

## YEAR 1215

### SPRING 1215

#### DESPAIR MARCHES

In the early days of 1215, it seems as though the armies of Daigotsu Kanpeki have become unstoppable. They push the borders of occupied territory out on all sides, simultaneously fighting on every front where the demonic entities might find samurai to kill. The Yasuki provinces act as a staging ground from which the Crane are assaulted. Dragon holdings outside of the mountains are sacked, the Tonbo lands put to the torch. What remains of the Lion and Crab armies have no choice but to join in a desperate alliance to hold what shreds of soil remain to them.

Darkness has come, and the Empire knows the Shadowlands' fury.

### SUMMER 1215

#### NO LOVE LEFT

The summer of 1215 brings one of the hottest seasons in known history. The heat is as unwelcome as it is uncomfortable, for the air carries the scent of rot and corruption far beyond the battlefields where it originates. Funerary incense is burned day and night to purge the wind of the foul vapors, and the sharper scent of ancient wood heralds the blasphemous burning of ancient shrines and temples as Kanpeki's army desecrates whatever dedications to the Fortunes and Kami that they come across.

In the furthest reaches of the Phoenix lands, the most devout among their shugenja find their prayers to the Heavens no longer answered, their cries and devotions going unnoticed. As was prophesied, Ningen-do is anathema to Tengoku, no longer blessed by the Celestial Realms.

### FALL 1215

#### A REVENANT'S JOURNEY

With the Second City firmly in his grasp, Arashi leaves the Colonies, setting sail with a small fleet for the shores of distant Rokugan. Determined to bring proper glory back to the Mantis name, he brings with him only those Colonial samurai and ronin that passed both his scrutiny and that of his right hand: Iuchi Namida, Oracle of Thunder. As one, they make for the Empire through storms and sea monsters, finally landing after an arduous journey. They stash their boats in the ruins of an old smuggler's cove, one known only to the eldest members of the former Mantis (and even then, only from the stories of their ancestors), and make their way inland.

Through trials and combat aplenty, they fight their way to the Palace of the Emerald Champion, where their force joins with that of the Last Legion. It is unknown exactly what transpires between the members of the Legion's leadership and the Colonial Warlord, but he and his samurai are accepted into their ranks, and together they hold back the encroaching darkness.

### WINTER 1215

#### SILENCE ON THE BATTLEFIELD

The campaign of Kanpeki's greed continues unchecked in the last dying days of autumn, and all throughout the Empire, tacticians and commanders prepare to brace themselves for a long couple of months before the snows bring them a brief reprieve from the year of death and bloodshed. However, when things seem to be at their lowest point, the advance of the Shadowlands simply... stops.

Cautiously, suspiciously, the officers at the front do not drop their guard. They keep their ragged soldiers at peak readiness, or at least as close to such as they can manage, prepared for raids and skirmishes that never come. As time passes, they grow bolder, sending scouts that never return. Eventually, they simply have to accept the fact that, for whatever reason, Kanpeki's armies have chosen to grant them respite. Confused, they turn their efforts to stockpiling for a long winter.