

YEAR 1203

SPRING 1203

THE EXODUS OF THE UNICORN

With the majority of their lands occupied by the Tainted, and their neighbors to the South practicing slash-and-burn tactics, those Unicorn that remain within the bounds of the Empire decide to abandon what is left of their holdings. While the majority of them head for the Ki-Rin's Path, a select few decide to stay behind, acting as a guerilla force within Rokugan itself. These riders, under acting Champion Moto Chinua, harass the forces of Daigotsu Kanpeki by going in secret among the Heimin of the Empire, stockpiling the weapons of the Samurai caste and training the populace in their use. Where previously, the forces of the enemy would simply overrun and zombify any villages that defied them, they suddenly found themselves confronted by fully armed and trained encampments of Ashigaru, in some cases backed by mobile Unicorn skirmishers and shugenja. This creates difficulties with some of the other clans, as some of their tax collectors begin meeting with similar receptions. In particular, the Crab do not take kindly to the peasantry objecting to their total war resource grab with steel.

To the Southwest, the Path is shut to the other Clans, held by redoubled forces of the now homeless Unicorn. They make special note to put any Spider travelers to the sword instantly. Along the path, The Khan escorts a wounded Moto Naleesh to the Colonies, finding Journey's End Keep occupied by a mere skeleton crew of the other Clans. Under Shinjo Min-Hee's command, the Unicorn fall upon the city en-masse, bringing news of the state of the Empire to the shocked residents. The Spider remnants are driven out, and Min-Hee claims the city for the Unicorn, coordinating her forces from her new base in the Colonies.

A SECRET MISSION

Susumu Shibatsu sends a small contingent of those loyal to him on a discreet mission into the heart of Kanpeki's territory. Little is known of the mission or its results, but a few things are certain. Of the initial forces, only a handful survived, Kanpeki is said to have flown into a rage upon hearing of it, and the few of Shibatsu's Spiders who escaped brought with them a wicker container large enough to contain, perhaps, a small child.