

Ninja Battle RPG
Shinobigami

By Toichiro Kawashima

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Welcome to the Kotodama Shinobi Clan

Thank you for your support of our English production of Shinobigami. Thanks to your money and support in purchasing this game, we are able to release supplemental material to expand the Shinobigami universe: New supplements, scenarios, articles, play materials, etc.

If you are exploring Shinobigami for the first time and are borrowing a copy of this book, please give this game a play with your friends: That's the greatest wish of both the translators and the original author. If you enjoy the experience, please do consider purchasing your own copy of the book. That support will not only pay the original author, but it will help and encourage us to translate and produce other unique Japanese role-playing games into English!

Please visit our publisher website at **www.kotohi.com** to see our other projects and our official forums. See the **www.shinobigami.com** website to find the latest information on this game, as well as to download useful play materials and ready-to-play scenarios.

The World of Shinobigami

Unlike other tabletop role-playing games, this game does not start with character creation or other rules: It begins with what is called a "replay" in the Japanese RPG scene. A replay is a transcription of an actual session of play, recorded and written up like a screenplay. Instead of just teaching the rules--perhaps with little play examples to explain some of the rules--a replay shows the entire experience of a roleplaying game session: From introductions and making characters, through the actual session content and table jokes/side-banter, all the way to the epilogue and end.

This replay features the game designer himself, as well as other Japanese RPG artists and author friends. Once you read through it, you'll understand the basic rules of the game, as well as what a Shinobigami session looks and feels like in play. The players of this original Japanese replay have their own unique quirks; when you play with your friends you'll find your own unique style!

Come visit the website to learn more about Japanese RPG replay culture.

For now: Sharpen your sword, stock up on prayer seals, and turn the page to experience the world of the Shadows War!

Shinobigami Replay Section

Slashing Through the Darkness



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Character Creation

1. Unraveling the Ninja Scroll

On a certain day, of a certain month...

Under the amber glow of an incandescent bulb, a man and a woman face each other.

One is the author of this book, **Touichirou Kawashima**¹.

The other is an artist, **Nagomi Ochiai**². She faces the man as if challenging him with the gaze of her large, glistening eyes.

The space between them is filled with sheets of paper, writing implements, and scattered six-sided dice.

The woman speaks first.

Ochiai: We're supposed to be playing a game today, right?

Kawashima: Thou art correct.

Ochiai: Thou? What's with the archaic language?

Kawashima: Ah, it's nothing. Just atmosphere. I've been reading ninja novels like crazy for this game.

Ochiai: Okay. So what about the rest of the players? Is it just the two of us?

Kawashima responds with a broad smile.

Ochiai: Mind telling me what's so funny?

Kawashima: Oh, nothing, nothing. Just atmosphere.

Ochiai: Since this is a roleplaying game about ninjas, does that mean that **you're going to bring in actual ninjas to play with**³, or something like that?

Kawashima: That's right. In fact, they're already here.

Ochiai: Really!?

Kawashima: No, not really.

Ochiai: <<stands up from her chair>> I think I'm going home.

Kawashima: Sorry, sorry. **Although I do know a real ninja**⁴, he's not coming.

Ochiai: So it really is just me here then?

Kawashima: Yep. The game we're playing, "**Shinobigami**"⁵, contains an

1. **Touichirou Kawashima** – A game designer who works for Adventure Planning Service. He spends his days creating, discussing, and playing games. Adventure Planning Service, aka "Bouken" in Japanese, is the game and multimedia design company that released the original Shinobigami game in Japanese.

2. **Nagomi Ochiai** – An illustrator who works for Adventure Planning Service. She is the main illustrator for the game "Peek-A-Boo", a game similar to Shinobigami, but featuring children who summon ghosts to do battle. Her eyes are indeed large.

3. **You're going to bring in actual ninjas to play with** – Since "Peek-A-Boo" is a game about children and ghosts, we played it with actual children. Afterward, strange phenomena started occurring in the room we recorded it in, so maybe we used actual ghosts too.

4. **Although I do know a real ninja** – He really is a master of Ninpo. And a Muay Thai practitioner. And an actor.

5. **Shinobigami** – The book you're holding right now. For more information on how the game is played, consult the "Rules" section that follows this "Replay" section.

element of inter-player conflict¹. So it's better for everyone to make their character beforehand and bring it with them.

Ochiai: Oho!

Kawashima: That's why I had you come early. I thought you could make your character before everyone else shows up.

Ochiai: I see. But why only me?

Kawashima: Forget about everyone else. Can you make your character by yourself?

Ochiai: ...Eh-heh-heh.

And so they began character creation.

2. The Birth of Eito Himukai

Kawashima: Well then, let's get down to business. First is your character's **name**² and gender...

Ochiai: I thought of those before I came.

Kawashima: All right then. Just in case, there's also a name table you can use, but if you'd have more fun coming up with your own, that's fine too. What's your name?

Ochiai: Eito Himukai. He's a junior in high school.

Kawashima: A high school student, excellent.

Ochiai: It fits with what's on this **handout**³ you gave me.

As she speaks, she pulls out a piece of paper that says the following:

"Mission"⁴: Do not let any non-ninjas find out that you are a ninja.

Secret⁵: Your parents were killed by someone named 'Mudou,' using his Ohgi; the secret sword technique "Human Blossom" (you know the details of his Ohgi). If you encounter Mudou, your Mission will become to defeat him and avenge your parents."

Ochiai: If you're trying to avenge your parents, you have to be a high school student! That's how young adult novels these days work, right?

Kawashima: I'm not so sure about that, but I guess it works. Anyway, I wanted to have this scenario take place in a high school.

Ochiai: Hey, hey. What are these "Mission" and "Secret" things, anyway?

Kawashima: Let's see here... Your "mission" is your objective for the session. If you succeed at it, you can gain **merit**⁶. When you acquire enough merit

1. **Contains an element of inter-player conflict** – This is also called "PvP" when it occurs in roleplaying games. Knowing that your beloved character could either win or lose creates a certain tension that you can't experience in other types of games.
2. **Name** – Since "Shinobigami" takes place in present day Japan, most of the names used will be typical Japanese names, but don't worry too hard about having to capture the right "feel."
3. **Handout** – This has the character's role and objective (their "Mission" and "Secret") written on it. The gamemaster prepares these and gives them to the players.
4. **Mission** – Each ninja has a job which he has to complete. If he fails, then his life...won't be in any danger, but it's still a good idea to try to succeed.
5. **Secret** – Each ninja also has a secret that he wishes to prevent others from learning. In "Shinobigami," the story progresses with the revelation of characters' secrets.
6. **Merit** – Think "Experience Points" in most console or tabletop RPGs.

[illegible]

points, your character advances.

Ochiai: I see. So I should try to accomplish it, then.

Kawashima: As you roleplay your character, you should try to follow it as much as you can.

Ochiai: Okay, and what about the secret?

Kawashima: That's information that your character keeps hidden. What's written there has to do with the scenario.

Ochiai: Aha. So that means that this “Mudou” will play a part in the scenario, then?

Kawashima: Well, I wonder? <<grins>>

Ochiai: Whatever. What's next?

Kawashima: Next you choose a faction or “ninja clan”. There are six factions, and your character is affiliated with one of them.

Ochiai: What are the different ones?

Kawashima: There are several different clans, like the **Hasuba Ninja Army**¹, who specialize in dealing with various ninja tools, or the Machiavellian **Hirasaka Agency**², etc...

Ochiai: But...?

Kawashima: To be honest, I wonder if a **Lost One**³ wouldn't be a better fit for a high school student seeking revenge.

Ochiai: Huh? What's that?

Kawashima: Fugitive ninjas, or ninjas from small villages or other organizations that don't fall under one of the major factions. A kind of **home-grown**

1. **Hasuba Ninja Army** – A faction that has uncovered all of the secrets of the various Ninpo, standardized them, and converted them into machines for their own use. They can use the ninja skills of other factions/clans.
2. **Hirasaka Agency** – A clan organized by ninjas attached to the Japanese national government. They are “social ninjas” who excel at manipulating others and constructing disguises.
3. **Lost One** – AKA “Haguremono” in Japanese. Everyone else. A ninja without a faction. It's easy to give them unique backgrounds, so they make good main-character types.

ninja.¹

Ochiai: Ah, that might work. I wanted his grandfather to teach him Ninpo after his parents were killed.

Kawashima: All right, write Lost Ones down for your faction. Characters from that faction specialize in Stealth. They're good at hiding, spying, and the like.

Ochiai: They're ninjas, shouldn't they all be specialists in stealth?

Kawashima: Ah... In "Shinobigami," Stealth refers to a group of skills used for hiding and spying. And you also have Ninpo, which can produce various special effects.

Ochiai: Right, right, so Skills are the various ninja arts, and Ninpo are special abilities.

Kawashima: Now that you've got that out of the way, you should decide on a **Cover**². This is the facade you present to normal society.

Ochiai: I'm a high schooler, obviously!

Kawashima: Okay. Since this scenario takes place in a high school, that works great. If for some reason you couldn't think of one, there's also the **Cover table**³. But **since you have a clear image of what you want to do, it's best to go with that**⁴.

Ochiai: So what's next?

Kawashima: Next you choose your **Conviction**⁵. This is the core of your character's personality. If, during the course of the game, you're at a loss as to what to do, you can roleplay following your conviction. It's like a compass in troubled seas. There are six different types of convictions, and you choose one of them.

Ochiai: <<looking over the rules>> There's a table for this too, eh? I'm gonna try rolling this time. <<rolls>> 5. "**Loyalty**"⁶.

Kawashima: "Loyalty" says, "You are sympathetic towards your faction/clan, a certain ideal, or a person, and would sacrifice yourself for them."

Ochiai: It doesn't feel like a Lost One would have a faction to pledge his loyalty to.

Kawashima: It doesn't.

Ochiai: Hmm. I guess that means I'll devote myself to my grandfather who taught me the ninja arts.

Kawashima: I see. Makes sense.

Ochiai: **Except my grandfather is dead**⁷. <<laughs>>

1. **Home-grown ninja** – A type of ninja who is taught ninja arts by a member of their family, whose only background is their own home. They could also be part of a branch family loosely affiliated with their family head, or a ninja created through artificial means.

2. **Cover** – Of course, when filling out government forms, you can always write "ninja" as your occupation. But you might get some pretty sad looks from the people behind the desk...

3. **Cover table** – Sometimes it can be difficult to come up with all the little details for your character. "Shinobigami" has numerous tables that you can roll on whenever that happens.

4. **Since you have a clear image of what you want to do, it's best to go with that** – Of course, those tables are only there in case you can't come up with anything. The player's ideas are the most important thing.

5. **Conviction** – All ninjas have a conviction, or conversely, there is no such thing as a ninja who doesn't believe in something. When your job involves fighting superhuman opponents beyond the realm of human experience, such a thing is absolutely necessary.

6. **Loyalty** – While I daresay that loyalty is a virtue in warrior societies, since the ninjas of "Shinobigami" are part of the modern world, you should be careful not to over-conflate ninja with classical samurai.

7. **Except my grandfather is dead** – This happens to the elderly, from time to time.

Kawashima: Is that so? <<nervous>>

Ochiai: Yep. But I still maintain my devotion to my grandfather's teachings. Sometimes, he'll appear in **flashbacks**¹.

Kawashima: Okay, I guess that works. It's pretty cool.

Ochiai: Eh-heh-heh-heh-heh.

Kawashima: All right. Next you choose your skills. Check out the skill list on the character sheet.

Ochiai: Whoa whoa whoa. There are so many of them.

Kawashima: Since Eito's specialty is Stealth, first fill in all the little spaces in the gaps on each side of the Stealth heading.

Ochiai: Okay. What do these mean?

Kawashima: Okay, first let me explain how **skill checks**² work. In this game, you **roll 2D6, and if the result is equal to or greater than the target number, you succeed**³.

Ochiai: That's simple enough. How do you find the target number?

Kawashima: It depends on which skill you are using for the check. Let's say you're spying on someone, and it seems like they're about to discover you, so you fake the sound of a cat, you would make a skill check using **Ventriloquism**⁴.

Ochiai: Ahh, very ninja-ish.

Kawashima: So, if you have the Ventriloquism skill, your target number is 5. But if you don't have it, you **substitute a different skill**⁵ that you do have. Find the skill that you have that's closest to the one required by the check, and count how many spaces separate them.

Ochiai: So what if, for example, I had Performance?

Kawashima: Ventriloquism and Performance are 4 spaces away from each other, right? So you would increase the target number by 4, for a total of 9.

Ochiai: Ah, so you count each skill and the white spaces between them.

Kawashima: Exactly. It represents how it is easy to apply skills in the same field to each other, but harder for ones in a different field. But, when you filled in those spaces to the side of the skill box, that means that you don't have to count them.

Ochiai: So that means I'm also pretty skilled at Martial Arts and Scheming.

Kawashima: It does. So, keeping that in mind, choose three skills from the Stealth field, and any other three skills you want.

Ochiai: Okay. Let's go with Multiplicity and Ventriloquism. What else...

Kawashima: If you only focus on skills that are close to each other, then

1. **Flashbacks** – For example, while Eito is fighting a powerful enemy, the screen might change to a sepia tone and the scene will cut to a silhouette of his grandfather, teaching a young Eito some obscure lesson on the finer points of ninjutsu. Then, when things return to normal, suddenly Eito is stronger!
2. **Skill check** – A rule used to determine how well a ninja does when he attempts something challenging.
3. **Roll 2D6, and if the result is equal to or greater than the target number, you succeed** – If the target number is 7, and the sum of the numbers on the dice is equal to 7, or a number greater than 7, then you're okay.
4. **Ventriloquism** – For normal people, ventriloquism is when you can make yourself talk without actually moving your lips. Ninjas can do that as well, along with being able to squeeze any number of other sounds from their diaphragms.
5. **Substitute a different skill** – A ninja's skill consists of a large network of things that all relate to each other. If you are good at one, then you'll be able to use others as well.

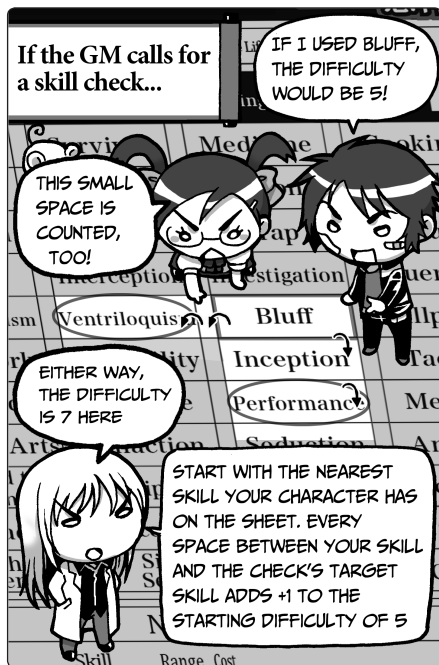
you'll have a higher chance of succeeding at your specialties, but you'll also lose some versatility. But since this is your first time, it's okay to go with whatever image you have in your head.

Ochiai: It seems like it would be good to pick some that are further away. Let's go with Infiltration. And I wanted to be a flame user, so I'll take Pyromancy, Analysis... and let's go with Transformation.

Kawashima: All right. Now that you're done with skill selection, let's move on to the best part of "Shinobigami," choosing your Ninpo.

Ding-dong.

Just then, the doorbell rings. Three men have arrived.



3. The Players Arrive

The three of them differ in build and features, but each wears a fierce, determined expression.

"Well, well, well. Ochiai, you're playing a Lost One?"

The first is a raggy-looking man. His physique is, for lack of a better word, thick. His name is **Satoshi Ikeda**¹. His friends call him "**Munch**."

"Sorry. Were you still in the middle of making your character? I guess maybe we got here too early."

The next to appear is a handsome young man, pale, as if he was carved from ice. His name is **Uokeri**³.

"I wonder if she'll at least let us watch?"

Last is a hearty man with a beard, who resembles Guan Yu: **Rasenjin Hayami**⁴. He is an artist and a scholar. People call him "**Beard**," on account of his appear-

1. **Satoshi Ikeda** – A graphic designer who works for Adventure Planning Service. He has a hard time around dogs and smoke, leading to rumors that he might be a fae.

2. **Munch** – Short for "munchkin." No, not the little people from "The Wizard of Oz." And not a breed of cat with very short legs, either. I won't go into the details, but suffice to say he knows the rules of many tabletop games inside and out.

3. **Uokeri** – A novelist who works for Adventure Planning Service. His name comes from the dinosaur, Baryonyx Walkeri ("Uokeri" in Japanese). His name has nothing to do with kicking fish, even if those are the characters it's written with. Actually, I've never asked him, so maybe it does.

4. **Rasenjin Hayami** – An illustrator and manga artist who has worked for various companies. He's notable for his cute characters and vibrant scenes. He's also traveled to Russia as a VIP on the government's dime.

5. **Beard** – Everyone who sees him goes, "That's quite a beard." "Yep, that's a beard all right."

ance.

Kawashima: You're early.
Beard: **Who are you calling "Guan Yu"?**¹? <<laughs>>
Munch: So what are your stats like?
Ochiai: No peeking. <<hiding her character sheet>>
Beard: We all already finished making our characters. **It won't hurt for us to look**².
Kawashima: Yeah, I guess not.
Munch: Oh, a Lost One? <<smiles>>
Ochiai: What about it? What about you, Munch, which clan are you?
Munch: Nuh-uh. I don't have to tell you. <<laughs>>
Ochiai: No fair!
Kawashima: Oh well, don't worry about it. Next you have to choose your Ninpo. Check out the list.
Ochiai: <<while looking at the list>> Oh, there are a lot of choices.
Kawashima: Pick four from the list.
Ochiai: Does that include the first line that says **Close Combat Attack**³?
Kawashima: Nope, four besides that one. Close Combat Attack is something all ninjas know from the start. It's a basic Ninpo available to everyone. So during character creation you get five total Ninpo, including that one.
Ochiai: Are there any restrictions?
Kawashima: You should really choose at least one of the special Ninpo from your faction. Also, you can't take any that belong to another faction.
Ochiai: Roger! Here I go!

<<A Montage Begins!>>

"Wow, **Shadow Clone**⁴ is pretty cool, isn't it?"

"It's not just cool, it's powerful too."

"Whoa. This **Cicada Switch**⁵ one is cool too."

"It is. It's great with Shadow Clone if you and an opponent are both aiming for the same Plot Value."

"Yeah. But **Counter**⁶ is good too."

<<whispers>> "Why don't you take both?"

"I feel like I'm making a deal with the devil." <laughs>>

"Do you wish for... power?" <<laughs>>

<<Montage Ends>>

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1. **Who are you calling "Guan Yu"** – Beard doesn't deny it, he's a pretty big guy. If you don't know the legendary figure Guan Yu from the Romance of the Three Kingdoms, please look him up!
 2. **It won't hurt for us to look** – As long as you don't make any changes to your character, there's no harm in seeing someone else's character, except for their Ohgi. If you end up in a similar situation before you play, remember this precedent.
 3. **Close Combat Attack** – A series of actions including kicking, punching, slashing, stabbing, and swinging. Obviously, since these are ninjas we're talking about, these are attacks that are too fast for normal people to notice, too strong for them to defend against.
 4. **Shadow Clone** – A Ninpo that allows one person to appear as if they are two or more people. It can prove quite a nuisance to an enemy if they lose track of which one is the real you.
 5. **Cicada Switch** – A Ninpo that allows you redirect an attack to another character. Of course, if the circumstances are right, it's also possible to turn the attack back on the attacker.
 6. **Counter** – A Ninpo that allows you to make a return attack even as you dodge one. A powerful technique that lets you attack and defend at the same time.

Ochiai: All right. Let's see how these look.

Kawashima: Indeed, let's see... **Cross Cut**¹, Shadow Clone, Counter, and **Expertise**²? I see, you went with Ninpo that use Multiplicity for their check.

Ochiai: Yeah, though Counter uses Acupuncture.

Uokeri: Huh? You know Acupuncture?

Ochiai: Nope. But I can make the check using Pyromancy since it's pretty close. It's a technique that strikes back at an enemy by engulfing their weapon in flames.

Munch: Oh, cool.

Ochiai: And I noticed that the skill box for Close Combat Attack is blank, does that mean I'm free to choose it myself?

Kawashima: Yeah, go for it.

Munch: By the way, since the **Dodge check**³ for an attack is made using the same skill as that attack, it might be a good idea to spread out the skills used for attacks.

Ochiai: Understood! Let's go with Infiltration then, that way I can hide my presence and take my opponents by surprise.

Uokeri: Coming up with attack types is pretty fun, since you can attack using a bunch of different skills.

Kawashima: And since it's a ninja game, it's especially fun to come up with all sorts of different **descriptions**⁴ when you use your Ninpo.

Ochiai: Heh-heh-heh. I've got all sorts of images popping up in my head.

Kawashima: All right, next you choose your **Ohgi**⁵.

Uokeri: Ah. **We shouldn't be watching for this part**⁶.

Kawashima: That's right. Could you go wait in the other room?

Ochiai: Huh? See you guys later. <<waves>>

4. Creating an Ohgi

Kawashima: This next thing you choose is **kept a secret**⁷ from the other characters.

Ochiai: Why's that?

Kawashima: Ohgi are like super-Ninpo that are unique to each ninja, and **produce a powerful effect just by declaring that you're using them**⁸. But, if its

1. **Cross Cut** – A Ninpo that increases the damage of your attacks when the enemy is close by. It's sort of like one moment you're behind the enemy, and the next moment their blood is spraying everywhere.
2. **Expertise** – This lets you use certain skills no matter what the circumstances. As a result of unimaginably strict training, your skills will still work even if you've lost your senses or are suffering from a debilitating physical condition.
3. **Dodge check** – A rule used to determine whether or not you are able to dodge when you are attacked. It's the equivalent to the effect of the "Barrier" used in Grade Schooler Arts.
4. **Description** – This is the act of translating "I hit and deal 1 point of damage" into "A massive swarm of spiders devours your organs."
5. **Ohgi** – A ninja's most secret of techniques. They can't be avoided unless someone manages to perceive their secret.
6. **We shouldn't be watching for this part** – Uokeri is such an honest player. He'll go easy on you during a fight, too.
7. **Kept a secret** – Your Ohgi's details are for you and you alone to know. After all, there's a chance you may have to use one against another character!
8. **Produce a powerful effect just by declaring that you're using them** – There's no need to make a check or roll dice when using your Ohgi.

true form is discerned, then the Ohgi can be broken. Therefore, a ninja must keep his Ohgi a secret, even from his own allies.

Ochiai: Nice, nice.

Kawashima: Whenever somebody uses an Ohgi, the characters in that scene learn its details. They gain knowledge of that Ohgi.

Ochiai: And if you have that information, you can prevent the Ohgi from working?

Kawashima: Exactly. A character who knows about an Ohgi can, from then on, make an **Ohgi Break check**¹ whenever that Ohgi is used in front of them. If it's successful, then they can neutralize the effect of the Ohgi.

Ochiai: So, "**The same attack never works twice**?" <<laughs>>

Kawashima: As long as the Ohgi Break check is successful, at least. <<laughs>>

Ochiai: What skill do you use to make an Ohgi Break check?

Kawashima: You designate a skill for your Ohgi when you choose it, from the list of ones that you already know.

Ochiai: I get it. If you use an Ohgi, it's like you're transforming or something.

Kawashima: You sound just like a main character. <<laughs>>

Ochiai: In that case, I'll pick Transformation as the skill.

Kawashima: The six different kinds of Ohgi effects are "**Critical Hit**³," "**Area Attack**⁴," "**Perfect Success**⁵," "**Immortal Body**⁶," "**Perfect Defense**⁷," and "**Dark Interference**⁸."

Ochiai: <<while reading the effects>> I definitely need to take Critical Hit!

Kawashima: All that's left is to come up with a name for your Ohgi...

Ochiai: You can roll on a table for that too! That looks fun!

Kawashima: Also, if you have an idea in your head, it's okay to choose a name on your own.

Ochiai: Okay, I'll choose it on my own. Eito's Ohgi is called "Consuming Fire God." His entire body becomes wrapped in fire, and he engulfs his opponent in flames.

Kawashima: All right. That seems like it will work. Now that you've decided on your Ohgi, choose two pieces of ninja gear, and that's it for character creation.

Ochiai: I'll take one **Bead of Life**⁹ to recover my life points, and one **Soma Pill**¹⁰ so I can re-roll one of my checks.

Kawashima: All right, fold back the section that has the details of your

1. **Ohgi Break check** – This check is powerful, but it's not a sure thing. The Ohgi still has its full effect if you fail.

2. **The same attack never works twice** – A line from "Saint Seiya" (Author: Masami Kurumada/Publisher: Shueisha).

3. **Critical Hit** – Deals 4 points of damage to a single opponent. It's not instant death, but it's close. A good starting Ohgi for new players.

4. **Area Attack** – Deals damage to multiple enemies at once. Also a good starting Ohgi for new players.

5. **Perfect Success** – Allows you to automatically succeed at a check.

6. **Immortal Body** – Recover from damage that you've taken.

7. **Perfect Defence** – Neutralizes the damage taken from a single attack.

8. **Dark Interference** – Changes the result of one of the dice someone rolled for a check to 1.

9. **Bead of Life** – A type of recovery medicine used by ninjas. It is made from grinding various ingredients into a powder and reducing them over a flame. Ninjas love grinding things into powders and reducing them over a flame.

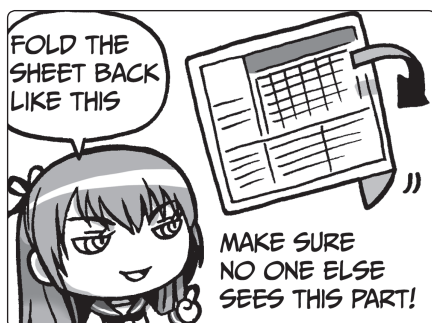
10. **Soma Pill** – Some ninjas have resorted to doping whenever they need to make an important check.

Ohgi and your ninja gear.

Ochiai: Okay. And now no one else can see it.

Kawashima: All right. Let's call in the other three and start the game.

Ochiai: Oooh. Now I'm getting nervous all of a sudden. <<laughs>>



Introduction Phase

1. Introductions

Each player takes their character sheet and sits down.

The game is finally starting.

Though the four of them look quite different, as one they smile awkwardly, as if to hide their nervousness.

Kawashima, looking at the four of them encouragingly, begins to speak as the gamemaster (GM for short).

Kawashima > GM: Sorry for making you all wait. First of all, I just want to confirm something. I already gave you your handouts, but did you all finish your characters?

Everyone except Ochiai: Of course.

GM: All right. Before we start, could each of you quickly introduce your characters? Go in the order of the **PC Number**¹ written on your handouts, please.

Ochiai: That means I start, huh? His name is Eito Himukai. His parents were both ninjas as well, but they were assassinated. His ninja grandfather helped him avoid the same fate, and he became a Lost One. He's a typical high school student. He learned the ninja arts from his grandfather.

Beard: Your grandfather must be rather famous in the ninja world. "**Every member of my clan was defeated, one by one**²," or something like that.

Ochiai > Eito: Ah, but my grandfather was also killed recently. <<laughs>>

Beard: O-, oh, he was? <<laughs>>

Eito: I've been living alone ever since.

Munch: How do you make a living?

Eito: As a ninja-for-hire, doing all sorts of jobs. <<laughs>>

GM: That's right. The criminal world and intelligence agencies often use Lost Ones. You're probably hired for those kinds of missions.

Eito: But instead of a paycheck, I've been getting paid in information regarding my grandfather's killer, so **I'm still pretty poor**³. <<laughs>>

GM: Understood. <<laughs>>

1. **PC Number** – When the gamemaster is preparing the handouts, she starts with the PC who he intends to be the main character (if any). In other words, the GM planned for there to be a "main character" for this scenario, and PC 1 is that main character.

2. **Every member of my clan was defeated, one by one** – For a Lost One to live that long, they've got to be talented enough for others to take notice. Eito's grandfather must have been stupidly powerful.

3. **I'm still pretty poor** – To actually find reason in one's poverty is to open the path to the God of the Poor. It's a dangerous technique that's been sealed away by the leaders of the Kurama Shin Clan since the Han'ei era.

PC 1 EITO HIMUKAI

Age: 17
Sex: Male
Faction: Lost Ones
Cover: High School Student
Conviction: Loyalty
Skills: Pyromancy, Infiltration, Ventriloquism, Multiplicity, Analysis, Transformation
Ninpo: Close Combat Attack (Infiltration), Cross Cut (Blade), Counter (Acupuncture), Shadow Clone (Multiplicity), Expertise (Multiplicity)

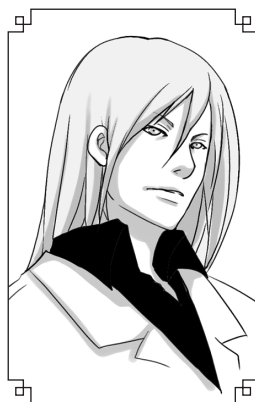


A young Lost One. He seeks to find and get revenge on the one who killed both his parents, and the grandfather who passed on their ninja teachings to him -- and so he has entered the world of the ninja as a Lost One. The Himukai family is one branch of a line of priests who worship the fire kami, Kagutsuchi. Their line died out, leaving Eito as the lone inheritor of their abilities. Since he has studied the ninja arts from an early age, he has difficulty interacting with his peers, but he is a gentle person at heart.

GM: All right, next is...
Uokeri: Next up is me. His name is **Genzou Izuna**¹. He is a **Bloodline of Oni**² sorcerer.
Ochiai: Oni?
GM: A descendant of a race who were long ago called "oni." They are unlike beings from our world, and have many sects who specialize in magic and necromancy, or who aren't even human at all.
Munch: Though all ninjas can use supernatural abilities of some kind. <<laughs>>
Uokeri > Genzou: As my name suggests, I am a user of *gen-jutsu*, illusion magic. I'm also skilled in acupuncture, and can throw many needles at once.

PC 2 GENZOU IZUNA

Age: Unknown
Sex: Male
Faction: Bloodline of Oni
Cover: Teacher
Conviction: Order
Skills: Acupuncture, Concealment, Medicine, Barrier, Illusion, Clairvoyance
Ninpo: Close Combat Attack (Acupuncture), Vampirism, Mob Combat Attack (Illusion), Enlightenment, Plot Restriction (Barrier)



A ninja of the Bloodline of Oni. He is a venerable mountain spirit and weasel shapeshifter. An illu-

1. **Genzou Izuna** – An izuna is a member of the weasel family, a type of mythological creature known as the kuda-gitsune, or pipe fox. One can infer from his name that his roots are in the northeastern parts of Japan
2. **Bloodline of Oni** – A faction made up of oni who continue to live in secret as part of human society.

sionist, it is said that none are able to escape his barrier. When he uses his illusion magic, the slits of his eyes glow blue.

He is level-headed, holds obligation and responsibility in the highest regard, and is feared by lower-ranking ninjas. He in turn takes the requests of his superiors most seriously, and is often entrusted with all sorts of important tasks. If left to himself, he would rather live peacefully in the mountains than undertake missions, but he has a very serious disposition, and will never cut corners for any reason.

Beard: I wanted to make my character someone's subordinate.
GM: In what sense?
Beard: I was thinking I could be another character's follower.
GM: Okay, how about being Genzou's lackey? <<grins>>
Beard: Oh, that'll work, that'll work. <<laughs>>
Genzou: I'm fine with that. What's with that smile? <<nervous>>
Beard: <<while checking his secret>> **Nah, it's nothing, it just fits¹,**
is all. Anyway, my name is **Aban Birukaze²**.
Eito: B... Birukaze? How do you even write that? <<laughs>>
Beard > Aban: You know, the normal way. *Biru* (building) is in katanana, *kaze* (wind) is in kanji. Aban is in hiragana.
Eito: **There's nothing normal about that!³**
GM: Just so you know, **I intended for "Shinobigami" to be a game with a pretty serious atmosphere⁴** to it...
Aban: It's fine, it's fine. Aban is originally a ninja from the **Marudoku-tou⁵** sect of the **Kurama Shin Clan⁶** clan. Somehow, she came to be Genzou's lackey.
Eito: **That sounds suspicious⁷.**
GM: W-well, she's a ninja, of course there's something suspicious about her.

1. **Nah, it's nothing, it just fits** – It appears that Beard's character's background has something to do with with Genzou. Just what that is, you'll find out later on in the story.

2. **Aban Birukaze** – This is an example of the "Hayami Method" of naming: Names that are "kinda Japanese", but pretty off-the-wall. It gives you names that don't feel like they should be names at all.

3. **There's nothing normal about that!** – This is the curse of the Hayami Method. The more you see and hear it, the more used to it you get, and eventually you end up naming your own characters that way...

4. **I intended for "Shinobigami" to be a game with a pretty serious atmosphere** – Seriously. Well, more or less.

5. **Marudoku-Tou** – This isn't some setting element written in a book, the player came up with this himself. The players are free to invent their own terms, groups, and other interesting facts to make up an interesting character backstory.

6. **Kurama Shin Clan** – A clan that focuses on the martial arts. Compared to the others, they're rather "proper" ninjas.

7. **That sounds suspicious** – It is.

PC 3 ABAN BIRUKAZE

Age: 16
Sex: Female
Faction: Kurama Shin Clan
Cover: Student
Conviction: Peace
Skills: Sleight of Hand, Footwork, Blade, Trap, Manipulation, Creature Mastery
Ninpo: Close Combat Attack (Sleight of Hand), Domineer, Bloody Determination, Vibrato, Assassin (Blade)



A female ninja who is part of the Marudoku-tou, an offshoot of the Kurama Shin Clan. The Marudoku-tou specialize in urban warfare and urban camouflage, which may be why Aban is terrified of the countryside. Hills, fields, and rivers cause her to become distracted and break out into cold sweats. Her specialty is parkour; forgoing equipment, she uses her own body to scale buildings and walls, scrambling up their sides and leaping from the top. She's short and slender, so she's well suited to hiding in the cramped spaces of the city. She can also control rats, the city's primary fauna.

Munch: Well then, I guess I'm last. Rutsubo Kokonoe. A female ninja of the Hasuba Ninja Army who specializes in Hydromancy.

Aban: The Hasuba's aim is to consolidate all the clans into one, right?

GM: Precisely. They're a clan that uses science to create ninja gear that produces the same effects as different types of Ninpo. In the future, once they have acquired all of the Ninpo, they wish to unite all of the clans.

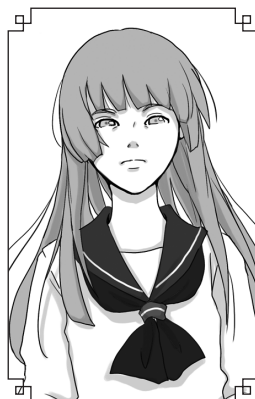
Munch > Rutsubo: The Hasuba are divided into groups like the Ink Bottle or Sawblade, with names taken from tools. One of them was a pharmaceutical research group called the Rutsubo-ryu. Since she's worker number 90 of that group, she's called Rutsubo Kokonoe ("ninefold").

Eito: So, a **science ninja**?

Rutsubo: That's right. My age is a mystery. I'm a suspicious older girl.

PC 4 RUTSUBO KOKONOE

Age: Unknown
Sex: Female
Faction: Hasuba Ninja Army
Cover: Student
Conviction: Self
Skills: Hydromancy, Apparel, Torture, Poison, Finances, Tactics
Ninpo: Close Combat Attack (Apparel), Mob Combat Attack (Necromancy), Crushing Blow (Hydromancy), Hadesology, Take the Hit



1. **Science ninja** – A group of ninjas who use science-Ninpo, and wear costumes heavily influenced by American ninjas. They even had their own animated show, it was quite popular..

A female ninja from the Rutsubo-ryu section of the Hasuba Ninja Army. Her unique physiology allows her to excrete pharmaceutical drugs from her skin. Her nickname is “**Nure-onna**.”¹

At first glance she appears to be a 17 or 18 year old girl, but the smile that sometimes crosses her moist, red lips is filled with a bewitching sensuality that belies her age. Some theorize that the chemicals inside her body are responsible for maintaining her youthful appearance. She’s a mysterious, ageless beauty. Her disposition is capricious, like a cat.

GM: Thanks. Alright everyone, let’s start the session.

2. Genzou Izuna – The Illusionist

GM: Well then, let’s get started. First I just want to remind everyone that even though “Shinobigami” is a serious game, don’t be afraid to be yourselves.

Group: Okay.

Aban: It’ll be fine, you can trust me.

GM: Yeah. You were the one I was most worried about. <<laughs>> First, we’ll go through your introduction scenes one by one. Let’s start with Genzou, the most ninja-like among you.

Aban: How rude! **Are the rest of us not ninja-like enough?**² <<laughs>>

Genzou: I believe he made the correct decision. <<laughs>>

GM: Thanks. **The location is Fuji’s Sea of Trees**³. You’re lying on your back, a deep sea of green surrounding you on all sides.

Genzou: As I take a deep breath of the fresh forest air, a feeling of calm washes over me.

Aban: What!? It’s the country, the country! <<nervous>>

GM: However, Genzou senses a presence next to him, about to ruin that pristine tranquility.

Genzou: “...Leave.”

GM: The presence envelops you. “That will not be possible. A missive from our master decrees, “There is a task which Izuna alone can handle,” the presence says, as countless eyes flash in the darkness around you. It seems to be a mountain beast.

Genzou: Well, it’s a bother, but I’ll sit up and inquire about the details.

GM: “**The Kinin Mandala has been found**”⁴, the mountain beast reports.

Genzou: That’s the thing mentioned in my mission.

GM: Correct. Genzou’s Mission is to “**Recover the secret formula, the ‘Kinin Mandala’**”⁵. It seems that your master’s command is that you acquire it.

1. **Nure-onna** – “Wet Woman”, a classical Japanese monster, a cunning snake-vampire.

2. **Are the rest of us not ninja-like enough?** – I’ll leave this up to the reader to decide.

3. **The location is Fuji’s Sea of Trees** – A vast forest at the base of Mt. Fuji. It’s famous as a site of many suicides.

4. **The Kinin Mandala has been found** – Since the GM passed out handouts beforehand, he can talk about the details immediately without having to give any in-depth explanations.

5. **Recover the secret formula, the “Kinin Mandala”** – With a mission like this, it is safe to guess that one of the characters, including any NPCs, is in possession of the Kinin Mandala, and that it is written as part of their secret. But as to who, he still doesn’t know.

Genzou: “Where is the formula located?”
GM: A place known as Shinonome High School, a public school in the suburbs of Tokyo.
Genzou: “I understand.” I say nothing more as I disappear into the ocean of trees. Up until now, the forest felt pure, but now it’s changed, as if a dark cloud has fallen over it. The wisteria and ivy that entwined the trees are joined by dangling corpses.
Group: Oooh!
Genzou: The forest that had existed until then was just one of Genzou’s illusions. <<laughs>>
GM: The mountain beast mutters, “**That Illusionist... Such power...**”¹, and watches Genzou as he leaves.

3. Aban Birukaze – Ninpo “Shrike’s Thorn”

GM: All right, let’s do Aban’s scene next.
Aban: My mission is also to “Recover the secret formula, the ‘Kinin Mandala.’”
GM: Right. Things started a few months ago. In an effort to strike down the Oni-Blooded, the enemies of the Kurama, you raided Fuji’s Sea of Trees.
Aban: No way. That’s so not like the Marudoku-tou. <<laughs>>
GM: I’m getting hives.
Aban: Hampered by your unfamiliarity with the forest, your unit was easily repelled.
GM: Eek. <<monotone>>
GM: Using a secret Oni technique, something is inserted into your body.
Aban: Ummm... **Did this just become a Yamada Futaro novel?**²! <<laughs>>
Genzou: I go to pierce her forehead with a 30cm long needle.
Aban: I’m brainwashed, poor thing. <<laughs>>
Genzou: “Ninpo, ‘Shrike’s Thorn!’” With this ritual, you will be unable to defy the will of the Oni-Blooded.
GM: Well, even though **there’s nothing like that in the rules**³, after performing the ritual, Aban becomes a servant of the Oni.
Aban: I address him as “master.”
Genzou: You will serve me with your whole being.
Eito: Whoa! <<laughs>>
Aban: Damn you. “You’ll regret making me your servant. If you think I’ll be of any help to you, you’ve made a terrible mistake!” <<laughs>>
GM: With that, Genzou and Aban head to infiltrate Shinonome High School, in search of the Kinin Mandala.

-
1. **That Illusionist... Such power...** – The GM should help build up the characters, making them shine in the first half of the game.
 2. **Did this just become a Yamada Futaro novel?** – Ninja novels have been around for some time, but Japanese novelist Yamada Futaro (Basilisk) became famous for adding heaps of eroticism and sex. Aban’s going for a cheap laugh.
 3. **There’s nothing like that in the rules** – But these types of story-related restrictions make “Shinobigami” more exciting. Revel in them.

4. Eito Himukai – Ninpo “Hermit Crab”

GM: Shinonome High School. Eito’s school. It’s the middle of a schoolwide assembly. They’re welcoming a new teacher. This scene takes place as he is being introduced.

Eito: Eito’s yawning, since he’s been staying up late with ninja business.

Genzou: By “new teacher” you mean me, right?

GM: <<nods silently>>

Genzou: Okay. I give a blunt introduction. “I’m Mr. Izuna, your new substitute teacher. Nice to meet you.” By the way, I’m a science teacher.

GM: The students start making a bit of a fuss over such a cool, straightforward introduction.

Aban: <<as the other female students>> “Eek, isn’t the new teacher cool?” <<laughs>>

Eito: <<also as other female students>> “That look in his eyes is sooo hot.” <<laughs>>

Rutsubo: Just **what decade is this school from**¹, anyway?

GM: While the students make a fuss, the principal follows up by saying, “Mr. Izuna will be filling in for your science teacher, Mrs. Kurokawa, while she’s away on maternity leave. Please give him all the respect he deserves.”

Aban: <<as the other students>> “Wait a minute, isn’t she in her 50’s?” <<bursts into laughter>>

Genzou: Clearly she became pregnant from an Oni Ninpo. “**Ninpo, ‘Hermit Crab!’**” <<laughs>>

Rutsubo: These Oni Ninpo are **freaking crazy**³...I think. <<laughs>>

Aban: By the way, I’m also transferring here, aren’t I?

GM: You are. You’re also in the gymnasium at the assembly.

Eito: My mission is “Do not let any non-ninjas find out that you are a ninja.” Can I sense anything suspicious about Genzou or Aban?

GM: Ah, okay. Genzou, Aban, Eito, **each of you make a Clairvoyance check**⁴. If you succeed, you can learn the **Location**⁵ of another character of your choice.

Rutsubo: GM, can I make a check too?

GM: Sorry, you’re somewhere else during this scene.

Rutsubo: Okay. Got it.

Genzou: I have Clairvoyance so my target is 5. <<rolls>> 7. Success.

Eito: All right. I’m using Analysis. It’s one, two, three spaces away. My target is 8? <<rolls>> 7. **I flubbed it**⁶. <<sobs>>

Aban: I don’t even feel like counting. If the target is higher than 12,

1. **What decade is this school from** – It’s probably some time during the 80’s. Ah, what a time, how embarrassing, how nostalgic.

2. **Ninpo, ‘Hermit Crab!’** – A Shinano Ninpo courtesy of the aforementioned author Yamada’s female ninja. It’s a secret technique that transfers a child from one woman’s stomach to another. How terrifying.

3. **Freaking crazy** – No, seriously. During drama scenes, you are free to describe things however you want, so try out all sorts of “Ninpo, ‘Whatever!’” that don’t appear in the rules.

4. **Each of you make a Clairvoyance check** – The GM is not following the rules as written here: Normally the players can only find each others’ Locations during the game’s play cycles. However, this kind of GM improvisation is also totally fine from time to time.

5. **Location** – Information about a character’s whereabouts. If this box is checked off, you are free to challenge that character to a fight.

6. **I flubbed it** – An expression that Ochiai picked up after playing games with elementary schoolers.

can I still make a check?

GM: That's fine, if you roll double sixes it's still a critical success.

Aban: Okay, let's give it a shot. <<rolls>> Nope. Failed.

GM: All right, Genzou, you can place a check mark next to either Aban's or Eito's Location.

Genzou: <<checking his Secret>> Yeah, let's find out Eito's Location.

Eito: Grr.

GM: So, as the school assembly ends, Eito leaves the gymnasium, still yawning. A young girl starts to talk to him, timidly.

Eito: Yaaaawn. Who is it?

GM: Her name is Matsuri Kazama. And since she has an **NPC**¹ handout, everyone will write her name in the "Characters" section of your sheet.

Aban: Ooh, so that means she has a secret too.

GM: It does. She also has a mission. Her mission is to "Become closer with PC 1 (Eito)." <<laughs>>

Eito: Well that's pretty straightforward. <<laughs>>

GM: She's really insistent on talking to Eito, who's always skipping school like some juvenile delinquent.

Eito: Even though she's annoying and Eito keeps ignoring her, if she just keeps at it, that persistence is enough to make him eventually pay attention to her. <<laughs>>

GM: Okay, so, she comes up and starts talking to Eito. "Hey, Eito, there was a bunch of trouble while you were gone."

Eito: Uh...yeah... <<dead stare>>

In that moment, the room becomes silent.

Group: ...

Eito: ...

Aban: You can do it, PC 1. <<laughs>>

Rutsubo: **If you can't come up with anything, just hold down the A Button**²! <<laughs>>

Eito: Yeah, **A Button**³.

GM: Request denied.

Eito: Uh...yeah... <<restless>> "It has nothing to do with me. Just, just leave me alone."

GM: Even though you try to use your "**ignore me beam**"⁴ on her, she's already committed. She presses on and keeps talking. "I thought you'd say that. But there really is a problem. Lots of people have caught some weird disease. And lots of people have been staying home."

Eito: Hmm...

GM: "You were absent for a while too. I was worried that maybe you caught the same thing."

Eito: When she says that, Eito's expression towards her softens.

1. **NPC** – A character controlled by the gamemaster. Short for "Non-Player Character."

2. **If you can't come up with anything, just hold down the A Button** – An expression used to tease people who don't read the dialogue and just keep holding down the A Button in video game RPGs.

3. **A Button** – There are times when people try to get away with an imaginary A Button and fake it when they can't think of anything. It's a good idea not to force them to roleplay, and just let them do it if they want to.

4. **Ignore me beam** – A common weapon of edgy protagonists. Conversely, they also sometimes have "pay attention to me" beams as well.

GM: “Although, the only people who have caught it have been girls.”

Eito: Just who does she think I am? <<laughs>>

GM: Besides your feelings towards Matsuri, there’s something else that bothers you. In the back of your mind, you can’t help but wonder if the mysterious illness has something to do with you—with ninjas.

Eito: A little bit worriedly, I say, “You’re a girl too. Be careful.”

GM: Her face suddenly turns bright red as she stammers out, “Don’t worry. I’ll be fine!” and heads back to the classroom.

Eito: As I watch her leave, I remember my mission, to not let any non-ninjas find out that I’m a ninja. “If there really is something going on in this school... **Whatever it is, I don’t want her getting dragged into it!**” I mumble. <<blushes>>

Aban: Woohoo! Nice job PC 1!

Eito: Whew. I suck at roleplaying. <<rests her face on the table and starts grinding her teeth>>

Genzou: No, no, that was really cool!

GM: Yeah, that was a pretty great scene. It took a little while, but that’s the end of Eito’s scene. Next it’s Rutsubo’s turn.

5. Rutsubo Kokonoe – Ninpo “Water Puppet”

GM: Last but not least, Rutsubo’s introduction scene.

Rutsubo: Where was I while everyone else was at the assembly?

GM: You were in one of the freshman classrooms with a boy, the student council president, Ao Saotome.

Rutsubo: Aw, I wanted to be the student council president. <<laughs>>

GM: Oh. Okay then, **Saotome has been demoted to vice president**². <<laughs>>

Rutsubo: My apologies.

GM: You’ve infiltrated this school on a mission. That mission, in short, is to clean up the school.

Rutsubo: Clean it up?

Aban: What, as some sort of secret beautification committee? <<laughs>>

GM: <<ignoring Aban>> At the moment, there’s a female student collapsed on the ground in front of you and Saotome.

Eito: Is this one of the sick people Matsuri was talking about?

GM: Precisely. And Rutsubo, you’ve realized that all of the girls who have collapsed like this have had their souls sucked out.

Rutsubo: The work of a ninja?

GM: Precisely.

Rutsubo: Is it okay for me to deal with this?

GM: Of course. This is the “cleaning up” I mentioned earlier.

Rutsubo: With a sigh, I say, “I hope you appreciate what it is I have to

1. **Whatever it is, I don’t want her getting dragged into it** – Although it looks like Ochiai doesn’t really want to roleplay and the GM is forcing her into it, that’s not the case. She was happy to be able to slip this line in.
2. **Saotome has been demoted to vice president** – It’s a good idea for a “Shinobigami” GM to respond flexibly like this. Don’t be afraid to change things at first, so that players can get the most from their scenes. To put it bluntly, I think it’s good to be able to talk about your NPCs’ backgrounds in the middle of the game and say, “I didn’t really decide on anything, so whatever works.”



deal with here,” and send Saotome to go stand guard.

GM: “Yes ma’am! I won’t let anyone approach!” he says spiritedly as he leaves the classroom. Of course, he has an NPC handout as well. His Mission is to “Get close to PC 4 (Rutsubo).” <<laughs>>

Aban: First the girl, now him...

Genzou: I wonder if he’s fallen for her.

GM: I wonder. <<laughs>>

Rutsubo: Whatever, that’s fine. First, let me finish “cleaning up.” While the girl lays there with a vacant expression on her face, **I gently press my lips against hers**¹. As “water” passes from my mouth to hers, I take control of her body.

GM: I see. Could you make a check using Necromancy?

Rutsubo: Since I have Hadesology, I’ll substitute Hydromancy. The target is 6. <<rolls>> ...It’s a success.

Rutsubo’s moist lips press against the pale lips of the girl.

As she does, the girl’s shoulders heave gently, and her forehead flushes crimson. She starts to take long, deep breaths, as if she were evolving in real-time, adjusting to breathing underwater.

She slowly pulls away from their embrace as Rutsubo evaluates her condition.

The girl’s tongue can be seen peeking sweetly out from between her lips.

Rutsubo: As I confirm that the girl has become my water puppet, I give a satisfied smile.

Aban: Wow... This scene could totally have gone in another direction... <<laughs>>

GM: The girl stands, her expression still empty.

Rutsubo: Then, I instruct her to return home, and remain asleep.

GM: The girl leaves the classroom on her own, a bit unsteadily. As you watch, you remember your mission.

Rutsubo: My mission... “Uphold the school’s rules.”

Aban: Hasn’t she already broken them...? <<laughs>>

GM: No. At the moment, more than ten students have already had their souls stripped, but Rutsubo is acting on her own to quell the rumors about the “mysterious disease.” Her job is to stop the students from causing an uproar.

Rutsubo: What do I need to do, specifically, to complete my mission?

GM: Basically, at the end of the session, all of the players look back and decide among themselves whether or not their missions were a success. So, at the end of the session, if everyone thinks, “Rutsubo was able to uphold the school’s rules,” then you succeeded at your mission.

Rutsubo: I see. I hope you’re all with me on this.

Aban: Master, let’s engage in an **illicit relationship**². <<laughs>>

Genzou: My conviction is Order, so I can’t support that.

Aban: Then maybe I should sneak into your home at night... <<worried>>

Rutsubo: If you don’t straighten up, I’m going to drain the water from your body and leave you a withered husk. <<laughs>>

1. **I gently press my lips against hers** – Are they? Aren’t they? Stick around for the season finale...

2. **Illicit relationship** – An “illicit relationship” is any sexual activity that people claim “interferes with the proper development of young men and women” It’s a Japanese legal phrase used in education departments cited in incidents of physical student-student or student-teacher relationships.

GM: Alright, everybody's introduction scenes are finished. Let's move on to the Main Phase.

And so, four shadows converge on Shinonome High School.
They have yet to become aware of each others' presence.
But shadows will inevitably come together.
Their fate: an unavoidable battle.



Main Phase – First Cycle

1. Rutsubo Kokonoe – Ninpo “Friendship Juice”

Shinonome High School, a public school in the suburbs of Tokyo.

It's coed, and known for its relaxed school atmosphere. It has few problems that could actually be considered problems.

The school building's location is a fortunate one, and the grounds are surrounded by greenery.

Unfortunately, however, that same environment may be the impetus for a large number of students playing hooky.

The woods surrounding the school are one of Eito Himukai's favorite spots.

GM: Okay. Usually the Main Phase would **start with the player to the GM's left**¹, but is there anybody who wants to go first?

Rutsubo: Me!

GM: Alright, I guess we'll start with Rutsubo's scene then.

Rutsubo: What can we do during the Main Phase?

GM: Primarily, you can choose to do either a **Drama Scene**² or a **Fight Scene**³. If you pick a drama scene, after describing a relatively open scene, you make a check, and if it succeeds, you receive some type of reward. If you pick a fight scene, you can either call someone out or seek them out and fight them.

Eito: Can you challenge one of the other players?

GM: Yes. But during the Main Phase, you can only choose to have a fight scene with someone whose location you know.

Genzou: So that means I could challenge Eito to a fight.

Eito: Hmm... <<nervous>>

Rutsubo: But this is my scene right now. I don't know anybody's location so I'm going to go with a drama scene.

GM: Okay, roll 2D6 and read the result from the **scene table**⁴.

Rutsubo: <<rolls>> 7. Let's see... It says, "The air in this forest is pure and clear. The cries of songbirds and the sound of leaves rustling are carried on the wind..."

Genzou: You're in a forest, even though this is a school drama.
<<laughs>>

GM: Also, Rutsubo, choose a **character who you want to appear in the scene**⁵.

Rutsubo: Okay, Eito seems like he's at the center of the story, so let's go

1. **Start with the player to the GM's left** – After you've gone around in a circle once, that's one cycle.
2. **Drama Scene** – These are scenes where you can acquire information or develop a bond with another character. They don't necessarily have to be dramatic.
3. **Fight Scene** – This is a game where you can fight with both NPCs and the other PCs. Although one of the characteristics of "Shinobigami" is that you can mix it up with the other PCs, if you take it too seriously it can ruin the mood. Try to make fights between the PCs the kind where they end up closer as a result.
4. **Scene Table** – An optional table with poetic descriptions of locations or atmospheres. It's helpful for new players, or players who don't have a strong goal/idea in mind for their scene.
5. A **character who you want to appear in the scene** – The player whose scene it is can choose anyone they wish to appear in the scene, whether it's Jesus or the player's dead grandpa or whomever. But try not to make it something too weird. Also, if you choose another PC, that PC's player can refuse.

with him. I want to meet him.

Eito: Okay!

GM: Also, after you've played out the scene, choose whichever is appropriate -- Healing, a piece of information, or an EmoBond -- and make a check. If it's successful, you receive whichever one you picked.

Aban: What effect do they have?

GM: If you pick Recovery, you recover one point of life. For information, you can learn the secret or location of a character of your choice. If you choose an EmoBond, you and one of the characters who appeared in the scene develop some sort of connection to each other.

Rutsubo: Okay, let's form an EmoBond with Eito.

GM: Gotcha. Okay, so the scene players are free to act out the scene however they wish. What kind of scene is it going to be?

Rutsubo: For now, I want to go with our first meeting.

Eito: Alright, are you going to give me a warning perhaps? I'm about to skip class and head out to the woods behind the school...

Rutsubo: I call out to him. "You're Eito... Himukai, are you not?"

Eito: "Who's there?"

Eito is unable to hide his surprise. Somehow or another, even though he is a ninja, someone was able to approach without him noticing. Remembering Matsuri's words, he readies himself to draw the kunai hidden in his sleeve.

Eito: Do I know she's the student council president?

Rutsubo: Does he know that we're both ninjas?

GM: Well, about that, getting the specifics of the world right can be tricky. For the sake of creating the story, basically, **it's up to the scene player,**

Rutsubo, to decide¹.

Rutsubo: In other words?

GM: If you don't want to tell him, then you don't have to.

Rutsubo: Ah. Okay, I don't think I want to let him know just yet. Nevertheless, Eito should feel like there's something amiss.

Eito: Okay. Then, Eito is wondering, "Is this really the the student council president I'm talking to?"

Genzou: By the way, what can characters who appear in the scene who aren't the scene player do?

GM: As long as they agree to it, the characters who appear in the scene may exchange or hand over any information other than that player's own secret.

Genzou: I see. So **you can't reveal your own secret**².

Rutsubo: "Class isn't over yet. Where do you think you're going?"

Eito: "I could ask you the same thing."

Rutsubo: "I'm here because I saw you heading off on your own."

Eito: I'm thinking that there's no reason she should have been able to notice me.

1. **It's up to the scene player, Rutsubo, to decide** – Each scene player is more or less free to direct their own scene. However, if it would be uncomfortable or disruptive to the game, you should tell them, "Nope. I'm sorry, but that's going to be a problem."

2. **You can't reveal your own secret** – However, if you stick to this rule too closely, it may be all but impossible to actually roleplay. It's meant to stop players from showing their secret to someone else and going, "So this is my secret, etc..." directly. You can still incorporate parts of your secret indirectly into your roleplaying.

Rutsubo: “You’ve missed a lot of school. The teachers are worried about you too. Is there anything you want to tell me? Something that might be bothering you?”

Eito: “Nothing I need to talk to you about.”

Rutsubo: “How cold,” I say, as I grab his hand, like this.

Aban: Oh! How forward.

Rutsubo: “One of my duties as president of the student council is to give the other students advice.” The tone of my voice is getting more and more creepy, seductive even. <<laughs>>

Eito: She’s one scary class president. <<laughs>> “It won’t do you any good to get involved with a loser like me.”

Rutsubo: “So even in a country school like this...” Wait, GM, is Shinonome High School in the countryside?

GM: Nope. Though if you had to choose between the two, maybe it is slightly more rural than urban. <<laughs>>

Aban: Yuck! <<moans>>

Group: <<bursts out laughing>>

Rutsubo: “So even in a countryside school like this, one can still find some hint of excitement.”

Aban: **Stop saying countryside already!**! <<sighs>>

Eito: “Are you coming with me?”

Rutsubo: “Are you asking me to skip class with you? Maybe that’s not such a bad idea,” I try telling him.

Eito: I was just kidding, but I like that she actually likes the idea. “Don’t be stupid, it was just a joke,” I reply.

Rutsubo: “That’s too bad. I haven’t skipped class since middle school. I was rather looking forward to it,” I say as I turn around to leave. Earlier, when I grabbed his hand, I secreted a pheromone from sweat glands in my hand.

Eito: <<laughs>> President, you’re gross. <<laughs>>

Rutsubo: What? Okay, instead of pheromones, let’s call it... um... “friendship juice”². <<laughs>>

Genzou: ...What the heck is that? <<laughs>>

GM: Nah, I think it sounds fine, doesn’t it? The scene player gets to choose which skills they make the check with.

Rutsubo: Okay, I’ll go with Hydromancy. <<rolls>> 12 on 2D6!

GM: When you roll double 6’s, you get a special effect. You can recover 1 point of life or a Status Ailment...

Rutsubo: But I haven’t taken any damage or Status Ailment yet, so I guess it does nothing.

GM: Alright, so Rutsubo secretes the friendship juice from sweat glands in her hand. <<laughs>>

Rutsubo: Yeah... we should have stuck with “pheromones.” <<laughs>>

Aban: I’m down with it!

GM: Okay, so Eito’s body reacts to the pheromones. Each of you roll 1D6.

Rutsubo: <<rolls>> 5.

Eito: <<rolls>> 1.

Rutsubo: I want a positive EmoBond, so I’ll go with attraction. Since I’m part of an organization, I look at Eito’s freedom and wish I could be like him.

1. **Stop saying countryside already** – The struggles of a ninja are harsh. It is a cruel world.

2. **Friendship juice** – While it may not seem fitting for a ninja from the pharmaceutical branch of the Hasuba, the term has strong literary connotations. Its meaning is very deep.

Eito: Yeah, I'm gonna go with "mistrust".

Rutsubo: What? A negative one?

Eito: You used "friendship juice" on me! That's mistrust right there, buddy. Mistrust!! <<laughs>>

Rutsubo: And after I looked up to you. Okay, I changed my mind, I want to go with "inferiority complex" instead.

GM: When you have an EmoBond with someone, there are three types of effects it can produce. The first is Information Sharing: When someone you have an EmoBond with learns a piece of information, you learn that information too. The second is Incursion: When someone you have an EmoBond with is in combat, you can jump into that combat, too. The last is Emotional Modifier or EmoMod: When someone you have an EmoBond with makes a check, you may add a modifier to the result, either +1 if the bond is positive, or -1 if it's negative.

Eito: Yeah, since I think something's up with her, I'm going to stick with mistrust.

Rutsubo: That's fine, I guess it makes sense.

GM: Okay, the scene ends with a slight feeling of tension in the air.

2. Aban Birukaze – Ninpo “Street Feedback”

Ding-dong-ding-dong.

As the final bell rings, the school fills with activity.

People going to hang out. People on their way to clubs and committee meetings.

People rushing to get home.

The hallways are packed with students.

But cutting his way through that typical after school scene is a man in a white lab coat—Genzou Izuna makes his way towards his objective -- the science lab.

GM: Okay, for the next scene...

Aban: I wanna go next!

GM: As long as no one else objects. Okay, Aban. Do you want to do a drama scene, or a fight scene?

Aban: A drama scene. After school or whatever.

GM: Want to roll on the scene table?

Aban: <<rolls>> ...8. “A chattering, raucous crowd surrounds you; the inane, naive babble of those blind to the Shadow War fills your ears.” So, going with that description: Homeroom just ended, and school is letting out.

GM: <<as the students>> “What do you wanna do now?” “Let’s head off to karaoke.” “No way, I wanna go get ice cream!”

Aban: Ignoring the chatter of her classmates, Aban looks out the window at the houses of suburbia. Even if they call it the suburbs, it’s lively enough to be a city.

Group: <<laughs>>

Aban: As long as there are buildings, it’s a city! <<laughs>>

GM: Alright, **let’s put that mess aside**¹. Aban, decide who you want to appear in your scene.

Aban: Izuna.

1. **Let’s put that mess aside** – The struggles of the ninja are harsh; the struggles of a GM keeping everyone on track can be just as harsh...

Genzou: Okay.

Aban: **I wonder what skill I should choose...**¹

GM: Yeah. I think here it will be better to play out the scene first, before you decide.

Aban: Okay. So, I go to talk to Genzou as he's walking down the hall. "Yo! Master."

Genzou: "What is it, rat?" <<laughs>>

Aban: "If you were confident enough to transfer here, then you must have something to back up your belief that this is where the Kinin Mandala is located."

Genzou: ... <<after hesitating>> "**Of course**"².

Group: <<laughs>>

Aban: "Then, where is it?"

Genzou: "After seeing all of the students in the gymnasium, there was one who caught my eye. I'll be keeping my on him. Eito Himukai."

Aban: "So he's the one who has it? Okay, okay." So it's him...

Genzou: By the way, I'm allowed to tell Aban Eito's location, right?

GM: Yes.

Genzou: And Aban and I are just master and servant **for flavor**³, right?

GM: Just flavor.

Genzou: I see. <<laughs>>

GM: Flavor let you pierce her with your controlling needle, and flavor can just as easily remove it, so be careful. <<laughs>>

Aban: Don't make light of the Ninpo of the Marudoku-tou!

<<laughs>>

Genzou: It's not my scene, but anyways, I command her, "It's likely that he is in possession of the scroll. Find him!"

Aban: So now I can learn his location?

Genzou: No, **I'm not going to tell you**⁴. <<laughs>>

Group: You're terrible!

Aban: You're not sharing information!

Genzou: What? Should I tell her? Fine, I tell her.

GM: Okay, Aban, put a check mark by Eito's location in the "Characters" section of your sheet.

Aban: Okay. And just then, from out of nowhere, a shuriken comes flying from the crowd towards Izuna. <<laughs>>

Eito: Somebody's going after Genzou.



1. **I wonder what skill I should choose...** – The player is thinking about which skill he wants to use in the scene, even before starting the scene: This is a great way to guide the drama in a way where the player can control which skill they will roll during the Skill Check. Of course this also leads to a more natural scene for that character's background.
2. **Of course** – He's using the phrase here to make it clear that there's no room for debate. However, in "Shinobigami," this useful phrase is often used to respond to a question to which you do not know the answer.
3. **for flavor** – Aban decided on this "master" relationship. Aban also makes up interesting technique names and other background facts about her character and clan. None of this is in the rules, so they have no rules effects. However, these "flavor" contributions from the players adds a lot to the game, and make it more fun for everyone.
4. **I'm not going to tell you** – Genzou is a jerk.

GM: Yeah. I wonder who. <<laughs>>

Aban: I want to form an EmoBond, but I need to make a check first, right?

GM: Yep, anything is fine so go for it.

Aban: Okay, I'll go with Sleight of Hand. <<rolls>> ...Success! "Marudoku Ninpo: 'Street Feedback!'"

Genzou: What is that!?

Aban: Since my clan is adapted to the city, we can manipulate the "pulse of the streets" that runs through the buildings and roads. By tapping into it, we can bend even buildings to our will.

Genzou: What a bizarre ability. <<laughs>>

Aban: Since I succeeded, I suddenly fling the door open and stop the shuriken that was about to hit Genzou. "You're being careless, master."

Genzou: Completely unfazed, I say, "You were slow to react."

Aban: It's a contest of **Neverfail roleplaying**¹. <<laughs>>

GM: Okay, both of you roll for your EmoBond.

Aban: I rolled a 3, so that's either affection or envy. Even if my master is a hick, I take pity on him and go with affection.

Genzou: 6.

GM: So that's either murderous intent or devotion. <<laughs>>

Genzou: Hmm... <<worried>>

GM: By the way, it is possible to change it later. <<laughs>>

Genzou: ...I guess I'll go with murderous intent.

Aban: Didn't I just save you from a shuriken? I want to change mine to envy.

Genzou: Come on, you can change it later, so just leave it how it is. Right now I'm thinking to myself, "Was this all her doing? Was she just trying to test my reaction speed?"

GM: Okay, that's the end of Aban's scene. Next up is...

Eito: I want to go next.

3. Eito Himukai – Sword Style "Hinowa's Bane"

The clouds drift by overhead.

On the roof of the school, Eito gazes at the sky. Before he realizes it, it has become dark. Perhaps he fell asleep.

Before he drifted off, specks of cloud barely obscured the sky. But when he opens his eyes, the sky is enveloped in dark clouds, and thunder rumbles in the distance.

It's going to rain soon.

His mind wanders back to that day...

Eito: Right, I'm going with a drama scene. The scene table is... <<rolls>> ...a 9. "A heavy rain begins to pour down; people pull out their umbrellas and begin a mad dash for cover under the building overhangs."

GM: Alright, a scene in the rain.

Eito: With the encounter with the class president still weighing on

1. **Neverfail roleplaying** – Neverfail roleplaying is where, because of the situation or the game, even if you fail, it's not actually the character's fault. Perhaps you were forced into it, or you intentionally brought that failure upon yourself. Basically, you're so awesome that any failure was planned that way. Use sparingly, as character over-competence can quickly become annoying to others.

him, Eito went to the roof to take a nap...

GM: So you decided to take a break from playing hooky.

<<laughs>>

Eito: Yep. But after school lets out and it starts to rain, he suddenly wakes up and rushes underneath the eaves.

GM: At first the rain only comes in small showers, but it is gradually growing heavier.

Eito: As he watches the rain, he thinks back to **when his parents were killed**¹. It was raining then, too. <<laughs sorrowfully>>

GM: I see.

Eito: He takes out **Hinowa**², the sword that his grandfather left him, and stares at it. Just then, he yells out, “Who’s there!?” and turns around. It’s Aban. <<laughs>>

Aban: Somebody called? <<laughs>> I drop down from above the eaves, dangling. <<laughs>>

Eito: “Who do you serve?”

Aban: How fortunate, I’ve caught him alone.

GM: By the way, since this is a drama scene, you can only fight as flavor. <<laughs>> If you want to deal damage to someone, choose a fight scene when it’s your turn as scene player.

Aban: I see. Okay then... “I won’t tell you who I am, but I can tell you that I’m working with Mr. Izuna.”

Eito: “Izuna...the new teacher?”

Aban: “He sends a message. He wants you to know that things will go much easier for you if you hand over the Kinin Mandala. Of course, we could also just defeat you and take it ourselves. <<stares>>”

Eito: Huh? “What mandala?”

Aban: “Look, you think you can play dumb with me?”

Eito: “Just hold on a minute. I don’t know anything about any mandala, just tell me what it is.”

Genzou: Hmm. Does he really not know...? <<worried>>

Aban: “There’s no point in trying to argue.” Hi-yaa, I shout, as I move to fight him (as flavor). <<laughs>>

Eito: Clang-clang. <<sound effects>>

Aban: Okay, as our swords clash, I say, “You’re not so bad,” and laugh. When I do, rats jump out of my mouth at him.

Group: Gross! <<laughs>>

Eito: “Jeez. I feel bad about hurting someone so little...but I guess I’ve got no choice,” I say, as flames burst from my body. This is one of the techniques of Himukai sword style, “Hinowa’s Bane!”

GM: The raindrops explode into steam as they strike Eito’s body.

Aban: My rats shriek as they are engulfed in flames and fall to the ground. <<laughs>>

1. **When his parents were killed** – During the course of the game, you should slowly share parts of your character’s background with the other players. By the end, the pieces you’ve shared will have built up into an entire story.

2. **Hinowa** – There are no stats for weapons in “Shinobigami.” Weapons and equipment are treated as a part of your Ninpo. But in a game of supernatural combat like this one, weapons are an important part of a character. Therefore, it’s fine to come up with descriptions like this one. Unleash your inner child and try to come up with all sorts of weapon names and descriptions.

Rutsubo: **Nice fail!** ¹. <<laughs>>
Aban: “You’ll regret this!” <<laughs>>
Eito: A bit dumbfounded, I say, “...What’s her problem?” And with that, I’m going to form an EmoBond with Aban!
GM: Roger. What are you using for the check?
Eito: Umm... <<worried>>
Genzou: Considering the scene, Pyromancy should be fine, shouldn’t it?
Eito: Let’s do that. <<rolls>> ...Success.
GM: Okay. Both of you figure out your bonds.
Aban: <<rolls>> ...1. I’m going with empathy.
Eito: <<rolls>> ...I got a 3.
GM: That’s affection and envy.
Eito: It was pretty funny when she just dropped in out of nowhere. Let’s go with affection.
GM: **Just then, Matsuri...** ² <<laughs>>
Eito: Panicking on the inside I go, “What is it?” <<laughs>>
GM: It looks like she was searching for you while you were skipping class. She says something like, “Eito, what are you doing playing hooky in a place like this!”
Genzou: Classic! And then she does something, like, reach for his shoulder and shout, “It’s hot!” – right? Got it.
GM: She’s surprised that, even though it’s raining, you’re not wet.
Eito: “The rain is pretty heavy. Did you bring an umbrella?” I ask her.
GM: Huh. Yeah, let’s say that she has one. She gives a big nod of her head.
Eito: “Well then, let me squeeze in underneath it. I’ll walk you home, while we’re at it,” I say. Let’s try out a pickup line. <<laughs>>
GM: She turns bright red and seems like she might refuse, but after a moment she says, “I guess I have no choice,” and smiles.
Eito: If there really are ninjas at the school, I wonder if I might have to dedicate myself to preserving the peaceful, every-day life of the normal students here...
GM: Maybe. Sounds like a fine goal.
<<smiles>>



4. Genzou Izuna – Ninpo “Submerged Flower”

Red, blue, black, orange, green...

A technicolor array of umbrellas covers the road.

Genzou Izuna stares down at the after-school scene from atop a telephone pole.
 “There he is, master.”

1. **Nice fail!** – Indeed, Aban failed and in the process made Eito look competent. This is good RPG sportsmanship. Try to roleplay even when you know that you’re going to lose. A large part of being a good player is helping the other characters shine during their scenes.
2. **Just then, Matsuri...** – Eito, who can’t fulfill his mission if someone normal finds out what he really is, was really nervous.



Aban points at a pair squeezed underneath a single umbrella. Matsuri, half of her body drenched, and Eito.

"You watch from here."

With that, Genzou leaps to the ground, his lab coat billowing behind him.

GM: Okay, lastly we have Genzou's scene.

Genzou: Let's start from where the last scene ended. Returning home in the rain.

Aban: Scene table, scene table!

Genzou: Nope. You don't need to roll on the scene table when you do a fight scene, right?

Group: Whoooooooooah!? <<excited>>

GM: Right. Since Genzou knows Eito's location, he can challenge him to a fight.

Genzou: Okay, while Eito and Matsuri are walking home sharing an umbrella, the other students around them start collapsing one after another.

Eito: "Who's there!?" I say, and shield Matsuri.

Genzou: From the rainy street, the camera pans upwards from the ground, fixating finally on a man with long hair and a lab coat.

Eito: We lock eyes!

Aban: An ominous roll of thunder fills the air...

Genzou: "You're Eito Himukai. A junior."

Eito: "You must be the one that rat-girl was talking about."

Genzou: "My name is Genzou Izuna. I'm here to take what you have, the Kinin Mandala."

Eito: "I already told her, I have no idea what you're talking about."

Genzou: "You can play dumb all you want, but you're already trapped inside my barrier."

Eito: Barrier!? <<laughs>>

Genzou: That's right. A magical barrier. That's why the other students collapsed.

GM: So it would seem.

Genzou: "If you try to resist, that girl will be next."

Eito: "I won't let you lay a finger on her!" I say, but because of my mission, I guess I can't fight in front of her. <<laughs>>

Genzou: Then, I hurl a needle. It strikes Matsuri, and she collapses too. By the way, when she wakes up, **for some reason she won't remember any of this**¹. <<laughs>>

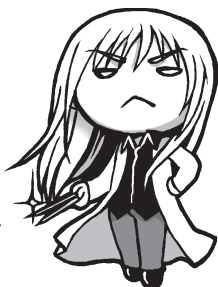
GM: Okay, let's start the fight. <<lays the battle sheet out on the table>> The ones fighting are Genzou and Eito.

Rutsubo: I have an EmoBond of attraction with Eito, so I can appear too, right?

GM: Correct.

Aban: Can I show up too? <<pondering>>

GM: Yep. You can also Interfere with the fight from the sidelines without getting into the thick of things, so it's fine if you want to watch how the battle plays out before you decide.



1. **For some reason she won't remember any of this** – Genzou is nice enough not to erase all her memories of Eito, however.

Rutsubo: Okay then, for now I'll just wait and see.

Aban: Me too.

GM: Gotcha. First off, Genzou. As the scene player, if you want, you can decide the battlefield using the **battlefield table**¹.

Genzou: <<looking at the battlefield table>> It does look interesting. Okay, let's try rolling. <<rolls>> ...2. Water?

GM: Players fighting on this battlefield receive a -2 penalty to their dodge checks.

Genzou: Okay. As a result of the magical barrier, the force of the rain was strengthened, and the ground at Eito's feet is flooded.

Eito: Ack!

GM: The battle begins. First, we start with the **Plot**². The two of you participating in the battle, hide a six-sided die in the palm of your hand with the number of your choice facing up.

Eito: Is higher better here?

GM: It is, sort of. Whoever has the highest score can act first.

Eito: Then wouldn't you just pick 6?

GM: That's not all though. During the battle, if you roll less than or equal to your Plot Value on a check, it's a fumble.

Eito: What!?

GM: Moreover, realize that if you fumble, every check you make for the rest of that round becomes a failure.

Rutsubo: What about the Perfect Success Ohgi?

GM: The Ohgi takes precedence.

Genzou: I see.

GM: Furthermore, if you are making an attack, your combat Nin-po's "range" must meet or exceed the difference between your Plot Value and your opponent's.

Eito: Close Combat Attack has a range of 1... And Cross Cut's range is 0, isn't it?

Genzou: Just so you know, my Mob Combat Attack's range using Illusion is 4. <<grins>>

Eito: Auuuuuugh. <<frustrated>>

Rutsubo: <<looking at Eito's character sheet>> But Eito has Shadow Clone, right? If you use that, you have two dice you can use for the Plot. You can choose one after they're revealed.

Eito: That's right! That's why I took it.

GM: Alright, before deciding your Plot, make a Multiplicity check. <<laughs>> By the way, **as usual, if you roll snake eyes now it counts as a fumble**³.

Eito: Here we go. The check calls for Multiplicity. Since I have that, the target is 5. <<rolls>> ...It's a success!

GM: So, like earlier, the rain striking Eito's body starts turning to

1. **Battlefield table** – There are numerous battlefields, such as high places, in or under water, in the middle of a storm, an arctic region, etc. While the GM let the player roll on the chart, sometimes a certain battlefield will make logical sense...
2. **Plot** – This word has lots of meanings, such as a plan, a story, an image, etc... One of those meanings is to draw a map. From that meaning comes the term "plot orders," used in games where you write your actions out beforehand. In contemporary games, "plot" can refer to not to the "writing things down" part, but more so the "planning something in advance" part. That's the use that was adopted for Shinobigami.
3. **As usual, if you roll snake eyes now it counts as a fumble** – "Now" refers to when deciding your Plot, before it is revealed.

steam. As it does, the steam takes the form of Eito, and starts splitting into multiple copies.

Genzou: “Is this...shadow cloning!?”

GM: Okay, let's choose your Plot.

Eito and Genzou: Okay.

GM: Are you ready? Go ahead and reveal them.

Both of them open their hands at the same time.

Eito has a 2 and a 5.

Genzou has a 3.

Eito: Yeah! I got it. I'm going to use the 2.

Genzou: Damn. But I still get to go first.

GM: Okay, both of you place your markers on the sections of the battle sheet that correspond to your Plot Values. The Plot step is done, next comes attacks.

Genzou: I start, right?

GM: That's right. Choose an attack Ninpo.

Genzou: Since the difference between our Plot Values is 1, I'm going to use Close Combat Attack. I'll make a check using Acupuncture. <<rolls>> ... Success!

GM: Okay, Eito, make a dodge check. You use the same skill as the attacker.

Eito: In the case of Acupuncture, I'll substitute using Pyromancy. Since they're two spaces away, my target is 7, right? Piece of cake.

GM: Nope. Because you're in water right now, you have a -2 modifier. You need a 9 or higher on two dice to not fail.

Eito: What!? Oh well, 1 damage shouldn't hurt.

Rutsubo: But during combats in the Main Phase, you're removed from battle if you take a point of damage, right?


GM: Right.

Eito: What was that!? Isn't there any way I can get a bonus to the check?

GM: There are two ways. One is called “Influence”. If a player who isn't involved in the battle describes a brief appearance somehow, they can increase or decrease the result of the check by 1.

Eito: A-ha. And the other is?

GM: “EmoMod”. If a character with whom you have a positive EmoBond appears in the scene, they can give you a +1 modifier. Rutsubo or Aban, if either of you wants to interrupt, now is your chance.

VELOCITY SYSTEM				ヴェロシティシステム			
零	壱			肆	伍	陸	死地
Mundane 静止した時間	Ghost Walk 幽霊歩き	思考速度		Sonic Speed 音速	Bullet Speed 弾速	Light Speed 光速	F.T.L. 超光速
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Aban: Nope. No matter how much he loves me, there's no way I can defend an enemy of my master. I'll ignore him. I'm not showing up.

Rutsubo: Nope, I'm just going to wait and see as well.

Eito: Noooooo. <<moans>>

Genzou: Well then, roll your dodge check.

Eito: I've got nothing but guts to go on... YAH! <<rolls>> ...6. I failed.

Genzou: Then the needle pierces Eito's shoulder. Since it's Close Combat damage, let's find out which random skill field it damages. <<rolls>> ...2, so that's Martial Arts.

Eito: Yeah! **I don't have any skills there, so it doesn't hurt!**

GM: Regardless, since you took damage, you're removed from combat. And since there are no characters left, we're done resolving attacks.

Genzou: I guess this victory is mine.

GM: It is. The winner, Genzou, can choose the result. **An EmoBond, Information, or a Prize².**

Genzou: By "Prize" do you mean the Kinin Mandala?

GM: That's right. The Kinin Mandala counts as a Prize as well.

Genzou: "As well" as what?

GM: <<smiles>>

Genzou: For now, we'll settle for the Kinin Mandala.

GM: Eito doesn't have it.

Genzou: W-what!?

Aban: What's wrong, master? <<laughs>>

Genzou: N-no, it's nothing. Well then, can I see Eito's secret?

GM: That should be fine. Eito, show Genzou your secret.

Eito: Yes sir. <<hands over the handout>>

Genzou: Let's see here. <<checking Eito's handout>>

Aban: Since I have affection with Genzou, it's okay if I look too, right?

GM: That's right. If you want, you can automatically learn that Information.

Aban: I wanna see!

Genzou: This should be it.

Aban: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

The two of them read the handout, which says the following:

"Secret: Your parents were killed by someone named 'Mudou,' using his Ohgi, the secret sword technique "Human Blossom" (you know the details of his Ohgi). If you encounter Mudou, your Mission will become to defeat him and avenge your parents."

Genzou: Okay. Then, I manipulate Eito's mind using magic. Peering

-
1. **I don't have any skills there, so it doesn't hurt** – When you take damage, the skills in the column associated with that life point become unusable. If you take damage to the field that's your specialty, you might want to cry.
 2. **An EmoBond, Information, or a Prize** – If you win a battle and choose an "EmoBond," you may choose to make someone else have a one-sided bond with you. What's more, the winner may freely choose which type of EmoBond it is: It doesn't have to be one of the words on the official EmoBond chart. So you can say, "Love me!" or "Hate me!" A "Prize," meanwhile, is some important object described in the scenario. If you acquire one during the course of the game, you can receive merit points for it.

into his mind, I learn his secret and scream. “You...! **I see, how interesting**¹.”

Group: <<laughs>>

Rutsubo: What does it say? I want to know. <<laughs>>

Eito: Can I come back to my senses when he screams?

Genzou: That’s fine. But when you do, Genzou is gone, and Matsuri and the other unconscious students are opening their eyes. <<laughs>> Eito can hear my voice echoing in his head. “It seems that you’ve been burdened with a heavy fate.” <<laughs>>

Eito: “What do you know?”

Genzou: “It appears that I was somewhat mistaken. I’ll **leave you to deal with this**².”

Eito: “Wait!” I say, but he’s already disappeared.

Genzou: Then, Eito looks around nervously, and after he and Matsuri leave, I turn and call out to Aban, “Were you watching?”

Aban: “Master, he’s a tough one.”

Group: <<bursts out laughing>>

Aban: As I swing down from a tree, my scorched uniform tears, as if on purpose. Although everything important is still covered. <<laughs>>

Genzou: “...**Things are getting interesting, aren’t they**³,” I say, and let’s end it there. <<laughs>>

GM: Roger. And with that, the first cycle ends, but before we move on, let’s have a **master scene**⁴.

5. Encounter in the Dead of Night

The school building is enveloped in inky darkness.

Shinonome High School has fallen so silent that the tumult of the afternoon seems like nothing more than an illusion.

But there’s someone swimming; creeping through that ocean of silence.

Eito Himukai.

He once again finds himself walking among the shadows.

GM: So the Master Scene takes place in the school at night. In this scene, Eito, after being attacked by Genzou, attempts to confirm whether a ninja is behind the mysterious illness of which Matsuri spoke.

Eito: And so he’s gone to the school at night to investigate.

GM: Something like that, yes. Make a check using Investigation.

Eito: The closest thing I have to Investigation is Ventriloquism. It’s 2 spaces away, so I need a 7 or better... <<rolls>> Ah, I failed.

GM: Okay, so you try to learn something about the mysterious illness, but it’s been skillfully covered up, and you aren’t able to get the full picture. However, you are able to learn that the student council has something to do with the coverup.

Rutsubo: The deserted school hallways at night... Can I come trudging down the hall from the other direction?

1. **I see, how interesting** – Genzou often says “I see,” even when he doesn’t.

2. **I’ll leave you to deal with this** – Since this is a game about ninjas, he wanted to say this at least once.

3. **Things are getting interesting, aren’t they** – Genzou’s at it again, implying that he can see the larger picture...

4. **Master scene** – Like the Introduction Phase, this is a scene where the gamemaster gets to direct the action. The gamemaster may insert them wheresoever she pleases.

GM: Sounds fine by me.

Rutsubo: “Oh, Eito.”

Eito: “...So it’s you.”

Rutsubo: “I need to make my rounds.”

Eito: “In the middle of the night?”

Aban: And a girl, by herself. Or, wait, is the vice president with her?

<<laughs>>

GM: Vice President Saotome is following her around like her shadow. <<laughs>>

Eito: Hmm? The vice president is there?

Aban: He seems like a nuisance, doesn’t he? **Is he really just a normal person**¹? <<laughs>>

Eito: For real. Especially since my mission is to keep my real self secret from non-ninjas. “The Student Council must have a lot of free time, to patrol the school in the middle of the night like this.”

GM: “What are you saying! The president is only thinking of the welfare of the students,” he stammers, losing his temper. <<laughs>>

Rutsubo: “Now now,” I say trying to calm him down. “Eito here is simply helping us investigate the incidents going on in the school, isn’t he?”

Eito: “Like I’d ever do something like that!” I try to deceive them.

Rutsubo: “Of course not, and I bet you wouldn’t pry open the door of the student council room and snoop around in there either, would you?”

<<laughs>>

Eito: **I did what!**² <<laughs>> Anyway, “It wasn’t me,” I tell her.

Rutsubo: “So, it wasn’t your doing. Well, I guess I’ll believe you. But if you keep this up, you might attract some unwanted attention, and people might begin to suspect you,” I say, clapping him on the shoulder.

Aban: **She sure is the touchy feely type**³. <<laughs>>

Eito: Since Eito’s emotions are on edge at the moment, as soon as she touches him steam starts to rise. <<laughs>>

Rutsubo: Providing further evidence that water and fire indeed don’t mix. <<laughs>>

Eito: And then, sensing water coming from Rutsubo, I say something like, “**By any chance, could you be...**”⁴ <<laughs>>

Rutsubo: “Anyhow, you should apply yourself a little harder next time.”

Eito: ...

Rutsubo: “Well, if anything happens, I’ll be there to help you out. This school belongs to both of us, after all.”

Eito: “I wonder,” I say, trying to get the vice president riled up.

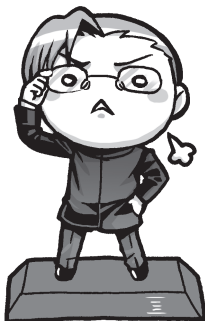
1. **Is he really just a normal person** – Of course, NPCs with secrets appear suspicious to the players. But if you think that and investigate them, only to find out that their secret says something like, “The truth is, his feet stink,” you could end up disappointed. Maybe the GM is casting doubt on them intentionally, a bluff to distract them. The players will have to determine if the GM is hiding something interesting, or just bluffing. Regardless, I wonder what his secret could be...
2. **I did what!** – It’s terrible to find out that you’ve been made to do things that you don’t even remember. If it gets to be too much for you, you should tell them to cut it out.
3. **She sure is the touchy feely type** – Rutsubo might be a bird-of-prey, the kind of girl who doesn’t let go of her victim (men) (“bird-of-prey” courtesy of “Rinshi!! Ekoda-chan”; Author: Yukari Taki-nami/Publisher: Kodansha).
4. **By any chance, could you be...** – The opposite of Genzou, even though Eito’s player knows something, the character is often played as not knowing and being surprised by things. This session has a really fantastic spread of characters.

<<laughs>>

GM: He's fuming behind her. "What do you think you're doing!? She's trying to do you a favor!" <<laughs>>

Aban: This guy looks like trouble, doesn't he? <<laughs>>

GM: Yeah. Anyways, that's the end of the first cycle. As the night goes on, the first day comes to an end as well. People head to bed so they can be ready to face the next morning.







Main Phase – Second Cycle

1. Rutsubo Kokonoe – Ninpo “Water Violation”

It's morning, but a morning that feels like it has come too early. Somehow, in the spring, time passes differently while you're still in bed.

A crowd of students hurry on their way to school.

Someone in that crowd dares to express such doubts about the laws of time and space.

A group of girls cackles wildly at the suggestion.

They grow louder and louder until school finally lets out.

Rutsubo: Moving on, I want to go first.

GM: Okay, Rutsubo will start the second cycle too.

Rutsubo: The scene table says... number 6. “You peacefully pass the time. You almost begin to forget about the war in the shadows...”

Genzou: So the scene takes place on the way to school.

Aban: Good morning, good morning! <<laughs>>

GM: Ding-dong-ding-dong.

Aban: I make my way to school using parkour. <<laughs>> Not because I'm late, but because I'm the type who just has to charge straight ahead. Climbing over apartments and stuff.

Rutsubo: That girl who shouted “That teacher is so cool!” during Genzou's introduction is there too.

GM: Oh my.

Rutsubo: She says to someone who looks like one of her friends, “Last night, I went to see Mr. Izuna!” “Oh my gawd, no waaay!” <<laughs>>

Genzou: **That was fast!**! <<laughs>>

Rutsubo: High school girls these days are very motivated. Anyway, as that girl walks past an empty classroom—**YOINK!**²—I grab her and pull her inside.

Aban: What's with this random girl's luck!? <<laughs>>

Rutsubo: I turn to the frightened girl and say, “I need to ask you something.”

GM: <<as the unnamed high school girl>> “P-president?”

Rutsubo: “Don't worry, you won't have to say anything,” I say, and kiss her.

Eito: Whoa!

Rutsubo: “I can simply ask the water inside you,” I say, as water starts welling up into her mouth. I guess it's sort of like she's being tortured. <<laughs>>

GM: So are you going to make a Torture check?

Rutsubo: Yes. <<laughs>> I want to see if I can find out Genzou's secret.

Aban: Amazing.

Rutsubo: Knowing that she was going to end up in contact with Genzou, I injected the water into her beforehand. <<rolls>> ...Success.

1. **That was fast** – And yet Genzou doesn't even remember it happening. How cruel.

2. **YOINK!** – It might be because there are a lot of scenes from comics that the players want to recreate, but they seem to use a lot of sound effects while playing “Shinobigami.” It's not like they have a poor vocabulary or anything.

GM: Alright, Genzou. Show your secret to Rutsubo and...
Eito: I have an EmoBond with Rutsubo!
GM: So show it to Rutsubo and Eito, then.

Rutsubo's and Eito's players peek at Genzou's handout. It says the following:
 "Secret: The secret formula, the Kinin Mandala, was stolen from your faction by PC 1's (Eito's) parents. You've been told that PC 1 (Eito) has the Kinin Mandala."
 This time it's Eito's and Rutsubo's turn to exchange looks.

Rutsubo: Genzou was trying to recover the Kinin Mandala, but...huh.
 I see, I see.
Eito: Huh. So that's the reason he attacked me earlier.
Aban: Hey, I have an EmoBond with Eito too...
GM: **InfoShare doesn't chain**¹ like that. Since it's Rutsubo's scene where she acquires the information, it's only for people who have a bond directly with her.
Aban: Ah, gotcha.
Rutsubo: Okay, so I say, "Maybe I should let Eito know about this." Is it okay if I go tell him?
GM: That's fine.
Rutsubo: Oh, by the way, is the vice president there?
GM: That's right. I wonder if it wouldn't be better if he weren't.
 <<laughs>> But it's your scene, so it's up to you.
Rutsubo: Then, as the girl's legs slowly stop twitching, he shows up saying something like, "President, where are you?"
GM: I see. "Ah, so this is where you've been!"
Rutsubo: "She doesn't seem to be doing too well."
GM: "Right, I'll take her to the nurse."
Rutsubo: "If you don't mind, Saotome," I say, and send her off in a confused stupor, her eyes unable to focus as if she's staring at something very far away. Her sparkling, jewel-like **pupils go dead black, and the eye around them turns cloudy**².
Eito: Terrible. That description was terrible. <<laughs>>

An innocent girl walks down the hall, staggering.
 Rutsubo watches her leave with a broad smile on her face.

2. Aban Birukaze – Ninpo “Feast of the Rat”

A spider clings to the white walls of the school.
 It's Aban Birukaze, attempting to infiltrate the student council room.
 She knocks on the wall—tap tap, tap tap—like a savvy shopper testing watermelons.
 Slightly changing the spot where she knocks each time, she eventually finds one that responds by giving off a high-pitched noise.
 A satisfied smile crosses her lips.

-
1. **InfoShare doesn't chain** – When someone with whom you have an EmoBond learns information, you can use InfoShare to learn that information as well. But, you can't use InfoShare to learn information from someone who learned it using InfoShare. (this can be confusing at first).
 2. **Pupils go dead black, and the eye around them turns cloudy** – For some reason, Rutsubo's player is very insistent in his descriptions. He might be reading too many naughty comics.

Marudoku Ninpo, "Street Feedback!"

The tip of her finger clicks against the wall, and the locked window of the student council room rattles itself open.

Aban: Let's roll on the scene table. <<rolls>> ...10.
GM: A drama scene, right?
Aban: Right. "The wind begins to blow madly, whipping hair and clothing about. Something is about to happen..." I'm in the student council room.
GM: Okay.
Aban: Naturally, since I'm entering through the window, the curtains are fluttering with a whoosh.
Rutsubo: "Sautome, hurry up and close that." <<laughs>>
Aban: No no no, the student council room is empty.
GM: Oh?
Rutsubo: Aww, **I wanted to be in this scene**¹.
Aban: Okay, I'm trying to find information on Eito, so I search the student council room for something that looks like a student register, but while I'm doing so, Rutsubo and the vice president enter the room.
GM: Chatter chatter chatter. <<sound effects>>
Rutsubo: "So about the new student welcome party..."
Aban: When Aban notices them, she clucks her tongue in frustration. As she does, a rat plunges itself into the vice president's mouth. The whites of his eyes bulge and he collapses. **This is the Marudoku-tou Ninpo, "Feast of the Rat"**. <<laughs>>
Eito: I guess you really do need to knock out the normal ones. <<laughs>>
Rutsubo: Since we're both girls, my attitude suddenly changes, and I say, "I hope you appreciate what it's like to be the one cleaning up all these messes." <<laughs>>
Aban: "You're not an ordinary person, are you?" <<laughs>>
Rutsubo: "And you're a garbage person. **Is it okay if I call you 'Trash Girl' from now on?**"³
Aban: How mean. <<laughs>> "So it seems we're not the only ones after the mandala."
Rutsubo: "You too? Speaking of which, you've been meeting with that teacher, haven't you?"
Aban: "If you have it, you'd better hand it over, if you value your life."
Rutsubo: Hmm... "Why don't we share what we know?"
Aban: What do you mean?
Rutsubo: You know Himukai's secret, don't you?
Aban: Eito? Yeah, I know his secret.
Rutsubo: I can't help it, but Eito Himukai intrigues me.
Eito: It's nothing. It's totally not important. <<monotone>>
Aban: "So you're interested in him too?"

1. **I wanted to be in this scene** – If you want to appear in somebody else's scene, it's fine to appeal to them like so.

2. **This is the Marudoku-tou Ninpo, "Feast of the Rat"** – If you only heard the name, you might think it's some sort of classy Japanese dish. Or not.

3. **Is it okay if I call you 'Trash Girl' from now on?** – This is a line that this replay's illustrator, Shie Nanahara, included in a sketch of Rutsubo to further define her character. That the player decided to use it shows they're both on the same page.

Rutsubo: “And you, do you trust your master?”
Aban: I wonder. <<laughs>>
Rutsubo: “Don’t you want to know what it is that he’s hiding from you?”
Aban: I see, I see. <<laughs>> “This way we won’t have to end up hurting each other. I wonder if we can settle this like adults.”
Genzou: This, coming from somebody who goes around shoving rats in other people’s mouths. <<laughs>>

And so each of them learns the secret that they hadn’t been privy to before. Now, every player knows both Eito’s and Genzou’s secrets.

Genzou: Ah, that’s right. **If you appear in a scene together, you can share information¹.**
GM: Although you can’t reveal your own secret, if you know another person’s, you can share it with someone else without any problem.
Rutsubo: <<reading the secret>> ...**He doesn’t have it either²!**
Eito: Doesn’t have what?
Rutsubo: Nothing. Right. **It’s nothing³.** Anyway, I feel like I am one step closer now. Let’s check off the box for Eito’s secret...there we go.
Aban: I didn’t expect things to go this way either. <<laughs>> “You’ve told me something useful. **I can see us becoming friends⁴.**”
Rutsubo: “Indeed.”
Aban: Well then, I exit through the window.
Genzou: And then the rat skitters away after you.
Eito: How cute. <<laughs>>
Rutsubo: “She really is like the wind, isn’t she?”
GM: As you say that, Saotome awakens with a groan. Anyway, Aban, you still get to make a check.
Aban: Ah, that’s right. I’ll go with Creature Mastery... <<rolls>> It succeeds. Rutsubo, show me your secret.
Rutsubo: Okay. Be my guest.
Genzou: Let’s see it.
Eito: I wanna read it too.
Aban: Okay, everyone can look. <<reads the secret>> Whoa! What the hell...!?

The three of them look at Rutsubo’s handout, which says the following:
“Secret: You are the underling of a ninja who has infiltrated the school, named ‘Mudou.’ You have been ordered to assist him in acquiring the sacred relic which he requires to complete the secret ritual recorded on the ‘Kinin Mandala’ which he possesses.”

Eito: **What the...?⁵** <<laughs>>
Genzou: Huh? <<cold stare>>

-
1. **If you appear in a scene together, you can share information** – You can. This rule is easy to forget.
 2. **He doesn’t have it either** – It seems like Rutsubo’s player is searching for someone...
 3. **It’s nothing** – It seems that whatever she’s looking for is related to secrets.
 4. **I can see us becoming friends** – Scenes where people start out as enemies but end up forming an alliance with each other are awesome.
 5. **What the...?** – An expression of surprise for when something happens that you should have known about earlier. Very useful.

Aban: What do you mean “You can see us becoming friends”?
You’re the freaking boss character’s right hand!¹ <<while tossing the handout back to Rutsubo>>
Rutsubo: No, that would be you. <<laughs>>
Eito: Anyway, we’re halfway through the second cycle. Apparently that Mudou guy’s secret ritual is gonna begin soon.
Genzou: Hmm. That would be bad. <<nervous>>
Aban: “Master, what should we do?” Suddenly this is a war council.
 <<laughs>>
Genzou: “Perhaps it is time that we search for this ‘Mudou.’”
GM: And with that, let’s move on to the next scene. The next one is a master scene.

3. Matsuri Kazama – Lunch

Lunch break.

Some students push their desks together in the classroom, some head to the cafeteria, some are on the roof, and some make their way out into the schoolyard. People are eating their lunches and enjoying themselves however they please. In search of his usual—milk, and melon-sweetbread—Eito unapologetically prepares to use his ninja skills to rush to the school store.

GM: So, it’s lunch time. Eito, what are you doing?
Eito: It would suck if they ran out of melon bread, so Eito’s gonna rush to the school store at **light speed for a second**². <<laughs>>
GM: As Eito prepares to move, even though normal people shouldn’t be able to see him, Matsuri grabs Eito firmly and stops him.
Eito: W-what!? <<laughs>>
Genzou: Don’t tell me she’s a ninja too! <<laughs>>
GM: She smiles ear to ear as she hands Eito a packed lunch wrapped in a fancy cloth.
Eito: Oh. Does she mean...?
GM: Then, she forces him back into his seat, sits down in the chair in front of him, and says, “I made you lunch!” <<laughs>>
Eito: What is this, a romcom now? <<laughs>>
GM: She’s trying to form an EmoBond with you.
Eito: Ah, I want an EmoBond with her too. <<blushes>>
GM: “I thought we could eat lunch together. Since you live alone, I was worried you might not be eating right.”
Eito: “That’s not true at all. I may not look it, but I’m a great cook.”

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1. **You’re the freaking boss character’s right hand!** – Since all the players now know the secret, it’s okay to talk about it openly like this. If there was still a player in the dark, this isn’t allowed: Doing something like that could spoil the game!
 2. **Light speed for a second** – He’s not kidding. According to the text on the battle sheet, when you have a Plot Value of 6 during combat, you can move close to the speed of light. Ninjas battle at such high speeds that normal people can’t even see them. Don’t try to bring actual physics into it.

Genzou: The hell, are you ignoring an **event flag**? <<laughs>>
GM: “Eito, you idiot.” <<sighs>>
Eito: But, since she went through all the trouble to bring it to him, he’s still happy to eat it.
Aban: Eito’s probably the type to totally not pick up on things and say it tastes awful or something. <<laughs>>
Eito: Hmm. Yeah, I totally miss her intentions and say something like, “You’ve got rice on your face,” and pluck a grain of rice off her cheek and eat it. <<laughs>>
GM: Matsuri’s face goes bright red. Her check **automatically passes because the GM says so**². Eito, you roll on the EmoBond table. <<rolls>> I got a 5. Let’s go with attraction.
Eito: <<rolls>> ...6
Genzou: Devotion or murderous intent. <<bursts out laughing>>
Eito: W-w-w-what should I do? <<laughs>>
Aban: **This girl made me lunch! I’ll kill her!**³ <<laughs>>
Eito: Just hold on a second. <<laughs>> Fine, devotion. “This girl has to be someone from the other world, a normal everyday person,” I force myself to believe.
Aban: I’ve still never had someone make me lunch. I’m impressed. <<laughs>>
Genzou: “How touching.”
Aban: Suddenly tears start to fall on his lunch. <<laughs>>
GM: <<pressing>> “What’s wrong? Are you crying?” <<laughs>>
Eito: What!? What’s up with that? Is that really how my character would act? <<laughs>>
Group: <<laughs>>
GM: Of course, the taste reminds you of your dead mother’s cooking or something. <<laughs>>
Eito: “No. It’s nothing.”
Genzou: There’s just something in his eye, or something like that.
GM: Matsuri does come off as motherly, doesn’t she. <<laughs>>
Eito: Embarrassed about the tears in my eyes, I try to play it off by saying something like, “Girls’ lunches are so small. I’ve always wondered if it’s enough to make you feel full.”
Genzou: <<in a narrator’s tone>> **And those tears were enough to give the lunch the perfect seasoning**⁴. <<laughs>>
Eito: “Your cooking is great. **I bet you’ll make some lucky guy a great bride**”⁵.

1. **Event flag** – A common joke at Japanese TRPG tables, this references console RPGs and how they have clear indicators (flags) signifying an important event or interaction that the player must proceed with, like “exclamation points” hovering over the heads of quest-givers in MMOs. Here, the players are teasing Eito’s player because it seems at first glance he’s ignoring this opportunity (flag) to roleplay with a potentially important NPC schoolgirl; though the player is really just roleplaying Eito’s innocence/alooness towards her.
2. **Automatically passes because the GM says so** – It’s fine for the gamemaster to change or bend the rules in order to make the game go more smoothly, particularly in the GM scene.
3. **”This girl made me lunch! I’ll kill her!”** – Talk about going overboard!
4. **And those tears were enough to give the lunch the perfect seasoning** – Plus now it won’t spoil in the summertime.
5. **I bet you’ll make some lucky guy a great bride** – This is actually a compliment still used even in contemporary Japan, at least in anime and manga and the like. Traditional gender roles and all that.

GM: Matsuri's cheeks turn beet red at Eito's words, and the master scene ends. On to the next scene.

4. Genzou Izuna – Ninpo “Barrier Needle”

Meanwhile, as Eito's tears splash into Matsuri's lunch, a group of students return from the roof.

For some reason, they decided they didn't feel like staying up there.

It's the power of Genzou's “Barrier Needle.”

As he watches the students scurry about beneath him, he scowls at Aban's report of what she's learned.

His long ponytail flutters in the wind.

He is a man who is quite well-suited to high places.

Genzou: I want to go. A drama scene... <<rolls>> ...4.

GM: “Buildings stretch out in rows below you. From here, you can see across the whole city...”

Genzou: All right, the roof of the school, staring down at the students.

Rutsubo: I want to go meet with him.

Genzou: For now it'll just be a scene between Genzou and Aban. I am receiving Aban's report of learning Rutsubo's secret earlier.

Aban: Down on one knee before him I say, “If what this rat reports is to be believed, **someone called ‘Mudou’ killed Eito's parents and stole the Kinin Mandala¹...**”

Genzou: As I listen to Aban's report, I suddenly sense a presence behind me and ask, “So, are you this ‘Mudou’?” to Rutsubo.

Rutsubo: <<entering>> “I am not.”

Genzou: “I just can't bring myself to believe you.”

Rutsubo: What!?!<<laughs>>

Genzou: “Keep your distance!”

Group: <<laughs>>

Rutsubo: “You're so mean. And to a defenseless young lady, no less.”

Genzou: That's not it at all. Since you were so kind as to appear in my scene, I'm trying to form an EmoBond with you.

Rutsubo: <<blushing a little>> That's fine, then.

Genzou: Not so fast! Will you let me know your location?

Rutsubo: Ah, yeah, I'll let you know.

Genzou: Oh? “You're being surprisingly upfront.”

Rutsubo: “I try to avoid fighting as much as possible.”

Genzou: I wonder.

GM: What is your conviction?

Rutsubo: **Self².** <<laughs>>

Genzou: “Who do you work for?”

Rutsubo: “Do you know what it is I am after? It has nothing to do with who I serve.”

Genzou: Well then, will you tell me the location of the Kinin Mandala?

1. **Someone...** – Again, if there is even one player who doesn't know the Secret, this kind of narration is not allowed. However, since everyone knows it, it's fair game to bring it into the scenes.

2. **Self** – A type of conviction. The kind of person who puts their own ideals and self-preservation first above all other goals. Often a narcissist.

Rutsubo: No. I say that I don't know where it is. <<laughs>> I know. If we form a bond with each other, then I will let you know when I find it.

Genzou: Should I form an EmoBond with her? Hmm... <<worried>>

Rutsubo: "You can trust me, sir," I say, as **I inch closer to him**¹. <<laughs>>

Genzou: There's probably water running from her feet towards Genzou through the cracks in the floor.

Aban: Here it comes! The **Friendship Juice**²! <<laughing>>

Rutsubo: Yes, it's probably coming, coming straight for you.

GM: I'm a little scared of her.

Genzou: But it stops directly in front of me.

GM: Ah, the barrier. <<laughs>>

Genzou: "I can't trust a ninja who acts like this." There's also a barrier of needles around Rutsubo that she can't see. Ninpo, "Barrier Needle!"

Rutsubo: "Oh my, what skill!"

Genzou: And so, as we confirm each others' abilities, we form an EmoBond.

GM: Okay. Well, go with Acupuncture or whatever.

Genzou: <<rolls>> ...Success.

Rutsubo: <<rolls>> ...4. Acknowledging his skill, I'll go with Loyalty. I won't oppose him. If I do, I might have to deal with rat-girl again.

Genzou: <<rolls>> ...3? Affection or Envy? What? "She... she's so beautiful." ...**It can't be!**³ <<laughs>>

GM: No no no.

Eito: A twisted mind is a beautiful thing, or something like that.

Genzou: Ah.

GM: Or more like "interesting," maybe.

Genzou: Okay. I guess that works. I'll pick affection.

GM: All right, next scene.

Rutsubo: Things are getting dangerous. Day two ends after the next scene.

Aban: Yeah, it's getting dangerous all right. <<laughs>>

5. Eito Himukai – The Flaming Sword “Hinowa”

Another rainy day.

Eito's thoughts turn once again to the death of his parents.

But the memory of Matsuri's smile washes away his dark thoughts.

Eito slaps his cheeks as if he's made up his mind.

He's going to protect that smile.

He sets off towards the student council room.

GM: Now, last up is Eito's scene.

Eito: Yeah. I'm worried about what I should do.

GM: A drama scene? Or battle, perhaps?

Eito: That's the question, isn't it?

GM: The prizes for this scenario are **the Kinin Mandala and the**

1. **I inch closer to him** – I think that Rutsubo might be a bit overly suspicious.

2. **Friendship juice** – This phrase carries incredible force. Ever since this phrase was coined during this game, whenever someone mentions Rutsubo, they can't not think of friendship juice.

3. **It can't be!** – The cry of the pathetic man who has tried to deceive himself and failed.

Eye of the Magatama¹.

Rutsubo: Ah, that's right. You're supposed to get something good if you have a prize, right?

GM: Yep. If you get one of them, you get 1 merit point.

Rutsubo: Got it.

GM: If you go with a fight scene, who would you fight?

Eito: Rutsubo.

Rutsubo: Why me!?

Eito: Well, you are the lackey for the target of my parents' vengeance.

Rutsubo: But you don't know my master's location. Nobody does.

<<laughs>>

Eito: Actually, I don't know anybody's location, much less Rutsubo's, so I can't challenge anyone to a fight.

GM: So a drama scene then?

Eito: Yep. <<rolls>> ...9.

GM: "A heavy rain begins to pour down; people pull out their umbrellas and begin a mad dash for cover under the building overhangs."

Aban: Is Eito an *ame-otoko*?! <<laughs>>

Group: Fwoosh. <<rain noise; laughs>>

Eito: After school, Eito, having heard from Aban that Rutsubo is working for Mudou, heads to the student council room to press her on the issue.

Rutsubo: Oh, this should be good.

Eito: When he opens the door to the student council room, he sees none other than Saotome, the vice president.

Genzou: It's raining outside.

Eito: Eito says, "I guess she's not here," and goes to leave.

GM: "Quite the rude one, aren't you?"

Eito: "The president's not around, is she?"

GM: "She's off making arrangements for tomorrow's new student welcome party."

Eito: Don't tell me this guy too...? Eying him suspiciously, Eito tries to use Analysis.

GM: That's fine.

Eito: I'm going to try to find out Saotome's secret.

Aban: That's right, **there are still NPC secrets left!**³

Eito: Here I go! <<rolls>> ...It's a success.

GM: Who has an EmoBond with Eito?

Aban and Rutsubo: Here!

GM: So those two find out as well. The three of you, look at this.

Saotome's handout says the following:

"Secret: You are a ninja named 'Mudou.' You are planning to sacrifice the owner of the Eye of the Magatama in order to retrieve a lost sacred relic. You are turning

1. **The Kinin Mandala and the Eye of the Magatama** – Both are unique to this scenario. A gamemaster should have no shortage of ideas for supernatural items like these. "Scroll of X"; "Dagger of Y" are simple but great prizes.

2. **Is Eito an ame-otoko** – In Nagano, they tell a tale of the ame-otoko ("rain man"), a monster born from a rain spirit and a human woman... Okay, that's not true at all. Actually, it's a guy who seems to always bring rain with them wherever he goes. In a woman's case, they'd be called an ame-onna ("rain woman"). Eito seems to roll the rain result on the scene table an awful lot.

3. **There are still NPC secrets left** – During playtesting, there was a tendency to put the PCs' secrets first, leaving the NPCs' secrets for later. There may be some hidden psychological reason behind this.

the school into a magic circle by offering up the souls of female students. By offering the souls of 444 students and the owner of the Eye of the Magatama during a ritual, you should be able to restore the power of the sacred relic.”

Eito: Just as I thought.
Aban: Oho!
Rutsubo: I figured that’s what was up, one way or another.
GM: Those of you who saw it, check off the box for Ao Saotome’s secret.
Aban: Let me see Rutsubo’s secret again.
Rutsubo: Be my guest.
Genzou: Boohoo. **I’m the only one who can’t see it, I feel so left out**¹.
<<laughs>>
Rutsubo: This is where I want to appear.
Eito: That’s fine. Then, Eito feels something unusual from Saotome. “I see, so that’s it,” I say, as I unsheathe “Hinowa,” the katana my grandfather left me!
Rutsubo: Just then, I appear behind him and say, “Eito, is that you?” and give him a big hug. <<laughs>>
GM: This touchy-feely girl. <<laughs>>
Rutsubo: I whisper into his ear, “I understand how you feel, but now is not the time.”
Eito: I say to Rutsubo, “Let go of me!” <<laughs>>
GM: Saotome is shooting Eito an icy look.
Eito: “You remember me.”
GM: “What are you talking about?”
Eito: “You remember these eyes,” I say, and one of my eyes turns gold.
Group: Woaaaaah!
GM: As if he didn’t even hear Eito, Saotome says, “President. About the preparations for tomorrow’s new student welcome party...”
Eito: Grr...
GM: “Everything is going off without a hitch.” <<grins>>
<<laughs>>
Group: <<laughs>>
GM: Then Saotome leaves the student council room, looking at Eito, his arms pinned behind his back by Rutsubo, out of the corner of his eye.
Eito: “L-let go of me!”
Rutsubo: “I’m afraid that I cannot do that.” <<laughs>>
Eito: “What’s with you...!?” I say, **though I already know**².
GM: That’s true. <<laughs>> And now the second day is over...
Let’s squeeze in a master scene.

The more Eito tries to struggle, the tighter Rutsubo’s grip on him becomes. He watches helplessly as Saotome walks past him. Rutsubo watches him with an unreadable expression on her face.

1. **I’m the only one who can’t see it, I feel so left out** – But that’s actually the real charm of an information-based game like “Shinobigami.” Try to enjoy it as much as you can.
2. **Though I already know** – Even if you already know something, it’s still important to say it. It’s not uncommon in this game for a player to know something that a character doesn’t. Or vice versa.

6. Ninpo “Needle Diagram”

A dark science lab.

Countless needles, arranged in the shape of the school building, give off a steady glow.

Some of them are moving.

It's a representation of the entire campus made up of needles.

“I see, so that's what's going on.”

Genzou says to himself, satisfied.

GM: It's the evening of the second day. This is a master scene. Basically, I want the PCs to appear with each other.

Group: Okay.

GM: **In this scene you'll exchange information with each other**¹. If there's anyone who wants to exchange information, then feel free to appear.

Genzou: Right, I'll start. Genzou is in the science lab investigating the network of needles he's set up throughout the school.

GM: Those needles sure are useful.

Genzou: This is the Ninpo, “Needle Diagram.” In a monologue I say something like, “I should have a needle placed in every student in the school. Yet I can still sense someone walking through the school without a needle in them. Who could it be?”

Eito: Then, that's where I enter. Having lost track of Saotome and slipped away from his captor, Rutsubo, Eito is angry and unable to control himself.

Genzou: The “Needle Diagram” lets me know that Eito is approaching. “My needles are flaring. This response...could it be, Eito Himukai?” <<laughs>>

Eito: Eito goes to kick in the door to the lab...

Genzou: And as he's about to, I call out, “Enter.” <<laughs>>

Eito: “Just who are you?” ...No wait, I already know Genzou's secret, don't I? <<laughs>>

Genzou: “My apologies for the incident earlier.”

Eito: “Just what do you know about me?”

Genzou: “I know about your parents. If you follow the trail of the stolen Kinin Mandala, it ends up leading to you.”

Eito: “I don't know anything about it.”

Genzou: “I am aware. My target is someone else. ‘Mudou.’ He should be the same one you're searching for. Join forces with me.”

Eito: “You know that ‘Mudou’ is Saotome!?” I say, acting surprised **as I leak the information to him**². <<laughs>>

Genzou: Inside I'm shocked, thinking, “No way, seriously!?” but I

1. **In this scene you'll exchange information with each other** – The players can create a scene like this on their own, but it's also fine for the GM to arrange it. It's not necessary to have an “information sharing GM scene” in a normal Shinobigami session, but it can be a good breather and roleplay opportunity for the players.

2. **As I leak the information to him** – Many exchanges of information are two-way: This leak was a one-way “gift”, to bring the player into seeing the bigger picture. Since Genzou was the last one to know the secret, Eito is allowed to reveal this secret openly.

keep my composure and respond, “**As expected**,”¹ and smile. <<bursts out laughing>>

Rutsubo: This is bad, I’ll have to change my plans.

Genzou: “Of course I knew.” <<laughs>>

Eito: His voice sounds so hollow. <<laughs>>

Genzou: “There’s nothing that goes on in this school that I don’t know.” <<laughs>>

Eito: “Well then, what about the Eye of the Magatama?”

Genzou: “...I’ve heard of it.” <<laughs>>

GM: **Liar!**²

Eito: “Who!? Who has it?” I scream at Genzou, grabbing his collar.

Genzou: Uh...well...you see... <<laughs>>

Aban: These questions are getting harder and harder to answer. <<laughs>>

Eito: “If you know, then tell me!”

Genzou: “Well...at first I thought it was that golden glowing eye of yours.”

Aban: Did you, now? <<laughs>>

Genzou: I had a scene to that effect.

Eito: He did, he did.

Genzou: Speaking of, is there a reason for it?

Eito: It was just for flavor, I just made it up on the fly.

Group: <<laughs>>

Genzou: “But, it appears that I was incorrect.” <<laughs>>

Eito: “This is no time for dithering about! Tomorrow all of the students at this school are going to be sacrificed, and the sacred relic will be completed!”

Genzou: ...**Wait, really?**³ <<laughs>>

GM: Genzou, you’re so cute. Soooo cute. <<laughs>>

Eito: “Don’t you get it? The life of every student in the school is at stake!”

Genzou: Well, now that you mention it... <<laughs>>

Aban: It must be hard trying to play a character who’s always right. <<laughs>>

Eito: “We’re ninjas. If fate should decree that we die, then so be it. But the rest of the students, the ones who are out there just living their lives, they’re just regular people. Do you want that mandala so bad that you’d throw away their lives for it?”

Genzou: That’s great. I’m all fired up.

Eito: Eito grabs his collar and suddenly pulls him close, like this. <<laughs>>

Genzou: I nonchalantly disappear, and then reappear behind Eito. “I see. If that’s the case, then it’s consistent with what’s been missing from my network.”

Group: <<bursts out laughing>>

Rutsubo: What a character. What a great character. <<laughs>>

Genzou: “Those must have been the gaps that appeared in the pattern

1. “**As expected**” – A ninja’s self image is even more important than his life. He’ll never accept his own failure, so long as another option exists.

2. **Liar!** – Of course he’s lying.

3. ...**Wait, really?** – This line isn’t enclosed in quotation marks because the editor has a conscience.

that I laid out. There's no other explanation."

Eito: "What's the matter? Do you know something?"

Genzou: "**There's no time to explain**¹ (that's all)."

Group: <<bursts out laughing>>

GM: This guy really has no clue what's going on! <<laughs>>

Aban: Master, **you haven't said a single concrete thing from the very beginning**².

Eito: All those noncommittal phrases sure come in handy.

<<laughs>>

Genzou: It's amazing, like some kind of artificial unintelligence.

<<laughs>>

Eito: Don't flatter yourself. <<laughs>>

Eito, Genzou, Aban, Rutsubo; each of them begins to put their own plan into action.

And so finally, the fated day arrives.



1. **There's no time to explain** – The more he says, the more likely it is he'll slip up. At a time like this, it's best to use a ninja's special ability to disappear at will.

2. **You haven't said a single concrete thing from the very beginning** – This technique is useful not just in roleplaying games, but in numerous other situations as well. Try it the next time you're late, or somebody asks you for advice.

Main Phase – Third Cycle

1. Aban Birukaze – Ninpo “Rat Lunch”

According to their information, this is the day that the ritual to sacrifice the students will occur.

The day is blessed with bright sun and clear skies, as if it had no idea of the dark fate that awaits.

The students and teachers, unknowing, think it a perfect day for the new student welcome party.

The morning air is pleasant and cool.

Meanwhile, Aban makes her way to Genzou’s temporary home in the woods, a worried expression on her face.

Crows fill the dawn sky with their ominous cackles.

Aban: I’m doing a drama scene. The scene table is a... <<rolls>> ...?! “You’re in the middle of an unspoiled forest. You can hear the sounds of birds singing and the rustle of a gentle breeze blowing through the trees.” **Augh! I’m trembling¹.**

Group: <<bursts out laughing>>

Eito: I wonder if she’ll be attacked by an owl or something when she goes into the woods.

Rutsubo: Flap flap. Nooo, not a bird of prey! <<laughs>>

GM: What are you going to do?

Aban: My master is there sleeping. I approach him awkwardly. <<laughs>> “Maaaster.”

Genzou: Maaaster. <<echoing>>

Aban: My right arm and right leg move at the same time, all awkward-like. <<laughs>>

Genzou: “What’s wrong?” I ask suspiciously.

Aban: “Master, what do you plan to do now?”

Genzou: “Acquire the Kinin Mandala, obviously.”

Aban: Oooh.

Genzou: “However, it seems that there’s an incident that threatens the entire student body, and it may reveal the existence of us ninja. We must stop the one pulling the strings, this ‘Mudou,’ before he is able to complete his ritual.”

Aban: “So, even if you don’t act like it, you really do have a kind heart,” I say, nudging him. <<laughs>>

Eito: Great scene, great scene. <<laughs>>

Genzou: Umm. “...Quiet, rat!”

Group: <<laughs loudly>>

Genzou: “You’re just one of my puppets. Know your place.”

Aban: “I’ll be quiet. But, you’ll need to keep your stamina up if you plan to fight ‘Mudou,’” I say, as I open up a wrapped package I was holding behind my back, and pull out a sandwich. Let’s go!

Genzou: W-what is it?

Aban: Rat sandwich. Delicious, right? <<laughs>>

1. **Augh! I’m trembling** – According to Aban’s player, ninjas of the Marudoku-tou suffer trauma whenever they’re away from artificial, man-made environments. Surrounded by the city since birth, and with bodies and minds adapted for living there, they can’t stand the inhuman truth of nature.

Eito: **There's a rat, quivering between two slices of bread**¹.
 <<laughs>>

Genzou: The same thing that guy ate before, just before his eyes went wide and he collapsed? <<laughs>>

Aban: No! This isn't the "Feast of the Rat..." This is the **Marudoku ninja technique, "Rat Lunch"**²; one bite and you'll fall for the person who gave it to you. In other words, I want to form an EmoBond with Genzou.

GM: So, Cooking?

Aban: Dining on rat sandwiches... <<rolls>> ...Success.

GM: Okay. Roll 1D6.

Aban: I'm fine with affection as it is...do I have to overwrite it?

GM: Since it's your drama scene, and you already have some kind of EmoBond, you don't have to roll. Plus, you roleplayed it like that too. <<laughs>>

Genzou: <<rolls>> ...1. empathy or mistrust. Let's go with empathy. That gets rid of murderous intent, then.

Aban: I see. Heh-heh-heh.

Genzou: What's up with that weird laugh?

Aban: It's a bit of an awkward, but subdued, love scene. I'll have a rat sandwich too.

Genzou: She shares half of it with him.

Rutsubo: But, isn't **the back half of the rat sticking out from the bread**³?

Genzou: I make a bit of a surprised face but, relatively unfazed, I open my mouth wide and swallow the whole thing in one bite.

GM: How ninja-like.

Genzou: I make a face that says "don't give me that pitiful look." "I grew up in the mountains," I warn her. "I've eaten things there aren't even words for."

Aban: "The mountains!" I tremble and go blue in the face. <<laughs>>

Eito: Things there aren't even words for? <<laughs>>

Genzou: "I'm different from a city-dweller like yourself."

Eito: Is he talking down to her? <<laughs>>

Aban: "I can't stand mountains!" I cover my ears and shake my head.

Group: <<laughs>>

GM: How cute.

Genzou: <<in a narrator's tone>> But even while he speaks such harshness, inside Genzou is thinking, it's really not so bad.

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1. **There's a rat, quivering between two slices of bread** – Rats being a sign of the overflowing life force of the city, this is an enchanted food item. If you eat it, you can gain that life force for yourself.
 2. **Marudoku ninja technique, "Rat Lunch"** – This Ninpo was developed by the founder of the Marudoku-tou during a time of famine. He traveled around distributing food, and the people loved and revered him.
 3. **The back half of the rat sticking out from the bread** – There are several ways you can place a rat in a rat sandwich. If you place the rat on its side, curled up, the back legs won't stick out, but then the bread ends up bulging unevenly. Aban did it "feigning death" style, spreading the rat out on its stomach.

2. Eito Himukai – Ninpo “Mist Voice”

Meanwhile, Eito too visits the forest, in order to declare his feelings.

GM: Who wants to go next?
Eito: Me. Though I wonder what I should do.
Rutsubo: I guess I'm fine with going last.
Eito: I just realized, Matsuri and Aban's secrets still haven't come to light yet, right?
Genzou: Okay, I'll try to figure out Aban's secret after this.
Eito: Right. I'll start then. Drama scene!
GM: Roll on the scene table.
Eito: <<rolls>> ...7! The woods again? <<laughs>>
Aban: I was right, Shinonome High School really is out in the boonies. <<resentful>>
Eito: Right, so Matsuri likes to take her pet dog for walks in the morning.
GM: Okay. She and her golden retriever are taking a walk in the woods, and the dog is sort of dragging her along, when...
Eito: Let's show up there.
GM: Matsuri is surprised, but she looks happy to see you. She greets you, saying, "Ah, Eito, what's up?"
Eito: Umm...
GM: "Oh no, are you stalking me?" <<bursts out laughing>>
Rutsubo: Your character always seems to rush off without thinking things through, doesn't he? <<laughs>>
Eito: "Better a hothead than a narcissist" I say, and let out a sigh. <<laughs>> Then I stare at her for a moment. "...If I don't do anything, she's going to end up being sacrificed too."
GM: "Don't stare at me like that."
Eito: Let's try to discover her secret.
GM: Okay. What are you making the check with?
Eito: I guess Analysis might be kinda weird here.
GM: Maybe just a Bluff check would work in this case. Since you're a ninja, you could use Interception to read her heartbeat too. It doesn't really matter what you use, as long as it fits the mood, ya know?
Eito: Okay. Let's go with Bluff then. Since it's two spaces away from Ventriloquism, my target is 7.
Rutsubo: It would suck if he failed here, so maybe I should use **Influence**? I've been watching them for a few moments. Eito notices an unsettling pair of eyes watching him, or something like that?
GM: I see. So you're showing up to try and find out her secret too? <<grins>> I like it.
Eito: So the target is 6! ... <<rolls>> ...Yeah! It's a success.
GM: Okay, so Eito, and Rutsubo and Aban who have EmoBonds

1. **Oh no, are you stalking me?** – There is a clan of ninjas in Chicago known as the Night Stalkers, but they're unrelated.
2. **Influence** – You'll note that Rutsubo got the rules wrong, and the GM didn't catch it either: Influence is only for combat scenes, not normal roleplay scenes! Hey, we're all human, mistakes will be made! At times like these, when you realize that a mistake was made earlier, simply confirm the mistake with the group and move on. No do-overs or rewinds after the fact, just be careful next time.

with him, all get to see.

Her secret says the following:

“Secret: She’s in love with PC 1 (Eito).”

Eito: ...Wait, what the hell!?!¹ <<blushes>>

Aban: Calm down, there’s more.

And it continues:

“And, she also heard Ao Saotome say something about her. ‘It can’t be! It’s not just you, but also PC 4 (Rutsubo) who possesses the Eye of the Magatama.’”

Rutsubo: What the hell!?! <<laughs>>

Aban: And I thought for sure she was the one who had the Eye of the Magatama. <<laughs>>

Genzou: Oh? I was wrong?²

GM: Well then, now what? <<grins>>

Eito: Yeah. Now what should I do? <<worried>>

Rutsubo: Yeah. I guess this changes things a little. Excuse me, may I appear in the scene, even just as a voice? <<laughs>>

Eito: That’s fine. But first, I want to finish this up. “Could you stay home from school today?” <<laughs>>

GM: “What do you mean?”

Eito: It’s not...uh...

GM: “Isn’t today the new student welcome party?”

Aban: A date! Ask her out on a date!

Eito: “It’s... umm... **do you want to go see the ocean**³...together?”

GM: What’s with you? <<laughs>> Okay, make a check using Bluff.

Eito: Umm... Using Ventriloquism my target is 7.

GM: How do you substitute Ventriloquism for Bluff?

Eito: This is different than normal. I’m using a real gentle voice! <<laughs>> “I went to see the ocean when I was skipping class before and it was beautiful, I thought I could show it to you.”

GM: Wonderful! Make the check.

Eito: <<rolls>> ...Success!

GM: Matsuri looks ecstatic and says, “I guess it’s okay to skip school once in a while,” and decides to skip class with you today.

Eito: Yes! <<excited>>

Rutsubo: Can I show up now?

Eito: Ah, right, go ahead.

Rutsubo: Okay, then the morning mist surrounding the trees starts to resonate, in a voice that only Eito can hear. <<laughs>>

Genzou: What’s that now?

1. ...Wait, what the hell!?! – There’s nothing to be surprised about, this is the kind of secret a normal high school student usually has.

2. Oh? I was wrong? – Poor Genzou.

3. Do you want to go see the ocean – “To go see the ocean” is a phrase used among the Oni-Blooded to refer to execution for breaking the law. It found its way into normal human society, meaning to exile a non-conformer. However, since Eito is a Lost One, he’s probably unaware of that meaning.

Rutsubo: **The Hasuba Ninpo, “Mist Voice.”**¹ “By now you should know what my goal is.”

Eito: I do, I do.

Rutsubo: “Then you’ve realized. About me...”

Eito: “What is it you’re planning?”

Rutsubo: “A job is a job. But, my goal is to keep order in the school. Eito, is it not possible for us to work together?”

Eito: ...

Rutsubo: “While it may seem unlike me, when I look at you, I feel a little jealous.”

Eito: “Don’t think that I trust you. But I’ll remember what you’ve said,” I say bluntly, but only for the sake of having the line fit my EmoBond of mistrust with her. Let’s fight together!

Rutsubo: “That shall suffice, for now,” I say, as the wind blows, spraying water about.

Eito: Fwoosh!

GM: And that’s where Eito’s scene ends.

3. Ao Saotome – Mudou

After that, Rutsubo entrusts the message to Eito using her water double.

“Did you contact him?”

Her master questions her from the darkness, an agitated expression on his face.

“Eito is off on a date, and I’m stuck here with this guy...?”

She curses herself silently, but the time to move against him has not yet come.

She obediently waits for his next instruction.

GM: All right, let’s insert a master scene in here. Rutsubo is in the darkened student council room.

Rutsubo: Okay.

GM: You’re kneeling in front of Ao Saotome...Mudou.

Rutsubo: Okay. “I’ve found the Eye of the Magatama. Its owner is Matsuri Kazama.”

GM: “Bring her to me.”

Rutsubo: “I guess I’ll give it a shot².”

Group: What!? <<laughs>>

Rutsubo: “Per your instructions, I managed to locate her. Everything beyond that is simply charity on my part.”

GM: Mudou smiles at Rutsubo’s boldness and says, “Bring her to me by the time the ritual begins,” as he gives her Eito’s location.

Rutsubo: I see. His location...

GM: That’s the end of this scene.

Rutsubo: “I wonder what’s going on,” I say as I leave, and things fade to black.

1. **The Hasuba Ninpo, “Mist Voice”** – After the game, the player explains to the group: The source of the “Mist Voice” is a wooden box with a rotating metal ball inside of it. By holding and pressing it in the right place, you can manipulate the rotation to produce vocal sounds.

2. **I’ll give it a shot** – It means something like, “Meh, I’ll try, if I’ve got nothing better going on.” Not secret ninja language.

4. Genzou Izuna – Ninpo “Mind Reader”

Her actions are inexplicable.

What has come over Aban?

Genzou, alone again in the woods, his cheeks stuffed with rat sandwich, furrows his brow.

In a rare fit of naive curiosity, it occurs to him to try using his knowledge gathering Ninpo, “Mind Reader,” on Aban.

Genzou: So, is it okay if I go next? Let’s try to discover Aban’s secret.
Aban: Roll on the scene table.
Genzou: <<rolls>> ...7
GM: The woods again. <<laughs>>
Genzou: It’s a continuation of Aban’s last scene.
Aban: I’m sweating like a pig. <<laughs>>
Genzou: I follow the trail of sweat through the woods. Let’s make a check using Clairvoyance. “That’s right, I never did take a thorough look at her after she came under my thrall.”
GM: So you want to spy on her? Or something like that?
Genzou: No, after the last scene, my impression of her has softened a bit.
Eito: Even though she made you eat something weird. <<laughs>>
Genzou: I am a ninja, after all. “Depending on her current state, I may be able to give her control of her actions back.” Something like that. <<rolls>>
...Success.
Aban: <<excited>> This is going to be rough. <<hands him the handout>>
Genzou: I’m pretty sure I already know.
Aban: Is that so? <<smug>>
Genzou: <<finishes reading>> ...Whaaaaaat!?!
Genzou and Aban: <<look at each other and laugh faintly>>
Rutsubo: Okay, let me see it!!
Aban: It’s pretty serious.

Her handout says the following:

“Secret: The truth is, you’re in love with PC 2 (Genzou). If you and PC 2 do not have affection or devotion EmoBonds with each other by the Climax Phase, your mission changes. In that case, your mission becomes: Kill PC 2, or else kill one character with whom PC 2 has an EmoBond of affection or devotion.”

Rutsubo: This late in the game... <<laughs>> And my scene is the only one left.
Aban: This is a pretty bad situation. <<laughs>>
Genzou: Yeah. I should have found out her secret sooner. <<laughs>>
Aban: Aban tried her hardest.
GM: You did try hard, Aban.
Rutsubo: Looks like things are going to get rough for you, Mr. Izuna.
<<laughs>>
Genzou: And for you too.
Rutsubo: Huh? What? Oh. <<gasps>>

1. Whaaaaaat!?! – I don’t think he knew.

Aban: Heh-heh-heh-heh-heh. <<nervous smile>>
Rutsubo: Could you list off your EmoBonds?
Genzou: Rutsubo is affection, Eito is nothing, and Aban is empathy.
Group: <<laughs>>
Aban: What about Rutsubo?
Rutsubo: Rutsubo? Eito is attraction, Izuna is loyalty.
Genzou, Aban, and Rutsubo:<<giving each other knowing looks>> A-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha.
Eito: I'm pretty sure I can guess what it is. <<laughs>>
Genzou: After probing Aban, when she leaves, I narrow my eyes and mutter, "What?"
Aban: Heh-heh-heh-heh. <<mischievous laugh>>
Genzou: "I just don't understand women..."¹ ...Ah, what a mess.
 <<laughs>>

5. Rutsubo Kokonoe – Ninpo “Watery Prison”

The ocean is two hours away by train. About one hour by bus.

The time is just past noon.

The air smells of salt water, and the sound of crashing waves can be heard in the distance.

Cutting through the roar of the ocean is the excited laughter of beach-going girls.

Eito's happy to be here.

He knows it's not the time to think such thoughts, but when he sees Matsuri's bubbly excitement, he simply can't help himself.

She runs through the waves as they break against the sand...

GM: Okay, so, this is the last player scene.
Rutsubo: I'm going to go challenge Eito to a fight.
Eito: What? Me?
GM: A battle between Rutsubo and Eito. Anyone who has an EmoBond with either of them can intervene.
Aban: I'll intervene if Genzou does. <<laughs>>
Genzou: I'll be cheering for them. <<laughs>>
Rutsubo: Can I set the scene? How about walking home from school?
Eito: No, we skipped class and went to the ocean. <<laughs>>
GM: The ocean, the ocean!
Rutsubo: Ah. The ocean is fine then. The ocean!
Aban: Water everywhere!
GM: What are you going to do about Matsuri? For now she's part of the scene.
Rutsubo: **To make things easier on Eito, let's knock her out².**
GM: All right, Eito and Matsuri are chatting and laughing it up.
Eito: The two of them are walking along the beach, and even though Eito's not really in the mood to play around, Matsuri is...
GM: She's enjoying herself.
Eito: She comes running up, and cuts in front of Eito, splashing

1. "I just don't understand women..." – To just come out and say it so bluntly seems very like Genzou. There doesn't seem to be any way out of this.

2. **To make things easier on Eito, let's knock her out** – A ninja shouldn't let the truth about who they are be exposed. During battle, they'll want to avoid being seen by those who know them.



water around. <<laughs>>

GM: Eito says something like, "Cut it out," a little embarrassed.

Eito: Matsuri should be safe all the way out here, I think.

Rutsubo: The sound of the waves says, "You really believe so?"

Group: <<laughs>>

Eito: The ocean, huh? That should be great for someone who uses water.

Rutsubo: "I am grateful that you chose here as your destination."

<<laughs>>

Eito: As expected, you can't trust this girl. <<sighs>>

Rutsubo: I appear without warning, as if I'm being born out of the waves.

Eito: I yell to Matsuri, "Get away from the water!"

GM: But it's already too late.

Eito: Matsuri goes, "Huh? What?" as the water splashes up and surrounds her.

GM: As a cage of water suddenly appears around her, Matsuri goes limp.

Rutsubo: Although to others this watery prison may be as strong as steel, I am able to slip my hand through it with ease. Stroking Matsuri's cheek I ask, "Which is it you wish to protect? This girl? Or the school?"

Eito: Augh, what a tough choice. <<laughs>>

Rutsubo: "Can't make up your mind?"

Eito: Ignoring her question I say, "Let her go." Then, Eito's whole body is surrounded by flames. <<laughs>>

Rutsubo: "Oh my, how scary." This is dangerous. I'm roleplaying **an enemy character who has no choice but to lose**¹. <<laughs>>

Group: <<laughs>>

Rutsubo: "It seems you've lost your temper. But don't you think you're being a bit naive?"

Eito: "This doesn't concern her!"

Rutsubo: "In that case, you should have taken her further away than this. It's strange, thinking you could avoid a fight with another ninja simply by skipping school."

Eito: "I planned to return by myself."

Rutsubo: "Did you now? Your mother and father ran away too, didn't they? From their clan."

Group: Ohhhhhhhhhhhhhhh, burn! <<laughs>>

Rutsubo: And with that, I go into a fighting stance.

GM: Nice. All right, each of you figure out your Plot.

Eito: My Shadow Clone... <<rolls>> ...Succeeds! Now I get two Plot Values.

Genzou: <<in a narrator's tone>> Hearing Rutsubo's challenge, Eito goes steely-eyed.

Eito: And, one of my eyes turns gold.

GM: Okay, reveal your Plot.

Rutsubo: 2.

Eito: 3 and 6...I'll go with 3.

1. **An enemy character who has no choice but to lose** – She's setting herself up to fail, albeit dramatically, in order to push the story forward. Sometimes players will realize that failing in a scene would make for a better story, and will choose themselves to start down that path. Still, she goes for the combat.

GM: All right, make your attacks starting with Eito.

Eito: Let's go with Close Combat Attack. <<rolls>> ...My Infiltration check succeeds!

GM: Okay, suddenly Eito's body disappears into the water.

Rutsubo: "Oh my. He sure loves to run and hide, doesn't he?"

GM: For a moment, Rutsubo loses track of where he is. Make a dodge check using Infiltration.

Rutsubo: All right, I'm going to make the check using Poison. My target is 7. <<rolls>> ...4. I failed. <<moans>>

Eito: Since I used Close Combat Attack, she takes 1 point of Close Combat damage. For Close Combat damage, the skill group is chosen randomly, right?

GM: That's right.

Eito: Flames encircle my hand, and I slash with them like a sword.

Rutsubo: Nope. I'm going to use a Soma Pill and re-roll my check. <<rolls>> ...This time it succeeds!

GM: Eito's strike hits! Or so he thinks...

Rutsubo: But actually, it was a water double. Splash splash.

Eito: "What!?"

Rutsubo: And then I appear directly behind him. "You're a ninja, you should know better than to wade into another ninja's element," I say, and although it's my turn, I don't attack him.

Eito: Huh? You don't?

Rutsubo: Then, at the end of the round, I withdraw. "Ah, no way no way! There's just no way I can win!" <<laughs>>

Eito: "Just what's your plan here?"

Rutsubo: "I'll tell you. I must be quite dedicated to my job to work overtime for free, right?"

Eito: In other words?

Rutsubo: "My mission is to uphold the school rules." And also, I wanted to test Eito's strength, to see which side I'd go with in the end.

Eito: I see.

Rutsubo: If possible, **I wanted you to steal the Eye of the Magatama¹**, the prize I'm carrying, after you win the fight. <<laughs>>

Aban: What a crafty girl. <<laughs>>

Eito: Fine, let's do that. But, since Eito still doesn't trust her, I say, "How do I know this isn't some Hasuba trick?"

VELOCITY SYSTEM				ヴェロシティシステム			
零	壱			肆	伍	陸	死地
Mundane 静止した時間	Ghost Walk 幽霊歩き			Sonic Speed 音速	Bullet Speed 弾速	Light Speed 光速	F.T.L. 超光速
0	1			4	5	6	7

1. **I wanted you to steal the Eye of the Magatama** – Rutsubo's Secret told her player that Rutsubo started the game with the Eye of the Magatama, the session's Prize. Her plan is not only for it to not be used in the ritual, but also to avoid going crazy and dying in the course of it.

Rutsubo: “Trust me. I’ve been waiting for this,” I say, as I disappear into the waves.

GM: The waves crash along the shore, and Rutsubo disappears.

Eito: I embrace Matsuri, freed from her water cage. And...

GM: She doesn’t seem to understand what’s going on. “Huh? What?” she says, and blushes at your touch.

Eito: I help her stand. “I’m sorry. There’s something I need to take care of. I’ll come back when I’ve finished it up. Will you wait here for me, until then?”

GM: “You mean like, a part time job?”

Eito: “No. Well, maybe something like that.”

GM: Looking at the expression on Eito’s face, it seems she understands. “Do your best. I’ll be waiting for you. Even if I have to wait into the night. Even if my parents are worried. I’ll wait for you, until you come back...”

Eito: I smile at her, and nod, silently.

GM: “**Make sure you come back for me!**”

And so he leaves the beach behind.
Her gaze is locked on him, unwavering, as he departs.

1. **Make sure you come back for me** – Ninpo “Make Sure You Come Back For Me” is a dangerous technique. Since you can’t move from that place until the target returns, there’s a chance you may starve to death. It’s said that this Ninpo originated with a ninja preparing food supplies in the Sahara Desert. Since Matsuri is not a ninja, she’s probably just using the phrase normally.

Climax Phase

1. Intertwined Memories

The student council room is dark.

Unlike the last time she was here, the room smells of mold, blood, and the scent of wild animals.

The smell of the countryside.

Aban tries to grimace, but cannot.

For at the moment, there is a 30cm long needle being removed, slowly, from her forehead.

GM: All right, now that the third cycle is over, we go to the Climax Phase. But first, let's have a quick master scene. Aban.

Aban: Yes sir!

GM: Ao Saotome...no, "Mudou," is **removing a needle from Aban's forehead, bit by bit**¹.

Genzou: Ah, my flavor-only brainwashing is undone so easily. <<laughs>>

GM: <<as Mudou>> "I'm sure he'll hate to lose you."

Aban: "It would have been easy enough for me to remove it without your help. You're sticking your nose where it doesn't belong." <<laughs>>

GM: "What? All I want from you is to keep him tied up. The ritual will soon begin."

Aban: "As far as I can tell, he doesn't care about your ritual or what happens to the school."

GM: "I see. In that case, you're free to pursue your own ends. I'm merely being helpful."

Rutsubo: <<frustrated>> Grr. What a nuisance.

GM: And now, finally, let's move on to the Climax Phase.

2. Ritual of the Magatama's Creation

The entire student body, and every teacher of Shinonome High School is gathered in the gymnasium.

Their eyes are drained of color and, as one, they stare up at the ceiling.

On stage Saotome barks out commands and makes careful gestures with his fingers.

As he does, the students' souls begin to seep from their mouths – an offering to the netherworld.

The spirit world begins to manifest.

GM: This is the Climax Phase. This scene will be treated as a fight scene, involving every character. Unlike the previous battles, you won't be removed from combat until all of your life points are gone.

Genzou: A fight to the death?

1. **Removing a needle from Aban's forehead, bit by bit** – The visual inspiration for this scene comes from Part 3 of "Jojo's Bizarre Adventure" (Author: Hirohiko Araki/Publisher: Shueisha), where the flesh bud is removed from Kakyoin.

GM: All right, let me set the scene. The location is Shinonome High School's gymnasium. All of the students are gathered there for the new student welcome party. However, their eyes are devoid of any expression, as if they have been stripped of their souls.

Eito: Ahhh, oooh.

GM: Rutsubo and Saotome are up on the stage; now, however, Rutsubo is standing behind him, and seems to be holding herself back.

Rutsubo: "The time is nearly upon us..."

GM: <<as Saotome>> "What about the Eye of the Magatama?"

Rutsubo: "Soon, without a doubt."

GM: Saotome...no, Mudou says, "Shall we begin before she gets here?" and pulls a long scroll from his pocket. The Kinin Mandala. The scroll unravels on its own, and folds over upon itself to form the shape of a six-pointed star upon the floor of the stage. Mudou stands at the center, and begins to perform a mudra. <<at the same time, the GM performs the Kuji!>>

Aban: Whoa! He's really doing the Kuji! <<laughs>>

Eito: He's crazy. CRAZY! <<laughs>>

GM: <<slow and intense>> Rin.. Pyou... Toh... Sha...

Rutsubo: I want to upload a video of this online. <<laughs>>

GM: Stop it. <<laughs>> Kai... Jin... Retsu... Zai... Zen! Then, as Mudou completes the secret mudra, something resembling beams of light shoot from the students' mouths and eyes up towards the ceiling. At the same time, a sound, that couldn't possibly come from human throats, rises up in a chorus from that "light."

Eito: Okay, that's when I enter the gymnasium from the second floor.

GM: Okay.

Rutsubo: "He has arrived," I say.

GM: At the moment, the power of the Eye of the Magatama **rests within Eito**². The "light" being emitted from the students' mouths and eyes is aiming towards him.

GM: "You're too late. The ritual has already begun."

Eito: "I can't let you do this. I'm here to stop you."

Rutsubo: In response to that, I disappear from the stage, and reappear back-to-back with Eito. "So you came."

Eito: "I hate to keep a girl waiting."

Rutsubo: "Do you trust me now?"

Eito: "I don't. But I told you I'd consider what you said."

Genzou: So, while Mudou's attention is focused on the two of them, Genzou rushes through the crowd of students in the gymnasium. He looks like someone running through a field of grass.

GM: <<as Mudou>> "Who's there!?"

Genzou: Running with my hands still in the pockets of my lab coat, I leap onto the stage. Then I say, "I, Genzou Izuna, have come for the Kinin Mandala."

GM: As you do, Mudou cries out, "Aban!"

1. **At the same time, the GM performs the Kuji** – The Kuji-kiri is a series of careful and precise hand gestures, or mudras, practiced in Mikkyo Buddhism, as well as other religions and some esoteric martial arts schools. Incidentally, the Kuji-kiri chant goes, "Rin Pyo Toh Sha Kai Jin Retsu Zai Zen".

2. **Rests within Eito** – This line should make it obvious that the Eye of the Magatama is a spiritual power, not an actual physical eye.



Aban: I make my entrance, clapping as I drop down from the ceiling of the gymnasium. "**That was so cool, master**¹," I shout.

Genzou: I react to her with extreme indignation.

Group: <<laughs>>

Genzou: I think that Aban might be the only person who can get on Genzou's nerves this much.

GM: Ah-ha, that's pretty great.

Aban: "Well, master, since you are always trying to look so cool, why don't you show me how powerful you really are."

Eito: I turn to Rutsubo behind me and ask, "Hey, what's going on?" I still don't know Aban's secret.

Aban: "Oho. This has nothing to do with you, boy!" I spit back at him.

Rutsubo: "You can clean up your own mess, you ladykiller teacher."

Genzou: As my temple twitches, I say, "Very well. I, Genzou Izuna, shall show you my most powerful magic."

GM: Okay, so it's time for the battle. We'll treat the battlefield as "crowded/throng".

Genzou: What effect does that have?

GM: "In a crowd of people, a classroom, a congested highway, etc... A fumble occurs if the result of a roll of 2D6 is less than or equal to your Plot Value +1."

Genzou: What?

GM: Since the place is littered with students.

3. Bloody Battle

The gymnasium is transformed into a scene of carnage. Without warning, the students-turned-sacrifices have become spontaneously blooming flowers of blood. But there, moving with a speed invisible to normal eyes, are five ninjas. The fight against evil rages on unseen.

GM: All right, first round. Everybody decide your Plot.

Eito: I'm going to use Shadow Clone. <<rolls>> ...Success!

GM: Okay, you get two dice for your Plot. Everyone, reveal them...

Genzou: Wait! I'm going to use Enlightenment. My Clairvoyance check... <<rolls>> ...succeeds! Mudou...your Plot is...3?

GM: Huh. You're right.

Genzou: Then, I'm going to give Mudou the Cursed Status Ailment.

GM: ...Damn. **Now I can't use the Tough Ninpo**². <<moans>>

Rutsubo: It's like he's already taken two points of damage.

GM: Damn. Everyone, reveal your Plot!

The results of the Plot are Genzou on 5, Aban on 4, Mudou and Eito at the same time on 3, and Rutsubo on 2.

Genzou: I'll start then. I say, "You fool! I trusted you, and now this,"

1. **That was so cool, master** – The way she said the word "cool" turned it into an insult. Insult-jutsu.
2. **Now I can't use the Tough Ninpo** – Powerful NPCs often take Tough, sometimes multiple times. If you can manage to block it, it can have a dreadful effect.

and, turning away from Aban, attack Mudou. I make a Mob Combat Attack using Illusion. Aban should be ashamed of herself.

Rutsubo: What is it they say about not feeding the trolls? <<laughs>>

Genzou: <<rolls>> ...What!? A fumble.

Aban: What an idiot!

GM: Mudou, without batting an eye, swiftly draws his katana and cuts down Genzou's illusions one after the other. "Heh. This is your grand illusion? Nothing!"

Genzou: Grr.

Aban: Yeah, I'm up next! I turn to my master and unleash my Ohgi.

Genzou: Hmm... <<nervous>>

Aban: <<in a narrator's tone>> But, before I explain what effect it has, **first I must tell you about the Marudoku-tou**¹. <<laughs>>

Eito: What are you talking about!? <<laughs>>

GM: The Marudoku-tou, obviously.

Aban: In the year 3000 BC, at the dawn of human civilization, there was one family that lived in the shadows! The Marudoku-tou are the descendents of ancient Babylon's original masters of darkness...

Genzou: **You should go work for White Wolf**². <<laughs>>

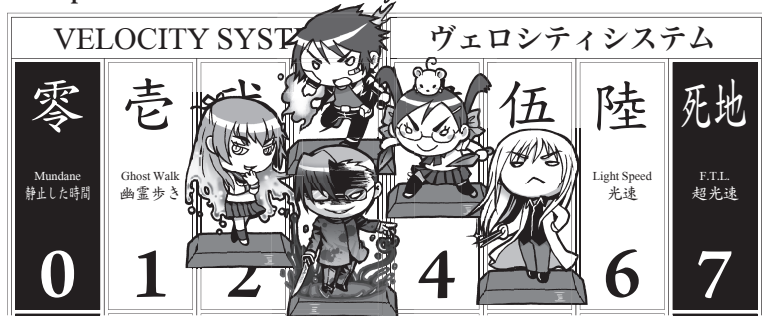
Aban: ...The destruction of Sumer, the sacking of Jerusalem, the fall of the Roman Empire; history has seen the fall of countless cities. But with the destruction of each, the Marudoku-tou moved on to the next city, honing their art of controlling them!

Genzou: I wait politely until she's finished talking. <<laughs>>

Aban: This is the Ohgi that my clan has carried with them for over 5000 years of living in the cities! Taste the power of "Urban Eradicator: Streets of Warping Death!"

GM: You really put a lot of thought into this. <<impressed>>

Aban: I plunge my sword into the ceiling, and now I can control the urban environment around me like it was in the palm of my hand. **First, the stratosphere**³.



1. **First I must tell you about the Marudoku-tou** – The secret history of the Marudoku-tou can be found in detail in a copy of the ancient tome, "An Unabridged Collection of Essays on the Horse," in the collection of a secret library in Kyoto. If you're curious, go check it out.
2. **You should go work for White Wolf** – The famous developer of classic roleplaying games loved the world over, especially their "World of Darkness" game line (Vampire, Werewolf, Mage, etc)... "World of Darkness" especially has captured many players, even in Japan, with its detailed and wild alternate histories and hidden historical backstories that the PC lineages were somehow involved with. Usually Rasputin shows up somehow.
3. **First, the stratosphere** – About 15km above sea level. I'll leave it to the reader to determine if this is considered "urban" or not.

Group: Wait, what? <<laughs>>
Aban: A shipping container from a jumbo jet comes crashing down. Fwoosh!
Group: Whaaaaat!!! <<bursts out laughing>>
Aban: In addition, several trucks come speeding up to the front of the school, and their drivers grab the shipping container by the handles and rush it inside the gymnasium.
GM: And then by coincidence, an angry bull that escaped from a nearby rodeo comes crashing into the gymnasium, causing its aging support beams to come tumbling down. <<laughs>>
Aban: Exactly. <<laughs>> And for some reason they're all heading for exactly one spot.
Genzou: Me? <<laughs>>
GM: <<in a narrator's tone>> **The odds against it were astronomical**¹. Was it by some freak accident of nature that these dreadful coincidences piled up, one on top of the other? No. This was the culmination of five thousand years study of the dark arts.
Eito: Ohgi are amazing. <<laughs>>
Aban: At any rate, that's 4 points of Close Combat damage, Master.
Genzou: That's quite rough, but considering the overwhelming seriousness of the scene, I'll take a 4 point hit.

However, the truth is, 4 points is a lot.
 He loses the ability to use any skills other than Sorcery and Stealth.

Aban: I didn't hit Sorcery?? "Tch! Did I miss?" I scream.
Eito: So now do we learn Aban's Ohgi?
Aban: Nope. Since I have Vibrato, you have to make an Analysis check to see through it first.
Eito: Vibrato? What's that?
GM: It's a special Ninpo that makes it so if someone doesn't succeed on an Analysis check first, they don't learn your Ohgi.
Eito: That's annoying. All right, let's try to see through her Ohgi then. My Analysis check is...a fumble. <<groans>>
Rutsubo: I'll use a Prayer Seal to ignore that result. "Look closer! You're acting as my eyes, after all!"
Eito: The result of the re-roll is... <<rolls>> ...It's a success this time! "I've discerned the secret of Street Binding!"
Rutsubo: EmoBonds don't transmit Ohgi... Hey Eito, now might be a good time to shout out what you learned and share her Ohgi with us, so that we can try to cancel it later.
Eito: You got it!
Aban: Hmph.
GM: Next up are Mudou and Eito with a Plot Value of 3. Mudou goes first. He unleashes his Ohgi, Human Blossom, at Eito. "Diiiiiiiiiiiiiiii!" Eito takes 4 points of Close Combat damage.
Eito: Since I already have knowledge of Mudou's Ohgi, I can make an Ohgi Break check, right?
GM: It's possible. Use Binding.
Eito: Binding, Binding. The closest skill is...okay, yeah. So my tar-

1. **The odds against it were astronomical** – By the way, astronomy also has its origins in ancient Babylon.

get is 10.

Rutsubo: If you use the Flashback Scene rule, you can add a +3 modifier to the check. You can reveal your secret, and describe yourself reflecting on a scene from your past.

Eito: Okay. My secret...everyone already knows it. <<laughs>>

GM: Well, for the sake of checking off the requirements for the Flashback Scene, show us anyway.

Eito: Okay. <<reveals his secret>> So, just before Mudou unleashes his Human Blossom, I close my eyes. The scenes of my parents' and grandfather's death rises in the back of my mind.

Aban: His grandfather's last words, just before he died, were, "...

Eito, don't try to avenge me!" <<laughs>>

Eito: Right. I nod at his words. "This sword wasn't made for vengeance. I'll use its power to help Matsuri and the others," I say, and make the check.

GM: Good, good. Add a +3 modifier.

Eito: I succeed on a 7 or higher. <<rolls>> ...All right! A success!

GM: Okay, at that moment, Hinowa blocks Mudou's sword.

Eito: I want to add to the scene. Hinowa blocks Mudou's sword, but the strength of his blow shatters the blade.

GM: What? O-okay. Mudou shouts, "Hah! I've won!" <<laughs>>

Aban: What an obvious losing-flag. <<laughs>>

Eito: But, where the blade breaks, flames shoot forth. **This flame is Hinowa's true blade!**¹

Genzou: "So the blade was really only a sheath!?" <<laughs>>

Eito: "Himukai-ryu sword style secret Ohgi... 'Consuming Fire God!'" The effect is a Critical Hit, and it uses the Transformation skill.

Aban: Transformation, huh? And I guess no one can break it now.

Eito: He takes 4 points of damage at random, right? <<rolls>> ...He loses the use of Martial Arts, Stealth, Strategy, and Sorcery!

Rutsubo: On Plot 2, I'll attack Mudou. My check for Crushing Blow... <<rolls>> ...succeeds. That will increase the damage. I make a Close Combat Attack using Apparel... <<rolls>> ...and that succeeds too! Is that enough to stop him?

GM: He can't die yet. **I'll do a Flashback Scene too**³. It's fifteen years ago. Mudou appears to be in his late 20's. He was a ninja in training, under Eito's grandfather.

Eito: What the!?

GM: He grew up with Eito's mother, and was in love with her.

Eito: <<looking at the notes on the back of the character sheet>> By the way, my grandfather's name was Rikudou Himukai. My mother's name was Nanami. My father was named Shiba.

Group: Wow. You actually wrote that all out? <<laughs>>

1. **Eito, don't try to avenge me** – The organized factions have strong prohibitions against seeking personal vengeance. As ninjas possess superhuman abilities, a cycle of revenge-seeking could easily bring about disaster. Lost Ones have no such rule, however; that's likely the reason for these dying words.

2. **This flame is Hinowa's true blade** – A flame blade can block something in much the same way as a beam saber or light saber.

3. **I'll do a Flashback Scene too** – If an NPC has a secret, they can also use a Flashback Scene like this. However, try to avoid doing it too early; it's better to use it when they're really in trouble.

GM: Okay, okay. After Shiba stole Nanami away from him, Ao Saotome left the righteous path and killed them both. Afterwards, he abandoned his name, used dark magic to disguise his age, and became Mudou.

Rutsubo: That much makes sense, but why is Mudou performing this magic ritual?

GM: With the power of the Magatama, the dead can be recalled... it's possible to revive those who have been lost. He is trying to bring Nanami back from the dead.

Eito: ...

GM: Okay, on to the dodge check. Using Pyromancy, and adding the plus 3, he succeeds on 6 or better. <<rolls>> ...Success!

Rutsubo: Tsk.

GM: That's the end of this round. Before we start the next round, he'll try to change the battlefield using Guidance. The check... <<rolls>> ...succeeds! He'll change the location to "water".

Genzou: H-how do we end up in water? Do we fight in the pool or something?

GM: Mudou chants a spell, and the students start hacking away at themselves.

Eito: "Stop! Stop!"

GM: As they do, they start bleeding, and the floor of the gymnasium becomes flooded by a sea of blood.

Rutsubo: It'll be a disaster if we don't end this soon.

The battle becomes split into two groups.

Mudou takes Eito's Ohgi and is hovering halfway between life and death. Although Eito was able to discern his Ohgi, a bold, disturbing smile spreads across his face.

On the other side, Genzou, having become the target of Aban's Ohgi, is buried under a pile of rubble.

Marudoku-tou Ninpo is truly terrifying.

GM: Okay, second round. Decide your Plot.

Eito: Shadow Clone...succeeds!

Genzou: I'll use Enlightenment on Aban. <<rolls>> ...It succeeds. Your Plot is...4!

Aban: Ack, again? How'd you know?

Genzou: Well then... <<rolls>> ...I'll seal off your Close Combat Attack!

GM: All right, let's reveal our Plot Values.

VELOCITY SYSTEM							
零	壱	弐	参	ロシテ	伍	チム	死地
Mundane 静止した時間	Ghost Walk 幽霊歩き	Neuro Speed 思考速度		Bullet Speed 弾速		F.T.L. 超光速	
0	1	3		5		7	

The results of the Plot are Eito and Mudou on 6, Genzou and Aban on 4, and Rutsubo on 2.

GM: Mwa-ha-ha-ha. We attack at the same time, but I think I'll go first. Mudou uses his Ohgi.

Eito: I'll make a check to break his Ohgi. "Human Blossom, break!"

GM: Nope. He unleashes **another Critical Hit**¹ Ohgi, "Eternal Revival."

Rutsubo: Did you say "another Critical Hit"!?

GM: Because he's a Jonin-rank high-level ninja, he knows two totally different Ohgi. Eito takes 4 points of Close Combat damage.

Eito: This is bad... <<nervous>>

Mudou assumes a thrusting stance.

With an earsplitting scream he lunges forward.

Eito dodges by leaping backwards.

But suddenly, the blade of Mudou's sword disappears.

Or so Eito believes, just as the blade reappears suddenly before his eyes.

Mudou's sword technique, "Eternal Revival," is capable of cutting through space itself, sending the blade through the spirit world and allowing him to call it forth directly in front of its victim's eyes.

Reflexively, Eito closes his eyes.

He's done for.

Rutsubo: **I'll Take the Hit for him**²!

Group: What did you say!?

Rutsubo: As the blade pierces my stomach, I turn to Eito behind me and say, "You'll save her, and the school, won't you?" <<laughs>>

Eito: I don't need to speak my thanks aloud. I'll unleash my Ohgi again. "Consuming Fire God!"

GM: I need an 11 or better using Transformation. Aww, Aban, can't you break his Ohgi for me?

Aban: Ugh. It has nothing to do with me. And besides, I don't want to fumble.

GM: **WHAAAT!?**³

Eito: And you can't use a Flashback Scene anymore either.

GM: I know. Let's do this! <<rolls>> ...It fails. I'll use a Soma Pill to re-roll... <<rolls>> ...Aww. It fails. Waaaaaaaaaah.

Eito: Hinowa's flame sets Mudou on fire. "...Burn."

GM: As he is engulfed in flames, he utters his last words. "Na... na... mi..."

Eito: ...

1. **Another Critical Hit** – Having multiple Ohgi with the same effect is a kind of insurance.

2. **I'll Take the Hit for him** – Rutsubo is using the Ninpo, Take the Hit. When someone takes damage, you can substitute yourself as the target and take the damage in their place.

3. **WHAAAT!?** – And I thought Mudou could have won if she had broken his Ohgi too. Oh well.

4. Battle Between Two Ninjas

Mudou is defeated.

However, another battle rages on.

Aban: Well, now it's my turn to finish off my master! Shall I use my Ohgi, or... I'm afraid of fumbling, so I guess I should use it?

Genzou: My target number to break your Ohgi is an 8.

Aban: Oooh. <<worried>> I'll attack, then. Assassin will make it easier to get a critical... <<rolls>> It succeeds! I'll attack with Domineer, sending my rats after him. Time for my Flashback Scene! Tada! <<reveals her secret to Eito>>

Group: Woaaaaah!

Aban: "I never thought that I, Aban Birukaze, would have such a hard time with a hick ninja like you!"

Genzou: What!?

Aban: At any rate, the Oni-Blooded are the Kurama Shin Clan's bitter enemies. During their struggles, Aban targeted Genzou over and over. Since they were huge melees, he may not remember her, but for Aban it was love at first sight.

Eito: <<reading Aban's secret>> Ooooooooh, I get it now.

Aban: It's only natural she'd have given it her all as his servant.

GM: You tried and tried and tried.

Eito: Like, 'Why couldn't he understand my feelings towards him?!' Something like that, right? Poor Aban.

Aban: "And he even had eyes for that rube of a student council president!"

Rutsubo: Hey, hold on now! <<laughs>>

GM: That's fine. Add a +3 Flashback Scene modifier.

Aban: **Excessive hatred breeds hatred a hundredfold¹.** Just die already! ...<<rolls>>...It's a fumble. <<laughs>>

Group: Geez. <<laughs>>

Eito: Your rats go to attack, but for some reason they hesitate. They stare back at Aban, worried looks on their faces.

GM: <<as the rat>> "Squeak! **Master, is this really okay-squeak?**"²

Aban: Shut up shut up shut up shut up!

Genzou: "...Are you a ninja, or really just an ordinary woman after all?"

Aban: "What was that!?"

Genzou: I turn to face her again and say, "The most important thing to a ninja is their mission, not their feelings! How pathetic, to abandon your duty and wallow in your own selfishness! I'll kill you myself!"

Aban: "Don't make me laugh! As a member of the Kurama, all I desire is victory. You're the enemy, after all!"

Group: <<laughs>>

Genzou: "Words are useless here!" I'll make a counterattack with Mob Combat Attack. My Illusion checks succeeds...and make Aban suffer from a

1. **Excessive hatred breeds hatred a hundredfold** – This is a play on an old Japanese expression, originally "Excessive tenderness breeds hatred a hundredfold. In this case, it started with hatred, so...

2. **Master, is this really okay-squeak?** – Few humans know that rats can talk, and none know that they're actually the smartest living creatures on Earth.

Curse Status Ailment.

Aban: Ugh. My Vibrato is sealed off.

Genzou: Genzou's eyes sparkle, and as Aban stares at those eyes, her vision begins to go askew. It distorts more and more, until suddenly she's back in the gymnasium, but the ceiling and the floor are reversed.

Aban: Wah!

Genzou: Since my illusion is visible to everybody, they all fall over. "Heaven and Earth Inversion!"

GM: Well then. Next up is Rutsubo...

Rutsubo: Nope. I'll pass. I don't have any grudge with either our teacher or the rat-girl.

Eito: Yeah. Same here.

Rutsubo: Let's just let them keep going until they're happy.

Left to settle things between themselves, the two of them spend the next few rounds trading blows, but both lack the will to decide the battle, and they are unable to reach a conclusion.

Finally, Aban uses her Ohgi, "Street Binding" once again, but Genzou recovers his life points using his Immortal Body Ohgi, "Nirvana Bloom."

As the effect of Immortal Body will gradually weaken over time, they may or may not eventually arrive at a conclusion before a natural draw/stalemate occurs after the next few rounds. However, the gamemaster, anticipating that it will take a while, declares a draw on account of having run out of time.

Genzou: <<heavy breathing>>

Aban: <<panting>>

Genzou: "Enough. I'll allow you to withdraw. Hurry up and leave!"

Aban: "I could say the same to you. You guys can clean up this mess yourselves. We're outta here!"

GM: Squeak!

Aban: "I feel like he could have killed me if he wanted to." Ahh, master.

GM: What now?

Aban: I wonder if it's okay for me to take the Kinin Mandala?

GM: Ah, yeah. I wonder. What do the rest of the players think?

Group: Well, **if that's enough to satisfy Aban**¹. <<laughs>>

Aban: Well then, tucking the Kinin Mandala under my arm, I leap away. "Genzou you idiot, I hope you die!" <<laughs>>

GM: How cute. <<laughs>>

Eito: She's a *tsundere*.

Rutsubo: In what way!?

Genzou: I wait as her voice fades into the distance and say, "What a foolish girl."

Everyone except Genzou: **The only fool here is you!**²

1. **If that's enough to satisfy Aban** – They would rather find a way of resolving things without anybody dying.

2. **The only fool here is you!** – This whole thing could have been avoided if he had discovered Aban's secret earlier. It was his mistake in thinking their master/servant relationship was for flavor only.

5. Epilogue

The sun has already set.

Eito heads towards the darkness-shrouded beach to make good on his promise.

- GM:** Now, let's head on to the epilogue. First up is Eito.
- Eito:** I told Matsuri to wait for me by the ocean, so I'm heading back there.
- GM:** It appears as if she's waiting for you, standing on the seawall and staring at the moon. "That was quicker than I thought."
- Eito:** "Sorry I'm late." If those two had just gotten on better, I would have been back sooner. <<laughs>>
- GM:** "Are you...hurt?"
- Eito:** No, Mr. Izuna gave me this wound a couple days ago. <<laughs>>
- GM:** "Did you finish it? The thing you needed to do?"
- Eito:** "Yeah," I say as I walk up to the beach. But I keep worrying that, as long as I'm here, she might get caught up in something else. Tomorrow, I'm going to leave town without telling her.
- GM:** "..."
- Eito:** "I found this," I say, handing her a pretty pink seashell. "You can have it."
- GM:** "Thank you."
- Eito:** Caught up in the realization that he's finally avenged his parents, without realizing it Eito begins to cry.
- GM:** "Are you crying?"
- Eito:** "It's nothing. I was just thinking of something happy..."
- GM:** "Huh? Something happy...you mean...?" **She gets the wrong idea**¹.
- Group:** <<laughs>>
- Eito:** He starts to think about her misunderstanding, and shoots her a big smile, one he'd never show anyone at school.
- Genzou:** <<in a narrator's tone>> And a single ray of light shone down on the cruel world.
- GM:** "You're such a crybaby, aren't you, Eito?"
- Eito:** "You sure take everything personally, don't you, Matsuri?"
- GM:** She doesn't quite know what you're talking about. She says, "I want to know more about you. All kinds of things."
- Eito:** Yeah...well, whatever. <<laughs>> "In time, I guess."
- GM:** She realizes the implication of what you said, and smiles back cheerfully.
- Eito:** "Let's go home," I say, and grab her hand.
- GM:** She grabs your hand tightly, and the two of you leave the beach, cuddled up to one another.
- GM:** A few days pass. How about Genzou next?
- Genzou:** "My time with you all was fleeting," I say from the stage.
- GM:** As expected, **Mrs. Kurokawa was merely suffering from**

1. **She gets the wrong idea** – In other words, she thinks he's happy that she spent the last few hours waiting for him on the beach in the dark.

false pregnancy¹. Of course. <<laughs>>

Genzou: The female students are sobbing.

GM: Later, somewhere in the darkness, your superior questions you, “And what of the Kinin Mandala?”

Genzou: “It was taken by the one from Kurama Shin. I will deal with it, of course.”

GM: “Very well. You will not return to us until you have recovered it.”

Genzou: “I understand. I shall stake my life on it.”

GM: Well then, from now on, in a complete reversal of roles, Genzou’s job is to pursue Aban.

Genzou: “Just you wait. Next time, for certain...” Genzou says, seemingly taking more pleasure in failing than he would have in success.

GM: Next is Aban. I wonder what she did after escaping.

Eito: Is she traveling through the countryside, crying?

Aban: No, the Marudoku-tou travel between cities using **courier services**². <<laughs>>

Eito: What!?

GM: Whoosh. All right, you’re traveling north through Japan along with some animal shipping crates.

Aban: I’m trying to read the Kinin Mandala inside the delivery truck, “**But I can’t make heads or tails of this**”³, I say.

GM: As you do, the rats at your feet start squeaking at you, like they’re trying to warn you of something.

Genzou: They sense something ghostly near the truck.

Aban: “So, the trap is set.”

GM: As she says that, the expression on her face is almost welcoming.

Aban: “All of you. Let’s make sure we do this right.”

GM: And finally, Rutsubo.

Rutsubo: I want the scene to take place a few days after the incident. Is it okay if Eito appears in it?

Eito: Yeah, that’s fine.

GM: All right, ever since the incident, things at the school have been pretty rough.

Aban: People died and stuff, right?

Rutsubo: No, they’re all fine. There were a lot of people whose blood was shed, but I’ve taken temporary control of them as water puppets to heal them.

GM: Well, dealing with everything has been difficult, but you’ve somehow managed for the last few days.

Eito: I’m late for school, as usual.

1. **Mrs. Kurokawa was merely suffering from false pregnancy** – Ninpo “Hysterical Pregnancy” is a unique skill of the Lost Ones that allows them to control temperatures. That means that both Mudou and his fellow student Eito could learn this Ninpo. Obviously, false/hysterical pregnancy can also occur naturally.

2. **Courier services** – Next time you open a package, be careful that there’s not a ninja inside.

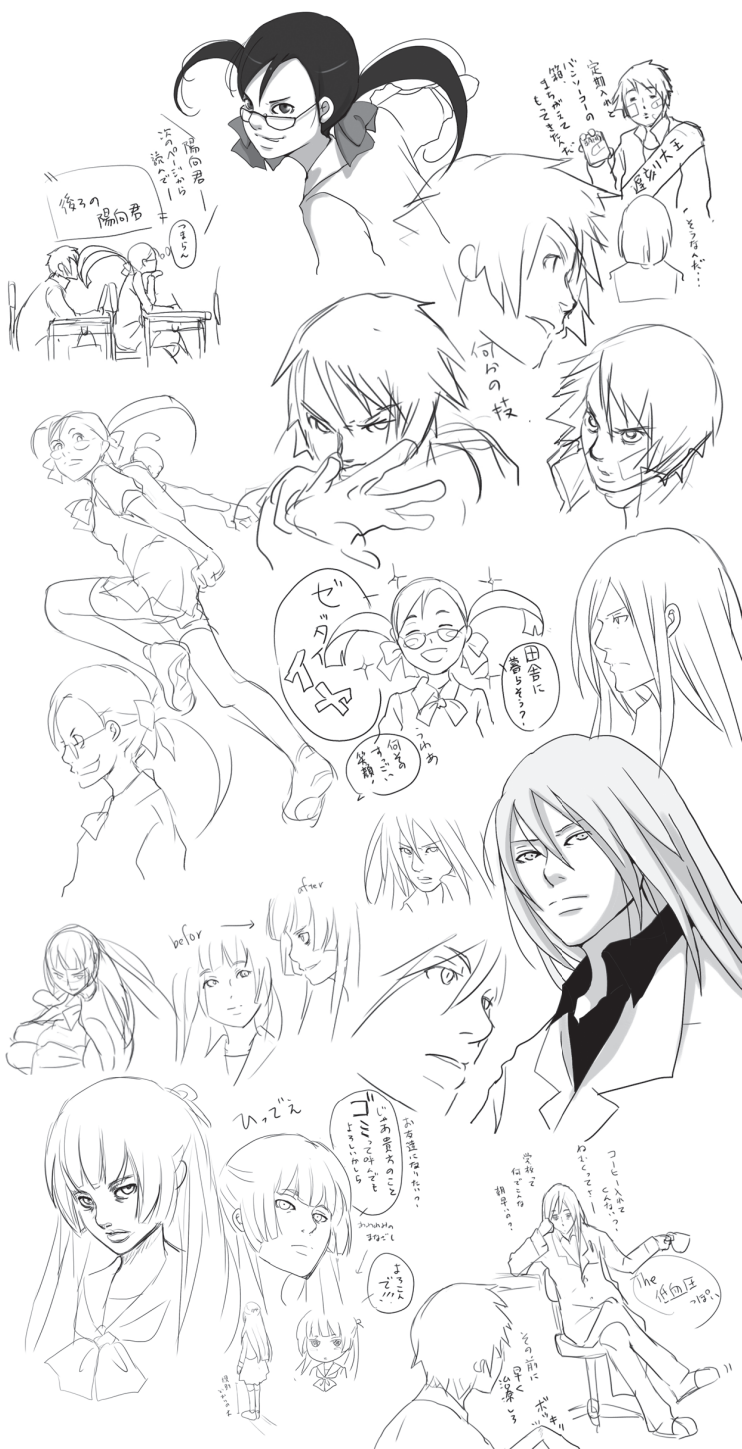
3. **But I can’t make heads or tails of this** – Since the GM didn’t actually say what’s written in it, it must be rather difficult to understand. Ancient, forgotten Chinese characters and mystical symbols, that sort of thing.

Rutsubo: I reach out my arms towards him and hug him from behind.
Eito! “Eito!”
Eito: “Wah! What do you want?”
Rutsubo: “I thought you weren’t coming back to this school.”
Eito: “I thought so too...but she’s here.”
Rutsubo: “But with you around, there could be all sorts of trouble.”
Eito: “If that happens, I’ll protect everyone, including her.”
Rutsubo: “My, how noble. Is that the only reason you decided to stay?”
Eito: “I wonder.” The Kinin Mandala used to belong to my parents. The time may come where I decide to set out in search of it. “For now, at least.”
Rutsubo: “You seem determined. You know if that happens, you won’t be able to take her with you.”
Eito: ...
Rutsubo: “There’s something I want to ask you about. I’ve been given a briefing from my superiors. I have a new mission. I could allow you to assist me, if you want.”
Eito: “As long as you help me keep her safe.”
Rutsubo: “You can trust me. **I don’t mind being your second choice**¹.”
Eito: “Hey. What are you talking about?”
Rutsubo: “If you wish, I can show you the feeling I haven’t been able to put into words all morning. Of course, **Matsuri doesn’t have to know**².”
Eito: I can’t trust a single word she’s saying, but I still get what she’s hinting at. “For now, I’ll just be helping you with your job.”
Rutsubo: “Thank you very much,” I say, and lick his cheek.
Group: <<murmur murmur>>
Aban: It looks like they’re kissing.
GM: Matsuri is staring long and hard at the two of them.
Rutsubo: “Ah, damn.” <<laughs>>
Eito: Eito gets flustered at her showing up like that all of a sudden.
GM: “Eito, just what’s going on here?”
Eito: “It was all her!”
Rutsubo: I take off, laughing.

Rutsubo’s high-pitched laughter echoes across the campus.
Matsuri, her cheeks puffed in anger, doesn’t look like she will forgive and forget so easily.
It’s a scene that would have been unimaginable a few days earlier.
But it’s not the worst thing in the world.
It seems like there’s still so much more to come.
With that thought, a smile manages to slip out across his lips.
Even though Matsuri is mad at him, Eito can’t stop smiling.
For the first time in a while, he laughs, from deep within his chest.

The End

-
- 1. I don’t mind being your second choice** – Ninjas have a tendency to view marriage with contempt. On the other hand, they place grave importance on their supernatural bloodlines.
 - 2. Matsuri doesn’t have to know** – It’s highly likely that Rutsubo was already aware of Matsuri’s presence when she said this.



Now that you have read the Shinobigami replay, proceed to the second part of the book: The rules.

Friendship; betrayal; alliances; and secrets... The following section will teach you how to run your own exciting ninja stories with your friends!

Shinobigami Rules Section

Secrets of the Ninja Scrolls



忍神一

Foreword

In this roleplaying game, players take on the personae of ninja from six different clans and take part in the battles that unfold in the darkness.

Ninjas are creatures of shadow. In these modern times, ordinary people are unaware of the existence of these individuals and their supernatural abilities, for they exist just beneath normal society. They closely guard their secrets, even as they clash on the fringes of our society; fighting day and night for what they believe in.

Shinobigami is a game that brings these stories to life. The Game Master prepares a number of Secrets and Prizes, then the players battle for supremacy—sometimes as enemies and sometimes as allies against a larger enemy the Game Master has prepared.

An ancient scroll containing the secrets to a long lost ninja art.

Top secret information that powerful nations would kill to keep hidden.

And a mysterious young girl that holds the key to reviving the *Shinobigami*.

A multitude of adventures await you in the world of the Shadow War!

This Marks the Beginning

The book that you hold in your hands contains the basic rules for the Shinobigami tabletop roleplaying game. Shinobigami is a game that allows players to experience exciting adventures and stories in a supernatural world eerily similar to our own. The game is played through conversation and the rolling of dice, while roleplaying in the context of this game consists of looking at the world through the eyes of a character of your own creation and guiding them through difficult choices. To get a good idea of how the game works you may wish to read through the first half of this book, the Replay section, which contains an exciting transcript of a group playing through the game for the first time.

This half of the book is the Rules section, in which the rules of the game are laid out for easy reference. It should be mentioned upfront that no set of rules is complete – things can happen in a roleplaying game for which no rule exists. If an unexpected situation arises, the Game Master should feel free to come up with a new or altered rule to suit the needs of the group.

How to Read This Book

Please note that the following vocabulary and notations have special meanings in this book:

nd6: Roll *n* six-sided dice and add up the result. For example, 1d6 means to roll a single six-sided die and take the result. 2d6 means to roll two six-sided dice and add the results together: A 2d6 roll of 1 and 4 would give a total result of 5.

D66: Roll two six-sided dice. Instead of adding them together, the lower result of the two dice becomes the tens column digit, while the higher die result becomes the ones column digit. With D66, you can get results from 11-66. For example, rolling a 5 and a 4 will give a result of 45.

Capitalization: Terms which have a specific meaning in the rules will be capitalized. This helps highlight specific concepts like Life Points, Information (such as Secrets, Location, Ohgi), EmoBonds, and Ninpo.

Session: A single game of Shinobigami (usually played in a single sitting) is referred to as a session.

GM: In RPG parlance, this is the standard abbreviation for Game Master. The GM is responsible for the creation of the scenario, adjudicating rules, controlling non-player characters, and generally ensuring that the game runs smoothly.

Player: A player creates a ninja character and participates in the GM's scenario. Each player creates their own character that they will use when participating in the game.

Character: Characters are people that appear in the scenario. Players create their

own characters and have full control them over during the game.

PC: Player Characters (PCs) are the characters that the Players create and control. They have names and backgrounds and are quickly created by combining Skills, Ninpo, and Ohgi.

NPC: Non-Player Characters (NPCs) are characters that are controlled by the GM.

Requirements for Play

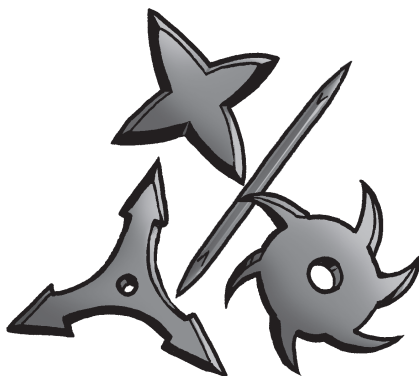
You will need the following things on hand in order to play Shinobigami:

Friends: Two to Five friends to play with you.

Rulebook: This book. Though a single book is needed to play, it may be easier if each player has their own. Additionally, there is a Shinobigami Expansion Book which contains additional rules and options for both GMs and players.

Sheets: Character sheets, Player Summaries, Handouts, and other necessary documents should be copied and handed out before the start of each game. A single copy of the Velocity System sheet is also required. They can be downloaded from the Shinobigami/Kotodama Heavy Industries website.

Dice: Six-sided dice are required to play. It is recommended that players have three dice each, and the GM should have six.



1 – Characters

The following rules are used by players to create their characters. Each player will need to have a copy of the character sheet, reproducible from this book or from the official Shinobigami/Kotodama Heavy Industries website. Ideally, each player should create their own character.

Some aspects of character creation are best done in secret; after all, a ninja shouldn't give everything away from the start; specifically, the players should keep their Ohgi and Ninja Gear a secret from the other players. Once a player has created their PC, they should show it to the GM for approval before the start of the game.

1.01 – Character Name

The default setting of Shinobigami is contemporary Japan, with modern ninja as the characters. A player might represent this by choosing a Japanese name for their character or using a name inspired by Asian pop culture. A character's name might also reflect his strengths or history, in any language the player chooses. If a player can't think of a name, they can use these random names tables to create a suitable name for their PC.

Last Name Table	
1	Prestigious
2-3	Fictional
4-5	Legendary
6	No Last Name

First Name	
1	Roll Twice, Two Names
2-3	Legendary
4-5	Normal
6	Unusual

Prestigious Last Names	
11	Ohtomo
12	Minamoto
13	Ise
14	Fuuma
15	Kusunoki
16	Katoh
22	Mochizuki
23	Tateoka
24	Hattori
25	Momochi
26	Fujibayashi
33	Kido
34	Yamaoka
35	Tarao
36	Tsunokuma
44	Ishikawa
45	Yagyu
46	Kohsaka
55	Morozumi
56	Ban
66	Obata

Fictional Last Names	
11	Sarutobi
12	Kirigakure
13	Kakei
14	Nezu
15	Unno
16	Anayama
22	Yuri
23	Miyoshi
24	Takahashi
25	Yamaji
26	Izumo
33	Kikoku
34	Bushin
35	Shiranui
36	Izayoi
44	Kuchinoha
45	Yuuki
46	Shamon
55	Oboro
56	Dohmeki
66	Sabishiro

Legendary Last Names	
11	Kurama
12	Yuugen
13	Hazefuchi
14	Kirisaki
15	Hiruma
16	Higurashi
22	Honobino
23	Kuroko
24	Yamimaru
25	Orihimi
26	Nanahoshi
33	Himuro
34	Bandoh
35	Magastuhi
36	Tomurai
44	Yoimachi
45	Hitohada
46	Kuzu
55	Kazenie
56	Ohonegumi
66	Hasuba

All first names below are listed with Masculine then Feminine name counterparts, based on the assumed gender of the character

Legendary First Names	
11	Kuruwa
	Azuki
12	Itachi
	Rinne
13	Gento
	Azami
14	Ikki
	Natsume
15	Kakashi
	Kaede
16	Kirihito
	Sumomo
22	Enju
	Kikyo
23	Setura
	Tsurara
24	Mukade
	Koma
25	Shishimaru
	Kocho
26	Hayate
	Kagami
33	Ikazuchi
	Shinobu
34	Kamui
	Misao
35	Mujina
	Kasumi
36	Goemon
	Ageha
44	Sho
	Tsukushi
45	Homura
	Hotaru
46	Tobikage
	Shirogane
55	Tenzen
	Mabuta
56	Juubei
	Botan
66	Tatewaki
	Zakuro

Normal First Names	
11	Jiro
	Futaba
12	Naoto
	Mikoto
13	Shingo
	Miyuki
14	Tetsuya
	Misa
15	Shinbei
	Michiko
16	Taizo
	Chiharu
22	Gansuke
	Fujiko
23	Seiji
	Ayumi
24	Ryoma
	Yohko
25	Tsutomu
	Ranko
26	Tohta
	Yukie
33	Morio
	Kanae
34	Kenkichi
	Saya
35	Shinsaku
	Rika
36	Haruaki
	Azusa
44	Shigeomi
	Karin
45	Yoshihiko
	Mari
46	Susumu
	Mina
55	Renji
	Yuka
56	Toshitsugu
	Shiori
66	Futaroh
	Nagisa

Unusual First Names	
11	Baron
	Princess
12	Alvar
	Jinx
13	Baltan
	Electra
14	Armstrong
	Kannon
15	Golgo
	Nikita
16	Bond
	Suki
22	Reed
	Suzie
23	Raffaello
	April
24	Joe
	Eunice
25	Cain
	Fox
26	Hernando
	Jeanne
33	Killer
	Silvia
34	Tsurayaba
	Tatsu
35	Mars
	Venus
36	Aleste
	Rachel
44	Chipp
	Christie
45	Edge
	Yuffie
46	Tasuke
	Gracia
55	Cygnus
	Mekira
56	Goh
	Kinu
66	Kenji
	Koki

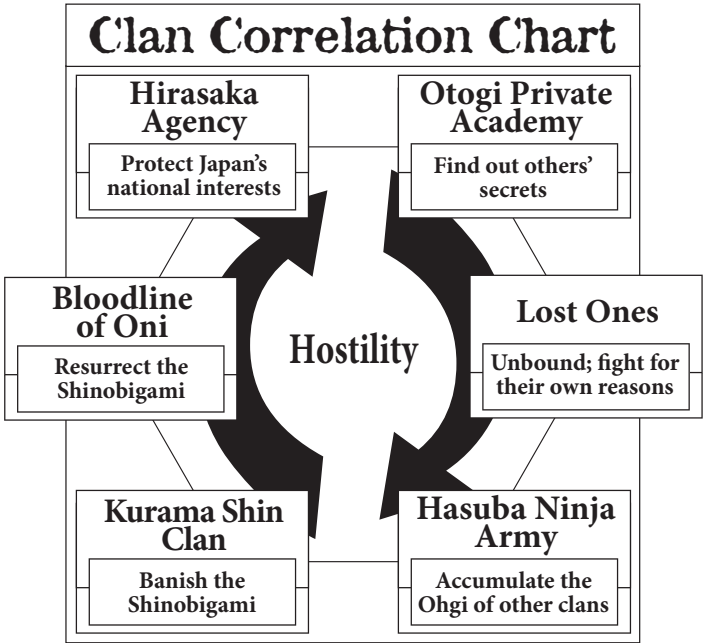
1.02 Gender and Age

A player may choose any gender representation and age for their PC.

1.03 Clan

There are several distinct ninja clans in the Shinobigami world, and each character will belong to one of these groups. A character's clan must be selected before Skills or Ninpo may be chosen. The following six clans are representative of the major powers in this world:

The Six Clans	Goal
Favored Enemy	Each clan has a historic enemy that they regularly come into conflict with. This applies in addition to the goals below.
Otogi Private Academy	Discover the secrets of others
Lost Ones	Fight for your own reasons, without being controlled by others
Hasuba Ninja Army	Learn the Ohgi of members of other clans
Kurama Shin Clan	Prevent the rise of the Shinobigami
Bloodline of Oni	Collect information relating to the rise of the Shinobigami
Hirasaka Agency	Protect Japan's national interests



1.03.1 Rank

After choosing a clan, a character’s rank must then be determined. Rank determines a character’s power, prestige, and influence within their clan. All PCs begin at the rank of Chunin, the middle rank, but will become more powerful and influential as they gain experience (called “Merit” in this game). Ninja of Chunin rank have proven themselves as powerful and resourceful members of their respective clans -- they are able to issue commands to ninja of lower rank but are required to obey those above them in the hierarchy.

As this chart indicates, characters of Chunin rank start the game with six Skills, four Ninpo, and a single Ohgi. Please see section 1.11 for more information on character advancement.

Rank Table

Name	Ninpo	Skills	Ohgi	Merit
Kusa	1	4	-	
Genin	2	5	-	
Genin-Gashira	3	5	-	
Chunin	4	6	1	
Chunin-Gashira	5	6	1	10
Jonin	6	7	2	20
Jonin-Gashira	7	7	2	50
Toryo	8	8	3	100



Hasuba Ninja Army



Hasuba Ningun

Expertise: Technology

Enemy: Kurama Shin Clan

Goal: Collect Ohgi from members of the other clans



Originally descendants of the legendary Saika Ikki army, they focus on researching and developing new ninja equipment.

Their mission is to research and reverse-engineer all of the various ninja arts, so as to replicate them as tools and gear that anyone can use.

Their ultimate goal is to unite all the clans under their banner.

Kurama Shin Clan



Kurama Shin-Ryu

Expertise: Martial Arts

Enemy: Bloodline of Oni

Goal: Prevent the rise of the Shinobigami



A clan of warriors, they were founded by the ancient Kyoto Eight warrior-monks. The Kurama Shin Clan are masters of incredible and powerful martial arts. They use these arts not only to strengthen their bodies and spirits, but also to ensure that monsters and ninja remain hidden, undiscovered, in the shadow of society. They are proud and honorable shinobi.

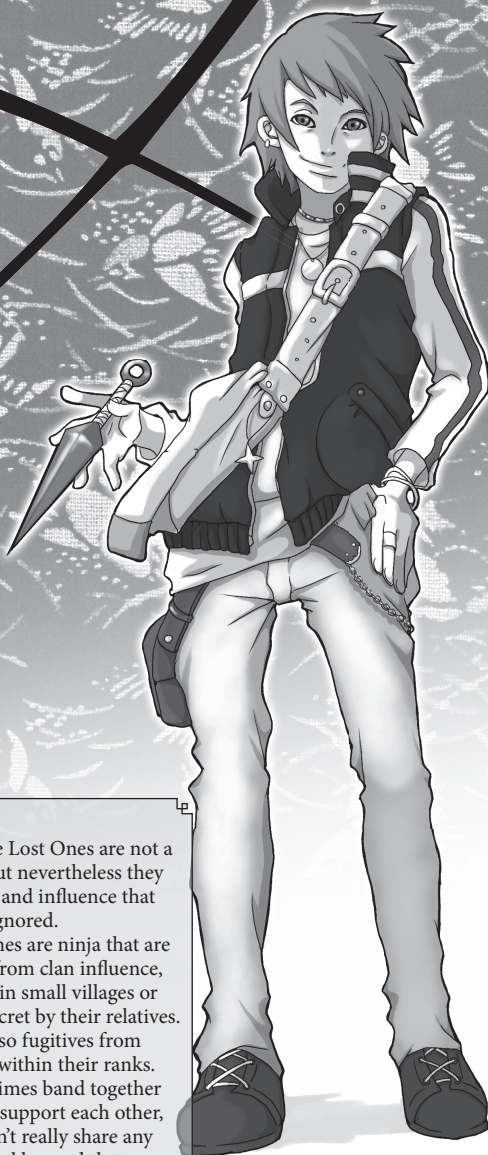
Lost Ones

Haguremono

Expertise: Stealth

Enemy: Hasuba Ninja Army

Goal: Fight for your own reasons, without being controlled by others



In truth, the Lost Ones are not a true clan, but nevertheless they have power and influence that cannot be ignored.

The Lost Ones are ninja that are raised free from clan influence, brought up in small villages or taught in secret by their relatives. There are also fugitives from other clans within their ranks. They sometimes band together to help and support each other, but they don't really share any common goal beyond that.

Hirasaka Agency



Hirasaka Kikan

Expertise: Scheming Enemy: Otogi Private Academy

Goal: Protect Japan's national interests



They are a Japanese secret intelligence agency with strong ties to the ancient Hirasaka Shinto Order. Well connected deep within the government, their highest priority is the safety and *raison d'état* (national interest) of Japan. Their primary tools are political and economic power gained through subterfuge and espionage. They manipulate from the shadows to protect Japan from the shadowy world of demons and magic which constantly threatens to overflow into everyday life.

Otogi Private Academy



Shiritsu Otogi Gakuen

Expertise: Strategy

Enemy: Lost Ones

Goal: Discover the secrets of others



On the surface, Otogi Private Academy is a boarding school for the elite and gifted, covering elementary through high school and beyond.

In reality, it is a secret training academy for boys and girls with unique and special powers; they cannot control by themselves without guidance and training. Otogi Academy has an extensive network of worldwide funding and research grants, as well as backing from several global secret agencies. As a result, they often recruit international exchange students.

Bloodline of Oni



Oni no Kettoh

Expertise: Sorcery

Enemy: Hirasaka Agency

Goal: Collect information relating to the rise of the Shinobigami



They are the descendants of the beings that were called Oni or Tsuchigumo in ancient times. In addition to human sorcerers and people with unusual powers, there are also many non-humans like vampires and lycanthropes called "Nightgaunts" in the ranks of the Oni-Blooded. Having a long history of being persecuted by those in power, they have a deep hatred for figures and institutions of authority.

1.04 Cover

Those who lurk in the World of Shadows must keep their true identities a secret when moving in normal society. To that end, every ninja adopts a Cover that they wear to deceive those around them. Each player may, if they wish, decide their character's Cover. If a player cannot come up with a suitable Cover, they can roll 1d6 on the Clan Cover Chart to find a Cover that suits their clan thematically.

Clan Cover Chart

	Hasuba	Kurama	Lost Ones	Hirasaka	Otogi	Oni
1	Researcher	Detective	Part-timer	Bureaucrat	Primary School	Traveler
2	Mechanic	Martial Artist	Office Worker / Corporate Drone	Police	Secondary School	Revolutionary
3	Artisan	Athlete	Artist	Self Defense Force	High School	Poet
4	Architect	Bodyguard	Host/ess	Lawyer	College	Trade/Import
5	Doctor	Mercenary	Gambler	Politician	Professor	Mystery
6	Programmer	Security Guard	Writer	Religious Leader	Lecturer	Dilettante

1.05 Convictions: The Six-Fold Path

Next, the character's basic personality should be determined. Ninja usually fall into one of the six Convictions described in the Six-Fold Path. A player may choose from the Convictions shown, or 1d6 may be rolled to determine the character's Conviction randomly.

The Convictions of the Six-Fold Path help guide a character's words and deeds. If a player ever finds themselves unsure as to what their character would do in a situation, they may refer to the character's Conviction for inspiration. However, a Conviction is not strictly required. A player may ignore the Conviction rule if they have a clear image of their character's personality.

The Six-Fold Path

1	Chaos	Strife, destruction of society or even self: You want to watch something specific, or perhaps everything, burn
2	Order	You can't abide hypocrisy or weakness, and seek to correct the world through the rule of law
3	Self	Honor, money, power, an ideal, safety: You strive to further some personal goal
4	Passion	Family, a friend, a lover: There's someone you care about, and you seek to protect them
5	Loyalty	You are willing to sacrifice yourself for your clan, a purpose, or a person you believe in
6	Peace	You believe in a future where everyone can be at peace, and walk the path of brotherhood

1.06 Skills

Next, the character's Skills must be chosen. Skills are the disciplines and techniques that the ninja have spent countless generations perfecting. Skills are divided into six Categories, and each clan specializes in one of those Categories.

Each character knows three Skills from their clan's specialized Category and three more Skills from any of the Categories. When they choose a Skill, the player should circle it on the Skill Matrix in the center of the character sheet.

Important: When determining if a Skill fits the situation or not, please consider the entire Skill's description rather than just the Skill's name. In many cases, the Skill includes a suite of related activities.

■ Technology

Technology represents the ability to effectively use various tools and devices. Ninja with an affinity for Technology can skillfully use concealed weapons or specialized equipment. Members of the Hasuba Ninja Army are skilled in the Technology Category.

Engineering	The ability to effectively use and repair machines and electronic devices.
Pyromancy	Use of gunpowder and fire-based tools; knowledge of the properties and handling of heat and fire.
Hydromancy	Use of tools that control water, including diving equipment. Also includes knowledge of various other liquids.
Acupuncture	Knowledge of acupuncture and pressure points. Use of needles to heal or hurt.
Hidden Weapons	The ability to conceal weapons in equipment and everyday items, as well as the use of such weapons.
Apparel	The use of clothing to distract and disguise, or to hide/store various objects.
Ropework	Skills associated with tying knots securely and throwing ropes, including for the purpose of capturing people.
Climbing	The ability to quickly and safely scale walls, fences, and natural obstacles.
Torture	Knowledge of various tools of torture, and how to use them to inflict pain.
Demolition	Includes the use of smoke bombs and other tools of distraction; as well as the destruction of locks, windows, mechanical devices and the like with or without explosive devices.
Burrow	The ability to quickly dig holes through walls and the earth below, or perform excavation.

■ Martial Arts

Martial Arts refers to abilities and techniques used to hone one's control of their body. Ninja with an affinity for martial arts can often move extremely quickly and are capable on the battlefield. Members of the Kurama Shin Clan are skilled in the Martial Arts Category.

Riding	The ability to skillfully drive vehicles and control riding animals.
Ballistics	Skill with firearms, cannons, bows and other projectiles. Also includes the science of ballistics.
Shuriken	Use of all shapes and varieties of shuriken and throwing knives.
Sleight of Hand	Hand-eye coordination and manual dexterity. Can perform precise movements, and quickly execute ninja secret/magical hand-gestures (Kuji-in).

Contortionism	The ability to manipulate one's own body. Keeping perfect balance or dislocating bones and joints also falls under this Skill.
Footwork	Walking without making noise, hiking long distances, and keeping your footing.
Speed	Running, parkour, and the art of moving yourself quickly from place to place.
Aerial Arts	The ability to leap great distances, glide through the air, and land safely when falling from great height.
Hand to Hand	Unarmed combat and grappling: The ability to fight with one's bare hands.
Blade	The use of all melee weapons, starting with swords and blades.
Unholy Strength	The ability to lift, carry, and throw incredibly heavy objects.

■ Stealth

Stealth represents the ability to hide one's presence, while at the same time confusing or misdirecting others. Ninja with an affinity for stealth have heightened senses and are adept at self-preservation. Those called "Lost Ones" by the other clans are skilled in the Stealth Category.

Survival	The skills and knowledge to stay alive in high and low temperature environments, underwater, and other extreme conditions.
Infiltration	The ability to infiltrate enemy territory or dangerous locations and remain under cover for long periods of time.
Escape	Running away from predicaments, freeing yourself from bonds, sliding out of slippery situations.
Interception	Listening to activity through walls and from above ceilings, as well as electronic hacking ability.
Ventriloquism	The ability to make sounds at a distance. Also includes mimicking the voices of others.
Invisibility	The ability to hide oneself.
Disguise	The skill and tools to impersonate another person.
Olfaction	The ability to analyze various smells, and to mask one's own scent.
Multiplicity	Perform many tasks at once, as if you had multiple clones of yourself.
Concealment	Hiding people, objects and information is all under the purview of concealment.
Sixth Sense	Perception beyond the five ordinary senses, allowing one to predict events and outcomes based on experience.

■ Scheming

Scheming is the ability to make things happen in accordance with one's plans by manipulating people and objects. Ninja with an affinity for scheming have a gift for diplomacy and negotiation, and are excellent at influencing others. Members of the Hirasaka Agency are skilled in the scheming Category.

Medicine	The knowledge of how to heal sickness, treat wounds and remove illnesses.
Poison	Knowledge of poisons and other toxins, as well as the ability to employ them effectively.
Trap	The ability to set and avoid traps. Utilizing various sorts of traps and mechanisms on intruders or pursuers.
Investigation	Pull together evidence on people, places, and things, then use it to determine what happened.
Bluff	The ability to hide your true intentions, and detect when others are lying.

Inception	Influence others by planting ideas, suggestions or thoughts in their minds. Mind-hacking.
Performance	Art, music, dance; abilities and knowledge related to all of the performance arts.
Seduction	Using charm and people skills to deceive or control others.
Manipulation	The ability to make people do one's bidding through superior planning and pulling strings from the shadows.
Rumor-Mongering	Create new information – true or false – and spread it through networks of people in order to achieve your ends.
Finances	Represents financial power, and the ability to get what you need when money is involved.

■ Strategy

Strategy represents the ability to improve one's chances of winning skirmishes and battles. Ninja with an affinity for strategy have strong analytical minds, and excellent command of battlefield tactics. Members of the Otogi Private Academy are skilled in the Strategy Category.

Cooking	Knowledge of nutrition, logistics and supply networks. The skills required to cook delicious or highly nutritious foods, and mastery of logistics.
Creature Mastery	Control the actions of animals, beasts and insects.
Nature	Knowledge of the natural world, and how to live and act in the wild.
Guerilla	The effective use of terrain, landmarks, natural cover, buildings and local information in battle situations.
Willpower	Representing the force of will, this Skill is used when overcoming hardships, stress, turmoil and confusion.
Tactics	The Skill of efficiently maneuvering units and troops.
Memory	The ability to remember facts and recall minute details.
Analysis	Observe the movements of the enemy, then analyze and break down their powers and capabilities.
Encryption	The ability to encode and decode messages. Also knowledge and use of hidden gestures, secret languages and cunning metaphors.
Signal	Use signals, signs, writing and calligraphy to pass information or relay secrets and influence people.
Contacts	Make use of the networks of people around you, both in ordinary life and the World of Shadows.

■ Sorcery

Sorcery includes knowledge of the monstrous, the magical, and the manipulation of otherworldly forces. Ninja with an affinity for sorcery understand the rules of the cosmos, and can use legendary magic and esoteric religious power. Oni-Blooded ninja are skilled in the Sorcery Category.

Transformation	The sorcerous ability to change all or part of your body into something else.
Summoning	Summon creatures from other planes to do your bidding.
Necromancy	Control the spirits and bodies of the dead.
Barrier	Define a space, line, or area, and control everything that is allowed to pass in, out or through it.
Binding	The ability to seal away the sorcerous and unnatural abilities of others.
Kotodama	Create and control the magic inherent in words – both spoken and written – and in esoteric Chinese characters.

Illusion	Use sorcery to create realistic and believable illusions, and to manipulate the senses.
Domination	When people see you or look into your eyes, you command them to act as if by suggestion or hypnosis.
Clairvoyance	The ability to see visions of events in faraway places or even other times.
Possession	Your mind can slip into the bodies of others, taking control and forcing them to act against their will.
Curse	Use the dark arts to curse and bring misfortune and disaster upon others.

■ Skill Note A: About “Kotodama”

Kotodama is a word that defies simple translation. It’s the belief that there’s a kind of spiritual power inherent within words and writing, particularly Chinese or Sanskrit characters (it literally means “word-soul”). This belief is found in Shinto and other old belief systems. In the game, it could represent things like:

- * Writing a particular Chinese or Sanskrit character (not a sentence, usually just one word/concept/pictograph) to produce a magical effect. Perhaps drawing the Chinese character for “Open” on a door to unlock it, or “Break” on a cell phone to cause it to shatter.
- * Writing symbols with a calligraphy brush on strips of pure paper, to produce unique one-time, versatile, but small effects (“Fire”, “Bird”, “Reveal”, “Calm”, etc).
- * Chanting a unique mantra to produce a particular magic effect. Perhaps waking someone up from a magical slumber or putting them to sleep, to raise your senses to reveal invisible opponents, and so on.
- * Drawing words or crafting logos to evoke a feeling or cause a magical effect upon the viewer.
- * Kotodama is subtle: Drawing “Fire” on a sheet of paper and throwing it may cause the paper to magically burn like a torch for a few seconds, it will not summon a Pyromancy-grade fireball or blow up a building. While it could potentially be used to reproduce other skill effects, it will never be as powerful as using those skills directly.

While a creative player could try to exploit the versatility of Kotodama, the GM should feel free to reign it in if they think the player is going too far, like regularly using it to produce an effect that clearly belongs to the domain of an existing skill.

■ Skill Note B: About “Domination”

In Japanese ninja folklore, Domination refers specifically to a ninja power where the ninja simply gazes at their target: The target is mesmerized, and can be commanded without even using words. The ninja does not shout orders or take a commanding tone: Instead, like vampire lore, they dominate another’s mind by “staring into their soul”. Depending on the ninja (and player’s description), their eyes may turn red or glow when they perform this act.

1.06.01 Gaps

The thin white squares found between each Skill Category on the character sheet are called Gaps. Once a character's Skills have been chosen, the Gaps on either side of the character's specialized Skill Category should be blacked out. Gaps filled in this way are treated as though they don't exist.

1.06.02 Life Points

Looking at the top of the six Categories found in the Skill Matrix of the character sheet, you will see that each Category contains a white box. Each box represents that Category's Life Point (LP) and allows you to see which Categories have been damaged.

Life Points are an abstraction of a character's physical and mental health. As long as a character has at least one Life Point remaining, they can continue to act. Once a character's Life Points drop to zero, however, they are unable to function.

At the beginning of the game, each character has a Life Point for each Category, for a total of six LP. As Life Points are lost, draw an X through affected Life Point slots to show which Categories are affected.

1.06.02.01 Extra Life Points

PCs may, through the use of Ninpo or the effects of certain Prizes, gain additional Life Points, granting them extra LP slots in which damage can be placed. If a character has any unmarked extra LP slots and takes damage, the damage must be assigned to the extra LP slots first unless otherwise specified.

1.07 Ninpo

Ninpo are the mysterious abilities, attacks, and forms that have been perfected by the ninja clans over many centuries. When used in-game, Ninpo have special effects that can alter the course of play. During combat, ninja use Ninpo to attack their opponents or help their allies.

Chunin-ranked ninja (which includes all starting PCs) begin with the Close Combat Attack Ninpo and four additional Ninpo of their choice. A player may choose their character's Ninpo from both the general Ninpo list and their clan Ninpo list; however, at least one Ninpo must come from the clan list and they may not choose Ninpo from a clan list that is not their own.

When a player chooses Ninpo for their character, they should write down the Type, Cost, Range, Assigned Skill, and Effect in the Ninpo List found on the bottom of the character sheet. A brief description of the Effect -- or even a page reference -- will suffice.

The Close Combat Ninpo found on the character sheet is a basic Ninpo learned by every ninja of every rank. It does not count toward the four Ninpo that are

chosen by new characters, but the player must choose a Skill to use as this Ninpo's Assigned Skill and write it in the space provided.

1.07.01 Types of Ninpo

There are three types of Ninpo: Attack, Support, and Equip.

Attack Ninpo are used during your turn in battle, and deal various types of damage directly to an opponent.

Support Ninpo have a variety of uses including inflicting Status Ailments on opponents or otherwise aiding in combat. By combining the effects of multiple Support Ninpo you can come up with some interesting results.

Equip Ninpo stay in effect at all times once chosen.

1.07.02 Assigned Skills

Assigned Skills are the Skills that are used to activate a Ninpo's effect. If a Ninpo has an Assigned Skill, a Skill Check using the Assigned Skill must be passed before the Ninpo takes effect.

Some Ninpo are listed with an Assigned Skill of "Any," "Any (Category)," or with multiple Skills. In these cases, the Assigned Skill must be chosen from the indicated range of Skills when the Ninpo is selected. Once chosen, the Assigned Skill is recorded in the Ninpo List section of the character sheet and cannot be changed.

1.07.03 Other Limits on Ninpo

The basic limit for the use of Ninpo is this: any given Ninpo may only be used once per Cycle in Drama Scenes, or once per round in combat in Combat Scenes.

The Range of a Ninpo indicates how far away a ninja can be and still use the Ninpo against a target in combat.

The Cost of a Ninpo indicates its ease of use. Ninpo with lower Cost are easier to use than Ninpo with higher Cost.

Please refer to section 6.03 for information on using Ninpo during a Drama Scene, and 7.12 for information on using Ninpo during combat.

ATTACK NINPO

Close Combat Attack *

Skill	Any	Type	Attack	Range	1	Cost	-
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Effect: Close Combat Attack. If the attack is successful, you may deal 1 Close Combat damage to the target.

A normal Close Combat attack.

Cross Cut

Skill	Blade	Type	Attack	Range	0	Cost	1
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Effect: Close Combat Attack. If the attack is successful, you may deal 2 Close Combat damage to the target.

Hold until you penetrate the opponent's space, then in that moment strike with fury.

Poison Fist

Skill	Poison	Type	Attack	Range	0	Cost	1
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Effect: Close Combat Attack. If the attack is successful, you may inflict 1 Close Combat damage and the Paralyzed Status Ailment on the target.

Poison is one of the many tools of a ninja's arsenal. Apply to your claws and attack.

Longicorn

Skill	Unholy Strength	Type	Attack	Range	0	Cost	4
--------------	-----------------	-------------	--------	--------------	---	-------------	---

Effect: Close Combat Attack. If the attack is successful, you may deal 1 Close Combat damage and the target loses 1 Ninja Gear of their choice.

When using all your strength, a ninja can deal damage to both their opponent's body and gear.

Sandbind

Skill	Tactics	Type	Attack	Range	2	Cost	4
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Effect: Close Combat Attack. You may target a single character in range with a Plot Value less than yours. If the attack is successful, deal 1 Close Combat damage, and the target must roll another dodge check at the end of the round, taking 1 Ranged Combat damage on a failure.

The enemy is enveloped in a sandstorm, becoming dehydrated and withering away.

Ranged Combat Attack *

Skill	Any	Type	Attack	Range	2	Cost	-
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Effect: Ranged Combat Attack. If the attack is successful, you may deal 1 Ranged Combat damage to the target.

A normal Ranged Combat attack.

ATTACK NINPO

Blast

Skill	Pyromancy	Type	Attack	Range	1	Cost	1
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Effect: Ranged Combat Attack. If the attack is successful, you may deal 2 Ranged Combat damage to the target.

While this projectile attack does not have a wide range, it packs an explosive punch.

Surefire

Skill	Ballistics	Type	Attack	Range	2	Cost	3
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Effect: Ranged Combat Attack. When the target attempts the Dodge Check they must meet or exceed the Check Result of this attack. If the attack is successful, you may deal 1 Ranged Combat to the target.

A ninja of great skill can boldly strike at an enemy with an unbeatable attack.

Whirlwind Slash

Skill	Ropework	Type	Attack	Range	2	Cost	1
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Effect: Ranged Combat Attack. The target suffers a -1 penalty to the Dodge Check. If the attack is successful, you may deal 1 Ranged Combat damage to the target.

Using rope, strings, or hair, you perform a tricky attack that blindsides your opponent.

Mob Combat Attack *

Skill	Any	Type	Attack	Range	4	Cost	-
--------------	-----	-------------	--------	--------------	---	-------------	---

Effect: Mob Combat Attack. If the attack is successful, you may deal 1 Mob Combat damage to the target.

A normal Mob Combat attack.

Domineer

Skill	Creature Mastery	Type	Attack	Range	3	Cost	4
--------------	------------------	-------------	--------	--------------	---	-------------	---

Effect: Mob Combat Attack. If the attack is successful, you may deal 1 Mob Combat damage and 1 Ranged Combat damage to the target.

Calling on the aid of birds, insects and other creatures, a ninja can send a relentless swarm of small animals after the enemy.

Phantom Soldiers

Skill	Illusion	Type	Attack	Range	2	Cost	4
--------------	----------	-------------	--------	--------------	---	-------------	---

Effect: Mob Combat Attack. If the attack is successful, you may deal 1 Mob Combat damage and 1 Close Combat damage to the target.

An illusory or ghost army is summoned and swarms the ninja's opponent.

SUPPORT NINPO

Take the Hit

Skill	-	Type	Support	Range	1	Cost	-
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo when someone takes damage or loses a Life Point. You may take the damage the character would have taken. You must take the same amount of damage as them (and to the same Life Point categories if possible).

A ninja is trained to throw their life away in service of another or a common purpose. Take a blow meant for someone else.

Poison Eater

Skill	-	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	1
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo at any time. Lose 1 Life Point to cure all Status Ailments you currently suffer.

Ingest a special poison to cure what ails you. "Fight poison with poison" is a Chinese proverb; but ancient ninja took it literally, and crafted a recipe.

Continuous Attack

Skill	-	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	2
--------------	---	-------------	---------	--------------	---	-------------	---

Effect: You may use this Ninpo when someone dodges your attack. You may attack again using the same attack Ninpo, paying the Cost (if any) a second time.

When facing a seemingly invincible enemy, a ninja uses many fast attacks to scratch at their defense until one strike lands true.

Wind Dancer

Skill	Hand to Hand	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	2
--------------	--------------	-------------	---------	--------------	---	-------------	---

Effect: You may use this Ninpo when you deal damage to someone. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, you may use the same attack Ninpo again immediately, paying the Cost a second time.

Find the enemy's weak point. Strike it again. And again. Harder.

Resupply

Skill	Finances	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	-
--------------	----------	-------------	---------	--------------	---	-------------	---

Effect: You may use this Ninpo when you are the Scene Player of a Drama Scene. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, you may regain one piece of Ninja Gear that you have used or lost. You may not have more Ninja Gear than you started with, and you may not recover Ninja Gear that you have given away.

Tools of the trade can always be replenished by having friends within the clan headquarters... or private black-market contacts.

SUPPORT NINPO

Arrow Catching

Skill	Apparel/Sleight of Hand	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	1
--------------	-------------------------	-------------	---------	--------------	---	-------------	---

Effect: You may use this Ninpo when someone makes a successful ranged attack. Make a Skill Check using this Ninpo's skill with a penalty equal to the difference between your Plot Value and the Plot of the character making the attack; on a successful Skill Check, the attack fails.

A long cloak, clothes, a curtain, a tatami mat; anything soft and flexible can be quickly manipulated to block, deflect or hamper the effects of arrows, daggers and even bullets.

Guidance

Skill	Speed/Performance/Barrier	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	2
--------------	---------------------------	-------------	---------	--------------	---	-------------	---

Effect: You may use this Ninpo at the end of the round. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, you may change the battlefield to another of your choice. If two people use Guidance in one round, the player who rolled highest chooses the battlefield. In addition, if the Extreme battlefield is chosen, the Battlefield effect happens immediately.

A skilled ninja seeks to understand the battlefield as well as they understand their enemy; such ninja pull their foes into locations and situations that work against them.

Disharmony

Skill	Interception	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	1
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo when you reveal your Plot Value. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, you may subtract one from your Plot Value. (To a minimum of 0)

Listen to their movements. Listen to their breathing. Listen to their heartbeat. Give yourself a moment to prepare for what comes next.

Resolution

Skill	Transformation	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	3
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo when you reveal your Plot Value. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, you may add one to your Plot Value. (To a maximum of 7)

Tune your reflexes to inhuman perfection, for the next action you make could mean the difference between life and death. Now. Make that move.

Inspiration

Skill	Riding	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	1
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo at the end of the round. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, the round count is increased by one for purposes of determining the number of rounds that have passed. For example, if used at the end of the first round, it would count as the end of the second round, moving into the third round.

Ride your mount, using strategic movement to keep the field of combat in motion. This forces your opponents to spend valuable time catching up, buying you a moment to find inspiration for your next strategy.

SUPPORT NINPO

Destruction *

Skill	[See Effect]	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	2
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Effect: Assign to one of the following skills: Demolition/Aerial Arts/Invisibility/Investigation/Signal/Binding. You may use this Ninpo when someone uses a Support Ninpo with an Assigned Skill in the same Category as the one you selected for this Ninpo. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, you may negate the effect of the opponent's Ninpo. If you take this Ninpo more than once, the assigned skill must be different each time.

The best trained ninja can read their opponents like an open book. They can anticipate, intercept, and negate enemy Ninpo.

Counter

Skill	[See Effect]	Type	Support	Range	2	Cost	2
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Effect: Assign to one of the following skills: Acupuncture/Contortionism/Concealment/Trap/Guerrilla/Domination. You may use this Ninpo when you successfully dodge an attack. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, you may deal 1 ranged damage to the character that attacked you as long as they are within range.

Your opponent missed you by a hair's breadth: Exactly as you planned. Now it's your turn.

Crushing Blow

Skill	Any Technology Skill	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	1
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Effect: You may use this before attempting an Attack Check. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, the attack deals 1 extra damage. If a Ninpo lists multiple types of damage, this only increases the first damage type listed.

Some ninja arts focus solely on improving upon other arts, enhancing their effectiveness.

Assassin

Skill	Any Martial Arts Skill	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	1
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Effect: You may use this before attempting an Attack Check. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, your Critical Value is reduced by 2 for your next Attack Check.

A ninja is skilled at anatomy, including pressure points and vulnerable locations. Target these as you attack.

Body Switch

Skill	Any Stealth Skill	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	1
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo when attempting a Dodge Check. Expend a Ninja Gear to substitute this Ninpo's skill for the skill that would normally be used for the Dodge Check. You may use this Ninpo even if you have Fumbled this round.

The stealthy ninja seizes any advantage available; distract or blind your opponent to avoid their attack.

SUPPORT NINPO

Emotion Manipulation

Skill	Any Scheming Skill	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	1
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo after you have successfully attacked another character. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, choose a character affected by your attack and change one of their Emotional Bonds to anything you wish. You may only change an existing bond, not create new bonds where they do not exist, or remove existing bonds.

In stressful situations like battle, emotions are open to expert manipulation and control. As bodies can be hurt, emotions can be twisted.

Strategic Command

Skill	Any Strategy Skill	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	3
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo when anyone other than yourself attempts a Skill Check. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, you may modify that character's Check Result by +1 or -1. This bonus can stack with EmoMods.

While the battle rages, you see and understand the underlying, hidden flow of action, form, reaction and consequence. Control that flow and you can aid or hinder those around you.

Plot Restriction

Skill	Any Sorcery Skill	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	3
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo when you succeed at an Attack Check. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, your opponent can no longer choose a Plot Value of 3 or higher. At the end of each round, your opponent may attempt a Skill Check using Will to negate this effect.

There are arts that can take control of an opponent's physical form. Apply them well, and watch your enemy slow to a crawl.

EQUIP NINPO

Tough *

Skill	-	Type	Equip	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: You have two extra Life Point slots. When taking damage, deduct Life Points from these slots first. If this Ninpo is chosen multiple times, each additional Tough adds only one Life Point.

Some ninja condition their bodies for incredible vitality.

Expertise *

Skill	-	Type	Equip	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: When choosing this Ninpo, choose a corresponding skill. Even if that skill's Category is disabled, you can still use that skill.

You have burned a particular skill into your body's memory.

Extensive Knowledge *

Skill	-	Type	Equip	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: Choose two Ohgi effects. When attempting an Ohgi Break against an Ohgi of these types, gain a +2 bonus to your Skill Check. If this Ninpo is chosen multiple times, you may only choose one additional Ohgi effect each time.

You are learned in the ways of the Shinobi World. You are a walking ninja encyclopedia.

Vibrato

Skill	Hand to Hand	Type	Equip	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: When you use an Ohgi, other characters present in the scene must succeed on an Analysis skill Check (Called an "Insight Check") or they do not learn your Ohgi.

Some ninja learn to obfuscate their Ohgi through gestures and misdirection, making it harder for others to recognize their methods and sources.

Starvation

Skill	Finances	Type	Equip	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: When you attack during a battle in which four or more rounds have passed, all your attacks deal an additional 1 Ranged Combat damage.

Drawing out the battle, a strategy of attrition will wear down your opponent. That's the moment when you strike.

Water Cracks Stone

Skill	Apparel, Sleight of Hand	Type	Equip	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: When you fail an Ohgi Break Check, make a note of the number of times you have failed against this Ohgi. When you have failed twice or more against a particular Ohgi, your Ohgi Break automatically succeeds. (This does not count as a Critical; if a Check Result is required, it is 10)

An indomitable spirit and relentless persistence will eventually shatter the hardest of stones.

HASUBA NINJA ARMY NINPO

Surprise Attack

Skill	Hidden Weapons	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo when you are the Scene Player of a Drama Scene. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, you may deal 1 Close Combat damage to another character in the scene. A character cannot be affected by this Ninpo more than once in the same game session.

Every ninja leads a double life. Find that part of your opponent that walks in the sun. Then strike when their guard is down.

Spider of Darkness

Skill	Ropework	Type	Support	Range	2	Cost	5
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo instead of making an attack. Choose a single character within this Ninpo's range. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, you may deal 1 Ranged Combat damage. However, the Life Point Category damaged by this attack is not disabled. This is not a traditional attack, so it cannot be dodged.

Cut and rend your opponent using chains, invisible ropes and the like.

Brutal Attack

Skill	Torture	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	1
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo when you succeed on an Attack Check and your opponent fails their Dodge Check. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, expend any one Ninja Gear. You may deal 1 extra damage on the attack. If a Ninpo lists multiple types of damage, this only increases the first damage type listed.

Ninja gear can be leveraged by the skilled to deliver a bone-breaking physical attack.

Sunder

Skill	Demolition	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	2
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo when you have succeeded on an attack and have dealt damage. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, the target suffers a -2 to all Attack Checks for the rest of the battle. This effect cannot be nullified.

A skilled opponent treats their weapon as an extension of themselves. Destroy it and even the odds.

Mechaninja

Skill	-	Type	Equip	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: You may select Support Ninpo from any clan, but not Hidden, Enemy, or Youma Ninpo. However, for Ninpo from outside the Hasuba Ninja Army and its sects, the Assigned Skill for those Ninpo becomes Engineering and the Cost increases by 1. If the Cost was -, it becomes 1.

Some ninjas have implanted mechanical or cybernetic parts to allow them to increase their range of ninja abilities.

Hadesology

Skill	-	Type	Equip	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: Whenever you attempt an Skill Check, you may substitute skills as though the Technology and Sorcery Categories were adjacent.

There is a science to the supernatural. You understand that science.

KURAMA SHIN CLAN NINPO

Drizzle

Skill	Ballistics	Type	Attack	Range	2	Cost	1
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Effect: Ranged Combat Attack. Choose up to two targets within this Ninpo's range. If the attack is successful, you may deal 1 Ranged Combat damage to each target.

A projectile attack that rains confusion on your foes. Confusion, but also shuriken, arrows and bullets.

Evening Calm

Skill	Shuriken	Type	Attack	Range	0	Cost	2
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Effect: Close Combat Attack. When attacking an opponent on the same Plot Value as you, you strike first rather than the attacks occurring simultaneously (unless both characters use Evening Calm.) If the attack is successful, you may deal 1 Close Combat damage to the target.

Wait for the opponent to wind up for their strike, then beat their speed by a fraction of a second.

Silhouette

Skill	Footwork	Type	Attack	Range	-	Cost	2
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo during the Plot phase before you have revealed your Plot. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, choose a character. You start the round on the same Plot Value as that character.

This ability allows you to read your opponent's moves, following them as if you were their shadow.

Heat Haze

Skill	Blade	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	1
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo before making an Attack Check. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, your opponent suffers a -2 to their Dodge Check.

Your blade shimmers with the light of a sun for a split second, distracting your opponent and breaking their defense.

Bloody Determination

Skill	-	Type	Equip	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: When you succeed on an Attack Check and your opponent fails their Dodge Check, you may expend a single Life Point. If you do so, you may deal 1 extra damage with your attack. If a Ninpo lists multiple types of damage, this only increases the first damage type listed.

First, you must understand the limits of your physical body. Now, push far past them, and strike with power.

End of the Beginning

Skill	-	Type	Equip	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: When you attack a character on a Plot Value higher than you, you deal 1 ranged damage in addition to the attack's normal effect.

Every ninja will eventually reveal an opening. Find one in your opponent, and strike true.

LOST ONES NINPO

Spiral Formation

Skill	Invisibility	Type	Attack	Range	0	Cost	1
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Effect: Close Combat Attack. Choose any number of characters within this Ninpo's range. If the attack is successful, you may deal 1 Close Combat damage to each of the targets.

Move in a spiraling motion while attacking, engaging multiple opponents at once.

Scent of Spring

Skill	Olfaction	Type	Attack	Range	3	Cost	4
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Effect: Ranged Combat Attack. All characters within range and on a lower Plot Value than you become the targets for this attack (you cannot choose to ignore a potential target; they all become targets). If the attack is successful, you may either deal 1 Ranged Combat damage to the target OR move them to the Fumble area. You may choose separately for each target.

Produce an intoxicating scent from your body to control everyone downwind from you.

Wandering

Skill	Infiltration	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo during a scene that you are not participating in. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, you may appear in the scene. You may not, however, interrupt any Ninpo, Ohgi, or effects from a check of any kind and must wait to appear until any effects are resolved. In addition, if you appear in a battle after the Plot Phase, your Plot is automatically 1 and you cannot use any Attack Ninpo that round.

You're somehow always in the right place at the right time.

Cicada Switch

Skill	Ventriloquism	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	4
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo when you have been chosen as the target of an attack and there is another character on the same Plot Value as you. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, you may change the target of the attack to someone else on your Plot Value.

By confusing their opponent, a ninja can cause them to strike the wrong target.

Ninpo Copy

Skill	Disguise	Type	Support	Range	2	Cost	4
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo during a Combat Scene when someone within this Ninpo's range uses a Support Ninpo. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, you gain the ability to use that Support Ninpo twice. If you use this Ninpo again before you have used up the previously copied Ninpo, you will forget the previous Ninpo immediately upon learning the new Ninpo.

You watched intently as they used a unique ninja art. Now that Ninpo is yours; you've made it your own.

Shadow Clone

Skill	Multiplicity	Type	Equip	Range	-	Cost	1
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo during the Plot phase before you have revealed your Plot Value. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, you may use two dice for your Plot. After Plots are revealed, choose one to use as your Plot Value.

Ninja can train themselves to move so fast that they appear to be at two places at once. Collapse the waveform and put yourself in a better position.

HIRASAKA AGENCY NINPO

Antitoxin

Skill	Medicine	Type	Support	Range	1	Cost	3
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo during a Combat Scene instead of making an attack. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, you may choose a character within this Ninpo's range and cure one of that character's Status Ailments.

This ability can cure the Status Ailments on yourself and your allies

Reticence

Skill	Investigation	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo after you receive Information from any source. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, you may choose not to share that Information with some or all characters who share Emotional Bonds with you: You may pick which characters can and cannot see the information. Also, all Ohgi Breaks targeting you receive a -1 penalty.

Control the flow of information, and your secrets will remain close to your chest.

Fascination

Skill	Seduction	Type	Support	Range	3	Cost	2
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo during a Combat Scene instead of making an attack. Choose any of the characters within this Ninpo's range that have a positive Emotional Bond towards you to be targets of this Ninpo. Each target character suffers -1 to all rolls, until you hit them with an attack or drop out of battle. This effect cannot be negated.

There are perfumes so powerful they can make opponents inattentive. Use that moment to strike.

Marionette

Skill	Manipulation	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	5
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Effect: You may use this during a Combat Scene when a character with an Emotional Bond towards you begins their turn. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, you may choose that character's actions, though you may not use their Ohgi or Ninja Gear. If they take damage this turn, you take that damage instead.

Learn what makes your enemy tick. Infiltrate their mind. Then bend them to your will.

Social Warfare

Skill	Rumor-Mongering	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo when you are the Scene Player of a Drama Scene. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, choose a character whose Location you know. You may deal 1 Mob Combat Damage to that character.

Not all devastating attacks are delivered by the end of a blade: Attack someone with words, status and social manipulation.

Shaken

Skill	-	Type	Equip	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: When you attack a character that knows your Secret, you deal 1 Ranged Combat damage in addition to the attack's normal effect.

A ninja learns the weakness of their opponent. A weakness is a crack in the wall of their psyche: That crack can be widened; the wall will eventually crumble.

OTOCHI PRIVATE ACADEMY NINPO

Ambush

Skill	Tactics	Type	Attack	Range	1	Cost	1
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Effect: Mob Combat Attack. The Dodge Check for this attack is modified by -2. If the attack is successful, you may deal 1 Mob Combat damage to the target.

Use a group of foes your opponent would never expect, to ambush them when their guard is down.

Rations

Skill	Cooking	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo during a Drama Scene in which you are the Scene Player. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, choose any characters participating in the scene. Those characters may recover 1 Life Point.

Ancient scrolls contain the recipes of hermits and monks; you can cook these mysterious dishes that heal and refresh.

Training

Skill	Memory	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo during a Drama Scene in which you are the Scene Player. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, you may change one of your chosen skills to a different one, permanently.

Training yourself using methods recounted in the Golden Light Sutra, you are able to hone your abilities and master a new skill.

Diversion

Skill	Encryption	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	2
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo when someone attempts a Dodge Check. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, roll 2d6 to randomly choose another skill of the same Category as the Dodge Check skill. The Dodge Check must use the new skill instead.

Ninja can apply misdirection to their attacks, calculated to cause the most confusion in their opponents.

Blitzkrieg

Skill	Signal	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: You may use this during a Drama Scene in which you are the Scene Player, when you have just learned a character's Location. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, you may begin a Combat Scene with that character.

Find the target. Kill the target. Sometimes the direct path is best.

Heart of the Battlefield

Skill	-	Type	Equip	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: When selecting this Ninpo, select a battlefield. When on that type of battlefield, all your rolls receive a +1 bonus, and you are immune to that battlefield's effects.

Through intense training, you have mastered every aspect of a favored battlefield.

BLOODLINE OF ONI NINPO

Vortex of Blood

Skill	Transformation	Type	Attack	Range	3	Cost	1
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Effect: Close Combat Attack. If the attack is successful, you may deal 1 Close Combat damage to the target.

Alter a part of your own body, or even your very blood. Attack your opponent with it.

Meteor Shower

Skill	Summoning	Type	Attack	Range	3	Cost	3
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Effect: Ranged Combat Attack. All characters within this Ninpo's range -- including yourself -- are targets for this attack. You deal 1 Ranged Combat damage to each target against whom the attack is successful.

Using the power of summoning, you lash out with a rain of hail, meteors, or other objects.

Vampirism

Skill	Necromancy	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	1
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo when your attack has successfully dealt damage to an opponent. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, you regain 1 Life Point.

Some ninja have learned the art of stealing life-essence from others.

Enlightenment

Skill	Clairvoyance	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	2
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo after everyone has decided their Plot but before Plots are revealed. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, choose a participating character and a number from 1-6. If the number you chose matches their Plot Value, they are inflicted with the "Curse" Status Ailment.

If you can read their mind, you can access their ninja arts: Seal them away before they are turned upon you.

Demonic Rebirth

Skill	Possession	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	5
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Effect: You may use this during a Combat Scene instead of making an attack. On a successful Skill Check of this Ninpo's skill, you lose one Life Point, and you may immediately begin a Drama Scene where you are the Scene Player. This scene is a flashback to past events. When the flashback ends, the battle continues. This Ninpo can only be used once per combat.

At the most critical moment, you are reminded of a crucial chapter of your life. Hopefully there is a lesson there that will help you now.

Imperial Wrath

Skill	-	Type	Equip	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: When selecting this Ninpo, choose a Category. When you have lost the Life Point for that Category, you receive a +1 modifier to all skill checks until it is healed.

There's a place inside you, a dark place that must never be awakened by another: When that sanctity is violated, you are filled with murderous rage.

ADVANCED NINPO

Asura

Skill	Any	Type	Attack	Range	2	Cost	-
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Effect: Close Combat Attack. Choose any characters in range of this Ninpo to become the targets for this attack. You may deal 1 Close Combat damage to each target against whom the attack is successful. This Ninpo is only available to ninja of Jonin-rank or higher.

A legendary wide area attack only available to expert ninja.

Kaleidoscope

Skill	Any	Type	Attack	Range	3	Cost	-
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Effect: Ranged Combat Attack. If the attack is successful, you may deal 2 Ranged Combat damage to the target. This Ninpo is only available to ninja of Jonin-rank or higher.

A heavy-firepower attack usable only by the ninja elite.

Buddha's Clasp Formation

Skill	Any	Type	Attack	Range	5	Cost	-
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Effect: Mob Combat Attack. Choose any characters in range of this Ninpo to become the targets for this attack. You may deal 1 Mob Combat damage to each target against whom the attack is successful. This Ninpo is only available to ninja of Jonin-rank or higher.

An ancient ability known to only a few, this attack can quickly change the odds in battle.

Sakra Devanam Indra

Skill	Any	Type	Attack	Range	1	Cost	-
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Effect: Close Combat Attack. If the attack is successful, you may deal 1 damage each of Close Combat, Ranged Combat, and Mob Combat to the target. This Ninpo is only available to ninja of Jonin-rank or higher.

A strike spoken of in legends, shrouded in mystery: It is said to have the power to destroy anything in Heaven or Earth.

Spiritual Awakening

Skill	-	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo at any time. Lose 2 Life Points and choose a skill. You gain that skill until the end of the session. This Ninpo can be used only once per session. This Ninpo is available only to ninja of Chunin-Gashira-rank or higher.

Opening your third eye, you realize that all this time you were the master of a ninja art, you just didn't know it until now.

Soulsucker

Skill	Analysis	Type	Support	Range	-	Cost	2
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Effect: You may use this Ninpo when you are the target of or suffer the effect of a Support Ninpo. On a successful Skill Check, record the name of the Ninpo that targeted or affected you. From that point on, any time you are targeted or suffer the effects of that Ninpo, you may attempt another Skill Check using this Ninpo's skill. On a success, the Support Ninpo's effect is canceled. This effect lasts until the end of the session. This Ninpo is only available to ninja of Jonin-rank or higher.

Practitioners of the highest level of ninjutsu can immediately understand Ninpo used against them, and adopt strategies to nullify their effects.

ADVANCED NINPO

Breath

Skill	-	Type	Equip	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: Whenever you attempt an Skill Check in which you need to roll 10 or higher to succeed, gain a +2 bonus. This Ninpo is only available to ninja of Chunin-Gashira-rank or higher.

As the situation around you becomes dangerous, your concentration increases to inhuman levels, and time seems to slow down around you.

Nirvana

Skill	-	Type	Equip	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: When choosing this Ninpo, select a skill Category. When that skill Category is damaged, you are still able to use all skills in the Category, as usual. This Ninpo is only available to ninja of Jonin-rank or higher.

You have trained yourself to a superhuman level in the ninja arts.

Acala the Immovable

Skill	-	Type	Equip	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: When attempting a Skill Check during battle, your Fumble Value becomes [Plot Value - 1]. This Ninpo is only available to ninja of Jonin-rank or higher.

Some ninja train themselves relentlessly in high-speed movement and situational reaction. They are rarely surprised.

Akasagarbha, The Receptacle of the Void

Skill	-	Type	Equip	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: When choosing this Ninpo, choose a space between two Categories. fill in all the Gaps in this space. This Ninpo is only available to ninja of Jonin-rank or higher.

Masters of the ninja arts achieve a level of versatility that others will never perceive, much less attain.

Gale

Skill	-	Type	Equip	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: No matter what Plot Value you select, your Fumble Value in combat is always 3. This Ninpo is only available to ninja of Jonin-rank or higher.

At this level of skill in the ninja arts, your movements are so fast that you can reduce oncoming gale winds to gentle breezes.

Enma, God of the Dead

Skill	-	Type	Equip	Range	-	Cost	-
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Effect: Whenever you attempt an Attack Check, the check automatically succeeds. (This does not count as a Critical, and if required the Check Result is 10). This Ninpo is only available to ninja of Jonin-rank or higher.

To the master ninja, killing techniques come as naturally as breathing.

1.08 Ohgi

Many ninja have honed an incredibly powerful and personal technique, kept secret from even their closest friends. This is called an Ohgi. Chunin characters start with a single Ohgi. Ohgi may be used once per Drama Scene or once per round of combat.

The seven Ohgi types are described below:

- **Critical Hit:** This Ohgi is used in place of an attack. Choose a character that is within one Plot Value as the target. Choose four Categories at random by rolling dice, and the target marks those Life Points as lost. If a Category is chosen where the Life Point has already been marked, the target may choose which remaining Category to mark instead.
- **Area Attack:** This Ohgi is used in place of an attack. Choose any number of characters within three Plot Values to be targets. All targets lose two Life Points. Each target may choose which Categories are lost.
- **Immortal Body:** This Ohgi can be used at any time. Recover Life Points equal to the roll of 1d6 minus the number of times this Ohgi has been used this session – including the current use, so the first use of this Ohgi recovers 1d6-1 LP. In addition, any Status Ailments are removed.
- **Perfect Defense:** This Ohgi can be used any time a character appearing in the same scene loses a Life Point. Choose a single character that has just lost a Life Point as the target. The target's Life Point loss is reduced by four (to a minimum of zero).
- **Perfect Success:** This Ohgi is used before rolling the dice for a Skill Check. You succeed automatically on the Skill Check. This does not count as a Critical, and if a Check Result is required it is treated as 10.
- **Dark Interference:** This Ohgi is used after another character appearing in the same scene rolls dice for a Skill Check. That character becomes the target, and you may turn one of the target's dice into a 1.
- **Extra Ninpo:** When this Ohgi is chosen, select two Attack or Support Ninpo that are available to your character. When you use this Ohgi, you may immediately use one of the two chosen Ninpo. This Ohgi can be used any time that the chosen Ninpo may be used, and the Ohgi's Range and Cost are considered to be the same as the chosen Ninpo. When this Ohgi is used, the Ohgi's Assigned Skill is used for the Ninpo's Assigned Skill.

Choose an Ohgi from the seven types above and record its effect in the Ohgi section of the character sheet, then come up with a visual and audio description of the technique. Once this has been decided, the player should determine which Skill they have circled best fits the image of the technique; this will become the Ohgi's Assigned Skill and should also be recorded in the Ohgi section of the character sheet.

Players should be careful not to betray their Ohgi's effect and Assigned Skill. It is important for a ninja to keep their secret weapon hidden until the moment it is used.

After the Ohgi's effect and Assigned Skill have been determined, the player must give the technique a suitably dramatic name. If a player cannot think of a name, the random Ohgi name charts may be used.

When rolling for a random name, first roll 2d6 and consult the Ohgi Naming Chart to see which charts you will use. Then roll d66 twice—once for each chart shown—to come up with two words or phrases. Combine the resulting words to create the Ohgi name. Feel free to change the order of the words, change the language used, use words similar in meaning or sound, or even use completely different words. You can even mix the Assigned Skill into the name, or append an Ohgi prefix as shown to make the Ohgi feel more authentic.

When combining words, feel free to use joining words (“of”, “of the”) or change the tense of verbs (Fall - Fallen - Falling - Fell).

Decorative Prefix Table

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Critical Hit	Certain Death	Esoteric Sword Art	Kage-Ryu	Demon Blade	Evil Aura	Ninja Killing Technique
Area Attack	Sword Dance	Avatar	Flurry Attack	Massacre Technique	Magic Bullet	Ultimate Weapon
Immortal Body	Hermit's Dharma	Special Move	Hidden Technique	Secret Art	Supremacy	Ultimate Technique
Absolute Defense	Forbidden Art	Heretical Technique	Resurrection	Ultimate Healing	Demonic Medicine	Ninja Science
Perfect Success	Buddha's Protection	Holy Lecture	Rending Art	Mind's Eye	Buddha's Power	Ultimate Will
Dark Interference	Infernal Sorcery	Sanctum Sanctorum	Power Word	Unnatural Sense	Spirit Aura	Magical Ninja Tool
Extra Ninpo	Hidden Attack	Esoteric Technique	Hidden Dharma	The Astounding	Awakening	Reincarnation

Ohgi Name Decision Chart

2	Nature + Nature
3	Darkness + Heaven
4	Nature + Darkness
5	Heaven + Life
6	Darkness + Nature
7	Heaven + Nature
8	Nature + Heaven
9	Darkness + Life
10	Nature + Life
11	Heaven + Darkness
12	Heaven + Heaven

Beauty in Nature Table		Day in the Life Table		Procession of Darkness Table		Heaven and Earth Table	
11	Star	11	Flying	11	Yasha	11	Symbol
12	Moon	12	Shout	12	Swarm	12	Kami
13	Darkness	13	Thief	13	Tiger	13	Time
14	Shadow	14	Thread	14	Shark	14	Dream
15	Thunder	15	Running	15	Dragon	15	Soul
16	Flame	16	Fall	16	Bat	16	Fang
22	Mist	22	Hidden	22	Asura	22	Wound
23	Sky	23	Binding	23	Monkey	23	Death
24	Whirlwind	24	Slash	24	Boar	24	Gold
25	Snow	25	Kill	25	Kitsune	25	Key
26	Avalanche	26	Deception	26	Serpent	26	Flower
33	Cicada	33	Tale	33	Rakshasa	33	Needle
34	Blizzard	34	Shot	34	Lizard	34	Katana
35	Will-o-the-Wisp	35	Union	35	Crow	35	Fist
36	Gathering Cloud	36	Dance	36	Peacock	36	Sound
44	Spray	44	Disorder	44	Dragonfly	44	Blood
45	Tempest	45	Wandering	45	Phoenix	45	Coffin
46	Haze	46	Reverse	46	Scorpion	46	Wheel
55	Kiss	55	Glare	55	Maitreya	55	World
56	Rainbow	56	Seal	56	Spider	56	Eye
66	Crimson	66	Vision	66	Lord of Light	66	Formation

1.09 EmoBonds

The People section of the character sheet will be filled out throughout the course of the game. An EmoBond, or Emotional Bond, reveals how one character feels towards another character.

The bonds that form between PCs also allow special abilities to be used. For more information on EmoBonds, please see section 6.02.03 on Emotion Checks.

1.10 Merit

A character's Merit represents how much service a character has rendered to their clan. A character can spend Merit to become more powerful, by receiving boons and rank from their clan. A new character starts with zero Merit unless they take Flaws as part of their Background.

1.10.01 Backgrounds

You may represent your character's upbringing or history through the use of Backgrounds, each of which has a specific mechanical effect. There are two types of backgrounds: Virtues and Flaws.

At character creation, a character starts off with no Virtues or Flaws. However,

they can choose Virtues as long as their cost is countered equally by Flaws. New players should avoid backgrounds for their first session, as they can make the game a little complicated.

1.10.01.01 Virtues

Virtues give a character a beneficial effect. Before the session begins, a character may spend the required amount of Merit to adopt a Virtue. At the end of a Session, a character may abandon a Virtue. Upon doing so, that character will regain the Merit that was spent on that Virtue. The virtues and their Merit costs are detailed on this table.

Safehouse	1
When you succeed at a Recovery Check, you either recover two LP, or remove two Status Ailments.	
<i>You have a safehouse that no one knows about, that you retreat to when danger strikes. You spent a lot of time designing it, and it provides a safe place to rest and recover.</i>	
Clout	2
When purchasing additional Ninja Gear, the Merit cost for the gear is halved (round up for fractions).	
<i>Your status and importance are known well among your friends and members of your clan, who provide you with equipment and materials at a reduced cost.</i>	
Traitor	2
When you take this Virtue, choose one of the other ninja clans. You gain a +1 bonus to Information Checks made to learn the Secret or Location of a member of that clan.	
<i>You have a loyal spy planted deep within another clan.</i>	
Kizuna	2
When you take this Virtue, choose one of the other characters, and set the EmoBond of your choice towards them. You may pick from the EmoBond list or define your own. Characters who have this Virtue can, in future sessions, set this same EmoBond towards that character before play begins.	
<i>You share a special unbreakable bond of fate – a kizuna – with another person.</i>	
Hardened	3
At the end of each Cycle, your Skill Check to recover from any Status Ailment receives a +2 bonus.	
<i>From a young age you have spent a great deal of time conditioning your body with small dosages of poisons, magic and curses. Now you are resistant to many ailments that would debilitate others.</i>	
Star of Fate	3
Once per session, when you are acting strongly in accordance with your chosen Conviction, you may reroll the dice for a single failed roll of any kind. The final decision of whether the character is acting in accordance with their Conviction or not is up to the GM. If it is determined that you are not, you can attempt to use this Virtue again later in the session.	
<i>Your fate seems to be guided by a particular star or constellation. You have embraced this, dedicating your life to following the path it sets for you. These stars and constellations have various names, but most support a particular belief or conviction ("Star of Misfortune"; "Star of Faith"; etc.)</i>	

1.10.01.02 Flaws

Flaws give characters detrimental effects in exchange for a specified amount of Merit. Once selected, a character's Flaws can never be changed. However, at the end of a Session, if the GM feels that a character actively overcame their Flaw, the character may remove the Flaw. The flaws and their Merit bonuses are detailed on this table.

Lack of Emotion	1
When choosing this Flaw, review the twelve EmoBonds on the EmoBond chart, and choose one of them. You cannot take this EmoBond. Whenever this EmoBond's number is rolled on the table, you must pick the opposite EmoBond. However, you can be given this EmoBond through Spoils of Battle conditions and Ninpo effects.	
<i>The piece of your heart responsible for a particular emotion is missing.</i>	
Code of Chivalry	1
During battles in the Main Phase when you are not the Scene Player, the participants can refuse you permission to enter the battle. However, if one of the participants is someone you share an EmoBond with, and is outnumbered two to one or greater, you are allowed to use Incursion as normal to assist the outnumbered character.	
<i>You romanticize stories of the samurai code, and honor and justice on the battlefield. For ninja, this kind of belief in fair fights and glory - rather than raw results - is unacceptable and dangerous.</i>	
Fugitive	2
When taking this Flaw, pick one of the other clans. This is the clan that you originally belonged to. Whenever a ninja from that clan learns your Location, you take one point of Ranged damage.	
<i>You used to belong to a different clan than the one you are in now. Members of that original clan are still after you.</i>	
Illicit Love	2
When choosing this Flaw, pick one of the other characters. Whenever you take an EmoBond of "Affection" or "Devotion" to a character other than the chosen character, you take one point of Ranged damage.	
<i>You've attracted the love of someone powerful, someone not to be trifled with. Their feelings are strong, smothering, and they will tolerate no rivals.</i>	
Battle-Crazed	2
When you are the Scene Player and choose a Combat Scene, you must roll randomly on the Battlefield Table to select the Battlefield.	
<i>You are always hungry for war. As such, you are ready and eager to fight with a total disregard for time, place and circumstances.</i>	
Cold-Hearted	3
Other characters may take positive EmoBonds with your character, but they may never give you positive Influence bonuses to your checks.	
<i>As a ninja, you've betrayed or been betrayed too many times to count. Over time, you've become incapable of feeling empathy for others.</i>	

1.11 Ninja Gear

Ninja Gear are tools frequently used by all ninja. There are three types: Beads of Life, Soma Pills, and Prayer Seals. When a piece of Ninja Gear is used, it is expended and gone for good. A character starts with two pieces of Ninja Gear, to be selected at the beginning of each Session. They may choose two of the same type, or two different pieces, as they see fit.

Bead of Life: This item may be used at any time. When consumed, a ninja regains a lost Life Point or recovers from a Status Ailment.

Soma Pill: This item may be used after you have rolled dice for a Skill Check. Consume this item, and reroll the Skill Check. You can avoid a Fumble result this way.

Prayer Seal: This item may be used after another character appearing in the same scene as you rolls dice for a Skill Check. Alternatively, it can be used when a character not appearing in the current scene rolls dice for a Skill Check, if your character is also not in the scene. When this item is used, the character must reroll the Skill Check, ignoring the previous result. This can be used to make an ally reroll (and avoid) a Fumble result, or to make an Opponent reroll a Critical result or other success.

1.11.01 Extra Gear

For every two Merit they spend, a character can start the session with an extra piece of Ninja Gear: a Bead of Life, Soma Pill, or Prayer Seal. However, a character may never have more than six Ninja Gear at any one time – including the two free starting ones. A character with six Ninja Gear may not gain any additional Ninja Gear under any circumstances.

Any Ninja gear, whether free or bought with Merit, is lost at the end of the Session with no compensation.



2 – Conflict Resolution: Skill Checks

In Shinobigami, whenever a character performs a major action for which the outcome is uncertain, a Skill Check is used to resolve the action and determine if the outcome is a success or failure.

During the game, ninja will be attempting to perform a myriad of extraordinary feats. They may be trying to uncover an enemy's secret identity or break into a compound riddled with traps and guarded by high-tech security systems. They may be trying to manipulate others to fight for their cause or snare an unwitting opponent in a cunning trap. Skill Checks are used to resolve these situations.

Outside of combat scenes, Skill Checks are rolled by the active character, and are not “defended against” by the target: Success or failure is determined solely by the single die roll of the player taking the action.

2.01 Order of Resolution

When a Skill Check is performed, the players go through the following steps:

1) Determine Appropriate Skill

The GM determines the Skill most suitable to the challenge at hand, if it's not already clear to everyone. There are also many situations where the Skill will be determined by the rules.

2) Confirm PC's Skills

Next, the player checks to see if their PC has the Skill determined by the GM.

If a PC has the Skill circled on their Character Sheet, they will have a high chance of success. If the character does not have the Skill circled, they must use a different Skill in its place, called the Replacement Skill. The player will then have to find the circled Skill on their Character Sheet that is closest to the Skill determined in step 1; this is the Skill the player will use to roll the Skill Check.

Using the Skill determined in step 1 as a starting point, move up, down, left, or right towards the PC's closest Skill, counting the number of squares it takes to reach it. Each Gap that hasn't been filled in counts as a square, but Gaps that have been filled in are ignored.

Unless a character has the Hadesology Equip Ninpo, the Skill Matrix does not “wrap around,” meaning that a player may not count by moving from the bottom Skill to the top, and the Technology Category is not connected to the Sorcery Category.

3) Confirm Target Number

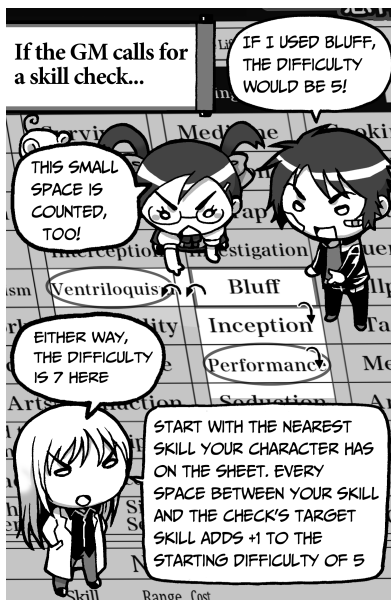
The Target Number (TN) is the number that a character is trying to meet or exceed when rolling dice; the higher the number, the lower the chances of success will be.

If the player determined in step 2 that they have the appropriate Skill circled, their TN is 5. If they must use a different Skill for the roll, as determined in step 2, their TN is [5 + the number of squares counted in step 2].

4) Roll the Dice

Roll 2d6. The sum of the numbers showing on the dice is called the Check Result. If the Check Result meets or exceeds the Target Number determined in step 3, the Skill Check is a success. On the other hand, a Check Result lower than the TN is a failure.

This is the basic format of a Skill Check. Three circumstances that have special effects on Skill Checks are explained below.



2.02 Roll Modifiers

This is an optional rule that the GM can use when there is an action in the game that they feel might be very easy or very difficult, based on the characters and what is currently happening in the scenario. The GM can modify the Skill Check by one to make the action a little easier or harder to perform. This rule should be used sparingly, if at all.

When a character is attempting an action that is easy to succeed at, the GM can apply a positive modifier called a bonus. When a particularly difficult action (even for an extremely skilled and versatile ninja) is being attempted, the roll can receive a negative modifier called a penalty. The modifier is either a +1 or -1 to the check, and is announced before the dice are rolled. Whenever the roll has been modified, the Check Result is the sum of the dice values plus or minus any applied modifiers.

2.03 Special Results

There are two special dice results that have powerful effects: Criticals and Fumbles.

Only the numbers on the dice matter when determining if a roll is a Critical or a Fumble. Even if modifiers would raise or lower a Check Result to a value that would become a Critical or Fumble, it does not count as a special result.

2.03.01 Criticals

Rolling a Critical represents a character achieving an incredible success. A Critical occurs during a Skill Check when the Check Result is the same or higher than a particular number – the Critical Value. Unless otherwise specified, the Critical Value is 12 (in other words, a Critical usually only occurs when both dice naturally come up as sixes). The Critical Value can never be 13 or higher: A roll of two sixes is always a Critical.

A Critical is an instant success, ignoring the Skill Check's Target Number. In addition, a character that rolls a Critical may also immediately recover one Life Point or recover from a single Status Ailment.

2.03.02 Fumbles

Rolling a Fumble represents a character failing a Skill Check in an unthinkable manner. During a Skill Check, a Check Result that is equal to or lower than a particular number is considered a Fumble. That number is called the Fumble Value.

During Drama Scenes and during the Plot phase of a Battle Scene, the Fumble Value is 2 (both dice naturally come up as ones). Once Plots have been chosen during a Battle Scene, a character's Plot Value is also their Fumble Value. The Fumble Value can never be 12 or higher. If the Fumble Value is 1 or less, a Fumble is not possible.

When a character rolls a Fumble, they automatically fail the Skill Check, even if the Check Result would otherwise meet or exceed the Target Number. If the Fumble occurred during a Drama Scene or during the Plot Phase of combat, the player must roll 1d6 to randomly determine a Status Ailment from the Fumble Chart. If the Fumble has occurred during any other portion of a Combat Scene, the character suffers a condition called Backlash: See Section 7.08.

Fumble Table

1	Something isn't right... For the rest of the Cycle, you take -1 to all Checks.
2	Crap! You lose one Ninja Gear of your choosing.
3	Information leak! Every other character can learn either your Location or your Secret (or one of your Secrets, if you have more than one.)
4	You let your guard down, or lose control of your abilities! Lose a Life Point in the Category of your choice.
5	An enemy's scheme? You've fallen into a trap, and receive a Status Ailment. Roll on the Status Ailment table.
6	Whew, that was close. Nothing special happens... this time.

2.03.03 Die Priority

If it somehow happens that the Fumble Value is as high as the Critical Value, the Critical Value becomes the Fumble Value +1.

2.03.04 No Usable Skills

If, due to the loss of Life Points or the Paralyzed Status Ailment, you are unable to use any Skills, you may still attempt Skill Checks. However, you will succeed only on a Critical result.

2.04 GM's Discretion

The GM is free to use their discretion any time a Skill Check involves a Replacement Skill.

If the GM feels that the Replacement Skill used in a Skill Check feels unnatural, they may ask the player, "How will this Skill allow you to succeed?" If they then feel that the player's answer is valid and interesting, they should allow the player to continue as normal. However, if the GM is not satisfied with the player's answer, the GM should come up with another, more suitable Skill for the player to use as the Replacement Skill.

Please use the GM's Discretion rule only when playing with a group that fully understands the rules of Shinobigami.

The GM's Discretion rule does not apply to any Skill Checks during combat.

2.05 Determining Random Skills

There are times when a rule in Shinobigami may ask you to come up with a random Skill. The Categories and rows of the Skill Matrix are numbered in preparation for just such an occasion.

To choose a random Skill, the GM should first roll 1d6 to determine a Category, followed by rolling 2d6 to determine the Skill within that Category. If the Category is already determined, the GM should simply roll 2d6 to determine the Skill.

3 – Session

A single game of Shinobigami is called a Session. A Session typically runs between four and six hours, depending on the number of players and how familiar they are with the game rules. A Session of Shinobigami is similar to an episode of an anime or drama – each game is distinct, with a story arc that opens and closes in the same sitting. Each session can be an episode which is part of a longer campaign; or the group may choose to explore other, unrelated events in the same world.

A Session typically consists of the GM describing a situation that the PCs must react to; the players listen to the description and in turn describe the actions their characters take in response to the situation. The GM then describes the effects of their actions, and describes the new situation that has unfolded as a result. A Session moves along like this, bouncing between the GM and each player in turn. For a comprehensive example, please refer to the Replay Part of this book.

A single Session is broken up into three parts: the Introduction Phase, the Main Phase, and the Climax Phase. Each phase is explained in depth in its own section.

3.01 Session Preparation

There are two types of preparation that should be completed before a Session: pre-game prep and game day prep. Let's begin by explaining pre-game preparation.

To Be Prepared Before Game Day:

The GM will have to put together the Scenario. For more information on Scenarios and how to create them, please reference section 11. The GM will also have to communicate the appropriate PC rank to the players (normally this is always “Chunin”).

The players, meanwhile, need to prepare PCs of the appropriate rank. For more information on character creation, please reference section 1. If players already have PCs at the appropriate rank from previous games, they may use those characters. Each player should also find something small to represent their character, such as a miniature, cardboard counter, or anything else that will be easy to remember.

Game Day Preparation:

Players need to make sure that they give the GM time to look over their character sheets before the game begins.

During the session each player must make sure that the Ohgi and Ninja Gear section of their character sheet is out of view of the other players. It can be folded under or cut off the sheet completely.

The GM will prepare the scenario's PC Secrets, and have them ready to hand out to the players.

3.02 Cycles

Cycles are a concept used in Shinobigami to make sure that each character has an equal chance to act. During each Cycle, each character will perform a single major action, usually making a single die roll during their scene in order to do so. While each character is limited to one major action, there are no limits to simple actions, such as asking allies for advice or looking at your surroundings. What exactly constitutes a major action will be explained in section 5 -- Main Phase.

At the beginning of a Cycle, play starts with the player to the left of the GM. This player is called the Scene Player, and they hold that title until they have finished their major action and their turn ends. After that the next player clockwise gets their turn – though with the GM's permission, the players may come up with their own turn order. Once all players have had a turn as Scene Player, the Cycle ends and a new one begins.

3.03 Master Scenes

When the Scene Player changes, the GM may, at their discretion, choose to conduct a Master Scene. During a Master Scene, the Game Master takes a turn as the Scene Player.

During a Master Scene, the GM takes control of a Non-Player Character according to the needs of the current scenario, and may also include PCs in the scene if they want to interact with them. The GM may also create special rules that come into play during a Master Scene. Master Scenes commonly expand upon what is happening to the Non-Player Characters behind the scenes: Perhaps a quick narration of the actions the major antagonists are taking where the PCs can't see them.

Sessions of Shinobigami do not require Master Scenes: They are simply a tool to be used if more exposition or NPC camera time would help liven up the session.

3.04 Ready and Exhausted

As each player has their character conduct a major action during their Scene, they should place a die or token over the illustration portion of their character sheet. A character with a die on their character's illustration is considered to be "Exhausted." This is to show that the character has already performed their major action for this Cycle.

Conversely, a character without a die placed on the illustration portion of the character sheet is considered to be "Ready." A Ready character has not yet performed their major action for this Cycle.

At the beginning of each Cycle, all Exhausted characters become Ready – all of the players should remove the die from the illustration portion of their character sheet.

4 – Introduction Phase

Each Session begins with an Introduction Phase, during which each character is introduced, explaining their connection to the situation at hand. The Introduction Phase consists of a single Cycle, and every PC gets their own quick scene. In most cases, these scenes show us a quick “day in the life” moment of each ninja, right before they receive their mission and leap into action. Dice are not rolled in the Introduction Phase Cycle, it is simply an opportunity to quickly establish the characters and do some light roleplay.

After each character’s scene, the Game Master should explain the background of the scenario to the Scene Player, handing them their Mission and Secret.

Each character’s Mission is a goal they have been tasked with, and which they should try to accomplish by the end of the session. If a character is able to complete their Mission, they earn Merit at the end of the session, but on the other hand, if they fail to fulfill their Mission, they will forfeit that Merit.

A character’s Secret is a vital fact that the character is hiding from everyone else. Most Secrets also have some sort of connection to the character’s Mission. A player may never willingly show or tell their Secret to another player – to do so goes against the ninja code.

The GM should write the Missions and Secrets on the handout found at the back of this book, and then fold the handout so that the Secret is facing down when it is given to the players, in order to make sure that no Secrets are revealed.

Once all players have had their turn as Scene Player, the Introduction Phase ends and the Main Phase begins.

4.01 People Chart

As each PC makes their debut in their Introduction Scene, the other players should write the Scene Player’s character name in the People Chart section of the character sheet. The players should also write down the names of any NPCs that the GM designates or who have their own Introduction Scene. This means that these NPCs have their own Missions and Secrets and may become valuable allies, sources of information, or bitter enemies.

5– Main Phase

The Main Phase forms the core of a session of Shinobigami. It begins at the end of the Introduction Phase and concludes when specific conditions set by the scenario are met. Typically, scenarios have conditions that end the Main Phase after three Cycles, or after all Secrets have been uncovered.

During the Main Phase, it's the players' turn to take charge of moving the game forward. The rules allow the Scene Players to set scenes, deciding who appears and what happens.

A scene in the Main Phase is one of two types: Drama or Combat. Each player chooses which type of scene they want to play when it is their turn to act as Scene Player.

6 Drama Scenes

Drama Scenes depict dramatic interaction between characters, such as an argument, negotiation, or investigation.

6.01 Scene Chart and Direction

To begin a Drama Scene, the Scene Player describes exactly when and where the scene is taking place. If the player has trouble quickly setting a scene, then they should feel free to determine the atmosphere of the scene by rolling 2d6 and consulting the Scene Chart. If a scenario features multiple Scene Charts, the Scene Player may choose the Scene Chart that is the best fit for their desired scene. Rolling on the Scene Chart is not a requirement for starting a scene, but it can be a helpful tool to quickly create a memorable situation.

Once the general setup of the scene has been determined, the Scene Player should figure out which characters will be appearing in the scene. PCs may be included in the scene if their player gives permission, while NPCs may appear with the GM's permission. Unimportant NPCs with no Secret or character data (called Extras) may take part in the scene at the Scene Player's whim.

After the characters and setting (both time and place) have been determined, the players act out the scene, with the Scene Player narrating events as necessary. A scene generally lasts a minute or two and usually features some roleplaying between characters, though if the Scene Player wishes, it can simply be a quick descriptive narration of the actions they take during the scene.

Scene Chart

2	The scent of blood fills the air. Signs of a recent battle... Wait, what's this? It appears that the battle is still going on!
3	Is this a dream? What's done is done... and yet, I can never forget what happened...
4	Buildings stretch out in rows below you. From here, you can see across the whole city...
5	It's so dark, it's like the world has ended. And yet, in this absolute darkness, you begin to whisper...
6	You peacefully pass the time. You almost begin to forget about the war in the shadows...
7	The air in this forest is pure and clear. The cries of songbirds and the sound of leaves rustling are carried on the wind...
8	A chattering, raucous crowd surrounds you; the inane, naive babble of those blind to the Shadow War fills your ears.
9	A heavy rain begins to pour down; people pull out their umbrellas and begin a mad dash for cover under the building overhangs.
10	The wind begins to blow madly, whipping hair and clothing about. Something is about to happen...
11	Drunks yell at passersby, touts call out to anyone who looks promising, hostesses entice potential customers. Ahh, just another night downtown...
12	The sun smiles down on you, filling you with light and warmth. For those who spend their lives warring in the shadows, this light blinds, this warmth burns...

Sometime during the scene, the Scene Player must choose an action to attempt: A Recovery Check, Information Check, or Emotion Check.

6.02 Drama Scene Checks

At some point during each Drama Scene, the Scene Player chooses between a Recovery, Information, or Emotion Check. They then choose a Skill and attempt a Skill Check using that Skill. If the check is successful they immediately benefit from the chosen Drama Scene Check. Making this check is considered to be their Major Action. Once the Scene Player's character receives the benefit of the Drama Scene Check, they are considered Exhausted.

A Scene Player may attempt the Drama Scene Check at any time during the scene.

It's highly recommended that each character use a different Skill in each Drama Scene when it is their turn as Scene Player: Even if they are particularly strong at one Skill, using the same Skill over and over is repetitive, and produces flat characters and repetitive scenes. Some GMs may wish to make this suggestion a requirement in their sessions.

6.02.1 Recovery Check

When a Scene Player succeeds at a Recovery Check, their character may either recover a single Life Point that was lost earlier in the session or remove one Status Ailment they are currently suffering.

6.02.2 Information Check

Before a player attempts an Information Check, they must first choose a character (who does not have to be in their scene). The player must then choose to try to learn either that character's Secret or their Location.

If the check is successful, the player then learns the Information (Secret or Location) they chose from the GM, in the case of an NPC, or player, in the case of a PC. Upon learning this Information, the Scene Player should mark off the appropriate box next to the target's name on the People Chart portion of their Character Sheet. The target character's player does not roll dice to defend against or oppose the Scene Player's action; success or failure is determined solely by the Scene Player's roll.

6.02.02.01 Open Knowledge

Once all the players have learned a particular Secret, that Secret becomes open knowledge. At that point, the players may speak freely about the open Secret. Until then, players must not discuss their own or others' Secrets openly, not even indirectly (strongly alluding to it out loud, etc).

6.02.03 Emotion Check

Before attempting an Emotion Check, the Scene Player must first choose one of the other characters taking part in the scene.

Then, if the Skill Check is successful, both the Scene Player and the player (or the GM) controlling the target character roll 1d6 and consult the Emotion Chart to determine the Emotional Bond (or EmoBond) that their character now feels towards the other. For each possible result on the chart there is a positive and negative choice; it is up to the player to decide which of the two their character feels. Once the EmoBonds have been determined, each player should make note of this in the People Chart section of the character sheet, making sure to circle the plus or minus symbol as appropriate to the nature of the EmoBond.

If you attempt an Emotion Check towards a character with whom you already have an EmoBond, you may replace the previous EmoBond with the new one or keep the previous EmoBond instead. Characters sharing an EmoBond have access to InfoShare, Incursion, and EmoMods.

EmoBonds

	Positive (+)	Negative (-)
1	Empathy	Mistrust
2	Friendship	Anger
3	Affection	Envy
4	Loyalty	Contempt
5	Admiration	Inferiority
6	Devotion	Murderous Intent

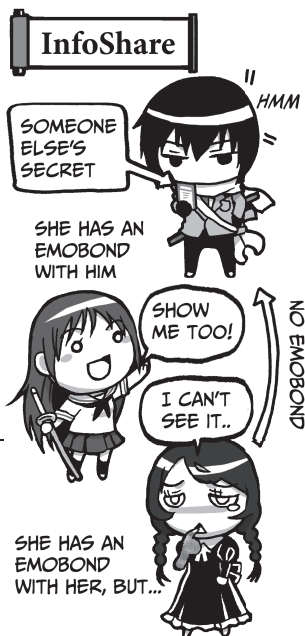
6.02.3.1 InfoShare

Whenever a character learns a piece of Information, any characters towards whom they hold an EmoBond automatically learn that same piece of Information. This is called InfoShare; or, when using it, InfoSharing. However, a character that learns Information through InfoSharing does not spread that Information through their own EmoBonds—the Information does not “daisy chain.”

And remember – you may never voluntarily reveal your own Secret.

6.02.3.2 Incursion

Whenever a character begins or is declared a target of a Combat Scene, any character with an EmoBond toward that character may choose to take part in the combat scene. This is called an Incursion.



6.02.3.03 EmoMod

Whenever a character attempts a Skill Check, any character with an EmoBond toward that character may affect the outcome of the roll. This is called an Emotional Modification, or EmoMod.

When using an EmoMod, a character with a positive EmoBond may give the target a +1 bonus to their roll, while a character with a negative EmoBond may give the target a -1 penalty to their roll. In order to use an EmoMod, a character must be appearing in the same scene as the target attempting the Skill Check. Use of an EmoMod must be declared before the Skill Check is attempted. An EmoMod may not be used once the dice have been rolled.

The GM may require the player to describe how their character is helping or hindering the target (perhaps they do so from the shadows, without the target character's knowledge; shuriken thrown from the shadows are a common occurrence).

Each player can use EmoMods in a Drama Scene once per Cycle and in a Combat Scene once per round.

6.03 Drama Scene Ninpo

Only Support Ninpo with descriptions that read “During a Drama Scene”, “When you are the Scene Player of a Drama Scene”, “Can be used anytime” or the like

may be used during a Drama Scene.

Not all Support Ninpo require a Skill Check to use. However, for those Support Ninpo that require a Skill Check to succeed, the Fumble Value for the Skill Check is raised by the Ninpo's Cost.

Some Ninpo may only be used by the Scene Player of a Drama Scene. Ninpo without this distinction may be used by other characters during a scene. However, unless the Ninpo description specifically states "You may use this Ninpo during a scene that you are not participating in," that character must appear in the scene to use their Ninpo.

6.04 Other Things You Can Do

Any character appearing in a scene—Scene Player or otherwise—may volunteer to trade Ninja Gear and/or any Information they have learned about the others (or even their own Information) with another character appearing in the same scene. This includes Ohgi, Locations, Secrets (of other characters, not your own). This does not require a roll, just an agreement between the two characters. As always, though, a character may not voluntarily reveal their own Secret.

7 - Combat Scenes

Combat Scenes are scenes used to depict physical combat between characters. Starting a Combat Scene is considered a Major Action, so once a Combat Scene is finished, the character that started the scene becomes Exhausted, just like if they made a Drama Scene Check.

7.01 Combat Scene Preparation

In order to initiate a combat, the Scene Player must choose a single character whose Location they know. The Scene Player's character then engages the target character in a Combat Scene. At this time, any characters with an EmoBond towards either character in the combat may use Incursion to join the battle.

Once a Scene Player has chosen to begin a Combat Scene, the GM should spread out a copy of the Velocity System sheet so that it is visible to all players. This sheet is used to keep track of each character's position during battle.

In addition to a copy of the Velocity System sheet, a counter, miniature, or unique die for each player should have been prepared before combat begins. When you declare your Plot Value, place your counter on the number that matches your chosen Plot Value.

7.01.01 Special Incursion

The Special Incursion rule is optional, and the GM should announce whether or not it is in effect at the beginning of the session (the default is "off"). This rule allows the possibility for more people to show up to fights that happen during the Main Phase, by allowing characters to use Location as well as Incursion from EmoBonds to join the fight.

Special Incursion: If this rule is in effect, any time a Combat Scene begins, other characters may attempt to enter the scene before the battle begins if they know the Location of one of the two original combatants (the attacker or the target). This applies only at the start of the battle: They cannot join after the combat begins.

In order to perform a Special Incursion, character must succeed at a Skill Check using a skill randomly selected by the GM rolling on the skill table (or choosing one from the skill table if it makes sense for the scene).

This rule does not replace the normal Incursion rule: A character who has an EmoBond with any of the combat participants can always join the fight as per the normal Incursion rules (7.13).

If the Special Incursion rule is in effect, one-on-one battles will occur less often. If you want more one-on-one battles to occur, or if you want to save time, you may want to ignore this rule.

7.02 Battlefield

If the Scene Player chooses, they may change the Battlefield before combat begins. If they decide to do so, the Scene Player must either roll 1d6 on the Battlefield Chart to determine a Battlefield randomly, or propose a Battlefield based on common sense according to where the battle is taking place. For example, if the Scene Player ambushes another character in a tight alley, they might propose “Congestion” to the GM. Each Battlefield has special rules that affect the battle.

If the Scene Player does not choose to change Battlefields, the battle takes place on Level Ground (no effect). The GM may also decide to set the Battlefield based on what is happening in the game.

Battlefield		
1	Level Ground	Nothing Special
2	Water	In or under an ocean, river, pool, or even a sea of blood. On this Battlefield, all Dodge Checks suffer a -2 penalty.
3	High Place	On top of or between buildings, on a sheer cliff, or other dangerous place. All characters who fumble also take a point of Close Combat Damage.
4	Bad Weather	Storm, blizzard, or even a rain of missiles or gunfire. All Combat Ninpo ranges increase by 1.
5	Congestion	Crowds, traffic, or even tight/enclosed spaces. The Fumble value increases by 1.
6	Extreme	Outer space, the bottom of an ocean, on lava, in the Underworld, and so on. At the end of every round, the GM rolls 1D6. If the result is less than or equal to the number of rounds that passed in this battle, all participants take 1 point of Close Combat damage. If any character drops out or leaves the battle, they must roll on the Status Ailment table.

7.03 The Flow of Battle

Each combat is divided into Rounds (not Cycles), which proceed in the following manner:

1. Plot
2. Attack Resolution
3. End of the round

If the Combat scene is taking place during the Main Phase, anytime a character takes 1 or more LP damage from another character’s attack or action, the damaged character is dropped from the scene. The last character remaining is declared the winner, and receives the spoils of battle; please see section 7.11 for more information. If all characters drop out of the scene, or if a number of rounds equal to the number of combat participants have passed without a clear winner, then the battle is a draw: The status quo does not change (if a Prize is involved, it does not change hands), and the participants back off to lick their wounds, swearing eventual vengeance.

VELOCITY SYSTEM				ヴェロシティシステム			
零	壱	弐	参	肆	伍	陸	死地
Mundane 静止した時間	Ghost Walk 幽霊歩き	Shadow Run 影走	Neuro Speed 思考速度	Sonic Speed 音速	Bullet Speed 弾速	Light Speed 光速	F.T.L. 超光速
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Fumble Area 0	Fumble Area 1	Fumble Area 2	Fumble Area 3	Fumble Area 4	Fumble Area 5	Fumble Area 6	Fumble Area 7
On a Fumble, you automatically fail all rolls for the remainder of the round	On a Fumble, you automatically fail all rolls for the remainder of the round	On a Fumble, you automatically fail all rolls for the remainder of the round	On a Fumble, you automatically fail all rolls for the remainder of the round	On a Fumble, you automatically fail all rolls for the remainder of the round	On a Fumble, you automatically fail all rolls for the remainder of the round	On a Fumble, you automatically fail all rolls for the remainder of the round	On a Fumble, you automatically fail all rolls for the remainder of the round

7.04 Plot

Each player taking part in the battle takes a six-sided die and secretly choose a number between one and six, by placing the die face-up on the table and hiding it under the palm of their hand. This process is called Plot, and the hidden number chosen by each player is their Plot Value. Once all participants have completed their Plot, everyone reveals their Plot Value simultaneously.

Once Plot Values have been revealed, each participant should place a counter representing their character on the number on the Velocity System sheet representing the Plot Value they have chosen.

Characters then carry out their Attack Resolutions in order from highest to lowest Plot Value.

7.04.01 Important Point about Plot

Besides determining the order of Attack Resolution, each character's Plot Value is also their Fumble Value. In other words, the higher the Plot Value is, the sooner a character acts, but the easier they Fumble.

7.04.02 When Plot is 0

If during Plot you reveal no die, or if you reveal a number that is then reduced below 1 by an enemy Ninpo, or your Plot Value somehow becomes less than 1, a Plot Foul occurs. When a player has a Plot Foul, their Plot Value becomes 0. A player may commit a Plot Foul on purpose.

A character with a Plot Value of 0 has a Fumble Value of 2.

Any character with a Plot Value of 1 or higher may, regardless of Range, choose to target a character with a Plot Value of 0. This also applies to Support Ninpo that have a Range.

Attacks that hit multiple targets may target characters with a Plot Value of 0, regardless of Range.

Critical Hit and Area Attack Ohgi may target characters with a Plot Value of 0, regardless of Range.

7.05 Attack Resolution

A character may make a single attack every round, on their turn.

To make an attack, the attacking character chooses an attack Ninpo from their List and selects an opponent within the Range of that Ninpo. Range is the difference between the attacking and defending characters' Plot Values. You cannot attack an opponent who is outside of the Range of your Ninpo.

The attacking player then rolls a Skill Check using the Assigned Skill of the chosen Ninpo; this is called the Attack Check.

If the Attack Check is a success, the defending player makes a Dodge Check. The Dodge Check is a Skill Check using the same Skill that was used to make the Attack Check. If the Dodge Check is a success, the attack fails, and has no effect. If the Dodge Check fails, the attack succeeds and the defending character takes damage as detailed in the Ninpo description.

If the Attack Check is a failure, the attack misses completely and no Dodge Check is necessary.

7.05.1 Close Combat

Close Combat attacks are hand-to-hand or direct attacks, typically using Skills such as Martial Arts or Blade.

For each point of Close Combat damage received, the attacker randomly selects a Category by rolling 1d6 and counting from the left. That Category's Life Point is damaged—the player must mark the box at the top of the Category's column. If that Category's LP has already been damaged, the victim may choose which Category receives the damage instead.

7.05.2 Ranged Combat

Ranged Combat attacks are projectile attacks by shuriken, blowdarts, guns, and other weapons that strike from a distance.

For each point of Ranged Combat damage received, the defending character chooses a Category. That Category's Life Point is damaged—the player must mark the box at the top of the Category's column.

This is why Close Combat attacks are generally more “dangerous” than Ranged Combat attacks: It is easier to target far-away characters with Ranged Combat

attacks, but when they do damage, the defender can choose where they take the damage, so they can take the damage to a Category/column where it will have little effect, such as where they have no Skills present. However, since Close Combat damage is rolled randomly, there is a one in six chance that the defender will take damage to their clan's primary Category, or a Category where a potent combat Skill is located. Taking Close Combat damage is risky!

7.05.3 Mob Combat

Mob Combat attacks are attacks by mobs, swarms or gangs, familiars or mario-nettes, or other indirect sources of damage.

Instead of causing LP damage, mobs cause the defending character to suffer a Status Ailment. For each point of Mob Combat damage received (almost always 1), the defending player rolls 1d6 and consults the Status Ailment Chart to determine which ailment they are afflicted with.

Some of the ailments stack. If the player rolls an ailment that they already have and it is stackable, it is applied again (refer to the status ailment description). If the player rolls an ailment that they already have and it is not stackable, then that result is nullified: They do not have to roll again to get a new ailment, they are "safe" because they are already affected.

Status Ailment Table

Roll	Type	Recovery	Description
1	Breakdown	Engineering	All of your Ninja Gear becomes unusable. At the end of every Cycle, make an Engineering Skill Check: A success removes this ailment. This Ailment does not stack.
2	Paralysis	Contortionism	One of your Skills (randomly selected) becomes unusable. At the end of every Cycle, make a Contortionism Skill Check: A success removes all instances of this Ailment. This Ailment can stack, affecting a different Skill each time.
3	Heavy Wound	Survival	When you make an Attack Check, Information Check or Emotion Check, you take a point of Close Combat damage. At the end of every Cycle, make a Survival check: A success removes this ailment. This condition does not stack.
4	Missing in Action	Finances	During the Main Phase, you can no longer appear in any character's scenes, just your own. At the end of every Cycle, make a Finances Check: A success removes this ailment. This condition does not stack.
5	Amnesia	Memory	One of your EmoBonds (randomly selected) no longer has any effect, as if you had no EmoBond with that character. At the end of every Cycle, make a Memory Skill Check: A success removes all instances of this Ailment. This Ailment can stack, affecting a different EmoBond each time.
6	Cursed	Curse	One of your Ninpo (randomly selected) is sealed, as if you never had it. At the end of every Cycle, make a Curse Skill Check: A success removes all instances of this Ailment. This Ailment can stack, affecting a different Ninpo each time.



7.05.04 Attack Check Criticals

When an Attack Check results in a Critical, a special effect occurs. If the Critical result is from a Close Combat Attack Ninpo, the Ninpo does an incredible 1d6 damage... or its normal damage if that would be higher. The attacking player may roll to determine the damaged Categories as normal; however, if a Category is rolled that already has been damaged, the defending player does not have to pick another Category to take the damage. That point of damage simply has no effect.

If a player rolls a Critical result when using a Ranged Combat Attack Ninpo, the Ninpo does 1d6 damage or damage as normal, whichever is higher. The defending player may choose which Categories are damaged.

If a player rolls a Critical result on a Mob Combat Attack Ninpo, they may choose which Status Ailment to inflict upon the defending character.

Critical effects only affect a Ninpo's basic damage type (the one listed at the start of the Ninpo description). If a Ninpo has multiple damage types, the Critical damage only applies to the Ninpo's basic damage type.

For example, if a player rolls a Critical while using the Domineer Ninpo, Ranged damage would not be increased as it is considered to be a Mob-type Ninpo.

7.06 Escape Checks

A defending character may choose to use the Escape Skill for the Dodge Check instead of the Attack Ninpo's Assigned Skill. If this special Dodge Check (called an Escape Check) succeeds, the attack has no effect and the defending character drops out of combat.

7.07 Life Point Loss and Recovery

As Life Points are lost, characters become more and more restricted.

First of all, when a Category has taken damage, all Skills within the Category are disabled until the Life Point is recovered.

Second, once a character has lost all their Life Points, they become Knocked Out. A character may never have less than zero Life Points.

Life Points can be recovered by Recovery Checks, use of the Bead of Life Ninja Gear, various Ninpo effects, the Immortal Body Ohgi, etc. When a Life Point is recovered, make sure to erase the X in the Life Point box. The player performing the recovery effect can choose which Life Point to recover.

A character can never recover more Life Points than they lost during the current session.

7.07.01 Knocked Out

A character with zero Life Points is Knocked Out and can perform no actions. As soon as a Knocked Out character recovers back to one Life Point or more, they are no longer Knocked Out.

During the Main Phase, any character that is Knocked Out during a scene may automatically recover one Life Point before the beginning of the next scene.

7.08 Backlash

During combat, when a character rolls a Fumble during the Attack Resolution or End of the Round phases, they automatically fail all subsequent Skill Checks that round. This is called Backlash – they pushed themselves too hard by going too fast or attempting Ninpo beyond their reach, and need time to recover from this dazed state.

A character suffering Backlash must move their counter to the Fumble Area corresponding to their Plot Value.

A character suffering Backlash may still attempt actions that do not require Skill Checks, such as Ohgi or using Ninja Gear. The Perfect Success Ohgi will allow a Backlashed character to succeed at a Skill Check, for example. There may even be Ninpo that specifically allow characters to attempt Skill Checks when Backlashed.

The Backlash condition expires at the beginning of the next round.

7.09 Simultaneous Attacks

If multiple characters are on the same Plot Value, their attacks occur simultaneously. For the sake of convenience, the actions of the player closest to the GM are handled first, but in game time these actions are occurring at the same moment.

Any damage, Backlash, or status ailments that occur during simultaneous attacks do not take effect until all characters on the same Plot Value have finished their attacks. Any effects that may occur due to damage or successful attacks are handled in the same way.

For example, characters A and B are on the same Plot Value. For the sake of convenience, character A goes first and attacks with Poison Fist, which can apply the Paralyzed status ailment. Character B tries to dodge and rolls a Fumble. Normally, B would take one damage and the Paralyzed status ailment from the attack in addition to Backlash (since they Fumbled). However, because the attacks are simultaneous, these effects will not take place until after B's attack is completely resolved.

In this example, if both characters attack successfully and cause each other to take damage, they would both drop out of combat.

7.10 End of the Round

Once all characters participating in the combat have taken their turns, the round ends. If a player so chooses, they may now elect to forfeit and have their character drop out of combat.

Then, if one of the following two conditions has been met, combat ends:

- There is only one (or no) character left standing.
- A number of rounds have passed equal to the number of participating characters.

As long as neither of these conditions are met, combat continues to the next round, beginning with Plot.

If, at the end of the Combat Scene there is only a single character left, that character is the winner. At that point, any characters that have dropped out of the combat become the losers.

If, at the end of the Combat Scene, all characters have dropped out, or if there are 2 or more characters left standing, there is no winner; the status quo remains, and any Prizes (if present) do not change hands. The characters leave the battlefield, often vowing to fight another day.

7.11 Spoils of Battle

At the end of combat, the winner may select any one of the losing characters who participated in the fight, and claim one of the following rewards:

Information

The winner learns the target's Location or Secret.

Emotion

The winner chooses an Emotional Bond with the target. The winner may set their own EmoBond towards the target, or set the target's EmoBond towards them. If a previous EmoBond exists, it is overwritten. Further, if the GM allows, the winner can pick any EmoBond description they desire for this – it does not have to be one of the 12 set words from the EmoBond list.

Prize

If the target was holding a Prize, the winner may choose to take control of it.

7.11.01 Special Circumstances

The GM can create a more complicated scenario by not declaring the owner of a Prize from the start of the session, thus removing the option of taking the Prize as a reward in combat. In this case, the GM should create a way to find the keeper of the Prize. (The easiest way to do this is to include this information in the Prize-keeper's Secret).

7.12 Using Ninpo During Combat Scenes

Characters participating in battle may only use a single attack Ninpo during their turn, but they may use any number of Support Ninpo as long as they adhere to the timing noted in each Ninpo's description text. However, each Support Ninpo can only be used once per round.

Many Ninpo have a Range assigned to them. This limits the characters that the user can target with that Ninpo. A character can only be targeted when the difference between the Ninpo user and target's Plot Value is equal to or less than the Ninpo's Range.

Many Ninpo also have a Cost assigned to them. During a single round, a character can use a combination of Ninpo which have a total Cost equal to or less than their Plot Value. If a character's Plot Value changes during a round, the new Plot Value becomes the Cost limit. Please note that Ninpo used during the Plot step of each round do not count against the Cost limit.

7.12.01 Using Ninpo During the Plot Phase

During the Plot phase of the combat round only, a character may use Support Ninpo even if the total Cost of those Ninpo would exceed their Plot Value for that round. However, the total Cost for all Ninpo used in a round can never exceed six. Also, if the Cost of the Ninpo used during the Plot phase is higher than the character's Plot Value that round, the character cannot use any additional Ninpo with a Cost greater than zero – even during the Attack Resolution phase.

There is no Backlash effect for Fumbles during the Plot phase; instead consult the Fumble Chart.

7.13 Incursion and Joining Combat Mid-battle

A character may join a Combat Scene in progress. In order to do so, a player must declare an Incursion during the Plot phase, before Plot Values are declared. Also, their character must have an EmoBond with any of the current combat participants. Upon doing so, the joining player must then choose a Plot Value in the usual way along with the other players.

Ninpo such as “Wandering” allow characters to join battle outside of the Plot phase. However, these effects force the character's Plot Value to become 1 and disallow attack Ninpo during their initial round.

Additionally, no effect allows a character to join a Combat Scene in the middle of a Ninpo, Ohgi, or other resolution. If a character declares their intention to join while an effect is being resolved, they will join only after the current resolution is complete.

7.14 Influence

Any player not participating in a Combat Scene may, once per round, influence the course of the battle. This is simply called Influence. This is similar to EmoMod, but it does not require an EmoBond with the target, and it can be positive or negative regardless of any EmoBond with that target.

Influence affects a Skill Check by a character participating in a Combat Scene by either adding a +1 bonus or a -1 penalty. In order to do so, the Influencing player must describe how this bonus or penalty occurs in the scene. Influence must be declared before the dice are rolled for the influenced Skill Check – once the dice have been rolled, Influence may not be used.

Note that Influence can only be used by players whose characters are not involved in combat. If a player's character is part of the combat, they may instead use EmoMod to modify their chosen target's roll once per round, as per the EmoMod rules.

Characters that were involved in a combat, but dropped out or were knocked out cannot use Influence in that combat.

8 – Climax Phase

The final stage of the session is the Climax Phase: the final battle that concludes the scenario. The Climax Phase is treated as a single Master Scene in which all the players participate. The rules are the same as a Combat Scene with a few differences, detailed below.

The Game Master determines the conditions that must be met for the Climax Phase to occur in a scenario.

8.01 Dropping Out of Battle

Unlike a Combat Scene in the Main Phase, the loss of a single Life Point is not enough to force a character to drop out during the Climax Phase. Instead, a character is only dropped from battle when all LP are lost. Escape Checks are not allowed during the Climax Phase unless the GM allows it. However, there are situations where a character may, depending on what happened during the session, simply cease to have their heart in the fight or have any interest in continuing; in such a situation the GM may allow the character to drop out of combat, forfeiting their claim to the Prize.

8.02 Ending Conditions

The GM may set the conditions for the end of the Climax Phase as they deem appropriate.

For example, the GM may decide to end the Climax Phase after a number rounds equal to the number of participants (like the Main Phase), or they may make it longer or shorter. They may also end the Climax Phase as soon as a particular character (an NPC antagonist, for example) drops out.

The GM may also set conditions that allows for multiple characters to become winners. If they do so, the GM must explicitly state how characters can win before the combat begins.

8.03 Flashbacks

Each character may take advantage of a Flashback once during the Climax Phase to achieve one of the following two effects:

Skill Check Bonus

Before rolling the dice for a Skill Check, a player can reveal their character's Secret and roleplay a flashback scene relating to it. Upon doing so, they receive a +3 bonus to the Skill Check.

Damage Bonus

To receive a bonus to damage, the character must first succeed on an Attack Check and their opponent must fail their Dodge Check. The player must then

reveal their character's Secret and roleplay a short flashback scene related to it. After the short revelatory scene concludes, the character deals a point of Close Combat damage in addition to their attack's normal effect.

8.04 Death

A character drops out of combat when their Life Points are reduced to zero (after all healing and other effects are applied), commonly falling unconscious or retreating into the shadows. However, the player has the option for their character to die instead. If a player chooses for their character to die, they choose one of the following effects to resolve immediately. Character death is permanent, and that character may never participate in another game of Shinobigami.

Attack

You may choose a single Attack Ninpo and any combination of Support Ninpo, using each once. The Cost for all Ninpo drops to 0, and all Skills become available, even if their Category was damaged/locked.

Confession

You may share any Information in your possession – including Secrets – with a single character.

8.04.01 NPC Death

When an NPC's LP is reduced to zero by the effect of a Ninpo or Ohgi, the player who inflicted the damage may choose for that NPC to die. An NPC that dies does not have the option to perform an attack or confession.

9 - Ohgi

Players may use their Ohgi any time they meet the timing requirements specified in the Ohgi type's description. Each Ohgi may be used during a Drama Scene only once per Cycle, and during a Combat Scene only once per round.

If the details of a character's Ohgi have not yet been revealed to anyone, that player must simply declare the name of the Ohgi and its effect to invoke the Ohgi.

Once an Ohgi is invoked, all characters present in the scene become aware of the Ohgi's details. Those characters may check off the Ohgi box next to the name of the character that invoked their Ohgi.

Ohgi details are treated as Information. In other words, if a character that has an EmoBond towards your character learns someone's Ohgi details, you would automatically learn it as well. However, a character's Ohgi details may not be learned via an Information Check during a Drama Scene.

9.01 Ohgi Break

If other characters in a scene know the details of an Ohgi, then they may attempt an Ohgi Break after the player declares the Ohgi's name and effect to activate it.

An Ohgi Break is a Skill Check that can completely nullify the effect of an Ohgi. In order to perform an Ohgi Break, your character must be present in the same scene as a character trying to use their Ohgi and must know the details of the Ohgi you are trying to break.

An Ohgi Break is performed by attempting a Skill Check using the target Ohgi's Assigned Skill. If the Skill Check is successful, the Ohgi is broken and has no effect on any character (but is still considered used).





TASTE THE OHGI OF
THE MARUDOKU-TOH!

URBAN ERADICATOR ART:
STREETS OF WARPING
DEATH!



MY GOD...



DIE,
MOTHER★%*@S!!

10 – Ending

Each character gets an epilogue at the conclusion of the Climax Phase, before the scenario ends. For each epilogue, the GM should reflect on the outcome of the session and come up with a fitting ending.

The GM should then give a short description of the outcome of the character's story, or have one final Cycle to give each character a final scene.

10.01 Earning Merit

Once the curtain falls on the final scene, characters have a chance to gain Merit. Everyone should review the actions of each character and see if they meet any of the conditions for receiving Merit. For each condition that is met, the character receives the amount of Merit shown in the Merit Chart.

Some Merit conditions are abstract ideals; if it is unclear if an abstract condition has been met, the players should discuss and come to a consensus. If the group cannot come to an agreement, the GM has the final word.

Merit Rewards

Points	Type	Description
1	Clan Goals	Over the session, you worked towards the goal of your clan, defeated a member of your clan's rival clan, or successfully blocked them from completing their Mission/Goal.
1	Last Ninja Standing	The character participated in the Climax Phase, and did not drop out of combat.
1	Roleplay	A character receives this reward if their player did a good job of playing the character, including their emotions and convictions.
1	Prize Held	The character attained the Prize—even temporarily—at any time in the scenario. Starting with the prize does not count, unless you lost and later regained it.
1	Heartstrings	Each player votes for the character that moved them the most. The character with the most votes receives one point of Merit. You cannot vote for yourself.
3	Mission Complete	The character completed their mission (their True Mission/Secret Goal, if they have one).

10.02 Respec

When a session is complete, each character completely restores their Life Points, resets all Information, and loses any Prizes and remaining Ninja Gear. At the start of the next session, if the player chooses to use the same character again, they will start at full health, with no Information or Prizes, and begin the game with two pieces of Ninja Gear as usual.

Between sessions, players are free to change their characters' Skills, Ninpo, and Ohgi within the limits of their clan rank, and may gain or abandon Backgrounds. A character may gain one Flaw and/or purchase one Virtue in-between each session.

If a character chooses to abandon a Virtue that they have gained, they gain Merit equal to the Merit cost of the Virtue(s) abandoned. If a character made progress towards overcoming a Flaw during the session, the GM may decide whether or not to allow the character to discard the Flaw. The character is not required to repay the Merit gained for taking the Flaw.

10.03 Using Merit

Merit can be spent during Respec on Backgrounds and Ninja Gear as explained in Section 1, as well as on gaining ranks.

10.03.01 Gaining Ranks

Characters can improve their rank within their clan, moving up to the next rank in the hierarchy. The Rank Chart in Section 1.03.1 contains the Merit costs for rising to each new rank. A Chunin ninja would need to spend 10 Merit to move up to Chunin-Gashira and a Chunin-Gashira ranked character must spend 20 Merit to move to Jonin. From there, it would cost 50 Merit to become Jonin-Gashira, then finally 100 more to become TORYO.

Increases in rank are permanent, and each increase brings with it additional Skills, Ninpo, or even Ohgi. Additionally, ninja of Jonin rank or higher gain access to the exclusive and powerful Ninpo listed at the end of the Ninpo section. A character may only gain rank once after any given session, and must complete another session before they can gain another rank.

11 – Scenario

The GM must prepare a scenario for each game of Shinobigami. A scenario is usually very simple, consisting of the story, setting, NPC data, and PC handouts for the session that the players will be participating in.

This section provides a step-by-step guide to writing a scenario, though it will be helpful to have a copy of the Scenario Sheet (See the Appendix) on hand while reading through it. Sample scenarios, found at the end of this section and online, can be used as is, or as inspiration for novice GMs trying to get a feel for how to create and run a scenario. GMs running their first roleplaying game are encouraged to use one of these sample scenarios for their first game.

11.01 Scenario Type

There are several different types of possible scenarios for Shinobigami. The first thing to do when designing one is to choose the type of scenario you'd like to create from the list below.

■ Versus

In a versus scenario, players face off in two or more opposing groups of ninja. To create a versus scenario, the GM must create two opposing factions: for example, a team that must kill a certain NPC, and a team that must protect the NPC; or a group that is trying to recover a specific Prize, and another group that is trying to prevent them from doing so. It is helpful to complicate things further by using conflicting Missions and Secrets; giving a team member a traitorous Secret makes for an interesting Climax Phase.

It is recommended that GMs new to Shinobigami start with a versus scenario.

■ Cooperative

In a cooperative scenario, players team up to fight a powerful enemy. To create a cooperative scenario, the GM must first create an enemy “boss” powerful enough to take on the players during the Climax Phase. It may be helpful to set a trigger that begins the Climax Phase as soon as the boss’ Ohgi or weak point has been revealed. Including the boss’ Ohgi details, Location, or a Climax Phase trigger as NPC’s Secrets or special scenario Prizes can make for a compelling Main Phase.

A cooperative scenario is recommended for GMs and players who want to play Shinobigami in a manner similar to other roleplaying games.

■ Battle Royale

In a battle royale, the players are locked in a free-for-all battle that only ends when a single ninja is left standing. GMs are advised to use conflicting Secrets, and a valuable or powerful Prize helps to raise tension between players.

Battle royale scenarios can be incredible fun with a group that enjoys the player-versus-player mindset, but the Climax Phase in these scenarios can take a long time to complete. Also, depending on how the players decide to work together, the scenario can become unbalanced, with one side easily overpowering another. Battle royale scenarios are suggested for groups that are looking for PVP action and have enough time to set aside for a long final battle.

■ Custom

In a custom scenario, the lines between the versus, cooperative, and battle royale scenarios are blurred: rival ninja that find they are bound by their Secrets against another foe mid-game; a group of ninja head to a moon base to engage an enemy only to find that there is only enough oxygen for one of them to survive the trip home; or even a group of ninja with no memories that must recover each other's Secrets to find out who their allies truly are. Three- or Four-way versus battles, a Prize that throws a well-meaning cooperative game into an all-out battle royale melee—there are countless ways to create unique and exciting scenarios.

11.02 Background Situation

The next step in scenario creation is for the GM to come up with the outline of the events that will draw the player characters together. These events will form the backbone of the major conflict in the scenario. Section 12, which details the World of Shadows/Shadow War, may be useful for GMs setting their scenarios in a traditional Shinobigami world.

When creating your situation, consider the time and location that will form the setting for the scenario. The GM should not, however, determine how players will interact with events—this is up to the players to determine during their scenes—though they should make notes on events that might possibly occur as the scenario progresses.

11.03 Number of Players

The GM must also determine the number of players to be involved in the scenario. Though the game is playable with two to six players, the ideal number is four. It is highly recommended that versus scenarios have an even number of players -- if there are an odd number of players in a versus scenario, the GM should include a Secret-bearing NPC that joins the smaller team.

11.4 Handouts

Handouts are sheets loaded with information that are handed to each player at the beginning of the session. The GM should copy the Handout sheet found at the end of this book and fill in Missions and Secrets for each player. These should be written in accordance with the scenario's background situation.

11.04.01 Missions

Every character in every session of Shinobigami has a goal to accomplish, whether by their own choice or because of a leader's order. The GM should take care to make sure that the Mission assigned to each character is possible for them to complete.

Missions in versus and battle royale scenarios should instigate conflict between players: orders to defeat the opposing team or to take control of a Prize are simple and effective. On the other hand, cooperative scenarios run more smoothly when all players are given Missions that mesh seamlessly.

■ Example Missions:

- Secure the Prize before the end of the scenario
- Defeat the traitor/boss
- Find someone
- Protect someone
- Protect something
- Kill someone
- Become involved with a specific character
- Achieve a story goal as determined by the scenario
- Interfere with someone else's Mission
- Make sure all characters survive

11.04.2 Secrets

Secrets are the pieces of information that each character is trying to hide, so they may never willingly tell anyone their own Secret. Some Secrets include a "True Mission." In those cases, completing the character's public Mission is meaningless: Only completing their True Mission counts for earning Merit. If a character's Secret includes a True Mission, please make sure to explain this rule to the players at the beginning of the session.

It is also possible to include effects in Secrets that change a character's Mission. For an example of this, please see Eito and Aban's Missions in the replay section. When including an effect that will let a character change their Mission, you are essentially handing them two Missions. Which Mission they complete will be up to the player.

■ Example Secrets:

- You have the Prize
- You are actually the Prize
- You have a secret condition to fulfill before the end of the session: Learn three Secrets; have two positive EmoBonds; protect PC X; etc.
- You are actually PC X's true parent/sibling
- You are in love/hate with PC X
- You are actually a traitor
- You are another character's alternate identity

- The condition needed to proceed to the Climax Phase
- An enemy's Information: number of underlings, Ohgi, Location, etc.
- Background information
- You actually have no Secrets

11.04.03 Lies and Truth

The world of Shadows is a dark place, and the air is thick with lies. Ninja are constantly looking for ways to deceive each other in order to come out on top. Because of this, it is acceptable to give Missions that are feints or outright lies. However, the GM must make sure that Secrets always tell the truth.

If you are trying to lead the players in a certain direction without giving away the truth, then please use phrases like, "It seems..." and "You believe..." in Drama Scenes.

11.05 NPCs

The acronym NPC stands for "Non-Player Character," meaning characters that are under control of the Game Master. Depending on the scenario, these could be rivals to the PCs, a powerful enemy, the target of a plot, or a scheming mastermind. Each NPC's background, name, age, gender and personality should be prepared. NPCs can also have Secrets and Missions.

When an NPC is expected to join battle as an enemy or ally, please follow the character creation rules to give the character Skills, Ninpo, Ohgi, and Ninja Gear. Alternately, the Enemy Data found in the book may be used.

11.05.01 Extras

NPCs that are not very important have no date or handout, and are called Extras. The GM is able to create and introduce Extras at any time. Likewise, a Scene Player is also free to create and introduce Extras at any time during their scene.

Extras are under the complete control of the GM or the Scene Player, as appropriate. Whatever they say the Extra says or does, happens.

11.06 Prizes

Prizes are unique to each scenario. Secret Ninpo scrolls, top secret information, sacred relics, lads or damsels in distress, or other kinds of targets could all be Prizes. In general, each scenario should have one Prize, though it is possible to have two or even more.

During the session, if a character gains control of a Prize even once, they are awarded one Merit at the conclusion of the game. However, taking control of the same Prize multiple times will only ever give you one Merit. If you are using a Prize in your scenario, you may want to think about including a Mission such as "Have control of the Prize at the end of the game."

11.07 Introduction Scenes

Introduction Scenes exist to explain why and how each character is related to the scenario and how much they know about what is happening. The GM should determine these details for each character as part of scenario creation.

Creating an Introduction Scene that reflects a character's Secret, Mission, clan, secret identity, long-term goals, or which utilizes techniques such as foreshadowing or flashbacks can add greatly to the feeling of immersion.

When in doubt, a common and effective introductory scene can get off to a good start with a simple question: "What do you look like, and what are you doing on this fine day before you receive the message from your clan elder?"

11.08 Master Scenes

Master Scenes are used to break up the Main Phase. If the GM wants to introduce a scene and have complete control over it, it should be a Master Scene. If there is some important piece of information that the players need, which is not part of someone's Secret, it can be a good idea to disseminate that information via a Master Scene. Master Scenes are also good opportunities to reveal interesting antagonist NPCs, and to show the players what the antagonists are up to.

Also, depending on the progress of the story, a GM may introduce a Master Scene to get the scenario back on track.

■ Example uses of Master Scenes:

- Reveal what NPCs are up to "off-screen"
- An NPC creates an EmoBond with a PC
- A scene in which PCs meet, and are free to share information
- On a successful Skill roll, an enemy's Location is discovered
- Show new players how combat works

11.09 Climax Scene

Since the Climax Scene does not occur until specific requirements have been met; the GM must determine these requirements when the scenario is written. Most scenarios should include a Limit (usually three Cycles), but other requirements may fit depending on the scenario. Some scenarios may skip the Climax Phase if a requirement is not met: for example, a GM may wish to create a unique cooperative scenario which requires the player characters to discover the final boss' Location before the Limit so that they can confront them in the Climax Phase, otherwise the game ends with their escape.

11.09.01 Limit

The Limit is the maximum number of Cycles that can occur in the Main Phase

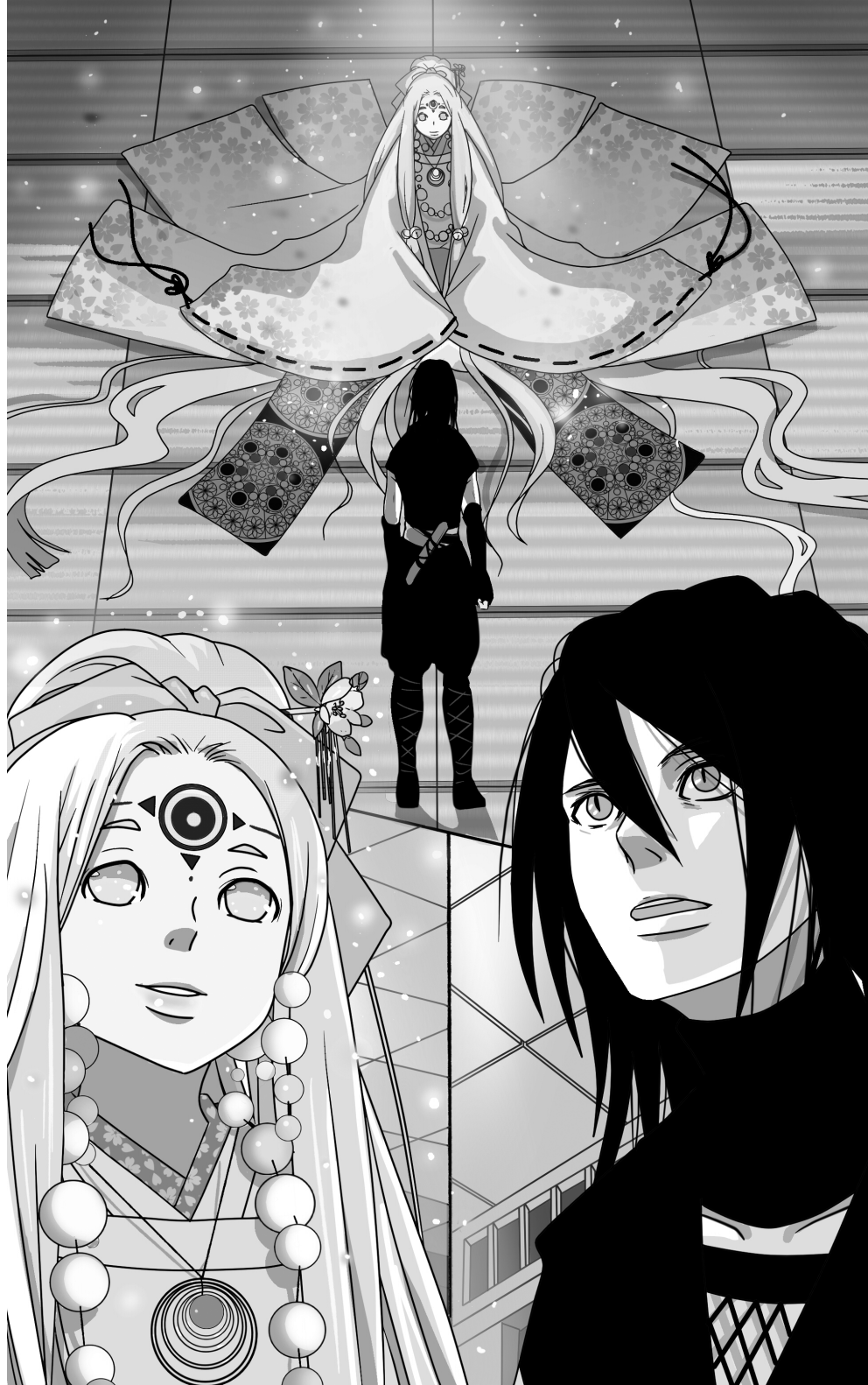
before the Climax Phase automatically occurs. No matter how far the scenario has developed, once the Limit has been reached, the Main Phase ends and the Climax Phase begins. Normally, the Limit is three or four Cycles.

The GM should find a plausible reason for the Limit: for example, an evil ritual may take three days (where each Cycle represents one day) to complete.

11.10 Conclusion

A scenario should end with a short, simple conclusion, which flows naturally from the game's fiction. Instead of coming up with a long, drawn out, deep ending to the story, try to reflect on the way each character has influenced the development of the scenario and their impact on the story's conclusion.

It is recommended that the GM have several vague endings in mind, depending on the outcome of the Climax Phase, especially in versus and battle royale type scenarios. The GM should never exactly determine the ending before the Climax Phase has ended, because the players will very likely surprise them and take the scenario and conclusion in a new direction. Prepare for some ad-libbing if necessary!



12 The Shadow War

At first glance, the world of Shinobigami is an ordinary one, calm and uneventful. A dark shadow, however, looms silently over this peaceful façade. That shadow wafts through the blackness of night, surging stronger as the moon travels its well-worn path, until it is dispelled with the breaking of dawn. They are sometimes called "Nightwalkers."

Just underneath the surface of the world we inhabit lies the realm of shadows known as the "Shadow War" or the "World of Shadows". It is a world of violence and conspiracy, a world of sorcery and illusion.

In the Shadow War, innumerable battles unfold daily across the land: Thousand-year old struggles between conquerors and the conquered; disgraceful political squabbles over national interests; mad scrambles that shake up our everyday lives; never-ending personal quests to fulfill an innermost desire.

All of these conflicts rage: Constantly, unknown, cleverly hidden just under our noses.

And those who struggle through this carnage are, of course, the ninja.

■ Ninja:

Ninja is the generic term that covers any and all of those that live and fight in the Shadow War. They possess a variety of other names: "Masters of Ninjutsu", "Shinobi", "Masters of the Art", "The Masked Ones", "Roof-Monkeys", and "Wandering Miko Maidens", to mention but a few.

During the Japanese middle ages, a ninja was someone used by daimyo or other lords for assassinations or intelligence gathering. In reality, ninja – wielders of supernatural abilities – existed long before that. It is said that they lived among us as long ago as the Yayoi period, in the first century BC. In some legends it is stated that no less august personages than the first emperor of Qin and Princess Himiko herself were of ninja blood.

With a basis in Taoist spiritual belief, the ninja developed their abilities—Ninpo—by utilizing advanced weaponry, science and magic.

Through the use of these powerful Ninpo, ninja have long exercised great influence over politics, business, and even religion. During the Sengoku period, a number of rival warlords emerged, and the ninja split into a number of separate clans, constantly locked in a brutal struggle for power. However, when the war finally ended and the Tokugawa clan took control of the country, the clans were once again reunited and put to work for the Shogunate as secret enforcers. As the nation modernized in the Meiji era, the usefulness of the ninja seemed to come to an end. It is said that many ninja took up jobs as farmers, agents of law enforcement, doctors, pharmacists, firework makers, and a myriad of other occupations.

Of course, where there is light, there must be shadow; and as the light of modernity shines ever brighter, the shadow that deepens the darkness. The Shadow War continues, as it always has, just below the surface of normal society. The curtain called Peace is used to cleverly disguise the World of Shadows. The ninja of today are only the newest pawns in the struggle as they fight the same battles and hold the same grudges as their ancestors. Theirs are the battles of a people imbued with supernatural abilities of science and magic.

■ Shinobigami

The Shinobigami are legends even among ninja. They are said to have been the progenitors of magic and martial arts. According to both the Hirasaka Agency and Bloodline of Oni, the Shinto god Susano-o of the Kojiki—the oldest historical record of ancient Japan—was himself a Shinobigami.

Though many doubt the veracity of these claims, the fact remains that six sacred relics were left behind by the Shinobigami and, though they were accounted for only recently, according to the Bloodline of Oni, they have been stolen away. The Bloodline of Oni had attempted a grand ritual using the relics in an attempt to learn the secret art Tenjo Tenge (“Everything in Heaven and Earth”), the mysterious power handed down from the Shinobigami themselves with the ability to grant any wish. At that time, the relics disappeared without a trace. Since that fateful day, a great number of ninja have sought the missing relics in an effort to discover the secret of Tenjo Tenge.

■ The Six Clans

The strength and size of ninja clans can fluctuate wildly, but at the moment, the balance of power has stabilized. The current groups in power are called The Six Clans. They are: the Hasuba Ninja Army, the Kurama Shin Clan, the Hirasaka Agency, the Otogi Private Academy, the Bloodline of Oni, and the Lost Ones.

□ Hasuba Ninja Army

The Hasuba Ninja Army is the clan that analyzes all the myriad abilities of the ninja, replicates them, and then adopts them into their own arsenal.

Originally descendants of the Saika Ikki, the Sengoku-era warrior-monks famous for their skilled arquebus troops, as well as their smithies and foundries. They specialized in firearms and cannons, and also possessed strong naval forces until their ancient clan was totally annihilated at the hands of Toyotomi Hideyoshi. However, the most skilled ninja survived, and went on to thrive by developing useful ninja tools and weapons for the area ninja clans like the Iga and Koga. This group was the precursor of the modern Hasuba Ninja Army.

The contemporary public face of the clan is a collection of over thirty subsidiary companies within the Yata Group. Yata Heavy Industries develops innovations in shipbuilding, electrical generators, aerospace development and weapons manufacturing. Their research department is the true heart of the Hasuba Ninja Army. Each section of the research department has a particular specialty, and they have been given code names based on the names of tools and instruments: Sawblade,

Ink Bottle, Hand Plane and the like.

The purpose of the clan is to analyze and understand all of the esoteric abilities of the ninja like Ninpo and Ohgi, to break them down scientifically, then to replicate these abilities via tools and equipment usable by anyone. In doing so, they hope to bring all of the abilities, and thus the clans themselves, to unification under banner of the Hasuba Ninja Army. For that reason, they despise members of the Kurama Shin Clan, who attempt to seal away Ninpo and destroy legendary artifacts and scrolls they deem dangerous.

The clan leader/Toryo of the Hasuba is Kuroshio Hitori, the chief executive officer of Yata Heavy Industries.

□ **Kurama Shin Clan**

The Kurama Shin Clan focuses on hunting the supernatural and making sure that the powerful secrets and techniques of the Shadow War stay hidden and do not escape into our world.

As the Heian period waned, an onmyoji (Taoist sorcerer) by the name of Kichi Hougan, together with eight warrior monks, founded this clan upon the Kurama Mountain of Kyoto. It is said that those eight monks were the origin of every martial art style in Japan, also known as the Kyoto Eight Styles. In fact, just about every well-known master of martial arts has had some secret affiliation with this clan.

Over the course of time, the Kurama Shin Clan has taken it upon itself to make sure that the Shadow War stays hidden in the shadows. Two of their most important duties are sealing away dangerous Ninpo before they can fall into the wrong hands, and the destruction of supernatural elements that would otherwise pose a threat to innocents. Because of this, they are often called Oni Hunters. Yet another duty passed down through the generations is the part they play in halting any group searching for the legendary Tenjo Tenge. In the course of keeping true to this obligation, they have mercilessly destroyed countless people that were searching for the missing holy relics.

The leader of the Kurama Shin Clan is the One-Eyed Swordsman, Yagyuu Mitsuyoshi. It is unclear whether or not he has any relation to the famed Yagyuu family.

□ **The Lost Ones**

The Lost Ones are a group of talented ninja who hold no allegiance to any of the major orders.

The Lost Ones “clan” simply refers to any ninja who, for a variety of reasons, do not belong to any of the other factions. The majority of these are ninja who have fled their clans, or those from small villages, who were personally taught techniques handed down in secret.

Due to the fact that some ninja in this grouping straddle the line between the world above and the World of Shadows—often by either taking jobs as mercenar-

ies or belonging to criminal groups—this clan is often looked down upon by the rest of the factions. The term “Lost Ones” began as a derogatory nickname for masterless and aimless ninja. Nonetheless, this faction contains such an extraordinary variety of ninja that it is impossible for the other groups to ignore.

In the strictest sense, the Lost Ones are not really a clan and thus have no unified purpose. However, there seem to be a large number of ninja within the group who have a hatred for the Hasuba Ninja Army. A large number of villages have been plundered and assimilated in the name of Hasuba’s hunger for rare and powerful Ninpo, and as the number of victims of their schemes grows, so too does their resentment and thirst for revenge.

The Lost Ones do not have a true leader.

□ **Hirasaka Agency**

The Hirasaka Agency is a secret intelligence agency that provides the government of Japan with information regarding the movement of ninja and magical forces.

Long before advent of Buddhism and other, younger, belief systems, the animist Shinto beliefs of ancient Japan formed the basis of the Hirasaka Shinto sect. Of The Six Clans, this one has the strongest ties to, and influence over, the world of politics. Fundamentally, they have Japan’s national interest in mind and act accordingly. There are even rumors that they manipulate the nation’s politics in accordance with divinations and sacred religious rites dedicated to the kami that protect the land.

A large number of Agency members are female ninja, known as “Miko,” that infiltrate businesses and organizations. The agency then analyzes the information gathered by the Miko, and utilize it to lead the other factions in directions that benefit the agency. Though the agency has terrifying powers of manipulation, their direct combat capabilities are somewhat limited; this is why Kurama Shin Clan members and Lost Ones are frequently hired or forced to work as security forces for the agency.

The leader of the Hirasaka Agency is the high priestess of the Hirasaka Shinto sect, Hirasaka Ubume.

□ **Otogi Private Academy**

The Otogi Private Academy protects and provides proper guidance for youth that show supernatural potential.

With the Meiji restoration, a large number of ninja hid themselves in our peaceful society, completely forgetting about the Shadow War. What they didn’t realize, however, is that their power could not be so easily forgotten, and is passed down through their very blood. Many of their children, as their slumbering powers awakened, have become outcasts when they find themselves unable to deal with their newfound strength. The Otogi Private Academy protects these children, teaching them to hone their powers by instructing them in the ways of the ninja.

On the surface, the academy is a school that encompasses both primary and secondary education. It boasts a large number of accomplished students and is often admired by outsiders. However, in reality the school is an intelligence agency that is training suitable children as spies and agents, though even within the school, less than half of the students actually realize the true purpose of their education.

The sponsors of the academy are primarily foreign conglomerates; due to their influence, a number of international exchange students and trainees of foreign intelligence agencies also attend the school. The Hirasaka Agency has long disapproved of this practice and more than a few skirmishes between the two have occurred over the years.

The leader and headmaster of the Otogi Private Academy is Rokaku Arthur Masashige.

□ Bloodline of Oni

The Bloodline of Oni is a group of preternatural beings with plans to subvert the ruling order.

These Oni-Blooded are the descendants of the beings once called Oni and Tsuchigumo in the days of ancient Japan. While many members of this clan are simply humans with unique talents and mastery of sorcery, the Bloodline of Oni has within its ranks the largest concentration of Others—such as vampires, werewolves, nightmares, and shape-shifters—of all the clans. As a result, many ninja from other clans have taken to calling them “Nightwalkers” or “Nightgaunts”. Though other ninja often have some sort of tie to the surface world, this is generally not true for members of the Bloodline of Oni. With rare exceptions, the members of this clan aggressively isolate themselves from normal society, and nearly all share a world-weary attitude, keeping very exclusive social circles.

Various factions have long oppressed the Bloodline of Oni, and this perpetual persecution has left the clan with a deep-seated distrust of government power. The Hirasaka Agency, with its ancient ties to the imperial court, particularly draws the clan’s ire; chance meetings between the two factions seldom end without a battle.

The unifying desire of this clan is to create a world in which they can live peacefully; to that end, they pursue the secret Shinobigami rite “Tenjo Tenge”. In the past, they suffered a blow when they failed a magic ritual that lost them control of several holy relics, but the clan is steady in its unwavering commitment to recovering and finding a way to try again.

The leader of the Bloodline of Oni is the leader of the cult that the clan uses to mask their existence: Yatonokami Torihiko.

■ Other Factions

There are entities other than The Six Clans that are aware of the Shadow War. These are the various other factions with ties to the ninja:

☐ **Gangland**

This category is comprised of yakuza, mafia and other organized crime groups. Many mobsters employ unscrupulous ninja – Lost Ones, more often than not. Even so, there are few in the world of organized crime who truly understand the extent of the Shadow War. For the most part, the most any gangster knows is that, “there are some really scary creeps out there...”

☐ **Law Enforcement**

Within the upper echelons of the police force, and in certain legal circles, the existence of the World of Shadows has become common knowledge. Due to the pressure from the Hirasaka Agency, however, they take great pains to make sure that this knowledge does not become public. The police, therefore, do their best to cover up anything that may expose the existence of the ninja clans. Occasionally, a rogue agent attempts to pull away the façade, ignoring orders from above. The fact that the world at large remains ignorant is all that needs to be said about the fate of these individuals.

☐ **Political Dynasties**

Various political dynasties use ninja to fulfill their schemes and designs. In the name of advancing their interests and furthering their causes, they have set innumerable battles into motion in the War of Shadow. Of these dynasties, the Mayoi-no-miya family has a unique stance; they seem to believe that the Six Clans should be kept in balance, and so they make sure to do what they can to thwart attempts by any clan to gain an advantage over the others. Though they approach each clan in different ways, this dynasty, at least, appears to be trying to ensure the stability of our world.

☐ **Foreign Nations**

Other nations have become aware of the existence of the ninja clans of Japan. As a result, many countries have created their own intelligence agencies that employ ninja and superhuman beings akin to ninja. Some examples are Great Britain's Knights of the Round Table and the United States' CIA.

☐ **Outsiders**

The Outsiders are the inhabitants of an otherworldly realm. They come into our world through “Gates” – special points in space and time that breach the wall between our world and theirs. Most Outsiders are harbingers of terrible disaster, and even more terrifyingly, they seem to be impervious to nearly all physical damage. Because of this, ninja are this world's only line of defense—and it is usually up to the Kurama Shin Clan and the Bloodline of Oni to answer the call.

Most Outsiders are skilled in mystical arts and come to our world for the sole purpose of testing their skills. Indeed, Outsiders seem hardly to care or even think about mankind, including ninja. However, if the Outsiders come across someone in this world with the ability to learn their mystical abilities or further

their secretive plans, an Outsider may take them back to their own world to shape them into their successor. The reason for this seems to be that Outsiders are unable to reproduce on their own. This sort of abduction by an Outsider is known as being “spirited away.”

The legendary Shinobigami and the ancestors of the Bloodline of Oni are said to have been Outsiders.

■ Dejima

A few years ago, the Bloodline of Oni, in an attempt to obtain the ultimate ninja art “Tenjo Tenge,” conducted a magical ritual—intended to revive the Shinobigami—inside a large urban area. The ritual was designed to sacrifice the thousands of city residents, as well as the six holy relics: The swords Mitsurugi and Yatsurugi; the jewels Mitama and Magatama; and the mirrors Mikagami and Sakagami. The Oni sorcerers managed to open a Gate and began to assert the power of the Shinobigami when, at the last minute, a group of ninja from every clan, assembled by the Kurama Shin Clan, put an end to their ritual. The incomplete ritual cast uncontrolled magical energy in every direction, dispersing that power throughout the city. Untold numbers of Outsiders emerged into the city and its former inhabitants were transformed into horrors beyond human imagining.

Since then, that city has been physically and magically sealed, inaccessible from the outside world; all records of its existence have been erased and any attempts to locate it have failed. Even within the World of Shadows, the only people with any information regarding the city are those of Jonin-rank or higher; within these upper ranks, the most accurate information most have is that the city, called “Dejima” by those in the know, is awash with Outsiders. Many ninja have since attempted to enter the city in order to retrieve the lost holy relics or gain the remarkable skills of the Outsiders, but none have returned...intact. It is considered a freak occurrence that a Hasuba clansman managed to return from Dejima, and it is said that his mind was shattered and his body was twisted in a way that he resembled an unspeakable amalgamation of sea creatures. Those who know of Dejima have another name for it now: Shijima, or Death Island.

13 - Enemies

This chapter contains the data for the class of NPCs called Enemies. Enemies are a type of character usually controlled by the Game Master. Blank record sheets for enemy data can be downloaded from the official Shinobigami website.

13.01 Adaptation

When an Enemy is first introduced in a game, the Game Master may alter their Assigned Skills or Ninpo as appropriate.

13.02 Simultaneous Action

When multiple Enemies are used simultaneously in battle, the Game Master should group together Enemies of the same type and use one Plot Value for each group.

13.03 Enemy Data

■ Life Points

The number of Life Points an Enemy starts with. Unlike PCs, as an Enemy loses Life Points, they don't lose the use of any Skills.

Also, when utilizing Ninpo such as "Imperial Wrath," which require choosing a Skill Category Life Point box, please choose a particular Life Point slot in place of a particular Category. For example, a character may acquire the "Imperial Wrath" Ninpo, choosing "the second LP box from the left". In doing so, the bonus from the Ninpo would apply after taking 2 or more damage.

If the GM wishes to use "PC-like enemy bosses", they could optionally allow such enemies to lose the use of Skill categories like the PCs. However, this makes for potentially much weaker enemies (or for a single lucky player roll to render the "big boss" ineffective for the rest of the scenario), and is not normally recommended.

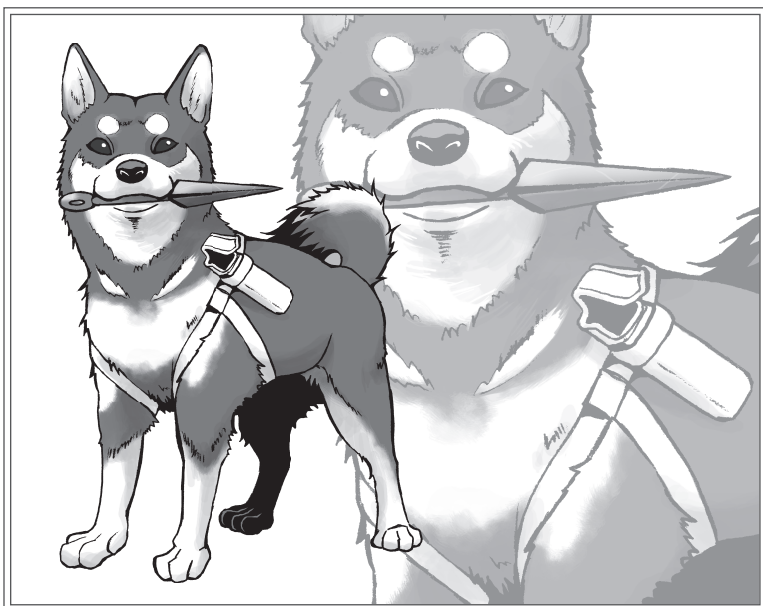
■ Skills, Ninpo, Ninja Gear

The Skills, Ninpo, and Ninja Gear possessed by the Enemy. The Enemy's primary Category (the category that acts as their "Clan Category", the GM fills in gaps on either side) is written before the slash while their Skills are written afterwards.

■ Etc.

Ohgi, special rules and the effects of Enemy Ninpo available only to Enemy NPCs will appear in the Etc. box. If no Ohgi information is written here, it is assumed that the character has no Ohgi available. If an Ohgi is used, its assigned skill must be chosen from among the Skills the enemy knows.

NINJA BEAST



Ninja Dog

Life ☐ ☐ ☐

Skills Martial Arts / Speed, Analysis

Ninpo Close Combat (Speed), Continuous Attack, Take the Hit

Bead of Life **0** Soma Pill **0** Prayer Seal **0**

These dogs represent the most loyal and brave of the ninja beasts. It is said that their senses are a million times more keen than a human's, and that they can crush a man's windpipe with a snap of their jaws.

Notes

Ninja Swarm

Life ☐ ☐

Skills Strategy / Medicine, Creature Mastery

Ninpo Close Combat (Medicine), Domineer (Creature Mastery)

Bead of Life **0** Soma Pill **0** Prayer Seal **0**

Swarms of beetles, bugs, centipedes, and other creepy crawlies used to pursue foes or even engage them in combat. Some of these creatures are even used in healing techniques.

Notes

Ninja Raven

Life ☐☐

Skills Martial Arts / Sleight of Hand, Aerial Arts, Signal

Ninpo **Close Combat** (Sleight of Hand), **Ranged Attack** (Aerial Arts), **Arrow Catching**

Bead of Life ☐ 0 Soma Pill ☐ 0 Prayer Seal ☐ 0

The cleverest of all birds, trained as a ninja beast. Ninja ravens perform aerial reconnaissance and deliver messages over long distances.

Notes

King Snake

Life ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Skills Sorcery / Pyromancy, Footwork, Blade, Poison, Transformation

Ninpo **Close Combat** (Footwork), **Cross Cut** (Blade), **Crushing Blow** (Pyromancy), **Assassin** (Footwork), **Asura** (Poison), **Poison Fang**

Bead of Life ☐ 0 Soma Pill ☐ 0 Prayer Seal ☐ 0

These supernatural beasts are all over 100 years old, and their bodies have grown to over ten meters in length. Though wild, they enjoy modern luxuries. One bite from a King Snake is said to be enough to drive people mad.

Notes Poison Fang: If this character damages another, the damaged character must make a Skill Check with the Poison skill. On a failure, the damaged character gains the Heavy Injury status ailment.

Monster Toad

Life ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Skills Stealth / Pyromancy, Infiltration, Invisibility, Guerilla, Binding

Ninpo **Close Combat** (Invisibility), **Blast** (Pyromancy), **Kaleidoscope** (Infiltration), **Counter** (Guerilla), **Plot Restriction** (Binding), **Toad Oil**

Bead of Life ☐ 0 Soma Pill ☐ 0 Prayer Seal ☐ 0

Supernatural beasts similar to the King Snakes. They can exhale a rainbow-colored cloud that consumes everything it touches. The tears of the Monster Toad are the main ingredient in Beads of Life.

Notes Toad Oil: Anyone attempting to attack this character must make a Skill Check with Survival. On a failure, the attacker gains the Paralyzed status effect.

Ninja Shark

Life ☐☐☐☐☐☐

Skills Martial Arts / Unholy Strength, Survival, Guerilla

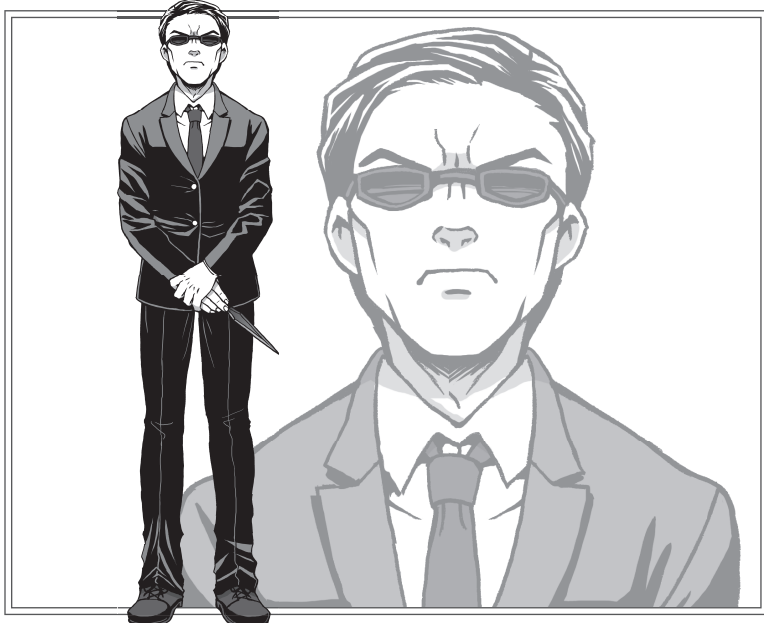
Ninpo **Close Combat** (Unholy Strength), **Jaws** (Unholy Strength), **Aquatic**

Bead of Life ☐ 0 Soma Pill ☐ 0 Prayer Seal ☐ 0

Savage great white sharks, altered via brain surgery to obey their masters' orders without question. Unmatched in aquatic combat.

Notes Jaws: This can be used before your Attack Check. On a successful Skill Check, your Close Combat Damage is raised by 2. However, this Ninpo can only be used on the Underwater battleground. Aquatic: When fighting in the Underwater battleground, you can ignore the battleground penalties.

GENIN



Kusa

Life



Skills

Stealth / Infiltration, Analysis

Ninpo

Close Combat (Infiltration), Wandering (Infiltration)

Bead of Life

0

Soma Pill

0

Prayer Seal

0

Hiding their ninja lineage, Kusa ("grass") are the lowest ranked ninja who are embedded throughout society. Their job is to collect information from schools, corporations, and many other communities. All of the ninja clans have Kusa.

Notes

Soldier

Life



Skills

Martial Arts / Shuriken, Blade, Invisibility

Ninpo

Close Combat (Blade), Ranged Attack (Shuriken), Heat Haze (Blade)

Bead of Life

0

Soma Pill

0

Prayer Seal

0

Even in the lower ranks, there are ninjas who specialize in combat. They are often employed in assassinations or ambushes.

Notes

Agent

Life ☐ ☐

Skills Technology / Pyromancy, Concealment, Rumor-mongering

Ninpo **Close Combat** (Pyromancy), **Blast** (Pyromancy), **Social Warfare** (Rumor-mongering)

Bead of Life **0** Soma Pill **0** Prayer Seal **0**

Even though they are low ranking ninjas, Agents are highly trained in special operations. They are most often used to gather information or for sabotage.

Notes

Kunoichi

Life ☐ ☐

Skills Scheming / Apparel, Poison, Seduction

Ninpo **Close Combat** (Poison), **Marionette** (Manipulation), **Fascination** (Seduction)

Bead of Life **0** Soma Pill **0** Prayer Seal **0**

Gifted with unearthly beauty, these ninja women are trained to charm their victims, turning them into sources of information for the clan.

Notes

Genin Leader

Life ☐ ☐ ☐

Skills Strategy / Hidden Weapons, Guerilla, Tactics, Encryption

Ninpo **Close Combat** (Guerilla), **Mob Combat** (Strategy), **Crushing Blow** (Hidden Weapons), **Strategic Command** (Tactics)

Bead of Life **0** Soma Pill **0** Prayer Seal **0**

These ninjas direct the actions of the lowest-ranked clan members. Skilled in strategy, they know how to make the most of their subordinates.

Notes

Zombie Ninja

Life ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Skills Stealth / Contortionism, Invisibility

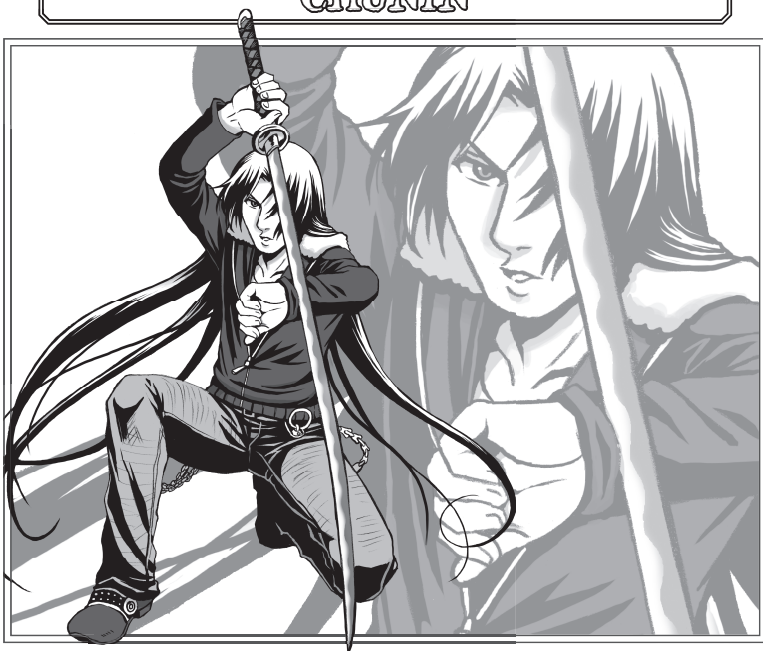
Ninpo **Close Combat** (Contortionism), **Continuous Attack**, **Take the Hit**, **Crushing Blow** (Hidden Weapons)

Bead of Life **0** Soma Pill **0** Prayer Seal **0**

Ninja called back into service from beyond even death. Though their memories are gone, their shinobi skills remain, years of rigorous training having imprinted them into their very bones.

Notes

CHUNIN



Mad Scientist

Life ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Skills Technology / Pyromancy, Apparel, Torture, Finances, Tactics

Ninpo **Close Combat** (Finances), **Ranged Attack** (Tactics), **Blast** (Pyromancy), **Crushing Blow** (Torture), **Hadesology**

Bead of Life **0** Soma Pill **0** Prayer Seal **1**

Hasuba scientists dedicated to unlocking the secrets of the other clans' Ninpo.

Notes 1 Ohgi: Dark Interference suggested.

Swordsman

Life ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Skills Martial Arts / Demolition, Riding, Speed, Blade, Analysis

Ninpo **Close Combat** (Riding), **Ranged Attack** (Blade), **Crushing Blow** (Demolition), **Heat Haze** (Blade), **End of the Beginning**

Bead of Life **1** Soma Pill **0** Prayer Seal **0**

Kurama Shin Clan soldiers that hunt supernatural threats.

Notes 1 Ohgi: Critical Hit suggested.

Runaway Ninja

Life ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Skills Stealth / Pyromancy, Escape, Invisibility, Multiplicity, Analysis

Ninpo **Close Combat** (Escape), **Shadow Clone** (Multiplicity), **Blast** (Pyromancy), **Continuous Attack**, **Tough**

Bead of Life **0** Soma Pill **1** Prayer Seal **0**

Ninjas who have forsaken their duty, betraying the clan by running away.

Notes 1 Ohgi: Area Attack suggested.

Shaman

Life ☐☐☐☐☐☐

Skills Scheming / Shuriken, Trap, Seduction, Finances, Kotodama

Ninpo **Close Combat** (Kotodama), **Ranged Attack** (Shuriken), **Resupply** (Finances), **Emotion Manipulation** (Seduction), **Marionette** (Manipulation)

Bead of Life **0** Soma Pill **1** Prayer Seal **0**

Hirasaka Agency ninjas, who infiltrate organizations to gather information.

Notes 1 Ohgi: Perfect Success suggested.

School Ninja

Life ☐☐☐☐☐☐

Skills Strategy / Speed, Interception, Nature, Tactics, Signal

Ninpo **Close Combat** (Nature), **Continuous Attack**, **Guidance** (Speed), **Heart of the Battlefield**, **Blitzkrieg** (Signal)

Bead of Life **1** Soma Pill **0** Prayer Seal **0**

Otogi Private Academy tacticians, planning their next move and looking for the next chance to strike.

Notes 1 Ohgi: Area Attack suggested.

Sorcerer

Life ☐☐☐☐☐☐

Skills Strategy / Speed, Interception, Nature, Tactics, Signal

Ninpo **Close Combat** (Nature), **Continuous Attack**, **Guidance** (Speed), **Heart of the Battlefield**, **Blitzkrieg** (Signal)

Bead of Life **1** Soma Pill **0** Prayer Seal **0**

Otogi Private Academy tacticians, planning their next move and looking for the next chance to strike.

Notes 1 Ohgi: Area Attack suggested.

JONIN



Metal God

Life ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Skills Technology / Engineering, Torture, Interception, Manipulation, Creature Mastery

Ninpo Close Combat (Torture), Kaleidoscope (Creature Mastery), Shadow Clone (Multiplicity), Social Warfare (Finances), Mechaninja, Hadesology

Bead of Life **1** Soma Pill **1** Prayer Seal **0**

Ninja that have mechanized their entire body. Now equipped with advanced weaponry, such as optical camouflage and high-frequency vibro-blades, their hearts are also cold as steel and they will stop at nothing to accomplish their mission.

Notes 2 Ohgi: Area Attack and Immortal Body suggested.

Blade Master

Life ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Skills Martial Arts / Hidden Weapons, Shuriken, Blade, Nature, Clairvoyance

Ninpo Close Combat (Domination), Asura (Shuriken), Assassin (Blade), Acala the Immovable, Bloody Determination, End of the Beginning

Bead of Life **1** Soma Pill **1** Prayer Seal **0**

Warriors living by the edge of the sword, engaged in an eternal search for That Which is True Strength. They trust no-one but their blades, and their thirst. Their thirst for blood.

Notes 2 Ohgi: Critical Hit and Perfect Success suggested.

Ninja Yakuza

Life □□□□□□□□

Skills Stealth / Sleight of Hand, Blade, Survival, Multiplicity, Domination

Ninpo **Close Combat** (Blade), **Kaleidoscope** (Sleight of Hand), **Shadow Clone** (Multiplicity), **Hidden Blades**, **Acala the Immovable**

Bead of Life **2** Soma Pill **1** Prayer Seal **0**

These ninjas have [fled the World of Shadows and] integrated themselves into normal society. Though most of them are Lost Ones, it is said that one family remembers the secret arts, passing that power down through the generations...

Notes 2 Ohgi: Area Attack and Dark Interference suggested. Special Ninpo: Hidden Blades: Support; A character that fails an Attack Check against this character takes 1 Ranged Damage.

Mastermind

Life □□□□□□□□

Skills Scheming / Sleight of Hand, Investigation, Rumor-mongering, Contacts, Illusion

Ninpo **Close Combat** (Sleight of Hand), **Kaleidoscope** (Illusion), **Social Warfare** (Rumor-mongering), **Reticence** (Investigation), **Marionette** (Manipulation), **Plot Restriction** (Illusion)

Bead of Life **1** Soma Pill **0** Prayer Seal **1**

Hidden even deeper than the World of Shadows, these ninja lurk in the shadows of the shadows. Controlling entire economies and bending governments to their will, they seem to determine the very course of history.

Notes 2 Ohgi: Immortal Body and Dark Interference suggested.

Prodigy

Life □□□□□□□□

Skills Strategy / Pyromancy, Nature, Willpower, Contacts, Illusion

Ninpo **Close Combat** (Pyromancy), **Celestial Path** (Nature), **Buddha's Clasp Formation** (Willpower), **Strategic Command** (Contacts), **Vibrato**, **Nirvana: Strategy**

Bead of Life **0** Soma Pill **1** Prayer Seal **1**

These strategists have claimed victory—and their opponent's head—in 100 of 100 battles. Maestros of the eastern, western, ancient and current arts of war, they live only to conquer on the battlefield.

Notes 2 Ohgi: Perfect Success x2 suggested. Special Ninpo: Celestial Path: Attack; Range 1, Cost 1; Close Combat. When fighting on the Level Ground Battlefield, your fumble threshold on this Combat Roll goes down by one and the difficulty of the opponent's Dodge Roll is increased by one.

Magic-Blooded

Life □□□□□□□□

Skills Sorcery / Hydromancy, Invisibility, Necromancy, Kotodama, Domination

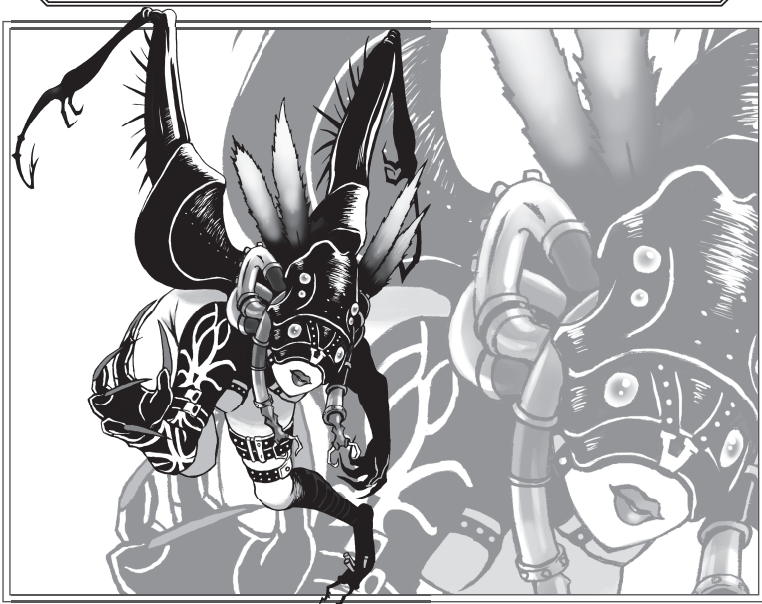
Ninpo **Close Combat** (Kotodama), **Asura** (Domination), **Crushing Blow** (Hydromancy), **Continuous Attack**, **Vampirism**, **Counter**

Bead of Life **0** Soma Pill **0** Prayer Seal **0**

Deep within the Oni clan, there are secret, powerful rites that can be used to create terrifying beasts—towering weapons of destruction. Creatures borne of these horrible rituals have magic coursing through their very veins; they are known as the Mage Blooded.

Notes 2 Ohgi: Critical Hit and Immortal Body suggested.

YOMA



Necrologist

Life ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Skills Sorcery / Acupuncture, Torture, Contortionism, Medicine, Necromancy

Ninpo **Close Combat** (Torture), **Buddha's Clasp Formation** (Necromancy), **Destruction** (Aerial Arts), **Counter** (Contortionism), **Vampirism** (Necromancy), **Crushing Blow** (Torture)

Bead of Life **0** Soma Pill **1** Prayer Seal **0**

Yoma that dabble in the science of death. They have perfected control over two crests: the Death Crest and the Life Crest. The Death Crest, when given to a living being, transforms them into a puppet-like creature called a Mannequin. The Life Crest, when placed upon a corpse, turns the body into a Replica, a mockery of life that retains the memories the creature had when it was alive.

Notes 2 Ohgi: Critical Hit and Immortal Body suggested.

Dismantler

Life ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Skills Technology / Hidden Weapons, Demolition, Shuriken, Interception, Bluff

Ninpo **Close Combat** (Interception), **Sunder** (Torture), **Destruction** (Torture), **Emotional Manipulation** (Bluff), **Surprise Attack** (Hidden Weapons), **Shaken**

Bead of Life **1** Soma Pill **1** Prayer Seal **0**

Yoma that provide clients with rare commodities. They are able to expertly deconstruct items to deliver specific parts: the springtime of a virgin girl, the dream of an ideal, the integrated circuits of envy, etc.

Notes 2 Ohgi: Critical Hit and Area Attack suggested.

Swordsmith

Life ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Skills Martial Arts / Ballistics, Blade, Inception, Transformation, Binding

Ninpo **Close Combat** (Binding), **Vortex of Blood** (Transformation), **Assassin** (Ballistics), **Heat Haze** (Blade), **Continuous Attack, End of the Beginning**

Bead of Life **0** Soma Pill **1** Prayer Seal **0**

These yoma carry cursed swords in order to do battle in the supernatural realm. These blades are forged from the most intense of human emotions, collected from human bodies that are carried to the yoma's realm and consumed in flames to extract their dreams, love, hate, and despair.

Notes 2 Ohgi: Critical Hit and Perfect Defense suggested.

Mechanist

Life ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Skills Technology / Engineering, Ropework, Burrow, Trap, Encryption

Ninpo **Close Combat** (Burrow), **Kaleidoscope** (Engineering), **Spider of Darkness** (Ropework), **Arrow Catching** (Apparel), **Continuous Attack, Hadesology**

Bead of Life **0** Soma Pill **1** Prayer Seal **0**

These yoma are continuously creating machines, and visit our world to test out their latest creations. Each is constantly searching for a mortal suitable to become their successor, spiriting away any it deems worthy.

Notes 2 Ohgi: Area Attack and Perfect Success suggested.

Muse

Life ☐☐☐☐☐☐

Skills Scheming / Apparel, Olfaction, Seduction, Signal, Possession

Ninpo **Close Combat** (Performance), **Scent of Spring** (Olfaction), **Emotion Manipulation** (Rumor-mongering), **Social Warfare** (Rumor-mongering), **Fascination** (Seduction), **Demonic Rebirth** (Possession)

Bead of Life **0** Soma Pill **0** Prayer Seal **1**

These yoma thrive on beauty, gifting artists with inspiration in exchange. However, an arrangement with a Muse can lead only to death, for the beauty that a Muse craves eventually coalesces into Gates that allow other yoma to enter our world.

Notes 2 Ohgi: Perfect Success and Dark Interference suggested.

...OTHER...

High Roller

Life ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Skills Strategy / Sleight of Hand, Aerial Arts, Ventriloquism, Willpower, Memory

Ninpo **Close Combat** (Ventriloquism), **Kaleidoscope** (Sleight of Hand), **Guidance** (Speed), **Asura** (Memory), **Destruction** (Ventriloquism), **Cicada Switch** (Ventriloquism)

Bead of Life **0** Soma Pill **1** Prayer Seal **0**

Yoma with supernatural nerve and mathematical ability, their goal in this world is to dominate in any and all games. While they may seem happy-go-lucky, they are bound by the rules of their games.

Notes 2 Ohgi: Perfect Success and Dark Interference suggested.

14 - Translator's Advice Section

While working on this translation, we have come up with some ideas that have helped us run Shinobigami more smoothly and engage our players more quickly. While these tips have worked with the way we approach the game, they may not work for the way that your group operates. If you find other ways to approach the game, we'd like to hear it! Come to the Kotodama/Shinobigami online community and share with other players and GMs!

1 – Characters and Character Creation

Characters are often created together on the day of the session. This has the added benefit of the players discussing their character concepts and, in cooperative games, spreading skills and abilities to cover any contingency. On the other hand, players can spend a long time fine-tuning their character, eating into valuable playing time.

Alternatively, GMs may create characters for the players ahead of time. This allows the GM to exert more control over the scenario for a more focused game, but might make roleplaying harder for players that aren't excited about the character they've been given. The name tables are considered "Roll or Choice". You can encourage the players to roll a random name or simply choose a cool-looking name from a list. If a player is having trouble making up their mind, suggest that they roll on the name tables, or look at them for inspiration.

When all the players are new to Shinobigami, have the GM limit Ohgi choices for all characters to only Critical Hit or Area Attack for the first game. We've found that these Ohgi choices are the easiest for all players to understand, with the least amount of unexpected gameplay effects for a first session. Those two attack Ohgi clearly demonstrate the Ohgi rules, while making every character a potential powerhouse. They also help push the Climax Phase battle towards having a clear winner, rather than ending in a stalemate. Rather than strong encouragement to take those Ohgi, the GM should simply take the others off the table for that first game. From that point on, the players should all understand the depth of Shinobigami enough to make informed choices for their Ohgi.

It is always ok to come back to finding a suitable name once the rest of PC creation is complete.

Foreign names are totally acceptable—remember that the cities of modern Japan are home to a large number of foreigners that have been a part of the social fabric for generations now! Besides, there are plenty of reasons for foreign agents to interfere in Japanese events.

For Conviction, we regularly disallow players to pick "Chaos" in our scenarios, unless we are very familiar with the player. If a character is rolling randomly, you can just say "If Chaos comes up, pick again". Chaos can be a very disruptive Conviction, especially if the players are not already friends with each other. Not only can Chaos push a player to roleplay a very disruptive character, it can subtly cue

the other players to not work/trust that character, which creates a disadvantage for that player before the game begins. Consider it an “Advanced” Conviction, and perhaps consider only allowing it at the table if there’s a lot of friendship and trust between the players.

Some players find that it is easier to find Ninpo that suit their play style before choosing their Skills. That way they see which Skills will be important to them, and work from there. Others prefer to choose skills that suit their character’s theme, first. Either approach is fine.

For new players, encourage everyone to take at least a second Attack Ninpo beyond the default Close Combat: Specifically, a Ninpo that uses another skill somewhere else on the Skill Grid. This ensures later that if the Close Combat skill column becomes injured or sealed, the character has a secondary attack and can stay in the fight. Creative players will often skip past the Attack Ninpo and instead pick various weird and interesting Ninpo; but for new players, a second Attack Ninpo (perhaps even as simple as a second Close Combat Ninpo using another skill) may end up being the difference between completing or failing at their goals.

If most or all of the players are new to the game, the GM should consider forcing the characters to take Life Pill as one of their two Ninja Tools. Or perhaps they could grant a Life Pill to all players on top of two others of their choice for the first session. While the other tools are useful when working with other characters, the Life Pill can be critical to keeping a player invested in the game: For example, in a character’s first Combat Scene, or Climax Phase, if the first point of damage they receive just happens to injure/lock down their primary Ninpo column, and they didn’t take a Life Pill in order to heal that condition... They can be taken out of the fight, or even practically out of the game, just because they didn’t consider that unlucky outcome. For everyone’s first session, a Life Pill is almost a must: After their first game, the players can decide not to take a Life Pill at their own risk.

If this is everyone’s first session, consider leaving out Backgrounds and Virtues. They may enhance a character if the player is already familiar with Shinobigami, but otherwise they can be very confusing to a new player. Skip them for your first session.

Note that all ninja have rudimentary training in each and every Skill, but are simply much better at using a certain few. It is always okay to portray a ninja utilizing an uncircled Skill as part of a Drama Scene.

Literally translated, Ninpo means “Ninja Arts.” If you have a hard time remembering the word “Ninpo”, substitute “Ninja Arts” instead.

Japanese plurals don’t have an ‘s’ stuck at the end of the word like in English. It may be confusing to see the words *ninja* or *Ninpo* used in a plural sense, but you can use “*ninjas*” if it works better for you.

2 - Sessions

One important thing for new players to understand, is that they control the start of their Drama Scene. They should look at their sheet to determine what skill they want to use, and then frame the scene in a way that lets them use that skill. For example, if a character has communication-type Skills like Seduction, Manipulation, Bluff or the like, it's probably effective to frame a scene where they and another ninja (their target for Information or EmoBond) are in a place where they will interact socially. If the character doesn't have those skills, the player should start the scene in a way to set up another skill for them to roll instead (for example, use their Climbing Skill to sneak into the target's high-rise apartment and learn their Secret; use their Memory Skill to impress the gourmet target ninja by reciting the qualities of wines, to form an EmoBond; and so on). This is an important technique for new Shinobigami players, and they will get better at it with practice.

A Shinobigami session where some of the players are unfamiliar with the rules (and thus must be taught the rule in play) usually takes about one hour per player: A GM and four new Shinobigami players may take about 4 hours to get through a scenario while learning all the rules. You may want to use the sample characters if every player is new, as that will help reduce time by about 20-30 minutes. If everyone comes to the table with an understanding of the game (especially when they have played it before), that session time estimate can be reduced by up to almost half.

The GM should always keep in mind that although they may be playing an adversarial role to some or all of the players, their actual job is to facilitate play and make sure that the game is fun and balanced. The GM should always try to be fair and allow the players to play their characters as they see them, but at the same time challenging them and pushing them to ever greater feats of heroism (or villainy).

During the Main Phase, each character only gets to take a single Main Action during their scene. If a player does not know what to do with their scene, it may help to remind them that these actions should further the story or attempt to accomplish the character's goals.

The GM may create their own Scene Charts that suit the scenario, or even switch Scene Charts in the middle of the session. You can find new Scene Charts in upcoming supplements or online. While they are heavily used in the Replay, they are not required for each game or play session. However, they are very helpful in inspiring players to quickly frame and begin their scenes, especially if they tend to have a hard time with ad-libbing.

To emphasize the previous point, you don't need to use the Scene Charts in your game, especially if the players are adept with improvisation and can quickly think of their scenes. You can even roll on it, and then chose whether or not to use the result (or else make up your own scene): Sometimes when using the Scene Chart, you may have an idea for a Drama Scene, but then rolling on the Scene Chart provides a very nonsensical result. In that kind of situation, ignore the Scene Chart. It's a handy tool, not a straightjacket.

Using Skills in unexpected ways is a good way to shake up a Drama Scene. For example, use First Aid to treat a wounded rival in an Emotion Check; use Pyromancy (or even Blade) to heat up a sword to cauterize a wound in a Recovery Check; Cooking the right sort of food may entice a weak-willed (or starving) enemy to spill the beans in an Information Check.

Often, Scene Players will set up Drama Scenes so that a lot of dramatical role-playing naturally happens between their character and others before the Skill Check happens. This is great for the story, but not every scene has to be like the coffee house scene from the movie "Heat". Some players may frame scenes that might just be a few seconds of narration followed by a roll: "I use Footwork to parkour over some building rooftops, following Ricardo from the shadows. I want to roll Footwork to determine their Secret. <<Rolls>". Both kinds of scenes are absolutely fine. Mixing up long and short Drama Scenes keeps a good pace to the game.

Encourage players to try to use a new Skill in each Drama Scene they frame. Using the same skill for each Drama Scene is kind of boring and only reveals one aspect of their character. It is a common "unwritten rule" that players must use a new Skill for each Drama Scene they create.

Connections don't always work both ways. Just as in real life, EmoBond is a two-way street: there may be times when a character has a positive emotion towards a character that does not reciprocate with a positive EmoBond, but rather chooses a negative emotion instead. A lot of this is due to roleplaying, character background, and other factors both inside and outside of the initiator's control.

Unless other means are hidden in a Secret or provided for in a special scenario rule, the only way to obtain a Prize is to defeat the character that currently possesses it.

Characters may share Information during Drama Scenes (just not their own Secrets), but this is explicitly not allowed during Combat Scenes. This includes the Climax Phase... with an exception for the death of a character.

Each Cycle, the players can change the order in which they are the Scene Player. It doesn't have to be clockwise each time. Each cycle, there may be a tactical reason why a player might want to have go early or later in a cycle. The GM should allow players to step up and go if they have a strong idea for a scene, or else fall back to going around the table in order if no one has a strong scene inspiration.

Whenever a question comes up about how the world works ("Do ninjas recognize each other on sight, like Vampires?" "Where is my Clan headquarters?" etc), that answer is up to the Scene Player to decide. The GM can always give guidance or answers as well, but otherwise the "truths" of the world (unless they'll break the world or scenario) are up to the Scene Player.

Almost hand-in-hand with the above: "Does Japan have X?" "Are there X stores in Tokyo?" "Is there a district famous for X?" These are some questions that may come up at the table. Don't stop the game, don't pull out your phone and look on Wikipedia, don't be afraid to get things right or wrong about Japanese culture or

geography. The answer to these questions is, “What does the scene player think the answer is?” and go with that. Mind, if there is a Japanese cultural expert at the table, they can feel free to chime in from time to time if it doesn't disrupt things. But remember that this is a game of modern fantasy fictional storytelling that every player at the table has a hand in creating: Not everything has to be accurate or verified by an expert.

Be careful as a GM when assigning secrets, and trust your players. If you hand a Secret to one of the players, but they really don't respond well to it from a personal standpoint, simply do it over and come up with something else (a good one on the fly is always “Mission: Protect (insert other PC name here)”, as there are never problems with that).

- Straight talk here: In an online playtest with strangers meant to be fun, the GM handed one of the players “Secret: PC X is secretly your master who controls you!”. Rather innocuous sounding, but by sheer bad luck that player was just getting over a really bad personal relationship trauma with issues of control. That player told the GM “I'm... not quite comfortable with this one.” The GM (not catching that this was a source of real trauma for that player) suggested that they don't have to play it as suggested: The player could turn the tables on the master character, be “out of their control” from the start of the session, or reject their control in the prologue and be their enemy. Unfortunately, the player still wasn't comfortable with that and bowed out of the online session. The GM finally understood that the player wasn't just “not feeling it”/“not able to grasp the motivation behind this Secret”, but it was actually triggering some trauma for them. The GM was kicking themselves for not catching this sooner; they would of course have simply given the player another Secret/Mission. Understandably, this is not a common occurrence, but please be mindful that something like this could potentially happen.

GMs: Listen to your players; Players: tell the GM if there's something that is making you uncomfortable. Shinobigami is only fun when there is trust and respect at the table.

3 - Combat

An important thing for a GM to prepare for is a combat that ends without a clear winner (when too many rounds pass, and a Stalemate results). This is quite a common occurrence in Shinobigami. If it's clear that one more round may settle things, the GM may allow it. However, everyone should be ready to face a situation where one clear winner is not decided, and the Prize does not change hands. In these situations, the most common story result is that all the ninja come to the realization that the battle has gone on long enough, and slowly back away from each other. More passionate characters will usually shout, “Next time, you're mine!” Cool-headed characters will simply nod at the strength of their opponent, while carefully backing away. It's simply the nature of all ninja to declare a stalemate for now and return to fight a later day, rather than to continue to fight a battle of attrition. It's especially important to prepare new Shinobigami players to this possibility before the Climax Phase begins.

Attacks are made using Ninpo; these are the special moves and techniques handed down through generations of warriors. Each Ninpo uses a particular Skill to activate.

During a Drama Scene, any Skill may be used in a Skill Check as long as the player and GM can justify it. During a Combat Scene, only Ninpo Assigned Skills are used.

Keep in mind that Ohgi need no skill rolls to perform, meaning that a wounded character with few or no remaining Skills will still be able to use them.

Why “Plot”? The original Japanese text used the English word Plot for this process, as the word had connotations of planning one’s moves ahead of time or having a written plan, with an emphasis on the former.

Mob Combat is not an attack against a mob, but instead is an attack originating from a group or mob.

4 - Scenarios

GMs, even seasoned GMs, are encouraged to use published scenarios, especially when first starting out with Shinobigami. As each scenario makes heavy use of Secrets, players should refrain from reading a published scenario before playing it.

The back of the book contains various “Enemies” that may appear in a game, from low-ranking ninja to powerful monsters. However, in almost all the sessions we run, the only real enemies that appear are the other player characters, or maybe one or two strong NPC ninja (with their own Secrets) as strong background characters and bosses. Still, the least powerful ones may serve as either companions to boss NPCs, or serve in a Combat Scene as a way to perhaps test the PCs and drain their resources. Unlike many other action-centric tabletop RPGs, there are few “PCs fight groups of weaker nameless enemies/monsters” scenes: More often than not the PC’s only real opponents are the other PCs at the table, or the powerful Boss NPC who they must rise up against.

While Cycles are concrete units of game structure, they are incredibly flexible story-wise. A single cycle may represent a single day, a week, or even greater lengths of time. Individual Scenes within a Cycle can take place out of order, presenting flashbacks or even flash-forwards.

Due to the clan system, no matter what rank a PC is, there will almost certainly be someone with authority over them. Introduction Scenes may simply consist of characters receiving orders, or even being given Missions to defy them.

When determining Secrets for the characters, the GM may want to consider the personality of their players. If a player tends to shy away from conflict, perhaps give their character a Secret which tells them to protect another character or forge positive EmoBonds. If a player tends to be a lone-wolf type, or quickly falls into an antagonist role in PVP scenarios (which may pit all the other characters against them before the scenario even begins), giving them a similar “positive”

Secret (“X is your Sibling”, “You are in love with X; protect them”) will help keep the game running in interesting directions.

With the above, it’s often a good idea to give a “positive” Secret to new players who choose Bloodline of Oni characters. They start the game in a position as an outsider where most of the other characters will naturally be suspicious of them, so giving them a Secret which puts them against other characters is perhaps too simple; the other characters will have no story reason to cooperate or help them. However, giving them a “positive” Secret that has them work with or protect others will keep the game flowing without the Oni character being automatically sidelined or ignored by the others.

Good Introduction Scenes give players strong reasons for taking an active role in the session. Bad Introduction Scenes invite the player to sit on the sidelines and ignore the main conflict.

A session should have no more than two Master Scenes, three if there are more than 4 players. Sometimes a GM will not see a need to create a Master Scene at all. Master Scenes are useful in helping a session stay on track or for speeding up the story. If players have failed a large number of information gathering rolls or are having trouble, a Master Scene is a useful tool to help get the players together and guide them toward a satisfying conclusion (for example, by giving them an extra scene to meet up and freely exchange Information).

Player-versus-player (or PVP) is a genre that has been attempted a number of times in the roleplaying game industry, but Shinobigami handles it with ease and balance. The most rewarding PVP scenarios will still include several Secrets that force some characters to work together or protect others.

As a GM becomes more experienced, they will likely be creating more custom scenarios than the other types. There literally is no limit to the exciting scenarios you can create, and it is very easy to make dynamic stories by combining 2 of the basic scenario types into one.

A GM should be cautious when presenting a scenario as cooperative with the intention of inserting PVP elements. Make sure that your group is comfortable—and mature enough—to handle in-party fighting.

You can get creative with ending conditions! You may give a character or NPC a Secret that ends the Main Phase and moves the game to the Climax, regardless of the number of other Secrets uncovered, or you can even make a Secret that makes a character immune to damage until the Secret is uncovered!

Shinobigami Starter Set

In the advice section, we discuss our strongly recommended set of standards to use when running or playing your first game of Shinobigami: The background and reasons are detailed in the advice section above, but here are the highlights. These rules will help make your first session a success, and lessen the chance of common player mistakes due to lack of experience.

* If possible, play with trusted friends first, before playing a random convention or online game with strangers.

* Print out a “Reference Sheet” for every player at the table.

* Don’t start with a Battle Royale scenario type. Go with Versus or Cooperative.

* Disallow the “Chaos” Conviction.

* Skills: When picking Skills, spread the skills out a little so they’re not all bunched together in one area of the sheet.

* Ninpo: Make everyone pick at least one more Attack Ninpo (everyone gets Close Combat by default; pick one more, perhaps Ranged Attack).

* Ohgi: Only choose between Critical Hit or Area Attack. The other Ohgi are more complicated or presume a detailed understanding of the flow of play.

* Ninja Tools: Everyone picks two. But give everyone a free third tool, a Life Pill. Make sure that everyone has at least one Life Pill (more is fine, too). If there are just one or two new Shinobigami players at the table, only giving their characters the extra life pill might be a solid handicap to keep things interesting and fair.

* Remind everyone that they may have secret friends as well as enemies: Not everyone is a threat.

* Remind everyone that while fulfilling their mission or secret mission grants the most “Merit” (think “points” in a board game), as a player they always have the option of their shinobi character rejecting that mission to find their own way or to make for a better story ending: Their choices are important and meaningful.

Finally, visit the publisher website at www.kotohi.com to download character sheets, reference materials, sample scenarios, and other play aids that will help make your first session a success!

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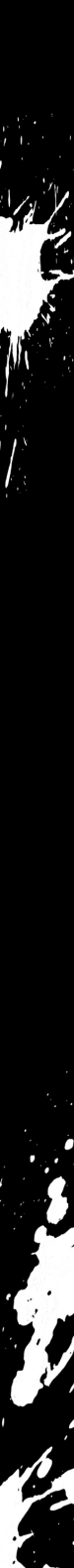
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