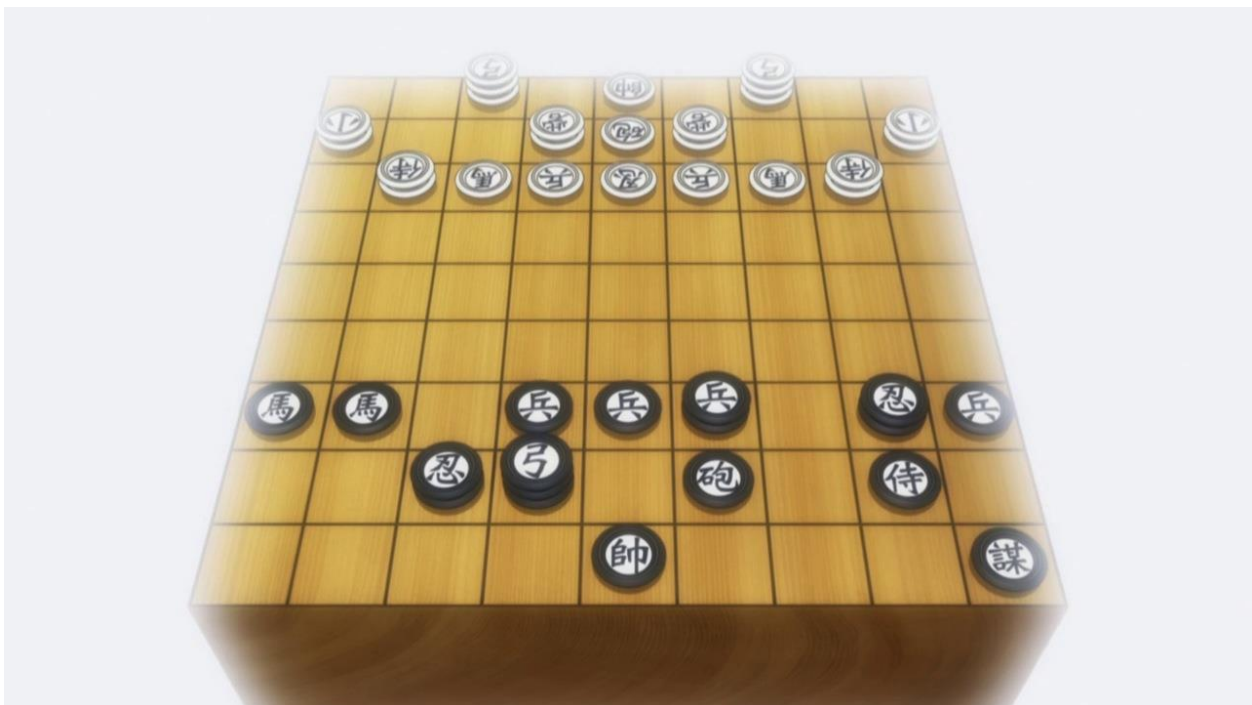

GUNGI, A TREATISE

War Council

"When? When did I start waiting for my opponent to make the first move? When, indeed? It became routine. The loser held out his hands in gratitude for the lesson and I graciously accepted without skipping a beat. As if that was what I wanted! That's not how it should be! For so long, I sought the height of perfection. I dreamed of giving my heart and soul to battle an unstoppable adversary! I'm a lucky man. I'm thankful for everything that led me to this point... that led me to you."

Isaac Netero, 12th Chairman of the Hunter Association

****SPOILERS:** Gungi, also known as War Council, is a two-player strategy board game played on a nine-by-nine board, similar to a shogi board. Gungi originated in East Gorteau and nearly all citizens know how to play. World tournaments have been held for the last fifteen years. Currently, there is no official Gungi champion. This is due to the recent passing of the previous grand master and five-time world champion, Komugi, a beloved and fearless girl from an inauspicious background. Komugi, who has been blind since birth, captured the hearts of both the citizens in East Gorteau and even many others. After a short Gungi career during her adolescence, she passed away from radiation poisoning contracted in a bizarre chain of events which catapulted an anamorphic ant to the top of the East Gorteau government. They died together—he being caressed tenderly in her bosom. She was undefeated in life, and continues undefeatable in death. May we never forget her bravery and exceedingly moe sacrifice. Unlike its spiritual brethren, chess, shogi, and go, Gungi incorporates an exciting 3rd dimension to gameplay leading to billions and billions of possibilities. As in chess and shogi, the goal is to trap the king.

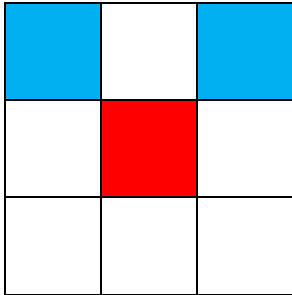


PIECES AND THEIR VARIOUS MOVES

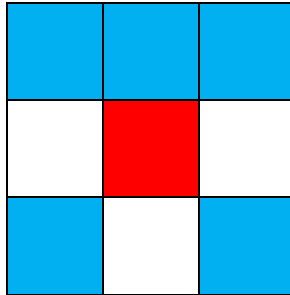
Note: Red indicates the placement of the piece. Blue means they can move into that square. Green symbolizes the ability of that piece to move in a continuous line along the path of that square.

Major General x4 (小)

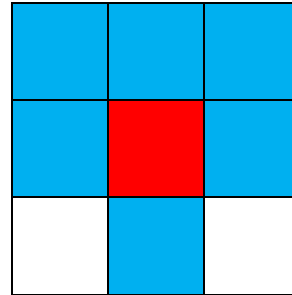
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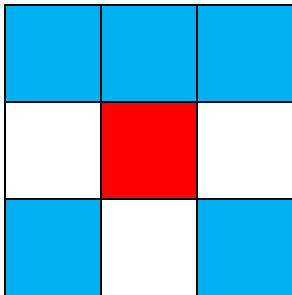


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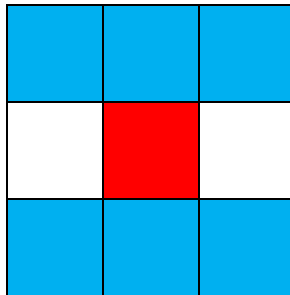


Lieutenant General x4 (中)

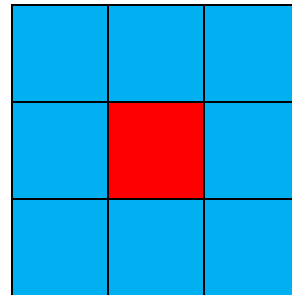
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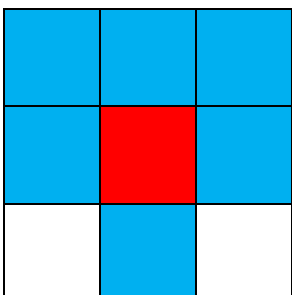


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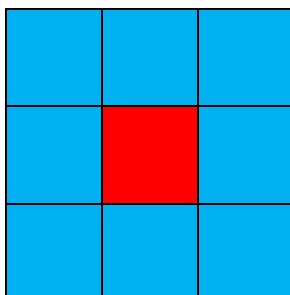


General x6 (大)

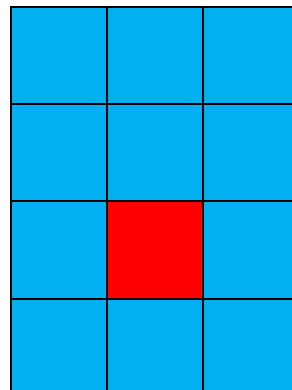
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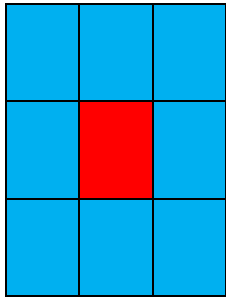


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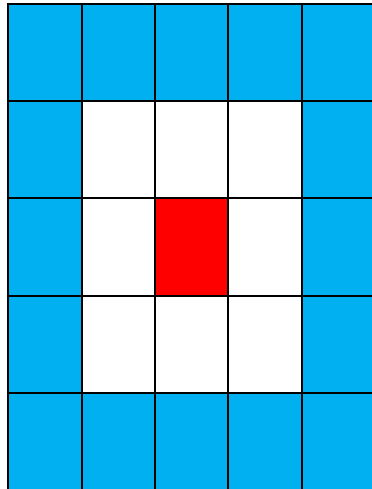


Archer x2 (弓)

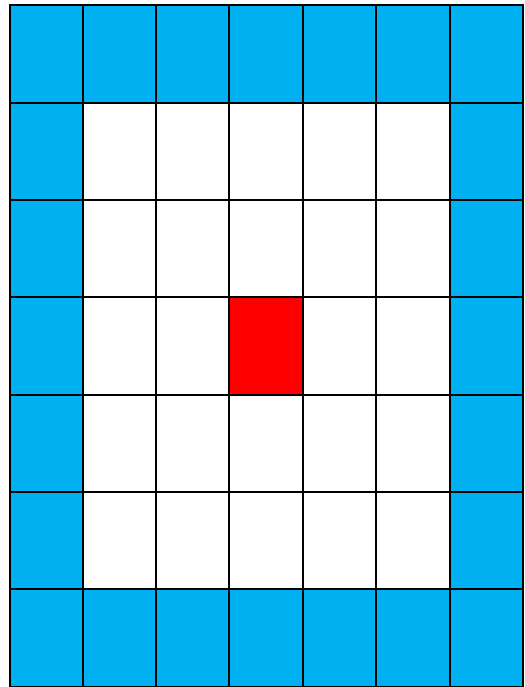
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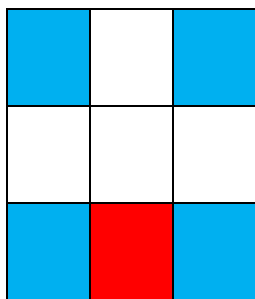


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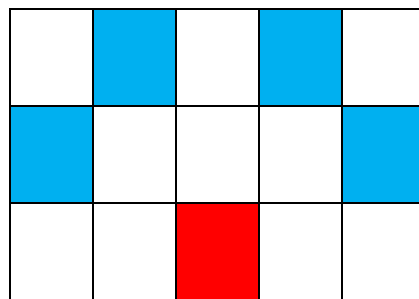


Knight x2 (馬)

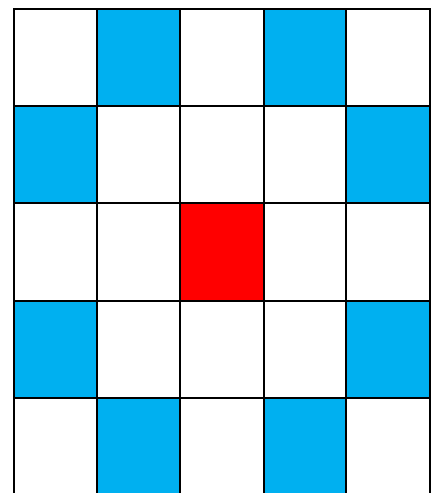
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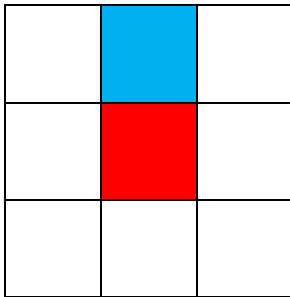


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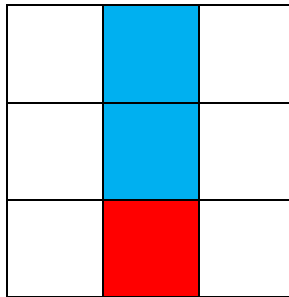


Musketeer x1 (筒)

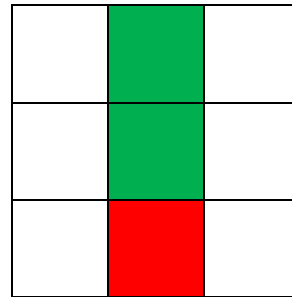
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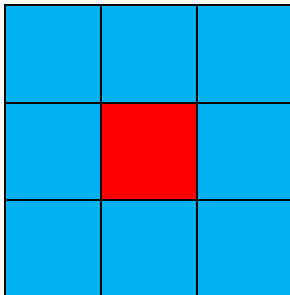


Tier 3



Captain/Counsel x1 (謀)

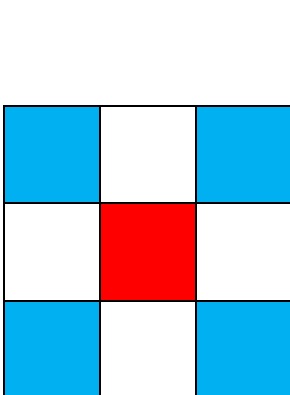
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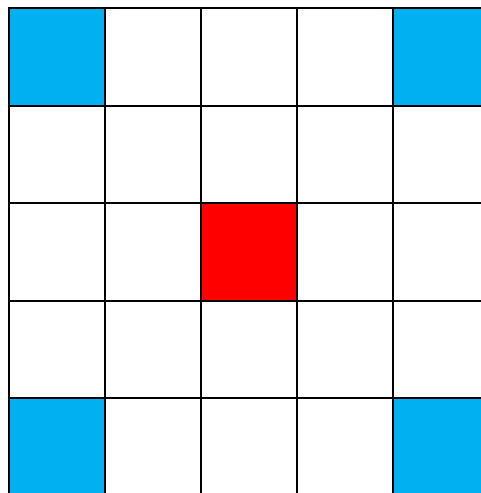
The captain takes on the movement ability of the piece (friendly or opponent) that is directly below it.

Samurai x2 (侍)

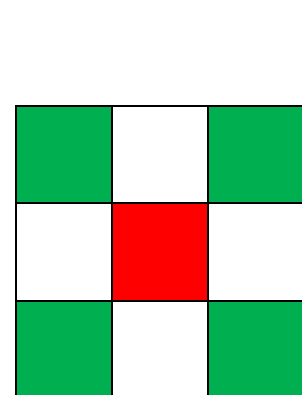
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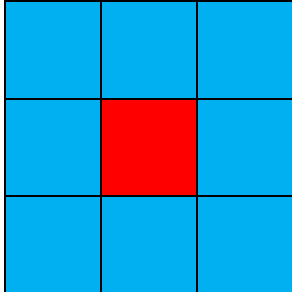


Tier 3



Fortress x2 (砦)

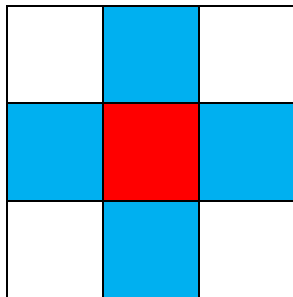
Tier 1



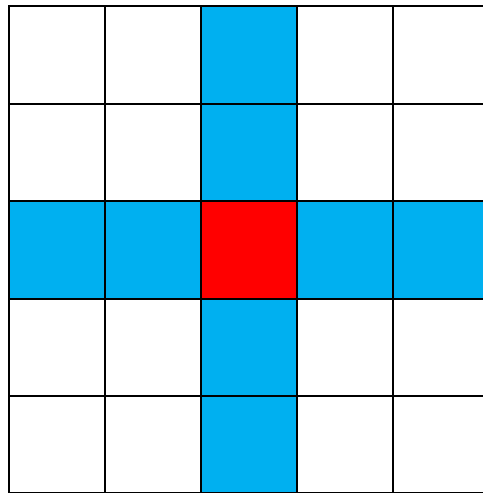
Fortresses can't stack on other pieces; they can only be stacked upon.

Cannon x2 (砲)

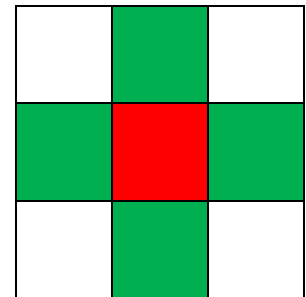
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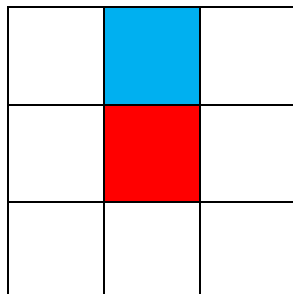


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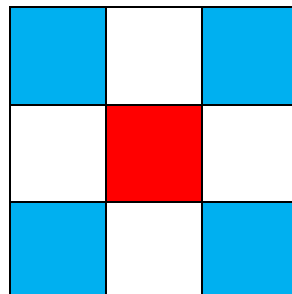


Spy x2 (忍)

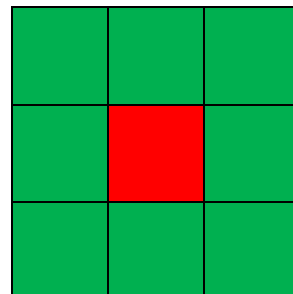
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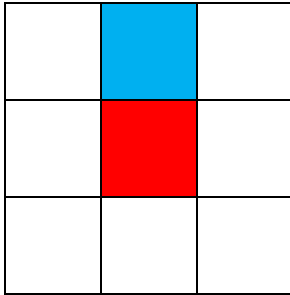


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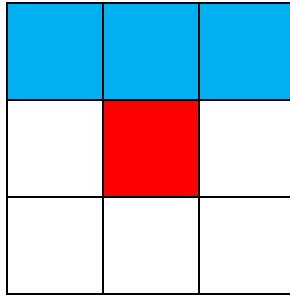


Pawn x9 (兵)

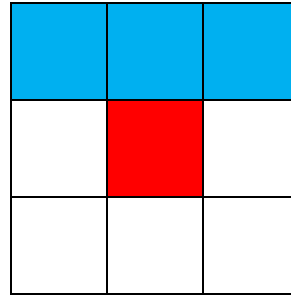
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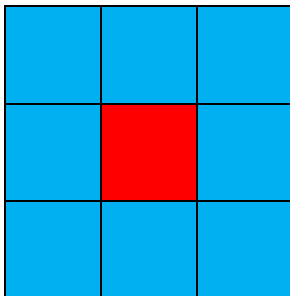


Tier 3



Marshall (King) x1 (帥)

Tier 1



The Marshall moves the same for all tiers. Pieces cannot be stacked on the Marshall.

RULES:

1. Each player is provided a total of 38 pieces as enumerated above.
2. Pieces are put on the board in the first three rows, trading off one-by-one. Black places first. The Marshall must always be put first.
3. The minimum pieces that must be placed in the beginning is one. This piece must be the Marshall. The maximum number of pieces you can have on the board at any time is 26.
4. White takes the first turn after all pieces have been set up.
5. A turn can be used for four things:
 - a. Move – choose one piece to move (see section above on how pieces move); remember that towers themselves do not move, they only increase range of mobility of the top piece
 - b. Attack – if an enemy piece occupies a square within your range of movement, you can attack; if there is only one piece, your piece must then move into and occupy that square but if you're attacking a tower, the result is that the tower loses the top
 - c. Stack – if either a friendly piece or an enemy piece is within your range of movement, you can stack on top of that piece to form a tower (the top piece of the tower controls the tower regardless of pieces of a different team below it)
 - d. Place – if you have less than the maximum pieces on the board, you may take a piece from your remaining pieces (captured pieces cannot be used) and place it anywhere on the board with three exceptions:
 1. Multiple pawns cannot be placed in the same file
 2. Pawns cannot place the opposing Marshall into check mate (although check is allowed)
 3. Pieces cannot be placed within the first three ranks of the opposing team's side of the board
6. The game concludes when the Marshall is mated. The player who checkmates their opponent wins. If a player at any given point has no legal moves to make and is not currently in check then a stalemate occurs and the game is a tie. Alternatively, the game may end if one side forfeits during the game.

STRATEGY:

“Disrupting your opponent’s rhythm is critical. Once you’ve learned the openings, you can deduce your opponent’s rhythm... Fear and desire hold the power to disrupt one’s rhythm. Desire clouds one’s vision, while fear stills one’s step.”

Meruem

- Crane Formation
- Kokoriko (remote concealment)
Kokoriko is an advanced technique developed by the legendary undefeated Gungi Grand Master Komugi. The technique involves isolating the Marshall.
- General in the middle
General in the middle is another advanced technique developed by Grand Master Komugi. It was developed specifically to counter the kokoriko stratagem. The technique involves placing a lieutenant general in the center of the board, thus commanding a large portion of the board and putting pressure on the isolated Marshall.

NOTES:

Episode 102 (Power x and x Games) – 20:33 to 22:00 Introduction to Gungi

- Pouf explains that the goal is to trap the king like chess/shogi
- Can stack up to 3 pieces
- At the start, you can freely place your pieces in your area (shown to be the first three rows)
- Black is shown with 18 pieces: 2 knights, 2 spies, 1 archer, 4 pawns, 1 Marshall, 1 cannon, 1 samurai, 1 counsel
- White is shown with 25 pieces: 2 archers, 2 major generals, 2 cannons, 2 samurai, 2 knights, 1 Marshall, 1 fortress, 1 spy, 2 pawns

Episode 103 (Check x and x Mate) – 1:49 to 4:55

- Five black pieces shown: 2 pawns, 1 archer, 1 spy, 1 general
- Three white pieces shown (with at least 6 others obscured but present): 1 general, 2 pawns
- Komugi reveals her inner moe by her blindness, talking differently (and messing up some words), and passing out in an attempt to stay silent. “An uncommonly stupid girl!” Meruem. “Yeah, that was embarrassing.” Komugi
- White makes the first move (4-4-1 pawn)

Episode 103 (Check x and x Mate) – 7:13 to 9:55

- Komugi moves: 7-8-2 Spy, a checkmate. Meruem’s king is on the second diagonal away from the spy tower. Other pieces around it are not shown
- Meruem remarks that she’s using an orthodox approach: stacking archers on pawns
- Meruem clears part of the board with black: major general and fortress; and white: pawn, knight, and samurai (2-tier tower)
- Later, Komugi moves 8-8-1 knight
- Meruem gives up (board shown with at least 10 black, 13 white with 3 white captured)
- Later, Meruem places a pawn
- Komugi places an archer
- *Commentary: Meruem is always represented as the black Marshall. Komugi is always represented by the white spy. We can see that Meruem’s downfall comes from Komugi as represented in this match. Since none of the characters have yet recognized the danger Komugi puts Meruem in, this counts as foreshadowing.*

Episode 103 (Check x and x Mate) – 20:25 to 22:01

- Board shown with a tower (black on first and third tier with white on second tier – third tier is lieutenant general), white pawn, and white major general
- The camera moves showing two towers with black on bottom and white on top (archer and Marshall) as well as a white pawn, black general, and black spy
- Meruem moves 4-5-1 musketeer
- Komugi moves 2-8-2 fortress
- Meruem notices that the spy (the third tier of an all-white tower) has done nothing the whole game but suddenly controls the whole board due to the new tower which is over 4 squares and up 2 from the spy, effectively destroying his right side; he forfeits (saying it is a checkmate)
- A group of pieces are shown: black spy, pawn, Marshall, and general along with 12 more; white samurai, cannon, archer, knight along with 9 more
- From start to checkmate, there were one hundred forty-four moves
- *Commentary: Once again, Meruem’s downfall is the spy, which controls the whole board.*

Episode 104 (Doubt x and x Hesitation) – 7:01 to 13:06

- Meruem places the first piece: 9-9-1 Marshall
- Komugi: 1-5-1 Marshall
- Meruem: 7-9-1 Pawn
- Komugi: 2-3-1 Pawn
- Meruem: 8-1-1 Spy
- Komugi: 2-3-1 Cannon
- Meruem: 9-1-1 Fortress
- Komugi: 2-7-2 Musketeer
- Komugi notes that the Marshall is isolated. Meruem calls it “remote concealment”
- Meruem: 7-1-2 Fortress
- Komugi: 1-6-2 General
- Meruem: 9-1-3 Archer
- Komugi: 3-2-2 Major general
- Meruem says he’s done placing pieces
- Black has 20 total pieces; White has 26 total pieces
- Meruem notes her crane formation has been modified towards his isolated Marshall
- Meruem predicts she will position archer on her right flank and try three-pronged attack
- Komugi: 1-9-3 new archer
- Meruem: 9-7-1 new spy
- Komugi: 2-9-1 Knight
- Meruem notes that her three-pronged attack will cost him two pieces but will create an opening on her left flank, which is the obvious move but he is going to play differently to alter her rhythm
- Meruem: 5-5-1 lieutenant general
- The board is shown to be 7 black and 7 white pieces
- Komugi: 9-2-1 new lieutenant general
- In defeat, Meruem pours his black pieces onto the lieutenant general (32 pieces including 1 general, 4 pawns, 2 cannons, 1 counsel, 1 major general, 2 samurai, 2 archers, 1 knight, and 1 fortress)
- Komugi reveals that “remote concealment” is actually called kokoriko and that she originally came up with the idea herself 10 years ago
- Komugi says that placing the lieutenant general in the middle to counter a three-pronged attack is another strategy she came up with called “general in the middle”
- Komugi relates that moving from kokoriko to general in the middle became popular in the day until it was used against her in a tournament and she figured out how to counter it
- *Commentary: Meruem’s “remote concealment” plan is a reflection of his current predicament. Despite being the most important piece on his side of the board, he has chosen to hide it away in a corner, isolated from the real action in the same way that he stays in the throne room and has little interaction with others. Instead, he allows the royal guard to do most of the fighting. Komugi’s three-pronged attack is interesting to compare to the palace invasion which had three different groups, each going after a separate member of the royal guard. Meruem is fine sacrificing a few members of his royal guard if he can win the battle, but decides to play a new piece that he has been biding his time to use. This is the “general in the middle” strategy. It is unclear who this general represents. Possibilities include any of the royal guard, one of the other ants, or even Palm. In any case, Komugi responds by placing a new lieutenant general next to the Marshall, symbolizing Netero’s surprising entrance and reckless attack on Meruem. Meruem is forced to forfeit, similar to the effects of radiation poison from his encounter with Netero.*

Episode 105 (Resolve x and x Awakening) – 3:12 to 11:10

- Komugi demonstrates her “unsightly” inner moe as she drools profusely in her resting meditations
- Fourteen black pieces are shown (2 spies, samurai, archer, counsel, and cannon)

- Meruem: 9-5-1 Marshall
- Meruem suggests a wager; Komugi offers her life as a wager, causing Meruem to rip off his arm in shame for proposing anything less than that (it's complicated). Komugi, who is blind, probably has no idea what is going on

Episode 105 (Resolve x and x Awakening) – 13:22 to 14:03

- Meruem: 7-9-1 Spy
- Komugi: 2-3-1 Pawn

Episode 108 (The x Gungi x of x Komugi) – 1:55 to 4:22

- Pouf recognizes the danger behind Komugi's inner moe, complete with a fabulous inner monologue and some cathartic fiddle work. As Meruem tries to conquer the world with Gungi and an iron fist, Pouf tries to conquer himself with tears and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Episode 108 (The x Gungi x of x Komugi) – 7:35 to 8:57

- Meruem consults Komugi on what strategy would have been best. He proposes moving to the right. She instructs him that moving the knight would have been the best. She didn't want a single piece controlling the board. "Sometimes you must accept the risk and move forward." Komugi

Episode 108 (The x Gungi x of x Komugi) – 11:33 to 14:39

- Meruem: 2-1-3 Pawn
- Komugi: 4-5-1 Knight
- Meruem: 8-7-2 Lieutenant general
- Komugi: 4-3-3 Archer
- Meruem notes that she continues to attack where he is weak
- Meruem: 2-1-1 Knight
- Komugi: 6-6-1 Major general
- Komugi begins to feel strange. An uncanny aura shrouds her body and little aura bubbles float around her. Marvelous moves make their way into her mind. She has awakened. The aura is none other than a physical manifestation of her inner moe. Meruem recognizes the power and possibilities this destructive force can wreak (as we in our time have also noted—moe continues to reign supreme in both Japan and now in other parts of the world... what a terrifying and thrilling time to be alive!).
- Meruem gives up under the pressure of moe. He dumps the pieces on the board. Black: 2 generals, lieutenant general, major general, samurai, 2 pawns, knight, counsel. White: Lieutenant general, 2 spies, and samurai.
- The board is shown. White: Cannon, fortress, knight, spy, pawn, Marshall, lieutenant general. Black: 3 major generals, 2 samurai, 1 spy, 2 archers, 1 knight, 5 generals, 2 pawns, 1 fortress, 1 cannon, 17 others

Episode 110 (Confusion x and x Expectation) – 5:31 to 6:03

- Komugi plays Gungi by herself to memorize the moves inspired by her inner moe
- The board is set up so that black and white have the same set up. The setup is identical to her set up in the first game against Meruem. Each side has 2 archers, 2 major generals, 2 cannons, 2 samurai, 2 knights, 1 Marshall, 1 fortress, 1 spy, 2 pawns

Episode 135 (This x Day x and x this x Moment) – 11:47 to

- For the first time in the series, Komugi plays as black.
- Meruem: 1-5-1 Marshall
- Komugi: 9-9-1 Marshall
- Meruem: 7-9-1 Pawn

- Komugi: 2-3-1 Pawn
- Meruem: 2-7-2 Musketeer
- Komugi: 7-1-2 Fortress
- Meruem recognizes that Komugi is playing kokoriko
- As the game progresses, Meruem plays 9-2-1 new lieutenant general against her Marshall
- Komugi counters (in a burst of moe aura) with 4-6-2 Spy
- The board is shown with 15 black pieces and 15 white pieces
- Meruem notes that she has found a way out
- Meruem plays aggressively (2-6-1 knight), thinking she will not be able to counter his knight and lieutenant general (he's trying to reverse her advantage)
- In bitter-sweet moe tears, Komugi asks if she's allowed to be this happy
- Meruem explains his contagious condition to Komugi, who responds simply by moving the next piece, reversing his reversal
- The black Marshall and white spy are shown together, floating in the moe air
- A montage of their time together dances across the screen
- Meruem: 4-4-1 Pawn
- Komugi: 6-5-1 knight
- Meruem: 2-7-2 new spy
- Meruem asks Komugi if she's still there and she affirms that she is
- Komugi: 4-5-1 lieutenant general
- Meruem remarks that he has been checkmated and has yet to defeat Komugi even once
- Meruem: 1-5-1 Marshall
- Komugi: 9-5-1 Marshall
- Holding hands, Meruem dies in Komugi's lap. She dies shortly thereafter
- *Commentary: What can be said that has not already been discussed in a dozen Internet chat rooms and expressed in a thousand hearts? The touching story of Meruem and Komugi interacting through Gungi is both emotionally shattering and brilliantly metaphorical. In the end, Meruem is never able to defeat his one and only friend. While Netero is responsible for his death, Komugi is responsible for his defeat. Komugi seems to grasp this on a basic level as demonstrated in their final match. Komugi plays as black for the only time. She is now Meruem, moving his pawns in the famous kokoriko that took place in the palace of East Gorteau. Unlike Meruem and the royal guard, however, Komugi successfully counters his strike. She adds a new spy to the board, changing the gameplay completely. Despite Meruem's attempt to reverse her newfound advantage, the white side is unable to prevail against her black side. The end result of this counter play, strangely enough, is the happiness of both Komugi and Meruem. In the palace invasion, Meruem needed to play a spy to counter Netero. While it is mere conjecture to try and determine what that spy could represent, one possibility will be here considered. The spy usually represents Komugi herself. When Netero and Zeno Zoldyck (the lieutenant general and knight) first encounter Meruem, they are shocked to see the compassion with which he cares for the injured Komugi. It isn't until Meruem isolates himself again from his troops that Netero remembers the reason he has come to fight and pursues his foe to the death.*