

SPIRIT CONSCRIPT

v1.1

"Ah! Good morning, mortal. I hope the Vessel Transfer wasn't too rocky for you. Meddlesome inconvenience to interrupt your death, really, I know...You were a shoe-in for Paradise! But powerful souls are in great demand in this City between life and death, and you're just the one I've been looking for."

"So, here's our arrangement. I sculpt a new body for your soul, and you work for the highest bidder. I make my keep, you go on living and gain a lucrative occupation... all parties benefit. Whoever you were in your last life—fallen hero, executed criminal, innocent victim from my world or some other—I offer a second chance. I implore you, make good on it."

"You may call me *Kofuko-san*, by the way. I have a certain reputation for unorthodox methods and general mayhem, but I'm not as beguiling as the Seven Sages would have you believe. I simply deal in souls... **and games**."

"...I know I left it lying around here *somewhere*... remind me again, which body am I putting you in?"

Human



Humans and their relatives are the only beings who possess souls, the source of Aura that fuels supernatural abilities. While humans are native to Mortal World, a few have snuck their way into the city of Youdu through witchcraft and bargaining. Your human lineage is pure, making your natural Aura stronger and deeper. Your body is acclimated to recovering and producing Aura more quickly.

Gain the **Pure Pool** Alteration automatically.
Choose two **Recovery Dispositions** instead of one.

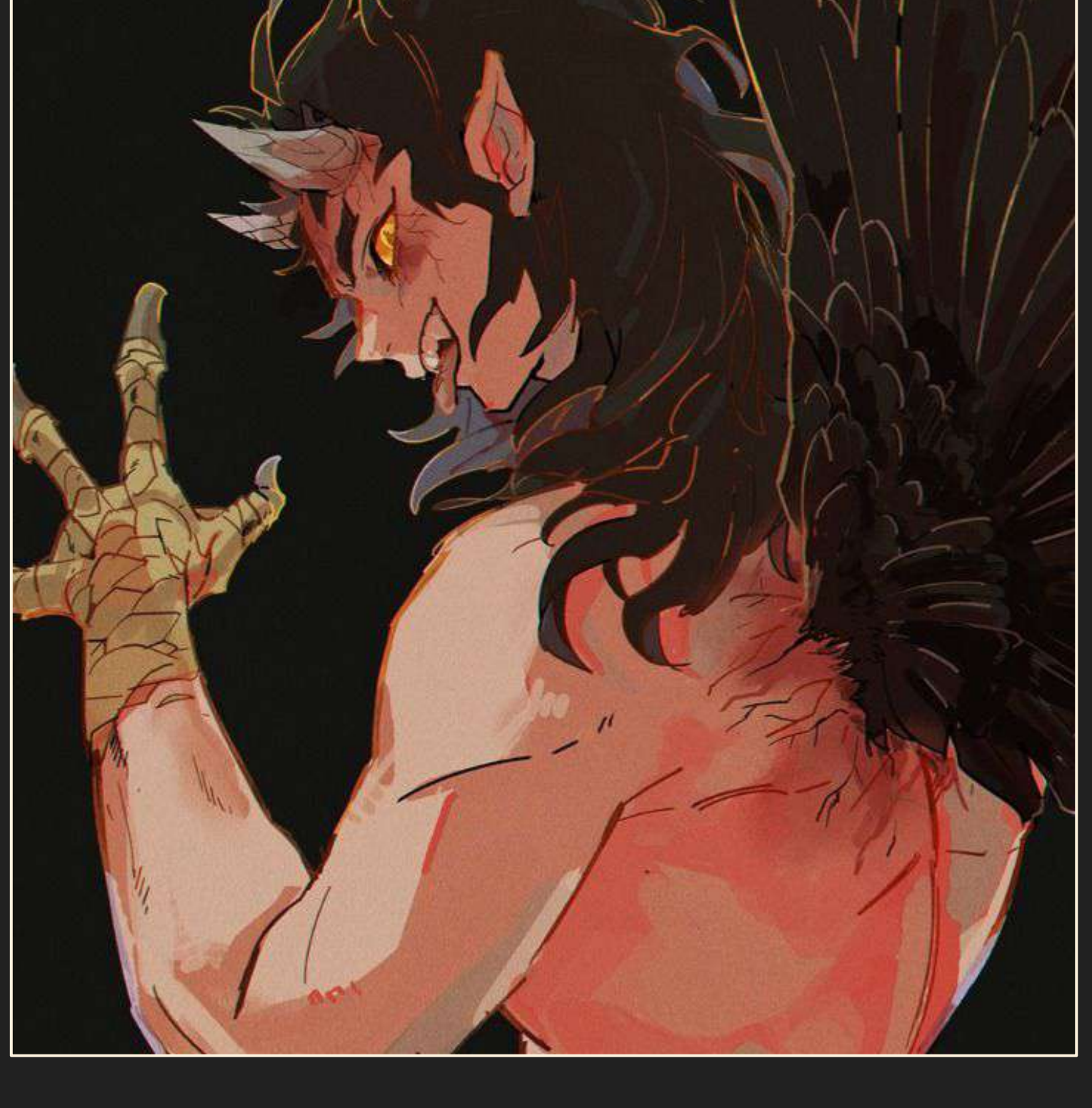
Yokai



The most common mortals in the City are Yokai, partly human and partly Spirit. Too human to live in Spirit World but too foreign to live in Mortal World, their natural home is in the City Between. While they can produce Aura with the part of their soul which is human, their other half allows them to draw Aura from others, as Spirits do. Legends of succubi, fae, djinn, angels, deva, oni, tengu and many other folkloric beings originate from the Yokai, depending on which Spirits they descend from.

Gain the **Aura Draining Technique** automatically.
Gain the **Spirit Blood** Alteration automatically.

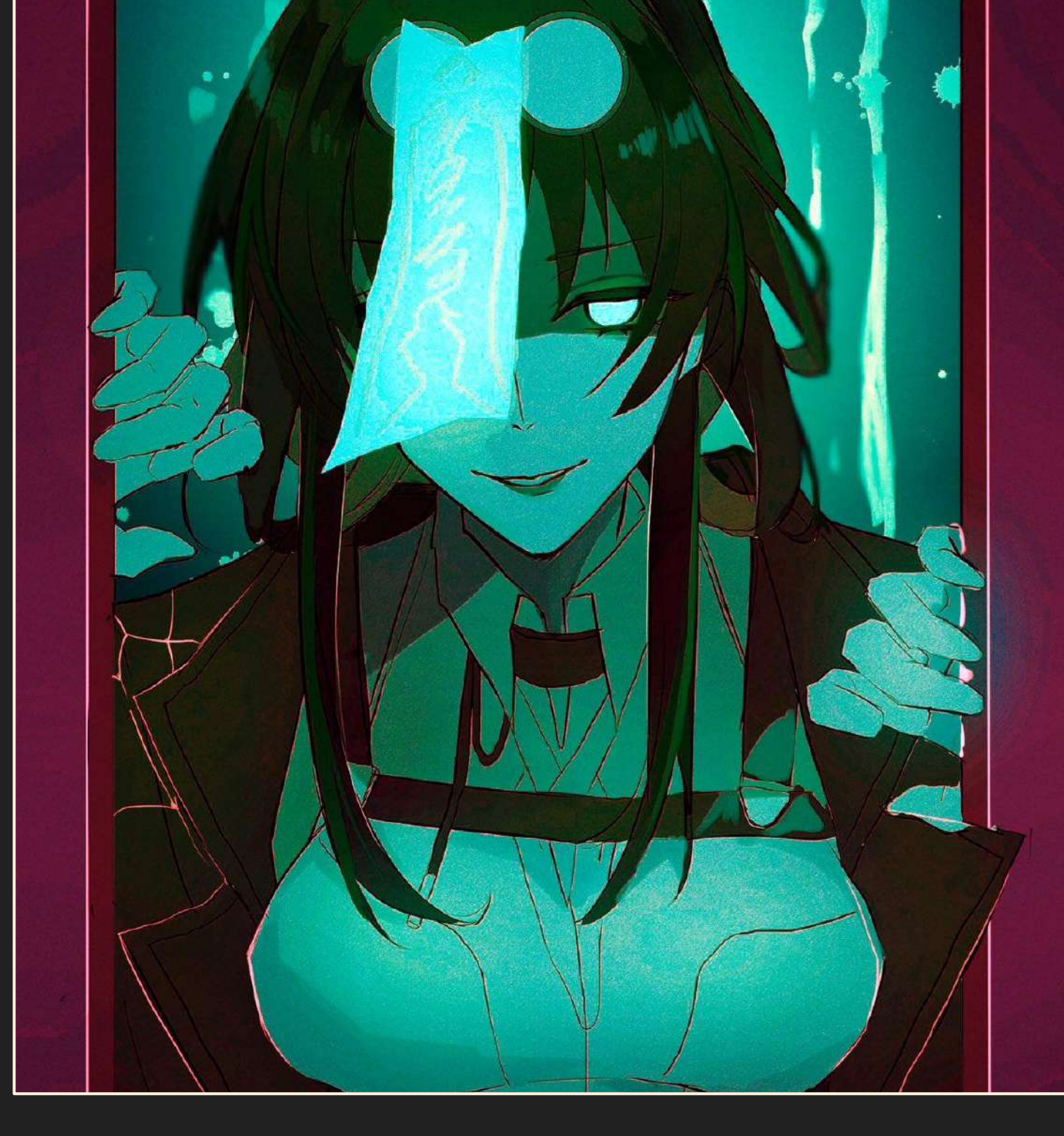
Shapeshifter



Shapeshifters also make their home in the City, far away from humanity where they are not forced to hide in animal form. Tales of werewolves, kitsune, tanuki, and itachi are all the product of their tricks and games in Mortal World. They often live as mischievous animals among the humans, stealing trinkets and treats to sell in the City Between.

Gain the **Animal Form** Technique automatically.
Gain the **Animal Blood** Alteration automatically.

Undead



Those whose souls cannot pass into their next incarnation find themselves beached in the City Between, where they remain until their unnatural tether to life is worn away. They remain there until their soul's age outgrows their necromantic body, a process which can take decades and completely frees them from normal physical needs. Legends of vampires, jiangshi, dullahan and liches can be traced to this population's occasional forays into the land of the living.

Gain the **Abiding Flesh** Technique automatically.
Gain the **Undead Blood** Alteration automatically.

"You might not be my finest piece, but you'll fetch a fair price, I'm sure.

"...Then again, I see room for improvement, depending on how much I can change without... *undue errors, shall we say*...

"Hm. We share a common goal, Conscript. You want to be powerful, I want to sell your powers. I'll play a few tricks up my sleeve for your sake, if you can tell me where your hidden talents lie..."



Potential

(Choose one)

Talented

You are fueled by your natural gifts, with little in the way of training or resources, but an unparalleled crucible of potential within you.

Gain **+45 AP** (Aura Points)
Gain **+6 EP** (Equipment Points)
Choose up to **1 Malignant Alteration**.
Choose up to **4 Benevolent Alterations**.

Gain **1 Great Release Technique** for free.

Mutated

Your power is a result of an unrivaled tolerance for unnatural resculptings of your body and soul, a trait you will exploit to its fullest possible benefit.

Gain **+35 AP** (Aura Points)
Gain **+5 EP** (Equipment Points)
Choose up to **4 Malignant Alterations**.
Choose up to **3 Benevolent Alterations**.

Gain **2 Basic Release Techniques** for free.

Practiced

Your power comes from hard work and the secrets of those who wished to see you succeed, granting you the knowledge, resources and connections required to learn what you lacked in prodigious and genetic gifts.

Gain **+20 AP** (Aura Points)
Gain **+12 EP** (Equipment Points)
Choose up to **2 Malignant Alterations**.
Choose up to **2 Benevolent Alterations**.

Gain **1 free Initiate level Training** and **1 free Master level Training**.

Gain **2 Basic Release Techniques** and **2 Great Release Techniques** for free.

Conditioned

Your power comes from refusal to give up after living a life in which all the odds were stacked, where you managed to somehow learn, struggle and thrive in spite of your situation.

Gain **+30 AP** (Aura Points)
Gain **+4 EP** (Equipment Points)
Choose up to **4 Malignant Alterations**.
Choose up to **1 Benevolent Alteration**.

Gain **3 free Master level Trainings** and **1 free Legend level Training**.

Gain **3 Basic Release Techniques** for free.

Challenged

You are seemingly inept at absolutely everything Kofuko-san hoped you'd be great at. You struggle with seemingly everything, and you only have a struggler's will to keep you afloat. Good luck. You'll need it.

Gain **+15 AP** (Aura Points)
Gain **+4 EP** (Equipment Points)
Choose up to **1 Malignant Alteration**.
Choose up to **1 Benevolent Alteration**.

Overpowered

You are anomalously more powerful than seemingly any metric or wildest dream could contain. Kofuko-san has struck gold, and the world and everyone in it seems to mysteriously revolve around you and you alone.

Gain **+60 AP** (Aura Points)
Gain **+24 EP** (Equipment Points)
Choose up to **5 Malignant Alterations**.
Choose up to **5 Benevolent Alteration**.

Gain **3 free Master level Trainings** and **2 free Legend level Trainings**.

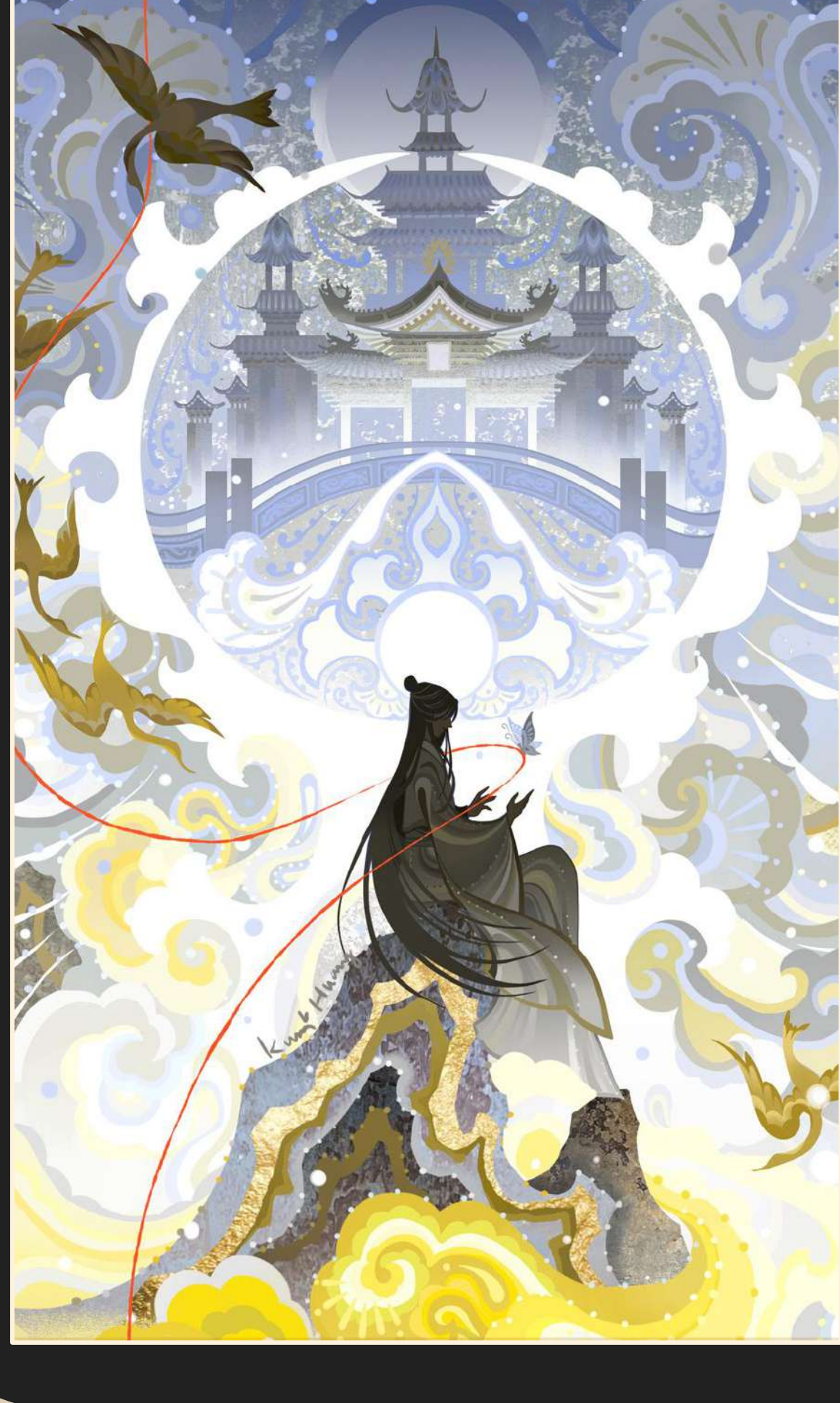
Gain **3 Basic** and **3 Great Release Techniques** for free.

Cannot be chosen in Multiplayer

SCENARIO

Choose one or more. If multiple are chosen, all the described events and circumstances apply, and all groups are **Strong**.

Age of Truth Saiya Yuga



In the beginning, there is peace after the War of Creation. The wheel of life and death is evenly divided. Yudi and Yama, the emperors of Heaven and Hell, have jointly settled into a precarious armistice over the Dark Capital's coveted territories, with both their armies decimated fighting for the throne that precedes the universe. Youdu reels from its bloody opening conflict, and greatly resists the prospect of another divine war.

And that reluctance is its vulnerability. Stagnancy, like a malignant growth, allows weeds to grow.

Though there is authority and governance, the celestial princes are weak, unwilling to overstep the bounds of peace to take drastic action. Laws are loose. Overseers are outnumbered by criminals. Powerful dynasties like the Majushin and the Senguru grow in size and influence with every passing day, and neither Yudi nor Yama can oppose them without raising an army and risking another war.

Anything—anyone—could upset that balance. A reverberating event is on the horizon, called an **Aura Burst**.

Some time in the very near future, the air of the cosmos will become saturated with so much living energy that merely breathing will rapidly restore Aura. This period of frenzy will persist for only 108 hours, but in that time all of Youdu could be restructured from the ground up. Spirits will suddenly be able to produce their own Aura. Monstrous **Chimeras** will multiply in droves. Powers and Techniques previously limited by their immense energy toll will become ubiquitous. People will master abilities that would take years to attain in mere hours. The entire City, for that briefest of periods, will be plunged into utter chaos. The **Aura Burst** will not only affect the City itself, and a slow, rising saturation of Aura in Mortal World heralds its arrival. Talk of incursions, unhallowed nights of mischief where the dead and Spirits wreak havoc on Earth, is spreading. The land of the living is in for a rude awakening.

Dynasties and Factions are Strong
Spirits and Chimeras are Normal
Authorities and the Populace are Weak

In the age of the Trigram, mortals are a caste below. The City's wealth and power is concentrated in the hands of Spirits who treat humans as chattel for worship and Aura. They rule the political landscape, the criminal underworld and the flow of capital with an iron fist.

None are more iron-fisted than the **Trigram**.

Ruling de-facto under the complacent governance of Yama and the Yudi, the **Raja Daanav**, king of Ogres, **Dokurokuro** the Living Grave, and **Vuseba** the mother of evils stranglehold unquestioned power, protected behind a veritable army of other evil Spirits. Dark rituals, human sacrifice, and occultic ceremonies grow bloodier and more perverse by the hour, as worshippers supplicate themselves for protection and prosperity to darker and darker beings...

But there is a hidden path to their ruin.

In the depths of the Dark Capital, the husk of the **Wheel-Turning Effigy** upholds the cycle of Samsara, held by eight chains and eight seals. Whoever succeeds in unsealing it would have the power to reshape the City, to conquer and kill with unstoppable vengeance.

The means of unsealing the **Effigy** are closely guarded. Threatened by its power and the risk of losing control over it, none who know its secrets are willing to act. Even Spirit-gods have their fears. If it awakened under one who couldn't control it, it might take every power in the City to stop it from eradicating the cosmos.

The **Senguru**, **Majushin**, **Jiahao** and **Ninokata** Dynasties hold the secrets of one chain and one seal each, guarded with their very lives. The rest are lost, though perhaps not for long.

Dynasties and Factions are Weak
Spirits and Chimeras are Strong
Authorities and the Populace are Normal

Age of Trigram Treta Yuga



In the Age of Dyad, Yama and Yudi's reluctant peace festers. Increasingly suspicious of the other's position, their tenuous armistice has unraveled into preparations for battle. The tide of war is rising ever higher.

The wise **Exorcists**, the scholars of the **Institute** and the **Overseers** flock to Yudi's aid, as do the City's nobility and upper class. Criminal elements—The **Yakuza's**, the **Stalkers** and the **Smugglers**—favor Yama's rule, like many commoners, under whom their interests are protected.

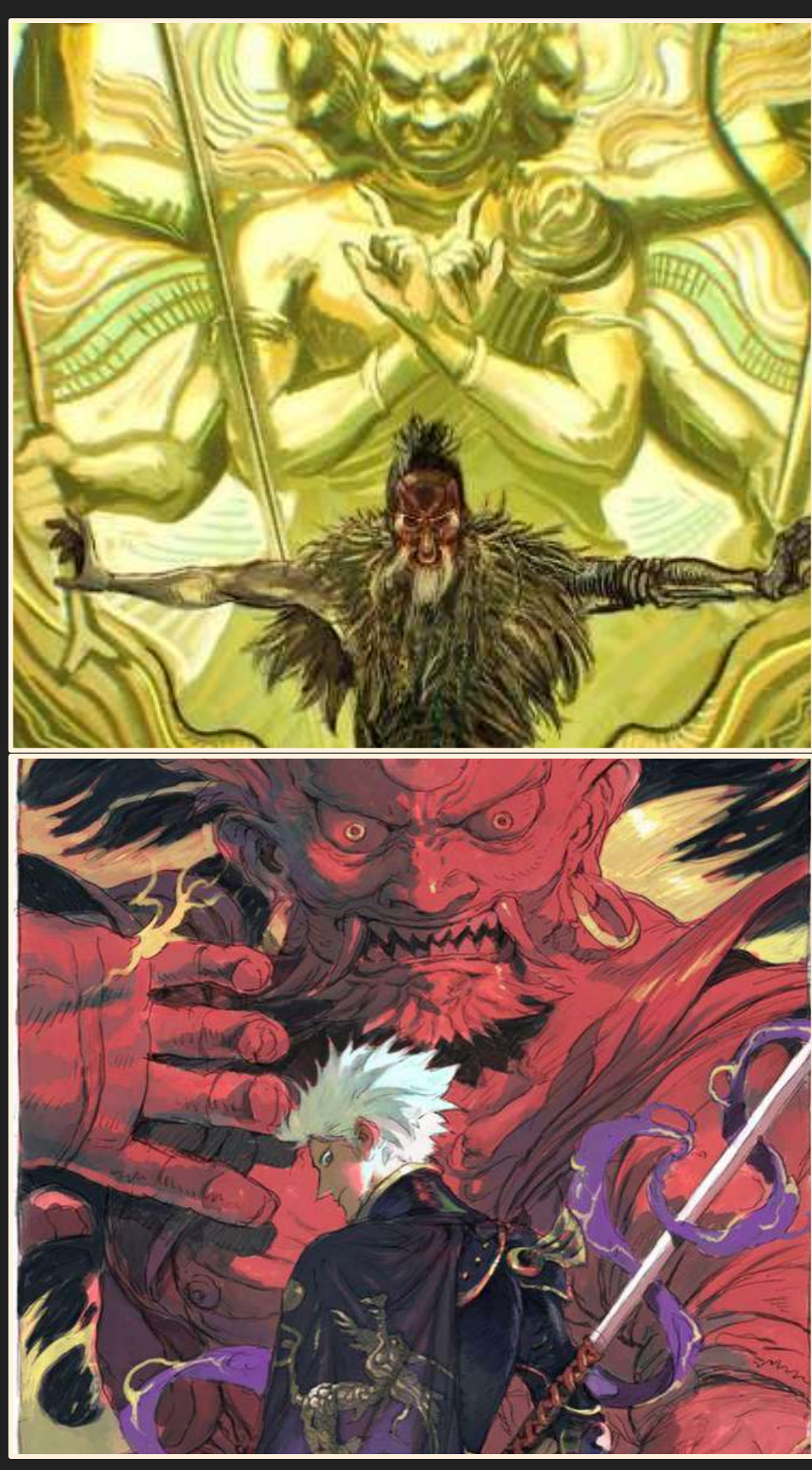
War could break out at a moment's notice. In the meantime, each side hastens to draw more allies into their fold, offering the wealth of their coffers to the few who are still unaligned. Another War of Creation will destabilize the City and open the doors to chaos. Blood will run like a river through the gutters. The night will fill with clashing blades. Alop the Spiral Summit, burning flames in noble manors will plume into the sky like a hoary stormcloud.

Maybe some still more clandestine party watching patiently from the margins has orchestrated the growing hostilities as a way to reshape the City in their image. Maybe the Trigram, or the great Dynasties, or someone else entirely wishes to swing the status quo back into their favor as it once was in ages past.

Only time will tell.

Dynasties and Factions are Normal
Spirits and Chimeras are Weak
Authorities and the Populace are Strong

Age of Dyad Dvapara Yuga



The end of the wheel approaches. From the height of its spoke, a single star falls from the heavenly mantle, heralding the crumbling of time itself.

But with that star, there is still hope.

Long regarded as a wives' tale, the legend of the **Fairy Star** persists as a hope for those who have lost loved ones or desperately need to change the past. So the legend goes, somewhere in this City between life and death, the hidden **Star** can grant any wish of its owner's heart if it is truly pure. If not, it will find a way to grant the wish in a way that teaches the seeker a punitive lesson and deprives them of what they sought.

Some seek it believing their heart is pure. Others seek it thinking they can outsmart the **Fairy Star** with a thorough wish. Though they have all failed, rest assured, the **Fairy Star** is very real. Hints of its location are buried in ancient ruins, the records of the **Senguru** Dynasty, and the distant memories of powerful Spirits, but no one has presently connected the dots.

The **Fairy Star** is the only way to halt the turning of the wheel and prevent the collapse and rebirth of the cosmos. At the same time, it could just as easily be used to conquer the City Between, to attain peerless eminence, or to pursue corrosive vanity. The rule of law relentlessly opposes any attempt to seek the **Star**, as the celestial princes themselves seek it for their own ends. A person can only use the **Fairy Star** once in their life, and it cannot be used again until the previous user has died or obtained immortality.

If you have a wish, it can be yours. You'll just have to cleave through this City Between to get it.

Dynasties and Factions are Strong
Spirits and Chimeras are Strong
Authorities and the Populace are Strong

Age of Conflict Kali Yuga



Conscription

Choose only one of the following occupational offers from your benefactor, unless an **Alteration** specifies later. The more dangerous your Conscription, the more you're paid and the more resources you'll have.

Aura Slave



It's common for Spirits to keep a human soul in their residence as a constant fountain of Aura to siphon for their magic. How much you like this job will really depend on who's draining you. You could have an old Toad Spirit constantly siphoning your Aura to make useless street trinkets, or you might be smothered by a dozen gorgeous Succubi who use your Aura to keep you under their spell. To be honest, Kofuko-san didn't check when he conscripted you. It's your owner's problem if you try to escape, but you might have to live outside of the law as a runaway.

Gain (+2 EP)

You do not have to choose Campaigns.

Housekeeper



You'll work as a menial servant in the house of a wealthy dignitary, in the echoing halls of a temple, or within the suffocating estate of a powerful Spirit. The employers you might be assigned to are a mixed bag. If you're unlucky, you could find yourself constantly harassed by the demands of a decrepit old codger or spoiled prepubescent brats. If fortune favors you, you might spend your career serving tea to a well-natured bodhisattva, or tending the iridescent gardens of a nature Spirit. The compensation is pretty meager, but your housing and physical needs will be provided by your employer and you won't ever be put in serious danger.

Gain (+3 EP)

You must choose at least 1 Campaign.

Street Vendor



Some noodle shop, sap liquor bar, smoking lounge, bath house or trinket store will always need employees, and your minimal skill set fits the bill. It's long, tiresome work, but it's certainly less dangerous than the most lucrative occupations in Youdu. If you keep up the good work, you might be able to open your own shop someday with your peers. For now, the store owner's a bit nasty to you, the constant haggling starts to grate, and the lack of courtesy certainly doesn't help, but it's steady and keeps you out of trouble. Trouble will probably find you either way. Maybe your store is accosted by gangs looking for protection money, maybe your noodle shop is the favorite restaurant of a powerful Spirit, or maybe your bath house is a brothel under the hood that needs to be hidden from the Overseers.

Gain (+3 EP)

You must choose at least 1 Campaign.

Surveyor



Explorers of Spirit World are in high demand, given the natural job mortality. While a Surveyor certainly needs fighting abilities, knowledge of Spirits and their realms is far more important. In the manifold realms of rebirth, interconnected by an ever-expanding web of hidden passageways, the most treasured artifacts of the Spirits are hidden: historical accounts dating millions of years in the past, legendary weapons once wielded by conquering Spirits of old, the enciphered Aura Techniques of bodhisattvas long past, and the hoarded treasures offered in sacrifice to now-forgotten idols. The luckiest Surveyors become rich beyond their wildest dreams, returning home heavy-laden with priceless relics. The ill-starred are often never seen again. Some realms of the Spirit World are deadly, some are peaceful. Your routes may take you between any combination of the two to reach your goal.

Gain (+4 EP)

You must choose at least 2 Campaigns.

Institute Apprentice



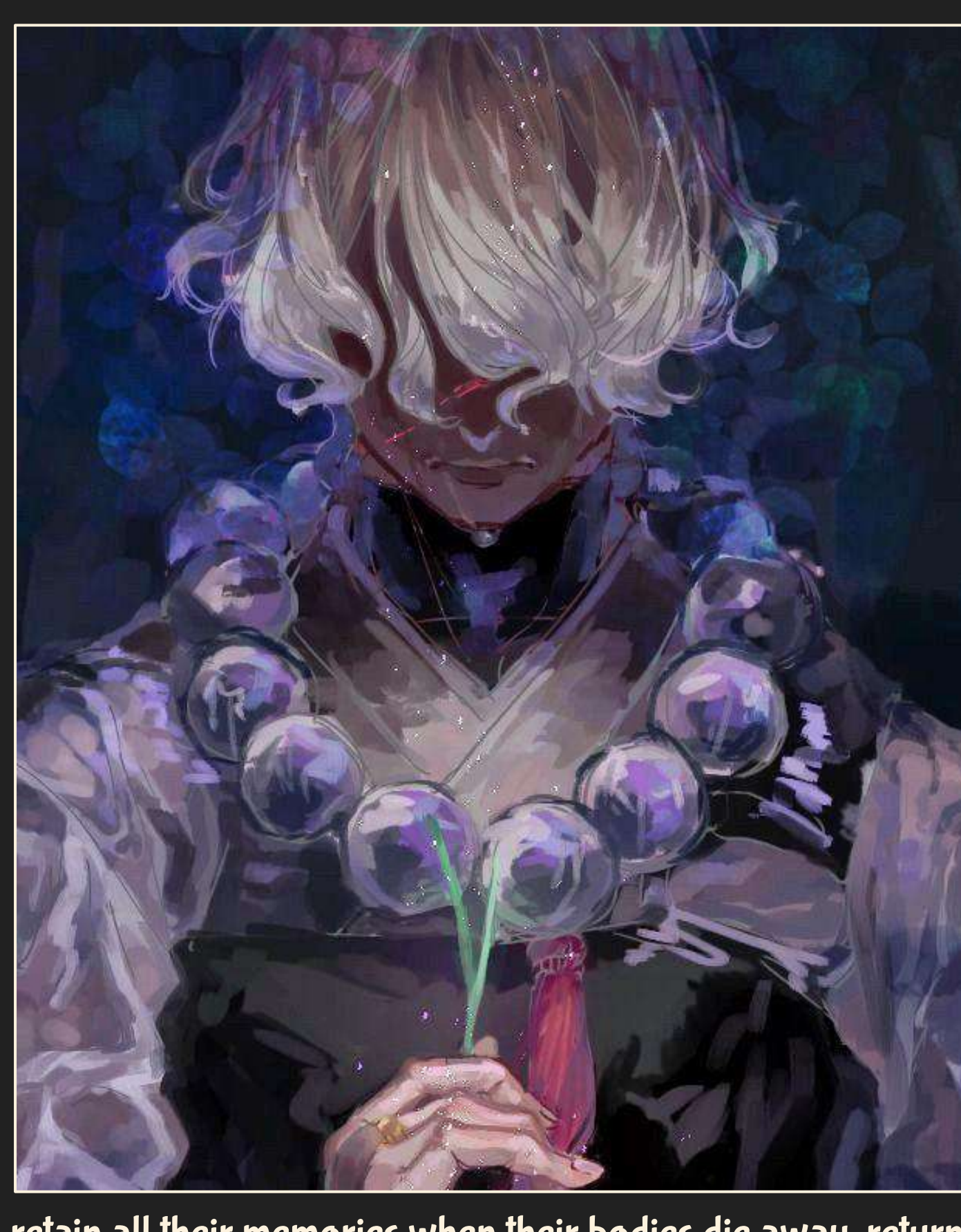
Scholars and sages need paper—pushers, teaching assistants and tutors to keep their backlog of busywork out of their hair. You'll be working under the tutelage of a learned master, being taught in lectures by your superiors while aiding in the education of your inferiors. You'll spend your days bustling between your professor's menial chores and your own studies, perfecting your Techniques and exercising them against other students in hand-to-hand exams. It's a wonderful setting to accelerate your development as an Aura user, but you're only paid just about what you need to survive by the master you'll assist.

Students are split into three categories: *Heavenly Master*, *Earthly Master*, and *Pupil*. A *Heavenly Master* has three *Earthly Masters* as his students, and each of these has one *Pupil* under their guidance. The three *Earthly Masters*, and by extension their *Pupils*, work, live and train together. An *Earthly Master* can only become one after a rigorous hands-on exam. A *Heavenly Master* must be a graduated *Earthly Master*, and becomes a *Heavenly Master* after training many students.

Gain (+3 EP)

You must choose at least 2 Campaigns.

Exorcist



Spirits retain all their memories when their bodies die away, returning from death after regesting in the Spirit Womb. The cumulative effects of thousands of years of life and death can drive them mad. The forms they choose become surreal and disturbing, and they begin to torment the living with hauntings, curses, nightmares and violence. An Exorcist thoroughly destroys or seals the physical form of the Spirit, potentially even wiping their memories if the Spirit is dangerous enough. These duties have a ceremonial and religious nature, and Exorcists themselves are usually well-educated, pious saints and monks. Exorcists are tasked with determining the corruption of any Spirits living in Youdu and exorcising them if they are deemed dangerous. Spirits involved with the mafia or leveraging a cult following might be very tricky to dispel without risking life and limb.

Gain (+5 EP)

You must choose at least 3 Campaigns.

Bodyguard

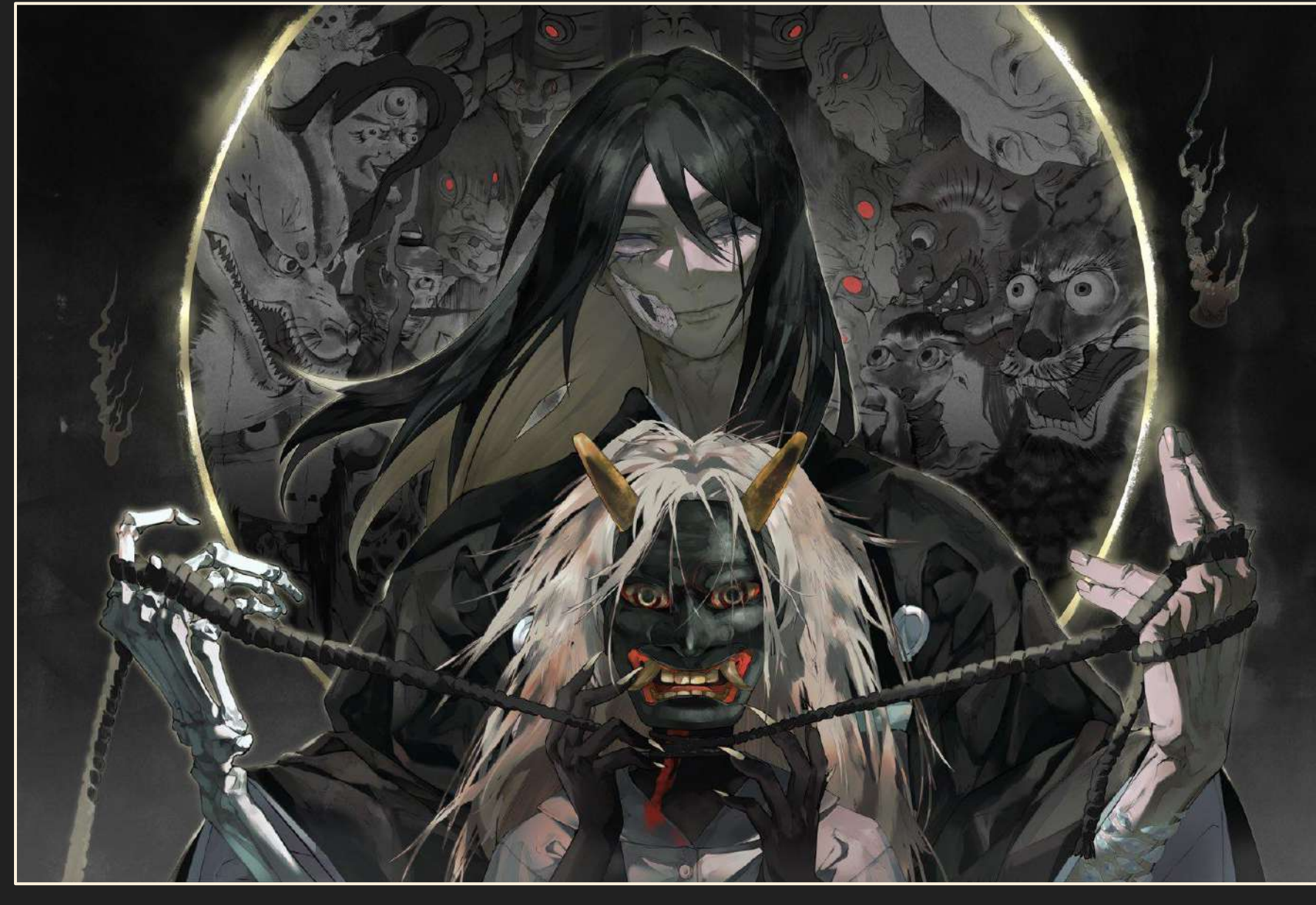


Your duty is to protect your employer's target, no matter the cost. You may move from employer to employer and contract to contract, and are obligated to place the thing they commission you to protect above your own life, whatever or whoever it may be. You might protect a treasured artifact, the grounds of a building, or your benefactor's person and those they have an interest in. A traditional bodyguard makes no distinction between what they guard, and does not allow their personal morals or even the law to interfere with their duty. If you can provide that kind of service, your payment will be exorbitant, especially if you're a strong fighter.

Gain (+5 EP)

You must choose at least 3 Campaigns.

Stalker



A Stalker is a manhunter and information gatherer, employed by the highest bidder to capture or kill targets, gather intelligence, plant evidence, or sabotage plans. Working as an amalgamation of a private detective, a spy and an assassin, the Stalkers are kings of espionage in the City Between, feared as angels of death and a source of constant paranoia for the elite. If you're among the lesser Stalkers in the industry, you'll be exposed to less violence and danger. Basic espionage, murder investigations, or theft on behalf of your clients will be your daily bread. On the other hand, if you're a uniquely talented Stalker, you'll be called upon to kill the most influential figures in the City Between, to neutralize the most powerful and dangerous fighters alive, and to play games of deception in the midst of certain death.

Gain (+5 EP)

You must choose at least 3 Campaigns.

Beast Hunter



Chimeras are an ever-present threat that hamlets and farmers desperately need protection from. Even in the inner City, an occasional monster might wander through the streets at night or boldly swoop overhead in broad daylight. Beast Hunters specialize in combat with these colossal hybrids, pushing them ever further to the outskirts of Youdu and keeping their populations in control. Bounties for particularly hungry and dangerous Chimeras will be common work, while periodic raids on hives, nests and burrows will keep you paid in times of peace. Different Chimeras have different hunting seasons, and different Beast Hunters have different monsters they're best at bringing down. Unless you're some kind of hotshot, you'll probably need to work with a team of Beast Hunters to help your chances of survival. Only the toughest—or maybe luckiest—can survive in this industry for long.

Gain (+5 EP)

You must choose at least 3 Campaigns.

Smuggler



Trinkets, machinery, media and treats from Mortal World are highly sought after, and the Overseers will try to confiscate anything illegitimately pilfered from the humans. Since most residents of Youdu can't even blend into Mortal World, much less acquire Mortal World money, it's a common practice to smuggle comic books, radios, disposable batteries, candy and other novelties and sell them on black markets for a king's ransom. The most valuable items of all are practically worth their weight in gold. Handheld cassette/DVD players, video game consoles, sexy magazines, academic literature and gourmet delicacies could all pay your month's rent if you can avoid the authorities. The best Smugglers are often specially commissioned to steal certain commodities for high-paying clients.

Gain (+4 EP)

You must choose at least 2 Campaigns.

Warsmith

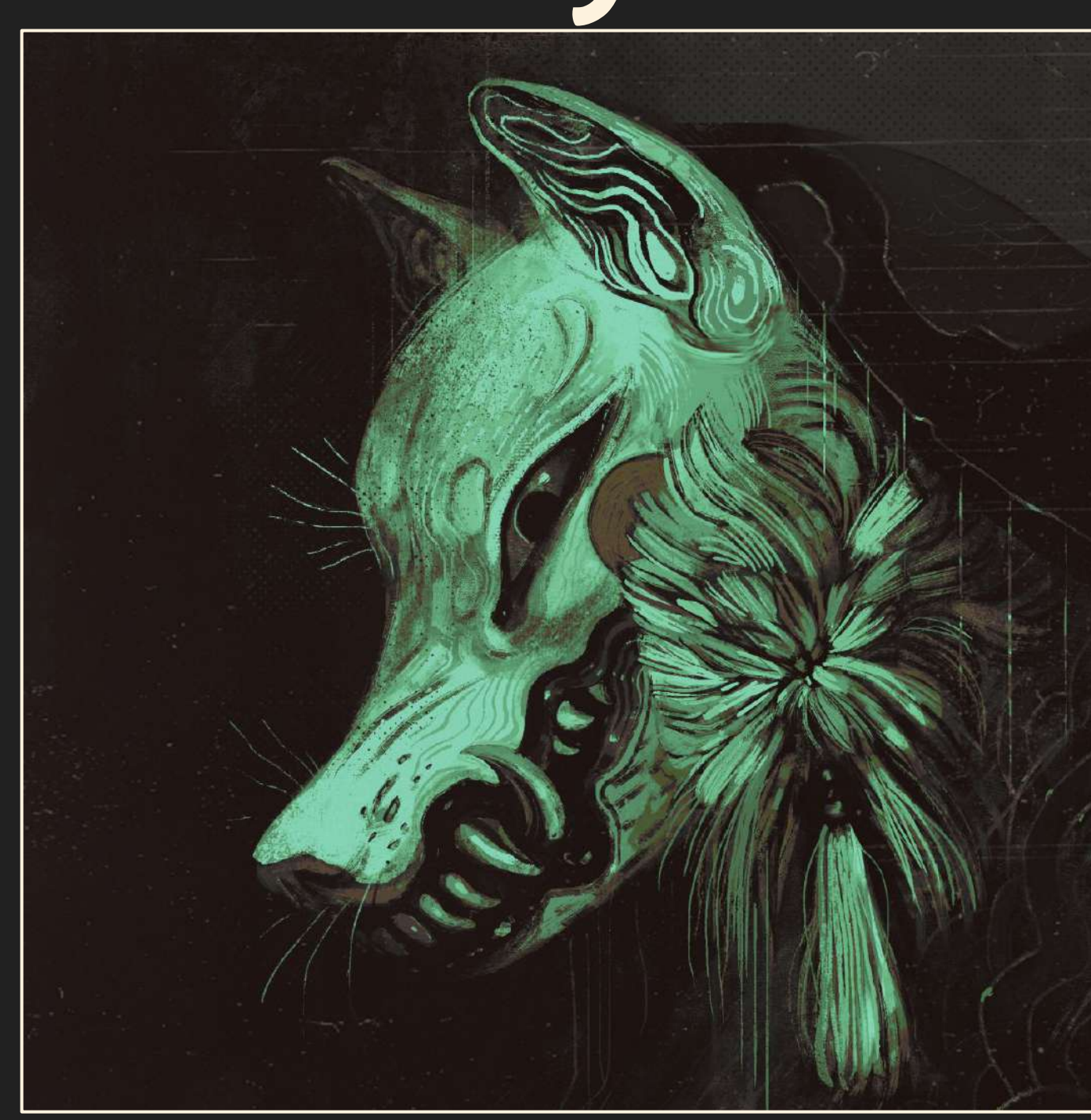


Your ultimate goal is to lead a great change in the status quo of Youdu through conquest, on behalf of some parties interested in revolutionary war. There's no in-between in this occupation: you will either be killed in a collective dogpile by the powers—that-be, or you will raise a dreadful army to your name and wreak havoc. The former is exponentially more likely. Still, there is a chance if you play your cards right. If your strength is unwavering, your charisma proclaimed wide, and your mercy unseen, the world might someday regard you as the bringer of a new age of Youdu. Your life will be filled with struggle, and those who join your cause will almost certainly forfeit their lives for it.

Gain (+8 EP)

You must choose at least 5 Campaigns.

Insurgent



Your duty is only to spread chaos. Those who hired you have opted to remain anonymous, but they somehow benefit from random acts of terrorism, indiscriminate violence and total pandemonium across the City Between. Cause as much mayhem as possible without being captured by the authorities, and your employers will reward you generously. Such dirty work never ends well though. The most likely outcome is an unceremonious death at the hands of those you've wronged, but you probably knew that. With luck, you might be able to escape to some barren wasteland so dense that you'll never be found; with still better luck, you might have the privilege of watching the City Between burn before you.

Gain (+8 EP)

You must choose at least 5 Campaigns.

Yakuza



You're fresh meat for a criminal empire, and you'll be doing dirty, violent deeds for one of the most powerful and greedy factions in Youdu, likely either the *Six-Finger Mafia* or the *Hellion Mob*. The local Yakuza respect strength, discretion and cunning, above all in a fight. If your skills aren't up to snuff, you can expect to keep doing dangerous or grueling grunt work until you wind up dead. Play your cards right, and you might rise to a prominent mob Dragon with money and power beyond your wildest dreams.

Gain (+5 EP)

You must choose at least 3 Campaigns.

Overseer



The Overseers are the militia and law enforcement of Youdu, maintaining order under the joint rule of the Jade Sovereign Yudi over heaven and King Yama over hell. They are tasked with apprehending anyone breaking the peace or the established laws. They aren't much more capable than the average street thug—and frankly aren't any less corrupt—but they make up for this in numbers. Organized criminals, all too willing to work with King Yama, exert enough influence over the politics of Youdu to earn a blind eye. Certain regions like the Devil Moon seldom have the attention of Overseers because they are chronically riddled with crime and arrests would be a drop in the bucket. A rare breed of Overseers take their duties very seriously and run headlong into trouble with the Yakuza and other groups all too accustomed to greasing palms and threatening their way out of legal consequences.

Gain (+5 EP)

You must choose at least 3 Campaigns.

Custom

Your Conscriptor is less interested in hiring you for a single job and more as a middleman for whatever work is in demand. You'll bounce between all kinds of gigs depending on the day of the week, many of which might not be articulated among these options. The time you spend in each gig will vary as much as the pay, and you might spend months as an assassin or mercenary when war is hot, only to be a street food vendor within the next few weeks. It's a chaotic life, but always interesting, and more options are open to you than any other.

Gain (+3 EP)

You must choose at least 5 Campaigns. You can choose Campaigns that require any Conscription, even if you do not have it.



"Well, I've got to drop you off **somewhere** , Conscript. You're not bound hand-and-foot to your choice of location here, but it's where you seem most at home. It will probably feel familiar to you, and you'll be more acquainted with the locals from this area—for better or worse."

HOME TERRITORY

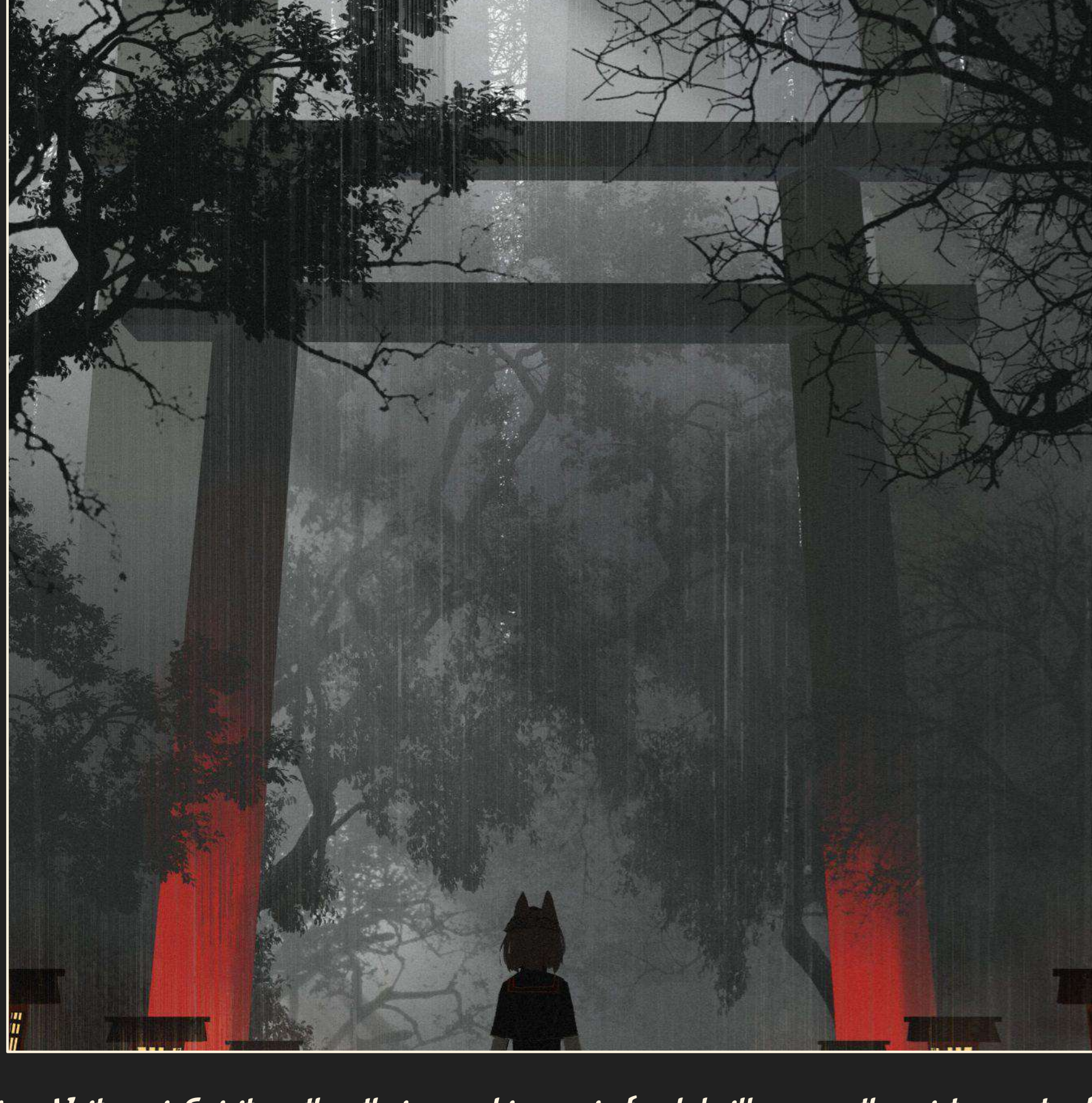
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Anahata Precinct



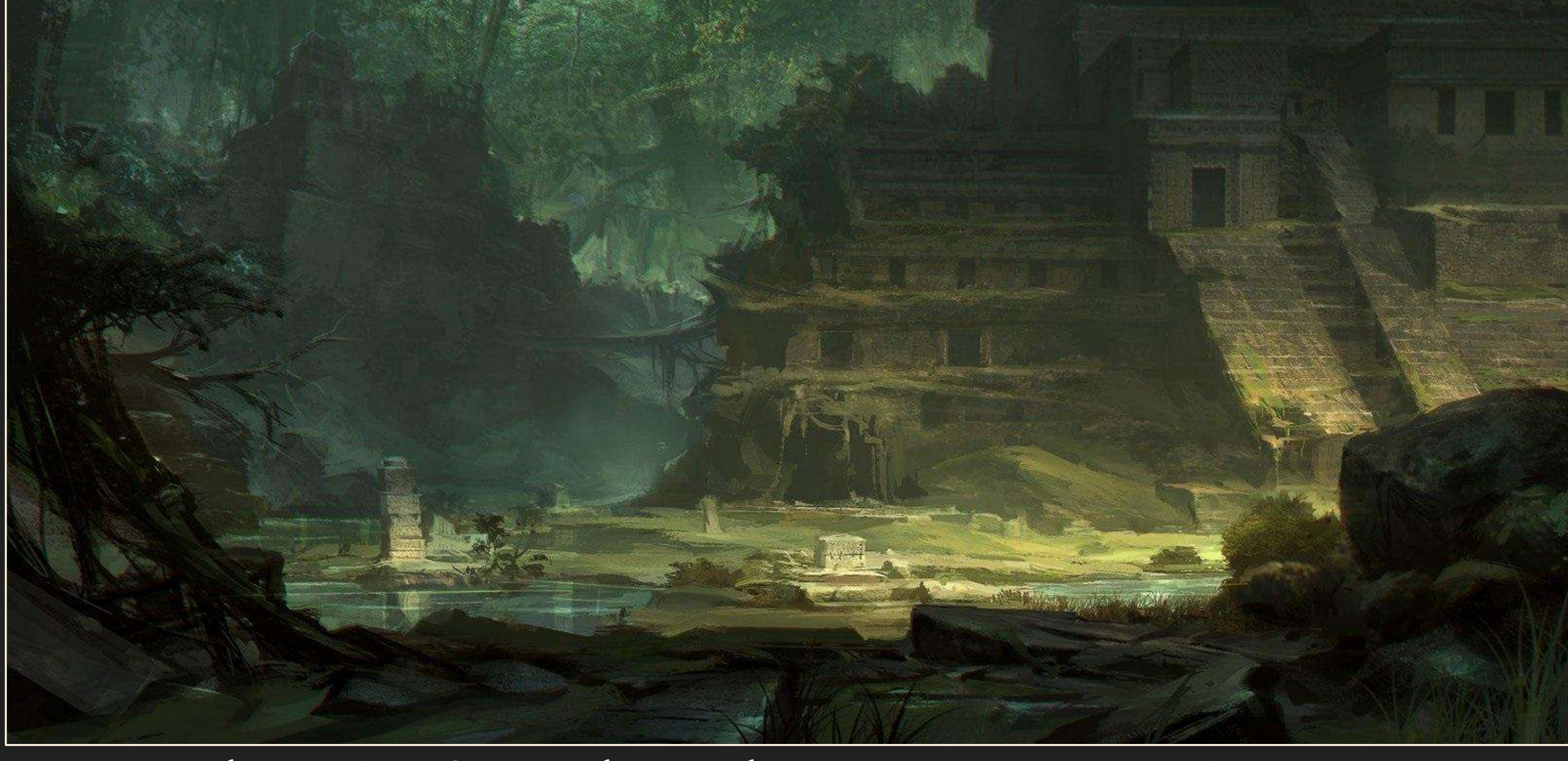
The densest population center in the City Between is the cardioid Anahata Precinct, where highrises housing untold masses are built in curious harmony with ornate temples and idols to the Spirits. You won't find a moment's peace from the constant pandemonium of moving bodies like hemoglobin in winding veins, always careening towards their next meal, the respite of a bed, or the demands of their work. It's easy to lose your sense of individuality among the crowds, though if you're trying to remain inconspicuous, plain sight is the greatest cover. It's inexpensive to maintain a modest standard of living here if you're on a shoestring budget like the rest of the City Between.

Feudal Spirit Chateaus



On the southern edge of the river Vailarani, Spirits gather their worshippers in feudal villages on the misty coasts of the void. A temple serves their master's rituals and ceremonies, with a more extravagant temple being the sign of a more powerful Spirit. In these villages, the kami-yashiki of the Seven Sages overlook the bank of the Vailarani, while more sectarian Spirits, Kofuko-san included, live further to the East and West. People from across Youdu travel here to seek favors from their Spirit of choice, to seek Exorcists and other religious services, or to learn Alchemy. This territory is also the location of the Institute, floating suspended on the edge of Spirit World to the south, surrounded by the oppressive, unsettling fog of the region.

The Border Wilds



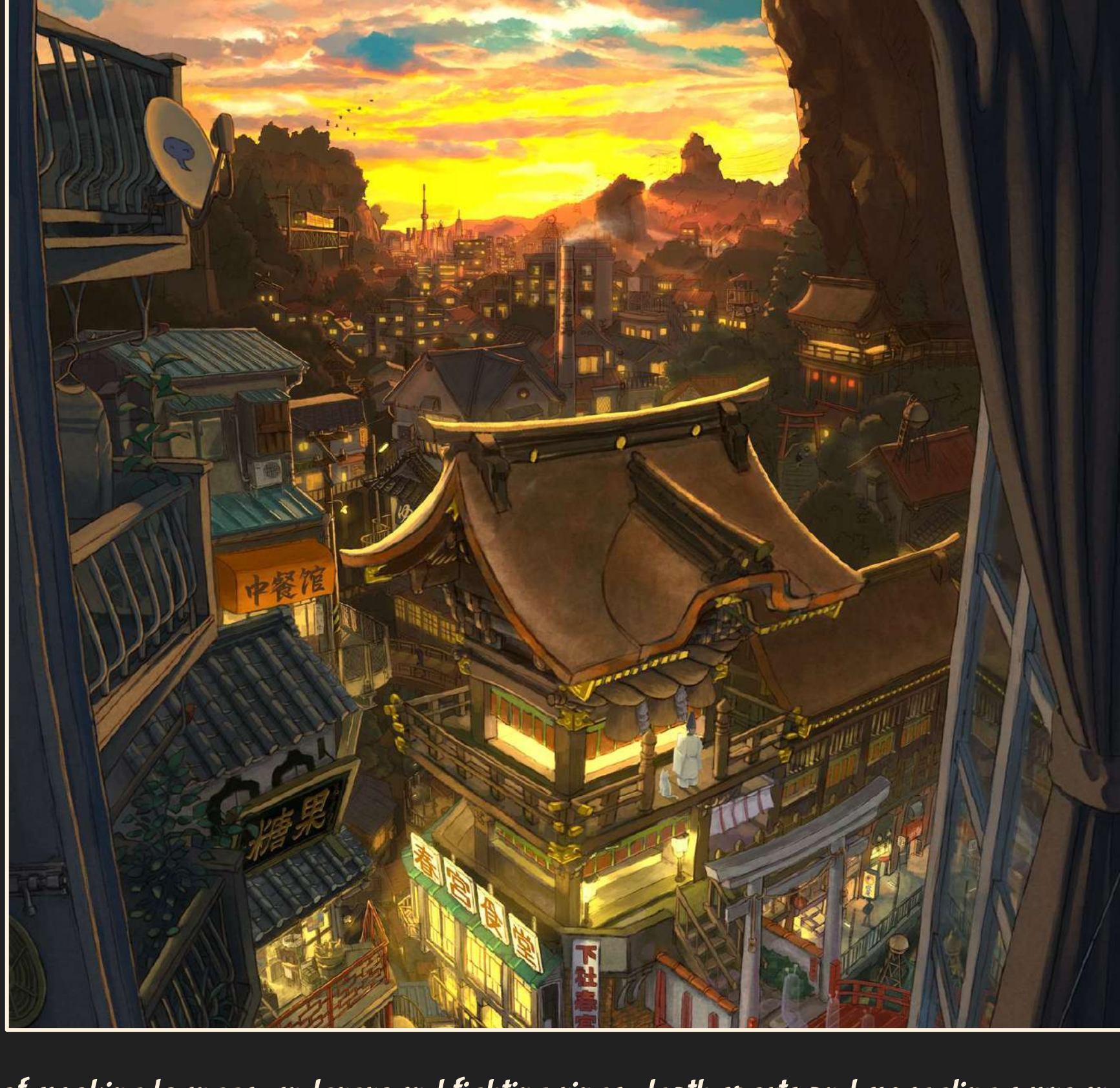
On the edges of Youdu, the Border Wilds extend as far as the sea, filled with inhospitable jungles teeming with Chimeras, isolated witches and predatory vegetation. Small hamlets and farms have spread thinly where jungle bush has been cleared, providing lumber, meat, grain and fruit to the City proper. Famine is an ever-present threat due to the constant incursion of Chimera, and some Beast Hunters from the City choose to live under the provision of the villages they protect. Others live in isolated shelters deep in the jungles, surviving off of wild meat from their hunts. In certain Chimera breeding seasons, those who live here may have to hunt day and night to stave off a total agricultural catastrophe, while in harsh winters they may be frozen into their homes without aid from the outside world.

The Lunar Ring Borough



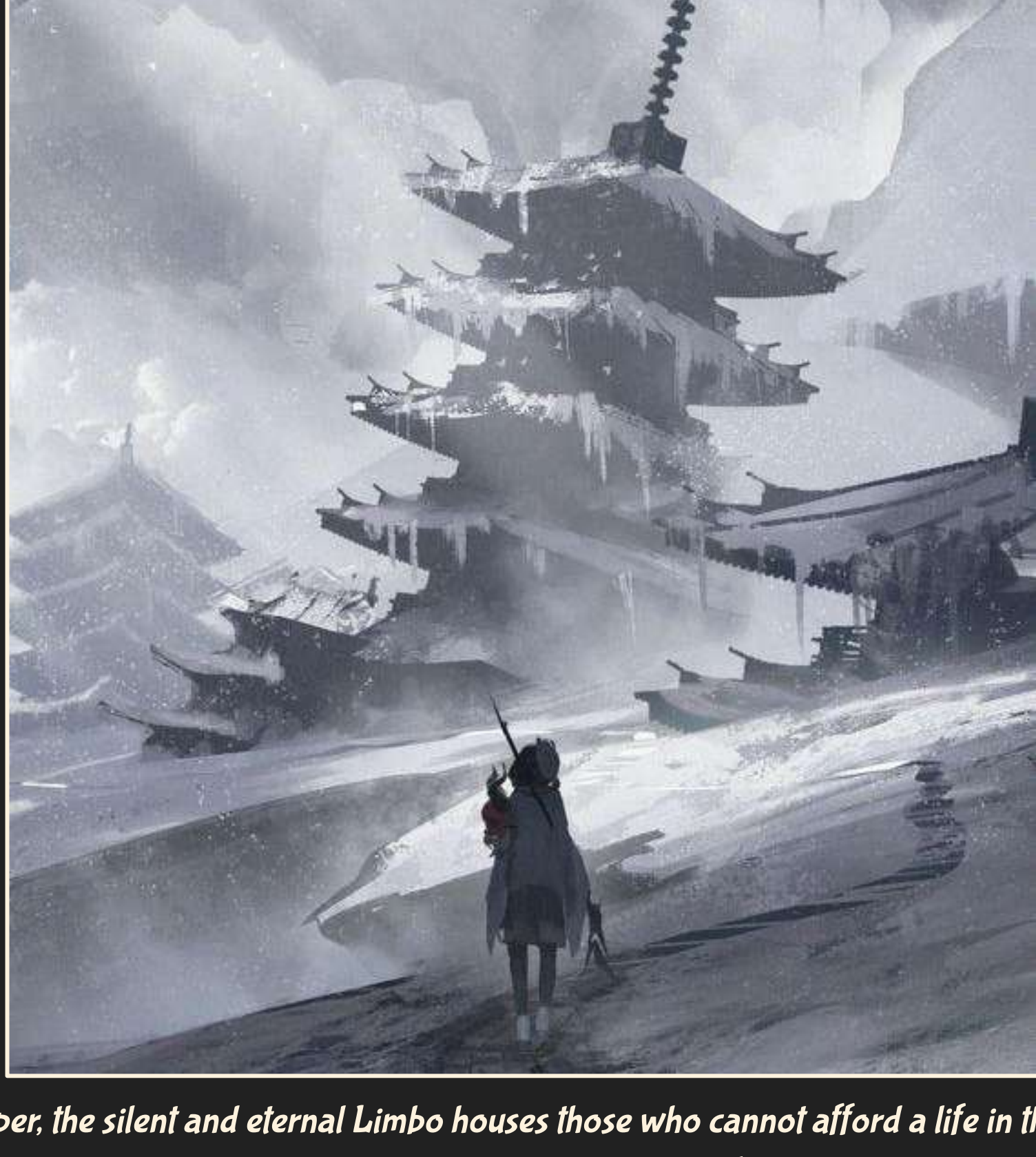
Girded with spanning walls of spined silver, the Lunar Ring Borough is the buttressed city-within-the-City to the northwest, governed and maintained by the Lunar Temple. Its primary living spaces are convents and monasteries, and its horizon is pricked with chthonic spires like the back of a great porcupine. Outsiders are permitted to live within its walls, protected from the vice and impurity that rules Youdu on the condition that they follow the edicts of the Temple and serve its needs. The Overseers scarcely monitor this territory due to its strict adherence to grave moral standards, and this allows more subtle forms of corruption to take root easily. Extortions for souls that have wracked up Hellfire Debt run rampant, and rich or powerful individuals who might otherwise see million-year judgements are able to smooth things over with a few greased palms or violent favors. If you don't have a mind to expose such corruption, you can live in peace within the walls, never fearing that those violent favors might be directed towards you.

The Devil Moon



A crescent-shaped quarter of smoking lounges, underground fighting rings, death sports and smuggling surrounds the Lunar Ring Borough in the northwest quarter, necessitating its great walls to keep debauchery and violence out. The most common residents are succubi, fiends and other impure Yokai, wallowing in vice like pigs in mud. If you're a lover of drink and sex, a flat in the Devil Moon will ensure you're drunk as a fish and screwed like a rabbit day-in and day-out. Slaves, drugs and liquor circulate all hours of the evening, bleeding residents dry of whatever meager income they can scrounge. The only people who aren't in perpetual poverty are barkeeps, slave traders and members of the Hellion Mob. Protection payments are as ubiquitous as rent and just as expensive, but the night life is as wild as your heart desires.

Limbo



Lying beneath the city of Youdu proper, the silent and eternal Limbo houses those who cannot afford a life in the light of the City Between. It reeks of ghosts and the undead, snaked with subway lines taking laborers between the surface and the mines where they toil. Though it is in desperate need of Exorcists, it is also where they are least inclined to work. Chimeras brood here, searching desperately for passage into the City to wreak havoc, stalking silently through dripping sewers to prey on any foolish enough to enter them. Beast Hunters, smugglers and laborers are the few who call this place their home amid ruins of abandoned constructions and the City's underground sprawl. Even gangs like the Six-Finger Mafia and the Hellion Mob don't bother prowling here; the people are simply too poor to extort or ensnare with vices. Still, it is an excellent location to hide yourself from the authorities, and a skilled explorer can easily find entrance to any part of the City Between through manholes, subway tunnels and sewer systems.

The Canal District



At the center of Youdu, the great river Vailarani splits the City Between, redirected to provide water to the north and south alike. At the center of the splitting river is the Canal District, where ferries transport cargo across the City. The market is loud and busy, and the rush of gurgling water mirrors the flow of suffocating crowds in the streets. Though it is second in population to the Anahata Precinct, it is the center of commerce in Youdu, where anything is possible for the right price. The Six-Finger Mafia prowls their territory here like hungry tigers, and though they are quite violent and unruly, their presence keeps out unsavory influences from the Devil Moon.

The Spines



The great many-headed serpent Yamata-no-Orochi's skeleton has largely been converted to a long, winding road that reaches nearly every corner of Youdu. Its ribs arch over the great Serpent Highway, cut like stairs to allow for morbid apartment complexes in each vertebra. Since it wraps around the entire City Between, it's possible to find a place to live on the Spines anywhere from the dense jungle to the center of the City. It acts as a farm-to-market road for yeomen in the Border Wilds, a bridge across the Vailarani in the Spirit Chateaus, and a cutting landmark bisecting the Devil Moon and the Lunar Ring Borough. At the end of the spines are eight heads, each leading supernaturally from Youdu to various religiously significant locations in Mortal World.

Spiral Summit



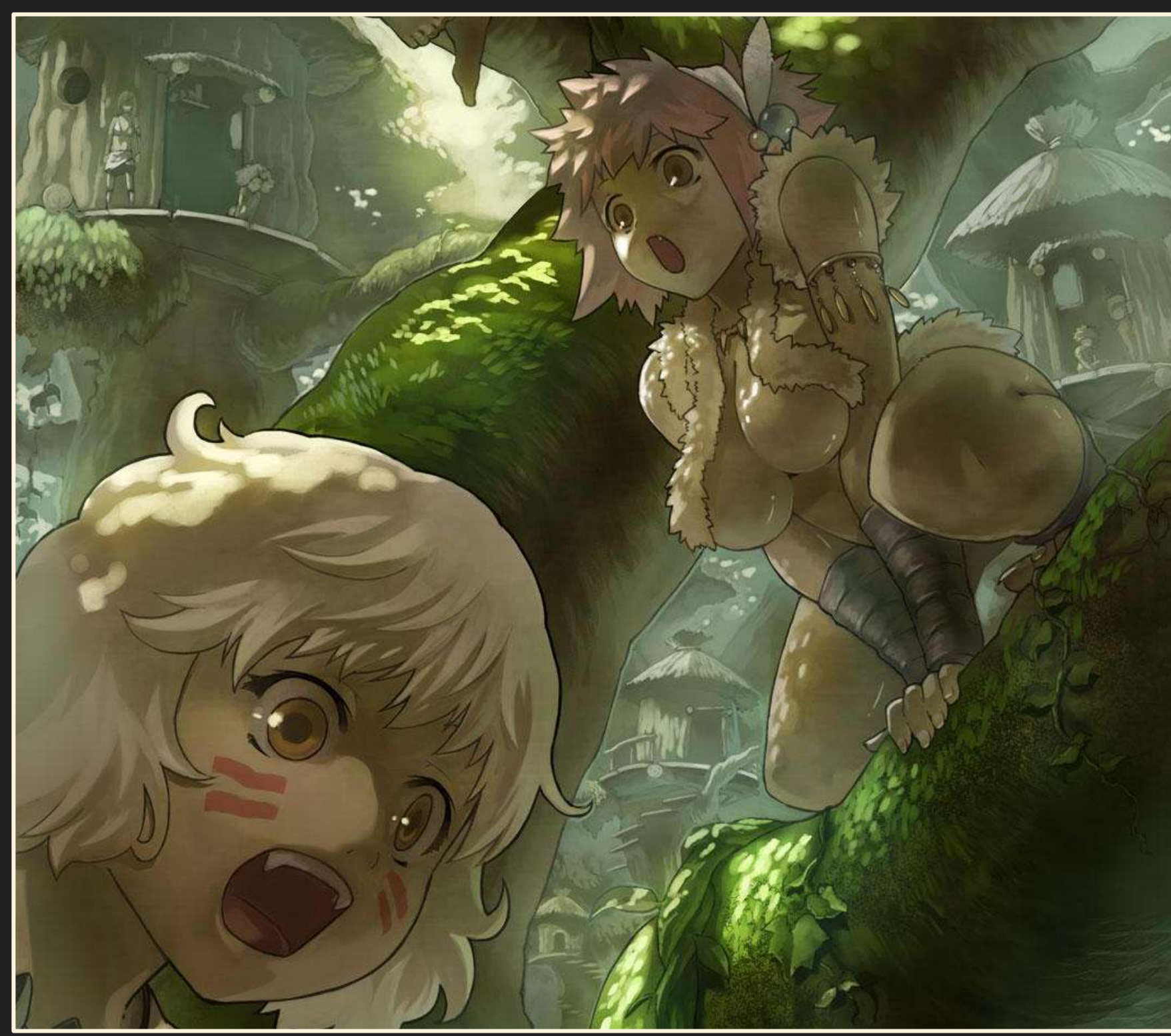
At the center of the City lies the Spiral Summit, a great artificial plateau with a long, winding highway of villages and estates girding its height. The higher someone lives on the mountain, the greater the class divide between them and the common people below. The dwelling places of former conquerors such and briefly the Trigram sit empty among the mists on its peak. If you choose to live here, your protection is almost certain, but you will always be looked down on by the wealthy and noble above you in height, no matter your station in life. Class is of the utmost importance on the Summit, and the aristocracy of the City Between will make it a point to remind you of that. Below, the people resent their plutocratic overlords, enjoying tea and bath houses while the City Between roils with corruption. Talk of war is common in the lower streets. Perhaps living in the midst of the wealthy is unwise when revolution is on the horizon.

Great Ruin Isles



To the far north, connected by the Channel of Salvation, the four Great Ruin Isles waver desolate in the pale light of the Northern Heaven, desiccating in dust for twenty years. The islands, once a beautiful trade hub for ships sailing the misty rim of Youdu, have been quarantined and abandoned due to the spread of the Grey Plague. While the number of Greyflesh Corpses is periodically culled to a handful by the Beast Hunters, the risk of contracting a horrifying, necrotic leprosy always remains and most avoid it as anything more than a desperate hideaway from civilization. To live there is to wear a veil of silk over your nose and mouth outdoors, to shun contact with all but wild animals and the occasional shambling Greyflesh Corpse. It's not a life many choose. Still, you might happen upon a few stubborn survivors, outlaws or psychopaths wandering aimlessly in the ruins. They make good drinking buddies. Since everything in the Great Ruin Isles was left untouched, most amenities and meager food can be scrounged by exploring or hunting, and every inn has a permanent vacancy to rest your head at night.

The Tribelands



A sector of sacred wilderness to the west is left untouched, a preserve of natural game, swamps and woods for the three great animal Tribes. You'll rarely find permanent buildings here and if you do, they're probably abandoned. Those who subsist in The Tribelands prefer a nomadic lifestyle centered on hunting, only occasionally establishing farmland and settlements that they return to periodically when the season brings ripe grain and fruit. Unlike the Border Wilds, the Tribelands are almost completely free from monstrous Chimeras thanks to the diligent and peerless hunters of the animal Tribes. That doesn't mean they're free from danger. Nomads of the region are suspicious of outsiders, accommodating in some tribes and cannibalistic in others. Strange underground ruins and monolithic structures dot the landscapes, and their origins are the subject of great archeological research. They seem to suggest the presence of an ancient civilization in the region which historical records shed no light on.

The Bureaucratic Quarter



An unusual sight in the context of Youdu, the Bureaucratic Quarter is a sea of concrete, geometric brutalism and glassy skyscrapers. Unlike the rest of the City Between, it is a utilitarian emulation of the cold, unflinching cityscapes of Mortal World, complete with orderly rows of box-shaped, cream-colored ministries and departments, and periodically placed electric street poles. Some combination of factors seems to have made these features novel and in-vogue, where in Mortal World they are considered lifeless and sterile. The extensive governmental functions of Youdu churn endless paper between endless bureaucrats here, and the Overseers stake their claim against the constant incursion of gang territory in its streets. It's a powerful experience to explore in the dead of night, and if anyone in the government of the City Between is hiding something, the evidence will be stuffed somewhere in the perpetual sea of papers and police files. Youdu's most secure prison, the Iron Manor, lies below feet of concrete and sewer systems within a block's distance from the Overseers. It's certainly a safe place to make your home, but too dull to keep you excited, at least from nine to five. When the paper-pushers finally let loose, quaint bars and back alleys suddenly fill with activity like a flood.

The Industry Docks



The Industry Docks border the great seas separating the City Between from heaven and hell, the hub of menial labor and the burgeoning trade of machinists. Crude by comparison to Mortal World, but sufficient to sustain Youdu, its harbors are stained with blood and fat from whaling boats, filled with carts of crab and fish, wandered by mariners who just want a hot meal and a strong drink. It is far more populated in the daylight, as most are turned away from living here by the smell of sea salt and the pervasive presence of the Hellion Mob. It's cheaper than anywhere but the wilderness and work is plentiful, but the constant mobs of drunkards and the frigid mists of the sea can erode even the toughest souls.