**On the Murakami Lineage**

**Main/Noble Family**

Murakami

**Branch Families**

Aomori

Kuronuma

Yukimura

Toriyama

All four branch families report directly to the Murakami family, although individuals within the branch families might have superiors in other branch families at work. All four branch families are almost exclusively employed by the Murakami family, but sometimes train under others or work for others during their training period.

Each branch family is mostly engaged in one or two areas of work for the Murakami family. Although, it isn’t uncommon for a family member from one house to train under another, if their talents fit.

The Toriyama family trains a lot of bodyguards and private military personnel, both of melee and arcane backgrounds.

The Kuronuma family is in charge of information gathering, and any shady business that the Murakami family can’t afford to dirty its hands with directly.

The Yukimura family is primarily employed as merchants, farmers, and mid-level management for the Murakami family’s various holdings around the country.

The Aomori family’s concerns are primarily blacksmithing and whitesmithing. Although, they have family members of all crafting disciplines.

**Toriyama and Kuronuma:**

Members of the Toriyama family and Kuronuma family are often at odds with one another. The Toriyama family has a hard time trusting members of the Kuronuma family, and is quick to suspect them if anything goes awry. The Kuronuma family often perceives Toriyama family members as getting too big for their britches. The Murakami family is careful to keep these two branch families in a balance of cooperation and conflict. It wouldn’t due for them to unite and usurp the main house.

**Toriyama and Yukimura:**

 Members of this family tend to get along well, and often have aligning personal interests. Although members of the Yukimura family tend to get the short end of the stick out of many of these alliances. The Toriyama family sees itself as a little too good for the Yukimura family, and doesn’t treat them as equals. The Yukimura family is careful to make sure that they can get a little credit for deeds the Toriyama family is praised for. But, they are just as careful to play to their role as a ‘lesser’ house, so that the Toriyama family is usually blamed for any mistakes in joint ventures.

**Toriyama and Aomori:**

 On the surface, both of these families seem to have little to do with one another. They are polite to each other at gatherings, but seem to have few interactions outside of scheduled events. Aomori is trying to keep out of the Toriyama and Kuronuma squabbles, and is doing its best not to take a side. Although, Toriyama has been known to attempt to bribe Aomori smiths to produce superior quality weapons—or offer to look the other way when an Aomori craftsman wants to acquire a forbidden reagent. Since the elders of Aomori seem unlikely to budge in their neutrality, several younger Toriyama members have been ordered to try to gain favor with the next generation of the Aomori family—in case change can be made when the upcoming generation takes power.

**Kuronuma and Yukimura**

 Kuronuma is in the beginning stages of a plan to plant a few spies within the Yukimura family to gain Toriyama secrets. It’s been slow going, but the family of spies has managed to secure a few hidden informants at all levels of the Yukimura family. They have also begun courting other Yukimura family members openly, making a point of treating them better than the Toriyama family. The Yukimura family seems split on whether or not it’s better to switch alliances to Kuronuma, or whether the other family’s recent change in behavior is all a smoke screen.

**Kuronuma and Aomori**

 The Aomori family is generally of the opinion that the Kuronuma family is always up to something, and it is rarely good. At the same time, they don’t have anyway of disproving that anything that the Kuronuma family is up to isn’t a part of orders from the main house. So they generally have a policy of trying to stay as far away from Kuronuma business as possible. Although, the Aomori family seems to get caught up in Kuronuma family antics regularly, as they have to act in cooperation with Kuronuma for larger Main House orders. The Aomori family usually resents this. Kuronuma family members often joke about these occasions for inter-house bonding—Aomori family members usually believe this is a load of crap.

**Yukimura and Aomori**

 You would think that these two houses would regularly get along. But, it seems that both suspect the other of plotting behind their backs or attempting to ally with the other houses in an attempt to stamp out the other. Usually, their surface relations are nothing if not polite and professional. But, as a result of the larger environment, they have trouble trusting one another and often assume either Kuronuma or Toriyama is manipulating the other in order to cause problems.