

JADE REGENT SESSION SUMMARY 02/17/2013

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Paul notices that *Tim* is showing up on the screen once again. He deduces that this means that *Tim* has moved to Richardson to join *Bruce*. This impression is somewhat confused by the ongoing conversation they're having with *Georgina* about Orgy Camps and the Insane Clown Posse. Apparently Richardson is a much more exciting city than previous information would have suggested. Fortunately, the conversation moves to how Pringles is actually a "processed potato food product".

Ernest finds himself in an unfamiliar position: he is the voice of reason and conservatism in this conversation. He's not totally comfortable with the fact that everyone else is talking about orgies and juggling festivals and whatnot.

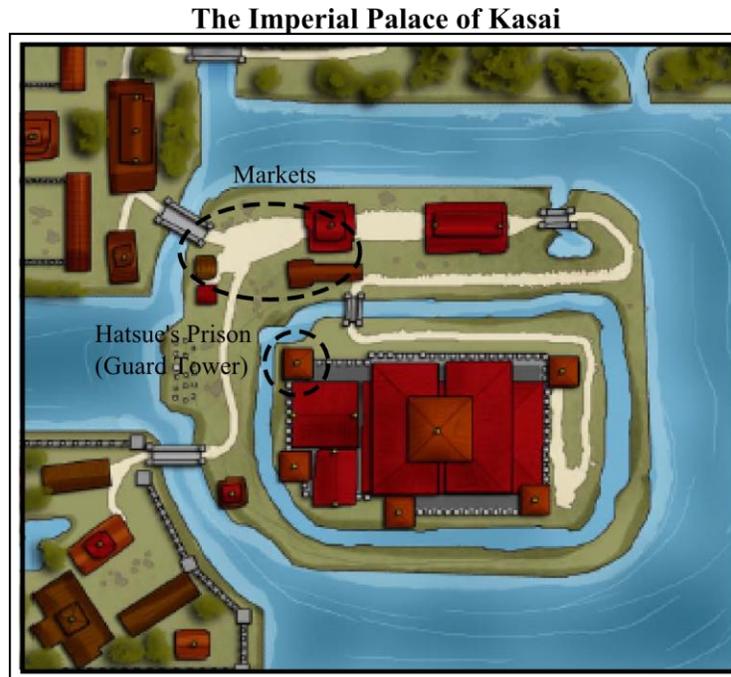
Chris just devotes himself to his higher calling: he adjusts the camera position, the microphone position, and ignores the direction of the conversation. He is quite relieved to find out that the subject has moved back towards *Tim*'s experience with a highly overqualified mail room manager.

Patrick does his best to be *Patrick*. *Matt* shows up late, for the purpose of gathering precious, precious snacks.

<i>Character</i>	<i>Player</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Level</i>
Harwynian Falingleaf	Bruce	Elegant Elven Transmuter	12
Yoshihiro Kaijitsu	Ernest	Tien Cavalier/Samurai-In-Training	12
Jacob Frostfang	Matt	Cold-Loving Kellid Party Sorcerer	12
V'lk	Chris	Mute Feral Elf Stabber (and Oracle)	2/10
Gobo Samarillian	Patrick	Blind Gnomish Fortuneteller	12
Bjorn the Unlucky	Tim	Ulfen Woodsman	12

RESCUING HATSUE

The characters' basic plan is to *teleport* to where *Hatsue* is being held, rescue her, go to the Shrine of the Heavenly Sovereigns to get *Ameiko Kaijitsu* blessed by the kami, and then liberate the capital city. *Harwynian* and *Jacob Frostfang* will be the folks who cast the spells.



The characters launch their *teleports* and appear in a guard tower, ready for action. Hatsue is chained to a chair in the center of the room. There are no foes visible, but as the characters move to help her someone calls out from murder slits up above. Defenders storm down the stairs. The *Typhoon Commander* above shouts commands to his men and casts a spell. Harwynian responds by casting *Haste* on his compatriots. The rest of the group golf claps at the cool name “Typhoon Commander.”

Jacob moves into position to engulf the attackers in his freezing breath. The Typhoon Guards rush down the stairs straight into his spell, but are only lightly wounded at most. *Bjorn* moves to engage the guards, slashing one with his fearsome *Nine-Ringed Ghost Sword*.

The Typhoon Commander flies down the steps, transforming into an ogre mage as he goes. He invokes his *justice judgment* ability! He attacks Ameiko with his naginata,

slashing her badly; the *Greater Heroism* from Jacob's tea ceremony prevents her from taking serious damage. Harwynian flutters *Miyako's Fan* and tries to slam the Typhoon Commander into a wall with a *Forceful Hand*. The ogre mage stands strong against the attack.

Bjorn slams into one of the Typhoon Guards, crushing him into a red paste with an unstoppable barrage of blade and shield strikes. Three more guards rush down the stairs to replace him.

V'lk decides that he's tired of seeing the Typhoon Commander flying around. He sends a *Dispel Magic* at him, shredding the Commander's spell and bringing him to the ground. Yoshihiro follows up by filling the Typhoon Commander's face with arrows. The commander falls.

Harwynian sends both *Forceful Hand* and a flight of *Magic Missiles* at the guard with the pointy face. Bjorn steps in and crushes both the pointy guard and the bowlegged guard, mashing one of them into the wall with his shield and cutting the other clean through.

Jacob takes the shape of a white dragon and moves up the stairs. He finds a Typhoon Guard and bites him harshly. The guard draws katana and wakizashi and slashes at him, unaware that his successful attacks will likely doom him thanks to Jacob's elemental aura. Jacob overbears him, claws him to shreds, then reduces the remains to frozen blood crystals. V'lk thinks, "This is the most wonderful thing ever..."

Then one of the Typhoon Guards regenerates enough to be able to stab upwards at Ameiko, inflicting a horrible wound! The characters respond by murdering all of the Typhoon Guards and sterilizing the bodies with fire.

The characters heal Hatsue, unchain her and Yoshihiro hands her a weapon, the *thundering blade of the house of Sugimatu*. A quick once-over indicates that she doesn't appear to be *charmed* or otherwise compromised. She tells them, "This is but one of the guard towers on the edges of the Imperial Palace!" The characters rush to the top of the tower and find that the tower overlooks a market outside the palace. There may be hundreds of people who heard the conflict inside, and they are starting to act with

dramatic alarm. The characters respond by teleporting out into the city at large and looking inconspicuous.

ON THE LAM

Hatsue tells the characters that they need to make contact with a resistance leader who is hiding somewhere in Kasai. She urges them to accompany her to the household of her friend Asachi Isao, a sympathizer whose family lives in the city.

As soon as the guards at the Isao complex see Hatsue they allow the characters to pass immediately. *Asachi Isao* is ancient and frail; he looks a bit like an Asian Patrick Stewart. As soon as he sees Ameiko and Yoshihiro he approaches, “I recognized you immediately! It has been a long time, but you are the very image of your great-grandparents! Our household is one of the few who still honor and remember the house of Amatatsu. I have taken good care of the wealth your family left behind when they fled the city.”

Yoshihiro is overcome with gratitude. “That is greater service than we expected! Your efforts bring honor to your house, and to that of the Amatatsu! Our army has surrounded the city and we intend to depose the Jade Regent and rid the land of his oni backers.”

Asachi Isao understands the characters’ need to take Ameiko to the Shrine of the Heavenly Sovereign out in the bay. The island is protected by wards and must be approached in a specific manner, by boat. The characters must pass through all five torii gates before the island’s true nature will be revealed.

He also relates the troubles in the city. The Jade Regent has taken the daughters of many noble households captive. His guards accost all women at the city gates and in the marketplace, because his seer has seen that the daughter of the Amatatsu holds the Imperial Seal – Isao’s own daughter is captive in the Palace. Much of the grain in the city has been carried off and stored in Imperial Granaries, far from the people who need it.

Bjorn spends some time playing shogi with Hatsue and sharing stories about their respective traumatic childhoods. Yoshihiro and Ameiko spend time with old Asachi Isao to learn about the Jade Regent and his closest advisors.

- The Jade Regent, Soho Takahiro
- Annamuramon, chief magistrate and possible Pokemon
- Renchi Maida, seer and lover of the Jade Regent
- The Raven Prince, his chief assassin

The last Emperor was very close to Takahiro, and must have passed the Regency along to him. Takahiro must have been accepted by the kami and the throne. Thus, it would mean nothing to defeat the Jade Regent without obtaining the favor of the kami and the spirits of the old Emperors.

HIT AND RUN

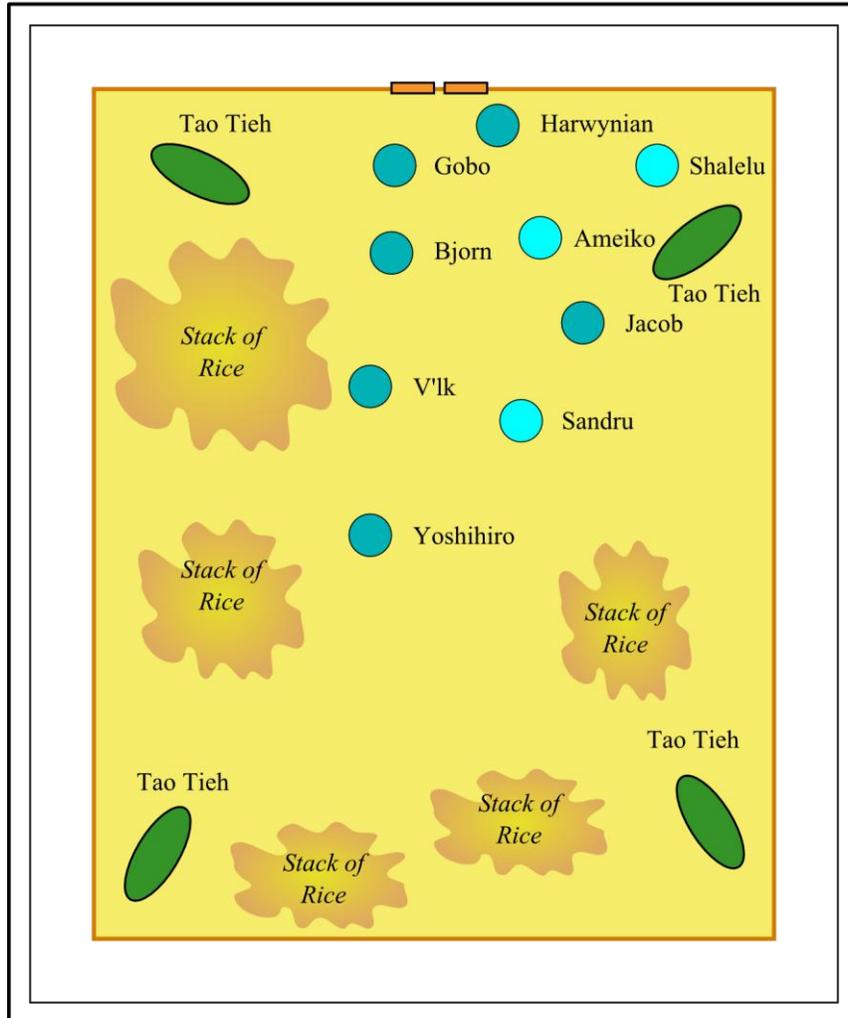
The characters seize upon the idea of a diversionary attack upon the Imperial granary to liberate some of the grain, then making the approach to the Shrine of the Heavenly Sovereign while the Jade Regent's guards are occupied with the granary. Isao's agents are able to tell the characters that during the day the granary is protected by a squad of guards, probably all oni of one sort or another. At night the oni depart, leaving the granary defended only by four statues of massive tigers. The locals all fully expect that the statues are not just symbolic protection.

Ameiko calls upon the knowledge of her ancestors to tell her more about the protectors of the Imperial Granary. The ancestors tell her of stone constructs called *Tao tieh*. They are symbols of both power and gluttony, with an extradimensional space at their core that allows them to swallow their foes and banish them into an endless void. When they are killed they burst open and anything stored inside comes gushing out. They are also extremely difficult to kill: normal weapons simply shatter against them. However, they are not true golems and lack a golem's antimagic defenses.

The characters prepare carefully for a night-time attack upon the Imperial Granary. They approach the building, casting various buffs as they go. Harwynian opens the main door with *Knock*. The characters move in carefully. The bulging stone eyes of the tao tieh swivel to face them.

Yoshihiro starts off with a couple of arrows into the nearest tao tieh. Harwynian follows up with a *Persistent Slow* on the nearest two. *Sandru Vhishki* rushes forward to engage and gets slammed into the ground for his trouble. Jacob, transformed into dragon shape and enhanced with *Strongjaw*, manages to break a tooth on another one. The characters swiftly figure out that the tao tieh have good damage resistance and are extremely difficult to damage.

The Imperial Granary



Jacob redoubles his attack and tears into an injured tao tieh, damaging it badly. He roars out, “See! They can be hurt! Raaaugh!”

Yoshihiro is faced by two undamaged tao tieh. Knowing that his blades are hard-pressed to pierce the creature’s defenses, he pulls out his *Bag of Devouring* he keeps as a pet and flings it down the thing’s gullet. The creature eagerly swallows it down... then the characters watch in amazement as it starts to deform and distort, folding in upon itself until nothing is left but a faint shimmer and a foul scent of brimstone. Yoshihiro mourns, “Good bye, Sacky! I’ll miss you!”

Gobo strikes the one tao tieh that hadn’t been *Slowed* with a *Chain Lightning*. The creature shatters into a pile of stone, topped by the disgorged contents of its stomach. Unfortunately, this amounts only to an ancient mummified body.

A tao tieh corners Sandru Vhishki. He desperately attempts to evade the creature, but gets grappled like a crippled mouse facing a seasoned cat. He cries out in anguish as he faces his doom. Harwynian strikes the creature with a *Chain Lightning*, inflicting only minimal damage. Gobo calls down the cold of the interstellar void upon it, causing the stone of its body to crack. Then Bjorn crashes into it and smashes it to bits, saving Sandru from an awful fate. As it expires it expels its stomach contents, a pile of sand and rocks.

Yoshihiro slashes the last tao tieh in half, ending the threat.

The characters pick through the piles of sand and find a magical rock, which Harwynian is able to identify as a *Stone of Good Luck*. Then they set up their *Portable Hole* and shovel rice into it. Yoshihiro calls out, “Woot! Rice raiders!” There is a fair amount of roasted rice around after all of the *Chain Lightnings*; V’lk tries eating some of it.

Other resistance folks come in with wagons and load up some rice and disappear. So do the characters.

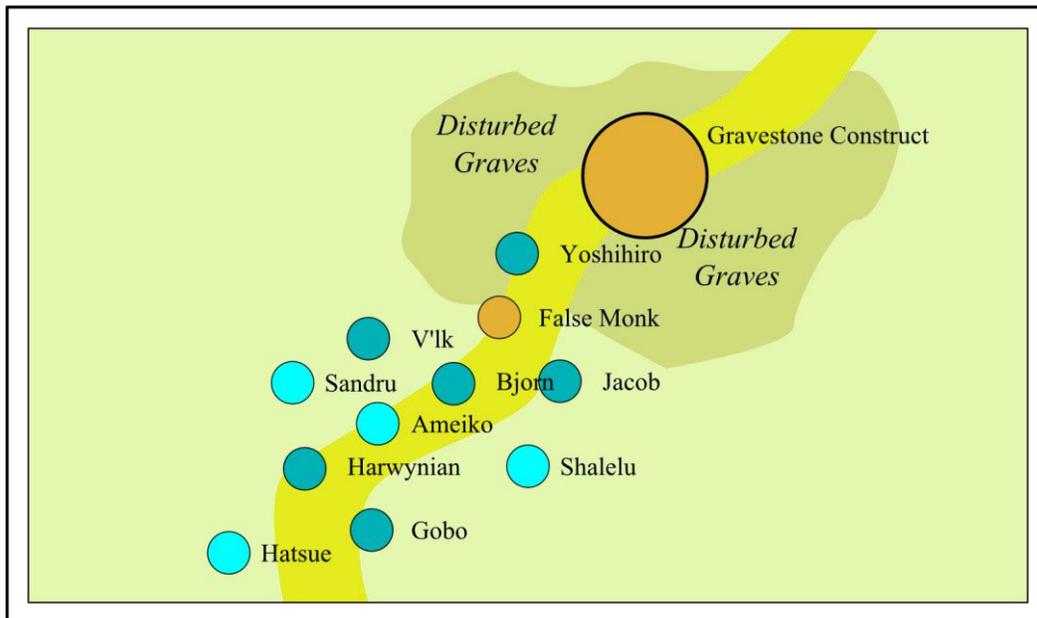
SHRINE OF THE HEAVENLY SOVEREIGNS

The characters find an old fisherman to row them out to the island of the Shrine of the Heavenly Sovereigns. They carefully paddle through all five torii gates, then tie up at the small wooden dock and make their way up to the shrine. The shrine features a small altar to Pharama and Tsukiyo (Tien god of spirits and the Moon). A massive gilded statue of a dragon dominates the building; it is a representation of the goddess Shizeru.

The characters explore the shrine. They come upon a robed woman, her face hidden by her cowl. She tells the characters that she is a servant of Shizeru and can guide them to the Shrine of Heavenly Sovereigns. She is troubled: the prophecies say that Minkai shall not fall so long as the sacred cherry tree lives, but the tree has not blossomed in three years. She fears that it is beset by evil spirits and malignant insects.

The Emperor turned over the power of rule to his bodyguard because he feared for his safety. Untimely death had come to almost all others of Imperial blood and he was concerned that the Empire would fall were he to be likewise stricken.

The False Monk and the Gravestone Construct



The monk leads the characters back out of the temple and up along the northern path, past a large number of graves and tombs of fallen Emperors, their trusted advisors, and other folk of Imperial blood. They come upon a small stone table with an incense

burner and a single block of incense. The incense is magical; Gobo is able to tell that it is *Incense of Meditation*. Yoshihiro takes both.

Further along the path the characters come upon a mysterious swirling light. The monk assures them, “This is normal, the sign of the guardian spirits protecting the graveyard.” As the monk moves up, the graves start to shudder. Yoshihiro cautions her, but she does not slow. As she approaches, the material of the graves rises up and forms into a gargantuan shape, its limbs made from gravestones and its body made of grave earth. It is the *Gravebound Guardian!*

Yoshihiro asks, “Is this normal?” He moves to place himself between her and the golem.

The monk turns and assures him, “Oh yes, perfectly normal.” Then she moves to the attack. She flips her cowl and robe back, revealing her claws and her unnaturally lengthening neck. V’lk turns *Invisible* as she extends her head some twenty feet from her body. The false monk attacks Yoshihiro, taking a terrible chunk out of his side. She invokes *False Darkness*, creating an area of darkness and silence all around her. Ameiko is engulfed within the cloud.

The gravebound guardian rumbles, “I am the guardian. I have seen so many terrible things, I can no longer tell good from evil.”

Jacob casts *Dispel Magic* at the darkness effect, stripping it away. The silence effect remains. The guardian responds by expelling a cloud of ash and grave dust across the group. Sandru is blinded and sickened; the others are protected by the *Greater Heroism* effect from the morning’s tea ceremony. The characters note that the guardian did not exempt the false monk from the attack – the two creatures are apparently not allies.

Bjorn slashes and slams at the false monk, discovering that she both is not undead and does have damage resistance. He curses all of the damage resistant monsters that seem to be lingering around Kasai. Yoshihiro draws out *Suishen* and slashes at the false monk, inflicting devastating damage.

The false monk notices that Harwynian is casting spells. She strikes him with a *Feeblemind* spell that he manages to shrug off. Then she starts her darkness effect up again, engulfing Ameiko, Sandru, Hatsue and Bjorn. Hatsue starts *Detect Evil* in the hope of finding the false monk with it. Gobo casts *Daylight* to suppress the darkness. And with the darkness lifted, Ameiko stabs at the false monk with her rapier. Sadly, her mithral rapier just slides harmlessly off the creature's supernatural hide.

Bjorn fast-draws his starknife with his off hand and strikes at the false monk with blade and starknife, slicing her open like a Christmas turkey. She falls to her knees oozing awful fluids. Bjorn finishes her with a flourish.

Noting that the false monk is down, Harwynian casts a *Persistent Slow* on the gravestone guardian. The creature starts moving at a reassuringly glacial pace. Yoshihiro stands forth and issues a samurai challenge against the guardian. He draws out his daikyu and shoots it, wounding it badly. V'lk closes in on the guardian from behind, flensing large chunks of stone from the golem's joints. Desperately wounded, it goes to one knee.

Hoping to finish it, Jacob flies in to strike in dragonform. The guardian is not quite out, yet – it strikes with unexpected speed to nearly cripple him. Jacob perseveres and lands a solid blow. It strikes back, leaving Jacob beaten and bloodied. Then Hatsue uses the *Shout* attack from the *Thundering Blade of the House of Sugimatu* to destroy the guardian. It collapses into an untidy pile of broken gravestones and dirt.

Bjorn announces, "We should loot the neck lady." Nobody pays attention to him. Bjorn repeats more strongly, "Bjorn is going to loot the neck lady!" Again, nobody heeds his words. Gobo ignores him even to the extent of casting a *Mass Cure Light Wounds*. Bjorn finally just loots her himself. He is disappointed to find that she has only her robe.

◀ANTINA BAND▶

The characters continue on down the path. They see that it leads down to a short bridge that then goes across to another, smaller island. The characters cross over carefully, then pass through another torii gate. There is a cedar stage at the center of the island, supported on four short columns. There are four instruments upon the stage: a biwa flute, a samisen, a drum, and a mandolin. Two buildings are on the right of the

stage, and two connected buildings to the left. Beyond the stage is a small koi pond with a strangely jointed bridge across it.

With a sparse quantity of characters who actually know how to play musical instruments, the characters fall upon the plan of having Ameiko use her Bardic powers to inspire competence in enough other characters to be able to play the rest of the instruments. Surprisingly, the end result sounds fairly good. The characters hope that this pleases the spirits.

The group crosses the odd bridge over the pond. All the fish have died, and “death by evil” is the best forensic explanation they can muster. They find a path to a building, some kind of mausoleum.

A GRAVE TASK

Inside, a funeral pavilion rests with urns and whatnot standing around. A ghost appears, the ghost of Emperor Higashiyama Shigure. He is all freaky and twitchy and staticy like any good Japanese ghost is nowadays. Ameiko manages to talk with him; he says that he was slain in some kind of rift in the hills on the northern part of the island and that he won't rest easy until his body is retrieved and put to rest. Attempts at further inquiry disturb him and as things threaten to go all Ringu the group exists post haste.

THE END OF THE SESSION