

Legend of the
Five Rings
THE CARD GAME

Masters of the Court
Crane Clan Pack

Amidst the honorable samurai of the Emerald Empire, none stand quite as virtuously as those of the Crane Clan. It is by the grace and excellence of the Left Hand of the Emperor that peace is maintained, for their mastery of law and diplomacy is unparalleled. The descendants of Lady Doji helped codify the laws that govern life in the Empire, simultaneously defining the social order and modeling it with elegance.

No political court of Rokugan is untouched by the Crane Clan. Some welcome Crane advisors and diplomats to ensure a mastery of etiquette in their dealings with other clans. Many feature works of art, music, or the fashion styles that are pioneered by the clan, for the beauty and artistry of the Kakita family is unparalleled within the Empire.

The Marriage of Lady Doji

When the first Hantei took the throne, he knew that he could not rule the Empire alone and so sought out a champion. Many came forward to compete in single combat, but it was a humble and polite mortal man whose unparalleled skill earned the Emperor's favor. That man's name was Kakita.

While at the Imperial Court, Kakita often saw Lady Doji, a paragon of grace and beauty, and his heart was moved. He went to Hantei and asked his Emperor if he could have Doji's hand in marriage. While Hantei happily acquiesced, Lady Doji refused, unwilling to marry a mortal. Yet, in her gracious way, Lady Doji did not outright refuse Kakita's hand. Instead, she agreed to marry him...if he were to first complete three tasks for her.

The tasks were thus, each designed to be an impossibility: Kakita would bring the dead to life on their wedding day, he would tell the court how many days it would take to walk the length of the world, and he would bring her as a wedding gift something whose beauty could not be challenged. Such was his devotion that Kakita undertook Doji's tasks and journeyed Rokugan in search of a way to give her what she asked.

Lady Doji was content with her cleverness, but as time went on she became friends with Kakita's sister, who had come to live in the palace with him. That young woman, named Kiyamori, told tales of her brother's virtues and exploits, and slowly Lady Doji's heart was moved towards gentleness. After months of journeying, Kakita returned to Otosan Uchi and proclaimed that he had returned to take Doji's hand in marriage.

To prove that he had earned her hand, Kakita first produced a tattered piece of driftwood and a beautiful *biwa*, which he had carved and painted with his own hands. More magnificent, beautiful, and melodious than any other instrument, the skills of Kakita's artisanship captivated the court. "This piece of driftwood died long ago. I found it in the sea and have fashioned it into this instrument so that it may find new life bringing wondrous music to all who will listen."

He then strode to the door and opened it, looking out into the clear morning sky. "The length of a voyage is defined by one's companion, for they can bring joy to even the longest of journeys. As you are the daughter of Amaterasu, I took her as my traveling companion and have found that it takes only one day to walk the length of the world, for without the beauty of Amaterasu, what is there?"

Finally, Kakita produced his gift to Lady Doji: an ornate mirror which bore her family's crest. "You asked me to find you something whose beauty could not be questioned. I could neither find nor think of anything more beautiful than you."

With Kakita's answer to each task, Lady Doji's heart was won. They were wed that day and their union established the tenets of the Crane Clan: beauty, creativity, and excellence.

Valor at Tidal Landbridge

After the Yasuki family broke away from the Crane Clan and joined the Crab, an enmity between the two clans grew into a hatred that continues to this day. However, a moment of necessity forged a unique respect and allegiance between two of their families when demonic forces attacked the Watchtower of Tidal Landbridge.

In the year 715, an elite strike force of ogres and Lost samurai, led by the cunning demon Kinjiro no Oni, nearly broke through the Crab Clan's bulwark against the Shadowlands. With most of their forces defending against a larger assault, the Crab samurai who manned the coastal watchtower at Earthquake Fish Bay were quickly overwhelmed. The beleaguered warriors cast up a flare with hopes that help would come before they were overwhelmed.

Help did come, but not from their own clan. Daidoji Masashigi, the daimyō of the Daidoji family, rode to the aid of the Crab warriors, his hunting party crossing the bay at low tide and fighting with fresh vigor to delay and defeat the Shadowlands attackers. They quickly determined that they could not hold out indefinitely, but Masashigi devised a valiant strategy: if they drove Kinjiro no Oni and its forces back to the landbridge, the rising tide would cut them off from reinforcement or retreat. The exhausted Crab warriors stayed back to deter any escape for the oni's forces while the Crane drove them into the bay. There, the Crane samurai held the Shadowlands forces locked in vicious combat as the tide rose and swallowed them all, monster and Crane alike.

When the tide receded once more, only Daidoji Masashigi's helmet could be found from the battle. The Crab survivors took it back to their watchtower and built a shrine in which to house it, commemorating the valor of the Daidoji who had come to their aid. Masashigi's sacrifice and unshakeable resolve earned his family an epithet from the Crab Clan, which would eventually be taken up by the rest of Rokugan: the "Iron Cranes."

Families of the Crane

The Doji

The Doji are the political heart of the Crane Clan—and Rokugan. Their generosity is renowned, and their polite graciousness earns them many allies in the dangerous courts of the Emerald Empire. Their foes whisper that such generosity merely masks manipulation tactics to put other clans in their debt, but the Doji simply understand that allies are more valuable than enemies.

Legend has it that on one snowy evening, Shinsei taught a lesson to Lady Doji about the importance of appreciating each moment to its fullest. That lesson has been passed on from generation to generation and remains one of the most important lessons of the Crane Clan: to strive for perfection in all endeavors, for life is too short to put anything less than one's entire effort into one's actions.

The Doji daimyō is Doji Hotaru, Indomitable Champion of the Crane Clan, Mistress of the Arts, and Trusted Left Hand of the Emperor.

The Kakita

Most of Rokugan knows the Kakita family by the beauty that comes from their famous Artisan Academy. Samurai from other clans often aspire to learn from the Kakita Academy, which produces art, fashion, music, and poetry that defines the styles and culture of the Emerald Empire. Yet excellence in art is not limited to peaceful endeavors. The "art of the duel" is yet another curriculum that Kakita artisans often learn, and their mastery of the iaijutsu style of dueling is unquestioned.

The Kakita daimyō is Kakita Yoshi, who uses his role as Imperial Chancellor to monitor and manipulate the tides of the Imperial court.

The Asahina

Peace is at the heart of the Crane Clan, and their family of shugenja perfectly exhibit this belief. As devoted pacifists, the Asahina family pursues health and beauty for themselves and

their allies. They often learn skills to become great artisans, healers, or mediators, to discourage violence between others as much as they reject violence themselves. Most well known of their creations are the *tsangusuri*, protective talismans that are given to their allies as either gifts for favor or as wards for safety.

The Asahina daimyō is Asahina Takamori, a mystic whose natural precognitive abilities lead him towards the study of omens and prophecy. His daughter, Asahina Takako, handles most of the clan's day-to-day affairs while he prioritizes his studies.

The Daidoji

For the days when the otherwise peaceful Crane Clan is threatened by violent attack, the Daidoji family, named the "Defenders of the Doji," stand ready to fight in their clan's defense. These heavily-armored warriors apply their clan's calling to excellence and beauty even on the battlefield.

Many generations after incorporating those members of the Yasuki family that stayed loyal to the Crane, the Daidoji family have become experts at trading, such that they compete with the Crab for mercantile dominion in southern Rokugan.

The Daidoji daimyō is Daidoji Uji, a grim and pragmatic general who sees it as his duty that the clan succeed in all endeavors. While the Daidoji family has maintained a small and secret school of saboteurs for centuries, that school has expanded into activities typical of shinobi under Uji's leadership, along with a willingness within the family to use whatever tactics necessary to achieve the clan's goals.

Courtesy and Excellence

To the Crane, the greatest honor comes from grace and beauty. No other clan can compete with the greatest of the Crane artisans, whose works of art have decorated the halls of each Emperor since the first Hantei. Crane courtesy is flawless; they remain polite and civilized even in the harshest of circumstances. Every task performed is done with excellence, for the Crane understand that every moment is unique and must be treasured to its fullest.