

KALIGAKU

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Henjinmura Village



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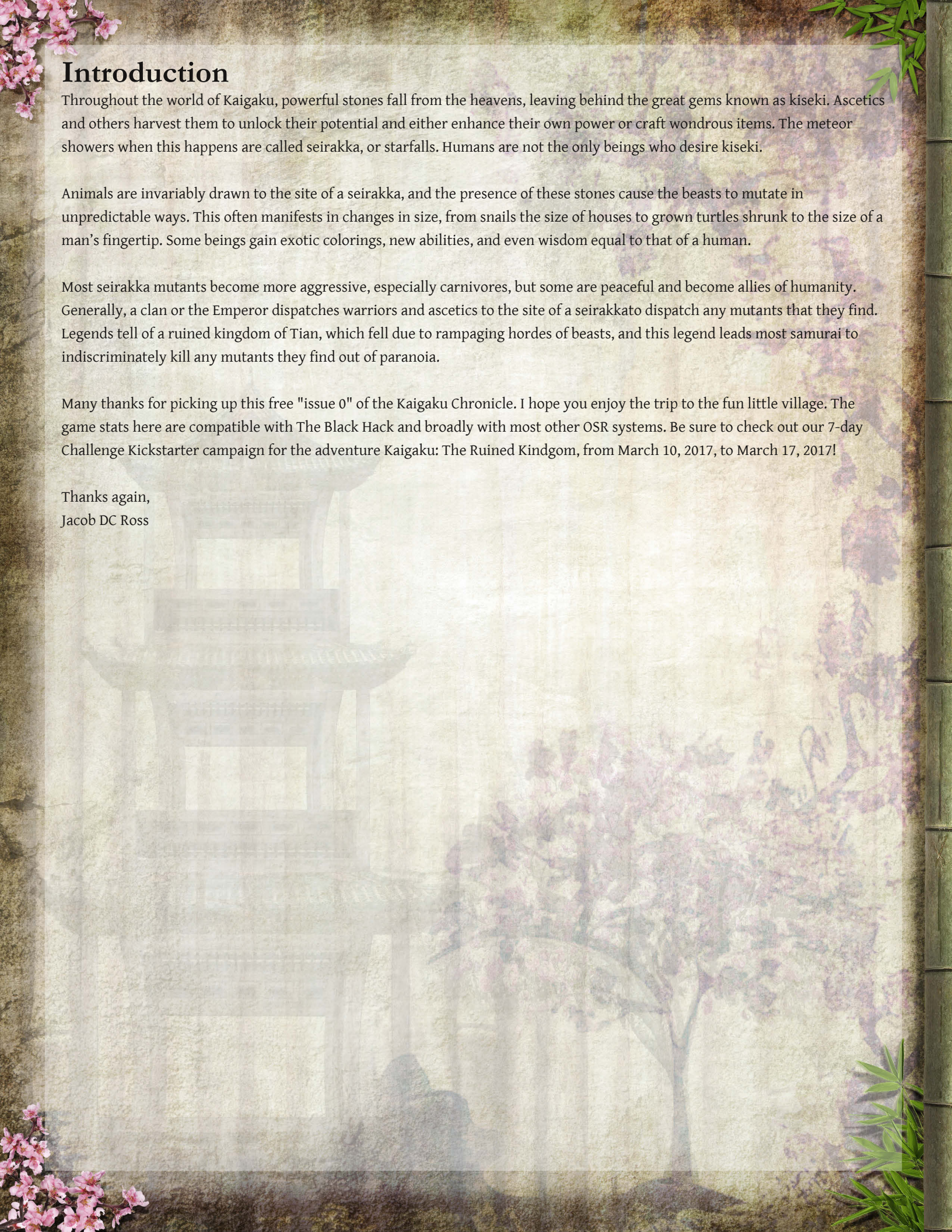
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Introduction

Throughout the world of Kaigaku, powerful stones fall from the heavens, leaving behind the great gems known as kiseki. Ascetics and others harvest them to unlock their potential and either enhance their own power or craft wondrous items. The meteor showers when this happens are called seirakka, or starfalls. Humans are not the only beings who desire kiseki.

Animals are invariably drawn to the site of a seirakka, and the presence of these stones cause the beasts to mutate in unpredictable ways. This often manifests in changes in size, from snails the size of houses to grown turtles shrunk to the size of a man's fingertip. Some beings gain exotic colorings, new abilities, and even wisdom equal to that of a human.

Most seirakka mutants become more aggressive, especially carnivores, but some are peaceful and become allies of humanity. Generally, a clan or the Emperor dispatches warriors and ascetics to the site of a seirakka to dispatch any mutants that they find. Legends tell of a ruined kingdom of Tian, which fell due to rampaging hordes of beasts, and this legend leads most samurai to indiscriminately kill any mutants they find out of paranoia.

Many thanks for picking up this free "issue 0" of the Kaigaku Chronicle. I hope you enjoy the trip to the fun little village. The game stats here are compatible with The Black Hack and broadly with most other OSR systems. Be sure to check out our 7-day Challenge Kickstarter campaign for the adventure Kaigaku: The Ruined Kingdom, from March 10, 2017, to March 17, 2017!

Thanks again,
Jacob DC Ross

The Village

Somewhere within the Empire (it's for you, the GM, to say where) lies the peaceful village of Henjinmura. It was founded several generations ago by a group of peasants and ronin displaced by a fire, famine, or a plague outbreak. They brought their case to the local daimyo and pledged loyalty and self-sufficiency, and were given a plot of land to found their settlement.

In truth, the entire village is made up of a special breed of mutant. So long as they wear a special kiseki stone or remain within their village grounds, these mutants appear to be human, but they have an animal nature. Every inhabitant is a special "superior" type of their original beast, with most having the ability to stand on two legs, use tools, speak Kaigaku, and form a functional society.

Denizens of Henjinmura, or Henjin, tend to remain in the local area because they're fearful of outsiders discovering their true identity and being exterminated out of fear. A kiseki beacon on the small island near the village

provides a radius of protection that maintains the illusion of human forms. If they need or want to venture farther, the Henjin must wear special necklaces. Henjin have the ability to remain in their true form even when inside the beacon's radius or wearing their necklaces, and most choose to do so whenever the village is free of outsiders.

Notable Locations

There are several points of interest in Henjinmura, several of which lead to various points of adventure.

Beacon Island

This island sits just off of the bank of Birdsong Lake and houses a small building where the Henjin maintain a kiseki-based device that helps them to maintain their "human" form. It covers a radius of about 2 kilometers (1.25 miles). Any Henjin who steps out of the protection and is not wearing a special pendant immediately reverts to their anthropomorphic animal form. This location is also where the village stores the protective pendants. It features a clockwork design. Despite their best efforts,



the village's ascetics can't eliminate the "gap" in coverage that causes it to fail for an entire day every 30 days.

Adventure Seed: Gida, the caretaker of the beacon, notices that the kiseki powering the device were disrupted, and a couple of the stones are missing. This doesn't immediately cause it to fail completely, but it does interfere with operation. Instead of a constant feature, the beacon is now an Item with a Usage Die that starts at d10. Roll this die each day, and on a result of a 1 or a 2, step the die down, reduce the beacon's radius by half, and cause 1d4 random Henjin to get stuck in animal form unless they wear a pendant, and there are only six Henjin in the village.

Hunter's Lodge

The predators among the Henjin find ways to sate their need for meat by hunting regular prey in the woods. Since Henjinmura can't have real samurai spending too much time in the village, most of their defense comes from hunters trained in guerilla tactics, so the lodge serves as a covert arsenal and barracks.

Adventure Seed: A monstrous star-changed mutant is causing trouble in the woods. It's a large wolf with black-and-red fur. Set its HD equal to 5 plus the number of adventurers among the PCs. The wolf is ferocious enough to tear through trees and buildings, and has a canine's nose to be able to smell prey through walls. It can attack after moving to Long distance each turn.

Sake House

For a fun night after a hard day's work, all are welcome at Kentaro's. It serves all manner of liquor, from sake to shochu and gaijin beer. Kentaro the Tanuki runs a competition the evening of every Gold Day, which is night the sixth day of the week, where village musicians compete for audience acclaim. The winners eat free. An act can only perform once every three weeks, or four weeks if they won their last appearance, which keeps things fresh. As each family in Henjinmura practices multiple instruments on a regular basis, this allows everyone to get a turn and keeps one act from dominating every rotation.

Adventure Seed: This location is a hub for all social activity. Each evening, you can roll a d4. On a result of a 4, a human traveller is passing through the village. They'll stay in a room in the back of Kentaro's. The PCs get asked to make sure that the visitor doesn't poke around too deeply or get into trouble.

Notable Inhabitants

Maiko, Usagi Archer

Maiko is somewhat of an anomaly in the community because, as a rabbit, she is an herbivore who follows the path of a predator. Her competitive spirit, combined with a distaste for boats and rice paddies, led her to become one of the most prominent hunters in Henjinmura. This eager young warrior is always the first on the battlefield when bandits or other dangers attack.

Maiko doesn't have many friends in the village since the carnivorous hunters feel uncomfortable telling their favorite jokes in her presence and most of the plant eaters find her outlook too far removed from their own to let their guard down around her. Maiko is eager to make new acquaintances, and she is among the most likely Henjin to admit outsiders into their society.



Hana, Kame Headman

The turtle called Hana is a contradiction in terms. Her name means 'flower', but she's known more for being a sage counselor than for being a radiant beauty. Hana is the oldest and most conservative person in the village when it comes to relations with humans. She is the only survivor of the first generation of Henjin, and the only one who knows for certain whether the Henjin are animals made intelligent or humans who became beastlike.

Hana is willing to deal with outsiders if it serves the village's purpose. Cautious human PCs might note that Henjinmura would be famous throughout the Empire if its existence were known, which means that Hana likely takes measures to prevent the secret from becoming public.

Gida, Kitsune Artisan

Gida is a wizened old fox who loves to spend his days tinkering with the kiseki. He began his life as a warrior but ended up losing his eyes in combat with a beast. The previous beacon master, a tsuru named Mei fashioned a pair of eyes for Gida. They allow him to see defined shapes but not colors. Impressed with this technology, and grateful that Mei used the village's limited supply of kiseki to create something useful for him instead of a shifting pendant that the whole village could use, Gida became Mei's apprentice and took over for her when she passed away.

Gida wants more stones to make artifacts. His eyes allow him to see color only when he works with kiseki, which makes working with them the most beautiful part of his life. He wants to pay back his perceived debt to the village by discovering new effects to impart. Because of this, he's open to working with outsiders since they're more likely to be able to get around the Empire and bring back kiseki.

Ogon, Koumori Ninja

Ogon is a restless spirit. This bat spent his formative years searching the countryside by night, searching for a ninja tribe to join. He left without taking one of the shifter pendants, both because he was too loyal to steal from his village and because, as a nocturnal creature, he moved in the night anyway.

Ogon is back in town after being away for many years. He's probably the most well-known Henjin in the Empire, having practiced his trade in Harayama and other large cities. He used costumes and darkness to hide his true form, but there are reports of a mysterious night stalker that persist to this day. Most of the Henjin don't know him personally because he prefers to spend time on the village outskirts, in both the forest and, rumor has it, on the occasional mission in human territory.



New Ryu: Wild Flesh

This ryu is different from most others because it's a bit more modular. You can take it for your character regardless of class. The only requirement is that you be a henjin, an animal with human intelligence or a human with an animal nature. Your default form is an anthropomorphic animal. When a kiseki-based effect allows you to switch between human and animal form, such as the Henjinmura Beacon or one of their protective necklaces, you can do so by making a Constitution roll. Fish and other creatures can survive on land when in human form, and in water when in wild form.

Class: Any

Weapon of Choice: Variable

Tier 1: Class Ability

Take the first tier of your Class Ability tree related to your class.

Tier 2: Wild Ability

Take an ability from the list of Wild Abilities that are appropriate to your animal form.

Tier 3: Class Ability

Take the second tier of your Class Ability tree related to your class.

Tier 4: Wild Ability

Take another ability from the list of Wild Abilities that are appropriate to your animal form.

Tier 5: Class Ability

Take the third tier of your Class Ability tree related to your class.

Class Ability Trees

These abilities plug into the tiers of the Wild Flesh Ryu. You choose the one based on your character's class. They're usable in both human and wild form unless otherwise stated.

Bushi

Tier 1: For My Pack

Gain a Wild Ability appropriate to your animal form with the Attack tag.. You can use that ability in both forms at will.

Tier 2: Brotherhood of Beasts

Each ally who attacks an enemy that you attacked gains a +1 stat bonus to attack that enemy. This bonus grows by +1 for each ally who attacked that enemy following your attack, to a maximum equal to your ryu tier. This ability resets on your turn.

Tier 3: Wounded Animal

You step up the die you roll for damage to the next highest value when you have taken damage equal to at least one quarter of your maximum HP. You instead step it up twice if you're at less than half of your total HP. For each step above d12 simply add +2 to the damage.

Courtier

Tier 1: Guile With Guile

Whenever anyone asks you a question, respond with a question of your own and roll Wisdom to make yourself look so clever that anyone who asks you more questions on the same subject looks foolish. You can use this ability a number of times per encounter equal to your ryu Tier rank. Rolls against those with higher status than you require a variable number of Intensifications depending on the status of the other person.

Tier 2: Revealing the Reasons

Whenever someone asks you a question, you can make a Wisdom roll to determine what they hope to learn from your response.

Tier 3: Wisest Counselor

When someone comes to you for advice or initiates social "combat" with you, roll Wisdom. On a success, you give an ally a number of free Intensifications to any Intelligence or Wisdom roll within the next day equal to 1 plus half the number of Intensifications you made. If you used this roll on an enemy, you gain a bonus to the first "damage" roll against them equal to twice the number of times you Intensified + 2. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to your ryu Tier rank, and never more than once per day per person.

Ninja

Tier 1: Speed of the Beast

Gain a Wild Ability appropriate to your animal form with the Movement tag. You can use that ability while in either form.

Tier 2: Disappear From Pursuit

When you're actively retreating from a situation, roll Dexterity. If you succeed, you disappear from sight and anyone seeking you can't find you for at least a number of rounds equal to half your ryu Tier rank, rounded up.

Tier 3: Flight of the Hidden

Your movement speed in both modes is doubled.

Ascetic

Tier 1: More Beast Than Man

Gain any Wild Ability appropriate to your animal form. You can use this ability in either form.

Tier 2: Extended Form

You can stay in your human form for a day without having a kiseki pendant by making a Constitution roll. You have to make a cumulative number of Intensifications for every day in a row that you use this ability.

Tier 3: Magnificent Beast

Gain any Wild Ability, regardless of whether or not it's appropriate to your animal form. You can use this in any form but it will expose you as something not human.

Wild Abilities

When you choose the animal form for your character, you can determine which abilities below are appropriate for your species.

Amphibious: You can survive in water and on land. Use this for amphibians, aquatic mammals, fish, and so on to negate penalties for being out of your environment indefinitely. Effects which allow you to use this ability in human form let your human form breathe underwater.

Armored: Gain additional AP equal to your ryu Tier rank.

Camouflage/Color Change: You can become effectively invisible by rolling Dexterity. This doesn't work when

you move unless you're blending in with a solid background such as turning blue and flying through a clear sky.

Flight [Movement]: You can fly in one turn vertically up to Nearby distance, horizontally up to Long distance while attacking or up to Far Away without attacking.

Natural Weapon [Attack]: You have claws, fangs, horns, or whatever else, which does +2 damage on all melee attacks. You are proficient with this weapon and it counts as the weapon of choice for your ryu.

Poison [Attack]: Make a Constitution roll when you hit an opponent with an unarmed attack. This ability causes 1d4 damage per turn for a number of turns equal to your ryu Tier rank. PCs can roll Constitution each turn to negate this effect.

Sharp Sense: You can see detail twice as far as a human, see in nearly total darkness, use echolocation to "see" in total darkness, distinguish any voice in a crowd, follow a being by scent up to Long range, tell every ingredient in something by taste, including poison, or always be able to find your way back to a place that you've already been. Various animals might have multiple uses of this ability, but you can only get access to one of them each time you select this ability.

Swift [Movement]: Your musculature, body shape, or multiple legs allow you to move twice as fast as a human.



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