SAKURA ARMS

A GAME BY BAKAFIRE WITH ART BY TOKIAME



RULEBOOK

AEG™

BIG in JAPAN 日本で大人気

SAKURA ARMS

A Game by Bakafire
for 2 players, ages 14 and up

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MEET the Designer

Why do I design games?



Shin Ito, aka Bakafire

I don't remember when I began to design games. It looks like it's from my early childhood according to mock-up cards found in my room. I don't remember what made me excited to make games the first time. But I remember that I got so excited about the huge worlds found in the boxes of games. Some games made it my dream to design games. Magnificent and powerful worlds in games speak to my heart and my effort is put into embodying new worlds in the games I create.

Why do I enjoy games?

I was impressed by the worlds in big games when I was a child. And I played a few games many times. Especially, I was impressed by Magic: The Gathering when I was in elementary school and some RPGs (D&D and Japanese RPGs) when I was in high school and university. Of course I love these games even now. They greatly influenced me!

BIG in JAPAN 日本で大人気 ™

Japan is a place of great innovation in game design, and AEG's Big In Japan game line seeks to bring the best of new Japanese hobby games to the world! We have sought to preserve as much of the original games as possible. This includes art, characters, setting, and mechanics.

We did take the liberty of instituting some graphical changes and adjustments to translations to make the games easier for world audiences to enjoy. Even then, we strive to present the games in a way that is as close as possible to the designers' original vision.

Why Sakura Arms?

Sakura Arms is an excellent representation of the best of independent Japanese game design. *Sakura Arms* features elegant game design that reveals deep strategic and tactical decisions. The illustrations and graphic design are works of art themselves, bringing to life the world in the designer's mind.

Next from Big in Japan:

Custom Heroes!



Craft unique cards in this exciting new take on a Japanese classic card game.

For more of our Big in Japan game line, visit www.alderac.com

SAKURA ARMS™

BACKGROUND

The Time of the Duel

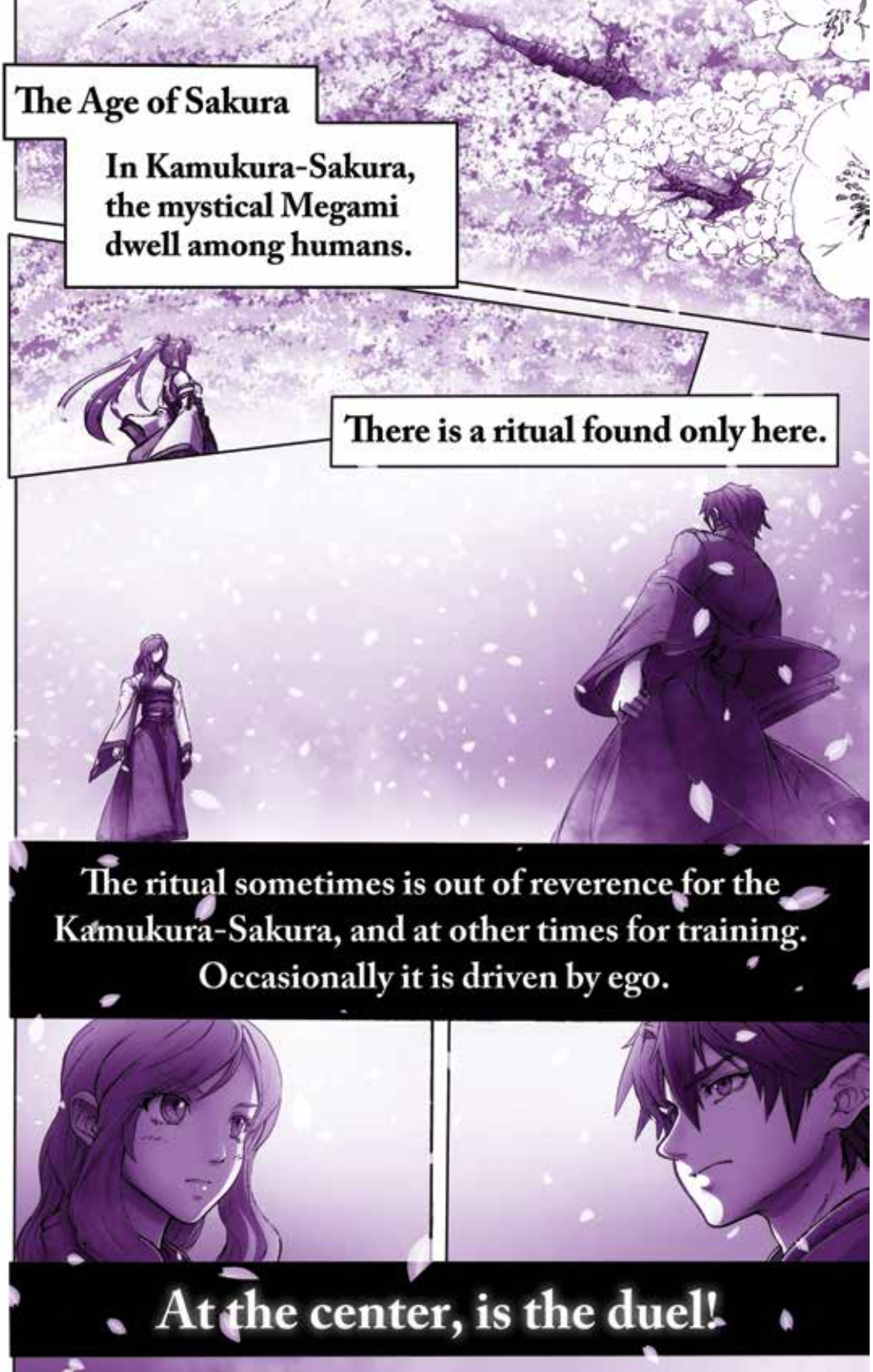
You face your rival. Without the aid of fate or destiny, your total focus is on the battle ahead. Belief in your heart, flowers on your hands, … SAKURA become your ARMS!

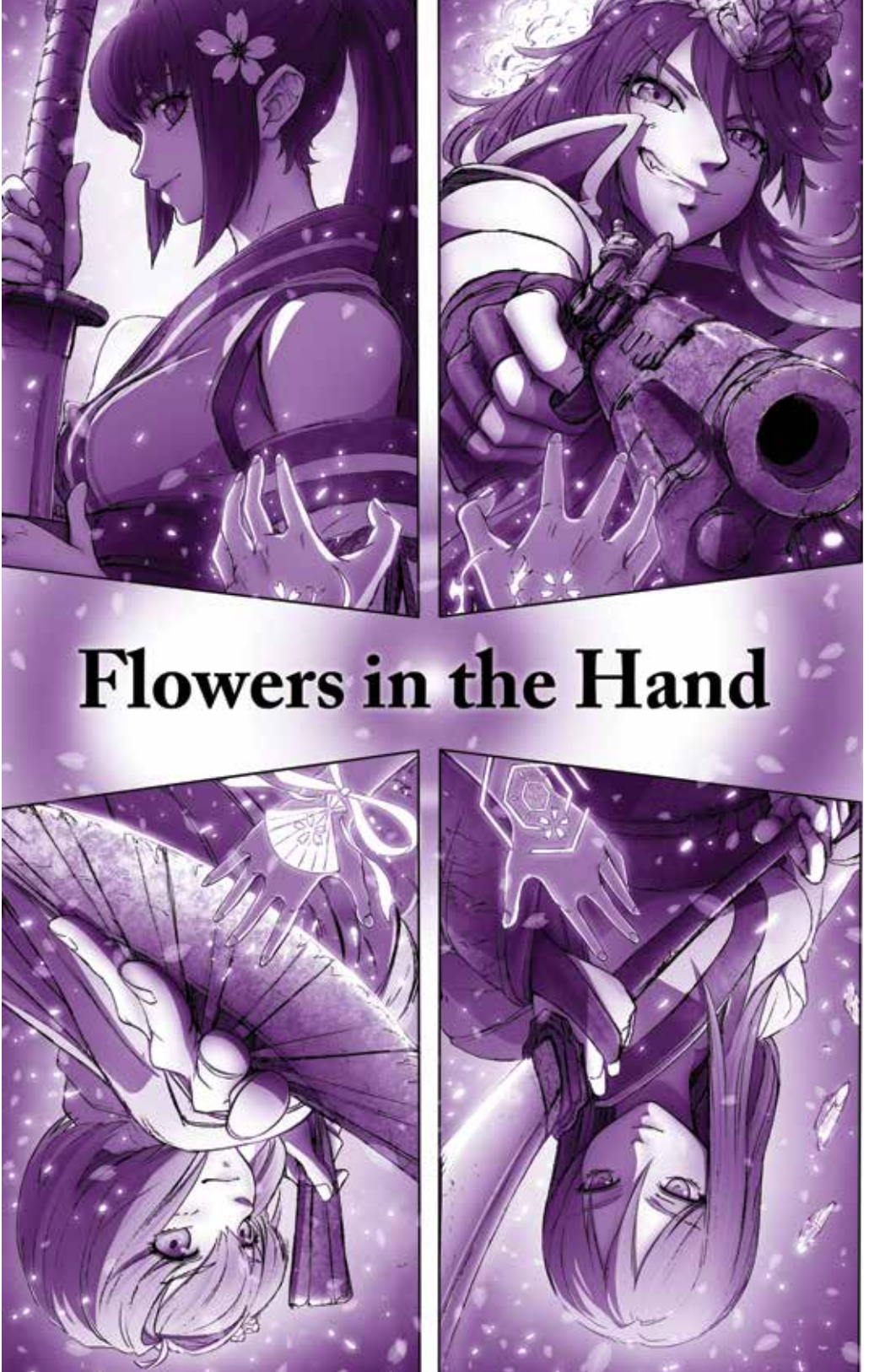
The Age of Sakura

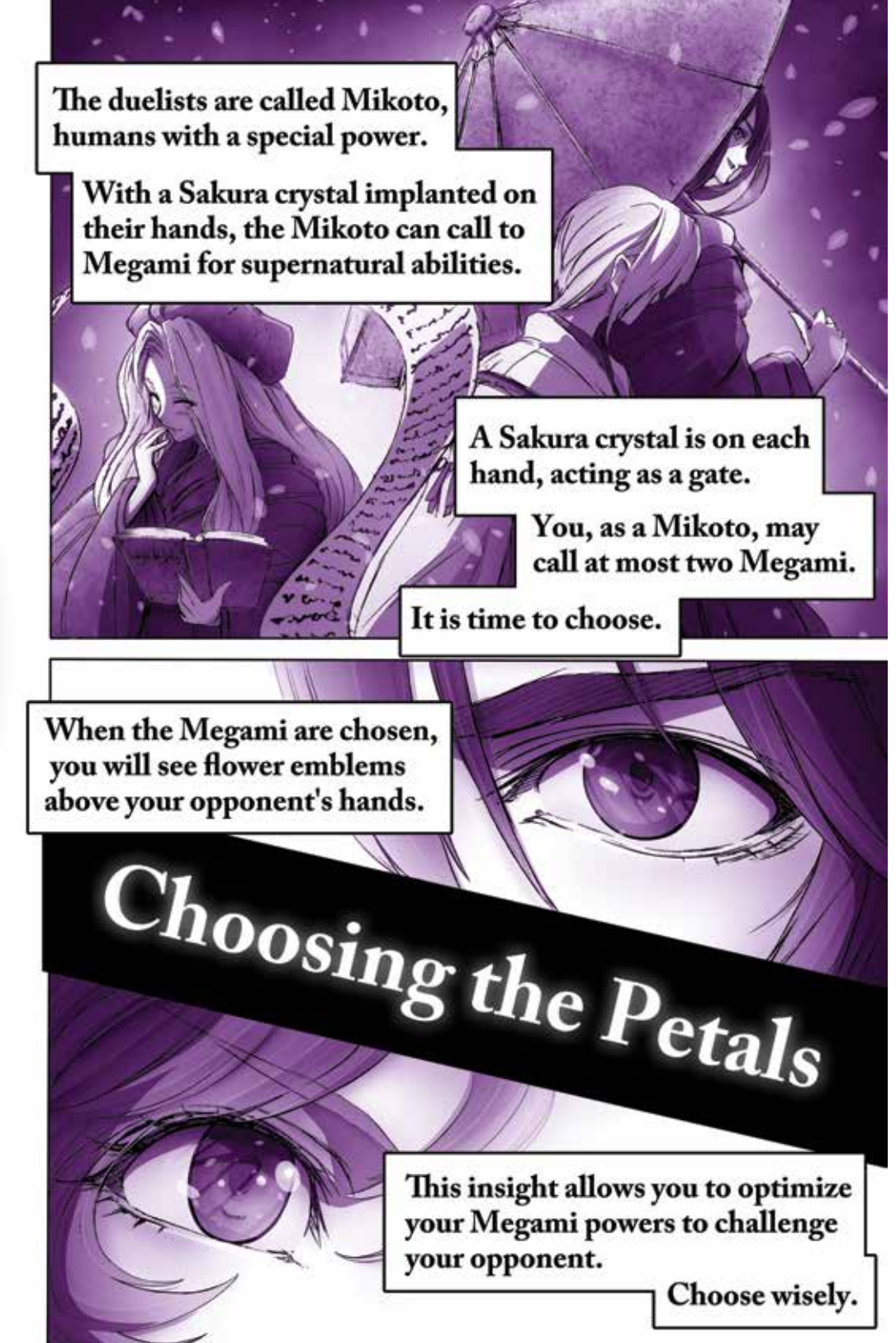
There have been Megami since the ancient age. They are supernatural beings, dwelling in the mysterious and beautiful Sakura trees whose petals are pure crystal. Their origins have long been forgotten. Even today the Megami dance with the infinite petals and live with the Sakura. This is the Age of Sakura.

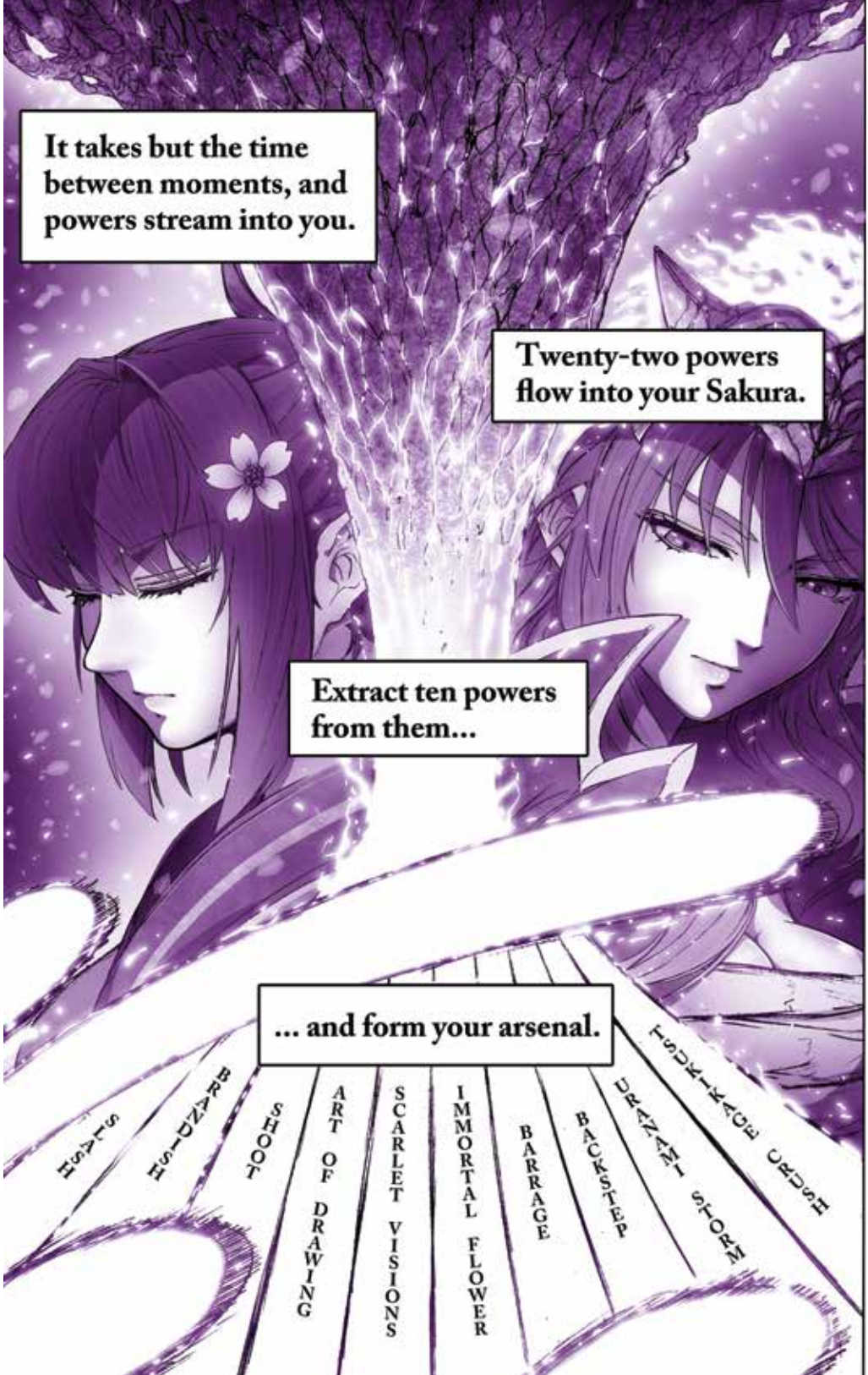
Mikoto, humans with special powers, can call to the Megami and request their supernatural powers. The Sakura petals planted on their hands allow them to speak to the Megami. These Mikoto control the world during the Age of Sakura. You and your rivals are these Mikoto, destined for victory or extinction.

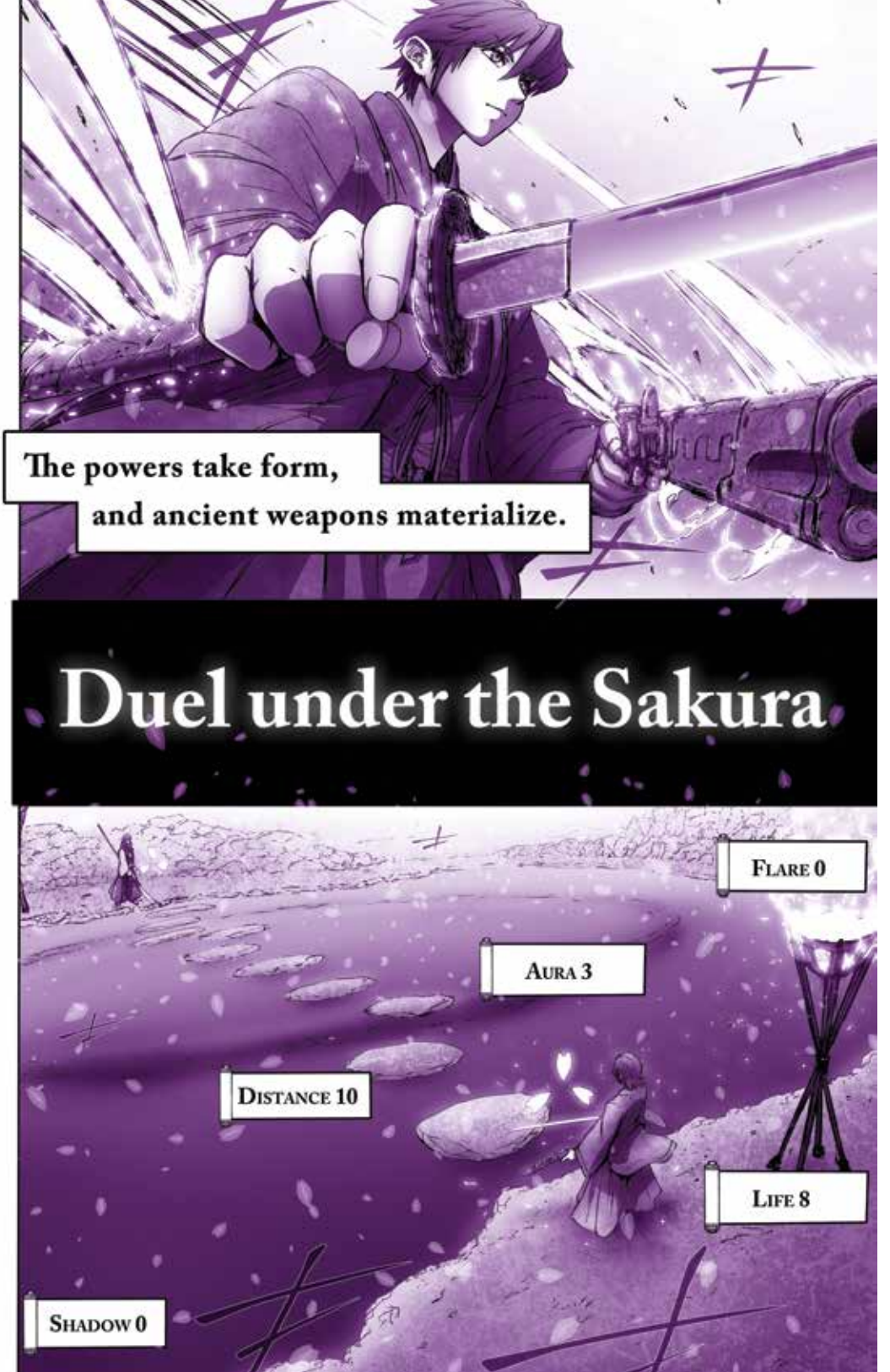



The Age of Sakura
In Kamukura-Sakura, the mystical Megami dwell among humans.
There is a ritual found only here.
The ritual sometimes is out of reverence for the Kamukura-Sakura, and at other times for training. Occasionally it is driven by ego.
At the center, is the duel!

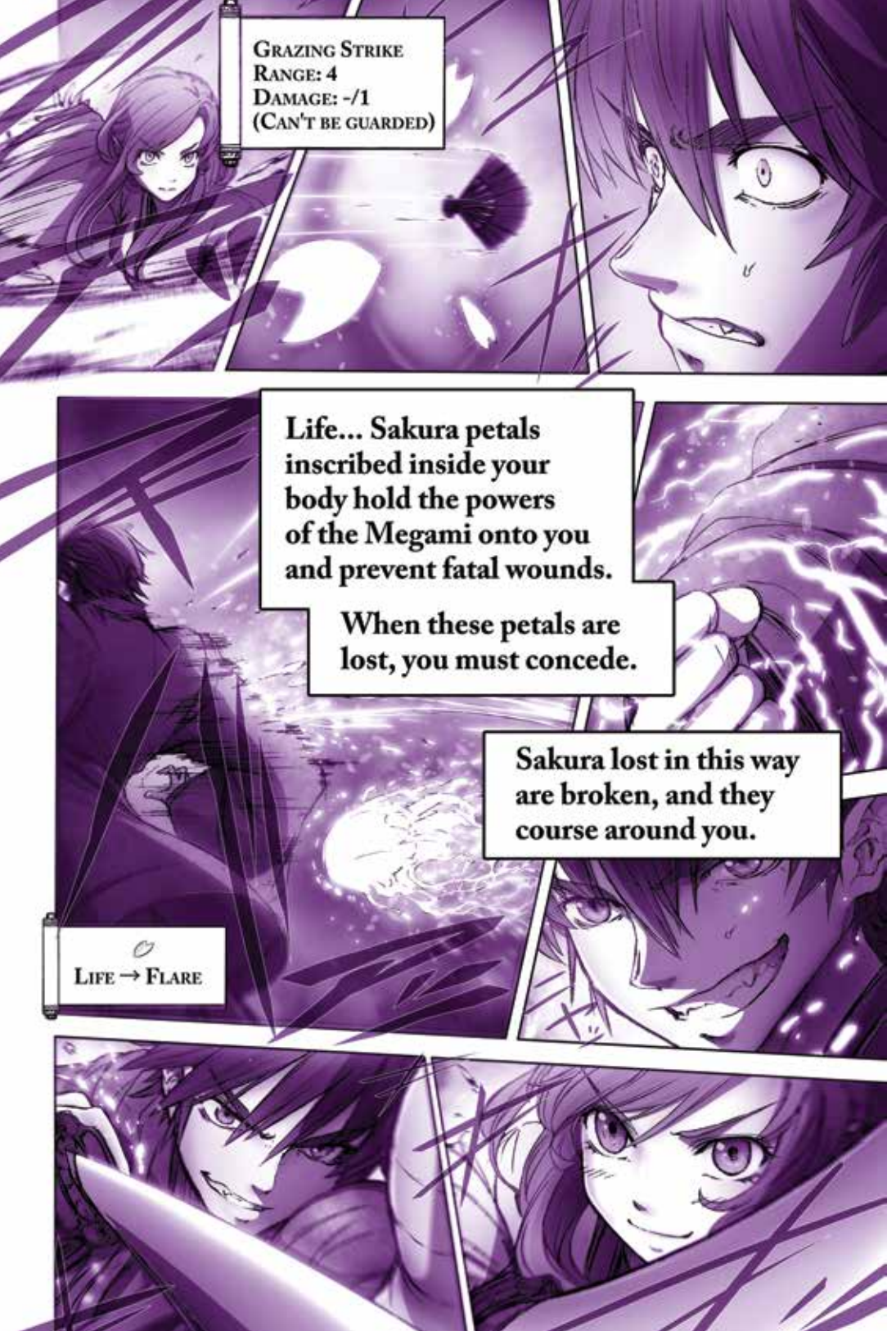

Flowers in the Hand

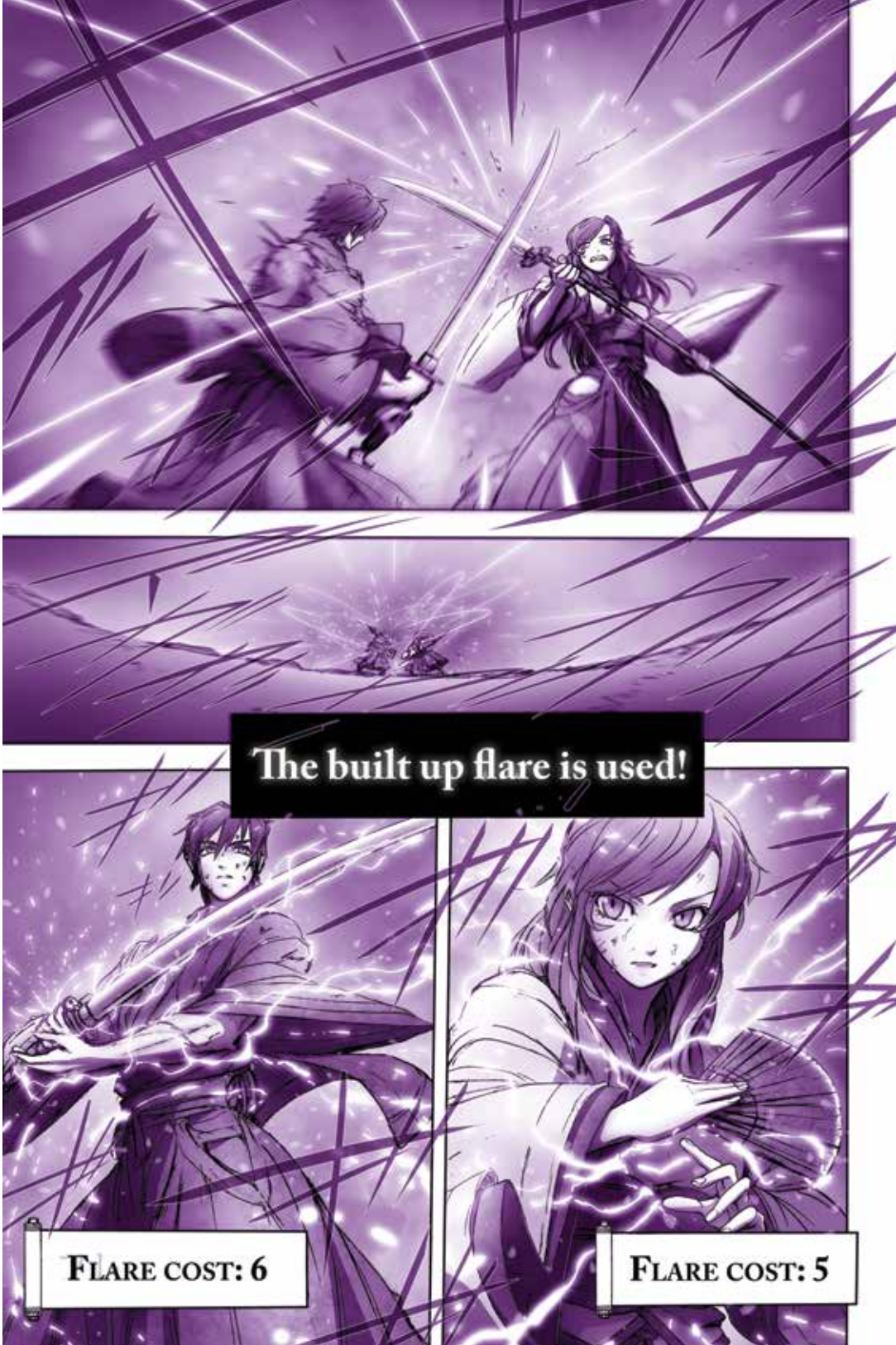

The duelists are called Mikoto, humans with a special power.
With a Sakura crystal implanted on their hands, the Mikoto can call to Megami for supernatural abilities.
A Sakura crystal is on each hand, acting as a gate.
You, as a Mikoto, may call at most two Megami.
It is time to choose.
When the Megami are chosen, you will see flower emblems above your opponent's hands.
Choosing the Petals
This insight allows you to optimize your Megami powers to challenge your opponent.
Choose wisely.

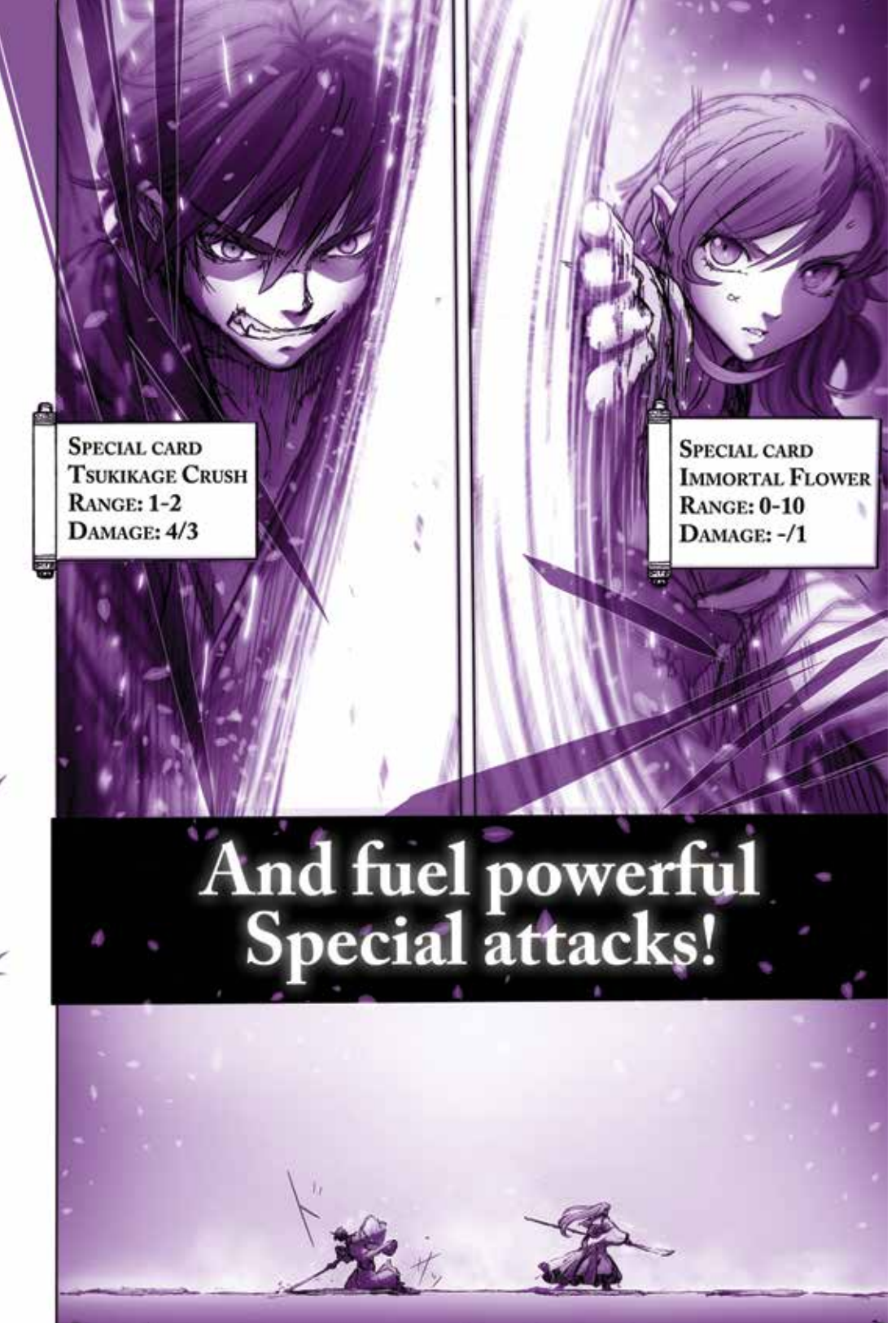

It takes but the time between moments, and powers stream into you.
Twenty-two powers flow into your Sakura.
Extract ten powers from them...
... and form your arsenal.
SLASH
BLAZE
SHOOT
ART OF DRAWING
SCARLET VISIONS
IMMORTAL FLOWER
BARRAGE
BACKSTEP
DRAGON STORM
HURRICANE CRUSH


The powers take form,
and ancient weapons materialize.
Duel under the Sakura
Flare 0
Aura 3
Distance 10
Life 8
Shadow 0

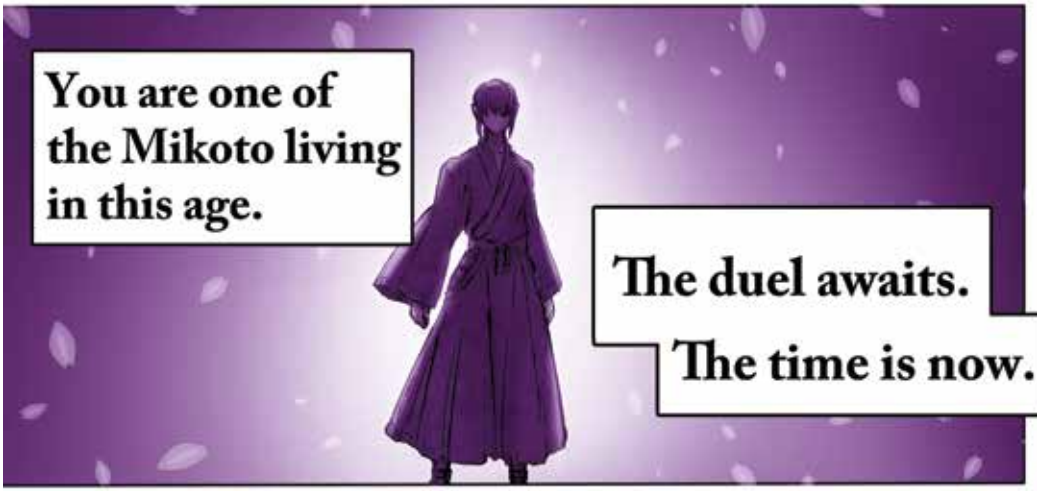

SHOOT
RANGE : 6-10
DAMAGE : 2/1
Aura... Sakura petals floating around you, defending you as a shield.
For each damage stopped, one Sakura petal moves to the Shadow.
AURA → SHADOW
BASIC ACTION
FORWARD MOVEMENT:
DISTANCE → 4
Distance... each attack requires the proper distance. Be strategic in your movement.


Grazing Strike
Range: 4
Damage: -/1
(Can't be guarded)
Life... Sakura petals inscribed inside your body hold the powers of the Megami onto you and prevent fatal wounds.
When these petals are lost, you must concede.
Sakura lost in this way are broken, and they course around you.
Life → Flare


The built up flare is used!
FLARE COST: 6
FLARE COST: 5


Special card
Tsukikage Crush
Range: 1-2
Damage: 4/3
Special card
Immortal Flower
Range: 0-10
Damage: -/1
And fuel powerful
Special attacks!

Now, you face your destiny.



Belief in your heart



Flowers on your hands



DUEL with SAKURA ARMS!

1 - OVERVIEW

1-1 Goal

Sakura Arms is a fighting card game for two players.

The object of the game is to win your duel against your opponent using the attacks of the Megami.

1-2 Victory Condition

You win when your opponent's Life becomes 0.

1-3 How to Play

A game consists of three steps: Flowers in Hand, Choosing the Petals, Duel under the Sakura.

Flowers in Hands

Each player chooses two Megami who grant them their power.

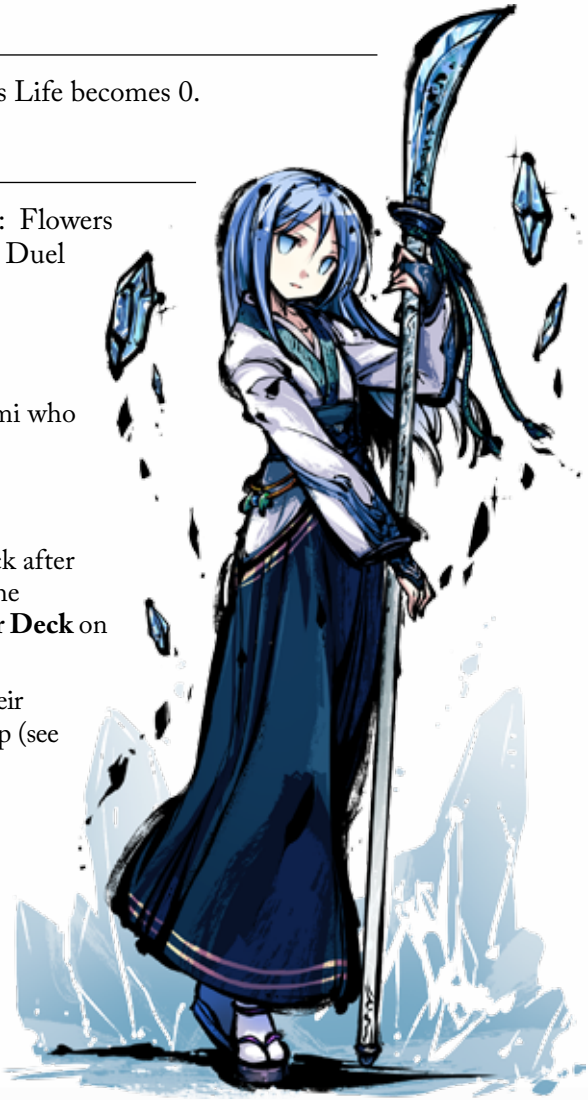
Choosing the Petals

Each player constructs their deck after seeing the Megami chosen by the opponent (see **3-1 Prepare Your Deck** on page 18).

Players also prepare the board, their cards and the duel during this step (see page 18).

Duel under the Sakura

You duel the opponent with your deck of cards.



2 - Components

Play Boards (2)

Game board showing the arena for players. (see **2-3 Play Board** on page 17).



Play Boards

Sakura Tokens (32)

Sakura petals, pieces of power from Megami. These are placed on the board to show various conditions.



Sakura Tokens

Megami Tarots (7)

Cards representing each Megami (character).



Megami Tarots

Cards (80)

There are four different types of cards.

- **Normal Cards (49):** The blessings of the Megami. Each Megami has 7 Normal cards each.
- **Special Cards (28):** Cards of special skills. Each Megami has 4 Special Cards each.
- **Vigor Cards (2):** Cards to count the players' Vigor (see page 20).
- **Umbrella Card (1):** Card to show the condition of your umbrella, open or closed. Only used if you choose Yukihi as one of your Megami.



Normal Cards



Special Cards

Rulebook (1)

You are reading this right now.



Vigor Cards



Umbrella Card

2-1 Card Anatomy



1. **Card Name:** The name of the card.
2. **Card Number and Megami:** This tells which Megami deck this card belongs in, and which number card it is.
3. **Card Type:** All cards have a type - **Action**, **Enhancement**, or **Attack**.
4. **Sub-Type:** Some cards have a sub-type - **Reaction** or **Throughout**.
5. **Text:** The effects of each card. Some are written in full, and some are using iconography. For more information, please refer to **6 - Keywords and Other Rules** on page 24.
6. **Range (only on Attack cards):** The Range of an attack.
7. **Damage (only on Attack cards):** The Damage dealt by the attack. The left number represents Damage to Aura, and the right number means Damage to Life.
8. **Charge: (only on Enhancement cards):** This number shows how many Sakura tokens are placed on the Enhancement when it is played.
9. **Cost (only on Special cards):** This number is the cost to play the card. You have to pay Sakura tokens equal to this number from your Flare to Shadow to play the card.

2-2 Card Conditions

Cards may be in one of several conditions. You may place your various cards however you like on your side of the board, but be careful to keep them in the proper orientation during play (vertical or rotated 90 degrees, face-up or face-down).

1. **Deck:** Your Normal cards are face-down.
2. **Played Pile:** Normal cards that are face-up.
3. **Discard Pile:** Normal cards that are rotated 90 degrees and face-down. They are discarded cards, that is cards that were used to pay for normal actions (see **4-2 Main Phase** on page 21). You may look at these cards, but your opponent may not.

4. **Enhancements:** Face-up cards that are Enhancements that may have Sakura tokens placed on them.

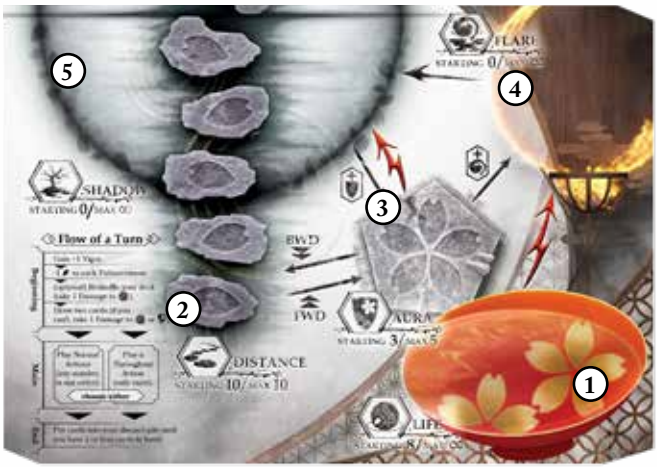
5. **Special Card:** Special cards are placed face-down. Once face-up, a Special card is considered Devoted, and may not be used again. Face-down Special cards are still available for use.

6. **Hand:** Your hand of cards.



2-3 Play Board

Each board has different areas described below. The number of Sakura tokens in each area informs players of the current condition of the duel.



1. **Life:** This is your current Life total.

2. **Distance:** This is the Distance between you and your opponent. You can use Attack cards only when at the appropriate Distance. Distance can never be greater than 10 Sakura tokens.

3. **Aura:** These are the Sakura tokens you are holding. You may use them to defend yourself from your opponent's attacks. Your Aura can never hold more than 5 Sakura tokens.

4. **Flare:** Flare Sakura tokens may be used to pay for Special cards.

5. **Shadow:** These are waned Sakura tokens. Once a token has been used for defending, paying a cost, or any other reasons, it goes to this area face-down.

Important: Both you and your opponent each have your own Life, Aura, and Flare. Distance and Shadow are shared by both players.

3 - Flowers and Petals

3-1 Prepare your deck

1. **Choosing Megami:** Each players chooses two Megami. If you use one copy of the game, we recommend that one player chooses a Megami, then the opponent chooses two, then the initial player chooses their second Megami. If you have two copies of the game, both players may choose their Megami in secret then reveal them simultaneously.
2. **Constructing your deck:** Each player constructs a deck in secret after seeing the opponent's Megami. A deck consists of 7 Normal and 3 Special cards, chosen from the available ones of the Megami you chose (see **Components** on page 15). If this is your first game, we recommend you use the decks presented below.

3-2 Prepare the board

Each player places a board in front of them, then places Sakura tokens on it. Numbers written in each area (see **2-3 Play Board** on page 17) show how many Sakura tokens are placed there at the beginning of the game.

For the First Game

For your first game we recommend that you use the following decks:

Player A: Raging Red Blade



Megami: Yurina, Himika

Normal Cards: Slash, Brandish, Art of Drawing, Footwork, Shoot, Barrage, Backstep

Special Cards: Tsukikage Crush, Uranami Storm, Scarlet Visions

Strategy: This is an aggressive deck! Use your ability to redraw your opening hand to try to get Barrage for early advantage. Use Footwork for getting close and finish the game with Yurina's attacks.

Player B: Elegant Blue Dance



Megami: Tokoyo, Saine

Normal Cards: Cut Down, Swing Rush, Gait, Outclass, Polite Return, Glancing Strike, Rabbit Step

Special Cards: Rhythmic Arc, Resonant Beat, Immortal Flower

Strategy: This is a defensive deck. React to your opponent's attacks with use of Polite Return and Outclass, and win with Saine's attacks. Rabbit Step and Resonant Beat will be useful when the opponent gets close.

3-3 Prepare your cards

Place your two Megami tarot cards, a Vigor card and your constructed deck on your side of the board. All Normal cards become a deck and all Special cards become available face-down Special cards.

3-4 Prepare for the duel

1. Decide who will be the first player by whatever method you prefer.
2. Each player shuffles their deck and draws 3 cards.
3. Each player may redraw their hand ONCE. To do so, choose any number of cards in your hand and place them on the bottom of your deck in any order, then redraw the same number of cards.
4. The first player starts the game with 0 Vigor, and the second player starts with 1 Vigor.
5. A fully prepared game area should be as follows:

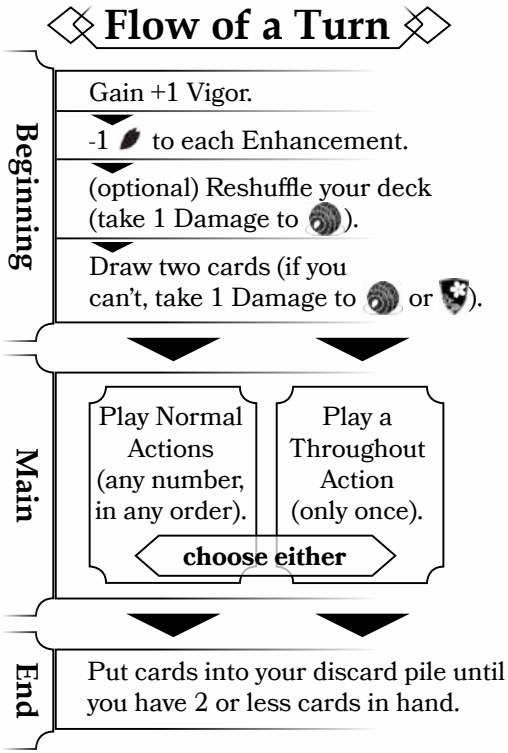


4 - Duel under the Sakura

Players take alternating turns in *Sakura Arms*. The flow of the turn is illustrated below, but note that on each player's first turn they skip the beginning phase.

4-1 Beginning Phase

You perform the following four actions in order:



1. **Gain Vigor:** You gain +1 Vigor. You may never have more than 2 Vigor at any point in the game.
2. **Remove Sakura tokens from Enhancements:** If there are any Enhancements in play, remove 1 Sakura token from each Enhancement and discard it to Shadow. Any Enhancements left without Sakura tokens are then placed in the played pile.

   Important: Remove Sakura tokens from both your and your opponent's Enhancements during this step.
3. **Reshuffle your Deck (Optional):** You may reshuffle your deck if you wish. To do so, shuffle the remaining deck, played pile, and discard pile together to create a new deck. If you reshuffled your deck this way, you take 1 Damage to your Life.
4. **Draw Cards:** You draw two cards from your deck.

Burnout

If there are no cards left in your deck, you take 1 Damage to your Aura or Life instead of drawing a card (your choice). You take the Damage regardless of what makes you draw (beginning phase or an effect) and take 1 Damage for each card you are unable to draw.

4-2 Main Phase

During your main phase you may choose to either take Normal actions or a single Throughout action.

A) Normal Actions

If you chose to take Normal actions, any number of the following, in any order:

- **Play a Card:** You may play a Normal card from your hand or an available Special card (without Throughout).

  Normal cards have no additional costs. You must pay, from your Flare to Shadow, a number of Sakura Tokens equal to a Special card's cost in order to play it. If you can't, the card cannot be played.
- **Perform a Basic Action:** You may move a Sakura token along the basic action arrows on your board. There are four basic actions:
  - **Forward Movement:** Move a token from Distance to your Aura.
  - **Backward Movement:** Move a token from your Aura to Distance.
  - **Recover:** Move a token from Shadow to your Aura.
  - **Focus:** Move a token from your Aura to your Flare.

To perform a basic action you must pay one of the following costs:

- Lose 1 Vigor
- Put a card from your hand to your discard pile.

B) Throughout Action

f you chose to take a Throughout action, do the following ONCE:

- **Play a Throughout Card:** Play a Normal or Special card with Throughout. Rules for playing cards are the same as for a Normal Action, where you must pay Flare for Special cards.



4-3 End Phase

You must put cards from your hand into your discard pile until your hand is 2 or fewer cards.

5 - Playing Cards

5-1 Playing Action Cards

When playing an Action card, you gain the effect of the card and then place it into your played pile, face-up. Special cards are left face-up in your Special card area, and are considered Devoted.

5-2 Playing Enhancement Cards

To play an Enhancement card, do the following:

1. Place Sakura tokens equal to the card's Charge onto the Enhancement card from Shadow or your Aura. You may use any combination of tokens from Shadow and your Aura. Once this is done, you gain the card's **Initialize** effects.
2. The card's **Ongoing** effects are now available while Sakura tokens are on the card.
3. Once the card loses all of its Sakura tokens, it is put into the played pile (or left face-up in the Special cards area if it was a Special card) immediately. Then, you gain its **Disenchant** effects.



5-3 Playing Attack Cards

You have to be at the proper Distance to play an Attack card. This means that the number of Sakura tokens placed on the Distance track on the board is within the Range of the card. So if there were 3 Sakura tokens on Distance, you could play a card a with a Range of 1-3, 2-4, 3, 3-5, etc.



Whenever you attack by playing an Attack card or gaining the effect of a card, the opponent has the opportunity to play a Reaction. If your opponent reacts to your attack, the opponent's Reaction effects happen first.

Important: You may only play ONE Reaction per Attack card.

Now do the following:

1. Check to ensure you are still in the proper Distance, as a Reaction may have moved you out of the proper Distance. If you are out of the proper Distance, the attack fails and nothing happens, including no **After Attack** effects. If you are still at the proper Distance, the attack succeeds.
2. You deal damage to the opponent based on the card's Damage. The opponent must choose to either take damage to their Aura or their Life (see **5-4 Taking Damage** below).
3. You perform any **After Attack** effects your Attack card may have.

Then place the Attack card in your played pile, or leave it face-up in your Special card area if it was a Special card, regardless of its success or failure.

5-4 Taking Damage

When a player is dealt Damage from an attack, they may choose to either apply it to their Aura or Life. However if the player has fewer Sakura tokens on their Aura than the amount of Damage that would be dealt to it, the player must choose Life.

If the Attack card indicates "-" Damage to either the Aura or Life (see **2-1 Card Anatomy** page 16), then the player taking the Damage must choose to take the only Damage they can.

Distributing Damage

- A player dealt Damage to Aura must move Sakura tokens equal to the Damage from their Aura to Shadow.
- A player dealt Damage to Life must move Sakura tokens equal to the Damage from their Life to their Flare.

6 - Key Words and Other Rules

6-1 For experienced players

After you have played a few games of *Sakura Arms* and are comfortable with the game, the rules regarding Forward Movement (see page 21) should include that you may not perform Forward Movement if the current Distance is 2 or less. Only the basic action of Forward Movement is forbidden in this case, you may still change the Distance to 1 or 0 through card effects. The reason behind this is that understanding this rule can be complicated for new players, but gives the game a better strategic experience after the game is mastered.

6-2 Fundamental Rules

- If an area is filled with Sakura tokens and you would have to move Sakura tokens to the area, you don't move them, they stay where they are.
- If you don't have enough Sakura tokens when you are dealt damage or gain the effects of cards, you move as many Sakura tokens as possible.
- If a card has 2 or more effects with the same timing, you perform them from top to bottom.
- Effects of cards override rules.
- If one effect makes something possible, and another effect makes it impossible, the impossible effect has priority.

6-3 +X/+Y

These effects change the Damage of an attack. The left number increases or decreases the amount of Damage dealt to Aura, and the right number does the same to Life. These effects never change the Damage when the initial attack has a value of "-".

6-4 Increase/Decrease (close/distant) its range +X/-X

These effects change the Range of an attack. The Range may increase or decrease. Close or Distant direction means the direction you change the Range.

- **Example 1:** If an attack with a Range of 3-4 increases its Range to Close direction, it becomes 2-4.
- **Example 2:** If an attack with Range 3-4 increases its Range to Distant direction, it becomes 3-5.
- **Example 3:** If an attack with Range 3-4 reduces its Range to Close direction, it becomes only 4.
- **Example 4:** If an attack with Range only 2 reduces its Range to Close direction, it loses 2 and has no Range, canceling the Attack card.

6-5 Forced

Forced may be found on some Action and Attack cards. It means that the card as printed is modified in a certain way, generally due to the conditions of the duel.

Always verify the Forced effect of a card to see if and how it can be played before playing it.



6-6 Unguarded

Unguarded is a keyword on some Enhancement cards. If you are dealt 1 or more damage while you have the Enhancement, all Sakura tokens on it go to Shadow and it goes to the discard pile. Its **Disenchant** effect does NOT happen since it does not go to the played pile.

6-7 Resurgence

Resurgence may be found on some Special cards. It means the player may have the opportunity to play the card twice or more. It is available only when the Special card is Devoted. Once you fulfill the Resurgence requirement on the card, it is once again available for your use (turn it face-down).

6-8 Sealing a Card

Sealing is an action included in the effects of some cards. A sealed card is put under the card that sealed it and is considered removed from the game.

6-9 Open/Close Icon

These icons are found only on Yukihi's cards. They mean that the effects of these cards change according to whether her umbrella is open or closed. Range, Damage, and card text may change.

Card Symbols and Iconography

ATK — Attack Card

ENH — Enhancement Card

ACT — Action Card

REA — Reaction Card

THR — Throughout Card



Opponent's Life



Your Life



Opponent's Aura



Your Aura



Opponent's Flare



Your Flare



Shadow



Distance



Umbrella Closed



Umbrella Open



SAKURA ARMS™

Credits

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Special Thanks: Kousaku, tot, Tsukinomichi, Maybell, Riko

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