

◎ INTRODUCTION

Seppuku: Fury of the Samurai is a solitaire role playing game, centering around the final moments of a samurai who is about to ritually end his life, and the events that led him there.

To play this game, you will need one player (that’s you), this foldout, a pencil, five six-sided dice (these will represent your *fury*; I use red dice but any color is fine), and a quiet place. This game also assumes you are familiar with samurai drama movies, such as:

- ♦ Hara-Kiri: Death of a Samurai (Takashi Miike, 2011)
- ♦ Ichi (Fumihiko Sori, 2008)
- ♦ Kagemusha (Akira Kurosawa, 1980)
- ♦ Thirteen Assassins (Takashi Miike, 2010)
- ♦ Yojimbo (Akira Kurosawa, 1961)

If you have never watched any of these, consider doing so before you play *Seppuku*.

◎ HOW TO PLAY

The game is divided into five acts, each corresponding to a line on your *death poem*. You will fill one line at the end of each act, starting on your right and moving towards your left. The lines themselves are numbered from one (一) to five (五). Depending on your choices within each act, you might gain a *fury die*. When this happens, take a six-sided die and place it in front of yourself. You may have up to five fury dice.

◎ NAMES

Here is a list of Japanese names to help you during the game.

FEMALE	MALE	NEUTRAL
Akemi	Daichi	Haru
Ayako	Goro	Hibiki
Chiyo	Hayate	Kohaku
Emi	Hideki	Makoto
Honoka	Ichiro	Michi
Izumi	Kiyoshi	Minato
Kaori	Masaru	Rin
Kiku	Nori	Shiori
Megumi	Ryo	Tsubasa
Ran	Shiro	Yasu
Riko	Takeshi	Yoshi
Suzume	Takuya	Yuki



S O F
A F U
M T R
U H Y
R E
A
I

五

四

三

二

一

You are kneeling, your legs folded underneath your thighs, white robes open to reveal your torso. You tightly grip your knife with both hands, veins pulsing with tension.

Inches away is your *kaishakunin*, your second in the ritual, is ready to cut your head off as soon as you plunge the blade into your abdomen. His face is hidden by the blinding sunlight.

In this extreme moment, you find yourself reliving the events that led you to commit *seppuku*.



ACT I : WAR

In the past, you took part in a cruel and merciless battle, as your Lord commanded. The clash of blades, the screams of men taken from their farms and fields, who will never see their families and loved ones again.

The nauseating, metallic stench of blood fills your nostrils, and will never entirely leave them.

The situation proved desperate, but your actions led your comrades to victory. What happened? And what did you do?

- ♦ You faced the enemy with bravery and warrior spirit, defeating them on the field. Write in your poem:
The blade is sheathed, now.

- ♦ You devised a cunning stratagem and defeated the enemy through deception. Write in your poem:
The fan is closed, now.

At the end of this act, you gain one *fury die*.



ACT II : LOVE

You are in a quiet place, away from the fury of war and the intrigues of aristocracy. Now that you think of it, perhaps this was the only time in your life in which you were truly safe.

You are not alone: with you is the person you love. What do you two talk about? What do you do, together? Who is this person?

- ♦ The woman you love, your wife. Write the name of your wife in your poem.
- ♦ The woman you love, who is not your wife. Write the name of this woman in your poem, then gain one *fury die*.
- ♦ The man you love. Write the name of this man in your poem, then gain one *fury die*.



ACT III : SHADOW

A man came to your city. He is a powerful, influential man, who deceived your Lord and has his magistrates under his thumb. What is the name of this man? Burn this name in your mind, in searing letters. This man is the *shadow*.

This man is ambitious, arrogant and vengeful. What has he done? Which atrocities did he commit?

You can barely tolerate this man's presence. What do you do?

- ♦ You hinder him subtly, stirring up your fellow samurai and magistrates against him. Write in your poem:
The frog is croaking in the darkness
Then, gain one *fury die*.
- ♦ You seek a direct confrontation, showing how outraged you are by his actions. Write in your poem:
The sparrow wages war against the wind
Then, gain one *fury die*.
- ♦ Acknowledging your position, you respect his authority and hide your feelings. Write in your poem:
The reed bows before the storm



ACT IV : DEATH

They are here for you. Your Lord has sent his guards to capture you. The *shadow's* hand is clearly behind this.

If you have two or more *fury dice*, this happens because you made a terrible mistake. What was this mistake?

If instead you have one *fury die*, the guards knock at your door with false accusations. But it's too late to do anything about it.

Write in your poem: *But Summer grows weary*

How do you deal with the situation?

- ♦ You surrender to authority. Immediately proceed to Act V.
- ♦ You raise your sword against the guards. Gain one *fury die*, then roll all your *fury dice*:

If you roll a 4 on any one die, or if you can add together two or more dice into a total value of 4, you slaughter the captors and manage an escape. However, you lose someone or something you held dear. Who or what is this?

Deep inside, you know you won't be able to run for long.

If you cannot obtain a 4 (on one die or adding dice together), the guards tire you out and capture you.



ACT V : CUT

How long has it been from the previous Act? Days, months, or even years...? It doesn't matter anymore.

Today you are here, before your Lord and his magistrates, to take your own life and restore your honor.

You sense your *kaishakunin* moving at your side, his face now made visible by the rays of the sun.

If you have two or less *fury dice*, he is a skilled warrior, and you can trust him. If you chose a man as your loved one during Act II, that man is your *kaishakunin* (unless you lost him over the course of Act IV).

Write in your poem: *And Spring follows Winter.*

You die a honorable death, with the touched but silent approval of your Lord.

If instead you have three or more *fury dice*, your *kaishakunin* is the *shadow*, the man you loathe the most. Were you aware of this? Are you here to exact revenge on him?

How do you deal with the situation?

- ♦ You accept your fate, plunging the blade in your belly.
Write in your poem: *And Spring follows Winter.*
You die a honorable death, with the touched but silent approval of your Lord. With time, your sacrifice will inspire those who oppose the *shadow*.
- ♦ Suddenly, you vengefully lash against the *shadow*!
Write in your poem: *And Winter fast approaches.*
Gain one *fury die*, then roll all your *fury dice*.

If you roll a 4 on any one die, or if you can add together two or more dice into a total value of 4, you triumph against the *shadow* and end his wretched life. Your Lord, voice wracked with sorrow, orders your execution. Your last memory of this life will be the sharp pain of an arrow piercing your heart.

If you cannot obtain a 4 (on one die or adding dice together), the *shadow* manages to best you. He pierces your heart, and kicks you to the ground: you die an agonizing death, writhing and squirming like a worm, before everyone's horrified gaze. You are forever dishonored.