

Otomo Taneji, Imperial Court Representative

Otomo Taneji does not fit the stereotype of a courtier from the imperial families. His upbringing and beliefs reflect his odd lineage, and his teachers have instilled in him a broad range of ideals and thoughts that go beyond that of the average Otomo.

Taneji's grandfather Mokihara was a member of the Mantis Clan and a follower of Yoritomo during the Clan Wars. Though Mokihara loved his clan and loved the freedom of the seas, he was reviled by Great Clan samurai and viewed as no better than a ronin or a common criminal. Mokihara was a proud and ambitious man and longed to be placed higher than those around him. He was determined to become a Great Clan samurai, or even a member of the Imperial families.

Mokihara's chance came when a few of his acquaintances included him in a plot to extort money from the Otomo family. They were cutthroat ronin that he occasionally traveled with and he held no deep attachment to them. He agreed to help them with their plot and watched for reinforcements as they kidnapped Otomo Damesu. When the conspirators relaxed and discussed how best to act next, Mokihara coolly walked in and killed them all. Damesu was grateful for Mokihara's rescue, and he gave the young Mantis his daughter's hand in marriage. Mokihara left the Mantis Clan and joined the Otomo family. Years later Mokihara was overjoyed to watch his son Shikan attend the Otomo courtier school. Finally, he had gained the prestige for his family he had always dreamed of for himself.

Shikan's training was orthodox but he vowed to raise all his sons to embrace their heritage. Shikan's first son Taneji was raised to respect both his Imperial lineage and his Mantis history. Taneji was raised with the Otomo and trained in their techniques, but he spent every summer with the Mantis in the Islands of Spice and Silk. In school he learned order and restraint, to conduct himself as a member of an Imperial Family would in the world. On the islands he learned joy and freedom, to never allow restrictive rules to bar him from having a mind of his own.

Perhaps as a direct result of his unique upbringing, Taneji grew to be an inquisitive and smart young lad. He scored at the top of his class at many subjects, and his easygoing nature made sure he never lacked for friends. When Taneji passed his gempukku, his father told him of an opportunity to serve his old friend Miya Hatori, a hero of the years following the Day of Thunder. Hatori was one of the most famous samurai of the Imperial families, and Taneji gladly accepted.

Taneji spent many years in Hatori's household as the elder statesman's assistant. He learned from several Otomo teachers that resided there and from Hatori himself. His many teachers encouraged him to hold unique perspectives on the world, and several taught him ideas that were counter to traditional Otomo lessons. Hatori taught him about the real world, about the disparity between clan samurai and what drives made them so different from each other. Taneji learned about the Miya duties and how to manage himself in the empire away from the courts.

During the chaotic Four Winds era, Taneji followed his master Miya Hatori across the empire as he attempted to gather information from the libraries of the Great Clans to the Miya Libraries. However, as they traveled through the different territories, it soon became evident that they were involved in machinations that encompassed the entire empire. Though the schemes grew more sinister as they traveled, Taneji was a great asset to his master when he kept his cool and performed his duties without fail.

As Taneji has grown his impact on Rokugani politics has also grown. While acting as Hatori's assistant, Taneji met many of the important personages of Rokugan. Many daimyo noticed his ability to adapt to his surroundings and learn from his experiences. Despite his young age, Taneji impressed those he met with his intelligence and composure, even in the presence of some of the most powerful men in the empire.

With Miya Hatori's recommendation, Taneji has been appointed as an official representative for the Imperial Court. In this duty he once again travels around all of Rokugan on the orders of the Imperial Court. His previous duties while serving Hatori has helped him cope to this lifestyle of never staying in one place for too long.

Tanitsu and Kaukatsu carefully watch the young courtier's progress, waiting for Taneji to become a powerful rival in the Imperial Court. That eventuality, they both know, is rapidly becoming the truth.

Otomo Taneji, Imperial Court Representative

Air: 3

Awareness: 5

Earth: 3

Fire: 3

Intelligence: 4

Water: 2

Void: 4

School/Rank: Otomo Courtier 3

Glory: 4.1

Status: 5.4

Honor: 2.8

Advantages: Allies (Miya Hatori, 4/2 points), Clear Thinker

Disadvantages: None.

Kata: None.

Skills: Calligraphy 3, Courtier (Manipulation, Political Maneuvering) 5, Deceit (Intimidation) 4, Defense 3, Etiquette (Bureaucracy, Conversation) 3, Games: Go 3, Investigation 4, Kenjutsu 3, Lore (Law) 3, Sailing 2, Storytelling (Oratory) 3, Tea Ceremony 4, Underworld 2.