daimyo Park Mi-na rebelled against the Lord Heir of Mercury, and it was the Tubeway that proved her undoing. Built by Kimoya but controlled by the Lord Heir, it enabled the Lord Heir to swiftly transport loyal troops to the site of the uprising and put down the Kimoya forces quickly. Daimyo Park committed ritual suicide in the Shrine of the Sage Yorama before she could be captured, and her keiretsu was subsequently disbanded.

The Kimoya Rebellion was the direct cause of the rule that states no daimyo may enter Longshore with a retinue of more than 1,000 samurai, on pain of death, without the express permission of the Lord Heir himself.

TAMBU

Mishima's largest producer of weapons, from pistols to meka, and possessor of the largest standing army on Mercury.

MAYAMA

Mishima's leading construction and heavy machinery firm.

VENUS

MUSHASHI

Famed for its swordsmiths, the Mushashi keiretsu controls a huge territory on Venus that gives it access to great mineral wealth as well as polar oil and gas fields.

SHOA

Shoa's prosperity is built on its diamond mines and its trade in Cybertronic technology.

OZUMI

Mishima's largest producer of industrial chemicals and pharmaceuticals

SURIGA

A conglomerate with an extensive retail empire. This rebel keiretsu has sworn allegiance to Lord Heir Moya rather than Maru, the Governor of Venus.

MARS

RED SUN

Mishima's largest media producer, Red Sun publishes newspaper, magazines, books, and comics. It also licenses movies and cartoons to media companies across the solar system.

SHINWA

The most powerful of all the Martian keiretsu, Shinwa operates in all kinds of primary and secondary industries.

AMIDA

Amida manufactures air and space vehicles of all kinds, and is the single largest aerospace company in Mishima.

LIVING IN THE MISHIMA WORLD

MEDIA

Like all the corporations, Mishima controls a huge media empire. Mishima's martial arts films are popular throughout the solar system, and its animated movies and TV series also enjoy a strong following. As with the equivalent media content produced by other corporations, Mishima's entertainment output is highly partisan, extolling the virtues of the culture and corporation that produced it, sometimes subtly but more often not.

Newspapers are read only by the executive class of Mishima. This is because commoner education is geared towards making them valuable human resources in their future careers. They are literate only to the degree necessary to operate factory machinery, serve customers in a convenience store, or whatever other task is their lot in life. Guildsmen are more broadly educated than workers, and



The celebrity samurai Kai and Yuri are ripped apart by corrupted camera drones on primetime television.

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can read the papers if they can find somewhere that will sell them one, but their horizons are still limited by their vocabulary. Most commoners get their news by radio and TV. These media are strictly controlled by the daimyos to ensure social harmony.

MODEL WORKERS

The genre known as model worker TV is huge in Mishima – indeed the most popular shows have a near-universal following among the commoners, and are a common guilty pleasure for the samurai executives to discuss at the office the next day.

Each series follows the day-to-day life of a commoner – usually a worker, hence the name – in order to reach a wider audience. The theory is that guildsmen's lives are too specialised to have broad appeal, but exceptions are made for trades deemed exciting, such as meka maintenance or military ammunition carrier.

The stars of the show are selected as embodiments of the Way in commoner form, showing extreme productivity and dedication to their duties, deference to their superiors, and enthusiasm for the Mishima way of life. This is, of course, incredibly dull propaganda. What gets viewers coming back every week are the ups and downs of the model workers' lives and their personal relationships, professional and romantic. The stars and producers of these shows must walk a fine line in creating content that acquires an army of devoted followers, without tripping the alarms at the daimyo's censorship board.

The genre has yet to gain more than a limited following outside the corporation, perhaps because of its reliance on subtle personal relationships and in-jokes that non-Mishima viewers will not get.

FOOD

Rice, chicken, and fish are the staples of the Mishima diet. Beyond that, there is a wide variance in cuisines in the different provinces of Mishima territory and between keiretsu. The food of Mayama is notoriously spicy, while the diet of Kimoya employees is bland and heavily based on mushrooms (they say they have a more refined palate). Outsiders joke that Suritomo employees will eat anything with legs that isn't a table – and Suritomo employees proudly agree. Honey-glazed scorpion on a stick is a Suritomo delicacy.

Sake and beer are the most common alcoholic drinks, with the samurai tending to favour sake.

RETAIL

Mishima loves malls. Luxury malls, specialist malls, budget malls with shoebox-sized stores crammed together into a cheap tower block, and everything in between – if a business can involve face-to-face contact with customers, they'll find some way to get it into a mall.

HERE COMES HITOMI

Hitomi is a worker-class filing clerk for Tambu Consolidated Office Gadgets. An important part of her job is to keep the quality assurance records up to date. Her work is dull, but her fans tune in to see her deal with the multiple spinning plates that are her private life. She's engaged to marry Akira from Facilities but has a secret, borderline romantic friendship with Kenji in R&D, whom she once kissed in a lift! The viewers never really question how this affair stays secret given that it's broadcast on TV every night – viewers suspend disbelief and the performers play along with the storyline.

Hitomi recently made an exciting move in her career – when she saw an opening for a logistics clerk with a Tambu hatamoto strike team she negotiated with Marketing to be reassigned. She now makes a daily phone call to Akira to please his existing fans, but Kenji is also being transferred to the strike team as a steward. The production team wants to continue the romantic plotline and use him as comic relief.

TANAKA

Who's Tanaka? No one in the general population has heard of him, but in model worker TV everybody knows Tanaka. They don't know his given name, but they do know him.

Tanaka is a Red Sun-affiliated talent agent, though his keiretsu leaves him on such a long leash he's practically a freelancer. He's responsible for several high-profile model workers and 'secondary assets' – the people who appear when a show needs a plumber to visit, or a rapid response fire team or something, and the people who make things happen off camera. These are always things to fix, people to be removed from a plot with minimal fuss, casting transitions to be smoothed, and talent to be scouted. TV's not always a pretty business, and it's best that the talent don't see everything that happens behind the scenes. But like Tanaka always says, if you want to make great TV, you've got to break a few legs.

Social scientists posit that the unfriendly environment of Mercury drove Mishima towards creating more pleasant, controllable environments for its retail and leisure spaces at a formative time in the corporation's development, and its enduring legacy is Mishima's

ACQUISITIONS IN MISHIMAN TERRITORIES

As might be expected, the overwhelming majority of items available for sale in Mishiman communities are those manufactured by Mishiman businesses. Buying a Capitolian television or finding an Imperial tailor are next to impossible in Longshore or other settlements. The idea of exposing commoners to the wares of other corporations is anathema to the samurai, and the samurai would seldom deign to patronise the businesses of an outsider. This kind of trade with outsiders still occurs – there is still a market for the occasional item as a novelty or conversation piece – but it is far from the mainstream, and takes a considerable amount of time and effort.

Items not manufactured by Mishima increase their Restriction and Cost ratings by two within Mishiman territories, due to limited availability and higher import tariffs. Any item where the modified Restriction Rating is six or higher simply cannot be found. All items without a specific manufacturer (such as common lifestyle items or tools) will be the locally-produced Mishiman variety unless specifically sought after, and non-Mishiman examples of such items will still suffer the increased Restriction and Cost ratings – it is next to impossible to find a good Capitolian cheeseburger in Longshore, where the prevailing diet consists mainly of fish and rice.

This does not apply to Mishiman holdings on Mars – Lady Mariko maintains far more open trading relations than the other Lord Heirs – or the Mishima-run parts of Luna.

mall-mania. Whatever the reason, malls remain a major part of Mishima life. Samurai and commoners alike love to spend time in malls, even if they don't want to buy anything, and the mall is the number one place to meet friends for dinner or socialising. Visiting new malls is a popular pastime, with people travelling for hours or sometimes even days to check out a new mall – even though it's rare that the products will be any different to what you would find near your own home. Retailers and mall owners create attractions to lure in new visitors, each more outlandish than the last. Famous mall attractions include the Tower of Tofu at Tambu Elements and the Hosokawa Retail City's Ocelot Lounge – filled with lifelike holographic ocelots.

High-end malls can resemble huge luxury department stores, while the typical commoner mall is more like a huge flea market. Selling goods can be a complicated business in Mishima territories, particularly if it involves bringing goods from the land of one daimyo

to another, as the paperwork is highly demanding. Permission to trade must be granted by the local lord, who must be given a cut of the profits, and the local Triad boss will usually have to be paid off too.

ARCHITECTURE

Buildings that serve as official symbols of the corporation or keiretsu are invariably designed to be as imposing as possible, while retaining the simple elegance of the wabi-sabi design principle.

Commoner dwellings are humble, as befits their inhabitants' low status, and on Mercury especially barely have any exterior design at all – worker dormitories are frequently constructed by placing a blank metal facade as a front wall for a natural rock gallery.

The interior of a typical Mishima building has a large central courtyard or chamber, with smaller surrounding rooms formed by movable screen walls. The internal layout can thus be transformed within a matter of minutes to suit changing requirements.

Mishima is also noted for its landscaped gardens, considered an important space for relaxation and, in the case of privately owned gardens, personal expression through the cultivation of flowers, bonsai trees, or general landscaping. Whenever possible, space is reserved in all Mishima buildings for a garden. When this is impossible, such as in the tightly packed commoner residences, shared gardens are provided by the keiretsu.

TRANSPORT

After Capitol, Mishima is the biggest producer of motor vehicles in the solar system. Its cars are, for the most part, cheap and acceptably reliable, provided you bear the low price in mind. Mishima motorbikes, in contrast, are among the best in the human worlds. Particularly favoured in the dense urban streets of Mishima cities, these bikes are prized throughout the system for their high build quality, performance, and engineering.

Mishima is the system's leading producer of humanoid walkers by a wide margin. Such vehicles are rarely found in other corporations' cities, being almost exclusively used for military purposes. But meka are a common sight not only in Mishima armies but also on the streets as utility vehicles, for construction, and sometimes as specialised police units.

Although Mishima is a leader in rocket technologies, its aircraft design still lags behind its rivals. Mishima keiretsu frequently buy second-tier Capitol aircraft and subsequently reverse engineer the designs for their own use.

BUSINESS STRATEGIES

MISHIMA IN BUSINESS

Some say the moral decline of the once proud Mishima organisation has showed in its cut-throat business policies. Others call the Mishima management economic geniuses, smart and ruthless, well adapted to the current circumstances. The keiretsu of Mishima give no quarter in business, and expect none in return.

The rise of the Mishima business empire in its early years was astonishing. In a short time, from a humble position on a glum planet with barely functional terraforming, the corporation took full advantage of the resources at its disposal and gauged the markets shrewdly to become the second largest corporation after Capitol, producing a comprehensive product portfolio – often at a lower cost and with a more appealing design.

The recipe for success included coldly calculated business methods, rapid development supported by the largest industrial espionage budget of all the corporations, and, most of all, a dedication to

maximising quality within a given product's assigned budget. And that is to say nothing of the will and determination displayed by the workers, technicians, and management of Mishima in realising their ambition to be the best.

Mishima marketers and brand managers are masters of their art. By optimising brand diversity, often almost to the point of having literally the same product packaged in several different ways – a procedure used by all the most successful companies of ancient days, now seemingly forgotten by the majority of modern corporations – they make sure they secure the most brand recognition and market share.

Mishima is renowned for always sticking to a deal, even if changing circumstances mean that deal is no longer beneficial to it, but it is even more renowned for its shrewdness in making those deals in the first place. Its business lawyers are matched only by Cybertronic's in this area. It is difficult to come out of a negotiation with a Mishima supplier or buyer having got by far the better deal, unless they want you to for strategic reasons.



The dark works of the heretic Von Hölle has even reached the upper echelons of Mishima boardrooms.

CRAFTSMANSHIP & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Mishima culture makes a distinction between craftsmanship and the making of things, and places a supreme value on both. The former emphasises the individual creator. A single craftsman may spend decades mastering his craft, and each item he creates is one of a kind and an expression of his inner spirit. Mishima craftsmen view their media as, in some sense, a living thing – that is, a part of the living world. Working with clay to make pottery, for example, using bamboo to make furniture, or creating delicate works of art from paper, are all ways in which the human being works in co-operation with nature to create something new.

In the making of things, the individual is de-emphasised in favour of the act of making and the concrete thing that is produced. This is the philosophy behind Mishima's manufacturing industry. Aside from working to achieve the best in technology, development, production, and logistics, the making of things also values dedication to continuous improvement, and the craftsman's talents. The difference from craftsmanship as a concept is that here, the person making the product is anonymous to the end user. Those involved in the making of things subsume their personalities and channel their energies into creating an exact likeness of the model product.

One who makes things for a living may still be a craftsman in his spare time, and Mishima society is full of these part-time craftsmen and organisations for their pursuits, as well as many exhibitions and other social societies dedicated to the appreciation of these arts. Common hobby crafts include bonsai gardening, calligraphy, flower arranging, and wood carving.

The importance of craftsmanship in Mishima's philosophy is reflected in its design standards. Unlike products from other corporations, the components of a Mishima product are always carefully arranged, placed, and cleaned – even if they will not be visible to the consumer.

Even a drilling machine destined to be taken immediately to a deep, dark mine shaft in Mercury, where human eyes will likely never actually see it again, would never be allowed to leave the factory with an imperfect coat of paint or an unsightly piece of welding.

Capitolians in particular often view the few Mishima customers they can get as unspeakably finicky for their refusal to buy anything that has the slightest imperfection. Even the most humble, disposable product must be made the best it can be.

APPRENTICESHIP

In Mishima's traditional ways of training, an apprentice will never be straightforwardly taught all the techniques he needs to become a master. He starts out as a dogsbody and learns by watching. First, he is given menial jobs not directly related to what his work unit

actually does. After a time, he may get the chance to help with some very minor tasks. Later, he may get his own equipment and try things out in his spare time. He gradually gains more responsibility. It is up to the apprentice to "steal" the master's knowledge and find through observation and trial and error how the master does what he does.

A variation on this procedure is used in most work units when new graduates join their ranks. Even in the military, while basic training is given – in the interests of safety if nothing else – many tricks of the trade are left for the recruit to make the effort to find out, thus rewarding enthusiasm and sharp thinking.

THE ART OF THE MASS-PRODUCED KNOCK-OFF

The weapon that has made Mishima a force to be reckoned with is the ability to produce large quantities of high-tech equipment at low costs. This not only gives Mishima an advantage in outfitting its own manufacturing facilities, but at the retail level it gives the buyer cheaper alternatives to Capitol or Bauhaus equipment. Mishima's budget consumer products have one drawback. The design and technology involved mean that these products are more expensive to repair than they are to manufacture. This is a strong selling point for the mass consumer market, but has given Mishima a somewhat bad reputation within the military industry, especially with freelancing mercenaries who need to be able to fix equipment themselves in battle.

What makes Mishima so good at knock-off products is its dedication to quality – Mishima's cheaper versions may use inferior components, but they make more efficient use of those components' capabilities, meaning that Mishima can put out a product with a much lower retail price but only slightly lower quality.

INDUSTRIAL ESPIONAGE

Mishima's subsidiaries make extensive use of industrial espionage to ferret out trade secrets and new designs from their rival keiretsu and from other corporations. Every keiretsu maintains a security department whose chief function is to keep spies out, and whose secondary function is to be spies.

When used against the other corporations, Mishima's excellent spycraft means that its own product developers can concentrate on refining and improving existing models and products. This then gives Mishima an advantage over the competitors by creating cheaper, improved versions of those products with a greatly reduced time-to-market.



OUTSIDERS

THE SHADOW CORPORATIONS

The techno-feudalism of the Mishima corporation is built upon contracts of fealty. The employee serves the company, and in return the company, in the persons of the management above that employee, provide remuneration, protection, and other amenities. The same applies to the relationship between parent companies and subsidiaries.

The shadow corporations break that pattern, and in doing so they embody something that Mishima society fears. They make deals, but their allegiance is only to themselves. Their public face is mutable, hidden behind countless front companies, meaning they have no widely accepted reputation that can be honoured or shamed.

On the plus side, the shadow corporations' untraceability makes them incredibly useful for work in which deniability is paramount. For this reason, their agents are used by daimyos and lords who need spies, saboteurs, or assassins that cannot be connected to their own companies. These agents are called shadow walkers, taking their name from the dreaded assassin cult.

The primary function of a shadow walker is espionage. Masters of disguise, they pass themselves off as local inhabitants or unobtrusive visitors – usually as commoners, since the web of relationships intrinsic to samurai status makes it hard to pass unnoticed as an unfamiliar executive. They gather information on their targets' meetings, activities, security systems, and building specifications. On occasion, they use their ability to access secure facilities to carry out sabotage or assassination missions, though these jobs cost the hirer significantly more than run-of-the-mill spying.

Shadow walkers are noted for their use of a wide variety of gadgets, some technologically advanced but most resolutely low-tech. At the more sophisticated end, shadow walkers may be equipped with the latest in electronic lockpicks and security suppression technology, computer hacking utilities, and stealth suits that not only provide visual camouflage through active chameleon arrays, making the wearer blend in with the background, but also suppress the wearer's heat signature, pheromones, and the sound of his heartbeat. Simpler gadgets often carried by shadow walkers include numerous concealed blades, pepper dust stored in a sword hilt so that it puffs out and blinds the enemy when the sword is drawn, and an encyclopaedic array of poisons of varying lethality derived from natural found ingredients.

SHINOBI ROBES

Made famous by countless dramatic interpretations, the near-black robes of the Shadow Walkers are regarded more as a fanciful creation of the media than the truth. This is quite deliberate: the dismissive attitude towards their existence helps divert attention from the Shadow Walkers. The robes they wear in practice are very similar to those depicted on stage and screen, but their true nature is more than simple night camouflage. Each contains layers of ballistic nylon and concealed ceramic plates designed to provide protection from attack, and each set of robes is embroidered and dyed with runes and sigils designed to dissuade the gaze of those who may spot them. A guard who spots a Shadow Walker may find it difficult to watch them for more than a few moments, and may struggle to remember the details of what he has seen afterwards.

A character wearing Shinobi robes gains one bonus Momentum on Stealth tests to remain unseen.

SHINOBI ROBES

FACTION	SOAK			
	HEAD	TORSO	ARMS	LEGS
Mishima	1	2	2	1
ENCUMBRANCE	RELIABILITY	RESTRICTION	COST	
4	4	5	10	

SECURITY SUPPRESSION KIT

RESTRICTION 5 **COST 12**
RELIABILITY 4 **ENCUMBRANCE 1**

Many Shadow Walkers carry around these toolkits, stored in pouches concealed within their robes. However, they are quite different from conventional anti-security tools; derived from the stolen creations of rival corporations, mixed with secrets of Dark Legion necrotechnology obtained by the First Master's finest students. A Shadow Walker does not pick a lock or crack a safe. Rather, he compromises them with an effect unnervingly similar to the corruption of the Dark Symmetry. Electronics fail, locks corrode into uselessness, and other items simply cease to function in a Shadow Walker's path.

A Shadow Walker – and only a Shadow Walker, for nobody else is trained in the use of such tools – may use a security suppression kit against a lock or other security mechanism by attempting a Thievery test with a difficulty equal to the target item's Reliability (GM's discretion, but more sophisticated systems have lower Reliability). Success means that the mechanism has been rendered useless.

SHURIKEN

RESTRICTION 2

COST 2 (SHURIKEN)

RESTRICTION 2

COST 3 (ENVOMED SHURIKEN)

Shuriken are tiny blades or spikes that can be hurled with considerable force and accuracy. Though far from the deadliest of weapons, they are cheap, lightweight, easy to carry, and are valuable for use against unarmoured foes or as distractions against tougher ones. Shuriken can easily be envenomed to have a more insidious effect.

As thrown weapons, each shuriken is considered to be both weapon and Reload: each purchase provides three Reloads, and using the weapon expends one of these Reloads. If you possess no shuriken Reloads, you possess no shuriken.

SHURIKEN

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+ \uparrow 2	Munition	1	1H	4
QUALITIES	Hidden 2				

SHURIKEN, ENVENOMED

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+ \uparrow 2	Munition	1	1H	3
QUALITIES	Hidden 2, Toxic 2				

KENJIRO MUNITIONS MODEL 6 WHISPER MACHINE PISTOL

RESTRICTION 2

COST 8

The Whisper was manufactured by Kenjiro Munitions, an independent company based in Fukido. Few examples can be found for sale in Mishiman territories, but they are highly prized by assassins and malcontents for their compact profile, high rate of fire, and nearly silent report. They are frequently employed by Shadow Walkers and similar covert operatives, who are far more able to obtain them than most people.

A Whisper machine pistol comes with an integral silencer.

WHISPER MACHINE PISTOL

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+ \uparrow 3	Burst	2	1H	2
QUALITIES	Close Quarters, Hidden 1				

BLINDING POWDER

RESTRICTION 3

COST 5 (FIVE USES)

Small pellets of blinding powder are concealed across a Shadow Walker's body, to be used to aid escape. A successful Average D1 Thievery test as a Restricted Action is sufficient for a Shadow Walker




The First Master engages in his dark works.

to slip one of these pellets from his robes and throw it, causing the pellet to burst, and a cloud of powder to erupt. The powder stings and burns the eyes, causing choking if inhaled, and is thus a potent deterrent to pursuers and attackers. Some Triad enforcers have come to use blinding powders as a way of incapacitating captives, and the practice has even reached a number of samurai performing police duties, for use against recalcitrant commoners (it would be most dishonourable to use it against a fellow samurai, however).

A character exposed to blinding powder must immediately pass a Daunting D3 Resistance test or be Blinded and Staggered for one minute (one round in combat). It is entirely useless against enemies wearing enclosed helmets, gas masks, or similar protective gear.

MORTUARY ENZYMES

These strange bio-technological implants were designed by the original masters of the Shadow Walker cult in order to ensure that none of the cult's members could ever expose its secrets if captured. The enzymes are injected into a Shadow Walker at the beginning of his training, and are activated under three circumstances: death, exposure to a mind-controlling substance, or at the will of the Shadow Walker. The result is the same regardless – the warrior's body dissolves into a pool of noxious slime, which is toxic to any who come into contact with it. This is normally sufficient to deter those who would investigate the remains of a Shadow Walker.

The slime produced when Mortuary Enzymes are activated is a contact poison, taking effect when it comes into contact with the skin of another. It takes a Daunting D3 Resistance test to resist the effects, with a failed test inflicting 2+4 damage with the Toxic 4 and Vicious 2 qualities.

THE SHADOW WALKER CULT

In the meeting rooms of Mishima, and around the water fountains, whispered rumours abound of the dreaded Shadow Walker Cult. Many, perhaps most, believe the cult to be nothing more than a legend, a viral PR exercise put forth by the shadow corporations to make their work seem more difficult and thus command higher fees. A select few know the truth – that the Shadow Walker Cult is very real.

Even those who have direct knowledge of the cult know little about this clandestine clan of assassins for certain. Some say it is the last remaining holdout of an ancient religion. Some say that it is really an arm of the Mishima System Holdings Group, an arm of the corporation answering directly to the Overlord. Some say it is a unified conspiracy that has infiltrated every level of Mishima society. Others say it is a warring mass of splinter groups, some of which are heretical, and some on the side of light. Some say that beneath their black masks the Shadow Walkers are hideous mutants.

These theories all seem equally unlikely, and no proof exists for any of them, for no member of the cult has ever been taken alive, and nobody has ever been retained for examination. On the extremely rare occasions that a Shadow Walker has been caught or killed, mortuary enzymes suppurate from concealed poison sacs, dissolving the body into a large puddle of poisonous goop.

According to common knowledge – that is, the tales everyone knows from countless movies – the cult steals babies from their parents and begins to train these children in its secret mystical arts of assassination as soon as they are old enough to walk. In the cult's remote fortress monasteries the children are given carefully calibrated hormonal therapies to promote strength and ferocity, along with chemicals that increase resistance to pain and poison. The children's nervous systems are rewired to give them catlike reflexes, and from the age of three they are trained in the martial arts. At age five their training as killers begins, teaching them every conceivable method of dealing death. They are indoctrinated into the nihilistic philosophy of the cult, ensuring lifelong mindless obedience. The most promising students, as they enter their sixteenth year, are taken away to a fortress hidden deep beneath the surface of Mercury where they receive the elite training that will make them into one of the Deathbringers, the elite of the Shadow Walker Cult.

No respectable Mishima executive would ever have dealings with such an ignoble, apostate organisation, for to do so would bring shame on his company and family. Despite this, the Shadow Walkers appear time and again in Mishima history, eliminating key figures within the corporation and without, and turning the tide of battles. Almost as if otherwise respectable Mishima executives were hiring them.

The truth is that the Shadow Walker Cult dates back to the Neronian Heresy, when it was founded by a renegade Technomancer of Algeroth known only as the First Master. This Technomancer was the most senior survivor of a samurai family whose holdings were obliterated by the powerful Naga Public Relations & Communications Agency in one of the bloodiest civil wars of that time. Furious that Algeroth had not saved his family from destruction, the First Master rebelled and staged a coup within his Temple of Destruction. He stole the temple's equipment and fled with the ragged remnants of his family to the unexplored caverns of Mercury, far from the inhabited underworlds. He and what was left of his family were now ronin, and had lost everything to the Naga clan. But they were already great martial artists and now they had the resources the First Master had taken from Algeroth. The First Master added his knowledge of biotechnology to the family's considerable store of ki powers, and the family took on a new name: the Shadow Walkers.

The Shadow Walkers began a campaign of terror against the Naga clan, which eventually – after years of mayhem and bloody, mocking tableaux left for horrified parents or children to discover – culminated in a wave of assassinations that wiped it out. Its revenge

accomplished, the family took stock and realised that it had no idea where to go next. It had satisfied its honour. But by adopting Dark Technology, it had made itself anathema to mainstream Mishima society, and it would be no more welcome elsewhere in human space. Agents of Algeroth and the Brotherhood alike were hunting it.

The family hid in its remote cavern fastness and made careful long-term plans. Over the generations that followed, it perfected its methods of stealthy movement and silent killing. The First Master created new biotech equipment, including the mortuary enzymes that would protect the family's secrets by dissolving any killed or captured Shadow Walker into a pool of toxic slime. It stole the secret of brainwashing from the Black Dragon Society, and developed an array of martial arts techniques second to none.

And when it was ready, it rented out its deadly services to anyone who could afford to hire it. It made secret pacts with the Lord Heirs to ensure that it would retain a safe haven within the Mishima realms. Today the Shadow Walker Cult is an important tool for the Lord Heirs, the ultimate weapon against the corporation's enemies. It is a weapon that the Lord Heirs do not unsheathe lightly, for the cult is unpredictable and exacts a great price.



A Shadow Walker performs his deadly art.

THE FACELESS

Mishima employees refer to those outside their society as the faceless, a name that bespeaks the fear and disdain they feel for such people. Outsiders are potential enemies who do not understand the great and proud traditions that make Mishima great. To a Mishima employee, an outsider is less than nothing. Usually, Mishima officials hide their distaste for foreigners in front of visiting dignitaries or businessmen, but by no means do they consider them an equal.

A Mishima employee can fall to the level of faceless if he commits some grave sin or dishonours himself. It is the worst nightmare of every Mishima employee to join the ranks of the faceless, expelled from his company, disowned by his family. Most would prefer death. If a Mishima employee is made faceless, his features are disfigured with ritual scarring, his name is deleted from all official records, and his family forgets he ever existed except as a source of unending shame. If family or friends encounter him on the street, they simply pretend not to see him. If he speaks, they will not hear.

The faceless usually seek out places where there are few Mishima personnel and try their best to eke out what living they can. In Luna there is a Faceless Quarter, a zone where these sad, lost individuals congregate to share their meagre resources. It is common for the faceless to wear featureless masks to hide their shame. Many such masked beggars can be found seeking alms in Mishima cities. Few but foreigners give them any money or food.

In recent years, shadowy figures have begun to organise the faceless in the depths of Mishima's cities. The Crimson Lotus Society has reported worrying signs of regular meetings and discussions in nearly every Mishima territory. The Overlord and Lord Heirs currently consider this to be beneath them and unworthy of attention. But some samurai lords, closer to the ground, fear that the Dark Apostles may be using the faceless as a new weapon in their war against humanity.

THE SECRET SOCIETIES

The general perception among the so-called experts from outside the corporation that Mishima employees are relentlessly conformist is somewhat undermined by the existence of Mishima's many secret societies. Mishima society is riddled with them. These range from the Triads, organised crime outfits with connections throughout the solar system, to outlaw commoner martial arts groups, to the Shadow Walker Cult, a sinister society feared for its powers of sorcery. These societies provide an alternative to the hierarchical power structures of the samurai, and in many cases date beyond living memory. Even though all of them are feared and outlawed by the samurai, the lords and daimyos of Mishima are forever trying to use them to gain an edge in their endless intrigues against their rivals.

THE TRIADS

The Triads are crime families who are extensively involved in extortion, gambling, smuggling, and other rackets throughout Mishima territory and beyond.

They are criminal families of immense power and wealth, among the oldest and most successful organisations in the solar system. Some even predate the corporations. Each Triad has its own territories, secret signs, and codes. They control their interests through agents on every planet, and are legendary for viciousness and insatiable greed.

Among the more notable Triads are the Black Dragon Society on Mercury, the Crimson Lotus on Venus, and the Yee Kuk Triad, which is based on Mars but runs operations on Mercury and Venus, and is the most prominent of the Triads operating on Luna.

Every Triad member bears a tattoo indicating his allegiance, and will add more and more tattoos as time goes by to denote progression within the organisation and notable achievements such as thefts, robberies, and murders committed. The skin of a senior Triad leader is a veritable canvas of swirling imagery. The designs vary with the culture of the Triad in question and personal preference, but dragons, swords, and flower blossoms are common motifs. A cherry blossom often denotes a contract killing.

These tattoos use psychoactive inks that render the tattoo invisible until the wearer wills otherwise. Then the tattoo becomes visible as an identifying mark to other members of the Triad, and as a display of pride to those outside the Triad. The Brotherhood has perfected a chemical bath that renders these tattoos visible when immersed, but the process does not help identify a Triad member until they've been caught already, so is of limited use.

Every Triad has an area of expertise in which it specialises, and attempts to monopolise within its territories. It is thus possible for more than one Triad to be present without conflict in a given area. For example, the Black Dragon Society can run guns through the Yee Kuk territory on Luna with few problems, since the Yee Kuk isn't interested in that particular racket. However, divisions between Triads, their territories, and their areas of interest are by no means clear-cut or changeless, and so one Triad outfit will often muscle in on another's business by accident or design.

When one Triad encroaches on another, terrible gang wars ensue until both sides are exhausted or one side is wiped out. If one side gets destroyed, its Triad will invariably send in a new, ambitious gang boss to take back the area, and the war will pick up from where it left off.

Part of what makes the Triads so successful is loyalty – a virtue they prize as much as anyone in Mishima. Joining a Triad is like

PEACH TREES

To the uninitiated, the shopkeepers and restaurateurs in the Mishima districts of Luna appear to have an unhealthy fascination with miniature peach trees. These decorative plants can be seen in every window, prominently displayed. However, they are not simply having a bonsai competition.

The Yee Kuk Triad make regular visits to establishments on its turf and offer to sell these delightful ornamental trees to the owners, at vastly inflated prices. There's nothing special about the trees; they're simply a thin veil for protection money, and displaying the tree in your window shows that you have paid your dues for the month. Shops and restaurants without trees get a visit from the heavy mob, which smashes up the fittings or burns the place down.

Every few months the Triad switches the "paid" marker to another kind of tree, in case anyone gets any smart ideas about tricking their enforcers with a peach tree they got from an ordinary garden centre at a normal price.

being adopted into a family. You put aside your old allegiances and swear total loyalty to your Triad through the most binding of oaths. Breaking these oaths will lead to you being hunted down by Triad assassins, among whose ranks are some of the most efficient killers on the worlds of mankind.

The Triads also retain extensive knowledge of the ancient science of brain-washing. Members are mentally conditioned not to give away their secret under any circumstances. This conditioning will hold up against all but the most extreme forms of torture or mind probe.

Triads teach their members many secrets forms of martial arts, and expect all their members to be proficient dispensers of extreme violence. After all, if a known Triad member were to be on the receiving end of a beating, the whole Triad would lose face. Triad-taught fighters are among the most deadly and underhand unarmed combatants known to humanity.

Because the Triads are so intimately involved with the darker aspects of the human condition, they make ideal fronts for the cults of the Dark Apostles, and even genuine Triad activities make a great catalyst for the cults' recruitment efforts. Since the Brotherhood has started to sense the Dark Symmetry in some Triads, its Second Directorate has established a whole department devoted to monitoring and, when desirable, eradicating them.

TRIAD CODES

Triads use numeric codes and esoteric names to refer to various ranks and positions. This practice began in the Yee Kuk Triad, and has been adopted by almost all Triads as an obfuscatory security measure, though each uses different numbers and terms.

YEE KUK TRIAD TERMINOLOGY

489 MOUNTAIN MASTER: The overall chief of the Triad.

438 DEPUTY MOUNTAIN MASTER: Second-in-command, who steps in when the Mountain Master dies or is unavailable.

432 GLASS SPIDER: The Mountain Master's proxy, who may attend meetings and give orders on his behalf, and acts as a liaison between different units.

426 RED LANCE: Military commander who oversees raiding and territorial defence.

415 WHITE PAPER FAN: Provides business and financial advice.

385 INCENSE MASTER: Oversees inductions into the Triad.

302 DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Assistant to the Incense Master, checks out the background of potential recruits.

49 SOLDIER: The Triad's rank and file.

25 SPARROW: An undercover police agent or spy for another Triad.

BLUE LANTERN: An associate of the Triad who is not actually a member. They don't get a number.

STRUCTURE

In all the Triads, members swear oaths of secrecy and loyalty, and are required to kick a percentage of their takings up to the bosses. Beyond that, every Triad is unique in its organisation, terminology, and culture.

The Black Dragon Society initiates new members with a ceremony at an altar dedicated to the renegade sage Izogi, in which incense is burnt and an animal sacrifice carried out, usually a pig, dog, or rat. The initiate must drink a cup of sake mixed with the blood of the sacrifice. He then passes under an arch of swords while reciting the 36 Oaths of the Black Dragon. The paper on which the Oaths are written is then burnt on the altar as an offering.

I shall not disclose the secrets of the Black Dragon family, not even to my parents, brothers, or wife. I shall never disclose the secrets of the Black Dragon for money. If I do so, twenty blades shall pierce my body unto death.

– One of the 36 Oaths of the Black Dragon

The Black Dragon Society is mainly involved in armaments and industrial secrets, and has branches on every human-settled planet. Its headquarters are to be found in Longshore, occupying an elegant glass and steel tower where the Triad's hundreds of lawyers are based. Notably, the society expressly forbids its members from dealing in narcotics, on pain of death.

The society is based on the oyabun-kobun relationship, where the kobun (foster child) owes allegiance to the oyabun (foster parent). Each individual has a personal, one-on-one bond of loyalty to a senior member of the society. This relationship is formalised in a society gathering where the oyabun ceremonially shares sake from his cup with the new kobun. In accepting the sake, the kobun promises to treat the members of the Black Dragon Society as he would members of his own blood family.

The leader of the society is only ever referred to as the Black Dragon, and those with whom he shares sake are his most senior advisors, the saiko komon, who control society turf in different cities or regions. They have their own underlings including underbosses, accountants, enforcers, lawyers, and advisors. The street-level thug who comes and smashes up your shop if you don't pay protection is usually five or six steps away from the kumichō in the sake-sharing chain.

The Yee Kuk Triad has its main power bases on Venus and Luna, where it specialises in using bribery and the threat of violence to obtain kickbacks, crooked construction contracts, and lavish perks for its members from samurai executives. In public, the Yee Kuk paints itself as representing the interests of the workers and guildsmen, though little if any of the benefits it acquires from the samurai on the commoners' behalf ever make it to anyone outside the Triad.

The initiation rites for the Yee Kuk Triad are relatively simple. A member of the Triad in good standing presents the recruit to the local boss and vouches for him. The recruit swears loyalty to the Triad, then holds an icon of Sage Kanji as it is set alight. He recites the formula, "This is that way that I shall burn if I reveal the secrets of this society." He is then presented with an ornamented dagger or pistol as a symbol of membership, and within a week gets his first gang tattoo.

The Yee Kuk Triad originated among the employees of the Suritomo keiretsu, and makes extensive use of the Suritomo language in its operations, laden with Triad jargon. If the new recruit does not already know the language, he must start to learn it immediately.

CULTS

Much more secretive than the Triads, and far more dangerous, are the cults. These powerful organisations have their roots in the ancient failed rebellions of the commoners against the samurai, and those roots run deep and have extensive ties to the communities in which they exist.

In ancient times, as today, only samurai were permitted to study the mystic arts, even though many commoners had the strength of will to learn them too. The rebel sage Izogi founded secret schools in defiance of the samurai and began to teach commoners his skills. Izogi was later captured and put to death by the other sages, but his teachings spread like wildfire among those who wanted to learn. Although not one of the Seven Sages, his is still revered by commoners, rebels, and criminals, and his teachings are still in circulation.

Because the samurai are strongly invested in avoiding another commoner rebellion, particularly one spearheaded by Art-wielding cultists, the Overlord and Lord Heirs of centuries past promulgated a ban on Izogi's teachings. Anyone found studying them was to be sentenced to a long and painful death by a thousand cuts. The edict only drove the cults deeper underground, sometimes literally, and made them more wary about who they admitted to membership, for now there were spies everywhere.

The cults became hotbeds of rebellious sentiment, filled with commoners who despised mainstream Mishima society and its unthinking rigidity.

This made the cults ideal recruiting ground for the servants of the Dark Apostles. But not all of them were corrupted. Some blazed their own trails down through the years that followed, teaching their students, perfecting their techniques, and refining their philosophies. Many cults were smashed and their knowledge lost. Sometimes the survivors taught their techniques to the samurai and a new mystic art was absorbed into mainstream Mishima thought. Some cults went on to become significant powers in the hidden corridors of Mishima politics – such as the notorious Shadow Walkers.

RONIN: OUTCAST SAMURAI

The masterless samurai known as ronin are an increasingly common sight in the Mishima realms. The corporate samurai view them as unwanted trouble, while commoners fear these wanderers who could snap and lash out with deadly violence at any time.

Ronin retain the privileges of samurai – they may carry two swords, wear kote armour, and request samurai hospitality, for example. They must be treated with the bare minimum of respect due to a samurai. But because they have no lord, they have no protector and no income.

THE OZUMI OUTFIT

This splinter group was originally part of the Ozumi branch of the Black Dragon Society, but broke away four years ago over a succession dispute. Since its formation the Ozumi Outfit has become known for its open armed conflict with the Black Dragon Society, involving particularly destructive weapons such as missile launchers, flamethrowers, and grenades. The violent feud has claimed the lives of numerous Triad members and many innocent bystanders, giving the Ozumi Outfit a notoriety far greater than its small size of just 1,000 members could normally bring.

The Ozumi Outfit came from the Black Dragon Society's drug-running outfit and is still a major narcotics player now, with the nickname "Ozumi Pharmaceuticals". It has drug trafficking and loansharking operations in several Mishima provinces outside Ozumi.

As far as samurai go, they are considered the lowest of the low. They may have the right to wear the daishō and kote armour, but without corporate backing they lack the financial wherewithal to keep this valuable equipment in good condition. Ronin weaponry is often in a shabby state of repair. The most desperate swallow their pride and sell their equipment, an action that bespeaks a true loss of hope for a samurai.

BECOMING A RONIN

There are two main paths by which a samurai falls to the status of ronin. The first and marginally more honourable route opens up when a lord and his entire fief is wiped out by a rival lord, another corporation, or the Dark Legion. The surviving samurai are shamed by their failure to die with their lord, and in most cases are not offered employment by any daimyo or lord, leaving them as ronin. Sometimes samurai left with no lord even turn down the offer of a position with a new lord, clinging fanatically to the oaths to a master who is now dead and gone.

More often, a ronin is made when a lord dismisses a samurai from his service, and does not even allow him the honourable option of ritual suicide. This punishment leaves the samurai, as the saying goes, "vegetating in shame", as to commit seppuku without permission would only bring more dishonour. Where the survivors of a destroyed clan often have vengeance to cling to, no matter how misdirected, ronin who are cast out as punishment frequently become directionless nihilists, caring little for themselves or the consequences of their actions.

THE DUEL

The old ronin was plastered. He could barely stand up. It was embarrassing. A crowd had gathered in the dusty street. Tanaka would cut the old man down and the people would go away and call him a bully. No glory here. Still, honour must be satisfied.

He'd insulted the old man, that was true. A muttered aside about the state of him. Swords with dirt ground into their hilts. Armour barely worthy of the name. Clan and company logos daubed over with black paint. Probably on his fifth bottle of the morning. Pathetic. An embarrassment to the samurai caste.

The old man had heard. Tanaka's friend said to apologise. Don't you know who that is? They stood at arm's length now. The old man

swaying. Draw and kill in one motion. Tanaka drew his blade. Smooth. Swift. Focused. The old man swifter. Tanaka felt a sudden sharp pain in his wrist and saw his sword hand fly away and land in the dust. His wrist gouted blood. He fell to his knees and looked up at the old man. The look in the old man's eyes said everything: How do you think I lived to get this old?



THE RONIN'S SURVIVAL GUIDE

If you become a ronin, your options are limited. You no longer have a position in the corporation, but your samurai status precludes you from taking on menial work of the kind befitting a commoner. Equally, you cannot be given work relating to business matters, since you are an unworthy rogue who cannot be trusted with confidential information. You pretty much have only your sword arm and trigger finger to rely on now.

Some common ways Ronin choose to earn a crust include:

HIRED SAMURAI

Hiring out your sword to daimyos in need has the advantage of utilising your training. However, the lords of Mishima view you as eminently expendable, and will be more than happy to send you on suicide missions. After all, if you don't come back they don't have to pay you.

BANDIT

This common ronin activity is low-class, vulgar, and apt to get you killed by the lords of the land where you operate. On the other hand, you don't have to take orders from anyone and, if you pick your victims well, you can make a decent living – perhaps decent enough to set up as an independent merchant and get back to something like a normal life.

SECURITY GUARD

It's embarrassing, but shopping malls throughout Mishima space are always on the lookout for tough guys with combat experience and management skills to protect shoppers and retailers from robbers and hooligans. Every other head of security at a Mishima mall or supermarket these days seems to be a ronin.

MERCENARY

Working as a hired hand for a Mishima lord is one thing, but taking money from the other corporations? This truly will earn you contempt from other samurai. Still, desperate times call for desperate measures.

SPY

You can put your insider knowledge to good use as a spy, though it means engaging in some deeply dishonourable and deceitful activities. Your ability to talk the samurai talk will be invaluable in bluffing your way into secure facilities or meeting rooms.

PRIVATE EYE

Samurai training incorporates many of the attributes of a successful detective, including patience, keen observation skills, familiarity with bureaucracy, and the ability to hold one's liquor. Ronin are held in low esteem, but so is police work, so ronin do not have much trouble getting investigation work even from samurai clients.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

RELATIONS WITH OTHER CORPORATIONS

BAUHAUS

Mishima has, relatively speaking, great respect for the Homebuilders. Samurai understand the martial spirit, attachment to honour, and born right to leadership that the Bauhaus aristocracy embraces. However, it covets the Homebuilders' technical prowess, and so Bauhaus suffers more than any other group from the depredations of Mishima's industrial espionage operatives.

Protests about this activity through the Cartel have done the Homebuilders no good. The Lord Heirs simply point out that their vassals' spy networks are set up and operate without their knowledge or approval. They will, of course, have the spies executed if they are caught, as much to punish them for incompetence as to appease the Homebuilders. They also take the time to point out that the only reason Bauhaus does not make use of intelligence gleaned from Mishima operations is because its own spies are invariably caught and killed before they get anywhere. The Homebuilders favour Lord Heiress Mariko because they have no significant operations on Mars and so have no conflict of interests with her, and because of her cordial relationship with the Brotherhood.

In contrast, the Elector Dukes hate Lord Heir Maru, who is a constant thorn in the side of their Venusian domains.

CAPITOL

All things considered, relations between Mishima and Capitol are as good as could be expected. That is, there's a lot of treachery, intrigue, and double-dealing. Although Mishima is Capitol's biggest trading partner, there are many points of conflict between the two great corporations. Capitol particularly hates Mishima's unlicensed use of its designs and the difficulty it has in selling into Mishima's huge but closed markets. The Mishimans see Capitolians as lacking in honour, discipline, and courage, and are horrified by Capitolian society's disregard for the elderly and the poor.

Capitol prefers to deal with Lord Heir Moya because it has no particular conflict of interest with him. Capitol's military forces have fought over the Graveton Archipelago on Venus against Lord Heir Maru's military, and are constantly fighting over territory in South Mars with Mariko's forces.

Lord Heirs Maru and Mariko resent the way Capitol favours Moya and interferes with their business interests. They have responded with force, increased espionage, and piracy.

CYBERTRONIC

Mishima and Cybertronic are natural allies. Both are enemies of the Brotherhood, and both have pushed back against the teachings of humanity's self-styled protectors. Mishima has access to the natural resources that Cybertronic needs. Cybertronic manufactures the advanced components that make Mishima's high-tech goods and the samurai's kote armour possible. This ensures that the two corporations remain on relatively good terms.

Cybertronic and its sophisticated technologies are exceedingly tempting targets for Mishima's industrial espionage units. If Mishima could just get its hands on a few key designs, there would be no more need to deal with the smaller corporation. But Cybertronic has so far remained impervious to infiltration. Every so often an individual daimyo throws a spanner into the works by getting it into his head that a raid on a Cybertronic installation would be a great idea. The Lord Heir in charge of whichever daimyo it is invariably apologises. Cybertronic is starting to suspect these raids may be a cloak for the Lord Heirs' own schemes.

Cybertronic is totally neutral in regard to the conflict between the three Lord Heirs. Moya is more wary of Cybertronic than his siblings, and forbids its presence on Mercury. He still needs Cybertronic components to compete with the other Lord Heirs though, so he purchases them through intermediaries on Luna and Venus.

IMPERIAL

Imperial performs a difficult balancing act when it comes to treating with Mishima. It is the only other corporation with any significant presence on Mercury because of its lease of the free city of Fukido. While Fukido generates a lot of revenue for Imperial, its existence is barely tolerated by Lord Heir Moya, who could wipe it out with his huge armies, though not cheaply.

On Mercury, Imperial does its best to placate Lord Heir Moya while letting him know that it will defend Fukido to the last man if he tries to take it, hoping he will consider the cost too great. Moya has too much respect for Imperial's military capabilities to launch an assault without carefully considering all the variables first. On Mars and Venus Imperial tries to get in to Moya's good books by raiding

the settlements of the other Lord Heirs. Given the opportunity Maru and Mariko would happily eradicate every Imperial holding in the solar system.

WHITESTAR

Mishima has conflicting feelings about these strange hold-outs from Earth. The upper management was against the Cartel's return to Earth, preferring to leave the husk of the planet as a memorial to human folly. Mishima maintains the bare minimum of diplomatic relations that politeness and realpolitik demand until it can find out more about these people. Early indications suggest to Mishima that Whitestar's people are shiftless barbarians with little to offer.

THE CARTEL

Mishima has scant regard for the Cartel, although this was not always the case. At one time, Mishima was nearly as enthusiastic as Capitol about the organisation and its goals, but with the decline of the Overlord and the rise of the Lord Heirs Mishima's involvement with the Cartel has become a joke.

The Overlord has the sole authority to negotiate treaties with the other corporations through the Cartel, but the Lord Heirs break these treaties with impunity. Only unofficial deals negotiated behind closed doors with individual Lord Heirs will be adhered to.

Mishima is more than willing to support the Cartel's military adventures when its missions coincide with Mishima interests. This is particularly true of operations against the Dark Legion.

THE BROTHERHOOD

Officially, the Brotherhood respects Mishima's unique customs and heritage, acknowledging its status as one of the great powers of the solar system. In truth, the Brotherhood hates the way it cannot control Mishima, which it sees as a hotbed of heresy, deviants, and schismatics, which took a wrong turn back in the time of the Neronian Heresy and has gone downhill from there.

The Brotherhood fears and hates the way Mishima's leaders ignore their Brotherhood advisors, and that some Mishima employees are able to use psychic powers that the Brotherhood cannot understand or control. Mishima, for its part, acknowledges that the Brotherhood performs a vital task in fighting the Darkness, the same as the Order of Demon Hunters. But its much vaunted "Word" is nothing more than a glorified public safety announcement. The Brotherhood provides practical guidelines but does nothing for the human soul.

To Mishima, the way the Brotherhood assumes the trappings of religion is truly despicable, preventing people from moving towards spiritual enlightenment with its overzealous destruction of so-called heretics – and Mishima's leaders are acutely aware that the Brotherhood considers its entire society heretical – and hiding its leaders' lust for power behind sweet-sounding words.

It is unofficial policy, universally followed, for Brotherhood observers to be kept out of the loop whenever anything that's actually important is under consideration. The exception to this is Lord Heiress Mariko, who consults her Brotherhood advisors extensively and so enjoys their support for her claim to the Overlord's throne.



The loss of Fukido instigated corporate seppuku on a massive scale.

POLICE AND MILITARY

POLICE

Mishima's police system leaves individual lords to handle their own affairs when it comes to law enforcement, and even in regards to which laws they choose to enforce. Some allow their territory to be policed by countless small security companies, each with up to 1,000 officers. Some lords depend on their own samurai to keep the peace.

This system is a by-product of Mishima's decentralised corporate governance. It would be almost impossible to have a single, uniformed police force within the separate domains of all the different lords; and even if everyone somehow agreed to this, individual lords would be very unlikely to offer much support at the best of times. In addition, Mishima has always feared any strong police system as a threat to the existing management.

The Mishima corporation has no uniform code of law. Tradition dictates that everybody must obey their superiors. Commoners obey samurai, samurai obey their lords, lords answer to their daimyo, and the daimyo obey the Lord Heirs.

The Lord Heirs do have general requirements for how they wish their subordinate territories to be governed. Lord Maru strongly discourages harsh treatment of the commoners. Lord Moya demands that his samurai keep the common herd under strict control. Lord Heiress Mariko, lacking the political control over her subjects that her brothers have, leaves her daimyos on a long leash as regards how they treat their commoners. Instead, she is careful to reward those that keep a close eye on their subordinate samurai for dealings - with other corporations or the other Lord Heirs - that might undermine her business concerns. As far as Mariko is concerned, if you take care of loyalty at the executive level, the workers will take care of themselves.

That said, the Lord Heirs do not meddle in the internal management of a keiretsu. A daimyo or lord has free rein to set whatever rules and regulations he chooses within his domain, and to enforce them as he sees fit.

Most lords simply have their lower-echelon samurai patrol the streets to keep order. This work is considered dull grunt work by the samurai, who often only bother to enforce their lord's edicts if they think they'll get into trouble for not doing it. Riots or muggings will get their attention, but anything that takes more than a few strokes with a katana to resolve will most likely be written up in a report and then quietly forgotten about.

Because samurai are always keen to try out their swords, violent street crime is quite rare. Samurai love killing bank robbers, muggers, and other criminals on the spot when they get the chance. Even better if the criminals are worthy adversaries who put up a fight. However, the samurai who get given police work find corruption, fraud, and similar offences thoroughly tedious, and have little interest in investigating them. Non-violent crime will often flourish in a Mishima-controlled area until a high-ranking lord declares a purge on white collar crime.

Some lords do go further, and organise fully fledged police forces with uniforms, codes of law to follow, and commoners serving in back-up roles. Police forces are much more common in the Mishima areas of great cities such as Luna or San Dorado, where Mishima cannot afford any diplomatic incidents, and where lawlessness is just embarrassing because outsiders will look askance at the corporation.

Checking up on health and safety codes, censorship laws, or other regulations is the duty of *inspectors* appointed on an *ad-hoc* basis by the relevant lord, and is not usually a full-time job. Investigating murders and other serious crimes falls to officials designated as *magistrates*. On Mercury these functions are combined in the person of the *inspector-magistrate*, who is empowered to collect evidence, pass judgement, and carry out sentencing (often death) on the spot. Mercurian lords maintain their own separate security forces, but the inspector-magistrates pledge their allegiance to Lord Heir Moya, and are commanded by Lord Nozaki.

Another widely used tool of control is the vast web of informers and agents provocateur to be found in every fiefdom, carrying word of all manner of goings-on to the lord's spymaster. These spies often use their connections to gather power for themselves and to settle old scores. Many are in the pay of the Triads.

The Triads often form a major part of the local manager's intelligence network, and require little encouragement to keep street crime at a low level on their own turf. In return, officials turn a blind eye to their activities.

These factors make Mishima areas comparatively safe in general, even though outsiders see them as breeding grounds for vice and crime. When running rackets in other corporations' territories, the Triads prefer to use Mishima territory as safe ground from which to base their operations. This is not always feasible, and several Triads have successfully set up in foreign territory - Imperial and Capitol

holdings are particularly fertile ground – but doing so requires much more expenditure of resources, personnel, bribe money, and time spent threatening cops.

It is much simpler to set up on nearby Mishima territory whenever possible and send operatives into the other corporations' territory as needed, who can flee back to the Mishima zone as and when they get in trouble.



THE MILITARY

Uniquely among the corporations, Mishima has no formal military structure. Each lord has a retinue of samurai who obey his orders without question. Each keiretsu makes its warriors available to the service of the corporation as stipulated in the terms of the subsidiarity contracts that signed the keiretsu to the Mishima corporation, which may vary from one keiretsu to the next. As a result, there is no top-down military organisation, only the oaths of loyalty that each samurai makes to his supervising lord manager.

The forces fielded by Mishima's lords range from a hundred low-grade soldiers under the command of a minor factory manager, to tens of thousands of highly skilled warriors sworn to the daimyo of a keiretsu. The quality of training, discipline, and equipment varies widely, contingent on the resources available to the commanding lord.

The typical Mishima military force is designed to be able to split up and operate with as little oversight as possible. The basic unit consists of five to ten soldiers or vehicles and is called a Strike Team. This is led by a Strike Leader. A unit of five to ten Strike Teams is called a Force, and is led by a Force Leader. A unit of five to ten Forces is called a Strike Force and is led by a Strike Force Commander. A unit of five to ten Strike Forces is called a Host, led by a Host Leader. An army can be made up of any number of Hosts, and its leader is called either Supreme Host Leader or Supreme Force Commander.

Each warrior in a Strike Team swears an oath to obey his Strike Leader without question, in a similar profession of obedience to that taken by a samurai to his lord, though much more limited in scope as it applies only to military matters. Promotion can come very swiftly in Mishima armed forces. A superior can reward a soldier for bravery by promoting him on the spot. Conversely, a man can be demoted in an instant too. This is both a strength and weakness of the Mishima command system. If a commander quickly promotes his most competent soldiers, the rank and file will trust their commander's judgement. On the other hand, if the commander surrounds himself with toadies and yes-men, he will lose his subordinates' respect and they will follow his orders to the letter but no more than that. In the Mishima military everything depends upon the commander of the unit.

BANNERMEN

One of the most important soldiers in any Mishima unit is its bannerman. The honour of carrying the pride of the unit is usually given to the strongest and fiercest warrior. The banner carries the unit's symbol and flies from a pole fixed to the bannerman's armour. These flags usually display the unit's liege lord, its category, and its unit number. It is a great dishonour for any unit to lose this banner and Mishima warriors will fight to the death rather than surrender their banner to enemy hands.

ASHIGARU

For centuries, only samurai took part in Mishima's many battles. But the corporate wars exacted a heavy toll in the lives of Mishima's proud executive caste. On Venus, Lord Maru realised he needed a new source of recruits if his armies were to be able to repel the other corporations and the threat of the Dark Legion. He began to train and field soldiers drawn from the ranks of the commoners, whom he dubbed ashigaru.

Traditionalists, given to dark mutterings at the best of times, said that no good would come of this violation of the ancient ban on arming the commoners. But both Lord Moya and Lady Mariko have seen that Mishima must employ ashigaru in order to survive, and now they too recruit commoner soldiers into their armies. Most ashigaru are fiercely loyal to their master because by entering combat they are given an opportunity to win honour that they could never have hoped for in civilian life. Some ashigaru, a very select few, have even been elevated to the status of samurai because of their bravery.

EQUIPMENT

The equipment carried by a samurai depends entirely upon his status and wealth, but mostly his wealth. All samurai except those of the very lowest level are expected to provide their own weapons, armour, and other equipment. A samurai is not expected to provide major pieces of gear such as battlemecha, but anything up to and including a dragonbike is for the samurai to pay for himself.

Low shareholder samurai and life samurai will usually have their basic equipment provided by their lord. Because most samurai supply their own gear, there can be a marked disparity in equipment load-outs even between samurai in the same keiretsu.

Some keiretsu believe in fielding comparatively small units of highly trained, well-equipped troops, and will subsidise purchases to ensure every soldier's equipment is up to scratch. Others have no problem fielding huge hordes of barely trained and poorly armed soldiers, relying on numbers and an indomitable warrior spirit to carry the day. One thing that is certain is that a lord will always have arms and armour that is at least as good as that of his retainers. The

daimyo of a keiretsu will often have devastatingly effective custom weapons that far outstrip anything his subordinates can bring to bear. The hataamoto of a lord are usually better equipped than the rest of his soldiers. Indeed, it is a point of pride that they should be.

Tradition demands that every samurai carry two swords: the long-bladed katana and the shorter wakizashi. Every samurai is trained to use these swords from birth; his swords are almost a part of him. Because they have such an attachment to these paired blades, called the **daisho**, samurai consider sword fighting the most honourable form of combat. A sword duel lets the combatants look into one another's eyes at the moment of victory or defeat – a meeting of warrior souls. These swords are a physical symbol of the samurai's status and honour. When a samurai takes the ultimate step of committing seppuku to save his honour, it is his wakizashi that he uses to make the cut.

The samurai are not only capable with the sword. Like any contemporary soldier, the samurai trains with all kinds of modern weaponry, including guns, flamethrowers, grenades, and rocket launchers. Marksmanship is highly prized, particularly with weapons that require great accuracy and focus, such as the sniper rifles used in "firearms meditation". Nonetheless, the sword is considered the true weapon of the samurai.

Samurai are also required to provide their own armour when they muster for battle. This may be ordinary armour that simply protects its wearer, or it may be a kote battlesuit, mechanised to give its wearer greater mobility and strength. Every battlesuit is personalised with motifs chosen by the samurai, with his family and company logos, and with the slogans and visuals of corporate sponsors that he has obtained. The more successful samurai are able to get by with a single big-name sponsor that can pay for all their equipment needs. Young or less prestigious samurai must fund their equipment by covering their battlesuits with the logos of multiple, smaller sponsors.

MEKA

Mishima's truly unique weapon is the meka. Meka are the humanoid, mechanical walkers invented by Mishima and yet to be successfully replicated elsewhere. These giant robots resemble kote battlesuits but are more akin to a tank or other combat vehicle. In warfare, battlemeka are capable of delivering superior firepower than an infantryman can carry, over terrain more difficult or enclosed than a tank or aircraft could deal with. Support meka are the workhorses of Mishima's heavy industries. They can be found on construction sites, hauling earth in mining operations, conducting repair work beneath the sea, and even sometimes, with special vacuum-hardened cockpits, in space.



The bannerman stands proud and firm in his convictions as he is honored to bare the crest of his master high into battle.

Piloted by a single soldier or a crew, these titans can crush a tank with a single stomp of the foot, or support an entire building while repairs are carried out at its base. However, meka are eye-wateringly expensive to build and maintain. Only the richest keiretsu can field them. Because of their cost, meka are kept in use for generations, becoming family heirlooms. Many meka acquire names, and some are more famous than any samurai of the family that owns them.

The much-loved Slayer of Dark Beasts halted a Dark Legion assault on Quanto almost single-handed and toppled the towers of the Nepharite Hale's Citadel with its mighty powerclaw. In the city of Shoa, a life-size statue of the Render of Faceless Outlanders stands in commemoration of the meka's deeds in the Siege of Shoa, when it destroyed 296 Bauhaus battle tanks.

TAMBU BATTLEMEKA MARK 2

RESTRICTION: 5 **COST: 85**

MAINTENANCE: 9 **RELIABILITY: 2**

The most common model of battlefield meka, the Mark 2 stands nearly five metres tall and weighs almost ten tonnes. Each one is a marvel of engineering, motivated by a complex network of micro-servos and hydraulics, all of which act as an extension of the pilot's body. The pilot is a lone samurai, often given the magnificent honour and grave responsibility of operating his keiretsu's only battlemeka, serving as its custodian and caretaker for a generation.

QUALITIES	Enclosed, Walker			
CRUISING SPEED	45 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY		0
CREW	1 commander		CARRYING CAPACITY	None
LOCATIONS	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	9	10	5	3
MOTIVE SYSTEM	8	8	4	2
WEAPON	6	6	3	2
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+↑4			
ARMAMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrified Mega-Fist (Melee, 2+↑8, Knockback, Spread 2, Stun) • Edge-Crusher blade (Melee, 2+↑8, Armour Piercing 2, Knockback, Vicious 1) <p>One Ranged Weapon from the following list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Dragonfang' autocannon (Range M, 2+↑7, Automatic, Spread 1) • 'Daimyo' rocket launcher with anti-armour rockets (Range L, 2+↑5, Munition, Armour Piercing 2, Vicious 1) 			
NOTES	<p>The meka may only use one melee weapon per turn – the blade is housed in the Mega-Fist, and may be extended or retracted as a Free Action once per turn.</p> <p>Contains ten Reloads for ranged weapon.</p>			

MAYAMA HEAVY ENGINEERING RŌDŌSHA TYPE 6 INDUSTRIAL MEKA

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 16**

MAINTENANCE: 3 **RELIABILITY: 2**

A standard form of industrial meka in use across Mercury, the Rōdōsha Type 6 is based on a stolen battlemeka design that found its way into the hands of the Mayama keiretsu decades ago. Legal action was taken to reclaim the design, but no satisfactory resolution looks forthcoming. Until then, Mayama continue to produce this highly successful industrial loadlifter. The enclosed design allows it to operate in more inhospitable conditions, such as mines and newly-excavated caverns, and its similarity to the battlemeka it was based on means that it is the closest that any guild-bonded commoner will ever come to operating a true meka. The demands of industry are less than those of battle, and thus industrial meka can be produced in far larger quantities than battlemeka.

QUALITIES	Enclosed, Rugged, Walker			
CRUISING SPEED	35 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY		0
CREW	1 pilot	CARRYING CAPACITY	225 enc	
LOCATIONS	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	6	10	5	3
MOTIVE SYSTEM	4	6	3	2
WEAPONS	3	6	3	2
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+↑4			
ARMAMENTS	Loader Claws (Melee, 2+↑4 damage, Knockback)			
NOTES	Carrying capacity only in crates held in loading claw			

THE NAVIES OF MISHIMA

Only on Venus does Mishima have traditional water-borne naval forces, comprising huge fleets of megacruisers, troop transports, rocketcraft carriers, and more. Each keiretsu may have its own navy, but the greatest fleet is that of Lord Heir Maru – after all, he does bear the title “Prince of the Oceans”, so it would simply be wrong for things to be otherwise. His flagship, Prince of Dragons, is the mightiest warship ever to sail the Venusian seas. Bristling with weapons, this ocean-going behemoth displaces a quarter of a million tons. The Prince's hull can withstand a direct hit from the most powerful anti-ship missiles currently in use, and its enormous 40-inch naval guns can reduce the largest fortress to rubble.

Anyone, samurai or commoner, might own a sea-going ship if he has enough money. But the Lord Heirs maintain a strict monopoly on space fleets. Except for the Overlord, no one else in the Mishima corporation is allowed to own a spacecraft. Each Lord Heir has a fleet of merchant and war vessels. The largest fleet belongs to Lord Heir Moya, though Maru's is not far off. Lady Mariko's war fleet does

not come close to the other two, but she has the best trade links with other corporations through the space lanes. The Overlord has a splendid golden space barge, which he uses for ceremonial visits on those rare occasions when he leaves Luna.



THE AIR FORCES OF MISHIMA

Only the wealthiest lords of the Mishima corporation can afford their own fleets of aircraft. Even the greatest daimyos generally have at most a dozen aeroplanes and perhaps fifty helicopters. Only the Lord Heirs command truly sizeable air forces with hundreds of aircraft. By the standards of the other corporations, even these are barely adequate.

Being based largely on a planet where everyone lives underground, Mishima has had little to spur it to aviation greatness. Civilian aircraft of Mercury are limited largely to zeppelins and helicopters used in those underworlds with ceilings high enough to make them practical – for the wealthy – as a way to get from one tower to another.

On Venus, Lord Heir Maru has plans to improve his air force, but his priority is on his army and navy. Passenger zeppelins are a popular form of transport between cities for guildsmen and low shareholder samurai, while those of higher status fly by helicopter.

Lord Heiress Mariko has a larger and better equipped air force than her half-brothers, with around 3,000 aircraft, which she uses to patrol and ferry troops around her vast, sparsely populated domain. Civilian aircraft are rare in her domain, though – almost no one except the military travels by air.

Both Maru and Mariko employ a high percentage of ashigaru as air crew, for one simple reason: every samurai wants to be a hotshot fighter ace. Obsessed with duels of skill against worthy foes, the samurai disdain bombers and transport planes as utterly tedious compared to the potential for dogfighting glory found in a fighter plane's cockpit.

Lower ranking samurai are still forced to pilot bombers and cargo planes until they rise through the ranks, but the Lord Heirs long ago stopped assigning samurai to crew or support roles, as morale became uniformly low. Discipline also became a problem. Seeing themselves as being denied a shot at glory in their humdrum assignments, the samurai fought duels amongst themselves with a frequency and recklessness that threatened to seriously deplete the forces' manpower. Today, commoners fulfil the many vital but mundane roles that make the air force keep ticking.

ARMOUR

The distinctive Mishima armour is constructed from ultra-light ceramics reinforced with metal plates, and padded with semi-solid polymers to absorb impact. Armour was once solely reserved for the samurai, but is now also worn by commoners of the ashigaru corps.

The left shoulder pad usually bears the logos of the wearer's lord and keiretsu. On the right are rank badges and, in the case of samurai, emblems of honour. If a samurai has been accorded the title "Military Employee of the Month", he will wear the holographic certificate here.

Ronin paint out the insignia on both shoulder pads, replacing them with calligraphic inscriptions of their choosing, usually poetry on the transience of life. All samurai customise their armour to a greater or lesser extent, so no two look alike. Ashigaru are not permitted to personalise their equipment.

It is difficult for people not employed by the corporation to get hold of Mishiman armour. When it can be found on the black market, it sells for at least three times the price it would to a Mishiman buyer.

ASHIGARU ARMOUR

The commoner soldiers of Mishima wear lightweight armour consisting of a breastplate, shoulder pads, and greaves in reinforced ceramics.

Ashigaru leaders wear kevlar helmets in their keiretsu's livery colours. Rank and file ashigaru normally do not wear helmets, instead sporting bandanas with morale-boosting slogans and advertisements for energy snacks.

Rules for ashigaru pads can be found on page 246 of the **Mutant Chronicles** core book.

BATTLESUIT

This is the basic standard for samurai armour, light yet highly resistant to damage. It is most commonly worn by low ranking samurai or ronin, who cannot afford to buy or maintain the powered kote armour.

Rules for Sode Battlesuits can be found on page 246 of the **Mutant Chronicles** core book.

SAMURAI POWERSUITS

Powersuits were the first of the new generation of Mishiman armour. The idea was to create a smaller version of the meka war machines. A powersuit uses components sourced from Cybertronic to monitor and control the complex hydraulics and servo systems in these heavily-armoured exoskeletons. These suits enormously increase the strength of the wearers, giving them a formidable and

intimidating bulk on the battlefield. Warriors in powered armour stand more than two and a half metres tall, and weigh nearly half a tonne. Their massive steel fists can shatter stone, and are all the deadlier when clutching a blade or heavy weapon. Many suits incorporate frightening masks, elongated shoulder pads, integrated weaponry, and a variety of other systems. Almost all have a back banner pole that proclaims the wearer's allegiance for all to see.

POWER ASSISTED: A character wearing a samurai powersuit benefits from heightened physical strength and mobility as a result of the armour's systems. The character gains one additional Momentum on all strength-based tests, and ignores the armour's encumbrance while the suit remains active. Further, the character increases his melee damage bonus by $\uparrow 2$ while wearing the armour. However, the awkward weight and bulk of the armour increases the difficulty of all Acrobatics and Stealth tests the character attempts by one.

STABLE PLATFORM: Samurai powersuits are sturdy and provide considerable support for soldiers operating powerful weaponry. A character wearing a powersuit always counts as Braced when using Unwieldy weapons, and may use Two-Handed or Unbalanced weapons one-handed without any penalty.

KOTE BATTLESUIT

The new generation of Mishima armour doesn't just protect its wearer. These powered suits are like miniature battlemecha, monitoring the wearer's movements and transmitting them to a complex, heavily armoured mechanical exoskeleton, that increases the user's mobility and strength, as well as protecting him from harm. Kote armour relies on a highly sophisticated control system built from Cybertronic-sourced components.

A samurai in kote armour stands up to two and a half metres tall and weighs nearly half a tonne. The suit's metal hands are capable of crushing rock, or of adroitly manipulating swords, guns, or other weapon systems. There is a lower limit on the size of weapons one may wield in a kote suit – swords must be scaled up to kote suit size – the ancient two-handers called no-dachi are a popular choice – and infantry-sized handguns are simply too small.

Every kote suit is custom made. Many incorporate extensive ornamentation; face masks bearing the features of howling oni demons or wild animals, elongated shoulder pad designs, and a range of built-in weapons from electric stun generators to grenade launchers to esoteric choices such as hidden dart guns. Almost all kote suits have one or more banner poles attached to the back, allowing the wearer to proudly display his allegiance and secure maximum exposure for his corporate sponsors.

Some older versions of kote armour are flawed, with a vulnerability in the chest that risks catastrophic feedback into the reactor. If hit



The battlemecha is a powerful machine of war and it has turned many a battle.

in the Torso, the attacker may spend three Momentum to ignore armour and inflict an additional $\uparrow 4$ damage. This version's Cost is reduced by four.

KOTE POWERSUIT

FACTION	SOAK			
	HEAD	TORSO	ARMS	LEGS
Mishima	4	5	4	4
ENCUMBRANCE	RELIABILITY	RESTRICTION	COST	
20	2	3	22	

SHOA ACE CUSTOM BATTLESUIT

The latest must-have kote armour for the elite samurai with crowns to burn is the Shoa Ace line. Custom made, like all kote suits, these cutting-edge designs are assembled in Shoa, and use Cybertronic-made auxiliary systems to regulate their hydraulics and pilot feedback. Already a firm favourite with Mishima's highest ranking samurai executives, Shoa Ace suits look similar to standard kote armour but are even bigger and more formidable, granting the wearer even better speed, power, and protection. They are the pinnacle of Mishima armour technology at this moment.

The higher quality of the Shoa Ace battlesuit means that it grants two additional Momentum on strength-based tests instead of the normal one for power-assisted armour, and increases the damage bonus it grants to **↑3**.

SHOA ACE POWERSUIT

FACTION	SOAK			
	HEAD	TORSO	ARMS	LEGS
Mishima	5	5	5	4
ENCUMBRANCE	RELIABILITY	RESTRICTION	COST	
25	2	4	26	

KARIUDO ARMOUR

These suits are built exclusively for the Demon Hunters by the artisans of the Forbidden Isle on Mercury. Distinguished by the pair of mechanical arms extending from the shoulders, a trained warrior in Kariudo armour can fend off innumerable foes with a flurry of razor-sharp blades and a storm of bullets, and is virtually impervious to the attacks of his foes. Their face guards are sculpted into terrifying demonic visages, and spikes protrude from the shoulder pads and gauntlets. Many have razor-sharp blades extending from the vambraces as a back-up weapon for use in close quarters.

A Kariudo-type armour suit provides similar protection to the Shoa Ace kote armour. In addition, Demon Hunter armour is anointed with sacred essences, and draped with mystic talismans that hang from the armour at locations representing centres of Ki energy in the human body.

The Demon Hunters' unique armour cannot be legally bought, only received as a gift.

A suit of Kariudo armour has four arms, and can thus wield more weapons than an ordinary warrior can. The armour is normally fitted with a single ranged weapon on the lower arms, and two melee weapons in the upper arms. The wearer can still only attack with one weapon at a time, though the normal rules for dual wielding apply.

KARIUDO

FACTION	SOAK			
	HEAD	TORSO	ARMS	LEGS
Mishima	5	6	5	5
ENCUMBRANCE	RELIABILITY	RESTRICTION	COST	
28	3	5	30	

DEATHSHRIEKER SCREECHGUN

RESTRICTION 4 **COST 11 (WEAPON)**

RESTRICTION 4 **COST 2 (RELOAD)**

This terrible, experimental weapon takes its name from the horrific sound it emits when used. The sound, however, is little more than

a side-effect of the weapon's true function. The sonic vibrations it produces can, when focussed perfectly, pulverise flesh, shatter bone, and transmit through armour, inflicting terrible damage on internal mechanisms.

A Deathshrieker Screechgun uses the Heavy Weapons skill, rather than the Ranged Weapons skill.

DEATHSHRIEKER SCREECHGUN

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	↑6	Munition	10	Unwieldy	4
QUALITIES	Armour Piercing 3, Stun, Torrent, Vicious 3				

DEMONFANG ROCKETGUN

RESTRICTION 4 **COST 7 (WEAPON)**

RESTRICTION 4 **COST 2 (RELOAD)**

This unique weapon – best described as a 'sniper cannon' – is designed for use on armoured targets, firing rocket-assisted explosive shells. Using it on ordinary targets is a particularly messy form of overkill, though one with desirably negative effects on the morale of enemies within visual range.

A Demonfang Rocketgun uses the Heavy Weapons skill, rather than the Ranged Weapons skill.

DEMONFANG ROCKETGUN

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
L	2+↑6	Munition	15	Unwieldy	2
QUALITIES	Unforgiving 3				

DRAGONSTORM TURBOCANNON

RESTRICTION 4 **COST 12 (WEAPON)**

RESTRICTION 4 **COST 2 (RELOAD)**

This powerful machine gun was designed for use in the dense jungles of Venus. It can function as a squad support weapon, mounted on a vehicle, or be fitted to a custom powersuit. A twenty five barrel Gatling heavy machine gun fed from a powered belt, it employs the most sophisticated cryogenic cooling systems and can fire at rates of up to 1,000 rounds per minute. Each round is a dense, armour-piercing slug designed to punch through personal armour and light vehicle plating in short order. While its effective range is fairly short, most users relish the sheer firepower it provides.

A Dragonstorm turbocannon uses the Heavy Weapons skill rather than the Ranged Weapons skill.

DRAGONSTORM TURBOCANNON

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	2+↑5	Automatic	25	Unwieldy	3
QUALITIES	Armour Piercing 2, Spread 2, Vicious 2				

MISHIMA WEAPONS



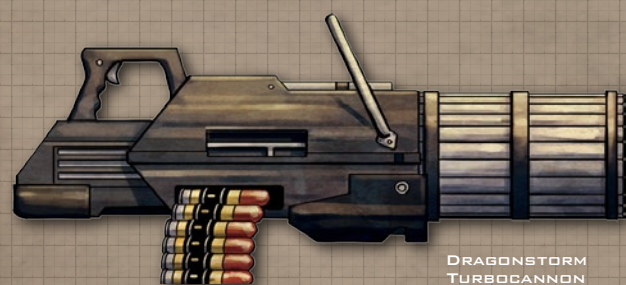
DARKSLAYER
KATANA



DEATHSHRIEKER
SCREECHGUN



DEMONFANG
ROCKETGUN

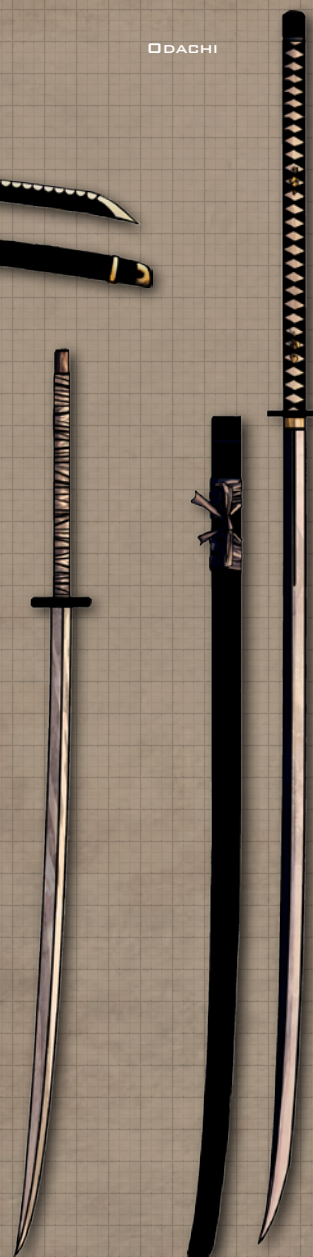


DRAGONSTORM
TURBOCANNON



TAMBU KEIRETSU NO.
1A 'YARI SHOGUN'

ODACHI



SHINKEN

TAMBU KEIRETSU NO. 1A 'YARI SHOGUN'

RESTRICTION 3 COST 9

The Yari is a weapon designed for ashigaru rather than samurai. It is essentially a Shogun assault rifle with a bayonet affixed to a three-foot pole attached to the underside. The Yari gives the relatively untrained warrior an effective melee weapon that can be employed without stowing his rifle. However, the Yari takes up space that would otherwise be used for the Shogun's grenade launcher.

NO. 1A "YARI SHOGUN"

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	1+↑4	Burst	4	2H	2
QUALITIES		-			

YARI

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
-	1+↑4	-	-	2H	3
QUALITIES		Armour Piercing 1, Reach			

DARKSLAYER KATANA

RESTRICTION 4 COST 14

The weaponsmiths on the Forbidden Isle are a combination of artisan and magician. They use closely-guarded secrets of forging and enchantment to give their blades incredible power against the Darkness.

While wielding one or more Darkslayer katana, a character increases his Corruption Soak by one.

DARKSLAYER KATANA

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
-	1+↑5	-	2	Unbalanced	4
QUALITIES		Parry 1, Pious 2			

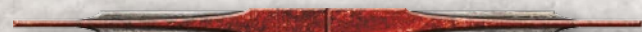
ÔDACHI

RESTRICTION 3 COST 10

Ôdachi, also known as nodachi, are long, two-handed blades of Mishiman design, longer and heavier than a katana. Though traditionally favoured by only a few of the most skilled samurai, they have increased in popularity as powersuits have become commonplace. The greater size and strength of a powersuit-clad warrior allows these large weapons to easily be used in one armoured hand.

ÔDACHI

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
-	2+↑5	-	5	2H	4
QUALITIES		Vicious 2			



SHINKEN

RESTRICTION 1 COST 3

Similar in form to other Mishiman swords, shinken are of a lower quality than the fine blades used by samurai. As a result, shinken are employed for training purposes, allowing younger samurai to practice their art. Some are also used for ceremonial or fashion reasons, worn by samurai who do not own a proper daishō but who wish to wear a blade to emphasise their rank.

SHINKEN

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
-	1+↑3	-	2	Unbalanced	3
QUALITIES		Parry 1			

HEIRLOOM WEAPONS

With the exception of its renowned swordsmithing, Mushashi has a reputation throughout the solar system for producing unreliable, cheap weaponry. In fact, Mushashi produces as complete a range of armaments as any other corporation, but only the mass-produced weapons are licensed for export. This is, in part, due to a desire to prevent enemies from reverse engineering Mishima's proprietary designs, but to a larger degree is simply because the low end of the market is where Mishima can dominate beyond its own borders. Simply put, Mishima's cheap guns are better than everyone else's cheap guns.

Within Mishima, it is common practice to have weapons customised or made to order – samurai like to pay as much for their weapons as possible. These unique weapons, the creations of master craftsmen, are referred to as heirloom weapons, as they are often passed from generation to generation.

The majority of heirloom weapons in existence are swords, but guns, especially handguns and sniper rifles, are often created to these exacting standards of perfection.

HEIRLOOM WEAPON SPECIAL PROPERTIES

An heirloom weapon is a normal weapon of Mishiman make, determined when the weapon is created. Each individual weapon has between one and three special properties, generated on the table on page 78. If the property is marked *, then it can only be generated once – re-roll duplicate results. Other properties can be generated multiple times, adding one to the rating of any weapon qualities granted (which stacks with the rating of qualities that the weapon already possesses). Certain results may not make much sense when applied to ranged weapons; the GM is free to require a re-roll of any such results, or to reinterpret them to provide some other comparable result.

Due to the exacting craftsmanship required to produce such weapons, they are difficult and expensive to obtain, each special

HEIRLOOM WEAPON PROPERTIES TABLE

D20 ROLL PROPERTY

1	Darkslayer: The weapon gains the Pious 2 quality, and the wielder gains an additional point of Corruption Soak while wielding one or more weapons with this property.
2	Hating Blade*: The weapon was forged to combat a particular foe. Against foes of that faction, the weapon gains Vicious 3. Roll on the Faction Table to determine which faction is the enemy. If Mishima is generated, then a single specific rival family is the blade's enemy.
3	Firestriker: When drawn in battle, the weapon is wreathed in a halo of burning power, gaining the Burning 2 and Vile qualities.
4	Dim Mak*: The weapon strikes true when aimed carefully, and gains the Unforgiving 3 quality.
5	Headtaker*: When striking an enemy with this weapon, the wielder will always strike the head (so long as the enemy has a head).
6	Bonebreaker: The weapon creates a shockwave on impact, transferring through armour. The weapon gains the Armour Piercing 2 and Knockback qualities.
7	Deadly Accuracy: When spending Momentum to alter the hit location struck, adjust the location roll by one additional point per Momentum spent. In addition, the weapon gains the Vicious 2 quality.
8	Defender: The weapon gains the Parry 1 weapon quality.
9	Shielding: The weapon has an unerring instinct for defence, swatting aside projectiles as well as blades. The weapon gains the Full Defence 1 quality. If the weapon already possesses the Parry quality, then that quality is replaced by the Full Defence quality at one higher rating (so a weapon with Parry 1 and this ability would have Full Defence 2 instead).
10	Spirit Weapon*: The weapon contains the soul of a previous wielder, who will periodically grant information or advice. While wielding the weapon, the wielder may spend a Chronicle point to draw upon the blade's insights. This grants two additional ranks of Expertise and Focus in a single skill for duration of the combat, or the next ten minutes if out of combat. The character cannot have more than five ranks of Expertise or Focus in any skill, even with this bonus.
11	Schooled Weapon: The weapon contains the knowledge of the powers taught by a particular school, and imparts them to the wielder. The weapon grants the wielder a single Close Combat talent he does not already possess, or a single talent from a Martial Arts School's talent tree.
12	Flesh-Render: The weapon gains the Vicious 3 quality.
13	Truesilver*: The heart of the weapon is made from an alloy known as Truesilver, which can hold mystical forces at bay. While wielding the weapon, all Art spells, Dark Gifts and other supernatural powers used against the wielder increase in difficulty by one.
14	Lifestealer*: The weapon absorbs the vital essence of those it wounds and invigorates the wielder. When the wielder uses this weapon to inflict one or more damage on a living creature using this weapon, he recovers a single wound, starting with his most severe wound.
15	Living Weapon*: The weapon has a life of its own, granting the wielder an additional d20 on any tests to attack or defend with it.
16	Sentinel*: Whenever the wielder buys additional dice for Observation or Insight tests by paying Dark Symmetry points, he gains 2d20 for each Dark Symmetry point paid, instead of the normal 1d20.
17	Ki Focus*: When holding this weapon, you gain an additional d20 on any tests made to manifest Ki powers.
18	Heartbreaker: The weapon gains the Vicious 4 quality when it strikes the torso location of a target.
19	Seeker: The weapon finds the weakest points of a foe's armour, and gains the Armour Piercing 3 quality.
20	Bonded*: The weapon's original owner was bonded by blood to this weapon, and his line are the only ones able to wield it effectively – indeed, they show an innate affinity for it. Any attempt by someone who is not the original owner or one of his descendants to wield this weapon is more difficult – skill tests made to attack or parry with the weapon increase in difficulty by two steps. The original owner and his descendants count as having one additional rank of Close Combat Expertise and Close Combat Focus for the purposes of wielding this weapon only.

property increases the weapon's Restriction rating by one and the Cost rating by ten.

MUSHASHI BLADES

If you own an heirloom sword, you most likely either have a Mushashi blade, or wish that you did. The Mushashi smiths use a secret forging system incorporating mystical techniques to create blades with special powers, similar to the runeforging of Imperial's Gallagher clan.

It is said that anyone who picks up a Mushashi blade can feel the life in it. These weapons are almost never for sale, for every owner treasures his and the Mushashi swordsmiths carefully control the supply to keep demand and prices high.

Mushashi blades are heirloom weapons, and are always a form of melee weapon. Due to the peerless swordsmithing techniques that Musashi employs, when rolling for heirloom weapon special properties, you may adjust each d20 roll up or down by one. Mushashi blades have a Restriction rating one higher than other heirloom weapons.

MYSTIC TALISMANS

RESTRICTION 2 COST 6

Crafted by Demon Hunters and White Mystics, these amulets, charms, and warding scrolls – collectively called Omamori – are intended to ward off the influences of the Dark Symmetry. Demon Hunters tend to wear many of these objects, enduring that they will have at least one to hand should Darkness assault them. While wearing one or more of these talismans, the character's Corruption Soak is increased by one, and any Dark Gift used against the character has its difficulty increased by one. If the character would suffer corruption or be affected by a Dark Gift, even after the benefits of these items, then the effects of the Corruption Roll or Dark Gift are negated but one talisman on the character's person is destroyed.

GAS TOOTH

RESTRICTION 3 (ILLEGAL) COST 10

A favoured device of Tattooed Man adepts, this false tooth is made of hollow ceramic and filled with gas. When the wearer bites down on it, hard, the gas is freed and the chemical agents in it react with the air. This is sufficiently poisonous to kill the tooth's owner instantly, and will kill anyone who gets a lungful as it billows forth from the owner's mouth.

Immediately when activated, and at the start of each turn for three rounds until the poison gas dissipates, everyone within Close range begin to suffocate, requiring a Challenging D2 Resistance test, with the difficulty increasing by one for every turn after the first. Each failed test inflicts 1+ \uparrow 5 damage to the chest and the Staggered status effect. The user dies instantly upon activation.

THE MISHIMAN SPACE FLEETS

While any daimyo with sufficient wealth can maintain his own surface navy – operating on the subterranean seas of Mercury or the oceans of Mars and Venus – only the Lord Heirs may possess a space fleet. None within Mishima may possess full-size spacecraft without the express permission of the Overlord or one of his bonded representatives. Each of the Heirs have their own fleets, with a range of vessels both mercantile and military, which are theirs to do with as they see fit.

In practice, each space fleet is broken into individual groups and leased out to individual keiretsu as business requirements dictate. The Lord Heirs have the final say over the use of their vessels, but the interplanetary economy is reliant on space travel, so the day-to-day operation of most mercantile vessels is left in the hands of lesser individuals. Military craft are leased out relatively infrequently, to ensure that military power is kept securely in the hands of the Lord Heirs, and military activities on other worlds are done purely at the pleasure of a Lord Heir.

The spacecraft in use by Mishima are operated primarily by commoners – there are numerous guilds devoted to the engineering and operation of spacecraft – with the largely disinterested samurai taking leadership roles primarily because no samurai can countenance a commoner being given command of such an important asset. On warships, these commoners are regarded as ashigaru, though this is often a technicality, a definition given due to their role in support of combat.

Mishiman warships are built with close combat in mind, favouring short-ranged bombardment cannons, ramming, and boarding actions to confront other large vessels. There is also a strong trend towards the use of carriers and light craft, as samurai regard fighter duels as an honourable form of single combat. Across the entire Mishima corporation, there are more samurai serving as fighter pilots than in any other role in the warfleets.

The largest warfleet belongs to Lord Heir Moya, though that of Lord Maru has been expanding quickly in recent years. Lady Mariko's warfleet is the smallest, but contains numerous state-of-the-art vessels, and her trade links to the other corporations give her the most widespread and active merchant fleet.



POLICE AND MILITARY



Hotaru fighter on maneuvers.

LIGHT CRAFT

Light Craft are classified more as aircraft than spacecraft, and are thus less regulated than spaceships are. This is partly because of their limited range, and partly because it eases the burden upon the Lord Heirs' fleet administrators. Only samurai are permitted to possess a Light Craft, though they tend to leave the maintenance and operation to dedicated crews of guildsmen. The only Light Craft that are piloted exclusively by samurai are fighters – they are tended to by commoner deck crews, and maintained by guildsman engineers, but only their owner may sit in the pilot's seat.

SHUTTLE – KŌCHŪ-CLASS TRANSPORT BOAT

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 32**
MAINTENANCE: 3 **RELIABILITY: 3**

The most common form of Light Craft in use by Mishiman keiretsu, the beetle-shaped Kōchū is produced in the thousands every year. The storage compartment is easy to refit for a variety of purposes, and different models and makes of these boats are found across the solar system. They are typically operated by a pair of guildsman pilots, trusted employees of the boat's samurai owner.

QUALITIES	Light Craft, Rugged		
INTERPLANETARY RANGE	6 hours	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	2
CREW	1 commander 1 engineer	PASSENGERS	18
DAMAGE	SOAK		DAMAGE
	1		5
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+↑2		FUEL LOAD 3
ARMAMENTS	None		
NOTES	None		

VOIDFIGHTER – TONBO-CLASS INTERCEPTOR

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 42**
MAINTENANCE: 4 **RELIABILITY: 1**

A light-weight and exceptionally manoeuvrable craft, the single-seat *Tonbo* Interceptor is rapidly gaining in popularity amongst many samurai. These craft are far lighter and more fragile than many voidfighters, and more lightly armed, but their agility allows a skilled pilot to weave through the fire of enemy craft without a scratch. The design is still relatively new and unrefined, with sophisticated control systems sourced from Cybertronic that cannot always be relied upon when fighting the forces of Darkness.

QUALITIES	Light Craft, Agile, No Life Support		
INTERPLANETARY RANGE	3 hours	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	3
CREW	1 commander	PASSENGERS	None
DAMAGE	SOAK		DAMAGE
	1		3
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+↑2		FUEL LOAD 1
ARMAMENTS	Demonstorm Chain Cannon (Close, Automatic, 1+↑3, Close Quarters, Spread 1)		
NOTES	Six Reloads for Demonstorm Chain Cannon		

FIGHTER-BOMBER – AMIDA HOTARU TYPE 99 STRIKE FIGHTER

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 44**
MAINTENANCE: 4 **RELIABILITY: 3**

The *Hotaru* is an ancient design, refitted during the First Dark Legion War. These venerable fighters, lacking much of the elegant and insect-like styling of modern craft, were common during the First Corporate War, and several squadrons earned considerable renown against Algeroth's *Carrion* Necrofighters above Venus. They

are versatile craft, employing a pair of heavy-gauge autocannons for dogfights and missiles for light anti-ship work.

QUALITIES	Light Craft, Agile, No Life Support		
INTERPLANETARY RANGE	6 hours	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	2
CREW	1 commander 1 gunner	PASSENGERS	None
DAMAGE	SOAK 2	DAMAGE 5	
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+↑3	FUEL LOAD	2
ARMAMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twin Darkscythe Autocannons (Close, Burst, 1+↑4, Close Quarters, Vicious 1) • Thunderstrike Missiles (Close, Munition, 2+↑4, Anti-Ship, Spread 1, Unforgiving 2) 		
NOTES	Eight Reloads for Darkscythe Autocannons. Three Reloads for Thunderstrike Missiles.		

BOMBER – AMIDA MODEL 49 DONRYU HEAVY BOMBER

RESTRICTION: 4 COST: 53
 MAINTENANCE: 5 RELIABILITY: 2

The *Donryu* is an archaic design of heavy bomber used for anti-ship operations by Mishiman forces. While frequently employed in void warfare, they are poorly-regarded by samurai, who perceive

bombing missions as dishonourable. Most bombers are crewed either by less-experienced samurai – those who have not yet mastered voidwar – or by trusted ashigaru pilots.

QUALITIES	Light Craft		
INTERPLANETARY RANGE	8 hours	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	0
CREW	1 commander 3 gunner	PASSENGERS	None
DAMAGE	SOAK 2	DAMAGE 6	
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+↑3	FUEL LOAD	2
ARMAMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2x Twin Darkscythe Autocannon Turrets (Close, Burst, 1+↑4, Close Quarters, Vicious 1) • Thunderstrike Missiles (Close, Munition, 2+↑4, Anti-Ship, Spread 1, Unforgiving 2) • Reaper Heavy Torpedo (Close, Munition, 3+↑6, Anti-Ship, Spread 2, Unforgiving 3) 		
NOTES	Two gunners operate the two Darkscythe Autocannon Turrets. One gunner operates the Thunderstrike Missiles and Reaper Heavy Torpedo. Six Reloads for each Darkscythe Autocannon Turret. Four Reloads for Thunderstrike Missiles. One Reload for Reaper Heavy Torpedo.		



Donryu bombers prepare to annihilate their target.

SPACESHIPS

As already explained, all true spaceships are owned by the Overlord or one of the three Lord Heirs. This is non-negotiable: the few daimyo who have grown wealthy enough to contemplate trying to establish their own fleets have been quickly dissuaded or silenced.

CARGO HAULER – SEKAIHASHI-CLASS FREIGHTER

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 58**
MAINTENANCE: 7 **RELIABILITY: 2**

Given how far Mercury is from Luna, Mishima freighters tend to be somewhat faster and lighter than the transports of the other corporations. The *Sekaihashi* is typical of this ethos, allowing smaller amounts of cargo to be moved more quickly between the individual domains of the Mishima corporation.

Many of these freighters are refitted for passenger use, originally to move workers to new territories. If this is done, then the cargo hold is replaced with room for passengers, increasing the total passenger capacity to 50.

QUALITIES	Ship, Rugged				
INTERPLANETARY RANGE	12 days		COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY		0
CREW	1 commander (Crew 3) 1 pilot 3 gunners (Crew 2) 1 engineer (Crew 2)			PASSENGERS	3
DAMAGE	LOCATION	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURE DAMAGE
	ENGINE	2	3	3	2
	HULL	3	4	3	3
	WEAPON	1	2	2	1
IMPACT DAMAGE	3+↑4		FUEL LOADS		4
ARMAMENTS	Defensive Battery (Range Close, Automatic, 1+↑3, Point Defence, Close Quarters)				
NOTES	Vast cargo hold. Six Reloads stored as standard.				

FRIGATE – AKAGI-CLASS ESCORT CARRIER

RESTRICTION: 5 **COST: 82**
MAINTENANCE: 9 **RELIABILITY: 2**

One of the more commonplace frigate designs used by Mishima, the *Akagi* is an escort carrier. Each frigate supports a squadron of attack craft, most frequently fighters, though a few of them carry bombers. Because of the higher proportion of samurai on carriers, they tend to contain well-appointed crew quarters, which in turn reduces the size of the crew further.



QUALITIES	Ship				
INTERPLANETARY RANGE	6 days		COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY		1
CREW	1 commander (Crew 3) 1 pilot 3 gunners (Crew 1) 1 engineer (Crew 1)			PASSENGERS	4
DAMAGE	LOCATION	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURE DAMAGE
	ENGINE	4	5	4	3
	HULL	5	6	5	4
	WEAPON	2	3	3	2
IMPACT DAMAGE	3+↑6		FUEL LOADS		2
ARMAMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autocannon Battery (Close, Automatic, 1+↑3, Point Defence, Close Quarters) • 2x Heavenstrike Railcannons (Medium, Burst, 2+↑6, Anti-Ship, Armour Piercing 1, Vicious 2) 				
NOTES	Twelve Reloads for Autocannon Battery. Ten Reloads for Heavenstrike Railcannons. Launch Bay containing five light craft (Interceptors, Fighter-Bombers, or Bombers, or any combination of the three).				

FRIGATE – YŪGURI-CLASS SCOUT FRIGATE

RESTRICTION: 5 **COST: 82**
MAINTENANCE: 9 **RELIABILITY: 3**

The *Yūguri* class is the current standard scout and reconnaissance frigate employed by the Lord Heirs. Individual vessels of this class are dispatched on prolonged missions, operating away from fleet command for weeks at a time. The missions of *Yūguri*-class frigates are frequently classified, and they are often requisitioned by Demon Hunters engaging in high priority operations.

QUALITIES	Agile, Ship				
INTERPLANETARY RANGE	30 days		COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY		2
CREW	1 commander (Crew 2) 1 pilot 3 gunners (Crew 1) 1 engineer (Crew 3)			PASSENGERS	8
DAMAGE	LOCATION	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURE DAMAGE
	ENGINE	4	5	4	3
	HULL	5	6	5	4
	WEAPON	2	3	3	2
IMPACT DAMAGE	3+↑6		FUEL LOADS		4
ARMAMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autocannon Battery (Close, Automatic, 1+↑3, Point Defence, Close Quarters) • 2x Heavenstrike Railcannons (Medium, Burst, 2+↑6, Anti-Ship, Armour Piercing 1, Vicious 2) 				
NOTES	Nine Reloads for Autocannon Battery. Six Reloads for Heavenstrike Railcannons.				

FRIGATE – IKAZUCHI-CLASS DESTROYER

RESTRICTION: 5 **COST: 82**
MAINTENANCE: 9 **RELIABILITY: 3**

Forming the core of the Lord Heirs' warfleets, the Ikazuchi-class destroyer is a heavy duty warship designed for front line combat. The fleet of Lord Heir Moya is built around squadrons of these vessels supported by carriers, bringing their cannons and torpedo launchers to bear against enemy vessels while the carrier-launched fighter wings duel for supremacy.

QUALITIES	Rugged, Ship				
	8 days		COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY 2		
CREW	1 commander (Crew 3) 1 pilot 4 gunners (Crew 2) 1 engineer (Crew 2)			PASSENGERS	6
DAMAGE	LOCATION	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURE DAMAGE
	ENGINE	5	5	5	3
	HULL	7	6	6	4
	WEAPON	4	3	4	3
IMPACT DAMAGE	3+↑6		FUEL LOADS	3	
ARMAMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autocannon Battery (Close, Automatic, 1+↑3, Point Defence, Close Quarters) • 3x Heavenstrike Railcannons (Medium, Burst, 2+↑6, Anti-Ship, Armour Piercing 1, Vicious 2) • Reaper Heavy Torpedoes (Close, Munition, 3+↑6, Anti-Ship, Slow Loading 1, Spread 2, Unforgiving 3) 				
	Fifteen Reloads for Autocannon Battery. Twelve Reloads for Heavenstrike Railcannons. Four Reloads for Reaper Heavy Torpedoes.				
NOTES					

SPACECRAFT WEAPON QUALITIES

The following weapon qualities apply specifically to the weapons of spacecraft.

Anti-Ship: The weapon is ponderous and heavy, designed to slay massive spacecraft rather than smaller targets. Increase the difficulty of all attacks made by this weapon against Light Craft or other small targets by one step.

Slow Loading X: The weapon is difficult to reload quickly, because of a complex firing mechanism, massive ammunition, or some other factor. It takes the weapon's gunner X Standard Actions, where X is the rating of this quality, to reload this weapon between uses.

DREADNOUGHT – TAIHŌ, HŌŌ-CLASS FLEET CARRIER

The *Taihō* has served as the heart of the Overlord's warfleet since the dark days of the First Corporate War. Refitted and maintained for centuries, it is now one of only two of the six original Hōō-class carriers still in service: the other is the *Hōshō*, which was gifted to the Brotherhood in the muster before the Venusian Crusade.

As can be expected of any vessel in service for more than thirteen centuries, the *Taihō* has an immense and prestigious history, and it is regarded as a high honour to serve upon her and contribute to her legacy. Its commanders and flight crew are always the most trusted and senior samurai in the Overlord's service, and its crews are selected from the most proficient guildsmen available. Further, so significant is service upon the *Taihō* that nearly 200 life samurai in Mishiman history owed their status to becoming crew of the venerable carrier, and three of those distinguished themselves so highly that they achieved true samurai status and established noteworthy legacies.

At present, the Overlord maintains no warfleet, but the *Taihō* remains in service as the flagship of Lord Heir Maru.

QUALITIES	Ponderous, Rugged, Ship				
	120 days		COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY 0		
CREW	1 commander (Crew 5) 1 pilot 14 gunners (see below) 3 engineer (Crew 5)			PASSENGERS	2
DAMAGE	LOCATION	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURE DAMAGE
	ENGINE	8	15	10	5
	HULL	10	18	15	12
	WEAPON	7	12	8	4
IMPACT DAMAGE	4+↑10		FUEL LOADS	10	
ARMAMENTS	Main Weapon, crewed by one Gunner (Crew 1): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Spirit Archer' Spinal Cannon (Range L, Munition, 4+↑8, Anti-Ship, Slow Loading 2, Unforgiving 3) 				
	13x Weapon Bays, each crewed by one Gunner (Crew 4): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autocannon Battery (Close, Automatic, 1+↑3, Point Defence, Close Quarters) • Heavenstrike Railcannon Battery (Medium, Automatic, 2+↑6, Anti-Ship, Armour Piercing 1, Vicious 2) 				
NOTES	Ten Reloads for 'Spirit Archer' Spinal Cannon. Each Weapon Bay has fifteen Reloads for Autocannon Battery and twelve Reloads for Heavenstrike Railcannon Battery. Launch Bay containing six squadrons, each of five light craft (Interceptors, Fighter-Bombers, or Bombers, or any combination of the three). A single squadron may launch or land in any one turn.				

BIONICS & CYBERNETICS

The warriors of Mishima have enthusiastically embraced the new technologies of bionics and cybernetics. Unlike the employees of Bauhaus, Capitol, Imperial, and many freelancers, they pay no heed to the Brotherhood's squawking about how this technology puts your soul at risk. Mishima is now the biggest consumer, and second biggest manufacturer, of mechanical prosthetics and augmentations after Cybertronic.

Though still inferior to Cybertronic systems, Mishima's products in this area are still effective.

Cybernetic and bionic systems may be used to replace limbs that have been lost or crippled in combat or through mishap, and augmentations add new functionalities to your basic-model human body.

The lowest level of bionic limb simply replaces that body part, though its toughness also provides the user with an additional point of armour in that location.

If a character acquires cybernetics during character creation as a special event, roll on the Hit Location Table in **Chapter 12: Damage, Wounds & Healing** in the *Mutant Chronicles* core book to see which body part was modified. The Cost and Restriction Ratings listed are for use when characters decide to get cybernetics implanted during play. The Cybernetics Tables also include a Roll heading – this is used to randomly determine an implant, for characters who received one in character creation.

HEAD IMPLANTS

The following implants are fitted into the subject's head. The various eye implants are available separately, or in a single implant, that combines multiple functions. In the Head Cybernetics Table, a basic Restriction is listed for 'Bionic Eye', while the Cost of a bionic eye is the total Cost of all the functions to be included in it.

If a bionic eye is randomly determined, roll **1d2**. On a 1 or 2, it has that many functions (use the values in the Roll column marked in brackets to determine them randomly). If a Dark Symmetry Icon is generated, it has all three functions (Targeter Eye, Telescopic Eye, and Thermographic Eye). On any other result, the eye is a basic model that provides no particular benefits but replicates the effects of an ordinary human eye.

RADIO TRANSCEIVER

Placed in the skull just behind the ear, this implant allows the user to monitor local radio frequencies and broadcast through an implanted throat mike. Functionally, these devices are similar to police scanners and other multi-frequency radios, though far smaller.

CYBERNETICS TABLE

HEAD	ROLL	RELIABILITY	RESTRICTION	COST
Radio Transceiver	1-2	1	4	8
Bionic Eye	3-5	1	3	*
Targeter Eye	(1-2)	2	–	4
Telescopic Eye	(3-4)	1	–	5
Thermographic Eye	(5-6)	1	–	5
Vocal Digitiser	6	1	3	8
TORSO				
Armoured Ribcage	1-3	3	3	8
Tox-monitor	4-6	1	3	10
ARM				
Bionic Arm (basic)	–	1	3	10
Adamantine Claws	4	2	–	+3
Dropgun	5	1	–	+5
Iron Fist	6	2	–	+2
LEG				
Bionic Leg (basic)	–	1	3	10
Bionic Leg (basic, both legs)	–	1	3	20
Integral Gun	1-3	2	–	+6
Internal Compartment	4-6	1	–	+8
Jump Servos	–	1	–	+10
'Lightning' Speed Augmentation	–	1	–	+10

TARGETER EYE

These implants replace an eyeball with an electronic targeting system, providing the appearance of a holographic targeting reticule in the owner's field of vision. This can be disabled or enabled by blinking twice in rapid succession. While concealed versions –



which superficially resemble the original eye – do exist, most take the form of a matte black sphere with red crosshairs where the iris and pupil would be.

A character with a targeter eye may spend a Restricted Action before attacking in order to aim down the scope. This allows the character to re-roll one d20 on an attack against any target within Close or Medium range.

TELESCOPIC EYE

These implants replace an eyeball with a system of variable lenses that allow distant images to be perceived more clearly, as if through a telescope. Appearing as a silver or glassy orb, a telescopic eye visibly shifts and extends when in use, which can be quite disconcerting to those unused to cybernetic technology.

A character with a telescopic eye can perceive objects as if looking through a telescope, and thus suffers no penalties for distance on Observation tests when attempting to spot or discern distant objects.

THERMOGRAPHIC EYE

This implant incorporates wide-spectrum sensors and filtering systems that allow the user to perceive the infrared portion of the electromagnetic spectrum, thus allowing him to perceive differences in temperature. In essence, it provides the subject with the ability to see 'heat' radiating from objects. Thermographic eyes appear as a crimson or glossy black sphere with no discernible markings. Few users leave the thermographic detection feature on constantly – it shows little detail, is ineffective in warm environments, and cannot discern things that would be obvious under visible light. As a result, the system is only activated when necessary and normally only for relatively short periods of time.

A character using a thermographic eye ignores penalties for mist or darkness, but sudden bright light or intense heat can blind the character while using the eye. This costs the GM two Dark Symmetry points, and causes the character to suffer the Blind status effect for 1d6 rounds.

VOCAL DIGITISER

Often used by people who have had their vocal chords damaged, this implant recreates the human voice. It can be used to speak normally or to create a harsh and intimidating mechanical tone. More skilled users can even use them to alter their own voice or imitate the voices of other people.

A character using a vocal digitiser can add one additional Momentum to any test to scare or intimidate a subject. Alternately, a character can attempt a Challenging D2 Stealth test to mimic another voice accurately, or to add or remove emotional stresses and inflections from his own voice, increasing the difficulty of Observation tests to detect lies by one step.

CHEST AND TORSO IMPLANTS

The following are implanted into or on to the subject's body, with internal implants integrating with or replacing vital organs.

ARMoured RIBCAGE

Over the top of the chest – covering the lungs and heart – is a layer of external titanium bands, forming a flexible, overlapping 'second rib-cage'. This provides an additional two points of armour soak to the Torso.

TOX-MONITOR

These complex bio-electrical systems monitor the owner's bloodstream for harmful substances. Working constantly, they neutralise any detected toxins that enter the bloodstream, providing protection against poisons and giving the owner a distinct advantage in drinking competitions.

A character with a tox-monitor counts as having Resistance Expertise 4 against the effects of poisons.

ARM IMPLANTS

The following implants are extras for a bionic arm. The basic bionic arm has eight Light Wound boxes, which replace those of the original limb. In all other ways, it functions as the original arm did, replicating and replacing its capabilities. However, wounds inflicted to a bionic arm do not heal – rather, they must be repaired. This takes ten minutes, and a Daunting D3 Mechanics test, or a Challenging D2 Science test, and restores one Light Wound, plus one per Momentum spent. Supernatural forms of healing do not affect bionics – the restorative power of the Light or the control of one's own Ki cannot knit damage to servo-muscles and neuroconductive cabling.

The cost of a basic bionic arm is listed in the Arm Cybernetics Table. Under that are the additional Costs of the various upgrade systems available.

If a character has a randomly determined bionic arm, roll to determine if the character has any additional upgrades. On a d6 roll of 1-3, the arm is a basic bionic arm only.

ADAMANTINE CLAWS

The subject's hands have been augmented to include razor-sharp claws, which emerge either from the fingers or knuckles. Knuckle-claws are longer, being stored in the forearm, while finger-claws are smaller and more delicate. These blades are formed from an extremely durable alloy that maintains an edge almost indefinitely, and is extremely difficult to break. People with these claw implants can often be identified by the tiny scars on their hands, the result of the claws breaking the skin to emerge.

Adamantine claws are counted as a knife with the Hidden 3 quality. A character with adamantine claws cannot be disarmed – the claws are part of him.

DROPGUN

This implant is designed for covert or concealed defence. The forearm is rebuilt around a modified Tambu .45 AP No.3 'Ronin' pistol chassis, concealing the muzzle in the subject's wrist. By bending the hand away from the wrist – upwards or downwards at the customer's discretion when the implant is fitted – the muzzle of the weapon is revealed and the weapon's safety is unlocked. The weapon can then be fired by neural impulse.

DROPGUN

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+ ↑ 3	Semi-Automatic	–	1H	1
QUALITIES	Close Quarters, Hidden 3				

INTERNAL: A dropgun cannot be discovered during any conventional search, as it is concealed entirely within the wielder's own arm. Only an extensive search with a metal detector or other sensory equipment will identify the presence of a dropgun.

IRON FIST

The arm's structure is hardened, and additional rapid-twitch servos are added to increase impact velocity. While the owner's overall strength cannot be meaningfully influenced – that is as much a matter of spine and back as anything else – it can allow the owner to hit harder in a fight. The owner increases the damage of an unarmed strike with that arm, or a melee weapon held in that hand, by +**↑**1.

LEG IMPLANTS

The following implants are extras for a bionic leg – the basic bionic leg has nine Light Wound boxes, which replace those of the original limb. In all other ways, it functions as the original leg did, replicating and replacing its capabilities. However, wounds inflicted to a bionic leg do not heal – rather, they must be repaired. This takes ten minutes, and a Daunting D3 Mechanics test, or a Challenging D2 Science test, and restores one Light Wound, plus one per Momentum spent. Supernatural forms of healing do not affect bionics – the restorative power of the Light or the control of one's own Ki cannot knit damage to servo-muscles and neuroconductive cabling.

The cost of a basic bionic leg is listed in the table below. Under that are the additional Costs of the various upgrade systems available.

If a character has a randomly-determined bionic leg, roll to determine if the character has any additional upgrades. On a d6 roll of 1-3, the leg is a basic bionic leg only. As they require both legs to be replaced, Jump Servos and 'Lightning' Speed Augmentation cannot be obtained randomly during character creation.

INTEGRAL GUN

Similar to the dropgun, this integral weapon is larger, though its location makes it harder to use. This implant is seldom well-regarded – few situations that the owners find themselves in are likely to allow them to sit down and open fire, so the gun is for emergencies and assassinations, where a hidden weapon can be vital. The shin is rebuilt around a modified Tambu No. 4 Windrider SMG chassis, concealing the muzzle in the ankle. The foot hinges away, revealing the muzzle. The weapon can then be fired by neural impulse. For reasons of space and safety, the weapon lacks the integral grenade launcher common to the Windrider – nobody wants to walk around with a leg full of grenades.

INTEGRAL GUN

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+ ↑ 3	Burst	–	*	1
QUALITIES	Hidden 3				

INTERNAL: An integral gun cannot be discovered during any conventional search, as it is concealed entirely within the wielder's own leg. Only an extensive search with a metal detector or other sensory equipment will identify the presence of an integral gun.

INTERNAL COMPARTMENT

The leg has had a shielded compartment within it, accessible only by a DNA locked panel. Up to three encumbrance of small items can be concealed within this compartment. The compartment's presence is virtually impossible to discern; it takes a Daunting D3 Observation test to detect an internal compartment.

JUMP SERVOS

Jump servos augment the subject's leg systems, and thus his ability to jump and leap, allowing him to achieve greater heights and distances than an unaugmented human could. They also incorporate a 'safe fall' mechanism, which instinctively guides the subject into the best position to absorb a fall. These implants are intended to operate in pairs, and are only sold if *both* legs are to be augmented – operating a single jump servo-equipped leg is inadvisable. The character gains two bonus d20s on all Acrobatics tests made to jump or to reduce damage from falling.

'LIGHTNING' SPEED AUGMENTATION

'Lightning' speed augmentation affects the subject's leg muscles while running, allowing him to achieve greater top speeds and maintain them for longer than an unaugmented human could. These implants are intended to operate in pairs, and are only sold if *both* legs are to be augmented – operating a single speed augmentation is inadvisable. The character gains two bonus d20s on all Athletics tests made to run at high speeds or over long distances.



MISHIMA AND THE DARKNESS

MISHIMA AND THE DARK LEGION

Until recently Mishima had suffered little at the hands of the Dark Legion. Mercury escaped the depredations of the Legion unscathed until the attacks on the Lost Provinces. On Mars, Lord Heir Mariko's forces likewise have little experience of fighting the Dark Legion.

On Venus, Mishima has not been as lucky as it has been on other worlds. Lord Heir Maru's forces have had to battle against Dark Legion incursions almost constantly. At first these battles went badly for Mishima, and Maru suffered the humiliation of seeing Capitol forces come to his rescue. It was, perhaps, this more than anything else that drove him to modernise his armed forces, to avoid ever again having to endure such a loss of face.

WAR ZONES: THE DARKWAYS OF MERCURY

The Darkways are those parts of subterranean Mercury that the Dark Legion controls, where half-buried Citadels pierce the planet's surface, thrusting towards the sky. It is as if these terrible edifices somehow burrowed their way up from the planet's core until they broke through into Mercury's thin atmosphere.

In fact, no one knows how the Dark Legion got into the underworld. Lord Heir Moya's secret police suspect that its vanguard agents came in through clandestine channels from Imperial-controlled Fukido. Common rumour has it that it used ancient pathways from the

surface, long since forgotten by the planet's inhabitants but somehow remembered by the Legion. No matter how it got there, the provinces of Sotoni and Zata are lost now. The Dark Legion descended on these sparsely populated underworlds, slaughtering all before it. The bodies of the dead were taken to the Citadels and turned into Undead Legionnaires. Those survivors who did not have time to fall on their swords were transformed into Necromutants, a fate worse than death. Today, the Lost Provinces are the Dark Legion's base for raids into Mishima territory, to which thousands have been dragged to the slave pits and worse fates.

Lord Heir Moya ordered the construction of a ring of mighty fortifications to seal off the area from the rest of the Webway, but somehow the Dark Apostles' agents continue to slip in and out. Despite Moya's best efforts word of the invasion leaked beyond Mercury, leading to increased pressure from the Brotherhood for access to the planet. Under severe political pressure the Lord Heir has been forced to allow outsiders access to Mercury, albeit limited, for the first time in centuries.

DEMON HUNTERS

The Order of Demon Hunters is sworn to eternal vigilance against the Dark Soul, rooting out its servants by all means necessary. The Order dates from the time of the Neronian Schism. Founded by the renegade Inquisitor Toranaga, it has gone on to develop traditions, methods, and goals quite distinct from those of the Brotherhood. Nonetheless, it is at least as devoted, brutal, and successful as its Brotherhood counterpart.



Mishima does not shy away from the use of cybernetics and bionics. They see its potential and have the technology and the knowledge to wield it safely.

Demon Hunters make their oaths of allegiance directly to the head of the Order, who swears his oath to the Overlord.

Most are chosen in childhood for training on the Forbidden Isle on Mercury, where they become fanatical warriors against evil. Others come to that dark and fearful island later in life, in the wake of tragedy.

Few are accepted. Fewer still survive the tests. Those that do are given knowledge of secret arts and acquire an undying hatred of the Dark Apostles and all their works. The training process takes many years and transforms the recruits into some of the most fearsome warriors in the human worlds. Once a Demon Hunter completes his training on the Forbidden Isle, he is free to wander the worlds of mankind as he chooses, hunting down the servants of Darkness wherever they may be found, and putting an end to them.

Some choose to ally themselves with a particular lord of Mishima and become a trusted advisor. Others drift from place to place, going to wherever they are needed most.

Demon Hunters may be commoners or samurai. Regardless, they are given the right to wear powered combat armour and openly carry weapons – rights usually reserved for samurai alone. By tradition they conceal their faces behind scowling masks.

There is little love lost between Demon Hunters and Inquisitors, but each has a wary respect for the other. By nature most Demon Hunters are aloof and make few personal attachments, but a few acquire small retinues of trusted companions who aid them in their quest against the Dark Apostles.

By ancient tradition a Demon Hunter may demand an audience with any ruler, up to and including a Lord Heir. The Demon Hunters are not frivolous with these requests. They are always heard with respect and their advice is usually followed.

MISHIMA INFILTRATED

DARK MYSTICS

The acolytes of this martial arts school are heretics, using a legitimate martial arts school as a front operation. These fronts are always positioned as individual boutique schools with no affiliation to other, well-known academies such as the Blademasters or Storm Warriors. This is because while branches of the major schools attract less suspicion when they set up shop, there is a much higher chance that a genuine acolyte will notice something is wrong. Plus, a unique school attracts the right kind of student – the sort that is drawn to the idea of a secret school which will teach him ki powers that no one else has. They get precisely that, but at the price of becoming servants of the Dark Apostles, hated instruments of humanity's downfall.

The Dark Mystics have dojos on every Mishima world.

Rules for Dark Gifts can be found on page 158 of the **Mutant Chronicles** core book, while the Heretic iconic career (used for Dark Mystic characters) can be found on page 58 of the **Mutant Chronicles** core book.

MERCURY

On the fourth floor of Tiger Park, the legendary amusement emporium of Longshore, lurks a hidden shrine to Muawijhe. A dozen of his servants work as ushers and bar staff in the tower, enacting rites in the shrine to spread their lord's power through Tiger Park's many video displays and the distorting mirrors that flank its grand entrance. Every so often an employee becomes suspicious of what goes on in the locked storage room behind the fourth-floor cocktail bar. They quickly disappear, dragged into the hidden service passages that run throughout the building and down to the basement, never to be seen again.

MARS

The Keepers of Arcane Lore are a cult of Semai. On Mars, their project is to infiltrate Mariko's court by winning the Tournament of the Skies. Whoever does so will gain her trust and, the Keepers hope, access to her inner court. One of the fighters this year is a brainwashed agent of the Keepers. But which one?

VENUS

Washio Yoshi is a master swordsmith of Mushashi. He is known far and wide for the strength and lightness of his blades, and the shimmering ethereality he somehow imparts to their steel. What is not known is that he is a heretic, sworn to the service of Ilian.

A select few of Washio's customers, chosen for their proximity to power or the susceptibility to the Dark Apostle that Washio perceives in them, are given very special blades. These are spirit cells that not only trap the souls of those who die while wielding them, but gradually leach away the wielder's personality while alive, transforming him into a human vector for the will of Ilian.

LUNA

Many factions contend in the Overlord's court. Their motives are largely selfish, and all too human. An exception is the Overlord's spiritual advisor, Lord Onogi, who whispers words of wisdom that serve the goals of the Dark Apostle Algeroth. He has many allies at the court of the Overlord, and in those of the Lord Heirs. He also has a multitude of hidden servants at his beck and call across the solar system – hidden heretics, suborned spies, and unquestioning samurai retainers.

MERCURY

THE SUN SEARS THE LAND AND THE OVERLORD IS FAR AWAY

Mishima's homeworld is its fortress. No other corporation has so secure a power base, because no other has an entire planet so completely locked down under its dominion.

Lord Heir Moya, Prince of Soil, rules all Mishima property and business on Mercury. Every keiretsu on the planet ultimately answers to him. Every spaceport is his to close or open – and to outsiders, he chooses only to open Longshore, the city most firmly under his control.

For centuries following the Great Rebellion, Mercury was sealed off from contact with the rest of the solar system, and traders were allowed to land only at the free port of Longshore. During this time Mishima clung strongly to its heritage and strenuously resisted 'spiritual pollution' of its culture from outside elements. Because Mercury was closed even to the Brotherhood, numerous strange sects and cults blossomed, beyond the reach of the Inquisition. Even today, outsiders have very limited access to Mercury, and only within specific zones of Longshore and in the Imperial colony of Fukido are they permitted to rent land.

All of Mercury is one vast fortress, peopled with warriors ready to fight and die at the Lord Heir's command. Of the other corporations, only Imperial has any significant presence in its freeport at Fukido, a tenuous foothold at best. Few doubt that if the Lord Heir wished it, the Imperial holding would be wiped out in a matter of months.

Mercury's environment is unique among all the human worlds. The Ancients' attempts at terraforming were only partially successful. Mercury's surface is a bleak, rocky desert scorched by the nearness of the sun. Mankind survives only in the great underworld cities carved out by the Ancients. Mishima constantly expands these underworlds and their attendant tunnel networks to make room for its growing population. The underworlds are strange, exotic places, and few indeed are those who have been privileged to see all of them.

Some of the underworlds are vast caverns, hundreds of miles across, which contain entire nations and city-states beneath their vaulted roofs. Others are claustrophobic webworks of endless tunnels, filled with teeming hordes of humanity who fight for every scrap of space and breath of air. All bear the mark of the Ancients' marvellous engineering and Mishima's skilled tunnelling. All are linked by the

THE PLANET MERCURY

Mercury has the most eccentric orbit of all the planets and takes 87.969 earth days to complete an orbit. Its varying distance to the Sun, combined with the 3:2 spin-orbit resonance of the planet's rotation around its axis, results in complex variations of the surface temperature, which is one reason the Ancients struggled to terraform the planet. A single Mercurian day lasts about two-third of a Mercurian year. Mishimans continue to use the old Earth-standard day and year instead.

Mercury consists of approximately 70% metallic and 30% silicate material, and its density is the second highest in the solar system, only slightly less than Earth's. Mercury's surface is very similar in appearance to that of the Moon, showing extensive plains and heavy cratering. The surface temperature of Mercury ranges from 100 K to 700 K at the equator. It never rises above 180 K at the poles.

Webway, a planet-spanning network of tunnels through which all trade and transport passes.

Life is precarious on Mercury. Every living thing relies on ancient mechanisms for its continued survival. Air is constantly recycled by colossal oxygenation engines, and light piped in through fibre optic cables. All such life support systems require constant maintenance and monitoring. A system's failure could wipe out an entire city. This has contributed to the Mishima culture's emphasis on obedience – following orders promptly could be the difference between life and death for tens of thousands, if not millions, of people.

Access to the underworlds is controlled through a few fortified cities that peek above the surface of the world. These mighty port cities lie mostly buried beneath the ground, with the bare minimum of sensors, beacons, and buildings exposed to the punishment of the sun's radiation. They provide access to the maze of tunnels that connect the underworlds and the industrial fiefdoms of the great daimyos. Some of these tunnels lead to cities long ago abandoned. Others lead to places excavated but never colonised. Rumours and legends persist of lost or hidden underworlds where the Ancients' dream of terraforming came to complete fruition, and which house

recreations of all of old Earth's diverse environments. There is no shortage of brave or foolhardy explorers eager to seek these out and the Webway Force Patrol is vigilant against such unauthorised exploration.

Through the Webway to the underworld cities flows the source of much of Mishima's revenue – the vast mineral wealth extracted from the corporation's huge mining operations. In the cavern cities, in huge factory complexes, these raw materials are turned into consumer goods. The cities and factories are sustained by power from solar energy arrays on the surface, stretching from horizon to horizon. Mishima's production costs are among the lowest anywhere in the solar system, giving the corporation a huge competitive advantage in the market for manufactured goods of all kinds.

Mercury is the home of the vast majority of Mishima's employees. The planet's unique living conditions go a long way towards explaining why the commoners' behaviour appears so docile. If they were to revolt against the company hierarchy, where would they go? There is no way off the planet except through the spaceports, which the corporation controls, and the underworlds are full of well-armed inspector-magistrates as well as the daimyo's company samurai. No one can pass through, or out of, a daimyo's territory without authorisation. If a commoner did think to betray his manager and flee, the only hope of refuge would be in the Imperial city of Fukido. But Mishima propaganda has been assiduous in painting that place as the most anarchic and deadly on Mercury.

Mercury is organised into hundreds of provinces. Each province is a semi-autonomous administrative unit within Lord Heir Moya's well-

organised fiefdom. Each province consists of a single underworld, usually under the command of one hereditary lord executive. Some lords control more than one province, and in a few cases a single province is split between more than one lord. A few provinces are controlled directly by the Mishima family in the person of Lord Heir Moya – notably, Longshore – but the vast majority are the domain of the keiretsu who pay fealty to the Prince of Soil.

THE WEBWAY

The Webway runs everywhere beneath the surface of Mercury, linking every Mishima outpost from the greatest cities to the smallest exploratory mining camps.

The core tunnels of the Webway are the main arteries of the system, carrying the most traffic. Through these major routes an elevated railway runs through the tunnel core, on which rocket trains thunder by at hundreds of kilometres per hour. These trains are used exclusively by high-ranking aristocrats, military officials, and the Lord Heir's personal couriers. Rocket-powered mail drones carry urgent memos, contracts, and treaties through the Webway. Sometimes troop trains rush samurai reinforcements to a rebellious province or the site of a Dark Legion incursion.

Beneath the raised rails are the Webway roads, where pedestrians, motorcycles, cars, and freight vehicles travel in a chaotic, constant stream. Peddlers push handcarts laden with snacks and bric-a-brac for sale. Samurai motorcades force their way through the traffic. Huge road trains carry massive payloads of raw materials to distant factories. Construction walkers stomp along to the site of the next tunnel to be



The webways are the veins of Mercury and constantly pump forth goods and business. Therefore they are heavily guarded.

dug. Every twenty kilometres checkpoints wait ready to bar the way at a moment's notice, and inspect vehicles and identification.

HIGH-SPEED PATROL: THE WEBWAY COPS

Policing this planet-wide network are the maverick inspector-magistrates of the Webway Force Patrol. They pursue high-priority wrongdoers through the most dangerous parts of the Webway, along unfinished or abandoned tunnels, before they can disappear off the grid into unmapped caverns. Their yellow, blue, and red high-speed patrol cars rocket along to the accompaniment of furious traditional percussion blasting from their siren arrays. Among Mercury's inspector-magistrates the Webway Force Patrol is a breed apart, working for little glory with a high fatality rate.

WFP officers are all samurai, but of the lowest rank. Most are independent shareholders in the Mishima Mercury Transit Security Corporation, which owns and operates the force. The rest are life samurai, hired as commoners and promoted to samurai rank on the recognisance of the force commander after completing their basic training.

WFP officers patrol the Webway as partners – one drives the car, the other operates the dispatch radio and pop-up machine gun turret. The standard WFP pursuit car is the Falcon Interceptor, a fast two-seater, armed and armoured, with a secure cell in the back that doubles as a safe for transporting valuable cargo. Officers carry a Hana-bi 30 pistol as a standard sidearm, with heavier-duty weapons and armour stored in the car.

KIRIN AUTOMOTIVE FALCON INTERCEPTOR

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 22**
MAINTENANCE: 5 **RELIABILITY: 3**

QUALITIES	Agile, Exposed, Rugged, Wheeled			
CRUISING SPEED	290 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY		1
CREW	1 pilot 1 gunner	CARRYING CAPACITY	1 passenger, 40 enc	
LOCATIONS	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	5	8	5	3
MOTIVE SYSTEM	2	5	3	2
WEAPONS	2	4	3	2
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+↑4			
ARMAMENTS	Turret-mounted Light Machine Gun (ranged): Range M, 1+↑5, Automatic, 2H, Spread 1			
NOTES	Turret has 6 reloads. Crew have ↑6 Cover Soak. Passenger cannot be targeted from outside the vehicle. Passenger seat is a cell, which locks from the outside. Weapon rack behind crew seats contains on Hana-bi 40 and one Hana-bi 50.			

HANA-BI 30 PISTOL

RESTRICTION 4 **COST 5**

Manufactured by a minor subsidiary of Tambu, the Hana-bi line of firearms are designed for use by the police rather than the military. As a result, they tend to lack the heavy firepower of military firearms, but are often fitted with underbarrel stunners. As police work in Mishiman society is done by samurai, these weapons are manufactured in relatively small numbers and to a very high standard, though they are commonly regarded as secondary to a samurai's Daisho.

Reloads for the stunner – battery packs that provide its electrical charge – have a Restriction of 3 and Cost 1 each. They have an encumbrance of 1.

HANA-BI 30

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+↑3	Semi-Automatic	2	1H	3
QUALITIES	Close Quarters				

STUNNER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	↑4	Munition	-	-	2
QUALITIES	Nonlethal, Stun				

HANA-BI 40 CLOSE ASSAULT WEAPON

RESTRICTION 4 **COST 8**

The Hana-bi 40 is a shotgun built for urban pacification, designed for short range environments such as buildings. Like many Hana-bi weapons, it is fitted with an electro-shock stunner that can incapacitate targets rather than kill them.

Reloads for the stunner – battery packs that provide its electrical charge – have a Restriction of 3 and Cost 1 each. They have an encumbrance of 1.

HANA-BI 40

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	1+↑5	Semi-Automatic	4	2H	3
QUALITIES	Knockdown, Spread 1				

STUNNER

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
C	↑4	Munition	-	-	2
QUALITIES	Nonlethal, Stun				

HANA-BI 50 RESPONSE RIFLE

RESTRICTION 4 **COST 7**

The Hana-bi 50 is a mid-range light-weight rifle for precision shooting during a crisis. Not as powerful as a full-size sniper rifle, and lacking the longer range, it is useful for bringing down targets quickly when heavier firepower is not available.



HANA-BI 50

RANGE	DAMAGE	MODE	ENC	SIZE	RELIABILITY
M	1+ 5	Semi-Automatic	4	2H	3
QUALITIES	Unforgiving 2				

BENEATH A BURNED WORLD: LIVING OFF THE GRID IN THE ABANDONED TUBES

The faceless, ronin, and other folk who find themselves on the margins of Mercury's great cities often find themselves drifting through the Webway. They soon discover something that most Mercurians rarely consider. Namely, that there is a Mercury beyond the underworlds and the tunnels that link them. Lawless indigent populations exist in many of Mercury's lost, abandoned, or officially undiscovered spaces. These *ad hoc* communities occupy played-out mines, old transit tunnels, and natural caverns that pre-date the Ancients' terraforming. Such places are often sought out as hiding places for cults, Triads, and heretics too.

LONGSHORE, HOME OF THE REGENT

Of all Mercury's great cities, Longshore is the greatest. It lies at the bottom of an enormous ravine close to the equator.

Far above, a plastic membrane called the Celestial Shield protects Longshore. This miracle of ancient technology keeps the city's breathable atmosphere in while letting spacecraft pass through, knitting itself behind them.

The city lies in the middle of a great underground ocean – another example of the Ancients' incredible engineering abilities. Longshore is the largest of Mercury's underworlds, stretching 300 kilometres in every direction with a ceiling two kilometres high. The whole cavern is climate-controlled, and lit by great artificial windows that dim and brighten on a 24-hour cycle to simulate an Earth standard day and night cycle. Around the main island on which the city rests, the floor of the cavern is covered by a shallow sea some thirty feet deep, out of which rise thousands of sculpted islands, lined by countless rice terraces, temples, and secluded pavilions. Cranes and flamingos

wade in the multi-coloured shallow waters around each island. Teeming shoals of fish shimmer in the sea, which is always filled with fishing boats and mobile platforms collecting and processing kelp. Huge carpets of edible algae form on the surface, and are collected by monstrous factory ships. Only when spacecraft arrive or depart from the great port is the tranquillity disturbed.

This appearance of harmony is deceptive. Since the coming of the Dark Legion, weird mutations have occurred in much of the wildlife. The unusual colour of the sea comes from industrial pollution. Banks of toxic sludge collect in the unseen corners of the cavern. The underworld is slowly drowning in its own waste.

Each island houses a hidden military installation, stocked with war machines and munitions. Hundreds of thousands of troops are on constant standby, ready to repel any threat to Lord Heir Moya. Thousands of rocket planes sit ready on their launchers, waiting to be called into action against any foe.

Longshore city proper is on the largest island, in the centre of the cavern. It rises like an anthill out of the sea, crowned at its peak by the radiant palace of Lord Heir Moya and the spire of Longshore Cathedral. The palace gates are guarded by two mighty 'gigameks', which are kept crewed and in combat readiness at all times. The Lord Heir's home is an enormous fortress, manned by 100,000 samurai all ready to lay down their lives for their master.

The city of Longshore is dedicated to trade and politics. All the great lords have palaces here, and the other corporations all have representative offices and trading enclaves. It is home to thousands upon thousands of administrators and managers of the samurai caste, as well as millions of commoners.

At the centre of the city is the Great Elevator, a complex of huge lifts, each capable of moving a dozen spacecraft or 10,000 human beings. These descend below the shallow ocean into the Undercity, a dark industrial netherworld where most of the city's commoners live and work. Many dwell in their workplaces, virtually chained to their machines. It is from the Undercity that the Webway spreads out to connect with the rest of Mercury.

THE FORBIDDEN ISLE

In a dark and gloomy part of the Longshore underworld's shallow sea, within a constant bank of fog, an opening in the rock wall winds into deeper darkness. This hidden waterway is navigable only by a small vessel with a shallow draught, and emerges in a lightless area where the sea deepens to an abyss. Rising from this sea is a great, black mountain. This is the Forbidden Isle. High atop its peak, visible from the water only as flickering lights in the shrouding mist, is the forbidding monastery of the dreaded Demon Hunters. No one who sets foot on this island ever leaves without the permission of the island's masters.

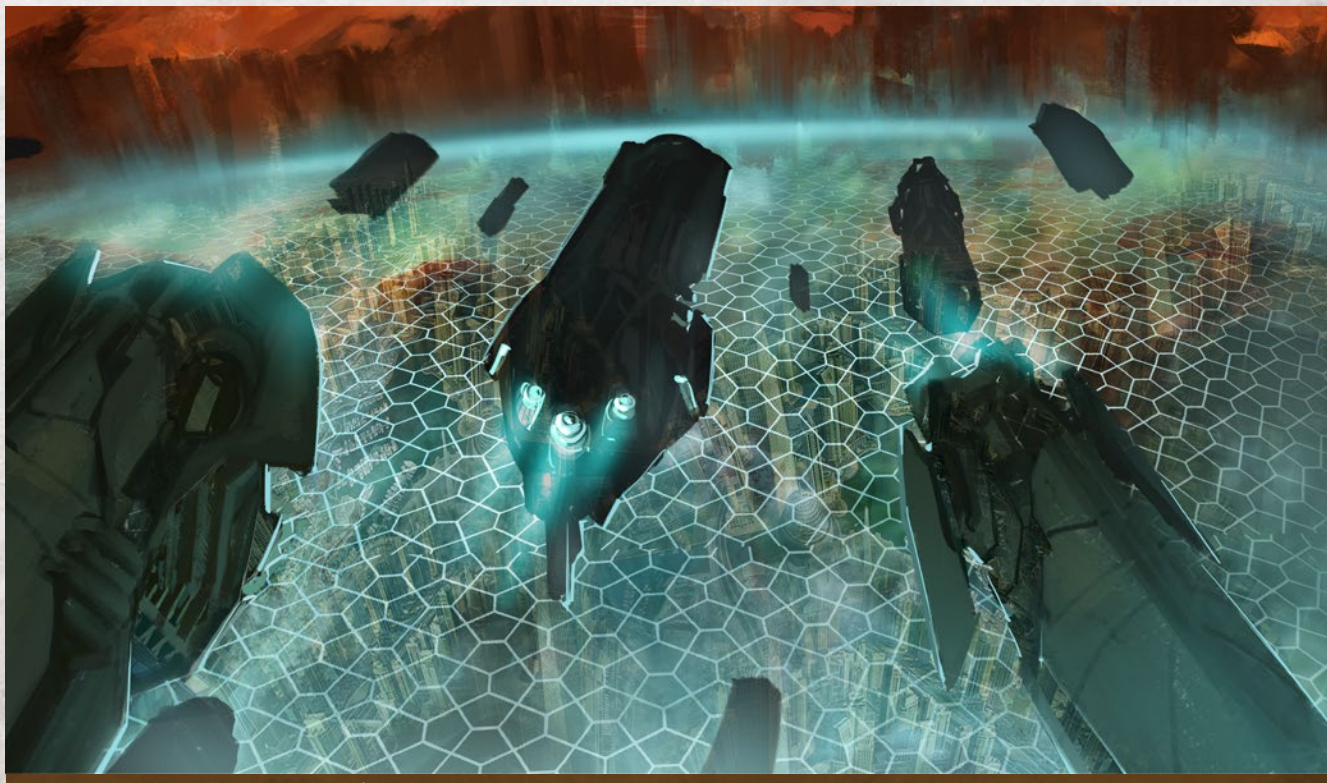
On the Isle thousands of prospective Demon Hunters are trained, tested, and hardened through ordeal. Desperate, bitter men and women are trained in all the secrets of demon hunting and then sent out to face the Darkness. Within the monastery's vast Forbidden Library thousands of scholars pore through ancient volumes that have been preserved since ancient days and kept from the book fires of the Inquisition. These scholars seek the secrets that may yet save mankind from the Dark Apostles. In huge dojos hundreds of novices hone their martial arts skills to levels that would seem impossible to less driven individuals. In dim meditation chambers wizened sages teach the magical application of the Way to those few who have successfully completed the training process. In the armouries buried within the mountain hundreds of master craftsmen

work diligently at the forges to create Demon Hunter battlesuits, which will be the graduates' most treasured possessions.

Once you have set foot on the Forbidden Isle, you may leave only as a qualified Demon Hunter, or on a mission for a Master of the Order. Those novices who fail the tests may commit ritual suicide, or may choose to remain and be trained as a guard, craftsman, scholar, or scribe. All who live take monastic vows. A few will be allowed to join the travelling retinue of a Demon Hunter. Most will spend the rest of their days on the Isle, since the Order's secrets are taught here and it would be dangerous for these secrets to become known to the rest of mankind.

Newcomers are subjected to a barrage of tests to prove they are not followers of the Dark. If they are, their fate is unpleasant. They are arrested, interrogated, and studied by scholars who have dedicated their lives to seeking greater knowledge of the Dark, at any cost.

Joining the Demon Hunters is considered a great honour. Most of the applicants who come here from samurai families are younger children. If they fail they are kept on the island, and the eldest son has removed a potential rival. If they succeed they may choose to return to their keiretsu and protect it from the influence of the Dark Apostles. The services of Demon Hunters are in great demand, and many daimyos will pay a small fortune for them.



Corporate transports over the protective dome of Longshore.

TIGER PARK

A stone's throw from Longshore proper, Tiger Park is an island given over entirely to pleasure, a huge combination amusement park, casino complex, and sports arena. The island belongs to the Onoshi samurai clan, impoverished until very recently. It is said that the Onoshi are just a front for the Black Dragon Triad.

As they enter, visitors pass twelve 'distorting mirrors' – reactive monitors that show the viewer in flamboyant costumes or outlandish transformed shapes keyed to indicators detected in their biometric readings.

On the first floor are gaming tables, singsong girls, magicians, pick-pockets, arcade machines, holographic fireworks, cages holding exotic birds, bodyguards with iron fans, hovering palls of incense, and acrobats on trapezes overhead. One flight up are stages for opera, cage fights (between crickets and between humans), pimps, midwives, barbers, and personal life consultants. The third floor houses jugglers, herbal therapists, ice cream parlours, and hostess bars. The fourth floor has shooting galleries, more card tables, massage benches, counters selling dried fish and intestines, and dance platforms. The fifth floor features dancing girls with dresses slit to the armpits, a cryogenically preserved whale brought from Earth with the first Mishima settlers, storytellers, the solar system's largest ball pond, peep shows, mask dances, a mirror maze, and a temple filled with icons of the Seven Sages. The cornucopia of amusements continues onwards and upwards, and with every new floor the entertainments grow more outlandish, expensive, and debauched.

The roof provides a commanding view of the Longshore underworld. One side has no handrail, to help those who have lost their life savings speed their journey to the next life.

THE SHRINE OF KANJI

The foremost place of pilgrimage for Mishima employees, this island is the final resting place of Kanji, the most revered of the Seven Sages. An enlightened philosopher of mind and body, Kanji was said to bring good fortune to all who crossed his path, and is venerated as the patron of the martial arts.

There are rumours that the spirit of Kanji appears at his shrine on certain holy nights, and these tales ensure that pilgrims are never in short supply. The shrine is an enormous pagoda, nearly 300 metres

high. At night the pagoda is floodlit so that it is visible from miles away across the water.

As well as the shrine the island is home to over 5,000 martial arts dojos, whose students frequently brawl over the merits of their various schools. Sometimes these disturbances blossom into huge riots, fuelled by the ki powers the dojo acolytes have learnt so far. Rumours abound that the Shadow Walker cult maintains a secret dojo here. Certainly, this island is one of the best places to make contact with the outlawed assassins.

THE EBON PALACE

Nozaki, Lord Heir Moya's most trusted hataamoto, makes his home on this island. Its name alone is a byword for fear in the minds of Longshore's residents. No one wants to visit; many are compelled to, though. The whole island has been carved into a gigantic fortress, and in its dungeons political prisoners are held awaiting torture and interrogation. It seems to rise from the sea like the head of a dragon.

Nozaki is a rake-thin, saturnine man who is utterly loyal to his master, and utterly ruthless in carrying out his duties. He is the chief of Lord Heir Moya's secret police, the Black Rose Society.

Within the walls of his Ebon Palace young samurai are trained in espionage and assassination, and equipped with the very latest technology available to Mishima's spymasters. Security here is very nearly as tight as that surrounding the Lord Heir's palace.

Since Nozaki rose to power as the head of the Black Rose, Longshore has become a fearful place. People disappear in the night. Their families and colleagues are careful not to remark on this in public, but an empty place at the table and workmates' anxious glances speak volumes. Even the rich and powerful do not feel safe. Some say that this climate of fear, and the clandestine arrests, are all down to Nozaki – that he is a loose cannon. Others say that the Lord Heir knows everything his hataamoto is doing and approves of it, but chooses to let the blame fall on Nozaki.

THE UNDERCITY

Deep below Longshore's sea bed, the Undercity clusters around the foot of the Great Elevator. This dark, miserable warren of dwellings and factories is where Longshore's millions of commoners live. Where the city above is artfully designed and well-kept, here the scenery is brutally functional. Exposed networks ducts, cables, and pipes run along walls and across streets, sometimes venting steam or dripping corrosive chemicals. Rusting ladders and rickety cargo lifts take you from one level to the next. The lower down you travel, the less pleasant it gets, because the lower levels are the newest, and so have the fewest amenities. Cave-ins, power cuts, and air shortages are common. In the very bottom levels live the Faceless, Mishima's untouchable caste – the lowest of the low both socially and literally.

The air is filled with choking, eye-burning pollution. Those who can afford it wear filter masks to protect their lungs – those who can't, die young. Condensation drips from above, so laden with pollution that the droplets are slowly eroding the stone beneath.

Sunlight is rarely pumped in to the Undercity. Instead, its winding byways are lit with flickering glow lamps. The air is filled with the constant rumble of industrial machinery. Whole families live one generation to the next without travelling a mile away from the machines they work on. This is the dark underbelly, simmering with resentment, that creates the wealth for Mishima's polished exterior, where millions of commoners toil to produce goods and services for the samurai.

There are no genteel tea houses here, no cherry-blossom gardens, only the endless tunnels, where people fight even to find a space to sleep. Life is short, and what there is of it is spent in weariness from constant labour, subsisting hand to mouth on the edge of starvation, watching enviously when fat merchants arrive to take a tour of the factories they own. Only constant samurai patrols – and fear of their vicious reprisals – keep the peace.

Still, the common people work to honour their ancestors, and in the hope that life for their children will be better.



It is down here in the industrial Undercity where most commoners are born, toil and die.

AKIRENKO

Suspended on huge cables from the high, vaulted ceiling of the Akirenko underworld, the Hanging Palaces are home to the city's samurai. Each platform is linked to the others by bridges, with the daimyo's residence at the centre.

The nobles dispose of their household waste by throwing it down to the cavern floor, where the commoners live. The streets of the City Below are filled with debris, and commoners are often killed by falling refuse. The Faceless of the city scrape a living from the trash heaps.

Each palace is anchored to the cavern floor by four titanic hawsers. Thieves and other commoners sometimes try to climb up these massive cables to reach the noble dwellings above. They never return.

The Akirenko keiretsu has recently been experimenting with bionics, creating its own versions of Cybertronic technology. This research has been moderately successful, and Akirenko has become a magnet for many injured samurai, who travel to the city to obtain bionic replacements for lost limbs and crippled organs. These seekers often fall prey to con men, robbers, or ronin bandits and wind up as beggars in the City Below.

TAMBU

This province is an expansive, dark, low-ceilinged underworld, packed the gills with factories and smelting facilities. Outside the production plants, scavengers scrape at lakes of red hot metal even as they congeal beneath the runoff pipes. The cavern is constantly being expanded, as mining vehicles dig for ore and construction meka build new galleries to house the commoner population. The city is dominated by the mile-wide central plaza that houses the Ironkeep, whose riveted steel battlements are patrolled by thousands of meka.

This is the home of the Tambu keiretsu, Mishima's largest producer of weapons, from pistols to meka, and possessor of the largest standing army on Mercury. Tambu has embraced and promoted the concept of the ashigaru, the commoner warrior class created by Lord Heir Maru on Venus, seeing a huge new market for its products.

The Tambu daimyos have long been renowned for their ruthlessness. The Tambu family is willing to buy, eliminate, or destroy any rival to maintain its virtual monopoly on the Mercurian arms market, and is powerful enough to stand aloof from the Lord Heirs' internecine struggles. Some claim that it was that Tambu clan turning away from the present Overlord that led to his loss of effective power, and it is certainly true that no Overlord has ever prospered without its support.

SANGOKU

Before the First Dark Legion War, the underworld known as the 'Three Lands' was composed of three distinct provinces separated by thick walls of rock, ruled over by three keiretsu: Nagoya Industrial, Issan Steel, and Kazan Minerals Group. Due to a rich seam of minerals nearby, these underworlds were constructed much closer together than normal. Over the years all three underworlds grew until eventually their mines, and then their city streets, ran into one another.

For years there was peace, but gradually tempers flared over mineral rights and territory. War erupted between Nagoya and Issan, and Kazan was soon drawn in. Buildings and mine works were destroyed, and commoners terrorised. Battles went on for weeks over 100 metres of corridor. Today the three keiretsu continue to skirmish over territory while their buildings and infrastructure crumble from neglect. The war has become an all-consuming obsession. The three provinces have become a wasteland of intertwined tunnels where bands of ronin, corporate samurai, and scavenging bandits fight in a complex multi-sided struggle. Alliances are made and broken within hours.

The constant war has drained the three battling keiretsu of resources. Without the income from their offworld subsidiaries they would likely collapse. Almost all revenue is spent on freelancers, spies, weapons, and assassins. Pride is on the line now, plus all three keiretsu know that they have spent so much on the war that the only way to recoup their losses is to gain total control of the Sangoku region's mineral wealth. It does not seem likely that any one side will win soon.

KIRIN

The Kirin underworld lies within the towering peak called Kirin Mountain, with huge armourglass windows half a mile high looking out over the planet's surface. This is the industrial heartland of the Kirin Industrial conglomerate, Mishima's leading manufacturer of motor vehicles. Kirin is particularly famous for its motorcycles, which are among the best and fastest in the human worlds.

The Kirin underworld has seen better days. A generation ago the commoners rose up in revolt against the daimyo, who was notoriously brutal, and began to sabotage the factories where they worked. The daimyo simply cut his losses, detonated a small



The Mutant Zones of Kirin are flooded by all manner of criminal scum and human vermin.

CHAPTER 10

tactical nuclear device in the area most affected by the rioting, and moved Kirin Industrial's production off-planet to Venus and Luna, where it already had large production facilities. Cars and bikes are still produced at Kirin Mountain, but the output from its enormous fortified factory complexes is barely a quarter of what it once was.

The rest of the city is an urban wasteland, frequently blanketed in toxic smog and dangerously irradiated in some parts. These streets are fought over by motorcycle gangs, armed bands of ronin, and mutated humans. The so-called Mutant Zones of Kirin are famous throughout Mercury as a haven for criminals and ronin of all kinds. It is said that sooner or later all the scum of Mercury will wash up in Kirin.

MAYAMA

The home of Mayama Heavy Engineering is the fastest-growing underworld in all of Mercury. The Mayama combine is responsible for almost all the excavation and maintenance work in the Webways, and the creation of new underworlds. Mayama owns the biggest fabrication plants for earthborers in the solar system, turning out more of these gargantuan drilling machines than all its competitors combined. It also produces bulldozers, cranes, construction meka, and all kinds of other heavy machinery.

Its subsidiary, Mayama Construction Works, builds starscrapers on Venus, Mars, and Luna, and its architects are famous all over the solar system for their innovative, effective designs for office buildings, palaces, bunkers, and fortifications. Mayama is also noted for having built Kosaki, a free city near Longshore that is open to all Mishima keiretsu to do business.

The Mayama underworld is the keiretsu's biggest and best advertisement for its own products. It is dominated by the gigantic Mayama Keep, a colossal fortress surrounded by a ring of nine lesser, but still mighty, fortresses. A tubeway system runs between the fortresses to rush troops to wherever they may be needed, and the city itself is built within the walls.

Mayama is famously conservative in its business dealings, which has resulted in modest but stable growth over the years, without any major disasters threatening the keiretsu as a whole. Today it rivals Suritomo in power and influence.

SURITOMO

The second largest Mishima-controlled underworld on Mercury is an enormous cavern filled with billowing multi-coloured smoke and ash that spews in toxic clouds from hundreds upon hundreds of factory chimneys. Illuminated by the flames from thousands of flare stacks, this is the home of the industrial keiretsu Suritomo, called Saat Gung in its native language. It is one of the oldest and most powerful keiretsu.

The commoners here live in conditions of slavery, watched over by tens of thousands of brutal samurai overseers. The entrance to the underworld is guarded by a huge fortress with seven gates, each gate guarded by 1,000 samurai. No one passes in or out without authorisation in triplicate and the permission of the daimyo's security force.

The keiretsu is owned by Daimyo Omi, a grotesquely obese man with disgusting table manners, who inspires as much fear as revulsion in friend and foe alike thanks to his cunning and ferocity. He commands the huge Saat Gung Army with a rod of iron, and is said to have extensive contacts among the Triads and the shadow corporations. His patience and the slow-burning wickedness of his long-term plans are legendary. He is one of Lord Nozaki's most trusted supporters.

FUKIDO AND THE CLOSED ZONE

The free city of Fukido was a grand idea that went horribly wrong. Overlord Kayi, the great-grandfather of the present Overlord, wanted to open up a spaceport that would rival Longshore and so undercut the power of his son Nakamura, then the Lord Heir Governor of Mercury. The Fukido underworld was excavated half way around the world from Longshore, and land was offered to anyone who could afford it – even buyers from outside Mishima.

Even though the prices were slightly inflated, this was the first time outsiders had ever been given the opportunity to lease space on Mercury. Imperial leapt at the chance, and purchased ninety-eight percent of the leasable land, using a series of agents and front companies to avoid tipping off the Overlord's real estate brokers. Corruption, bribery, and intimidation ensured that Imperial got what it wanted.

Essentially, Mishima awoke one morning to discover that a rival corporation had, after centuries, established a foothold on its fortress homeworld.

Mishima protested and prepared for war, but the leases were legal by Cartel law. The Brotherhood mediated the dispute and war was avoided.

Mishima eventually accepted Imperial's presence because the leases only ran for 99 years. When the leases expire, the Imperial occupants can be legally evicted, by force if necessary. The Imperials of Fukido know their days are numbered, and have implemented an anarchic, anything-goes free market system in order to extract as much wealth from the city as possible before their time is up. There is no law in Fukido except that which can be enforced by the companies sub-letting space or individuals themselves. Price-fixing cartels formed of early-bird investors control every sector: retail, accommodation, construction, and transport are particularly lucrative. These groups

are able to keep the populace – mostly Imperials and Capitolians lured by the promise of a truly free capitalist system without port taxes or duties – ticking over with the promise of great wealth tomorrow, while making sure that every cardinal they spend goes into the tycoons' pockets. Entrepreneurs and corporate businesses who try to enter the Fukido market are soon sent packing or bought out.

Fukido is now the second largest city on Mercury, a fact that sorely vexes Lord Heir Moya. More alarmingly, legal experts have identified some parts of Fukido where the original leases may theoretically force Mishima to cede the land to its Imperial occupiers in perpetuity. However, the vital geothermal power station that keeps Fukido running is not one of them. In a few years Mishima will have the power to cut off the city's lifeblood, if the Lord Heir so chose.

The area around Fukido has been blockaded, fortified, and designated the *Closed Zone*.

Access is tightly regulated. Only the military units stationed there and Lord Moya's trusted administrators are given permission to enter the Closed Zone, along with the inhabitants of Suna Takoku – a small Mishima mining town that thrived near Fukido before the Imperial buyout and is now within the boundaries of the Zone.

Suna Takoku is the only official crossing point between Fukido and Mishima territory. Mining continues there at significantly reduced output. Half of the town's population now works in the service industry, selling refreshments, guidebooks, and other travel paraphernalia to Mishima officials passing through the town to Fukido.

A very limited number of travellers obtain the necessary authorisations to travel in the other direction, and Suna Takoku is their first encounter with Mercurian culture. Since this first encounter consists largely of people eager to meet them, it is a wholly inaccurate first impression.



A member of Strike Team Colossus has revved up his Tenshi-class meka and is ready to face off against the Dark Legion.

CHAPTER 10

VENUS

HOTBED OF THE NEW HUMANITY

Venus is the second most important of the Mishima realms, the domain of Lord Heir Maru, Prince of the Oceans. Although it produces less than a quarter of Mishima's manufactured output, Venus is militarily very important, for Lord Heir Maru has the strongest of all the Mishiman armies – though not the largest in terms of sheer manpower – and is the greatest strategic innovator Mishima has seen in centuries.

Maru needs to be a brilliant military leader. His domain is surrounded by rival corporations and the implacable menace of the Dark Legion.

Venus is the richest and most abundant of all the human worlds, and consequently the most fought over. Venus' dominant power is the ancient and aristocratic Bauhaus corporation, but huge areas are also controlled by the grasping Capitol. On Venus, Mishima rivals Capitol in power thanks mainly to the aggressive strategies pursued by Lord Heir Maru and his staff. Of course, the overwhelming threat of the Dark Legion is a destabilising influence on any balance of power, and all the great human factions must take the Legion's presence into account.

Maru's realm is divided into seven provinces. The first of these was seized by Mishima long ago during the First Corporate War, when huge spacedrops by Mishima forces seized the island of Quan. Today Quan has become the hub of Mishiman Venus, and it is a hugely fortified island base from which Mishima's armies and navies set forth to conquer new lands. The other six provinces within Mishima's 'sphere of prosperity' are Shan, Shoa, Yamashiro, Mushashi, Ozumi, and Suriga.

LIFE ON VENUS

Life for Mishima's employees on Venus is markedly different from that on Mercury. The first and most obvious difference is that life is in many ways much more free and easy. The danger of systems failure so omnipresent on Mercury simply does not exist on Venus. More space is available, so life is less cramped. Maru and his samurai do not oppress the commoners nearly so much as Moya on Mercury, in part because people can flee from Maru's realms to the Bauhaus domains or to the Capitol strongholds on the Graveton Archipelago. This does not mean that the division between manager and worker does not exist on Venus. Far from it. However, Venusian samurai are

much less brutal, and positive reinforcement of cultural norms for the commoners is much more common.

The second factor that distinguishes Mishima life on Venus is the constant presence of war. While border skirmishes between daimyos are common on Mercury, they are nothing like the massive, drawn-out clashes that Mishima's forces on Venus engage in against the other corporations and the Dark Legion. Because of this constant threat of war, Lord Maru's domain is far more militarised, rather than policed, than Lord Heir Moya's. Constant attrition of samurai troops and the better treatment of commoners has led to the creation of a new class of military commoners – the ashigaru. These men and women are fiercely loyal because they know that if they serve their lords bravely and well they might even achieve samurai status not just for their children, but within their own lifetimes.

All this means that the samurai who serve Lord Heir Maru tend to be more flexible and open-minded, and slightly less class-conscious, than those who serve Lord Heir Moya.

QUAN

A large island rich in minerals and other natural resources, Quan lies on the southern edge of the Ring of Fire, close to the tenth parallel. Quan is mountainous, with huge forests covering much of the landmass, which provide a rich source of timber for building houses in the traditional Mishima style. Lord Heir Maru's most trusted vassal lords make their homes in great mountain fastnesses here, where they oversee and protect the island's natural wealth.

As the oldest of Mishima's Venusian provinces, Quan is also the most developed. It has an extensive network of transit systems and defensive missile emplacements. Its vast, leafy hinterlands are used to train Mishima's troops in jungle warfare.

Quan is most densely populated along its coastline, where one industrial city blends into another in a narrow strip all around the edge of the island. The nexus of Quan's roads and freight railways is the deep water port at Quanto, where artificial fortress islands rise from the sea, their turrets constantly scanning the horizon in readiness.

The island beyond the port and adjoining legation quarter is forbidden to all foreigners except Brotherhood observers, and even they must have their official travel passes on hand at all times when they set foot beyond the limits of Quanto.

QUANTO

Quanto is a beautiful city built into the sides of an extinct volcano. Its deep water harbour is justly as famous for its capacity and throughput as for its brilliant blue waters. This is the capital of Lord Heir Maru, Prince of the Oceans, Governor and CEO of Mishima Venus. It is also the base for Mishima's Venusian Fleet, which is not as large as the naval force of either Capitol or Bauhaus, but does contain several of the dreaded megacruisers, the largest warships ever built.

The city is guarded by Lord Heir Maru's personal army, headed by his Shogun Guard. These elite warriors pilot the towering Shogun meka, huge armoured exoskeletons the size of tanks – a magnificent sight as they stride two by two on patrol, gleaming in the sunlight reflected from the cerulean harbour waters.

The Golden Palace, home to the Lord Heir, is one of the Seven Wonders of the System, carved directly from the volcanic rock and entirely covered with gold leaf. It is a city in itself, with thousands of chambers and buildings within its walls. Dozens of craft land every week at the Quanto spaceport, which lies on a specially built island in the harbour. From Quanto, zeppelins, ships, and flying boats leave from Quan Island to every destination in Mishima's Venusian territories, while road and rail links take passengers to elsewhere on the island.

Within the towering walls of the Red Palace of War, the best and brightest young samurai are schooled in modern warfare. This is a new institution, recently set up by Lord Heir Maru to further his professionalisation of the Mishima armies. The instructors are the

most successful of Mishima's generals, and mercenary theorists and practitioners of the art of war. The graduates of the Red Palace are expected to pass on their learning to the troops under their command, slowly turning the unruly feudal samurai of Venus into a modern fighting force. Also within the Red Palace is Maru's command bunker, where he holds councils of war with his senior daimyos to plan their next moves against rebels, the Dark Legion, and the other corporations.

The other feather in Lord Heir Maru's cap is the huge new shipyard in Quanto Harbour. He has spent multiple fortunes to create this shipbuilding facility, and hopes that it will eventually give him the most powerful navy on the planet. At any one time at least one megacruiser or rocketcraft carrier is under construction in the hull plant, while in the armaments yard expert engineers are hard at work on the weapon systems with which to equip the new vessels. The pounding and hissing of fabricators and the heavy stomp of huge workmecha echo through the city day and night – more faintly in the wealthier parts of town, unavoidably in the poorer areas near the shipyard, where accessorised earplugs have become a fashion trend.

The streets of Quanto are like the internal roads of an army base. Tens of thousands of armed samurai go to and fro on the Lord Heir's business. Every major keiretsu has a headquarters here and sends representatives to the Lord Heir's boardroom seeking favours and concessions. The ambassadors of the other factions employ networks of observers and analysts, seeking to understand the mind and plans of Maru, the most dangerous of the three Lord Heirs.



A highly trained samurai in his prime is one of the deadliest foes one can face.

MUSHASHI BLADES

Mushashi is famed for its swordsmiths, whose technique and artistry rival those of the Imperial clan Gallagher. A Mushashi blade is a priceless heirloom for any samurai family fortunate enough to possess one. True Mushashi blades are handcrafted, and the workshop puts out only a handful every year.

A Mushashi blade is keen, strong, and shines with a pure, clear light. For more detail on the famed Mushashi blades, see page 79.

SHOA

Shoa is an island city-state less than thirty kilometres off the coast of the Bauhaus-dominated mainland, linked to the coastal city of Tromberg by a huge causeway that carries road and rail links. This causeway has, in the past, been the site of great bloodshed, fought over by Lord Commander Shoa's forces and the Bauhaus military. The causeway ends at the great black basalt walls that enclose the densely packed domain of Lord Shoa, one of the most powerful daimyos on Venus.

Shoa's prosperity is built on the diamond mines beneath the island, and on Lord Shoa's recent decision to allow Cybertronic to set up a production facility on his island. Cybertronic's presence in the city has let the Shoa keiretsu leapfrog its rivals to the forefront of the electronics market. Shoa now produces the most sophisticated digital systems of any Mishima business, and manufactures the system's best battlesuits and meka. Shoa City has always been a trading hub, but it is now arguably northern Venus's foremost market for Cybertronic-sourced components.

Lord Shoa signed an exclusivity agreement that gives him a monopoly on weapon systems produced at the facility, in return for the use of his land and his protection. The city, once in decline, has experienced a dramatic reversal of fortunes, and an abundance of wealth among the populace. Lord Heir Moya operates a holding company and bonded warehouse here that buys up almost half of Shoa-Cybertronic's output, since he will not allow Cybertronic to set up on Mercury. Lord Shoa charges a sizeable mark-up to the Prince of Soil.

This new-found wealth has made Shoa a mouth-watering target for Imperial freebooters, who have tried to capture the city many times. Each attack has been fought off, with many casualties on both sides. After one recent raid a small force of Imperial Regulars was cut off from retreat, but managed to hole up in the south bastion for almost a month before being driven out, sniping at samurai in the streets below and subsisting on food from the bastion's mini-mall.

Shoa is a small island. As a result, land prices are astronomical, rivalling those of prime real estate on Luna. Mishima's engineers have excavated large warrens beneath the island for the commoners to live in, but foreigners and samurai without hereditary land prefer to pay the price of life in the starscrapers. The apartments in these towering residences are minuscule, but the views are frequently excellent.

Shoa's well-drilled military serves primarily as a defence force for the island. The clan's soldiers can also be seen in many other parts of Venus, guarding Shoa's electronics and battlesuit dealerships in their distinctive black and silver armour.

MUSHASHI

The Mushashi keiretsu controls a huge territory that stretches from the northern ice cap, through the Ring of Strife, to the Ring of Fire. This gives Mushashi access to the rich mineral wealth of the northern mountains and the polar oil and gas fields.

The province is thinly populated and controlled from enormous fortress cities. Mushashi City, the capital, is sited in a vast cavern dug beneath Mount Ryana. This is the site of Lord CEO Mushashi's head office, from where he oversees the keiretsu's affairs and plans his next strike against the northern gas fields of Bauhaus. Mushashi possess a large, highly mechanized military, with over 100 Tatsu war machines and thousands of battlemecha.

OZUMI

The province of the Ozumi keiretsu is a huge territory, extending from the jungles of the Ring of Fire to the Romburg Mountains. The keiretsu, Mishima's largest producer of industrial chemicals and pharmaceuticals, exploits all the resources of this diverse ecology, including the unique plants of the rainforest that go to produce a wide range of medicines.

Though a powerful economic player, the Ozumi clan is perhaps most famous for its ongoing wars with the Romanov electors of Bauhaus. Ozumi troops reduced the city of Romburg to rubble and very nearly seized the huge weapons installations there. In return, the Romanovs launched Operation Steel Fist, a massive offensive that seized almost half the Ozumi lands, including many irreplaceable manufacturing plants. Lord Ozumi has petitioned Lord Heir Maru for support in a counter-offensive, but Maru has so far demurred. He is not yet ready to go toe to toe with Bauhaus.

SURIGA

Lord Heir Maru does not quite control all of Mishima Venus. The exception is the Suriga keiretsu, which stands in rebellion and swears allegiance to Lord Heir Moya. Now perhaps the most militarised of

all Mishima's provinces anywhere, Suriga receives regular influxes of troops direct from Mercury.

The keiretsu is based on Suriga Island, at the southern edge of the Ring of Fire, but has subsidiaries and retail outlets all over Venus, except in the other six Mishima provinces. Because of its allegiance to Lord Heir Moya, Suriga is spared Imperial raids. Suriga also enjoys cautiously cordial relations with Capitol and Bauhaus, who see in the renegade province a potential ally against Maru. However, the servants of the Dark Apostles also seem to find much to like about Suriga, and their presence is strong here.

The capital city, Surigata, is bleak and foreboding, a slab-like city built into the side of a basalt mountain around a natural deep water harbour. The bulk of the city, home to the commoner population, is underground. The spaceport is large, modern, and busy, with regular flights to and from Mercury, Mars, and Luna.

SHINSEKI

Deep in the jungles close to the Venusian equator, where monstrous fauna roam, steaming humidity saps the will, and losing your way in the trackless forests spells a death sentence, Shinseki Fortress is one of the most isolated outposts of Mishima's military power on Venus.

This heavily fortified bunker complex is almost entirely underground save for a few necessary entrance and exit points, with a matrix of hidden defence systems covering the ground above. Shinseki Fortress occupies this distant locale to provide protection for the region's far-flung business interests. Mishima prospectors and farming operations call on the fort's garrison for rescue whenever rival corporations or the Dark Legion threaten them, which is often enough to keep that garrison very busy.

The force that responds to these cries for help is the mechanised cavalry unit known as Nobue's Riders. They are led by the charismatic Nobue Jen, who scorned the life of pampered luxury set out for her as the daughter of a daimyo in favour of Venusian adventure. Adventurous and brash, she has landed her unit in hot water more than once. Nonetheless, her men would follow her into the very gates of hell, for they know that her leadership and bravery are what has saved all their lives on more than one occasion. As a side benefit, her connection to the Mishima Mars central keiretsu gets the Riders a great deal of media exposure, accompanied by product endorsements that include far finer food and drink than a soldier would normally get.

JUNGLE DRAGONBIKE

Nobue's Riders are mounted on dragonbikes specially adapted for their jungle terrain. They sacrifice some top speed in exchange for more manoeuvrability at low speeds amongst the trees, and better shielding against humidity.

These dragonbikes are also equipped with jumpjets, allowing them to leap through the jungle canopy for a brief period before plunging back down beneath the foliage. This enables Nobue's Riders to get the drop on enemies who cannot predict which direction the Riders will be coming from next.

MODIFIED KIRIN AUTOMOTIVE TYPE 8 SORYU DRAGONBIKE

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 27**

MAINTENANCE: 6 **RELIABILITY: 2**

QUALITIES	Exposed, Hover			
CRUISING SPEED	80 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY		2
CREW	1 pilot	CARRYING CAPACITY	1 passenger, 30 enc	
LOCATIONS	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	4	6	3	2
MOTIVE SYSTEM	3	4	2	1
WEAPON	2	3	2	1
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+↑4			
ARMAMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dragonstorm Turbocannon (Range M, 2+↑6, Automatic, Armour Piercing 2, Spread 2, Vicious 1) • Daimyo Rocket Launcher with Anti-Personnel Rockets (Range L, 2+↑5, Munition, Blast (Close)) 			
NOTES	Both weapons have six Reloads each. Crew have ↑4 cover Soak.			

CELL 514

Technically attached to Shinseki Fortress, but very much its own domain, is the top secret Cell 514. This military research facility has been based in the Shinseki area for longer than anyone cares to remember. It may even predate the fortress itself, although no one is sure because the records are sealed. Buried even deeper in the jungle than Shinseki Fortress, surrounded by a no-fly zone and a sophisticated, hidden air defence system, Cell 514 is guarded by soldiers sent directly from the retinues of Lords Maru and Moya.

These personnel often visit Shinseki but never interact with the rest of the garrison. Reinforcements and supplies use Shinseki Fortress as a staging ground, though nothing coming out of the facility ever stops here, instead being taken directly to wherever it is going. The troops rotating into the Cell 514 garrison arrive in unmarked transports, usually in the dead of night, always masked and bearing no visible identification. Sometimes they are escorting geeky-looking types who seem to be administrators or researchers.

The majority of the Shinseki Fortress personnel are careful not to talk about Cell 514 or try to find out anything about it. Those with a less acute sense of self-preservation say they have heard the Cell 514 garrison refer to shipments to Mercury, and some say the researchers are biologists and genetic engineers.

PIRATES OF THE VENUSIAN JUNGLE: THE BUCCANEERS OF ŌCHOKU

Clear across the other side of Mishima territory from Shinseki is the island of Ōchoku.

It sits on the fringes of the jungle, where the waters of the great southern ocean lap among the trunks of the great verdant sea-forest. This is the home base of the notorious swamp pirates who prey upon the shipping lanes to the south.

Because of the shallow water that surrounds Ōchoku – the shore of the mainland is not far away – and the restricted space between the sturdy tree trunks, only small watercraft with shallow draughts can approach the island. The pirates use precisely this kind of boat – flat-hulled skimmers that use water-jet propulsion to manoeuvre through the jungle and switch to rocket power to blast across the open ocean at speed. Overhead, the jungle canopy protects the pirates' hideout from airborne observation.



Nobue's riders squaring off against the deadly and corrupted fauna on Venus.

THE GRAVETON SUB WARS

Few regions in the solar system have historically been so fought over as the resource-rich Graveton Archipelago. Only South Mars, perhaps, outdoes this string of islands in that regard. One of the most fraught yet unseen aspects of the conflict that raged among these pearls of the Venesian ocean during the Dark Symmetry era was the undersea battle that came to be known as the Graveton Sub Wars.

Mishima constructed mighty fortresses to contest the Bauhaus claim on the island territories. In the face of this boldness, war was inevitable.

The agile Dragonfish submersibles of Mishima duelled with the subaquatic forces of Bauhaus – and later, Capitol – for the countless sea channels that controlled the shipping routes among the islands.

Thousands of submariners lost their lives as the Sub Wars ground on and on for years. After forty years of terrible losses, the two corporations at last came to an uneasy truce. Mishima gained significant holdings, establishing it as a true power on Venus from then on.

The pirates wait at the edge of the jungle, or over the horizon in open water, for vulnerable, isolated cargo ships, which they spot using airborne scouts or through intelligence gained at the ships' ports of origin. When they're sure no protective warship is in range, they go in for the kill, activating their rocket engines to close in with terrifying speed.

The pirates' modus operandi is to overwhelm their targets' crew with superior numbers and intimidation – the best victim is one that won't fight back. The aim is to take control of the cargo ship before the crew realise what is happening, so they don't raise the alarm. That's difficult to manage and happens rarely – it only works if the pirates can attack from very close by in shoreline cover. Most often, a successful raid happens when the pirates hijack the ship after its owners receive the alert, but the pirates are able to destroy its transponders and sail it away before corporate reinforcements arrive.

The ship is then hidden in one of countless tree-covered coves, and the crew taken back to Ōchoku or another hideout and held for ransom. The majority of hijackings are never reported beyond the corporate branch directly in charge of a cargo ship, for fear of repercussions from higher management and loss of future contracts. Instead, they almost always negotiate for the return of the crew and

cargo to try and get some or all of their investment back before the news gets out that they have lost a ship.

The Mishima Corporation could probably find the location of Ōchoku and shut it down without much trouble, but it seems that Lord Heir Maru has other things on his mind. His daimyos in the region, when asked, deny they have any responsibility for dealing with the pirates, as this kind of cross-border security matter is entirely the purview of the Lord Heir. So nothing gets done. Bauhaus and Capitol suffer most from the swamp pirates' depredations, though the occasional Mishima transport does get attacked.

SWAMP SKIMMER

The raiding craft of the Ōchoku swamp pirates are lightly armed and armoured, but incredibly quick and agile. Typical armaments include machine-guns for clearing the decks of ships as they approach, and missile launchers in the event of stiff resistance. Swamp skimmers are not designed for stand-up fights at sea. Their job is to get their crews to the target as fast as possible, and if the enemy proves too tough to get them back to safety even faster.

SWAMP SKIMMER

RESTRICTION: 4 **COST: 20**
MAINTENANCE: 4 **RELIABILITY: 3**

QUALITIES	Exposed, Rugged, Watercraft			
CRUISING SPEED	350 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	1	
CREW	1 pilot 1 gunner	CARRYING CAPACITY	10 passengers, 300 enc	
LOCATIONS	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	7	12	6	3
MOTIVE SYSTEM	4	7	4	2
WEAPONS	3	4	3	2
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+↑4			
ARMAMENTS	Turret mount (choose one): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dragonfire Heavy Machine Gun (Range L, 2+↑6, Automatic, 2H, Spread 2) • Daimyo Rocket Launcher with Anti-Personnel Rockets (Range L, 2+↑5, Munition, Blast (Close)) • Daimyo Rocket Launcher with Anti-Armour Rockets (Range L, 2+↑5, Munition, Armour Piercing 2, Vicious 1) 			
NOTES	Turret has eight Reloads. Crew have ↑4 Cover Soak. Passengers have ↑ Cover Soak.			

The majority of swamp pirates originate from Bauhaus and Capitol, though a sizeable minority are Mishima-born ronin and faceless. Wherever you came from originally, if you have nowhere else to go and a flexible approach to the concept of private property law, Ōchoku has a place for you.

The island itself is a lawless place, with little industry other than piracy, taverns, and hostels to serve a pirate clientele, boatyards, and ship-breakers. Brawls between rival crews are not so much common as continuous – at any hour of the night or day, two pirate crews will be having a rumble somewhere on Ōchoku.

No one rules Ōchoku, but Honda 'Saraso' Emi is the longest-established pub landlord on the island. In fact, she built the first pub there some twelve years ago. At that time there were only around fifty pirates regularly operating from Ōchoku, but they were a thirsty clientele, which made them good business. After two years of motoring crates of sake over from the mainland Mishima town of Satokosho, and selling them off the back of her boat, Emi decided to set up shop permanently.

Today several hundred pirates use Ōchoku as their base of operations, and all of them visit Emi's Sake House more or less frequently.

'Saroso' Emi, sells booze to pirates

Cheerful, sturdy, takes no nonsense

'SAROSO' EMI ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
6	9	8	9
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
10	9	8	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	-	1	-	1	-	2	-	2	1	3	3

WOUNDS: 5

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Slicer (melee):** 1+↑3, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 2
- ◆ **Ronin Pistol (ranged):** Range C, 1+↑4, Semi-Automatic, 1H, Close Quarters

MARS

A TOUGH RED PLANET

Mishima's Mars operation is overseen by Lord Heiress Mariko, arguably the weakest of the Lord Heirs in military and economic terms, but strongest diplomatically. Mariko has turned her apparent weakness into a strength by encouraging outsiders to see her as less of a threat than the other two. She has been able to cultivate good relationships with the other corporations and, invaluable, the Brotherhood. Relatively few keiretsu answer to her, but those that do have access to every major market in the solar system: Luna, San Dorado, Volksburg, Burroughs, and Fukido, as well as trading in Mishima territories on Mercury and Venus.

Her armies are experienced and well drilled through constant battle in the South Martian Wars, though not quite up to the standard of Lord Heir Maru's troops. Mariko has followed Maru's lead in establishing a college of strategy and recruiting commoners as ashigaru warriors.

LIFE ON MARS

The day-to-day existence of a Martian Mishima employee is much less controlled than those of Mishima employees on Mercury or even Venus. The governor has too much on her plate to waste time on dealing with any but the most vital matters. As a result, life here is – by Mishima standards – positively *laissez-faire*. The people have frequent contact with other corporations, whose employees are commonly found living in the larger towns and cities, as are freelancers.

Because of this, many Mishima employees here learn other languages and are often quite multicultural, enjoying food, media, and even personal relationships from outside their own corporation.

For all that, there are still limits. Samurai are bound by the corporate codes of conduct, not to mention their own legally binding lifetime contractual agreements. Commoners know not to push the boundaries of their freedom too much. Just as with any other corporation, personal expression is accepted; going against the company is not.

HOSOKAWA

The capital of Mishima's Martian territory, Hosokawa is dominated by Lord Heiress Mariko's Palace of the Skies, a huge white-walled fortress that towers over the sculpted landscape. The city is part

dwelling-place and part garden, built in classical Mishima style and full of immaculate lawns, pristine raked gravel, serene temples, and elegant buildings. The people of the city dress in muted colours and speak quietly. It is a quiet city. The sound of Hosokawa is the whispering of the breeze through bamboo groves and the distant toll of a temple gong.

The inhabitants of Hosokawa are a most peaceful people, though not entirely through choice. Lord Heiress Mariko has strict aesthetic views on how her capital should be, and these views do not allow for raucousness in the streets or vulgar displays such as brightly decorated buildings or clothing. Her secret police are the local branch of the Crimson Lotus Society. On other planets the society is simply another Triad, though a powerful one, but here it is also the eyes and ears of the Governor. They use informers and espionage to keep Mariko up to date with events as they happen, and enforce her will throughout Hosokawa. The underboss known as 'Clamps' Akimoto is the head of the fashion police, who have a quiet, threatening word with anyone who goes out in public dressed too garishly.

Many of the beautifying features of Hosokawa's architecture conceal the entrances and viewports of the hidden fortifications that permeate the city. Hundreds of defensive emplacements, bunkers, and barracks are artfully blended into their surroundings, beautifying the city's appearance while concealing its weaponry and defences. The broad avenues and spacious plazas also create wide open killing grounds in the event of invasion.

The reason for such extensive fortification is that Hosokawa sits at the centre of a domain constantly on edge, with its population and military stretched thin over a vast, treacherous land. Mishima's Martian holdings radiate outwards from Hosokawa in a ring of settlements that extend for over 1,600 kilometres, as far as the southern polar ice cap – a claim strongly disputed by Capitol and Imperial. The corporation has ploughed resources into improving its territory here, rebuilding the canals, coaxing abundant crops from unyielding land, and aggressively founding new settlements.

All that investment would be in vain if Capitol forces were able to seize it – and they are very keen to do so. Mishima troops are in a state of constant low-intensity conflict with Capitol's frontier units. So far the conflict has remained at the level of brushfire wars and occasional raids by Capitol civilians into Mishima territory.

Mariko has only four first-rank keiretsu under her control: Red Sun, Shinwa, Amida, and the Mishima Mars Group itself. However, she also has an informal alliance with the powerful Tambu combine, which is an immeasurable boon to her business interests. Unlike on Venus or Mercury, where the keiretsu are spread out across Mishima territory, all of the Mars-based keiretsu have their headquarters in Hosokawa, where Mariko can keep an eye on them, stay in constant contact with their daimyos, and make sure they do not get up to too much in the way of independent thinking.

SENSOMACHI

Some 500 kilometres north of Hosokawa, in a dust-choked canyon, is Sensomachi – a military industrial city dedicated to the maintenance and improvement of Lord Heiress Mariko's armed forces. Aerospace and interplanetary transports thunder in at all times of day and night. Factories churn out vehicles and munitions. Soldiers – both samurai and the new-fangled ashigaru commoner troops – train at the massive Sensomachi Military Academy on the city's outskirts, where huge domes contain artificially recreated environments to train the soldiers in all kinds of warfare, from jungle guerrilla actions to arctic assaults.

In the shadow of the spaceport are the Proving Grounds, where those who seek the Lord Heiress's favour duel for supremacy. Every two years the Lord Heiress permits warriors from all corporations, and those who owe no such allegiance, into the Proving Grounds to compete in the Tournament of the Skies.

THE TOURNAMENT OF THE SKIES

Lord Heiress Mariko's emissaries travel the system to invite the greatest warriors to compete. Would-be entrants without an invitation must take part in the qualifying tournaments, which take place in the months leading up to the tournament proper. These are rough and ready affairs, held in the wastelands close to the spaceport. Fighters through the qualifying ground and fight one another while judges from the military academy wander through the jostling crowds taking notes. It is up to each fighter to challenge another, and hope that a judge happens to be watching. The judges take the winner's name and send their considered rating out of ten and any comments through to a central registry. Once a fighter has had three ratings registered, his qualification score is set. If you fought well but didn't win, you don't get a rating. If you win but a judge wasn't watching, again, you wasted your time. The top 120 scores get through to the Tournament of the Skies in the unseeded positions.



Thousands upon thousands of war machines and munitions flow from the industrial complexes of Sensomachi.

THE CONTENDERS

The favourites to win this year's Tournament of the Skies come from all over the solar system, including:

ALEX SMART

FACTION: Capitol

WEAPON: dual stun-clubs

Smart took extended leave from the Capitol military to travel to Mars in search of his missing former comrade, Charlie. Somehow he drifted into the qualifiers at Sensomachi, where his 10/10 ratings generated a lot of pre-contest buzz.

ANDRE DOS PASSOS OF HOUSE DANTE

FACTION: Bauhaus

WEAPON: heirloom cutlass

Scion of a noble house, Dos Passos is almost as famous for his carousing as his fighting. Commentators and fans call him 'Andre the Pirate'.

CAMILLA HEALY

FACTION: Imperial

WEAPON: none

This former Blood Beret from the asteroid belt takes on armed opponents bare-handed. And wins.



JOHN SMITH

FACTION: Cybertronic

WEAPON: CSA404 close combat sidearm

This bland, smiling warrior sent by Cybertronic has little in the way of personality to win over the crowd, but he always seems to have a new biomechanical trick up his sleeve – or under his skin.

KIM SEONG-GYEONG

NICKNAME: Captain Kim

FACTION: Mishima

WEAPON: military longsword

'Captain' Kim, as he is known, is in fact a commander in the naval forces of Lord Heir Maru, who sponsored him to enter the Tournament of the Skies. He's vowed to protect the pride of Mishima's samurai.

SATO SHINJI

FACTION: freelance

WEAPON: dual butterfly swords

Sato grew up as a commoner on Mercury and trained in an outlaw dojo before escaping to Luna, where he dominated the local pit-fighting scene. Now he's on Mars, with his invitation to the Tournament guaranteeing safe passage, to show that a commoner can be as great a warrior as any samurai.

WONG LINA

FACTION: Mishima

WEAPON: three-section spear

Hailing from Longshore, rumour has it this agile martial artist entered the tournament as part of a plan to enact revenge on her father's killer.

The Tournament of the Skies is a straight knock-out competition. Each bout consists of three rounds to first blood or knockdown. Competitors need not use matching weapons, and may fight unarmed if they choose, but projectile weapons are not allowed. The fights are held in a variety of arenas, usually circular spaces about ten metres across, fenced in with wire mesh. Crowds of commoners pack in around the edges, with samurai spectators in raised galleries for a better view. Camera crews from all the system's biggest media networks jostle for prime viewing angles.

The grand final is held in the Phoenix Courtyard of the Lord Heiress' palace in Sensomachi, surrounded by ancient statues and elegant architecture. Commoners are not permitted in to view this match, so they watch on huge video screens outside the palace walls. Even from half a kilometre away inside the courtyard, the fighters can hear the roar of the crowd.

The ultimate winner of the competition is hailed as the greatest martial artist in the solar system, at least for the next two years. The champion receives a golden silk sash as a trophy, and another, greater prize – though what this other prize is remains a secret. Some whisper that the 'prize' is a trip to a secret brainwashing facility, and that Mariko uses the tournament to identify the system's best fighters and bring them into a secret army programmed to fight for her when she commands it.

THE SOUTHERN BANNERS

The Southern Banners are a sparsely populated wilderness, bitterly contested among rival powers. To maintain a strong foothold here, Mariko offers land, in perpetuity, to any ronin who are prepared to swear allegiance to her, and assume the banner and stewardship of the land. Many of these lands are not under Mishima control in

theory or practice – yet. The new bannermen of these holdings must therefore take hold of the land before they can profit from it and pass it on as an inheritance to their descendants. Many of these ronin turned governors rally old comrades in arms to their banners, assembling ragtag but highly skilled ronin armies. Almost as many ronin are attracted to South Mars on a freelance basis, wandering the badlands as guns and blades for hire.

NAKAJIMA

Nakajima is a typical example of a ronin holding in the Southern Banners. Centred on Nakajima City, the fortified village from which it takes its name, the banner is home to 2,000 souls in the windswept Martian desert. Nakajima's wealth, such as it is, comes from mining, chiefly the mineral olivine. Outposts dot the landscape throughout the area wherever an olivine seam is detected. These automated outposts require minimal maintenance but must be overseen at all times. One or two engineers stay on duty at each Mishima-owned outpost for a few weeks, then return to Nakajima City for a week's leave before rotating out again. A handful of the mining stations are owned by freelancers, who get no days off unless they can hire someone to watch their stations.

The bannerman overseeing this territory, Takagi Tora, relies on his band of ronin, the Hundred Tigers. The name is only roughly accurate – their actual numbers vary between eighty and 150 as ronin come and go. The Tigers patrol Nakajima singly or in pairs, kicking up huge plumes of red dust as they ride their dragonbikes along the perimeters, visiting isolated mining posts and keeping an eye out for incursions by Imperial, Capitol, or the Dark Legion.



NAKAJIMA CITY

CURTAIN WALL

A reinforced concrete wall with machine gun and missile launcher turrets every twenty metres. It would not last long against a concentrated military assault, but it suffices to keep out bandits and the small raiding parties sent by Imperial and Capitol.

TEMPLE OF THE SEVEN SAGES

Prospectors and travellers visit this seven-tier pagoda to burn incense in front of the Seven Sages' icons, and request blessings.

The temple is overseen by the laconic sage Zato Hisakazu.

Zato Hisakazu, guardian of the temple

Contemplative, practical, stoic

ZATO HISAKAZU, GUARDIAN OF THE TEMPLE ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
7	8	7	10
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	9	11	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	3	2	1	–	1	2	2	2	1	–

WOUNDS: 5

SOAK: **Ballistic Nylon Robes:** (Torso 1, Arms 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

◀ **Unarmed Strike (melee):** 1+↑2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

◀ **Grey Mystic Master:** Hizakazu is a Master of the Grey Mystics school, and knows the following Ki powers: Aura of Mystical Resistance, Cleanse Poison, Ki Self-Healing, Supreme Concentration, Suspended Animation, Teleport, Yizo's Prescience, and Yuroji's True Sight.

HANSU WINE HOUSE

The wine house is a rickety pre-fabricated bungalow that rattles when the southerly winds sweep in from the desert. Ronin gather here to eat, drink sake, and play dice. It's the only place in town to drink, so when a fight breaks out, everyone takes it outside to the street. The owner is an ex-Bauhaus freelancer called Hans Goethe. Everybody calls him Hansu.

Hans Goethe, vendor of sake and good times

Astute, welcoming, scrupulously polite

HANS GOETHE, VENDOR OF SAKE AND GOOD TIMES ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
8	8	8	9
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
9	7	9	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	1

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: Light Military Shoulder Pads: (Head 1, Torso 1, Arms 1)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Combat Knife (melee):** 1+**T**3, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 1
- ◆ **HG-25 'Equalizer' Revolver (ranged):** Range C, 1+**T**5, Semi-Automatic, Unbalanced, Close Quarters, Knockdown

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Decades of Experience:** Hans has made a life out of connecting with people and solving their problems, and he has accrued a considerable array of contacts. Whenever he needs assistance from other individuals, he may reduce the difficulty to find this assistance by two steps.
- ◆ **Well-Mannered:** Hans is a people person, polite and gracious, and knows the best ways to convince them of things. He gains two additional points of Momentum on a successful Persuade test.

BANNERMAN'S OFFICE

Takagi Tora lives and works in this fortified bunker in the centre of the village. The majority of the bunker is underground, with only the main entrance and waiting rooms above ground.

Takagi Tora, steward of the Nakajima Banner

Combat veteran, ronin, commanding

TAKAGI TORA, STEWARD OF THE NAKAJIMA BANNER ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
10	8	9	7
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	7	8	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
4	2	2	-	2	1	2	1	3	2	2	1

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: Sode Battlesuit: (Head 1, Torso 3, Arms 2, Legs 2)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Katana (melee):** 1+**T**9, Unbalanced, Parry 1
- ◆ **Wakizashi (melee):** 1+**T**6, 1H, Parry 1
- ◆ **Unarmed Strike (melee):** 1+**T**4
- ◆ **Shogun Assault Rifle (ranged):** Range M, 1+**T**4, Burst, 2H

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Font of Courage:** Tora is a bold and courageous man, his example inspiring others to stand firm. When any warriors under his command are required to make a Willpower test, they reduce the difficulty by one step, which may eliminate the need for a test.
- ◆ **Kenjutsu:** Tora is a skilled swordsman, and may re-roll up to two **T** when he hits with a melee weapon. Further, he may always attempt to Parry. So long as he has a melee weapon within Reach, he may always attempt a Parry Response Action.
- ◆ **Blademaster Student:** Tora is a student of the Blademaster school, and knows the following Ki powers: Weapon Link (Katana), Yorama's Deflecting Hands.

GARRISON BLOCK

The Hundred Tigers live here when they are not out on patrol. The garrison block contains dormitories, an armoury, and the garage where the Tigers' dragonbikes are maintained. At any given time, half the Tigers will be out amongst the mining stations, 25% on guard in Nakajima City, and the rest off duty, here or elsewhere in town.

Nakano Koya, typical Hundred Tigers ronin

Uncouth, ronin, thin-skinned

NAKANO KOYA, HUNDRED TIGERS RONIN ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
8	9	10	9
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
9	7	8	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	3	1	2	1	3	3	2	1	1	1	1

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: Sode Battlesuit: (Head 1, Torso 3, Arms 2, Legs 2)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Katana (melee):** 1+**T**5, Unbalanced, Parry 1
- ◆ **Wakizashi (melee):** 1+**T**4, 1H, Parry 1
- ◆ **Unarmed Strike (melee):** 1+**T**2
- ◆ **Archer Sniper Rifle (ranged):** Range L, 2+**T**5, Semi-Automatic, 2H, Unforgiving 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Sharp-Eyed:** Koya's senses are honed by a lifetime of battle. He may re-roll one d20 when making an Observation test, but must

accept the new result. Further, during combat, he may make an Average D1 Observation test as a Restricted Action. If this test is passed, and he makes a Ranged or Close Combat attack action, he adds $\uparrow 2$ to the damage roll.

◆ **Kyujutsu:** Koya is a skilled marksman, able to line up and eliminate targets with effortless precision. He reduces the penalty for firing at ranges other than the weapon's optimal range by one step, which can eliminate the penalty. Further, when spending Momentum to adjust the location struck, each point of Momentum spent will shift the hit location roll by up to two points. Finally, he may reroll two \uparrow from each damage roll made with a ranged weapon.

GENERAL STORE

Whatever you need, the general store is unlikely to have it. You can pick up plenty of tasteless long-life food products and mining supplies, though.

HOTEL ROSE

This run-down flophouse caters to travellers passing through and miners in town to pick up supplies.

SETSUKA'S MOTOR VEHICLE REPAIRS

A one-woman operation run by the young mechanic Setsuka. Her skills as a mechanic are indisputably strong, but in this out-of-the-way place she often lacks the parts and equipment she needs to

make serious repairs. She moved to Nakajima City almost a year ago, and doesn't like to talk about where she came from.

Setsuka, expert mechanic

Young, guildswoman, independent

SETSUKA, EXPERT MECHANIC ★

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
8	8	9	8
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
9	10	9	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	-	2	-	1	-	2	1	1	1	3	2

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

◆ **Wrench (melee):** 1+ $\uparrow 3$, 1H, Stun

◆ **Ronin Handgun (ranged):** Range C, 1+ $\uparrow 3$, Semi-Automatic, 1H, Close Quarters



One of the Hundred Tiger ronins on patrol, looking after Nakajima assets.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Technical Expert:** Setsuka is a talented and creative mechanic, used to making the most of limited resources. She may re-roll any dice that do not generate a success on the initial roll when making a Mechanics test, but must accept the new result. Further, she may reduce the difficulty of Mechanics tests by one, which may reduce the difficulty of the test to zero, and when attempting a repair, can reduce the time taken by two steps per Momentum spent.
- Wilful:** Setsuka's determination allows her to re-roll one d20 when making a Willpower test, but she must accept the new result.

THREE WOLF RADIO

The radio station shut down when its owner and only DJ, 'Three Wolf' Li, moved back to Hosokawa. A few months ago an ex-Capitol freelancer called Hank Smart moved in and just uses the old place as his house. Everyone in town is pretty sure he's a Capitol spy, but he hasn't yet done anything to warrant him being run out of town. Plus he gives the impression he's pretty handy with a gun.

Hank is the forward scout for a Capitolian long-range raiding unit waiting at the edge of the Nakajima banner. They don't have the numbers or weaponry to take on the Hundred Tigers head-on, so Hank is waiting for the right moment to call them in. Maybe when the Tigers are called away to some distant emergency, or when the town's distracted by a community festival.

Hank Smart, suspicious newcomer

Gaunt, sneaky, kind of a creep

HANK SMART, SUSPICIOUS NEWCOMER ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
6	7	8	11
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	9	9	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	-	1	1	-	-	3	3	2	1	2	2

WOUNDS: 5

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

- Switchblade (melee):** 1+ \uparrow 3, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Observer:** Smart is gathering information for Capitol, and is keenly observant. He may re-roll one d20 when making an Observation test, but must accept the new result. Further, he gains an additional d20 on Observation tests made to recognise people, places, and objects he has already interacted with, even if they are disguised or concealed in some way.

IEYASU TRADING

The trading office of the largest mining co-operative in Nakajima district. Being the largest just means there's ten of them, pooling resources and helping each other out. Black Toshiro and his gang have been raiding its shipments between cooperative's outposts and town, and it's on the lookout for some hired toughs to send the bandits packing once and for all.

Lam Fung, spokesman for Ieyasu Trading

Grumpy, miserly, tough

LAM FUNG, IEYASU TRADING SPOKESMAN ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
7	7	8	8
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	9	9	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	-	1	1	1	-	2	1	3	2	1	1

WOUNDS: 5

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

- Ronin Handgun (ranged):** Range C, 1+ \uparrow 3, Semi-Automatic, 1H, Close Quarters

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Trader:** Though acerbic, Lam Fun is an uncompromising negotiator. He gains an additional d20 on all Lifestyle tests.

THE BLOCKHOUSE

This dilapidated old building on the edge of town is where Black Toshiro and his bandits are based when they're in town. The miners outside town are easy pickings, but there's no big score there. Black Toshiro has been eyeing the transport trains coming in and out of

Nakajima Station with increasing avarice, but feels he needs a better class of crook or warrior to help him mount a raid than he currently has in his band.

Black Toshiro, ronin bandit

Greedy, savage, charismatic

BLACK TOSHIRO, RONIN BANDIT ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	ABILITY	AWARENESS
9	9	10	8
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
9	7	8	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	3	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	1

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: **Sode Battlesuit:** (Head 1, Torso 3, Arms 2, Legs 2)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Katana (melee):** 1+**T**6, Unbalanced, Parry 1
- ◆ **Wakizashi (melee):** 1+**T**5, 1H, Parry 1
- ◆ **Unarmed Strike (melee):** 1+**T**3
- ◆ **Pair of Windrider SMGs (ranged):** Range C, 1+**T**3, Burst

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Gunslinger:** Toshiro adapts quickly. As a Response Action, he may respond to an attack with an attack of his own with any weapon he can wield one-handed. This attack has a basic difficulty of Daunting D3, and is resolved before the enemy attack. In addition, if Toshiro succeeds at an attack with a ranged weapon and spends Momentum to perform a Swift Strike, there is no increase in difficulty for the second attack.

NAKAJIMA STATION

The central transport link between Nakajima and civilisation. All the district's mineral shipments blast off from here by rocket-train.

THE MAJOR KEIRETSU OF MARS

RED SUN

Mishima's largest media producer, Red Sun publishes newspaper, magazines, books, and comics. It also owns chains of radio and TV stations, as well as cinemas, in most major cities across the solar system, except for those on Mercury. Red Sun also licenses its

martial arts movies and cartoons to media companies owned by Capitol and Imperial, and sells tie-in merchandise based on its films, shows, and publications. Its many lines of plastic battlemecha are popular with children throughout the solar system.

Because Red Sun's media empire gives it connections and influence in nearly every market, it is highly influential not only in Lord heiress Mariko's court but throughout Mishima society. Red Sun maintains its own space fleet, called the Huhng Yaht Guard. It is one of the largest and more formidable space forces in the human worlds.

SHINWA

This giant conglomerate, known in its own language as Shenhua, has interests in a huge range of industries, from sand-mining to steel production to construction work, kote armour manufacture, and even building Tatsu-class meka. Its daimyo is Lord Commander Shenhua Chimu (in Mishiman, Shinwa Akabe), who is utterly devoted to his cousin Lady Mariko. According to some accounting methods, Shinwa is Mishima's largest keiretsu, boasting even greater sales and revenues than Suritomo or Tambu. Shinwa fields the largest standing army of any single keiretsu, and is the financial and military keystone of Lady Mariko's empire.

AMIDA

The aerospace production plants of Amida are the biggest in all of Mishima space. It dominates the industry within Mishima largely because the major Mercurian keiretsu have yet to expand into the aerospace field, making it the biggest fish in a small pond. The proximity of Capitol's cutting-edge aerospace industry and its lax security is another boon, allowing Amida spies to almost come and go as they please to bring back the latest developments to the company's development labs.

Amida manufactures air and space vehicles of all kinds, from short-range ornithopters to zeppelins, rocketplanes, and interplanetary spacecraft. Amida also does a nice line in ground-to-air missiles, and produces aviation-related electronics such as military radar technology and air traffic control systems. The keiretsu sells its products to anyone who will buy them, including the rival Lord Heirs. Mariko gives this trade her blessing, as these pricey items bring in much-needed revenue.

As one might expect, Amida has Mishima's best air force. Almost all its samurai are trained pilots, to at least basic proficiency, and all the rest are trained as airborne cavalry. Amida is famous for its aeromeka, rocket-propelled meka units that blast over the battlefield unleashing hell from shoulder-mounted rocket pods, before landing with a flourish to continue the carnage up close.



LUNA

JEWEL IN THE CROWN

Mishima's presence on Luna comprises a mixture of the concerns belonging to the three Lord Heirs, independent operations run by the major keiretsu, Triad racketeers, and the largest concentration of employees directly loyal to the Overlord anywhere in the solar system.

Of the Lord Heirs, Mariko is the best represented on Luna due to her warmer relations with other corporations, which has allowed her keiretsu to set up an extensive array of businesses, ranging from direct wholesaling of Martian exports to retail outlets and service-sector companies.

The plaza adjoining the Mishima Mars Central Representative Office is known as Red Planet Square. The eastern face of the Representative Office occupies the entire west side of the square, and the other three sides are packed full of restaurants, shops, hotels, and amusement arcades owned by Martian Mishima *émigrés* to Luna. A thirty-metre bronze statue of the Mayama folk hero Zaton stands in the centre of the square, a blindfolded samurai with an iron scaffolding pole held in the guard position of the Blademaster school of swordsmanship.

The square is a focal point for the Mishima Mars community on Luna. Because of the relative openness and approachability of Martian Mishima society, Red Planet Square is also a popular destination for other Mishima visitors, employees of other corporations, and freelancers whenever they are looking for authentic Mishima food and a warm welcome.

THE PALACE

The Overlord guards his lunar sphere of influence jealously, constantly marshalling spies, informants, and other agents to stay on top of his children's Machiavellian politicking. Luna is all the Overlord has left, and he fears losing his grip on the Mishima enclave and his palace truly becoming a tranquil gilded cage.

The Overlord's Palace is his official residence, close to the central meeting house of the Cartel. Surrounded by courtiers, concubines, and his hatamoto, the Overlord lives a life of opulent, impotent luxury. The Overlord attends nearly every Cartel summit to negotiate meaningless treaties, and returns to his palace to issue hollow edicts that everybody ignores. Aided by his Steward of Rites, Hagu-sensei, he performs the ancient daily rituals set forth in the Scrolls of Hours, hearkening back to a time when the Overlord was truly the ruler of Mishima.

Once a year, on his birthday, the Lord Heirs are obliged to visit the Overlord, listen to his pronouncements, and give him gifts. Lord Heir Moya has recently taken to pleading ill health and sending his grand vizier Lord Nozaki in his place. This calculated insult infuriates the Overlord, who plots revenge.

Once a year, on the first Cardinal's birthday, the Overlord and the current Cardinal have a formal meeting in which they restate the old pledges of friendship between Mishima and the Brotherhood. This too is a sad excuse for a meeting between great powers.

THE OVERLORD'S HATAMOTO

The Overlord's most fanatical followers are his hatamoto – his elite personal guard. These are the finest warriors in the corporation, handpicked by the Overlord himself and utterly devoted to him. All but the greenest recruit knows that the Overlord's power is a shadow of what it once was. In some ways, this only serves to make these elite soldiers even more devoted to the old man. They serve not only the Overlord as he is, but the ideal of the Overlord – a paragon of Mishima nobility and the samurai virtues who deserves to be honoured.

ALL FOR THE ONE: RIVALRY WITH THE LORD HEIRS' GUARDS

The Lord Heirs maintain garrisons of their own hatamoto at their palaces on Luna, whose chief function is to wait in readiness for whenever their master should choose to visit. This leaves hundreds of highly trained samurai with little to do, bored out of their minds, and spoiling for a fight.

By happy coincidence, the duties of the Overlord's hatamoto are not especially strenuous either, and they too are more than happy to test out their fighting skills on the servants of the Lord Heirs, whom they see as forever insulting their lord and master.

Brawls and duels between hatamoto serving the Overlord and one of the Lord Heirs are common in Mishima's areas of the city, as much as the corporation tries to keep a lid on such fighting for fear of losing face. The hatamoto have no wish to shame the corporation, but an insult in the street will always lead to bared steel, regardless of any edicts handed down from on high.

The majority of scuffles occur between the Overlord's hatamoto and the samurai of Lord Heir Moya. Fights often break out between the warriors of the rival Lord Heirs too.

THE YAMORI TEAHOUSE

A stone's throw from the Overlord's Palace stands the Yamori Teahouse, the favourite hang-out of the Overlord's hatamoto. This three-storey building is constructed from weathered wooden beams, with an open balcony that runs around the building on the top floor, providing guests with a fine view of the palace and the central business district of Luna's largest Mishima zone.

The main chamber is on the ground floor, entered from the street by sliding double doors. Customers sit at low bench tables and are served from long-spouted brass teapots by staff standing some distance away in order to not disturb their conversation. A low stage projects from a proscenium arch in the east wall, used for performances of music, drama, and poetry on selected evenings.

REGULARS

Many samurai frequent the Yamori Teahouse, but none are more of a fixture than the much talked-about hatamoto known as Honma, Aramaki, and Yoshida. These three bravos are thick as thieves and serve the Overlord with pride. When they are not at the teahouse they are either on duty guarding the Overlord or undertaking some secret mission on his behalf, or they are off duty, getting into scrapes all over Luna.

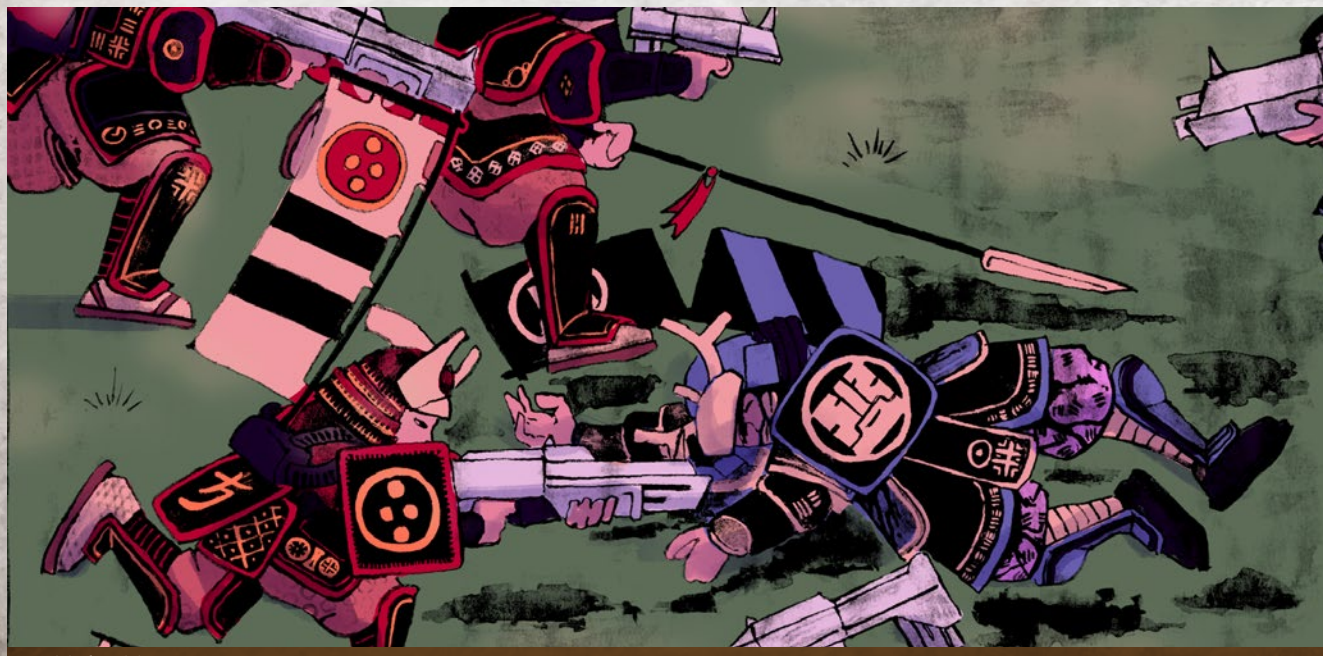
Honma is honest, blunt, and slightly gullible. He is the youngest and most extrovert of the group, fond of sake, women, and song. Though he can be naive, he is also extremely dedicated and loyal to his friends. More often than not it is Honma who initiates the group's street fights with the Lord Heirs' warriors – Aramaki and Yoshida

enjoy a fight just as much as he does, so they often bring some minor perceived slight to Honma's attention, knowing that their captain will be more lenient with a hot-headed youth later on.

Aramaki is ambitious and never seems satisfied: as a hatamoto, he yearns to become a sage, but he used to be a scholar who longed for battle. Doubtless if he ever does become a sage in a mountain retreat, he will wish for the life of a soldier again. He became a hatamoto because of pride: as a young student, he was physically thrown out of a lady's house in a manner most unbecoming a samurai. He practised for a year with the best master swordsman in the city to get his revenge, and became an expert swordsman. He still lost his duel against the lady's father, who turned out to be his master's master. But he spared Aramaki's life and recruited him into the Overlord's hatamoto in recognition of his raw talent and bravery.

Yoshida is the oldest of the three by some years. Noble and handsome, but also very secretive, Yoshida drowns the sorrows of his mysterious past in drink. He is very protective of Honma, whom he treats almost as a son. Captain Takeuchi, chief of the Overlord's military guard, knows Yoshida's past and keeps his secret. He also respects Yoshida's wealth of experience as a warrior and servant of the Overlord, and often consults him on important and delicate matters.

Chiba Choki, small time crook and forger, is another Yamori regular. He likes to sit in a shady recess by the west wall, where he receives enquiries from potential customers. If you need knock-off ID cards or authorisation papers, Chiba Choki is your man. For a price.



Death before dishonor.

CHAPTER 13

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