The Price of Honor

By Jason Flowers

Challenge

Ashidaka no Kakita Takihiro, in his youth, studied the blade alongside Kakita Fumoki at the Kakita academy. The two swordsmen were as close as brothers and traveled the Empire together for a number of years until they saved the life of an influential Seppun astrologer. The Imperial was beset by bandits and the two young samurai fearlessly fought them off. While both men fought to protect the Seppun, Kakita Fumoki, being of higher status and delivering the final blow to the bandit’s leder, was awarded an old and valuable Imperial daisho in thanks. Ashidaka Takihiro, feeling slighted at being excluded gave in to dark temptation and took the daito one evening when they had returned to Crane lands. Takihiro absconded with the blade and never saw his friend, Kakita Fumoki, again.

Focus

Years later, Ashidaka Kumi, who grew up thinking her father, Takihiro, had been awarded the beautiful sword in thanks for his brave service, learned of his past crime. After thinking over the situation for a few weeks, she made up her mind to return the blade to its paired sword and rightful owner, Kakita Fumoki. Kumi researched Fumoki-san, discovering he had become a renowned duelist and that he had established a residence in a nearby town. Without a word to her father she took the sword and traveled there.

When she arrived, however, she found that she struggled with finding the courage to return the blade to its rightful owner. She knew it would be most honorable to openly return the katana but feared the dishonor this action could bring upon her father and family, perhaps, too, even the Kakita Dueling Academy. Conversely, returning it secretly, would preserve her father’s honor, but at the cost of darkening her own. Perhaps the Player Characters can help her make the right decision?

Strike

Whichever path is chosen, it quickly becomes obvious that the wakizashi of the pair is the centerpiece in a collection of trophies won by the illustrious duelist; its stand prominently displayed in his home, the katana is conspicuous in its absence. The mysterious reappearance of the long-lost sword will undoubtedly cause a stir among the upper social circles. How can Kakita Fumoki accept this returned blade from the daughter of his erstwhile friend without admitting it was returned by the thief after all these years?