Isawa
Aki
威沢
秋
Shugenja of the Phoenix Clan
TURN TO THE BACK OF THIS BOOKLET TO SEE IF
ISAWA AKI IS THE RIGHT CHARACTER FOR YOU!

Welcome to the Emerald Empire

This is an era of sudden change and upheaval in Rokugan, where the Emerald Empire has ruled for over a thousand years. Mortal schemes, natural calamities, and celestial turmoil alike have disrupted the political, military, and spiritual equilibrium of the land. Long-simmering rivalries and fresh betrayals ripple through the courts and on the battlefield. The Chrysanthemum Throne is beset by threats from without and within, and the honor of the seven Great Clans—the families descended from the heroes of legend and sworn to rule their lands in the Emperor's name—shall be put to the test.

READY TO START?

If you're already familiar with Rokugan, the clans of the Emerald Empire, and the other cultural aspects of the *Legend of the Five Rings* setting, then you can skip the remainder of this page and jump straight to the next page to learn about roleplaying and more about your character.

Your Clan: The Phoenix

"Master the elements and be reborn."

Other clans guard the Empire's borders, even the Empire's future, but the Phoenix guard the Empire's soul. It is our duty to keep safe the myriad religious paths, defining them and arbitrating their differences. Scholars of the *Tao* and servants of the spirits are found among our ranks more than in any other clan; the wisdom we have gleaned from both traditions has led us to foster peace and understanding among the other clans—even if it means sacrificing ourselves in the process.

We know that our every step sends ripples throughout the world, so we must tread lightly and with a peaceful heart, lest disharmony or even chaos result.

Your School: Isawa Elementalist

Schools in Rokugan train and prepare us for our role as samurai, such as bushi (warriors), shugenja (priests who can call on the spirits for aid), courtiers (those skilled in political matters), and monks (seekers of enlightenment).

As one of the oldest and greatest shugenja families in the Empire, we have had centuries to learn to commune with the spirits and the most effective ways to request their blessings. Some might confuse authority with arrogance, but at heart, we here at Isawa Elemental Academies are a pious and dutiful family that is devoted to ensuring harmony and balance.

The Code of Bushidō

The Way of the Warrior, or *Bushidō*, elevates samurai from the rest of society while also chaining us to near-unattainable ideals. When you become a samurai, you must embody Righteousness and Honor, Loyalty and Duty, and Courtesy and Compassion, as well as Courage in the face of death. You will be expected to uphold these virtues in your every word and deed, even when these ideals conflict with one another. The tenets of Bushidō would not be ideals to strive toward, after all, if they were easy to achieve...

The tenet of ***Righteousness*** drives you, as we Phoenix are willing to sacrifice ourselves to ensure the right thing is done. We know that when our lands are not governed justly, the Heavens will voice their displeasure.

Wise Words from your Sensei...

Honor and glory are everything to a samurai. Honor reflects your inward opinion of how well you adhere to the tenets of Bushidō, while glory reflects how well known your name is throughout the Empire. In a perfect world, you could bring glory to yourself and the Phoenix while maintaining your moral integrity, but in Rokugan, we are frequently tested to see which one we value more highly.

Know that your life as a samurai will often feature much turmoil over competing desires—especially over what you personally want (your ***ninjō***) and what society, your clan, and your lord expects of you (your ***giri***).

Playing Your Character

You are part of a roleplaying game (RPG), an exciting cooperative storytelling experience. Like many games, it has rules, components, and dice to help describe and resolve the action. Unlike most games, an RPG has no winner or loser and no opposing teams. If everyone has fun, then everyone wins!

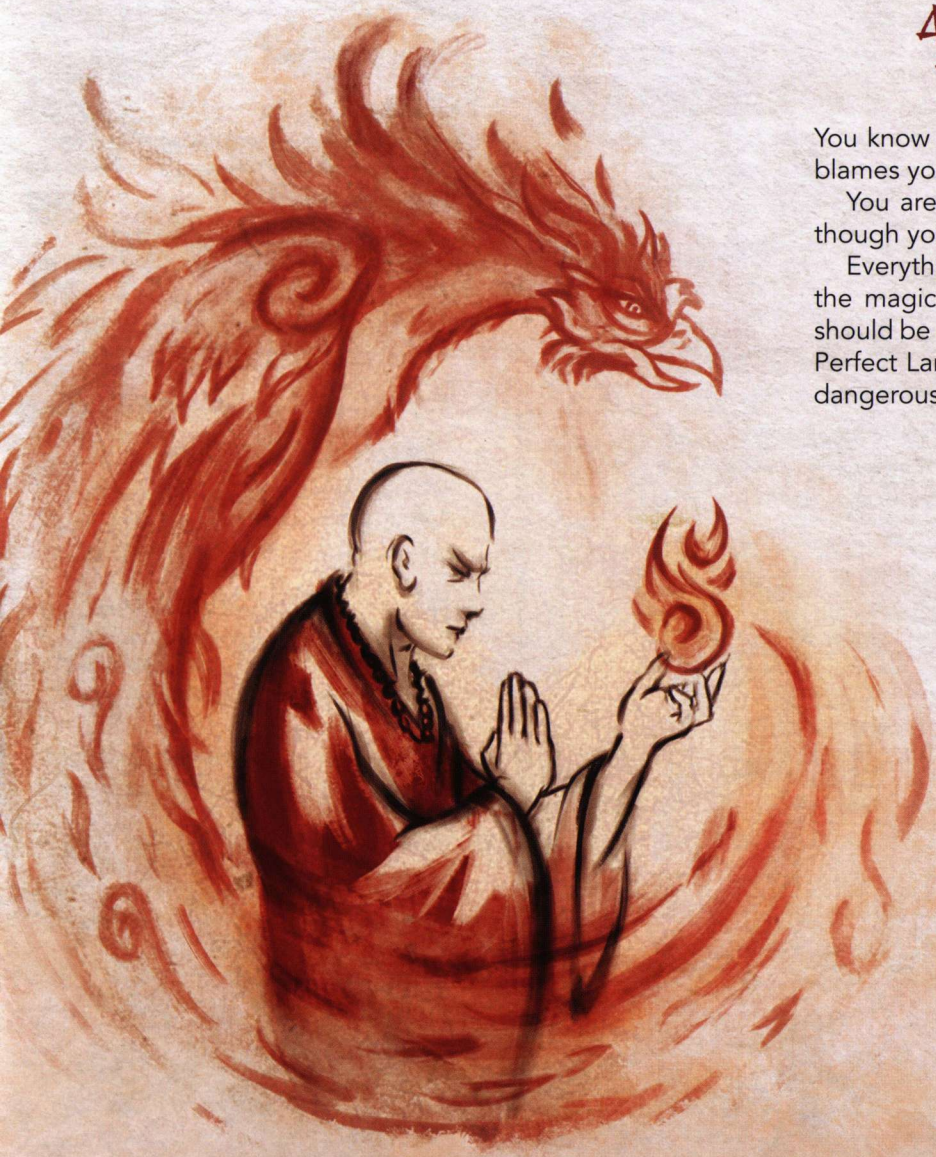
The other players (like you) are hero players. Each of you controls one player character (PC)—your character is Isawa Aki. Hero players make decisions for their PCs, describing what they want their characters to do and how they react to the plot and setting created by the game master (GM) who runs the game. Whenever you want your character to do something, simply tell the GM what that is; the GM will then tell you the result. Sometimes, the GM may say a check is needed to see if you succeed in your request, like if you wanted to leap over a chasm or attack a foe. You'll learn how to make checks on the next page.

Your Story So Far...

The recent untimely and mysterious death of the Emerald Champion, Doji Satsume of the Crane Clan, has thrown the Emerald Empire into turmoil. Each of the Great Clans suspiciously eyes the others and wonders whether the death was no tragic accident, but a dishonorable act of murder.

In these times of strife, a group of youths approaches the village of Tsuma for the Topaz Championship and their *gempuku*, the coming-of-age ceremony that will mark them as fully fledged samurai. Each contestant has come from a different clan and dreams of being the highest-scoring contestant in the tournament, earning the title of Topaz Champion. Despite being pitted against one another, they are all united in their desire to succeed and bring honor to their clan and family.

Not everyone in Tsuma has honorable motives for the contest, however. Personal vendettas, supernatural visitations, and deadly sabotage may undermine the following days—unless the new arrivals stay true to the Code of Bushidō and act as the honorable samurai they seek to become.



As you travel to Tsuma from the Isawa Elemental Academies...

You know that Isawa Ranmaru, your mentor's husband, blames you for her death. He may be correct.

You are certain your parents are very proud of you, though you have not seen them for some years now.

Everything you have studied makes you believe that the magic used by the Unicorn Clan is heretical, and should be outlawed. Similarly, the religious beliefs of the Perfect Land Sect are aberrant and possibly even more dangerous to Rokugan.

CHARACTER NAME
Isawa Aki

CLAN
Phoenix

RINGS AND RING VALUES

ENDURANCE (1)	CRITICAL STRIKES (2)	CONDITIONS (3)
8 FATIGUE		

COMPOSURE (4)	PERSONAL UNMASKING
6 STRIFE	*Your reaction when you exceed your Composure:* **Withdraw into quiet contemplation**

FOCUS (5)	VIGILANCE (6)	VOID POINTS (7)
5	2	2 MAXIMUM / CURRENT

HONOR (8)	GLORY (9)	CONTEST POINTS (10)
45 STARTING / CURRENT	47 STARTING / CURRENT	

SKILLS AND DICE THEY ADD

	ARTISAN	RANK / DICE
Craft or Repair a Work of Art	Aesthetics: *Create visual works of art*	0 / –
	Composition: *Compose literature*	1 / ⬠
	Design: *Fashion and select clothing*	0 / –
	Smithing: *Craft weapons and armor*	0 / –

	MARTIAL	RANK / DICE
Overcome an Opponent	Fitness: *Perform feats of physical prowess*	0 / –
	Martial Arts [Melee]: *Use close combat weapon*	0 / –
	Martial Arts [Ranged]: *Use ranged weapon*	0 / –
	Martial Arts [Unarmed]: *Use fists in combat*	0 / –
	Meditation: *Process and control emotions*	1 / ⬠
	Tactics: *Command and control in a battle*	0 / –

	SCHOLAR	RANK / DICE
Know or Learn a Fact	Culture: *Know Rokugani traditions and trends*	1 / ⬠
	Government: *Know how the Empire operates*	0 / –
	Medicine: *Know the body and how to heal it*	0 / –
	Sentiment: *Understand emotions of others*	0 / –
	Theology: *Understand religions and the spirits*	3 / ⬠⬠⬠

	SOCIAL	RANK / DICE
Influence a Person	Command: *Issue orders to others*	0 / –
	Courtesy: *Control conversations and arguments*	1 / ⬠
	Games: *Play and understand games*	1 / ⬠
	Performance: *Entertain and impress others*	0 / –

	TRADE	RANK / DICE
Acquire or Use Resources	Commerce: *Buy and sell goods for profit*	0 / –
	Labor: *Conduct manual tasks such as farming*	0 / –
	Seafaring: *Operate boats and subsist at sea*	0 / –
	Skulduggery: *Steal and spy on others*	0 / –
	Survival: *Travel and endure in wilderness areas*	0 / –

APPROACHES AND DICE THEY ADD

Air Ring: 2 / ■■
Graceful, cunning, and precise

Earth Ring: 1 / ■
Steady, grounded, and thorough

Fire Ring: 3 / ■■■
Direct, ferocious, and inventive

Water Ring: 2 / ■■
Balanced, flexible, and perceptive

Void Ring: 2 / ■■
Enlightened, centered, and mystical

CONFLICT STANCES

Air: Enemies add +1 to the target number (TN) of their checks against you

Earth: Foes can't spend ✲ to injure you

Fire: You may count your ↶ results in a successful check as bonus successes

Water: You can perform an additional, different action that doesn't need a check

Void: You ignore strife from ↶ results in your check

Skill Die ⬠

Ring Die ■

Success. If the total number of ↶ results on kept dice are equal to or greater than or the Target Number (TN) of the check, then you succeed! Each ↶ beyond this is a bonus success.

Explosive Success. This counts as a ↶ result, and for each kept die with ↷, you can roll 1 extra die of the same type and then choose whether to keep it or not. You can keep doing this each time you get a ↷ result on a kept die.

HOW TO PERFORM A CHECK

1. Describe to the GM what you want to do, and they will determine the check you need to make, the skill to use, and the target number (TN) to succeed.
2. Refer to the Skill to be used for the check, and select the associated number of ⬠ dice.
3. Select the Approach (based on the Ring you're going to use) and the associated number of ■ dice.
4. Roll the combined dice pool.
5. Keep a number of dice (of either type) equal to or less than the Ring used in the check.
6. If you have at least as many Successes (◔) on the kept dice as the TN, you succeed!

IN YOUR TURN:

At the start of your turn, you should set your **Stance** if you're in a skirmish. This determines which Ring you'll fight with.

Then you can move 1 range band, and can perform one of the following **Actions**:

- **Attack** by using the Strike action. You'll probably use this frequently in skirmishes.
- **Move** up to 1 extra range band.
- **Use a skill** in a check, such as Medicine to remove fatigue or Fitness to move a fallen tree out of your way.

You can also use your School Ability as part of making a check. This doesn't count as a separate action.

YOUR CHARACTER'S HEALTH AND STANDING IN THE CHAMPIONSHIP

1. **Endurance** represents your stamina and willingness to fight, while fatigue indicates damage you have taken. When you suffer **fatigue**, mark it here. If this goes above your Endurance value, you fall unconscious!
2. **Critical strikes** represent serious injuries to your character. If you suffer one, mark it here. Erase the mark if the critical strike is healed.
3. If your character suffers any health **conditions** such as becoming unconscious, indicate them here.
4. **Composure** is your capacity to endure mental and emotional pressure, while **strife** represents strong emotions that can overcome your inner control. When you suffer strife, mark it here. When the strife you've suffered exceeds your Composure value, you become Unmasked!
5. **Focus** represents how fast you react to threats. It helps determine the order in combat!
6. **Vigilance** is your wariness and overall ability to notice things that could be a threat.
7. **Void points** will be available for you to use after the Interlude on the next page.
8. **Honor** represents your belief that you are upholding the values of Bushidō. Record any changes to it here.
9. **Glory** reflects your social standing in Rokugan. Record any changes to it here.
10. Track the **contest points** you achieve here. Your goal is to reach 8 points, and thus show your readiness to become a samurai!

WEAPONS AND GEAR

WEAPON	SKILL	RANGE	DAMAGE
Fists	Martial Arts [Unarmed]	0	1
Staff	Martial Arts [Melee]	1	2

You deal damage to the target equal to the weapon's base damage plus your bonus successes. You may also spend ✲ ✲ from the check to inflict a **critical strike**!

GEAR	
Robes	Fiery red, as befits a Phoenix
Traveling Pack	Useful items when on the road, like bedmat and traveling clothes
Satchel of Scrolls	Various texts and tomes for study
Money	5 koku (enough money to sustain you for five months)

YOUR PERSONAL TURMOIL

You are aware of your power, and want to gain even more. Your expert researches have gained attention, though, which may mean you are instead destined to be only a scholar and never wield real power.

YOUR SCHOOL ABILITY:

AT ONE WITH THE ELEMENTS

Once per scene when making a Theology check, before rolling the dice you may reduce the TN of the check by 1.

YOUR ADVANTAGE

Sixth Sense: You are especially in tune with the spirit world, and are especially sensitive to mystical phenomena.

You may reroll up to 2 dice of your choice when your advantage helps you on any check.

Opportunity. This represents a positive, incidental effect of your action. Your GM will indicate what benefits this result will give you for this check.

Strife. This reflects your emotional reaction to the task. It can represent things like frustration or fear, or the thrill of a challenge or joy. Too much strife, though, can make you lose your Composure and Unmask!

STOP!
Don't turn the page until the GM instructs you to.

CHARACTER NAME
Isawa Aki

CLAN
Phoenix

RINGS AND RING VALUES

Earth
Air
Water
Fire
Void

ENDURANCE	CRITICAL STRIKES	CONDITIONS
8 FATIGUE		

COMPOSURE	PERSONAL UNMASKING
6 STRIFE	*Your reaction when you exceed your Composure:* **Withdraw into quiet contemplation**

FOCUS	VIGILANCE	VOID POINTS (1)
5	2	2 MAXIMUM / CURRENT

HONOR	GLORY	CONTEST POINTS
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SKILLS AND DICE THEY ADD

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	Composition: *Compose literature*	
	Design: *Fashion and select clothing*	
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	MARTIAL	RANK
Overcome an Opponent	Fitness: *Perform feats of physical prowess*	
	Martial Arts [Melee]: *Use close combat weapon*	
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Know or Learn a Fact	Culture: *Know Rokugani traditions and trends*	
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	SOCIAL	RANK
Influence a Person	Command: *Issue orders to others*	
	Courtesy: *Control conversations and arguments*	
	Games: *Play and understand games*	
	Performance: *Entertain and impress others*	

	TRADE	RANK
Acquire or Use Resources	Commerce: *Buy and sell goods for profit*	
	Labor: *Conduct manual tasks such as farming*	
	Seafaring: *Operate boats and subsist at sea*	
	Skulduggery: *Steal and spy on others*	
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APPROACHES AND DICE THEY ADD

- **Air Ring**: *Graceful, cunning, and precise*
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- **Fire Ring**: *Direct, ferocious, and inventive*
- **Water Ring**: *Balanced, flexible, and perceptive*
- **Void Ring**: *Enlightened, centered, and mystical*

CONFLICT STANCES

- **Air**: Enemies add +1 to the target number (TN) of their checks against you
- **Earth**: Foes can't spend ✲ to injure you
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- **Void**: You ignore strife from results in your check

Skill Die ⬟ Ring Die ■

Success

Explosive Success

Opportunity

INTERLUDE: SPENDING EXPERIENCE POINTS (XP)

During the Interlude, you gain 4 XP! You can spend XP to...

- **Increase one or more Rings**: Increasing a Ring value costs XP equal to twice the new value. So advancing from 1 to 2 costs 6 XP, from 2 to 3 costs 9 XP, and so on. Each upgrade must be done separately, so increasing a Ring value from 1 to 3 would cost 15 XP (6 XP + 9 XP). You can never increase a Ring value greater than your lowest Rings value + your Void Ring value. *Mark the new value in the entry space for that ring.*
- **Increase one or more Skills:** Buying +1 rank in a skill costs twice the new rank value. So going from 0 ranks to 1 rank costs 2 XP, from 1 to 2 costs 4 XP, etc. Each upgrade must be done separately, so going from 1 rank to 3 ranks would cost 10 XP (4 XP + 6 XP). *Mark the new value in the rank entry for that skill.*
- **Purchase a Technique—Path to Inner Peace** (2XP) This technique allows commune with water kami to you heal yourself and those around you. *If chosen, see the rules below on this page and place a check next to its title.*
- **Purchase a Technique—Tempest of Air** (2XP) You beseech the air spirits to lash out at your foes with powerful gusts! *If chosen, see the rules below on this page and place a check next to its title.*

1 You can now use **Void points**, which allow you to call on your inner strength and overcome impossible odds. While making a check, when assembling the dice pool you may spend 1 Void point to **Seize the Moment**! This allows you to roll 1 additional ■ ring die and then keep 1 additional die (of any type) when resolving the check.

2 **Techniques** represent advanced training that let you act in unexpected ways or exploit openings that others would overlook. You have two techniques available to purchase during the interlude.

WEAPONS AND GEAR

WEAPON	SKILL	RANGE	DAMAGE
Fists	Martial Arts [Unarmed]	0	1
Katana	Martial Arts [Melee]	1	4

You deal damage to the target equal to the weapon's base damage plus your bonus successes. You may also spend ✿ ✿ from the check to inflict a **critical strike**!

GEAR	
Robes	Fiery red, as befits a Phoenix
Traveling Pack	Useful items when on the road, like bedmat and traveling clothes
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NEW TECHNIQUES

2

PATH TO INNER PEACE

As a Support action, you may make a TN 2 Theology (Water) check targeting yourself or another character at range 0–2. If you succeed, each target heals 2 fatigue plus your bonus successes. You may spend ✿ to target one extra character per ✿ spent this way. You cannot use this on someone more than once per scene.

TEMPEST OF AIR

As an Attack action, you may make a TN 3 Theology (Air) check targeting everyone at range 2–3. If you succeed, each target suffers 2 damage. You may spend ✿ ✿ to exclude 1 character from these effects.

IN YOUR TURN:

At the start of your turn, set your Stance if in a skirmish.

Then you can move 1 range band, and can perform one of the following **Actions**:

- Attack using Strike
- Move 1 extra range band
- Use a skill
- Use one of your new Techniques, if it is described as an action

You can also use your School Ability as part of making a check. This doesn't count as a separate action. You may also use a Technique if it isn't described as an action.

Enter the Emerald Empire with Isawa Aki!

You would be wise to select this character if you want to:

- Be an expert at calling upon the spirits to lend you elemental aid
- Belong to a clan that focuses on harmony and religious matters
- Solve your problems with ingenuity and passion

It would be unwise, however, to chose Isawa Aki if you desire a play a character who excels at diplomacy or the use of weapons, or who uses the inner power of *ki* to empower their martial arts.

Isawa Aki's Story

Aki showed her ability to hear and speak with the kami*—the mystical nature spirits of Rokugan—at a young age and was soon apprenticed to Isawa Juriko, a powerful shugenja who some suggested might someday be the next Master of Fire. Aki took to her studies with great passion, and found a kindred soul in her mentor. Indeed, soon Aki was making contributions to Juriko's work, urging the elder shugenja to press further in her studies and understanding of the kami.*

Unfortunately, something went wrong, and Juriko died in a horrible fire. Since then, Aki has been without a proper mentor, completing her studies on her own at the temples and libraries of the Isawa. Here she learned more of the heretical Perfect Land sect, and she firmly believes their teachings of false equality are dangerous and can only bring ruin to the Emerald Empire.

Now, Aki is ready to undertake her gempuku trials and become a full, adult samurai. As is only proper given her extensive natural gifts, Aki has been selected to travel to Tsuma and join the Topaz Tournament. Aki is certain that Juriko's fate is not what awaits her. Soon, Aki will not only reach her old mentor's level of mastery, but exceed it. Becoming Topaz Champion is only the first step.

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