

# Equipment



In this section, choose your weapons and equipment. Other weapons and equipment can be acquired later, but the ones you choose here will be reliable, respectable tools of good quality and craftsmanship, requiring minimal maintenance and easily repaired. It will prove its worth in the hands of a legendary fighter or a student alike.

In the *Weapons* section...

Take an *Basic Weapon* of any type for **(-3 EP)** each. A *Basic Weapon* can have one *Weapon Trait* unless an *Alteration* specifies.

Take *Special Weapon* of any type for **(-6 EP)** each. A *Special Weapon* can have two *Weapon Traits* unless an *Alteration* specifies, and is stronger, more powerful, and more masterfully crafted than a *Basic Weapon*.

Take an *Ancient Weapon* of any type for **(-10 EP)** each. An *Ancient Weapon* can have three *Weapon Traits* unless an *Alteration* specifies, and is superior to the work of any modern hands, with peerless power and quality.

Equipment and *Special Weapons* have their own unique costs.

## Weapons



### Bladed Weapons

Any weapon with a sharpened edge to be held in the hand design to pierce and slice. Traditional options might include any number of swords both historical and modern, while exotic weapons might include glaives, scythes, kusarigama, or even razor wires. Your choice of *Bladed Weapon* shouldn't leave your grip in regular use, as shurikens and throwing daggers might.



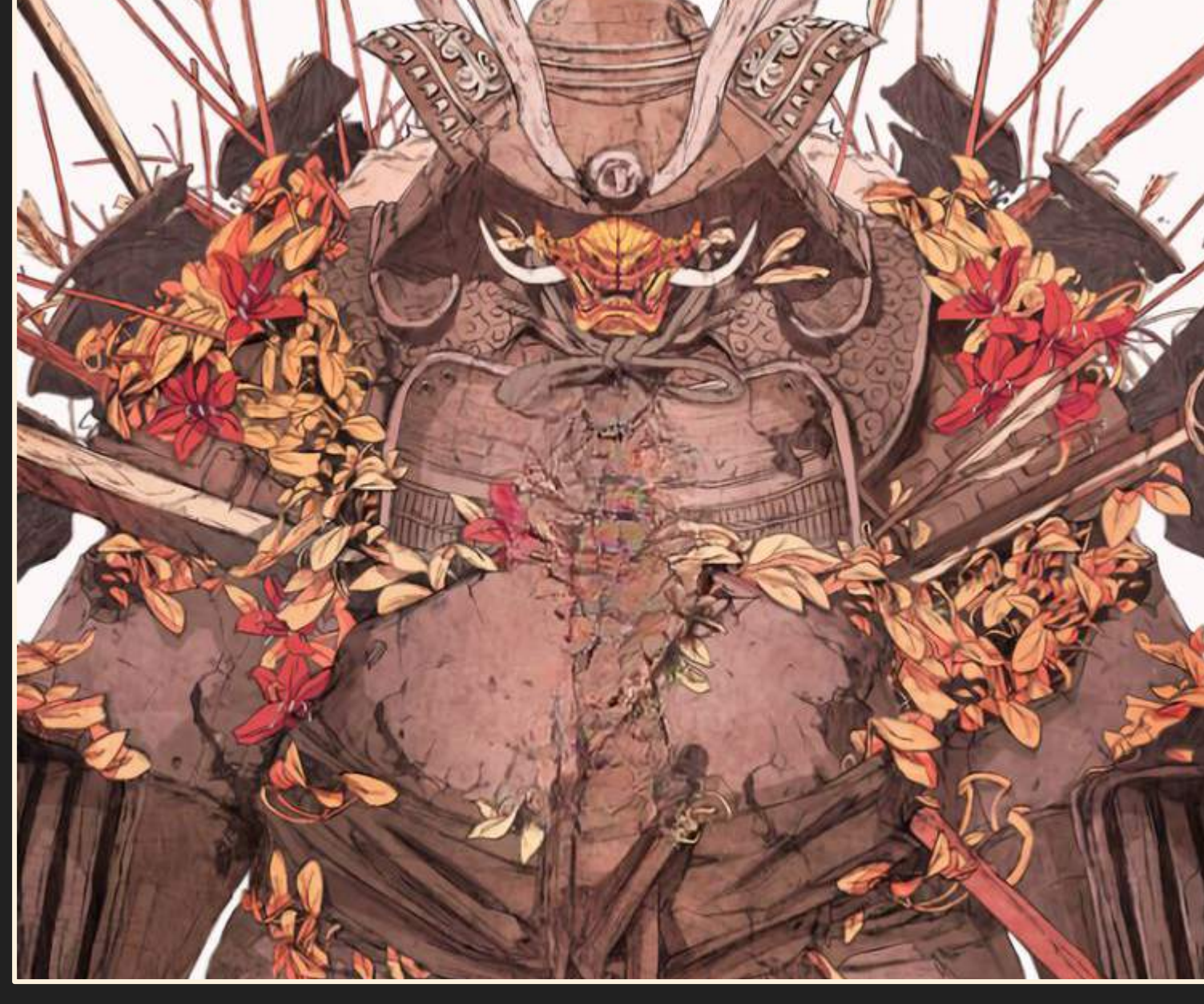
### Blunt Weapons

Any weapon with a heavy weight designed to crush and shatter. Clubs, hammers, maces, nunchaku and kanabo are common, while knuckle dusters, flails and improvised implements like baseball bats and crowbars are seldom seen but equally deadly. *Blunt Weapons* can have spikes, spines, and other sharp surfaces, so long as the primary damage of the weapon comes from crushing force rather than piercing.



### Projectile Weapons

Any weapon designed to leave your hands when it meets its target. Arrows and bows, throwing daggers, shurikens, chakrams, blowguns, crossbows and even fireworks are well within the realm of possibility, though modern ballistics and explosives are an advancement largely lost on Youdu. Choosing a *Projectile Weapon* provides enough copies of the projectile to avoid excess concerns over running out.



### Defensive Tools

Armor, shields, plates and anything else designed to defend you from outside forces. Some, namely shields, can be used as improvisational blunt weapons, but can still be chosen as long as their primary purpose is defensive. Even measures that act more as offensive deterrents can fit into this category, such as spiked guards or porcupine-like armor.

## Weapon Traits

You can apply special traits, supernatural properties and combat additions to your *Weapons*. The limit on *Weapon Traits* is based on the strength of the weapon itself, unless an *Alteration* specifies.



### Retraction (-1 AP)

Your weapon has a spool of razor wire and a gyroscopic retraction mechanism that allows it to violently snap back into its coiled position. You can use it as a grappling hook, to relieve it at a distance, to pull enemies closer to you, or to slice them to ribbons if you've tangled them sufficiently.



### Voltage Chain (-1 AP)

Your weapon gathers current when spun, and releases the gathered charge when it touches or pierces a target. Especially against foes in metal armor, this can be enough to shock an enemy into paralysis or burn them from the inside out. Clashing with a metal weapon will force its wielder to disarm themselves or suffer electrocution if improperly insulated.



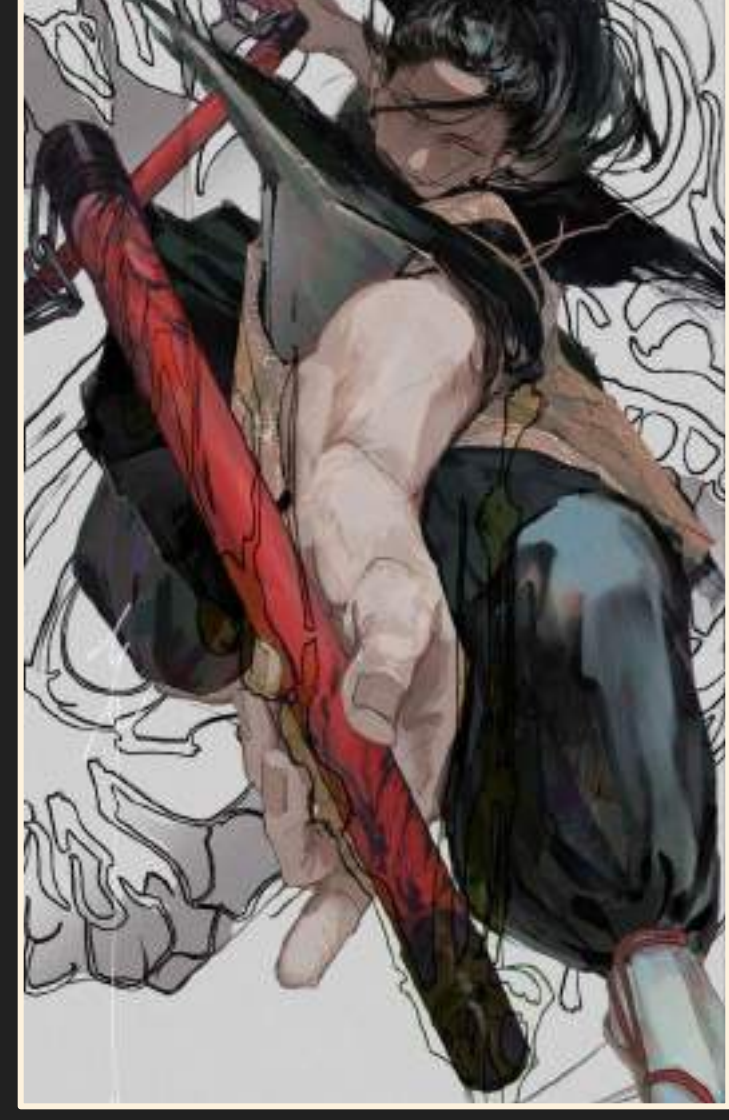
### Fire Wheel (-1 AP)

Your weapon ignites when spun, spreading violent flames wherever it makes contact. The flames of the *Fire Wheel* are especially potent, and their ignition spreads and grows as if napalm were constantly fueling its blaze. They extinguish immediately when they make contact with the wielder, and can be snuffed with their fingers.



### Supermassive (-1 AP)

Your weapon is made of a supernaturally dense material and is scaled to utterly enormous sizes. It's pretty much unbreakable, and deals much more crushing, concussive force. If it's a tool or weapon that's primarily defensive in nature, you'll be much safer when shielded behind it.



### Adaptive (-1 AP)

However much speed and impact would be behind your fists and kicks, your weapon will always exceed it by a significant margin. Its benefits, impact even the largest among them to become delirious and weary if you sink your hooks into them. Strikes you make with your weapons against summoned entities are mirrored in their summoner.



### Burn (-1 AP)

Your weapon inflicts a searing heat when it comes into contact with flesh, limiting the potential for bleeding but producing miserable and debilitating pain while damaging the body internally and externally. With an internal blow, vital organs and veins could be cauterized, or muscle groups rendered completely inoperable.



### Rupert's Drop (-1 AP)

Your weapon has a special property that allows it to create slashes, impacts and cleaves far larger and more powerful than its size would normally allow. To achieve this, you must land a hit against connecting points on the body, and this effect only applies to living things. On the human body, this means the eyes, neck at the chin, sternum and most joints, among other weak spots.



### Reflection (-1 AP)

Any force or projectile that hits your weapon can be channelled directly behind you to avoid making an impact directly. While area-of-effect attacks may be harder to circumvent, precise projectiles are trivialized with enough skill on your part. In a niche case, you can direct your own attacks into your weapon to create devastating effects behind you or outside your field of vision.



### Bulchery (-1 AP)

The material of your weapon is toxic to Chimeras, animals and summoned creatures. They cause even the largest among them to become delirious and weary if you sink your hooks into them. Strikes you make with your weapons against summoned entities are mirrored in their summoner.



### Severing Shear (-1 AP)

When a *Spirit* is exorcized by your weapon, the striking surface becomes permanently sharper or gains leverage, becomes harder, and becomes more nimble. Perform enough exorcisms, and your weapon will become nigh-indestructible and able to strike with unearthly precision.



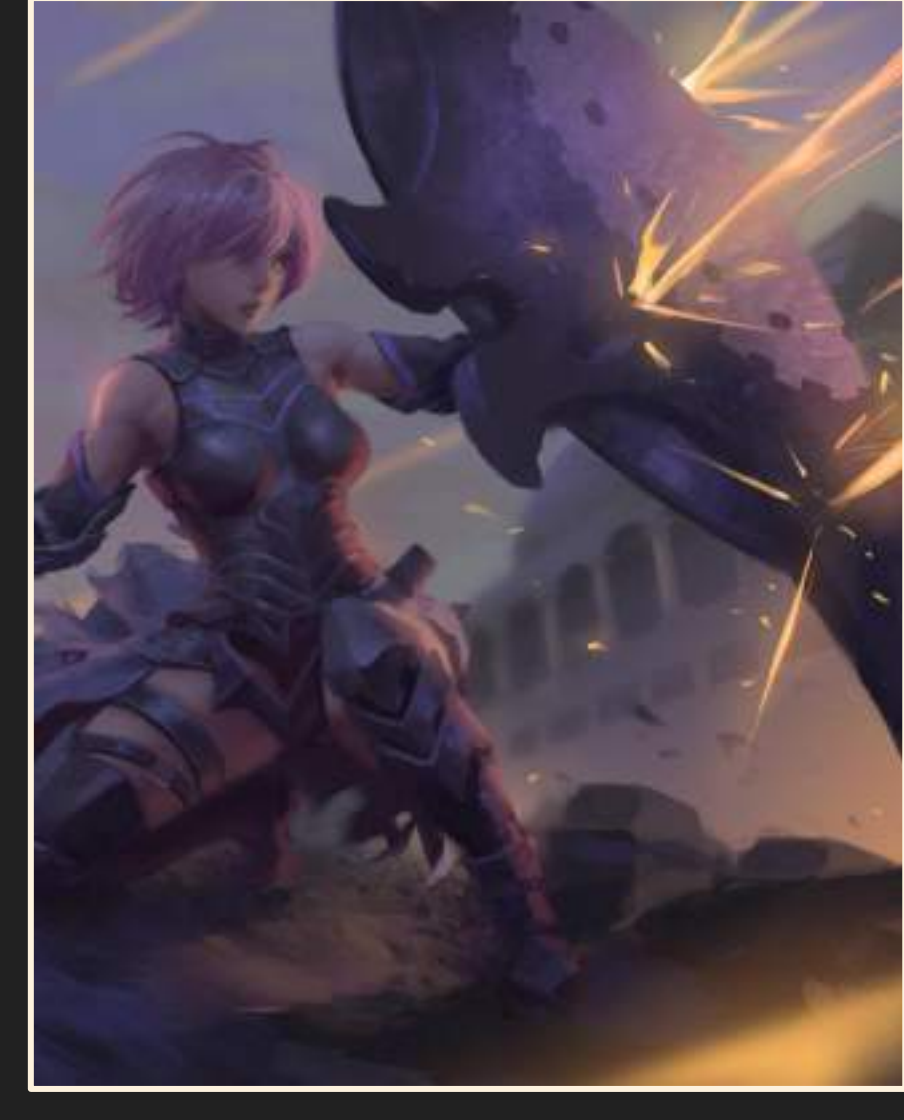
### Silvered (-1 AP)

Your weapon is especially effective against *Spirits*, and *Spirits* killed with it will have their capacity to gather *Aura* from worship crippled after being defeated with it, rendering them almost completely powerless until they make a lengthy recovery.



### Scar Scission (-1 AP)

Wounds you inflict with your weapon are highly resistant to healing and medicine, and may take months or even years to fully heal. Unnatural healing methods and restorative *Release Techniques* are dramatically less effective at repairing the damage they inflict.



### Redirection Shield (-1 AP)

When blocking, your weapon is a nearly indestructible defensive bulwark, and exudes visible currents of energy that redirect heat, explosive force, or other attacks over and around its surface to protect you.



### Icicle Chill (-1 AP)

Those pierced or struck with your weapon are injected with bone-chilling temperature depressants, causing rapid-onset frostbite, muscular stiffness and paralysis. If they are hit enough, their blood will crystalize in their veins.



### Implantation (-1 AP)

Your weapon is embedded into the flesh of your hands and forearms, emerging and sheathing by a trigger gesture you choose. It can be ejected as a projectile with another trigger gesture, attached by retracting wires.



### Terror Ward (-1 AP)

In addition to harming and agonizing *Spirits* with greater efficacy, any noise made with your weapon creates a terrifying echo that fills all who come close to it with apprehension. The closer they come, the greater the effect.





**Vortex (-1 AP)**

Your weapon can emit a massive gravity that compels projectiles and strikes to hit at its center instead of colliding with you. If an opponent can't redirect their bolts or muster the strength to resist the effect, their strikes will hit squarely against your weapon so you can easily counter.



**Grappler (-1 AP)**

Any object or person struck with your weapon will adhere to it relentlessly, allowing you to grapple and maintain contact with opponents at an enormous advantage and climb nearly any surface effortlessly. It requires immense, back-breaking force to detach your weapon by force, but will naturally detach at your will.



**Seismic Gong (-1 AP)**

Striking any surface or individual with your weapon will send seismic waves of force across the striking point, dealing damage throughout. This can be especially effective at dealing environmental damage or harming an opponent at their squishy core when external defenses guard them.



**Extension (-1 AP)**

Your weapon can extend up to ten feet and retract to six inches in length as long as you are holding it. As a surprise attack, an impromptu pole vault or a storage convenience, this trait dramatically increases the weapon's versatility.



**Dragoon (-1 AP)**

Your weapon can propel itself at deadly, bullet-like speeds from jets mounted in its handle, creating a powerful thrust designed to pierce durable targets like an anti-tank round. If you allow the weapon to fly from your hand, it can act as an accurate, massive projectile. If you hold on while it launches, you will be propelled along with it, sliding across the ground at speeds comparable to a stallion in full-sprint.



**Explosive (-1 AP)**

Your weapon is coated with an explosive cocktail that's susceptible to any contact with a hard surface. If it impacts your opponent with full-force or ricochets off of a wall, it will create a fiery explosion wherever it lands, leaving the weapon itself completely unharmed. The force is directed towards the point of impact, meaning you won't be harmed in the collateral damage.



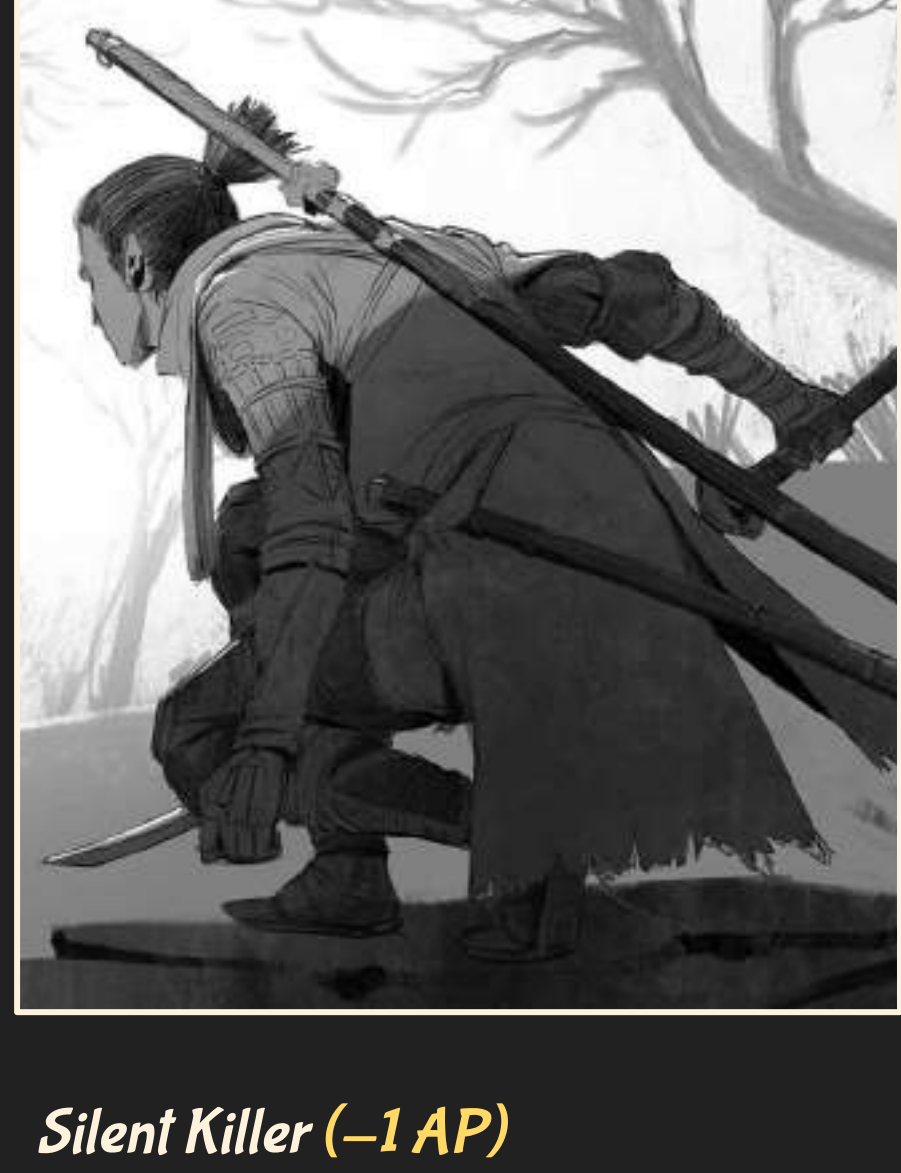
**Dismantling (-1 AP)**

Your weapon punches through any nonliving matter without exception, assuming it is unaffected by Aura. Mundane armor is completely ineffective at protecting against it, physical barriers and obstacles fall apart with even a glancing strike, and your enemies' weapons shatter into scintillating pieces when blades clash.



**Ultima Launcher (-1 AP)**

When propelled by an outside force or mechanism, your weapon gains exponential speed, precision and puncturing force as it travels. Using it as an oversized arrow or launching it with the help of a Technique will allow it to pierce even the most absurdly durable targets, and using it in normal martial combat will enhance its piercing and perforating potential greatly, even if it is blunt. Techniques that purely enhance strength will provide the force of the Ultima Launcher in direct proportion to how strong they make you.



**Silent Killer (-1 AP)**

The projectiles or the strikes and movement of your weapon occur completely silently, and the pain of the wound is delayed until it would prove useful. It is extremely difficult to detect a wound from your weapon until it is too late, and your victims may be walking around as dead men for minutes or hours before they realize they've been killed.



**Malignant Incense (-1 AP)**

A smoke emitted by your weapon at will is a powerful acidic agent to all but you, degrading equipment and armor and eventually decaying human flesh in necrotic patches. It's a powerful deterrent that will keep most foes at a distance, but can prove harmful to the environment and your allies.



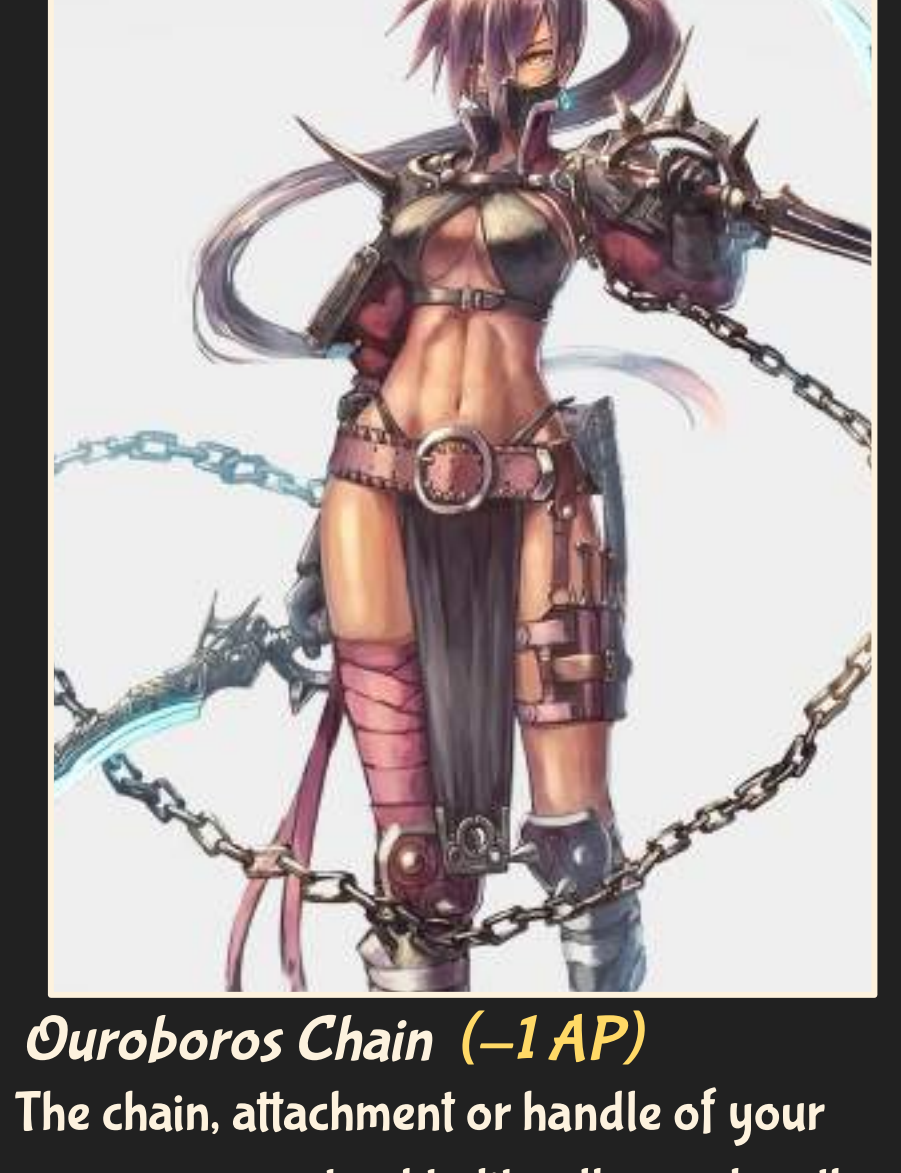
**Headhunter (-1 AP)**

If given even a few drops of blood, the weapon will have a magnetic pull toward the victim's location. So long as they're in the same World as you, it can guide you to them over any distance.



**Cremation (-1 AP)**

Anyone killed with your weapon will immediately disintegrate into fine ash that mixes seamlessly with the ambient air. The bodies of your victim will be silently disposed of and flutter away without a trace, leaving no evidence.



**Ouroboros Chain (-1 AP)**

The chain, attachment or handle of your weapon can extend to literally any length, and is prehensile to whoever is holding the handle at the end. This allows the user to enwrap, bludgeon or divest someone from any distance. The weapon's head can be replaced with any other weapon or implement, becoming that type of weapon for the purposes of any Technique.



**Butterfly Wingbeat (-1 AP)**

Your weapon creates gusts of wind far larger than its size and your strength would suggest. You can send someone within a few meters of their flying off their feet, tear doors from their hinges, and even propel yourself through the air with an especially strong gust.



**Green Dragon Crescent (-1 AP)**

Your weapon can fly and move with a mind of its own, making long distance strikes with a throw more feasible. Any multitude of battle maneuvers that are otherwise impossible are suddenly as easy as thinking of them. Your weapon can return to you from any distance or fight alongside you completely autonomously, forcing foes to face you on two fronts.



**Windswept (-1 AP)**

Your weapon creates a specialized air current around it that can be manipulated by its user. Aside from giving it high-precision cutting force, it can be used to eject it at bullet-speeds from its sheath and into your hand, or dissipate itself to carry a sharp, swirling wind through the air from its surface. After it is used, it requires a moment's preparation to re-establish the wind current around its edge.



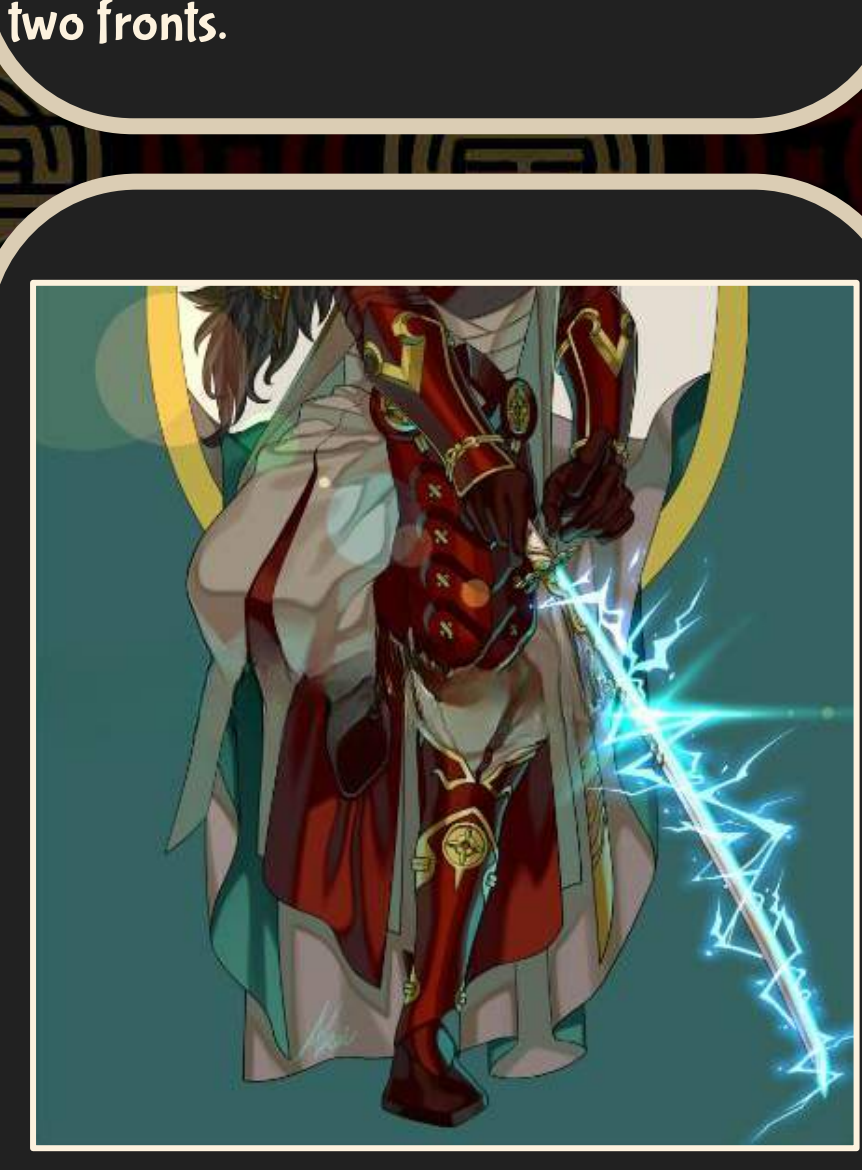
**Gravitation (-1 AP)**

Anything struck with your weapon is un tethered by gravity for a brief interval, causing them to float above the ground. The harder you've hit the object or victim, the longer the anti-gravity lasts, allowing you to batter defenseless opponents suspended mid-air after landing a strong blow.



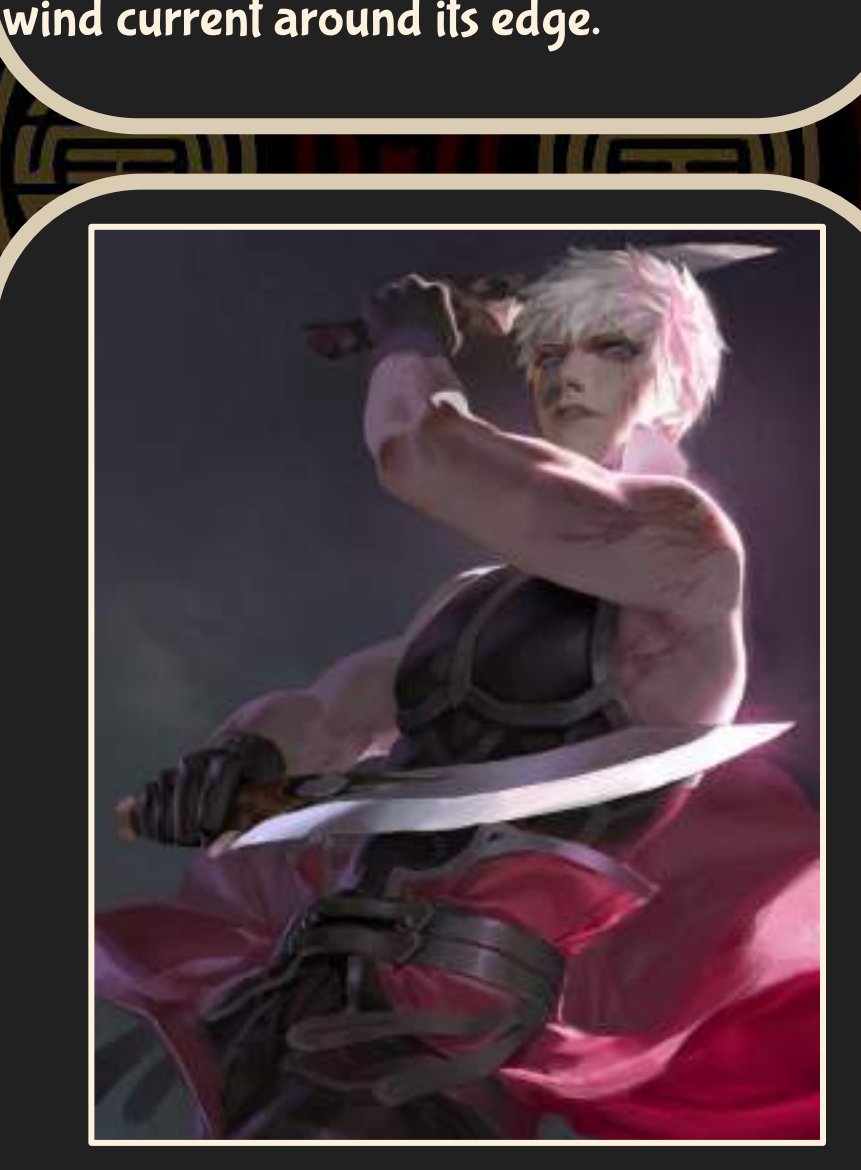
**Oni Thunder (-1 AP)**

Your weapon is made of a conductive sparking metal that releases a shower of blinding electric sparks when it strikes its target. This effect is as loud as a gunshot and blinding as a firework, leaving bewildering stars in the eyes and ringing in the ears.



**Elemental Conductor (-1 AP)**

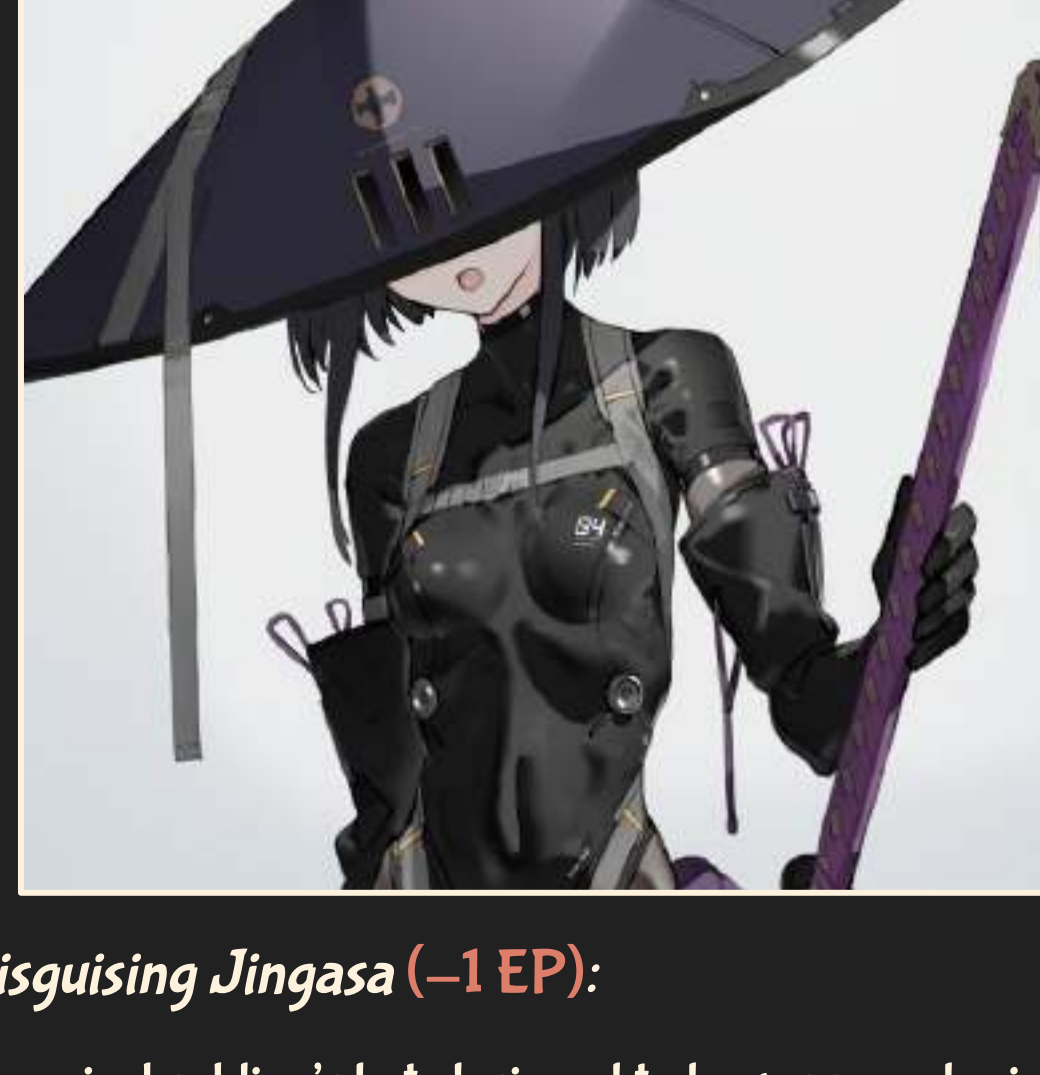
The weapon is replaced by its handle, fitted to create a projection of the weapon either with pure Aura or from a Conduction Mode you have currently activated. The exact benefits will depend upon the element itself, but the material requires a negligible amount of Aura and can be manipulated if you have the Techniques for it.



**Twin (-1 AP)**

As long as you have your weapon in your hand, you can create another one from thin air in your opposite hand. If too many are cloned, eventually other copies will start to disappear with each new one created, assuming they aren't in use.

## Equipment and Special Weapons



**Disguising Jingasa (-1 EP):**

A conical soldier's hat, designed to keep sun and rain off the body. While wearing the Disguising Jingasa, your eyes are covered, and by seemingly supernatural means people won't be able to tell who's underneath it unless it is removed. While you still might develop a reputation as 'that warrior in the board hat' or 'that bandit whose eyes are covered', your exploits won't be connected to your usual identity unless the Jingasa is removed and your face recognized.



**False Ocular Coverings (-1 EP):**

Anything from blindfolds to shades, glasses, eyepatches, contact lenses and full facial coverings, so long as they obstruct the line-of-sight of the user. They are commonly employed to defend against the effects of Eye Techniques, as they can obstruct the direct eye contact required for many of their effects. Alternatively, a user of such Techniques might use some Ocular Coverings to conceal their abilities until the moment is right, hiding the tell-tale patterns on their eyes, or as a courtesy to avoid unintended effects. Regardless of what your Ocular Coverings are, you can easily see through them even if they're a literal blindfold. You'll have perfect visual clarity in low-light conditions, total darkness, and through obstructions like fog and smoke while wearing them.



**Facial Breathing Cloth (-1 EP):**

A filtering cloth placed over the nose and mouth, designed with multiple layers of fine material to allow for steady breathing while still keeping toxins and smoke out of your lungs. You'll never inhale a lethal dose of any poisonous vapors in your environment, though you still might suffer some harm or long-term effects. While wearing your Facial Cloth, you can always breathe perfectly, regardless of the environment around you. This includes being able to breathe underwater, in the midst of deadly toxins, or within billowing clouds of ash.



**Discerning Traditional Garments (-1 EP):**

You're in possession of a full wardrobe of traditional garments, such as Kimono, Yukata, Samue, numerous kinds of Hanfu, and others depending on your sex and preferences. For religious etiquette and ceremonial purposes, you will most certainly find in the proper attire. While wearing your Traditional Garments, you are subtly aware of certain social and behavioral cues you might otherwise miss. You can tell when someone's lying, what their social weaknesses are, and how you might best manipulate them to get what you want.



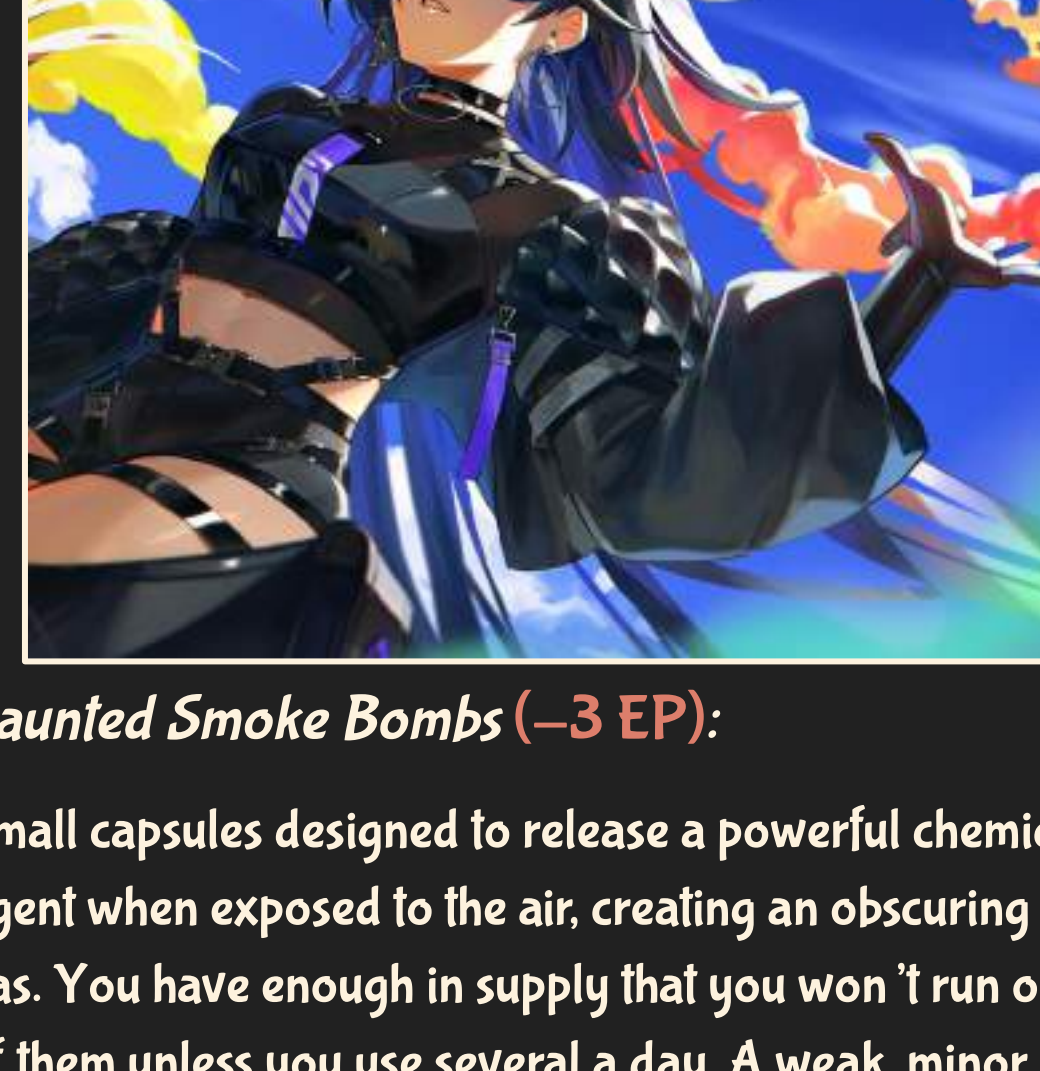
**Noble Modern Formals (-1 EP):**

You're in possession of a full wardrobe of formal clothes worn in the modern west, namely suits, tuxedos, ties, dresses, and so on, depending on your sex and preferences. You'll always have a fit for a special occasion or merely to attract attention. Unless you give people reason to think otherwise, you'll be assumed to be wealthy, noble and high-caste while wearing your Modern Formals. You'd be shocked what the rich can get away with. For the most part, the authorities will turn a blind eye to you even if they see you doing something you shouldn't.



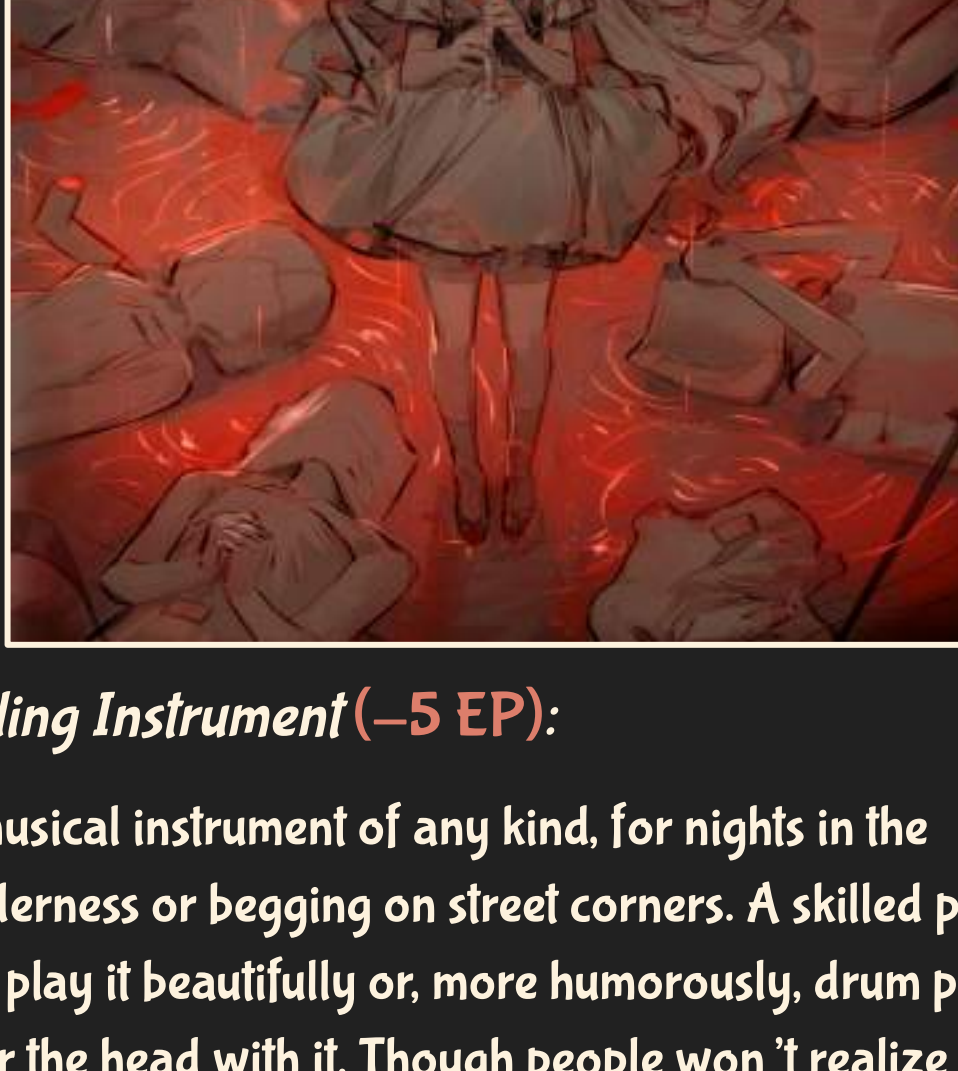
**Impersonating Solemn Uniform (-1 EP):**

You're in possession of a full wardrobe of uniforms for various professions, depending on your sex and preferences. These can include a ceremonial monk or priestess's garb, the traditional armor of a Beast Hunter, a butler's vest or french maid's dress, the robes of the Majushin and Senguru, the vestments of the Overseers, and many, many more. Even if you aren't a worker in any of these fields or affiliated with these groups, you may still find use for them as disguises. In addition to your Solemn Uniform, you are given convincing identifiers as a member of every organization in the City. You have the badge of an Overseer, the ceremony band of an Exorcist, and so on. Unless someone actively checks the records of the organization, they'll have no reason to question your membership in it.



**Haunted Smoke Bombs (-3 EP):**

Small capsules designed to release a powerful chemical agent when exposed to the air, creating an obscuring gas. You have enough in supply that you won't run out of them unless you use several a day. A weak, minor Spirit is entrapped in each of your Smoke Bombs, to be released when the bomb is broken. It will relentlessly attack your foes in a fit of rage until it is destroyed or exorcized, serving as a powerful distraction in the heat of battle.



**Lulling Instrument (-5 EP):**

A musical instrument of any kind, for nights in the wilderness or begging on street corners. A skilled player can play it beautifully or, more humorously, drum people over the head with it. Though people won't realize it, the sound of your Instrument can make anyone in earshot drowsier the longer they hear its melody. They'll often fall asleep within minutes of hearing it. If someone realizes what the music is doing, they can stop its effects by covering their ears.



**Ninja Tabi (-3 EP):**

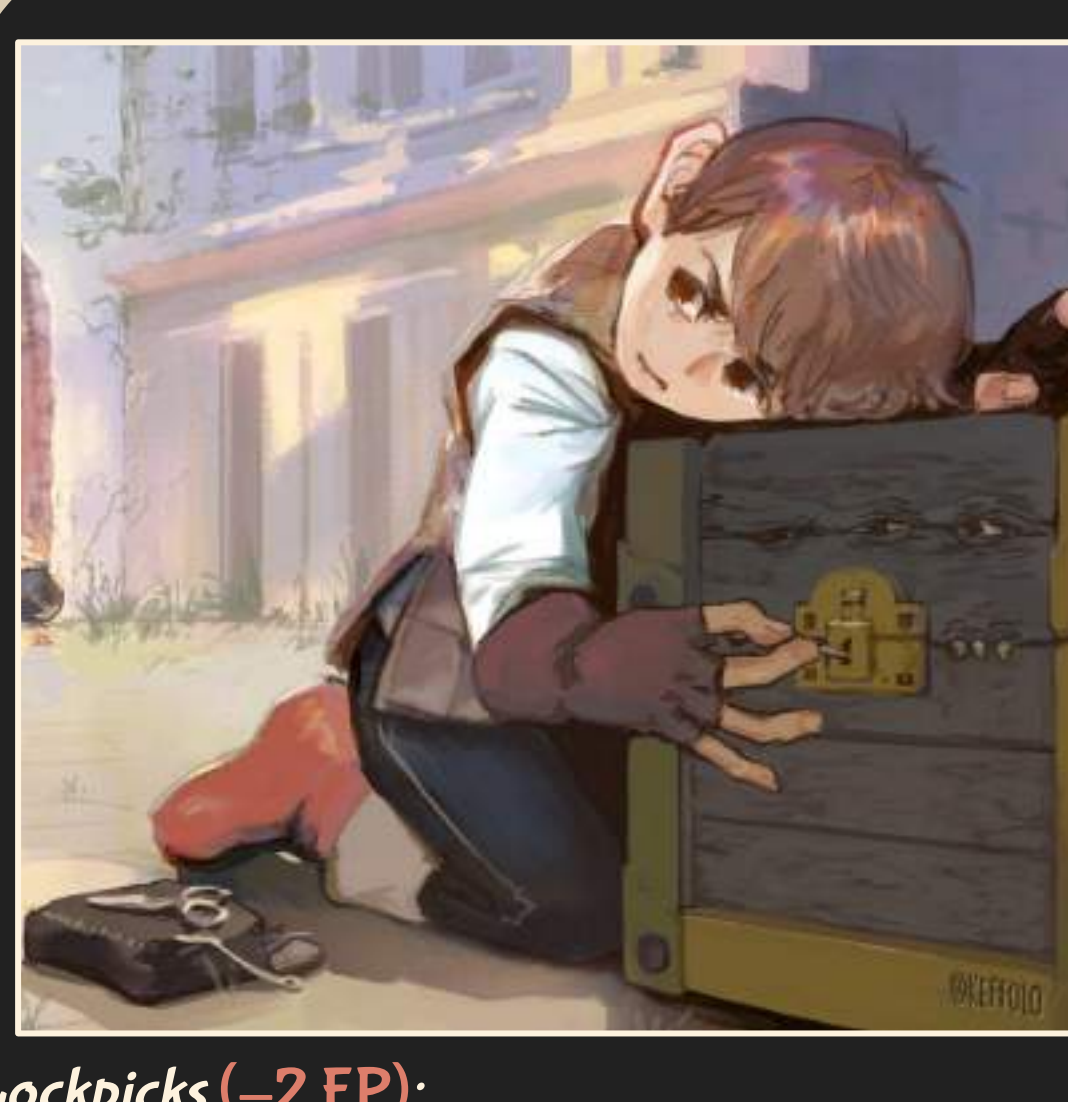
A set of two-toed shoes that provide far more flexibility, grip strength and freedom of motion than normal boots or sandals. While wearing them, your soles adhere securely to whatever surface you place them on, including for climbing. Beyond just giving additional leverage for sprinting speeds and ascending tall buildings, they also muffle your footsteps to the point of being completely imperceptible, even to those who know you're coming.





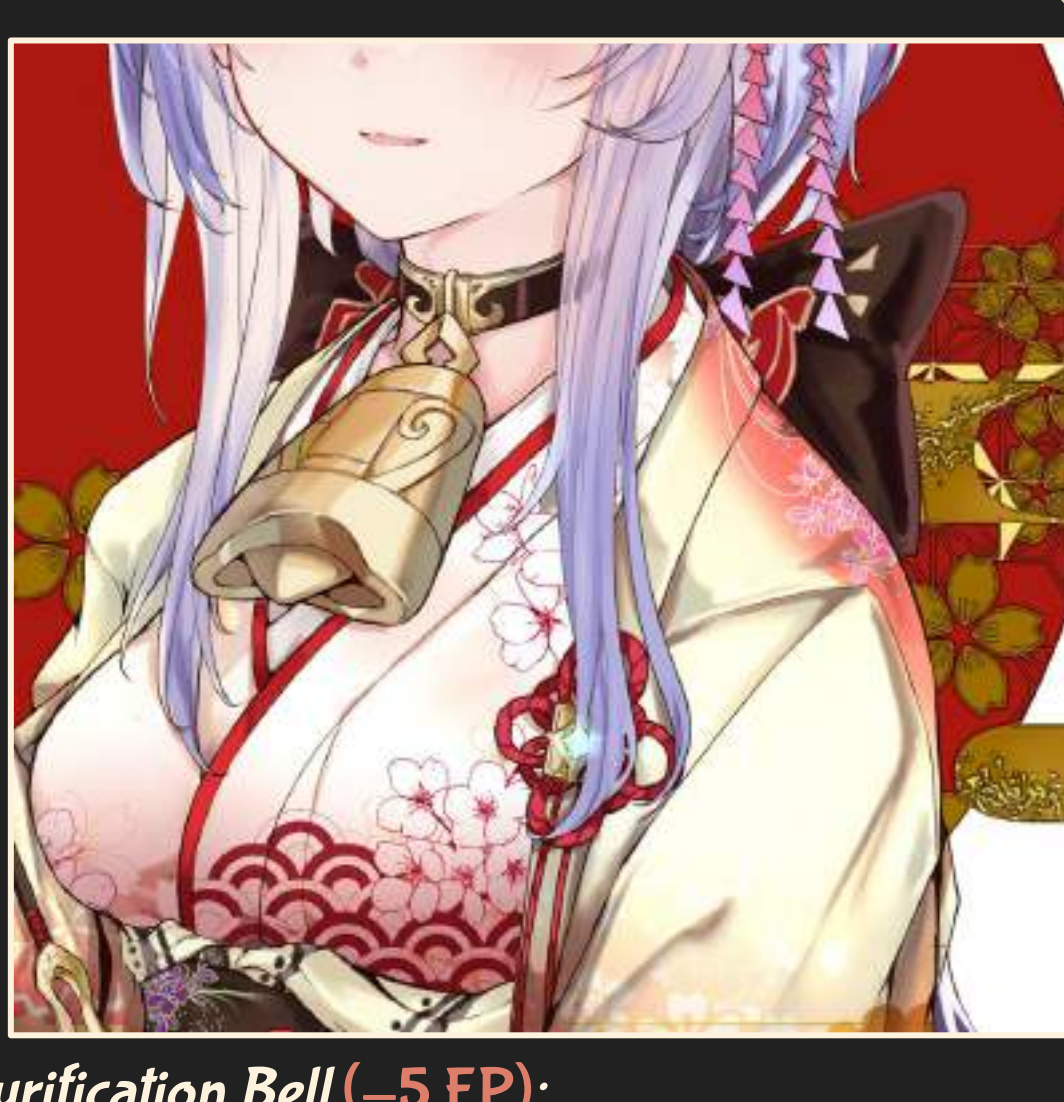
**Grappling Launcher (–4 EP):**

A pressurized gun with a four-pronged claw which embeds itself into wood and stone surfaces or latches to outcroppings and branches. It then retracts violently, carrying the user with it to wherever it was shot.



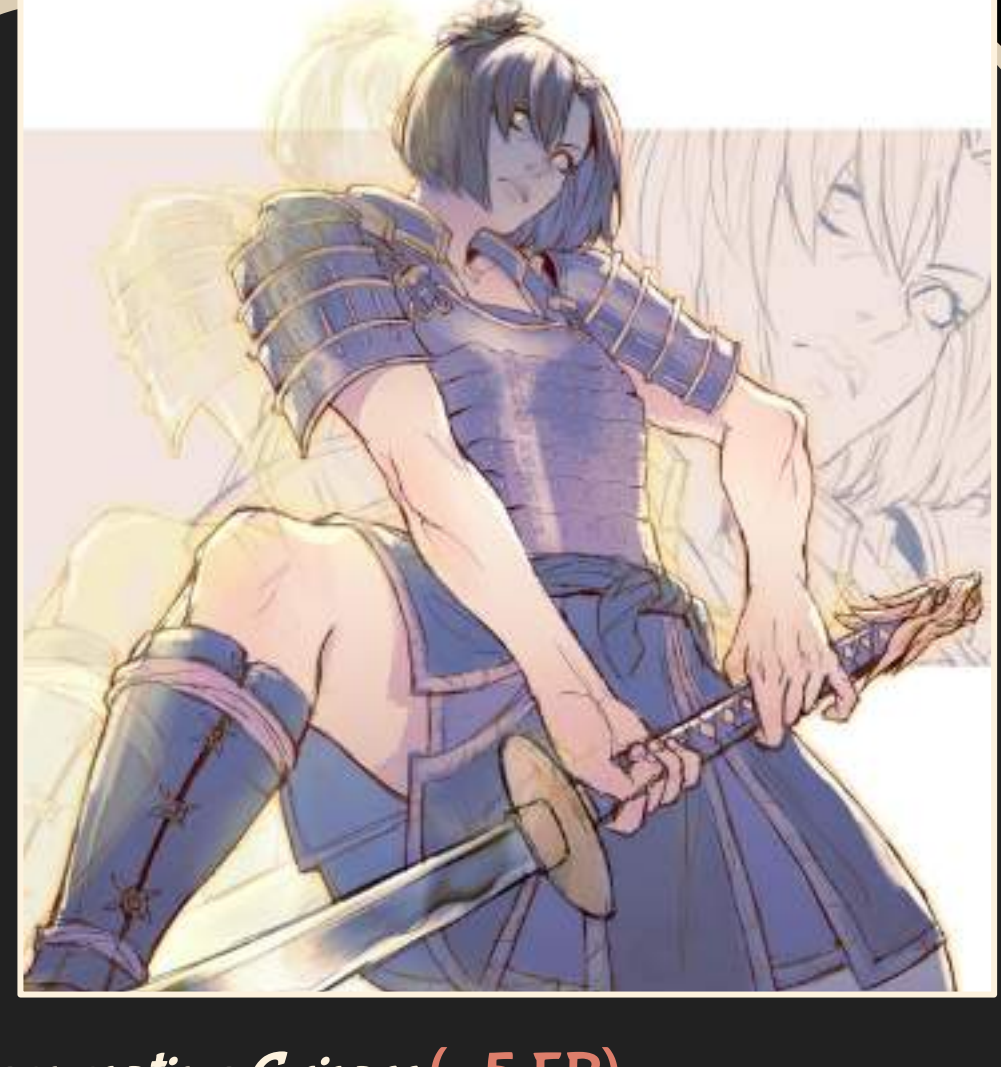
**Lockpicks (–2 EP):**

A full set of lockpicking instruments, allowing their user to enter nearly any locked passage if they've got the time and acumen to work the pins. Some locks will be tougher to crack than others, depending on what they're protecting.



**Purification Bell (–5 EP):**

A small handheld bell whose chime echoes off of Spirits and objects affected by them. It's especially useful for exorcists, who frequently use it to pinpoint cursed and possessed objects, find where Spirits are hiding, or determine the source of a Spirit's grudge.



**Regenerating Cuirass (–5 EP):**

A metal and leather chestpiece with free plates at the pelvis and thighs to allow for movement while remaining protected. It additionally includes armor for the shins and forearms, decreasing the efficacy of practically every kind of weapon in piercing or crushing your body. This cuirass in particular is imbued with the peculiar ability to restore itself slowly, like the growth of a trimmed tree, if it suffers serious damage. Leather will knit into its original structure, lacquer will return to its surface, and metal plates will weld in place again if all the constituent parts are placed near each other, such as by tying them together with thread or applying any adhesive material.



**Gong Kabuto (–4 EP):**

A helmet critical to the traditional armor of the samurai and their retainers, typically featuring a horn structure either at the center or at its sides. For Onis and other Yokai, holes in the helmet allow horns to poke through for a display of power and status. This Kabuto in particular is designed with a metallic structure that disperses shock in the ringing of a loud cymbal, protecting the head from damages far beyond that of simple metal and leather.



**Summoning Armor (–5 EP):**

A set of ten paper sigils which stick to your body and summon a highly durable and ornate piece of armor when activated with a touch. Each paper corresponds to shin guards, forearm guards, boots, helmet, chest piece, thigh plates, and so on, allowing you to wield only a few if they suit you. For the sake of concealed, simple armor it can prove invaluable in a pinch, especially if maneuverability is paramount. You can even summon and banish them mid-combat to trade between protection and dexterity as needed.



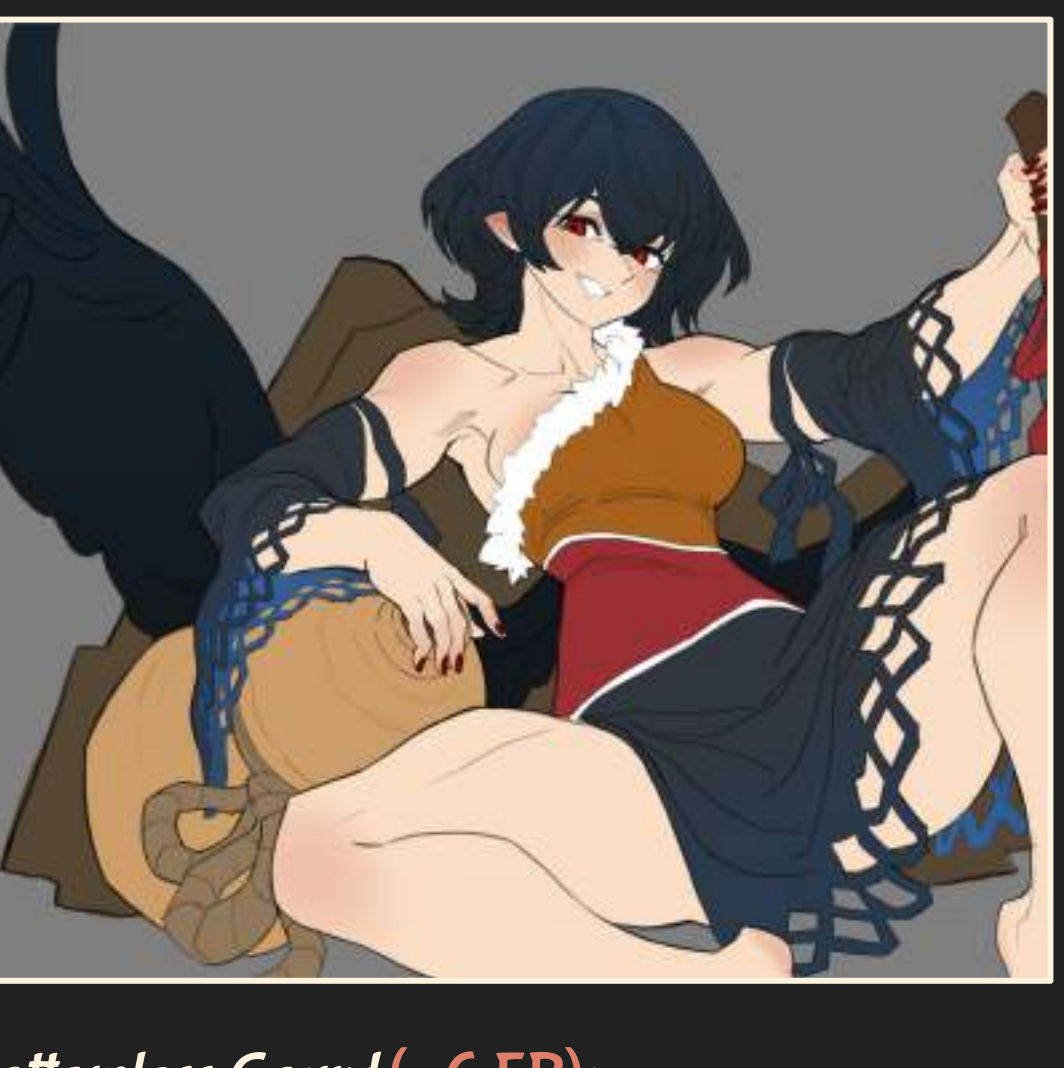
**Weighted Straps (–3 EP):**

A set of enchanted straps fitted with heavy metal inside. The Weighted Straps, by some uncanny property, are always heavy enough that the wearer will find it challenging to move, and as they become accustomed to their weight they will increase their load over time to maximize muscle growth and dexterity. When removed, they will experience a sudden burst of speed, strength and flexibility they've painstakingly developed under the huge weight of their encumbrance. When removed from the wearer, they're practically weightless.



**Spider Shots (–3 EP):**

A set of several dozen pressurized rods that magnetically connect wires to each other when they embed into any surface. As the number shot increases, the number of wires required to connect every rod to every other rod increases exponentially, eventually creating a web to entrap foes or cut them to pieces.



**Bottomless Gourd (–6 EP):**

A dry, hollowed gourd to be worn slung on the back, with the special property of having no limit to the amount of objects it can fit, as long as they can fit into its opening. Its mouth is about the radius of a human arm, so any weapon that you can hold in your hands will easily fit, and most practical amenities probably will too. When you reach in, whatever stored object you were trying to find is immediately placed in your palm by a clammy, wrinkled hand that occasionally gestures to you.



**Shaman's Kundala (–5 EP)**

A set of ornaments adorning the lobes of the ears, weighing each down with their heft. While these are fastened to one's ears, they are able to communicate thoughts, images and words with any being they have subjugated to themselves. This umbrella includes any souls and Spirits they've conquered, any creatures or Chimeras they've sculpted, and the entities from any Summon Rite they've performed.



**Waidan Miracle Pills (–8 EP):**

A small bottle of powder pills that fully restore the consumer's health and physical stamina when consumed. Full limbs can be regrown and organs repaired by consuming one, though the Waidan Miracle Pills only affect physical injuries. They cannot reverse disease or nullify poisons, nor can they restore lifespan. The sachet contains a limited number of these pills, and they are extremely rare as a commodity in the City Between.



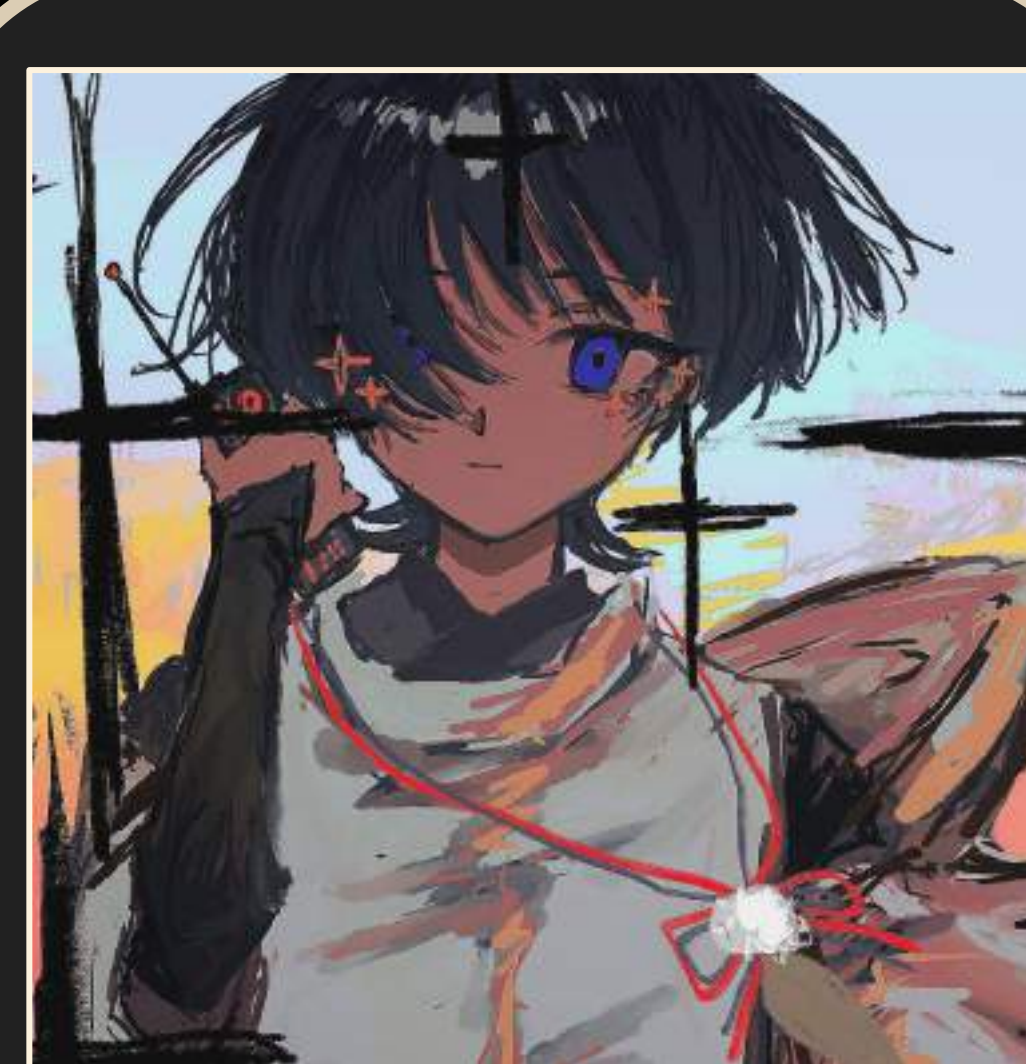
**Prayer Drum (–5 EP):**

A hand drum blessed by a sage. Its beat is used in many religious ceremonies, and hearing its beat multiple times cleanses curses, sigils and possessions. The weakest of Spirits will scatter like flies from a corpse at its sound. It makes many of the day-to-day tasks of an Exorcist trivial, reducing their efforts to only the strongest Spirits in the City Between.



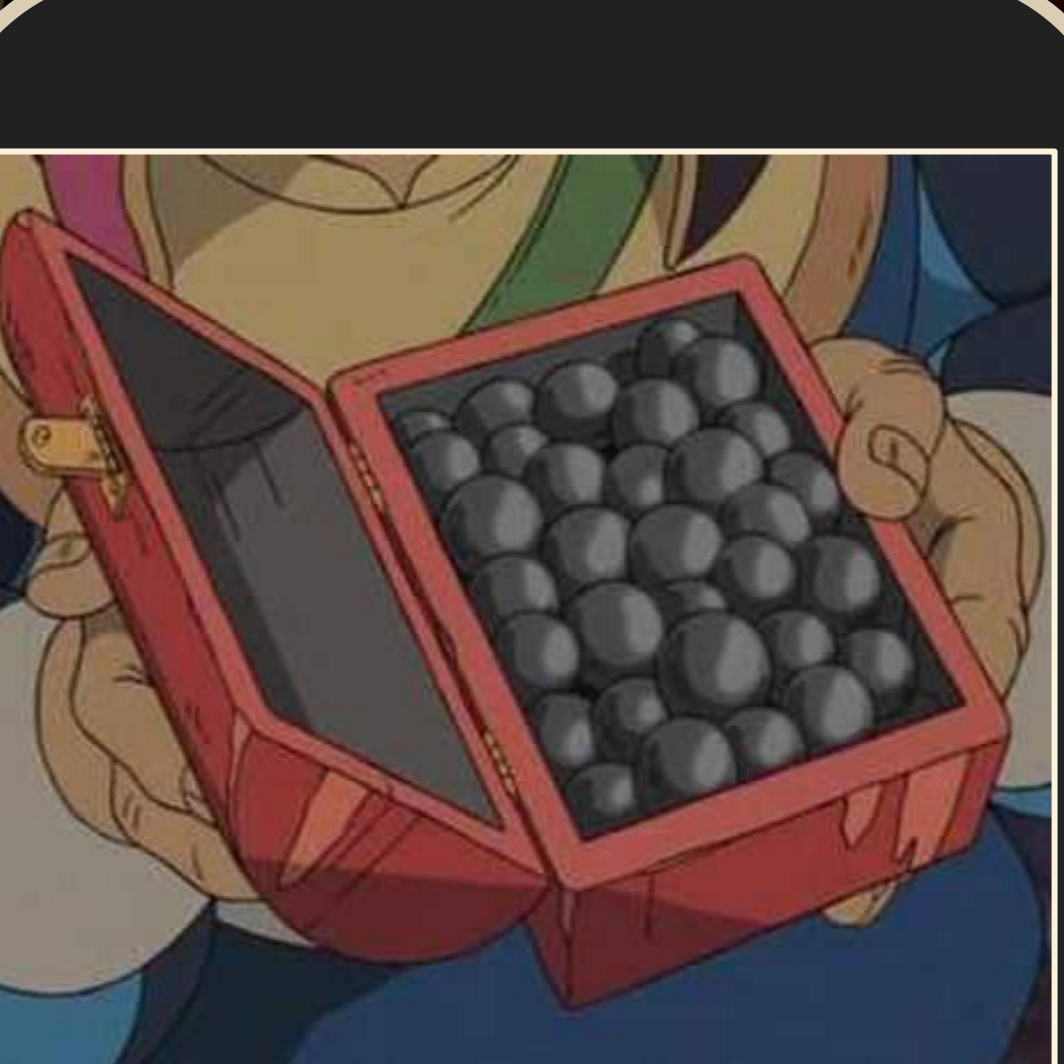
**Turtle Shell Dwelling (–8 EP):**

An unbreakable box turtle's shell with a place for a key to be inserted. When one inserts the key, they find themselves immediately within a modest apartment, complete with a small bed, kitchenette, functional plumbing and a paper window on the east and west walls. Attempting to go through the window on either the east or west wall will lead into the opposite window, and one can actually see themselves through each window in an infinite, mirror-like procession. If you're a frequent traveler, a Turtle Shell Dwelling can be a welcoming home away from home. When you exit the room's main doorway, you simply appear out of thin air beside the box turtle's shell with the key in hand. A ring of keys beside the door allows the user to give entry to multiple guests.



**Mortal World Radios (–5 EP):**

A set of eight long-distance radios from Mortal World, the best solution for communication in the absence of cell towers and wireless internet. Their range can extend up to twenty miles while outdoors and around ten while indoors, aiding both in coordinating a strategy and communicating to allies within the same District as you. Communicating much further than that will likely prove difficult or choppy. So long as they aren't used continuously for dozens of hours at a time, battery life isn't much of a concern.



**Quicksilver Immortality Pills (–8 EP):**

A wooden box containing pills filled with enchanted mercury. Each one consumed has less effect than the last, and grants the user an extension to their lifespan in body and soul when taken. The first pill grants five years, the second grants two years, and so forth. The final pill consumed will only grant a matter of days. There hasn't been an alchemist skilled enough to create these life-extending pills in centuries, making them incredibly valuable and unlikely to ever be created again. Use them wisely, or trade for them in a pinch.



**Mortal World Firearm (–8 EP):**

A rarity in the City Between, firearms made by humans are strictly forbidden. That doesn't stop people who know how strong a bullet is in a world of martial arts. It can cost an arm and a leg to smuggle one from Mortal World, and acquiring extra ammunition is just as hard. You should be very, very wise about how you use the bullets you've acquired, as you're probably not going to get more than what you have without spending a pretty penny.



**Noroi Gakkotsu (–6 EP):**

A cruel metal apparatus worn around your jaws, designed with curious interconnected mechanisms that force your teeth closed with the snap force of a crocodile or wild animal. Aside from allowing you to bite with enough force to shatter human bone like glass, the mechanism physically cannot be opened by anyone but you once it's closed by any means at all. If you manage to catch a neck, limb, digit or other extremity in the Noroi Gakkotsu, it's either going to be amputated or the victim will stay in your bleeding jaws until it is.



**Gunbai no Kamikaze (–8 EP):**

The divine war fan Gunbai no Kamikaze's beat is capable of stirring a number of weather effects to the user's command, with the exact event depending on how the user beats it. One large gust will generate a tornado, a multitude of smaller ones will whip up a thunderstorm, and twisting the Gunbai about its axis will create obscuring fog. Aside from all of these, its gale is strong enough to rend flesh from bones, and becomes stronger in the hands of a stronger wielder.



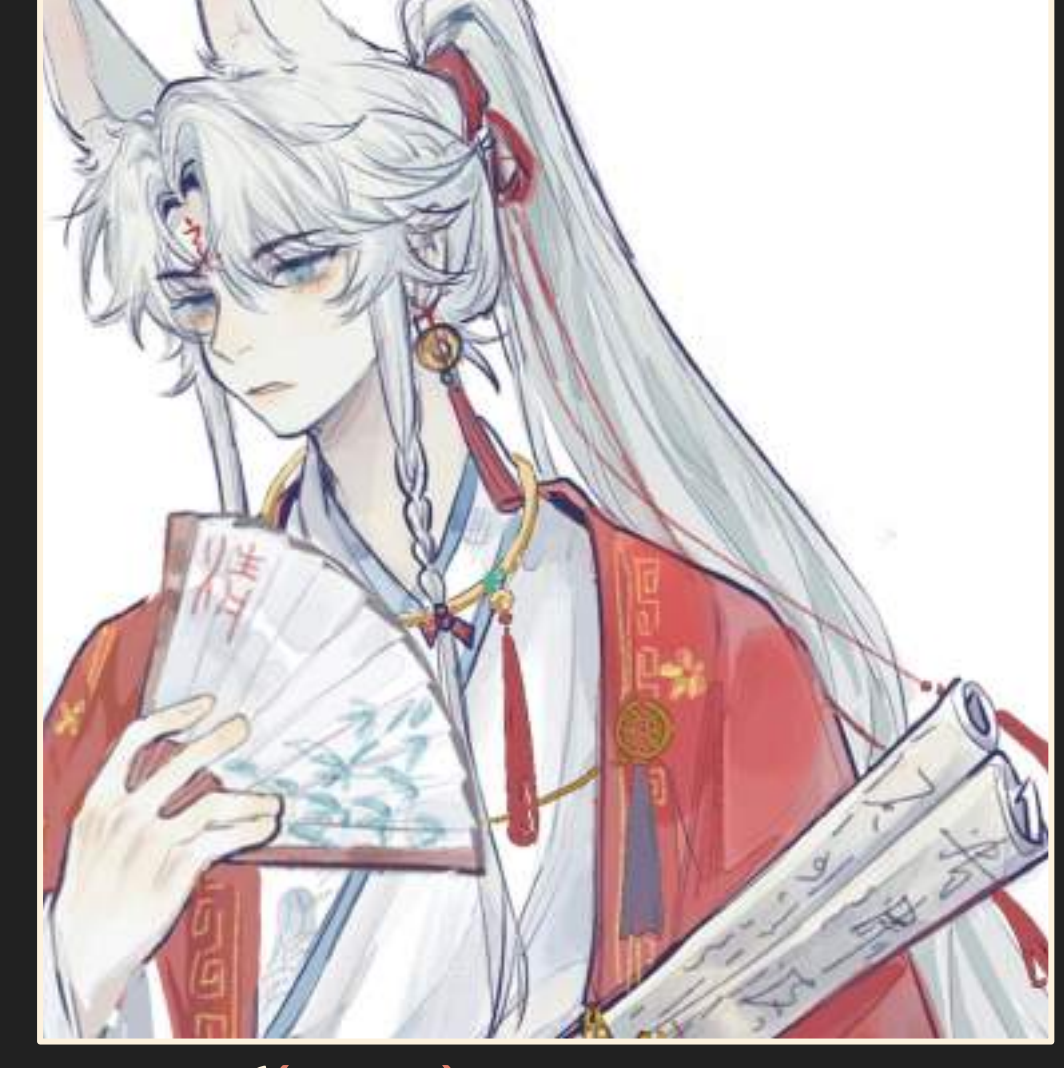
**Ame-no-Sakahoko (–9 EP):**

The legendary spear that cleaves the chaos of the turned world, the Ame-no-Sakahoko's blade creates sharp, deafening gusts of wind with each strike that are so powerful they can cut through steel. If smoke or vapor fills a room, its wielder can stir a local storm into existence by cleaving their blade through the clouds, producing an arc of thunder crackling through the blade's edge wherever it points. Perhaps its most powerful trait, when it is stuck into any surface, such as ground or wood, a column of earth will form from it, sealing the spear within and forming a literal mountain over time. The wielder must then either retrieve the spear or leave it for its next wielder, if it is left to fully form a mountain. For combat purposes, it can instead be used to generate a massive wall in an instant and quickly retrieved thereafter.



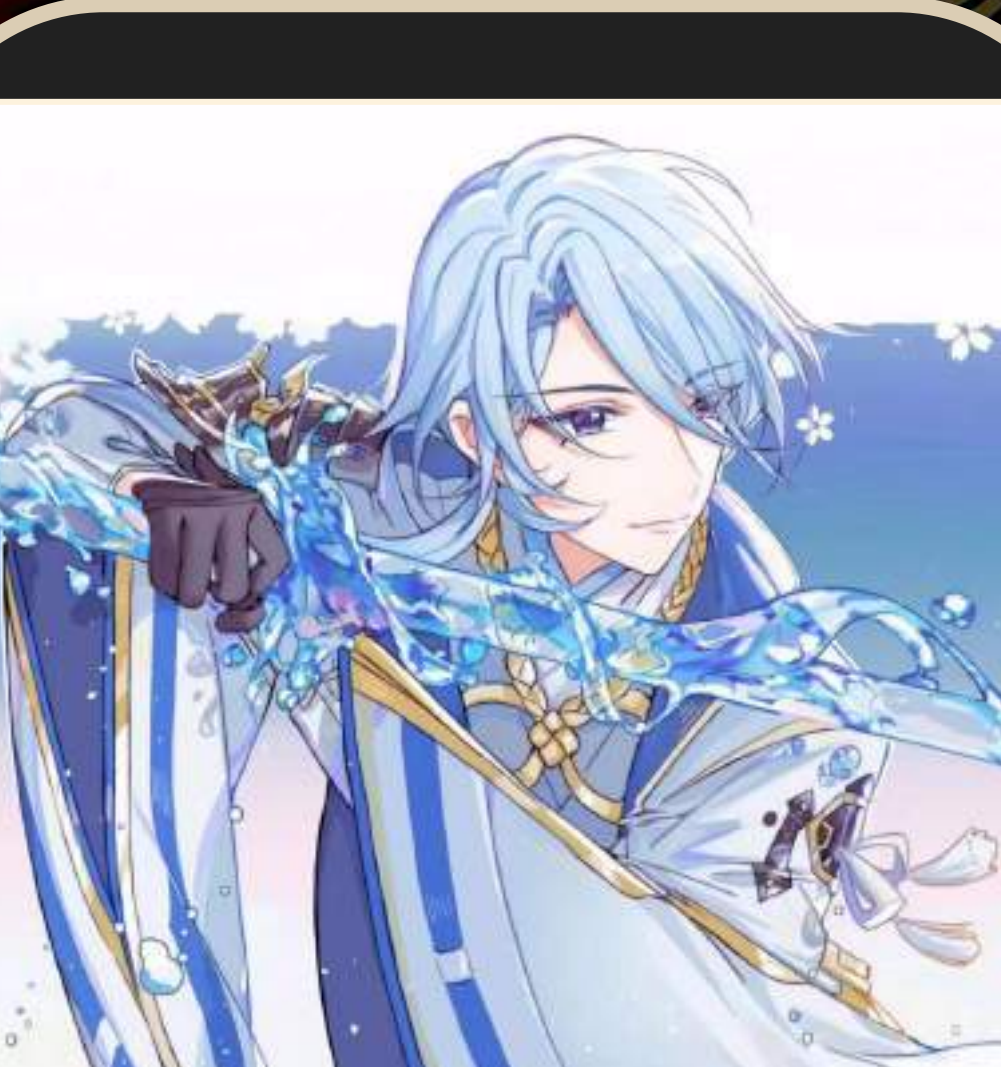
**Saika Ikki's Last Memory (–9 EP):**

The Saika Ikki's Last Memory is the cursed blade of a great mercenary clan, holding the knowledge of five hundred warriors. A loose section of its hilt is just large enough to fit bills and coins into its crevice, which disappear from sight the moment they fall in. Without payment, it is a mere blade; when it's been properly compensated, it literally wields itself in the user's hands, drawing upon the refined bladecraft of centuries-old warriors. It therefore requires no skill on its user's part to rank among the deadliest swordsmen, provided they can satiate its relentless hunger for money. Pay it enough, and it can even train you by forcing your hands and posture into the proper form, eventually training you with long forgotten martial Techniques that make modern styles pale in comparison.



**Resting Leaf (–7 EP):**

The Resting Leaf is a roll of paper about the width of the user's torso, designed to be shackled around the waist or carried in the hand. A page of the Resting Leaf will fold itself into any shape its user intends when it's torn from the roll, with large pages folding into larger origami. If the user makes a weapon or ammunition from these pages, they will have all the sharpness, resilience and weight of any normal weapon it's folded to look like. So long as the holder is actively pulling on its roll, the Resting Leaf can produce an unlimited volume of hexed pages.



**Hamon-Line Sword of Waves (–7 EP):**

A blade of suspended water, recirculating in pressurized eddies that correspond to the size of the holder's Aura Reserve. With a larger Reserve, the waters of the blade spin faster and faster, cutting through solid stone or flesh and bone with ease. The blade itself surges and retracts at the holder's whim, supplying its own jets of water.



**Reanimating Nail (–8 EP):**

A sharp nail meant for securing locomotive rails in place, any killed by it are resurrected immediately as shambling carcasses at the user's command, who will fight with speed, coordination and agility on their behalf until they are killed or rot away. While they retain all of their martial skill and fighting abilities, they cannot use Release Techniques they knew in life when reanimated.



**Ten no Ya (–8 EP):**

A piercing shaft of luminance which, when launched with a short prayer, detonates in a fiery and blinding explosion. Over a matter of minutes, the light of the blast seeps like a fog back into the possession of its owner, eventually reforming the Ten no Ya. If the Ten no Ya changes owners while still in its solid form, it will return to its new owner when used.





**Great Blade–Bow of Life (–10 EP):**

A legendary bow which bestowed life onto the City Between. Arrows fired from its string create life wherever they land, whether in blooms of flowers and trees or a flurry of songbirds and insects. The volume of life produced by the Great Bladebow is enough to produce impromptu barriers, distractions, and visual cover. Physically piercing an opponent with the Blade–Bow will cause vegetation, fungus and animal life to rapidly grow in the wound, causing severe internal damages and likely death if not amputated.



**Yume Graffiti (–8 EP):**

A metal claw finger with an inkwell and nib, designed to expel ink in any form from a fine mist to a cutting stream, drawing upon the user's own blood circulation to alchemically replenish its supply. Creating blinding smokescreens, blinding an opponent with ink, and much more are possible, but it is best used in the hands of a skilled alchemist. With it, they can create and apply paper and body sigils at any distance, circumventing the need for preparation or contact.



**Chimera Tap (–7 EP):**

A vial containing the characterizing cells of a powerful Chimera, which will merge with whoever is injected with it and transfigure them into an enormous monster. This transformation is rapid, single–use, degrades and corrupts the mind affected by it, and will be impossible to reverse without powerful Aura Techniques. It can be used on yourself in a suicidal act of violence or to neutralize an opponent who sports an array of immunities too difficult to penetrate.



**Muramasa (–10 EP):**

The 'younger sister' karmic blade, the Muramasa, is the great masterpiece that knows no resistance. The more noxious the wielder's karma is compared to their victim, the greater the cutting and striking force of the blade, with no upper boundaries outside of how much evil its wielder can commit. Brandished by vengeful fighters throughout history, it is best used in the hands of someone truly, incorrigibly evil. It tempts its user to greater sins the more it is wielded, growing more and more powerful in their hands.



**Masamune (–10 EP):**

The 'older brother' karmic blade, the Masamune, is the justice edge that cleaves through the defiler. The more pure and righteous the wielder's karma compared to their opponent, the greater the cutting and striking force of the blade, with no upper boundaries outside of how virtuous its wielder can become. It is the fated rival of the Muramasa, and their wielders, with blades always equally devastating against one another, are said to kill each other by the will of fate.



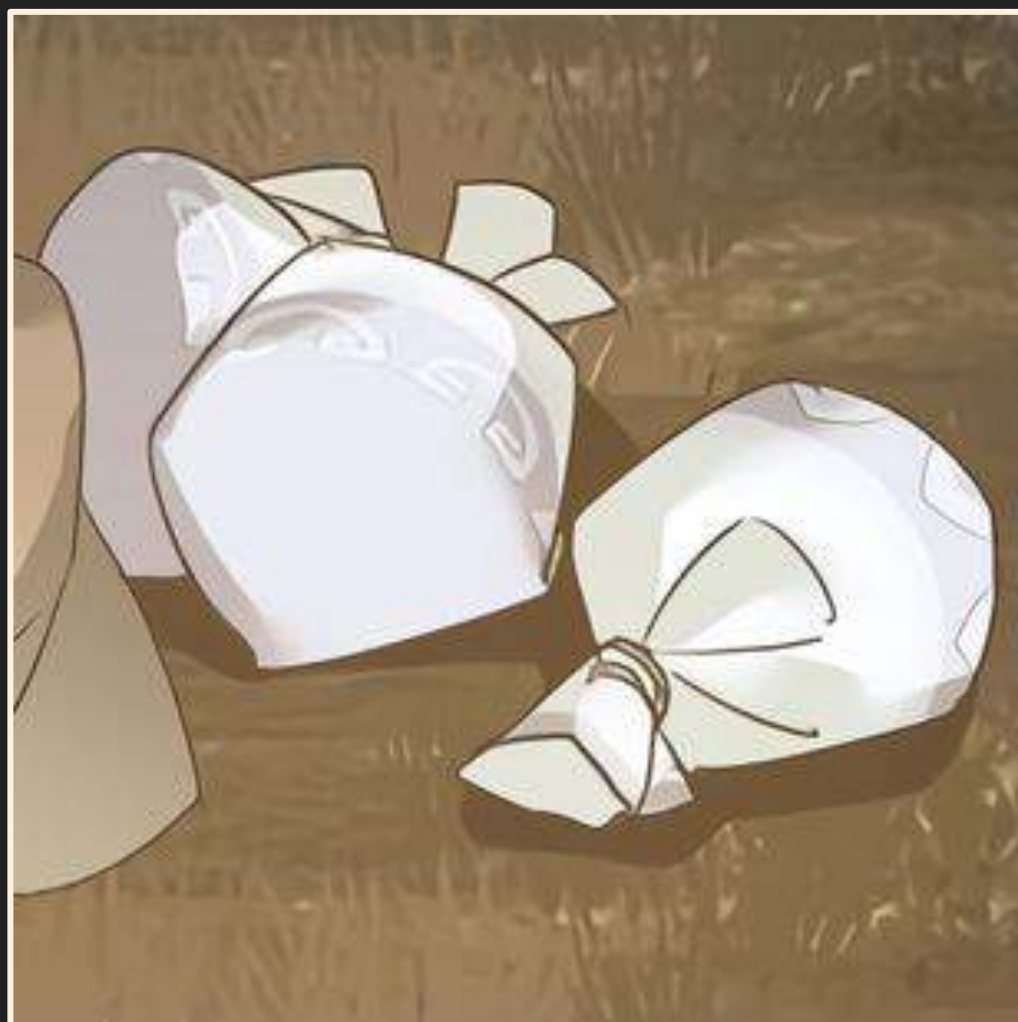
**Cursing Needles (–9 EP):**

The Cursing Needles are a set of pinpricks that each force the person they are embedded in to Devote ♦x1 for each one inside their body. This Equipment includes a total of 30 Cursing Needles, allowing you to either cripple or completely inhibit your opponent's Aura. While they can be removed to disable their effects, the Aura previously dissipated must still be recovered, making it useful even if only a few make their mark.



**Aura Inhibiting Darts (–9 EP):**

A small supply of powerful agents administered by a feathered dart, designed for the Blowgun or Wristbow. A single dose will prevent the target from being able to naturally regenerate Aura for multiple days. They'll be in no shape to fight, and this can be used as an effective way to neutralize otherwise unbeatable opponents or in combination with methods of dissipating an enemy's energy.



**Qiankun Pouches (–8 EP):**

A set of five small watertight pouches drawn with a leather strap and able to expand to about the width of a human arm. Each one can hold far more than its small size would suggest, and descends to a depth and width of an arm's reach. Each one can be used to store different implements, and for a wandering traveler or explorer, the ability to carry large supplies of rations, water, and supplies can prove invaluable.



**Steed of Jade (–6 EP):**

A small statue of a horse, no larger than a coin. When placed on the ground and recited a certain incantation, it will become a full animate horse of pure jade. If it is destroyed or broken, a shard can be used to recreate the horse, though not without a few days of carving and sculpting.



# Factions

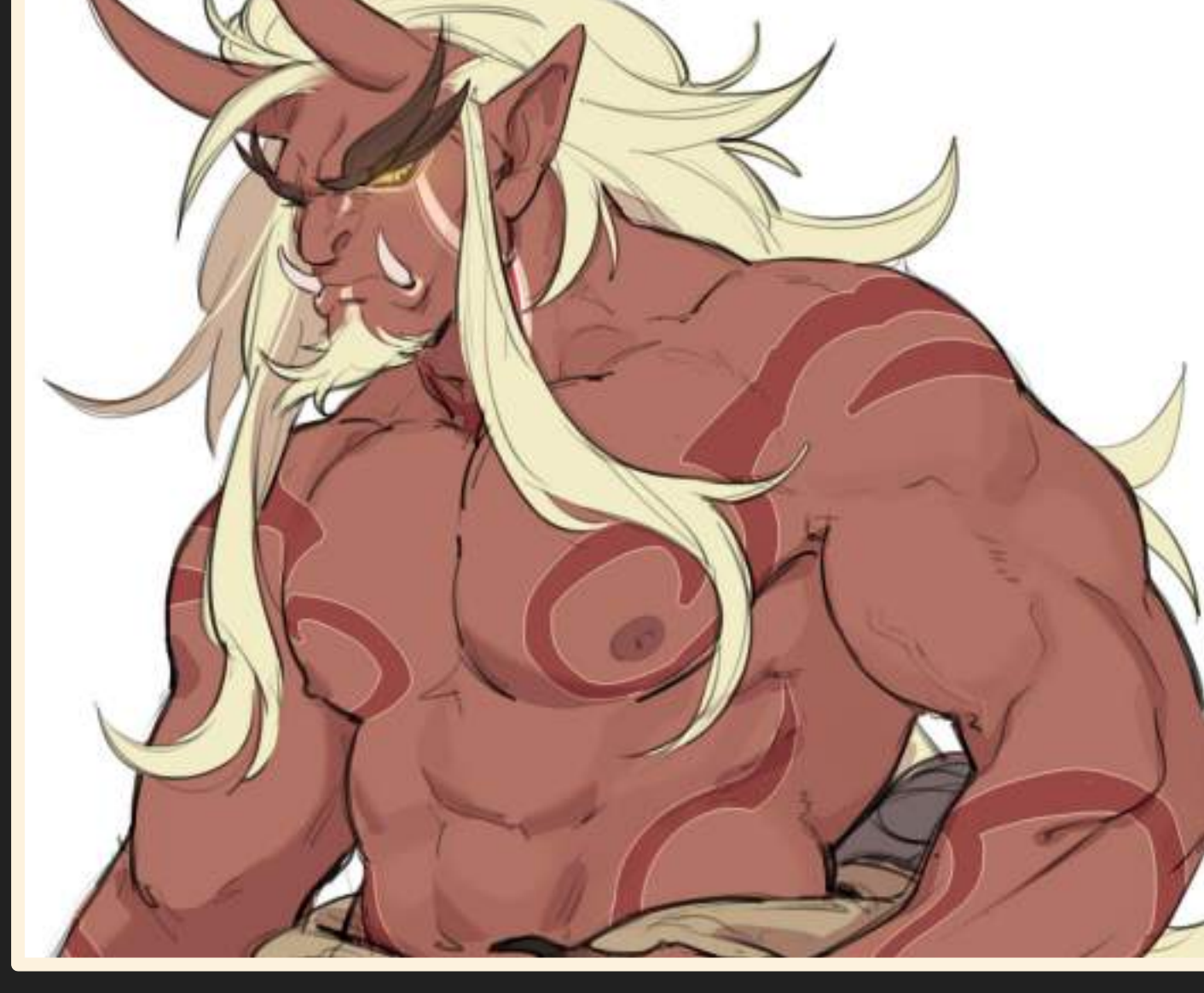
You may choose one Faction that you're a **Member** of. You have either sought membership with them after your first death, or you were a member all along. Either way, you are one of their own, treated with respect and insider privileges. If recognized by someone from your **Member** faction while in danger, they will come to your immediate aid. You may not choose this option multiple times. **(-1 AP)**

You may choose any Faction to be your **Ally**, as long as you choose a different one to be your **Foes**. While you may not be treated as an insider by your **Allies**, you are treated as a strategic partner who shares common goals. You are not pursued relentlessly by your **Foes**, but you will likely be antagonized by them if they have the opportunity. You may choose this option multiple times. **(0 AP)**

You may choose one Faction that is your **Nemesis**. This Faction has made killing you one of their top priorities, and will use the full extent of their resources to bring you down. If recognized by a member of your **Nemesis** Faction, they will make an attempt on your life. You may not choose this option multiple times unless an Alteration specifies. **(+1 AP)**

## The Red Demon Clan

The Red Demon Clan are the descendants of the Raja Danaav, and the City's most famous Beast Hunters, martial artists and brutes, by tradition a head taller than the everyday denizens of Youdu. To put it lightly, they've never been counted among the scholarly intellectual caste, but are highly regarded as creatures of honor, camaraderie and strength. The Clan's halls are filled with the scent of spilled sake, the howls of laughing patriarchs, and the splinters of tables shattered by too many arm wrestling competitions.

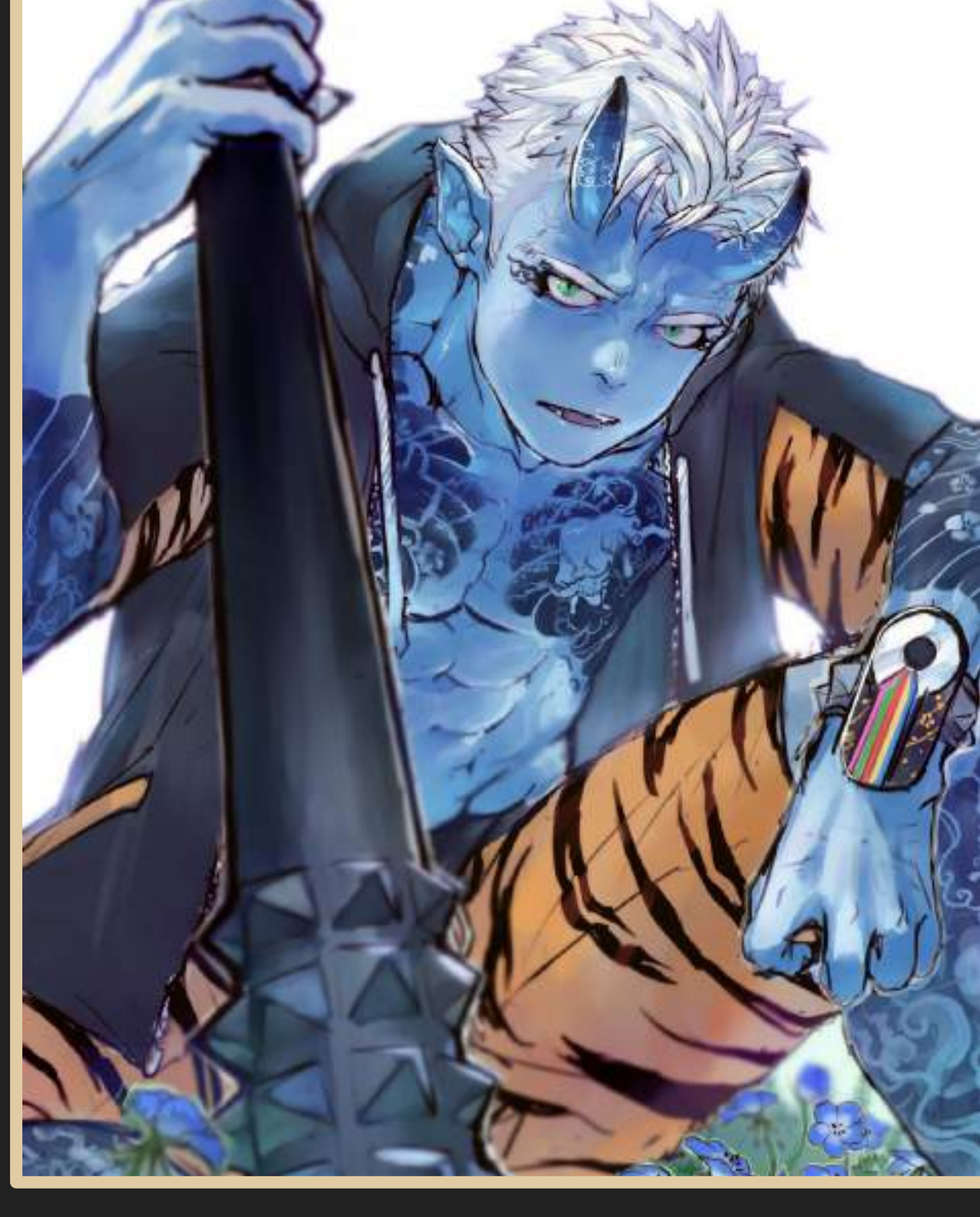


Though they are frequently associated with the Six-Finger Mafia, they garner much greater respect in spite of this reputation. Their most common occupations are hunting Chimeras or acting as bodyguards, being that they place such cultural importance upon the value of honor and trust. It's no mystery why, given how much they clash with the Blue Demon Clan. They consider themselves the sole bulwark between the Blue Demons and an unending reign of violence and enslavement for the people of Youdu, a responsibility they see as justification for the comparatively harmless crimes of the Six-Finger and Shen Roh, exiled patriarch of the Clan and the Mafia's current head.

## The Blue Demon Clan



The Human Dynasties hold the Blue Demon Clan in particular animosity. Aside from being inextricably tied to the dominant Hellion Mob, The Blue Demon Clan's own Affinities have historically come from stealing human men from the Dynasties, leeching maliciously off of their tireless efforts and bloodline purity with a thief's gusto. While the Red and Pale Demon Clans do the same, neither have been so destructive to the longevity and purity of the Human Dynasties. Because of this, they've acquired the power and influence necessary to cement the Hellion Mob and its reign of terror for decades, tightening their grips around the City ever closer. Some of their members are among the single strongest Aura Users the City has to offer, the Dragons of their Mob and the Clan Heads most notably.



Famous for their perfidy, the Blue Demon Clan are the ancient spawn of Vuseba, the Mother of Evils. Throughout history, they've proven through their two-faced betrayals that, while they're the most powerful and largest of the demon clans, they're also the least trustworthy. Their first priority is always the good of their own kind, and any alliances with outsiders are to be considered temporary at best and disposable at worst. Vuseba's instructions to her spawn in centuries past was and still is clear: the Blue Demon Clan will reign unchallenged over the Earth and the City, and any moral or ethical cost can be brushed aside in the pursuit of that ultimate goal.

## The Pale Demon Clan

The Pale Demons are the rare and the tightly knit among Youdu's factions, the Demon Clan descended from Yakshanek, the demon progenitor yet resigned to the Spirit Womb after his first death in the War of Creation. Being the only Demon Clan without their progenitor Spirit represented among the Trigram, their single objective is Yakshanek's resurrection, placing them at odds with the Exorcists as their religious practices broach the forbidden and occultic. Rumors claim that they draw outsiders into their ranks to sacrifice in dark ceremonies said to accelerate his return.



This motive forces the exact alignments and tactics of the Clan into obscurity. One can only guess at what their master plan for reclaiming eminence entails, though the Exorcists have some small measure of intelligence on them: their growing ambition, their clandestine violence, their commission of proxies to cause instability in the City's order and internal affairs. They've embedded themselves into more conspiratorial threads than even they know about, and are entrenched in the City's cloak-and-dagger politics with no intention of stopping.

## The House of Catacomb

Among the wealthiest sects in the City, the Great House of Catacomb is the sole clan belonging to the undead of Youdu, known most famously for their miserly tendencies and astronomical wealth. They own the banks, the casinos, the markets, you name it. All that capital gives them political leverage, and they're wont to play both sides of a coin to make sure it falls into their piggy bank. They pull the strings from the shadows, lacking in physical power and muscle but expert navigators of intrigue and negotiation. They're always looking to hire strong fighters to their side, and for an excellent price. If you're a Bodyguard or Stalker, they may be among your most frequent customers.

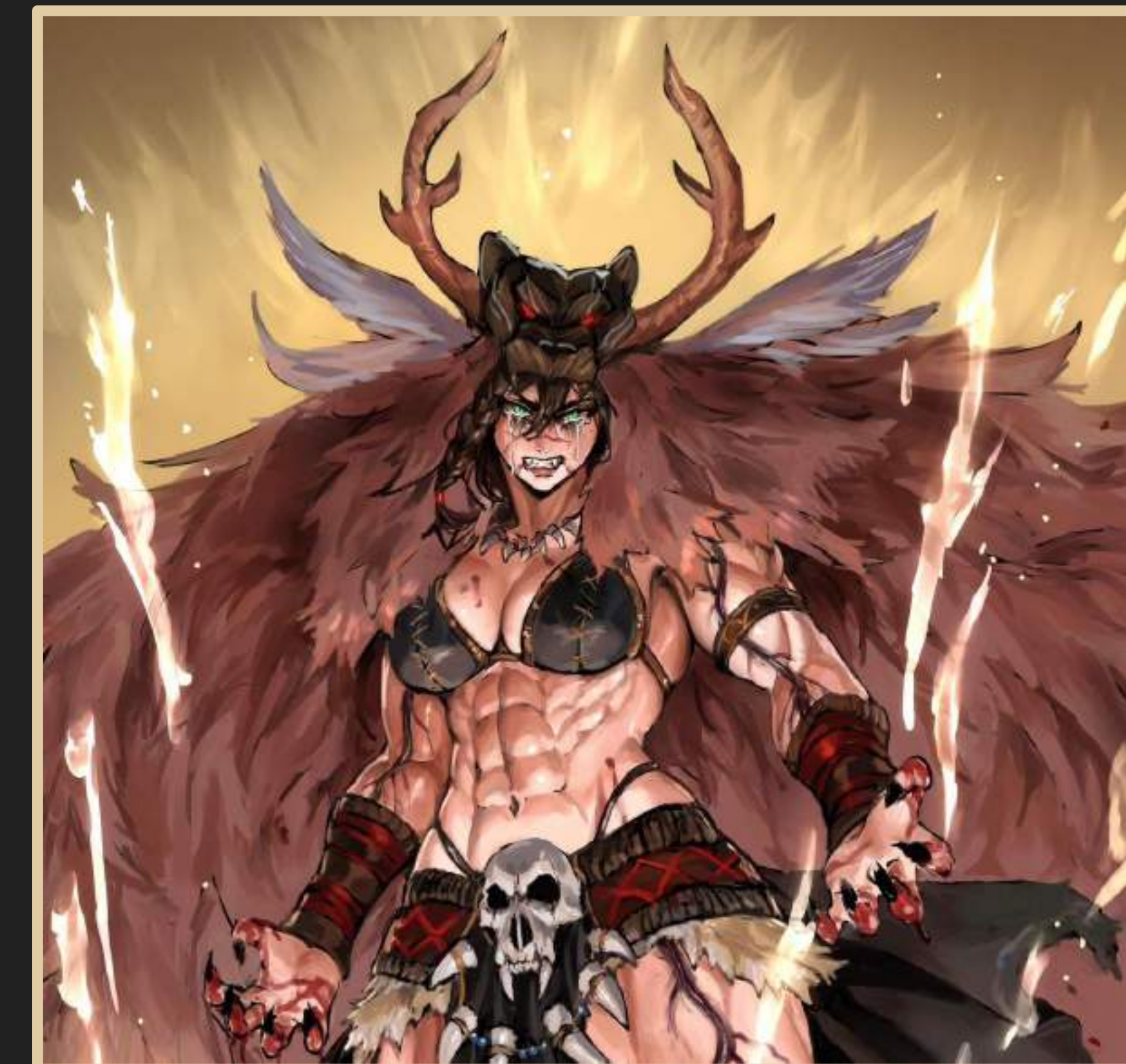


Being composed entirely of the long-dead, the House of Catacomb also possesses the most thorough historical record of the City Between available, hoarding information with the same ferocity that they hoard wealth. You might be able to extract many valuable secrets from them, provided you know what you're looking for. Perhaps most valuable, their collection of artifacts, forged by ancient alchemists or discovered in the strange corners of the Spirit World, is among the most comprehensive in the City Between. Membership is won by outsiders through patronage or marriages of strategic significance, though they are always greatly appreciative of a powerful friend at their disposal.

## The Hair Tribe



They have a strong cultural attachment with the Red Demon Clan and the Jiahao, who they regard as the only noble sects of the City outside of their own. They value honesty, bravery, and generally distrust anyone who becomes too intelligent for their own good. In fact, an excess of intelligence or academic fervor is regarded as a vice, meaning few if any in the Hair Tribe are particularly talented in the Flow and Alchemy Affinities.



The Hair Tribe are hunters, warriors and survivalists, the most populated of the four Animal Tribes and the primary residents of the Tribelands. Considered some of the greatest martial warriors and Beast Hunters in the City, their increasingly isolated sect has forsaken all attachment to the discipline of Alchemy, and regards its practitioners with great suspicion. On no shortage of occasions, they have staged active invasions of the Majushin's Turtle Islands, with no lack of casualties on both sides. For the time being, such ambitions have to be suppressed as the sorcerers of the City grow more and more powerful.



## *The Feather Tribe*



Some speculate that their territories in the Tribelands are home to a species of fruiting body or seed which they consume en masse, inducing a kind of religious psychosis that drives their fanatical spiritual practices. This is only hearsay, but the Exorcists have been searching for evidence of such a medicine for decades with the aim of eradicating it. If it does exist, it is known only by the most devoted inner circles of the Feather Tribe.



The Feather Tribe are secretive to the most extreme degree, and provide some of the highest caliber Exorcists the City has to offer. They seem to have a connection to the Spirits second to none, no doubt due to their vicious internal practices and primitivist Spirit worship demanding the utmost obedience and ritual strictness to appease their respective cults. It is this quality that also makes them a frequent target of Exorcists, being that they can devolve into the illegal and the hysterical without careful regulatory pressure.

## *The Scale Tribe*



Among them, the only way to advance in rank and receive the Tribe's approval is the acquisition of new Techniques, with rarer and more obscure ones being considered the most valuable. It is their commodity of choice, their asset of highest value, and finding a sagacious member in the wilderness is a certain method to expand your knowledge, provided you curry their favor sufficiently. In their dealings, they almost always demand the secrets of hidden Techniques and abilities as their price of business.



The Scale, in contrast to their brother tribes, have embraced and retained their ancient acumen in sorcery which created the Animal Tribes in the first place. Their recordkeeping and archival are among the most scrupulous in the City, and their libraries and sages hold the secrets of Techniques forgotten even to the Majushin. Their tribe has little in the way of structure or even gatherings, and most members live in isolation for most of their adult lives, as excess coddling in childhood is seen as a source of weakness.

## *Jiahao, The Warrior Dynasty*

The Jiahao are the famously thick-headed warmongers of the City, who care only to train, eat, sleep, and train again, with their most high-ranking members also being the physically largest and strongest. They are the genetic carriers of the Core Affinity, and have mastered its Techniques in the pursuit of becoming physically invincible and superseding mortality itself, a kind of bodily enlightenment that is supposedly obtained through the agony of bloody knuckles and bruises. They are frequently at odds with the other Human dynasties, but are greatly beloved by the Red Demon Clan, whose callous bluntness and love of food, drink and a fight make them friends over a feast.



Though they appear on their surface to be brutish cavemen, at the bottom of their savage culture is a true striving for excellence, a love of justice, and a firm commitment to be the physical wall between the City and ruin. They are often Beast Hunters, Bodyguards and Overseers, prominent in the City's justice system and regarded as incorruptible by the populace.

## *Senguru, The Monastic Dynasty*



Traditionally they have been seen as the great moral backbone of the City, but their reputation has declined over the centuries, becoming more and more jaded, less concerned with the outer world and more concerned with their own goals. Their secrets are coveted the City over, and you'd have full access to them if you obtained membership through their curious rituals and ascetic practices.



The Senguru are the religious seekers of the City, whose primary goal as a clan is to achieve absolute sublimation into the matter and energy of the universe and attain immortality. The consequence is their renown and fame as the sacred holders of the Flow Affinity and their skill at wielding its Techniques. They are commonly Exorcists, monks and revered figures of wisdom, sometimes seen begging for alms while playing the shakuhachi.

## *Majushin, The Sorcerer Dynasty*

Unquestionably the most powerful of the human Dynasties, the Majushin have advanced the art of Alchemy by centuries from atop their secluded Turtle Islands. They are the only Dynasty to obtain impermanence, and have turned away from Spirit worship entirely to revere their enlightened ancestors, Sugemajo and Sattiva Panfaetha. Above the law, the City and the Spirits, their influence extends like an infestation into every facet of Youdu. When the Majushin speak, the City is forced to lend its ear.

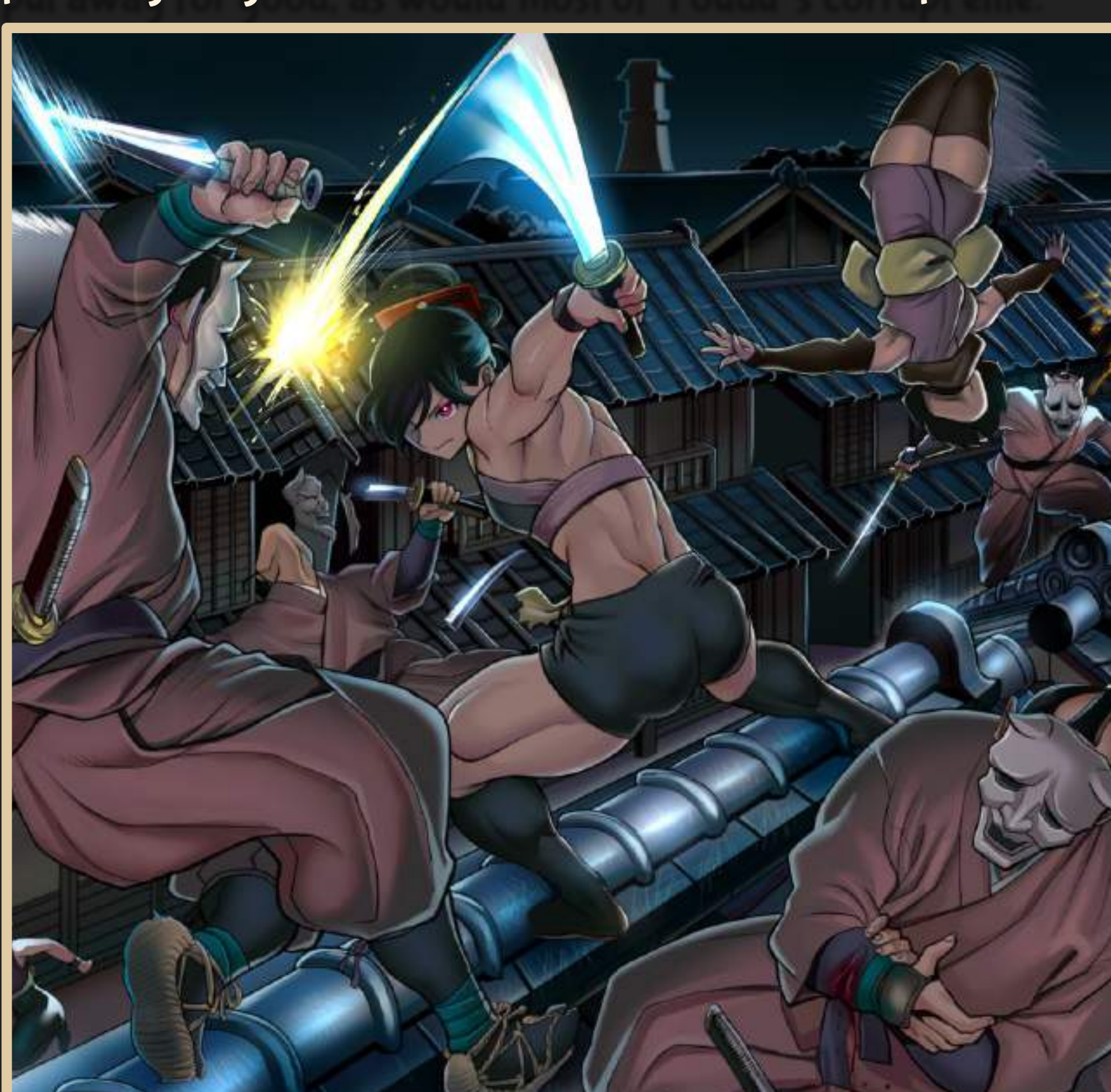


They are collectively opposed by the other human Dynasties, who despite internal rivalries cannot allow the Majushin's reign to go unchallenged. While powerful, the Majushin are largely regarded as inhumane, calculating witches, exacting their will and advancing their magic at any price to the City. Their craft is largely responsible for the existence of the Chimeras, a blight not easily forgiven by the people. Gross imperinence in magical experiments with the soul have led to bodily malignance and death in the City, and the sheer cruelty of their research is partly why their Turtle Islands are so ruthlessly guarded from outside intrusion. In strange centuries, the Majushin may even become unfettered by death itself, as readily as they have unfettered themselves from any moral compunction or remorse in the pursuit of power.

## *Ninokata, The Shinobi Dynasty*



The Ninokata consider their duty to the City more valuable than their own lives, and are required to take an oath of suicide in the event that they are captured and on the verge of divulging the clan's secrets. Their training begins at birth, and usually continues until their death, motivated by an unerring commitment to protect the Dark Capital from the tyranny of the few. They could be a powerful ally in disrupting Youdu's status quo, or could accelerate your training as a Stalker if you can win their favor. Inculcation of outsiders is hard-earned through hard training and sadistic initiation rituals, too numerous and too secret for the public to know. They are among the most powerful Phase users in Youdu, having developed many treasured Techniques of the Affinity themselves by seeking to scatter themselves across time and space, and thus escape reincarnation. Still other Phase Techniques have been kept secret in the clan's vaults, known only to a select few and a smattering of ancient Spirits.

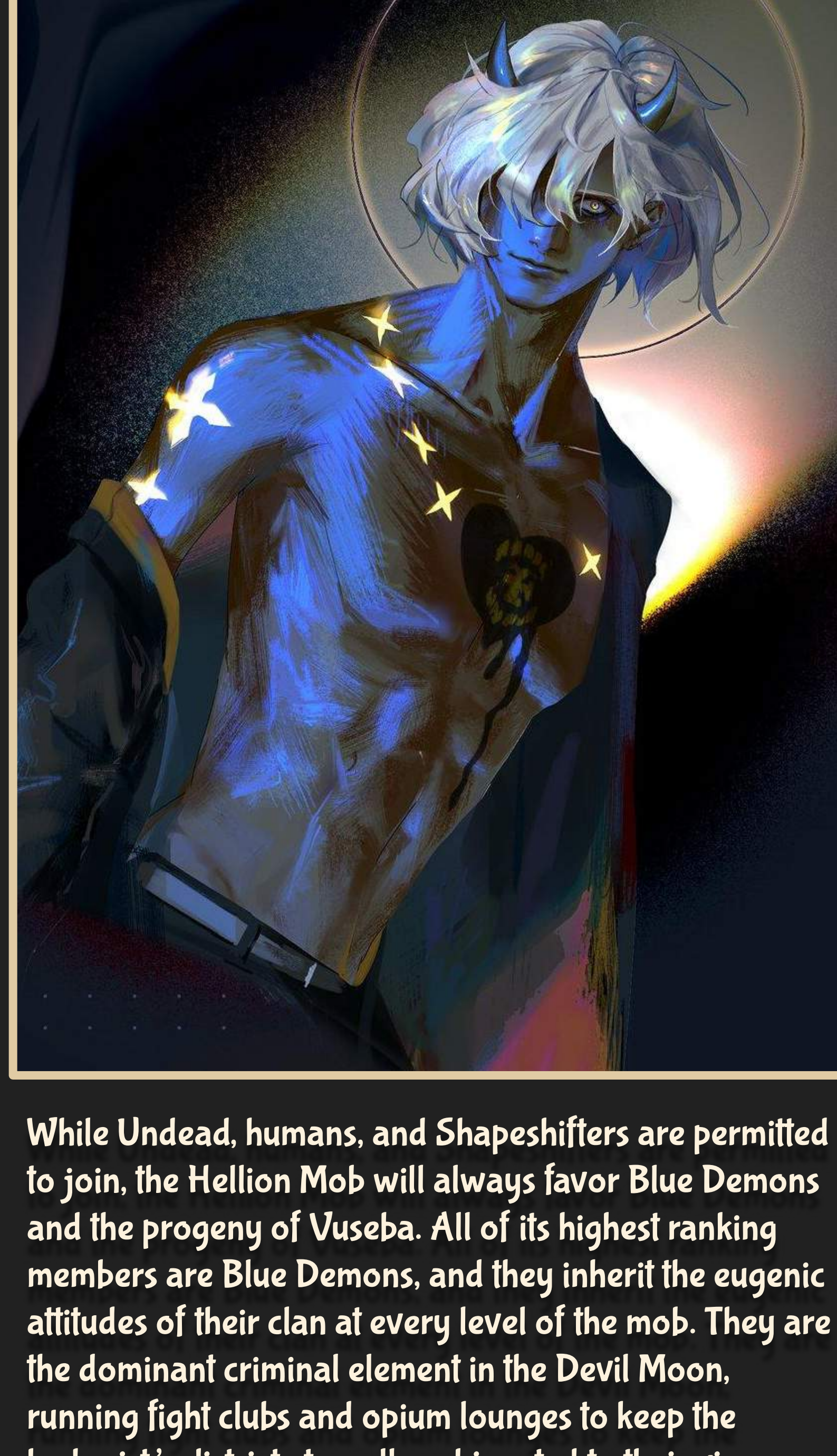
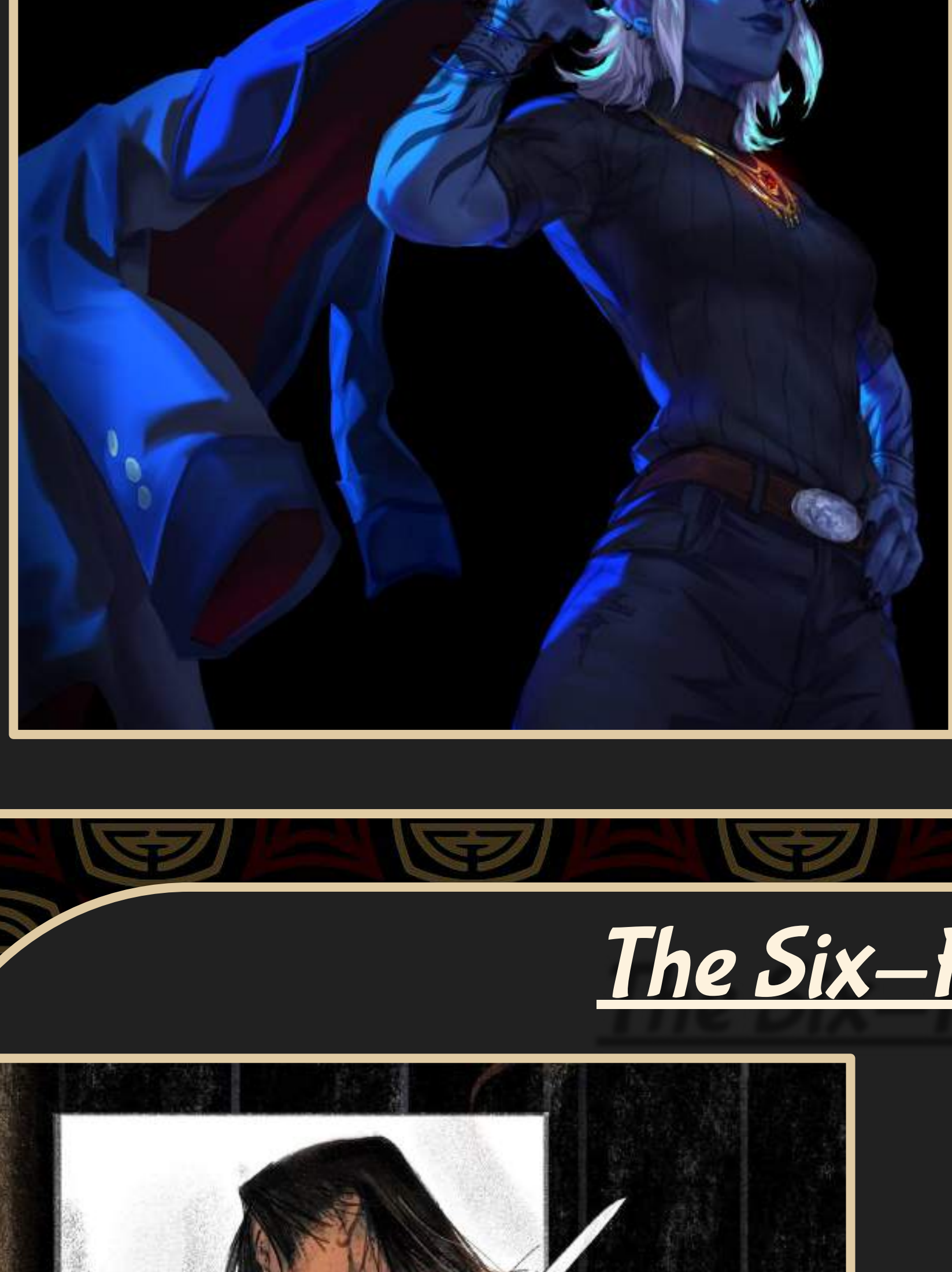


The Ninokata are a respected clan of assassins and saboteurs, keeping a centuries-long tradition of serving the clandestine ambitions of Youdu's upper crust. Their leading principle is quite simple: if the threat of assassins is greater than the protections of political power, Youdu's leaders will never become despots. Not for long, at least. Over the centuries, an unusual genetic trait of the family preserved through incestuous blood causes most of the Ninokata to be born female, with a male only born once every few generations. Yama and Yudi, for their part, would love to see this pesky thorn in their side finally put away for good, as would most of Youdu's corrupt elite.



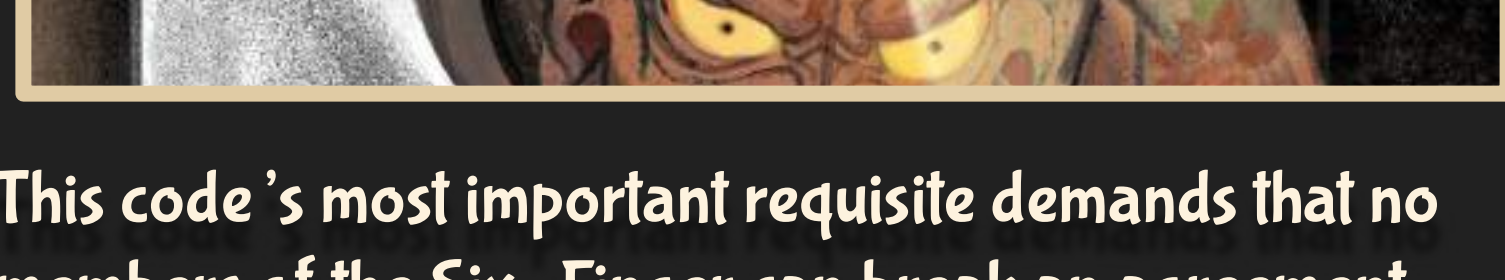
## The Hellion Mob

Inextricably tied to the Blue Demon Clan, the Hellion Mob is feared as an organization of severe and harsh punishment, intimidating the Devil Moon into fear and poverty and leaving those who refuse to drown in the River Vaitarani. They are brutal, cruel, hedonistic and unflinching. Their organization deals in illegal narcotics, trafficking, kidnapping, slavery, loan extortion, prostitution, murders and anything else you can imagine. They are famously two-faced, and their rivals the Six-Finger make it a point to differentiate themselves from their sadism and dog-eat-dog philosophy. They have no loyalty, even to each other, and ascent in the organization comes on a staircase of corpses.



While Undead, humans, and Shapeshifters are permitted to join, the Hellion Mob will always favor Blue Demons and the progeny of Vuseba. All of its highest ranking members are Blue Demons, and they inherit the eugenic attitudes of their clan at every level of the mob. They are the dominant criminal element in the Devil Moon, running fight clubs and opium lounges to keep the hedonist's district eternally subjugated to their vices.

## The Six-Finger Mafia



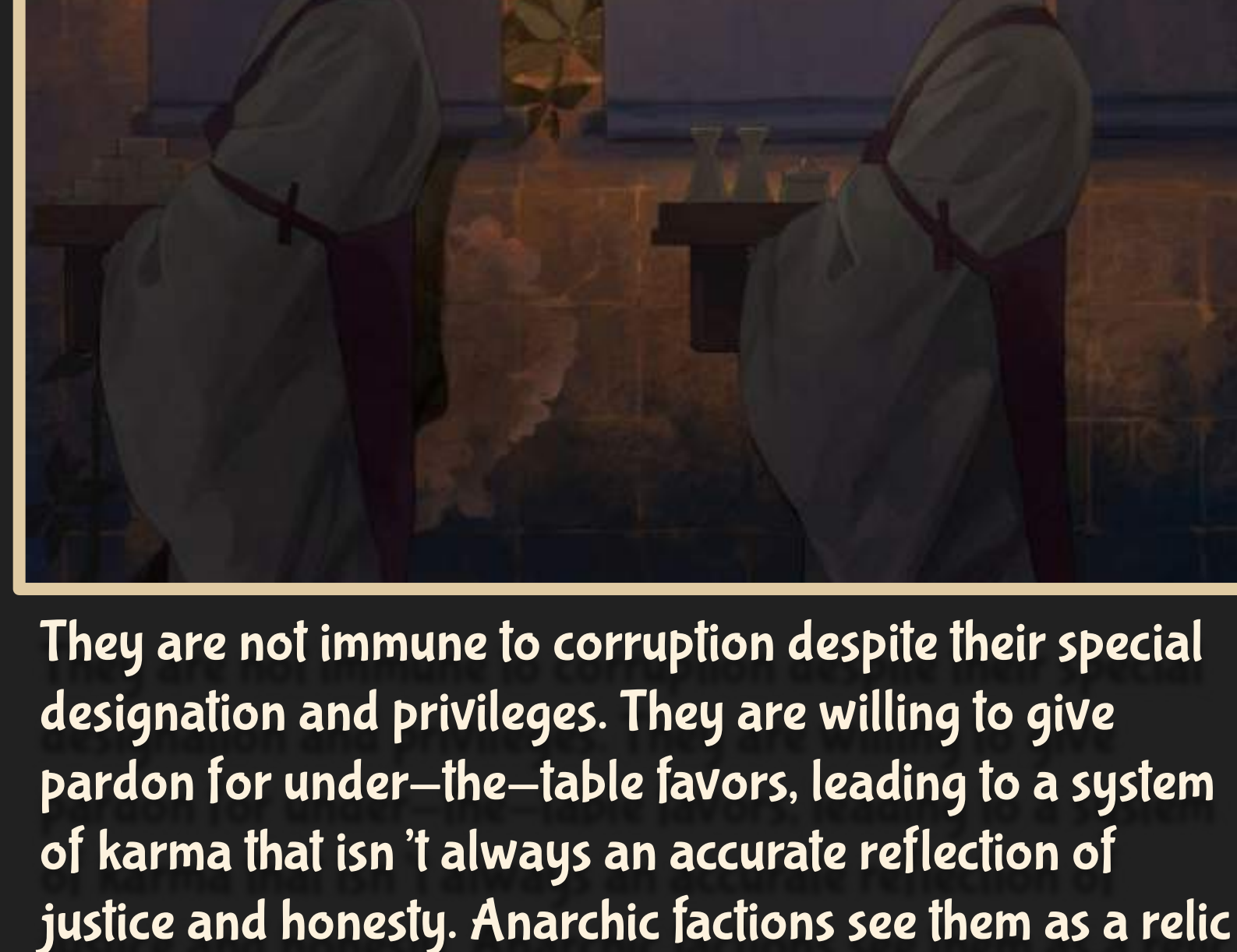
This code's most important requisite demands that no members of the Six-Finger can break an agreement made in good faith, and they commonly use Devil Deals to facilitate this honesty even for trivial matters. Shen Roh, among other powerful members of the Red Demon Clan, hold the highest positions of power in the mafia's hierarchy, and their primary enterprises consist of protection payments, bodyguarding services, illegal gambling, union connections, and, as they refer to it, 'dispute resolution' in matters of justice that fall outside the law. While these might be pretty distasteful, they're downright pleasant in comparison to the cruelty and hedonism of the Hellion, and even the Overseers are willing to work with Six-Fingers if it's to bring down larger and more dangerous Hellion operations.



Rival organization to the Hellion Mob and denizens of the Canal District. The Six-Finger Mafia is the only criminal element large enough to regularly challenge the influence of the Hellion across the City. While they are largely associated with the Red Demon Clan, they make the concerted effort to work with Shapeshifters, humans and the Undead and follow a rough but effective code of honorable dealing, earning a more favorable reputation than the famously deceptive Hellion overall.

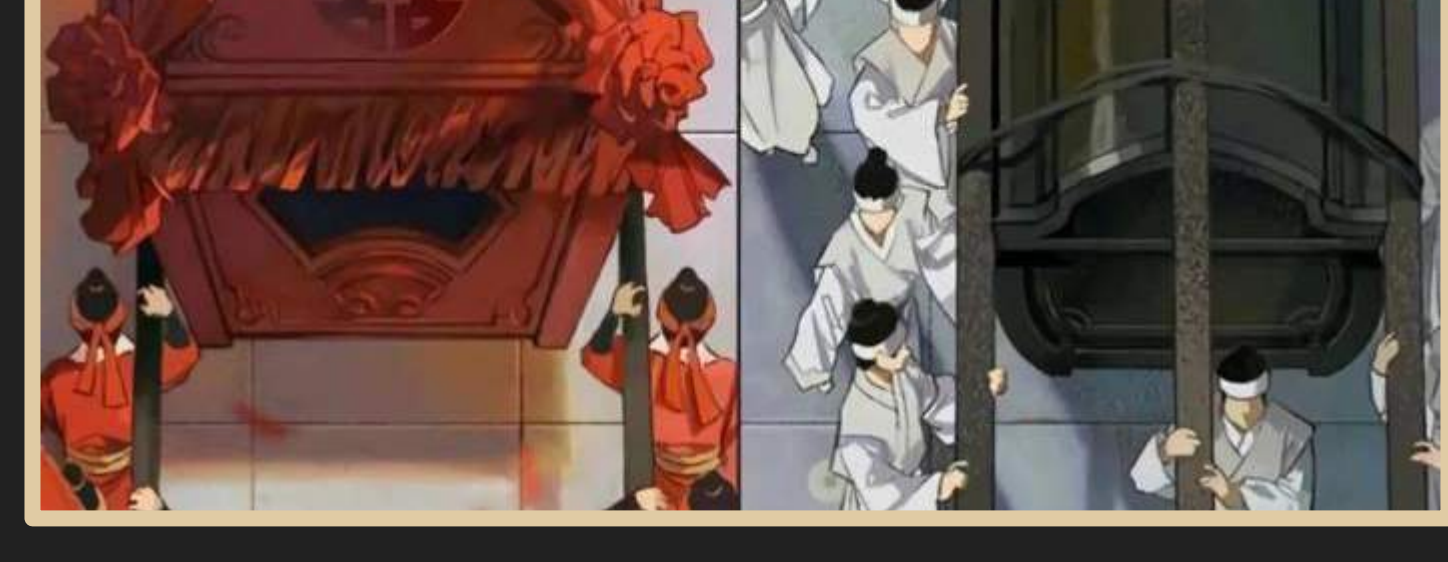
## The Lunar Temple

Beyond cult worship of Spirits, the primary religious authority in the City is the Lunar Temple, the arbiters of punishment and reward in the afterlife. All sentient souls accumulate karma through their actions, and are either sent up the river Vaitarani to the light of Paradise or the purgatorial flame of the Hell worlds, where their accrued karma is dispersed over hundreds, thousands, or even millions of years before the soul reincarnates and continues the cycle. The Lunar Temple merely facilitates this, and has the unique responsibility of being able to cleanse bad karma and grant good karma through certain penances, rituals and selfless deeds they commission.



They are not immune to corruption despite their special designation and privileges. They are willing to give pardon for under-the-table favors, leading to a system of karma that isn't always an accurate reflection of justice and honesty. Anarchic factions see them as a relic of a bygone era, an age in which drastic punishment and reward was the only method to keep people's morality in line. Some even call for its collapse, but can't execute on their threats due to their monopoly on the afterlife. Any faction in Youdu must at least remain neutral to the Temple or else risk their access to karmic pardon, a fact that the Lunar Temple is gladly willing to use for its own gain.

## The Solar Trigram Cult



As the only alternative to the Lunar Temple's influence, the Solar Trigram Cult offers the knowledge and the secret powers of their respective Spirits, bringing the high priests and practitioners to the level of some of Youdu's strongest.



The occultic triumvirate worshipping Vuseba, the Raja Danaav, and Yakshaneh are among the last socially tolerate instances of malicious Spirit worship in the City, with most others culled by the Exorcists over the ages. Vuseba and the Raja Danaav are currently incarnated and draw enough power and influence from their cults that the Exorcists cannot realistically challenge them, and Yaksahnek's cult is so expansive that the Exorcists are engaged in a perpetual witch hunt to root them out.

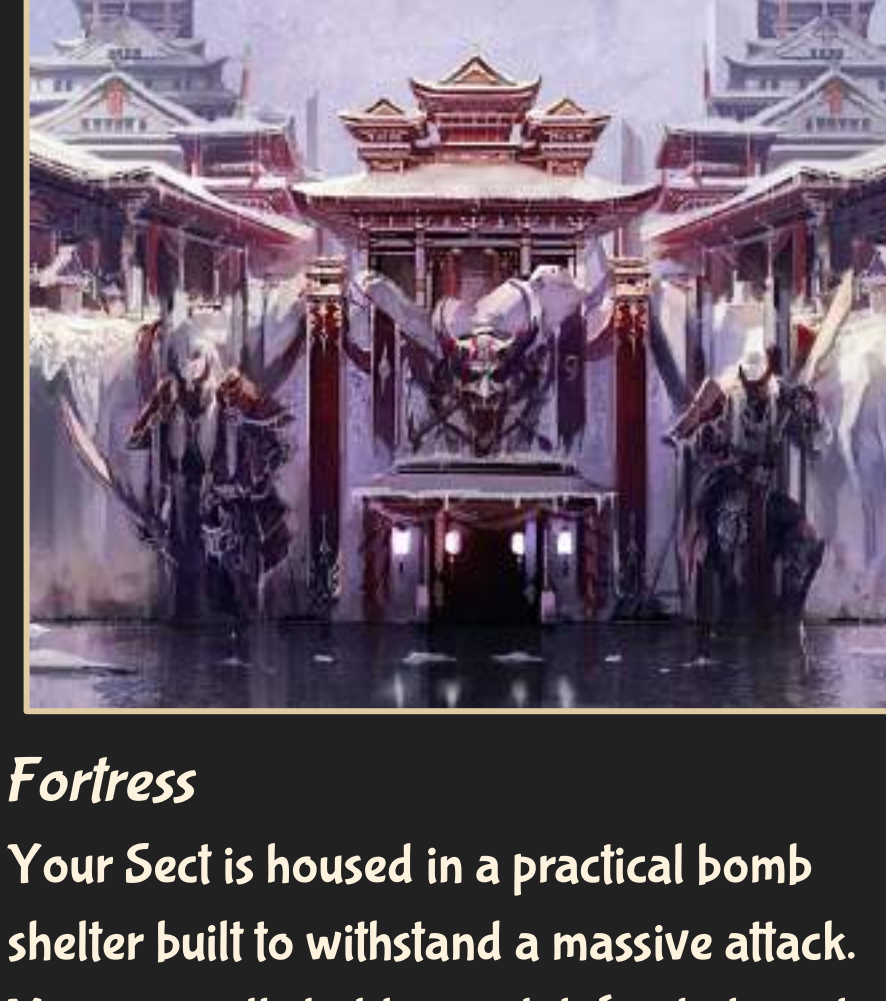
## New Sect

Occasionally, a leading figure rises and organizes a following around themselves to change the playing field of Youdu. You are one of these figures. With the reputation and force of magnetism behind you, anything is possible. You can form a cult of personality, a new bloodline, a hidden dojo, a criminal organization—practically anything as long as you can draw people to your goals. Gain a large enough crowd at your back, and you could even reshape the power structure of the City Between.

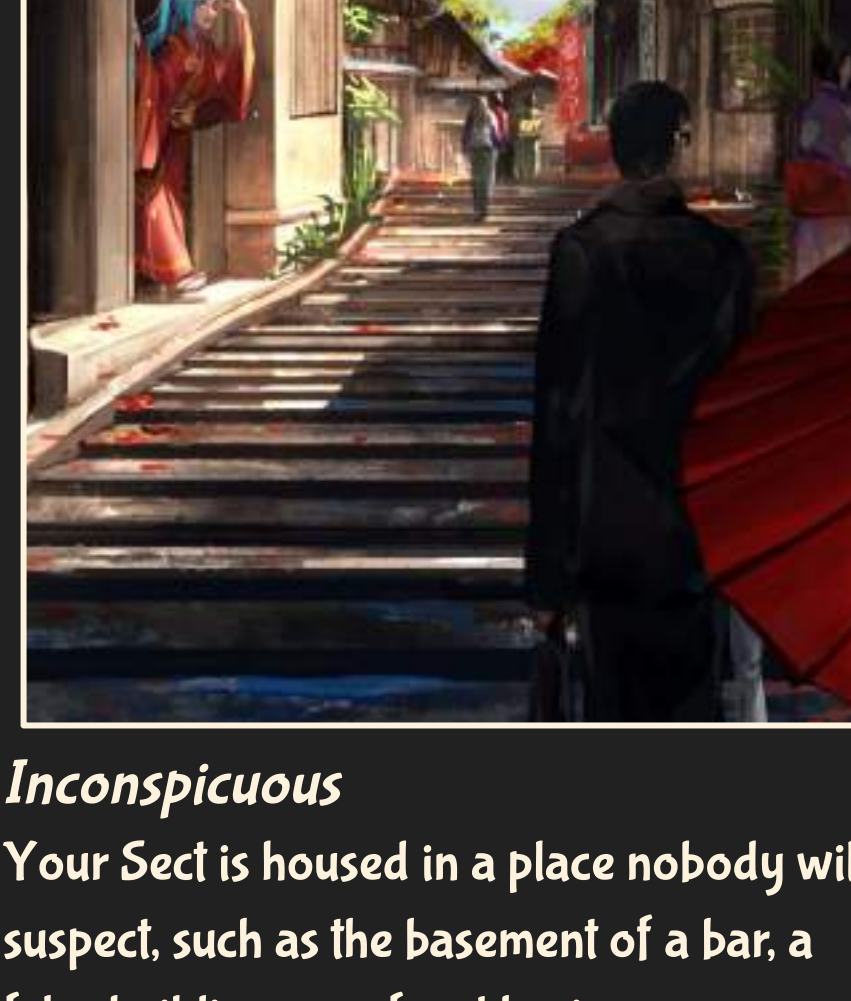
*You must have an Alteration which specifies that it allows you to create a New Sect. It costs (0 AP) for others to join it as Allies or Members and provides (+1 AP) as a Nemesis or Foe, regardless of Alterations.*

*Choose 2 of the following Advantages, and also choose 1 of the following as your Sect's Special Advantage that makes it one of the strongest in the City. Choose a location for your New Sect using the Home Territory section.*

## Sect Advantages



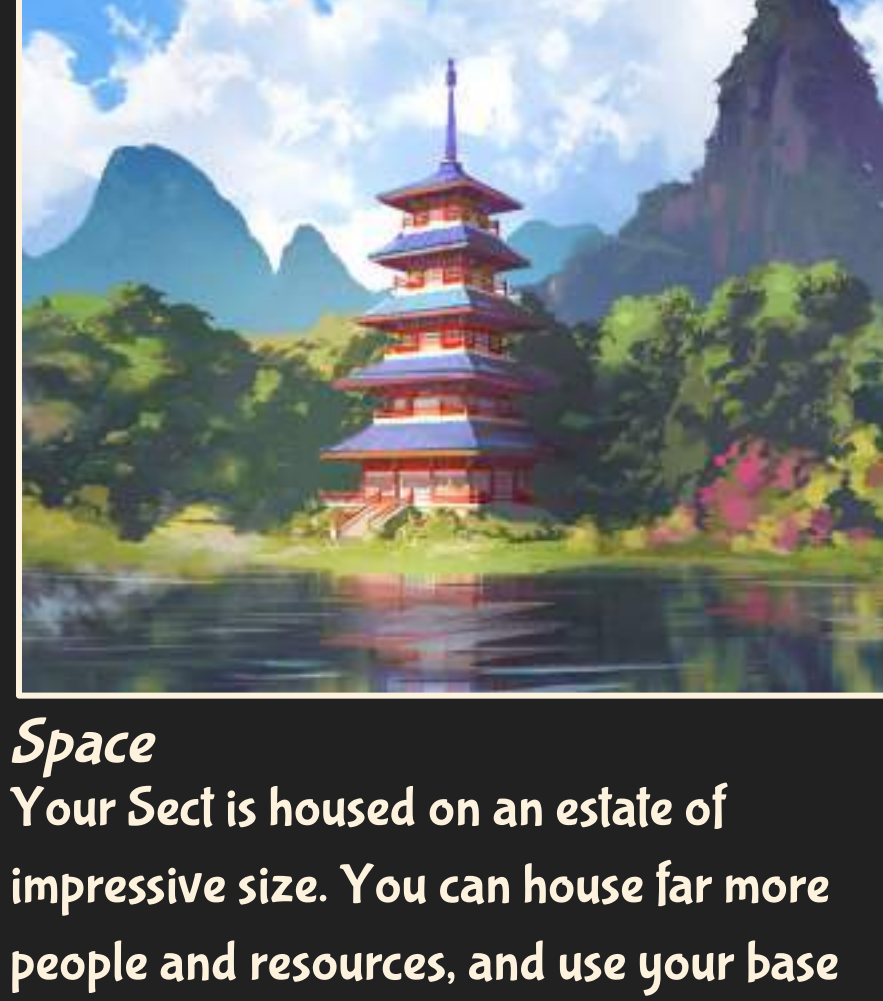
**Fortress**  
Your Sect is housed in a practical bomb shelter built to withstand a massive attack. You are well-hidden and defended inside your base.



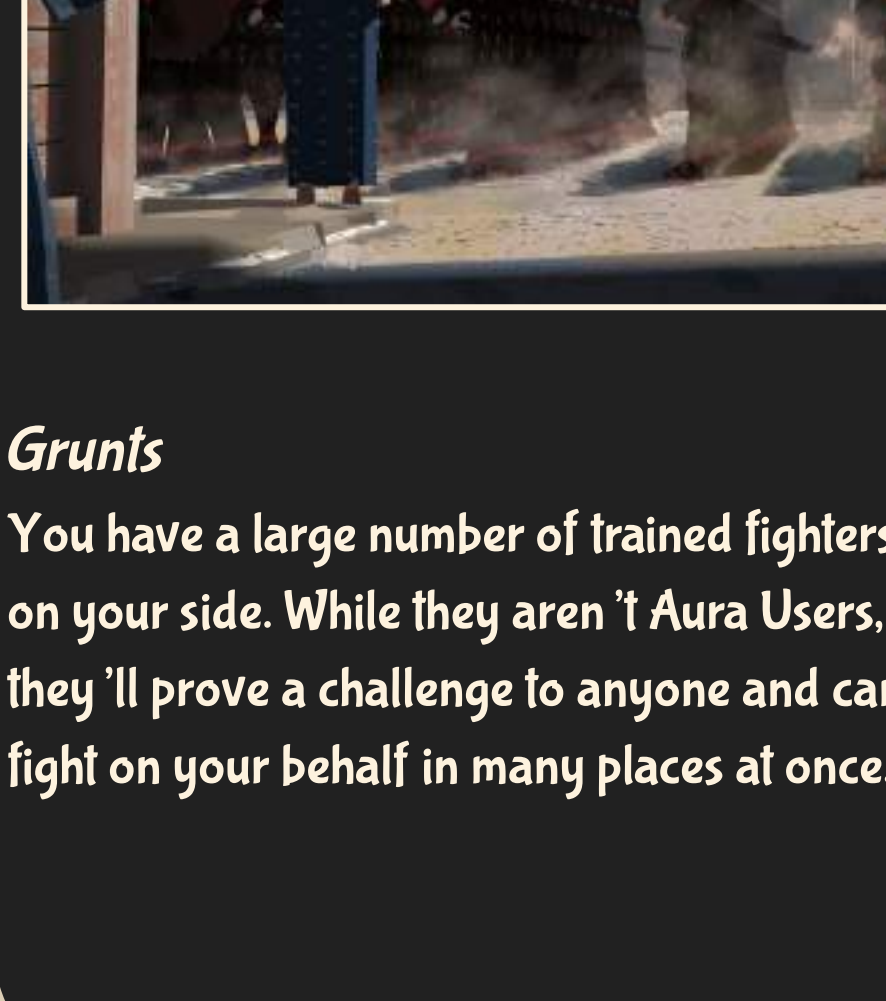
**Inconspicuous**  
Your Sect is housed in a place nobody will suspect, such as the basement of a bar, a false building, or a front business.



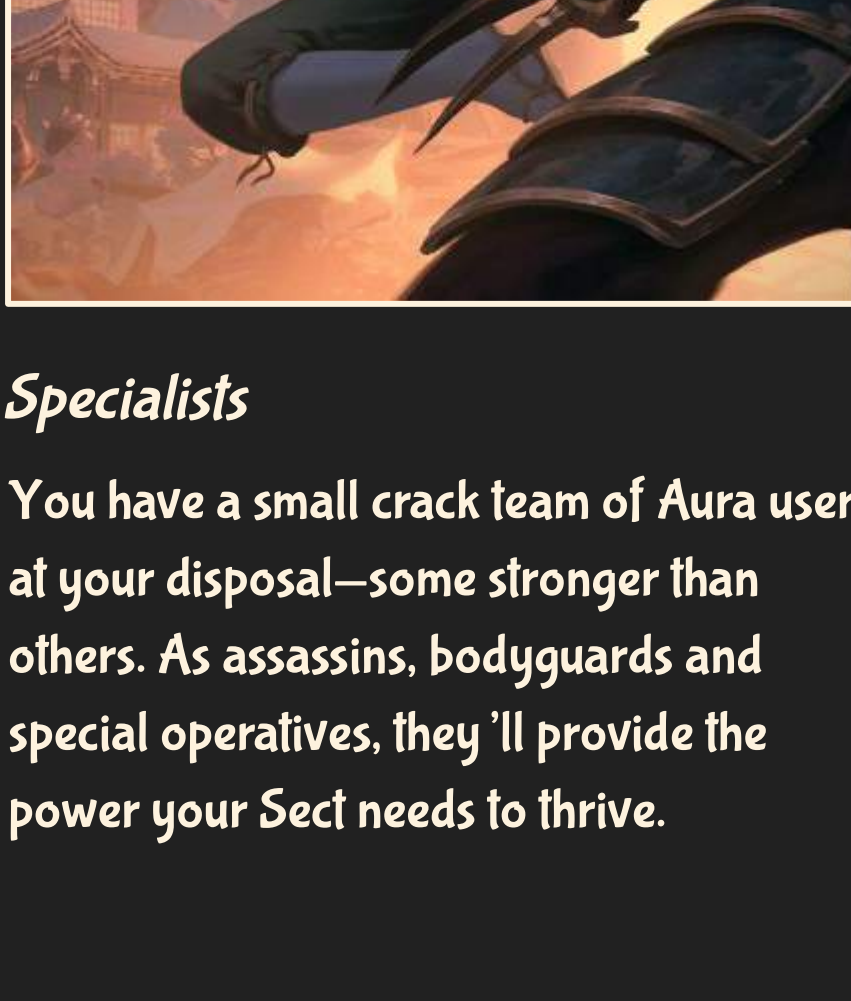
**Luxury**  
Your Sect is housed in extreme opulence, with no expenses spared. No one will doubt your professionalism and status as a faction.



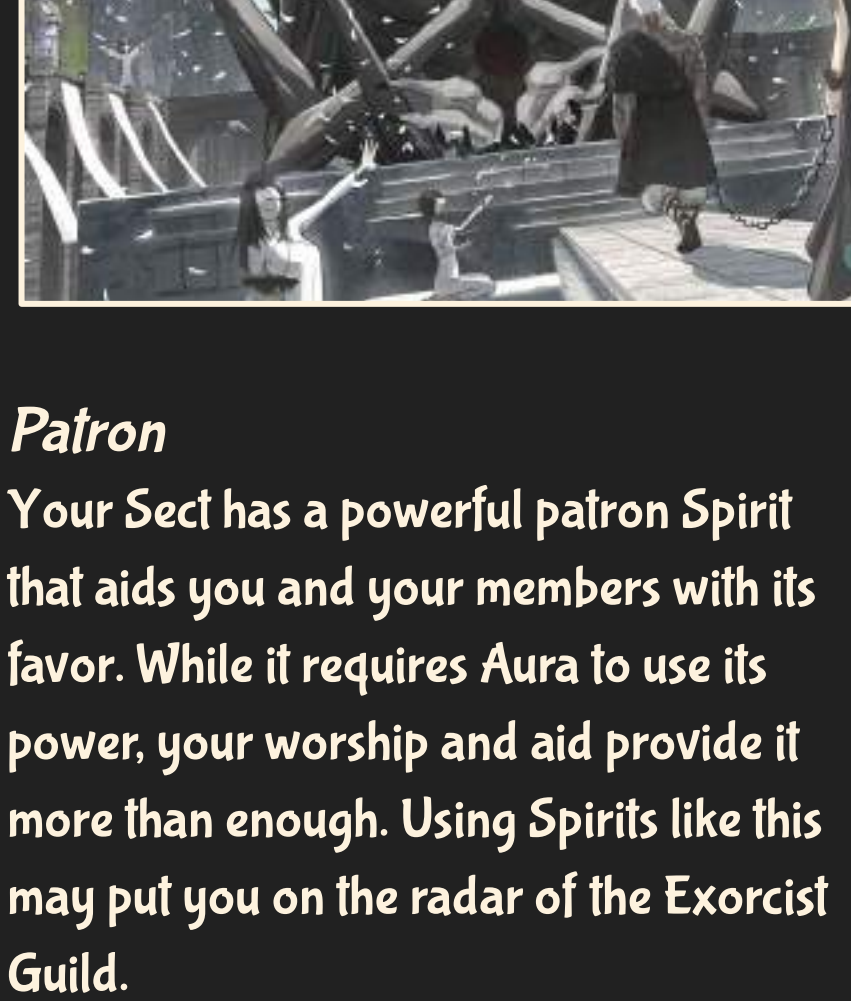
**Space**  
Your Sect is housed on an estate of impressive size. You can house far more people and resources, and use your base for more multiple purposes.



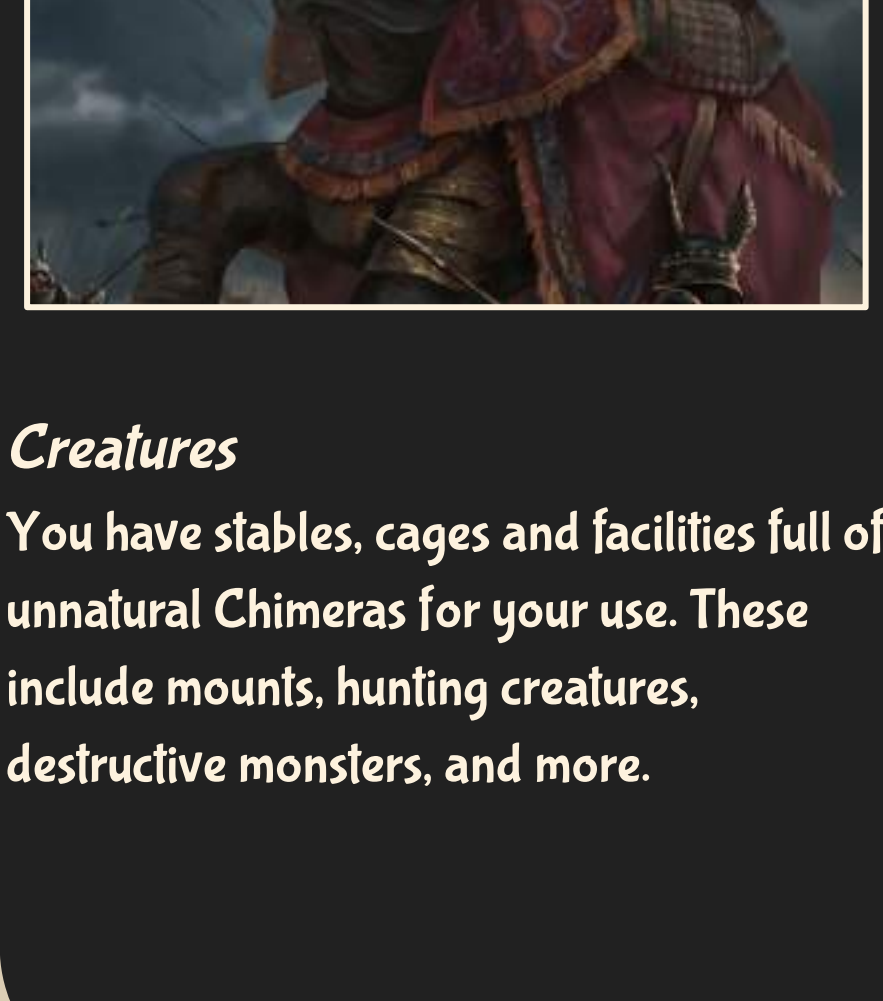
**Grunts**  
You have a large number of trained fighters on your side. While they aren't Aura Users, they'll prove a challenge to anyone and can fight on your behalf in many places at once.



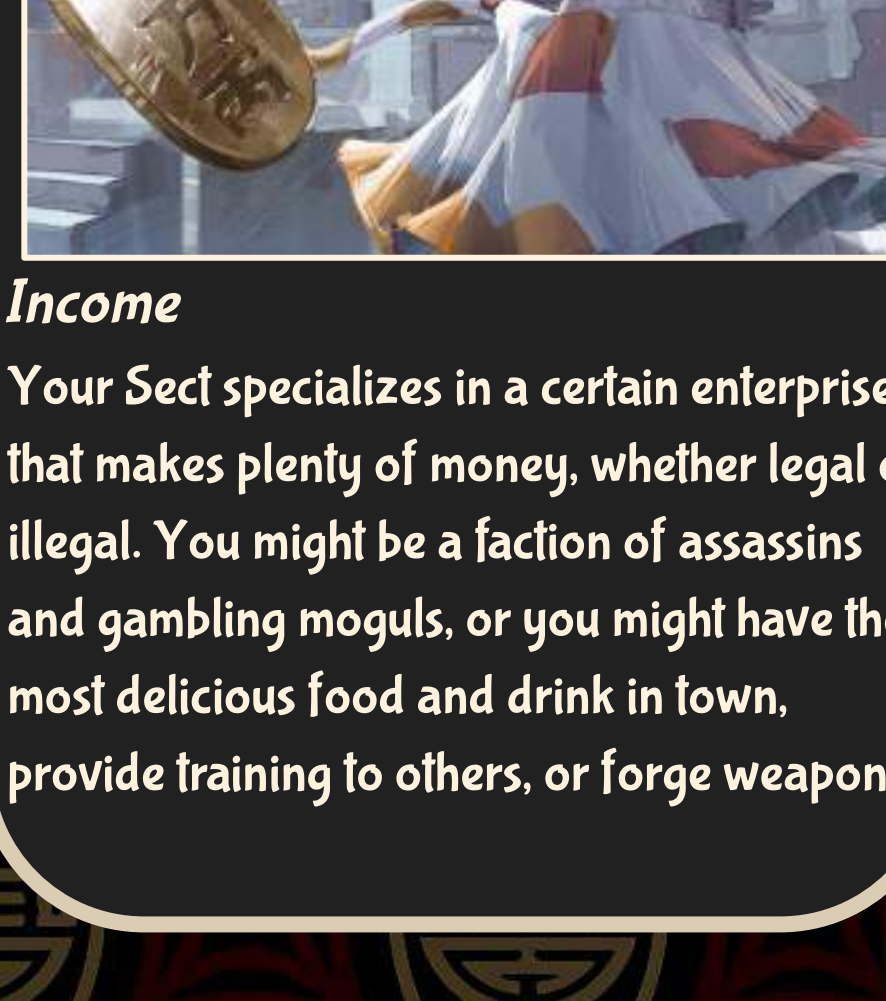
**Specialists**  
You have a small crack team of Aura users at your disposal—some stronger than others. As assassins, bodyguards and special operatives, they'll provide the power your Sect needs to thrive.



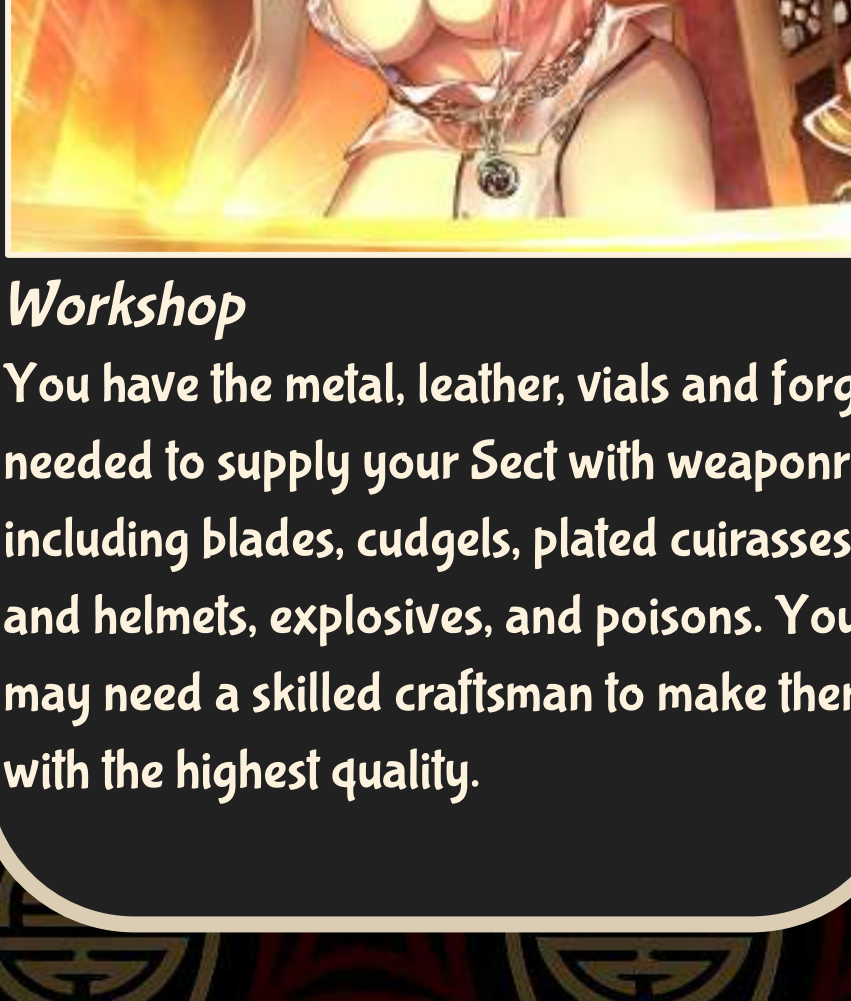
**Patron**  
Your Sect has a powerful patron Spirit that aids you and your members with its favor. While it requires Aura to use its power, your worship and aid provide it more than enough. Using Spirits like this may put you on the radar of the Exorcist Guild.



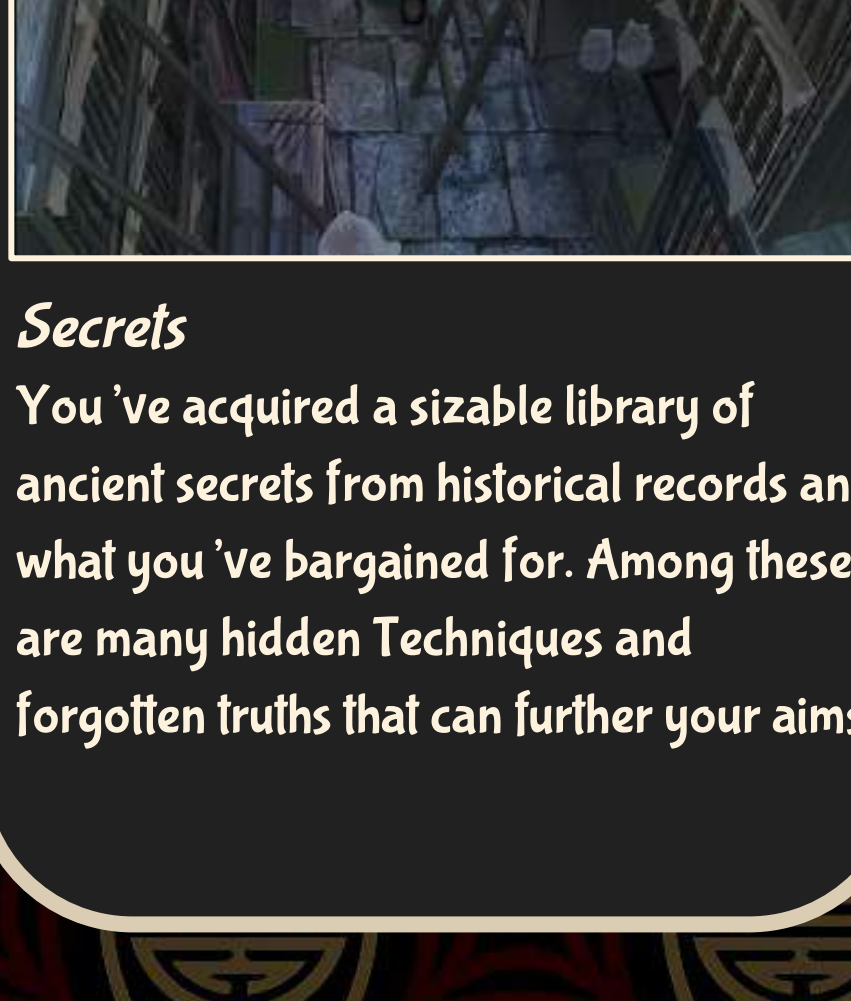
**Creatures**  
You have stables, cages and facilities full of unnatural Chimeras for your use. These include mounts, hunting creatures, destructive monsters, and more.



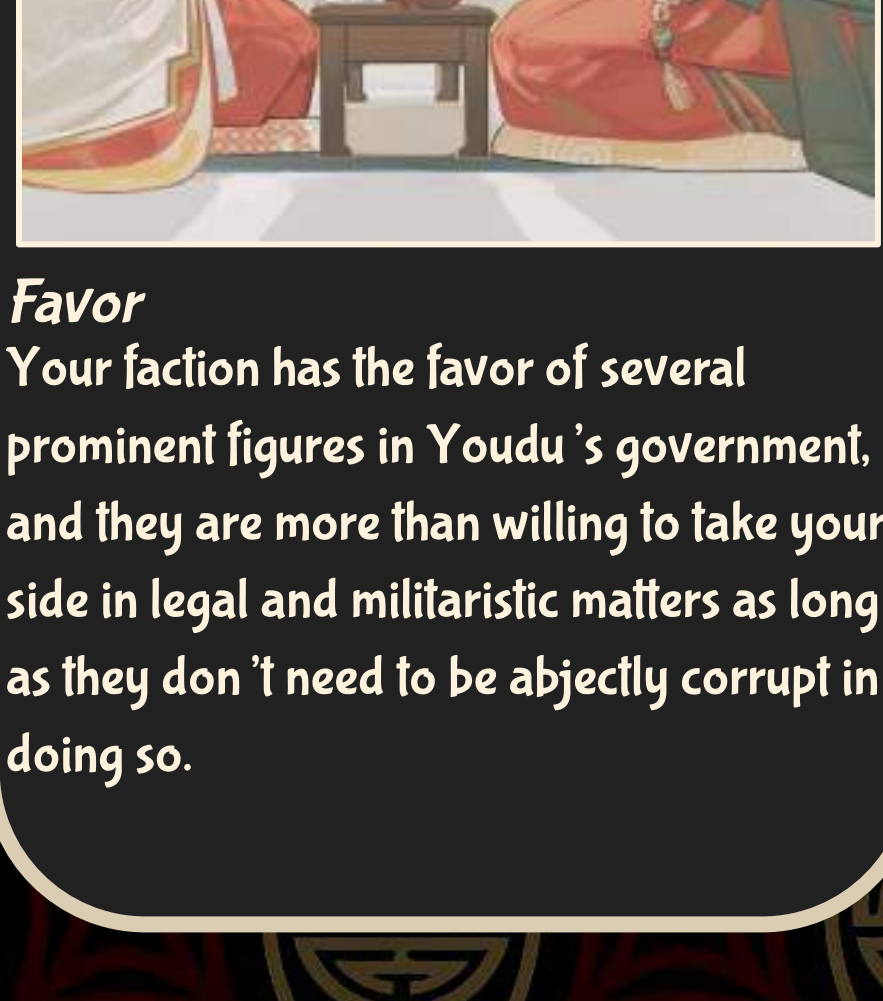
**Income**  
Your Sect specializes in a certain enterprise that makes plenty of money, whether legal or illegal. You might be a faction of assassins and gambling moguls, or you might have the most delicious food and drink in town, provide training to others, or forge weapons.



**Workshop**  
You have the metal, leather, vials and forge needed to supply your Sect with weaponry, including blades, cudgels, plated crosses and helmets, explosives, and poisons. You may need a skilled craftsman to make them with the highest quality.



**Secrets**  
You've acquired a sizable library of ancient secrets from historical records and what you've bargained for. Among these are many hidden Techniques and forgotten truths that can further your aims.



**Favor**  
Your faction has the favor of several prominent figures in Youdu's government, and they are more than willing to take your side in legal and militaristic matters as long as they don't need to be abjectly corrupt in doing so.



# Campaigns

## Conscription—Dedicated Campaigns:

Universal:



### Underworld Tournament

Any Conscription

The legendary Underworld Tournament is the largest and most anticipated martial arts exhibition of the decade, drawing powerful fighters of every color and creed from across the City Between. There are dozens of competitions to speak of, but three are most coveted: the Ruination Gauntlet, the Grand Championship, and the Trophy Hunter's Trial.

The Grand Championship is the most straightforward of these contests: martial artists face each other one-on-one, to the death or submission in the Capital Arena, fighting one match each day.

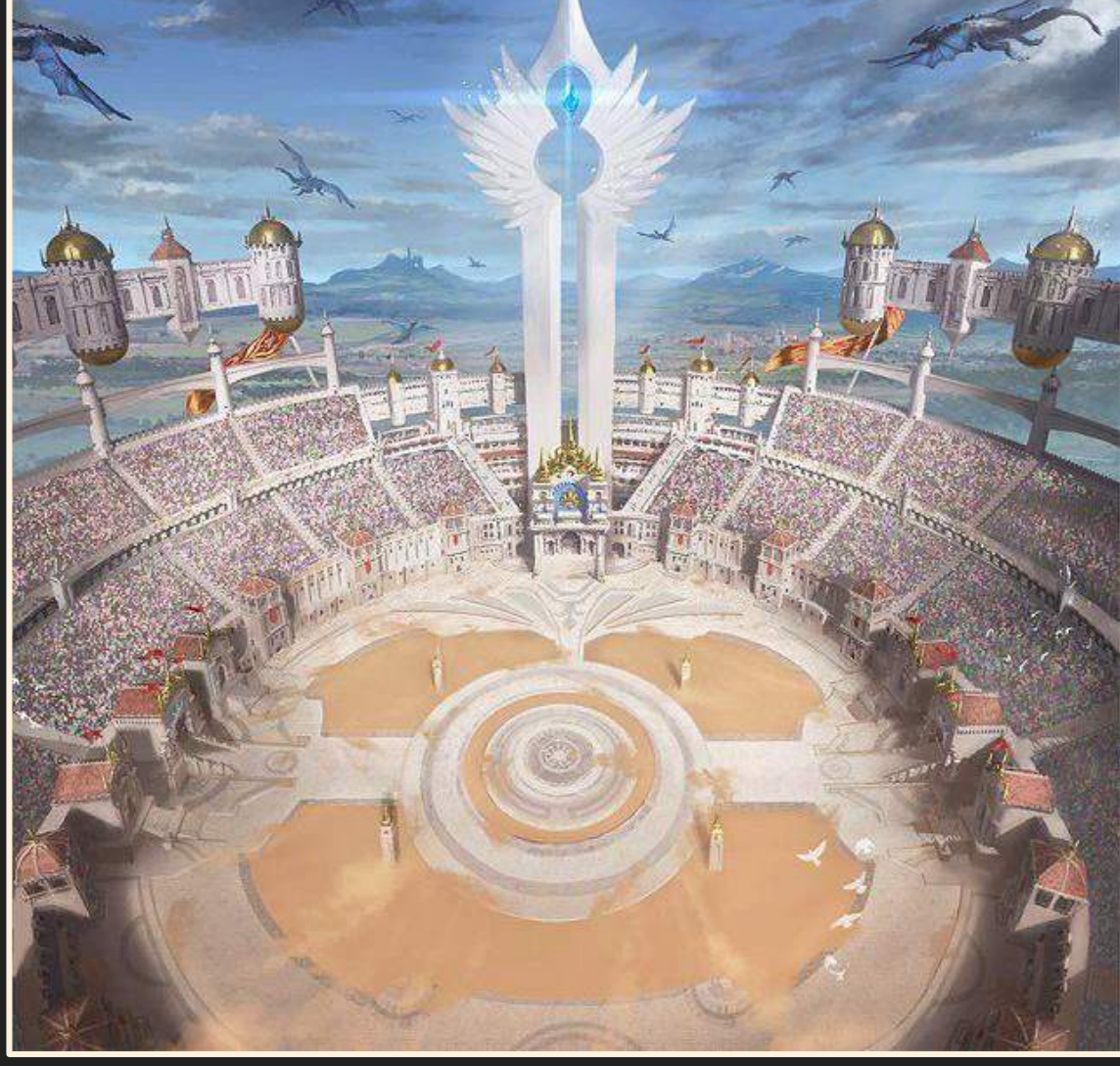
In the Ruination Gauntlet, a Gale of the Heavenly Prison is cast around a specified area of the Great Ruin Isles, with the objective being to remove Signal Paper Sigils attached to each participant that will immediately teleport them out of the barrier. Death, elimination or submission are the only escapes, and every skill at the player's disposal will be put to the test by hidden traps and monstrous Chimeras dispersed throughout.

The Trophy Hunter's Trial consists of a point-based hunt for various Targets across Youdu—rare beasts, Treasure Bugs, human quarry, mad Spirits or precious artifacts—with holly contested Targets being worth more points towards victory. The highest ranking contestants in all of these events are given a life-changing amount of money as a prize, though the real reward is the reputation acquired. Being crowned Underworld Champion, surviving the Ruination Gauntlet, or effortlessly overcoming the Trophy Hunter's Trial could bring inordinate business offers to any assassin, mercenary, warrior or explorer, much less the organization they belong to.

### Arena Deathmatches

Any Conscription

A common and barbaric spectator sport in Youdu pits martial warriors against increasingly dangerous and powerful opponents in the Capital Arena, with greater prizes delivered to those who can subdue stronger foes. Anyone is allowed to participate, though voluntary fighters are few and far between. Often it is filled with prisoners or slaves earning their freedom by racking up victories. In the Capital Arena, only one combatant can walk away unscathed. Offering a forfeit is dishonorable, and the forfeiting loser becomes property of the Arena head or is given as an enslaved prize to the winner. Against a Chimera, no outcome is acceptable but death. With all of these risks, the rewards are enormous. In one-on-one combat, the prize is typically the victor's choice of enslaving the loser or a great sum of money. In fights against beasts, the reward is the lion's share of profits made from spectators, and even the rights to take the animal as a prize if they subdue it or want a feast like no other.



### Visitations to Mortal World

Any Conscription

Spirits and residents from Youdu take long visits in Mortal World all the time, sometimes to maintain a cult they've fostered, and other times to experience a change of pace from the comparatively small City Between. You might be asked to retrieve Mortal World technology for a hermit's D.I.Y projects, rare delicacies for a noble, or deliver a message to criminals in exile. You might even go there for a nice, long vacation from magic and martial arts. Unless you have very good reason to do so, revealing the existence of Youdu or Spirit World is considered verboten. Exceptions are made in grave danger, to save someone's life, or in subtle ways not likely to be detected by more than a few people at a time.

### Seeker of the Strongest Fighter

Any Conscription

Your purpose in life is battle. Your existence is training. You need to fight like you need to breathe, and you will not stop training until you become the strongest martial artist alive or you die trying. Nothing will stop you, and you'll become the greatest by sheer stubbornness if you have to, talent be cursed. Your calling is to search for stronger and stronger fighters day and night, journeying across vast plains and high mountains to face hermit samurais, fire-breathing demons and towering monsters.



### Technique Collection

Any Conscription

Your goal is always greater power, and you seek to obtain every Release Technique under the sun. You know no limits of law or morality, and will gladly raid the archives of ancient sects and bloodlines to obtain abilities hidden in the annals of time. You may have to fear this City from its foundations, but you will rest at nothing to attain the abilities of gods. If you become even half of what you've set out to be, there will be no one who can abate your lust for power.

### Filler Arc

Any Conscription

You'll experience a periodic break in the action as a buffer when the anime starts to outpace the manga. Filler Arcs are usually tropey, fluffy nonsense that fills your hours with character development, romance, fanservice or training sessions. You'll get your beach episode, your recovering-in-the-hospital episode, your hot springs episode, your running-errands-hijinks, your horny wish-fulfillment sidequest, and much more all with only tangential relationships to the actual plot you're pursuing. It's pointless, it's lighthearted, it's a great opportunity for character moments, and it keeps you from getting fatigued. Adventuring, contrary to popular belief, is friggin' exhausting after all.



### Slave Hoarding

Any Conscription

Could you be any more of a bad isekai trope if you tried? Your goal is to hoard hot slaves like a dragon hoards treasure, without the slightest apprehension about the ethics of forcing people to be your sex trophies. With how attractive and available beautiful people are in Youdu, you certainly have a plethora of options. There are a lot more women than men in Youdu, so it's going to be a cakewalk if you're hoarding women and a bit of a wild goose chase if you're hoarding men. Everyone you defeat in combat or miraculously convince will join your ever-expanding colerie of romantic playthings, with the next prospect always being more exciting than the last. You're not above unsavory means of acquisition either. Hypnotism, aphrodisiacs, predatory contracts, arranged marriage or even physical domination are all on the table. You might have many heroic traits and noble ambitions, but your obsession with carnal conquest certainly isn't one. You're actually kind of a scumbag in that department.

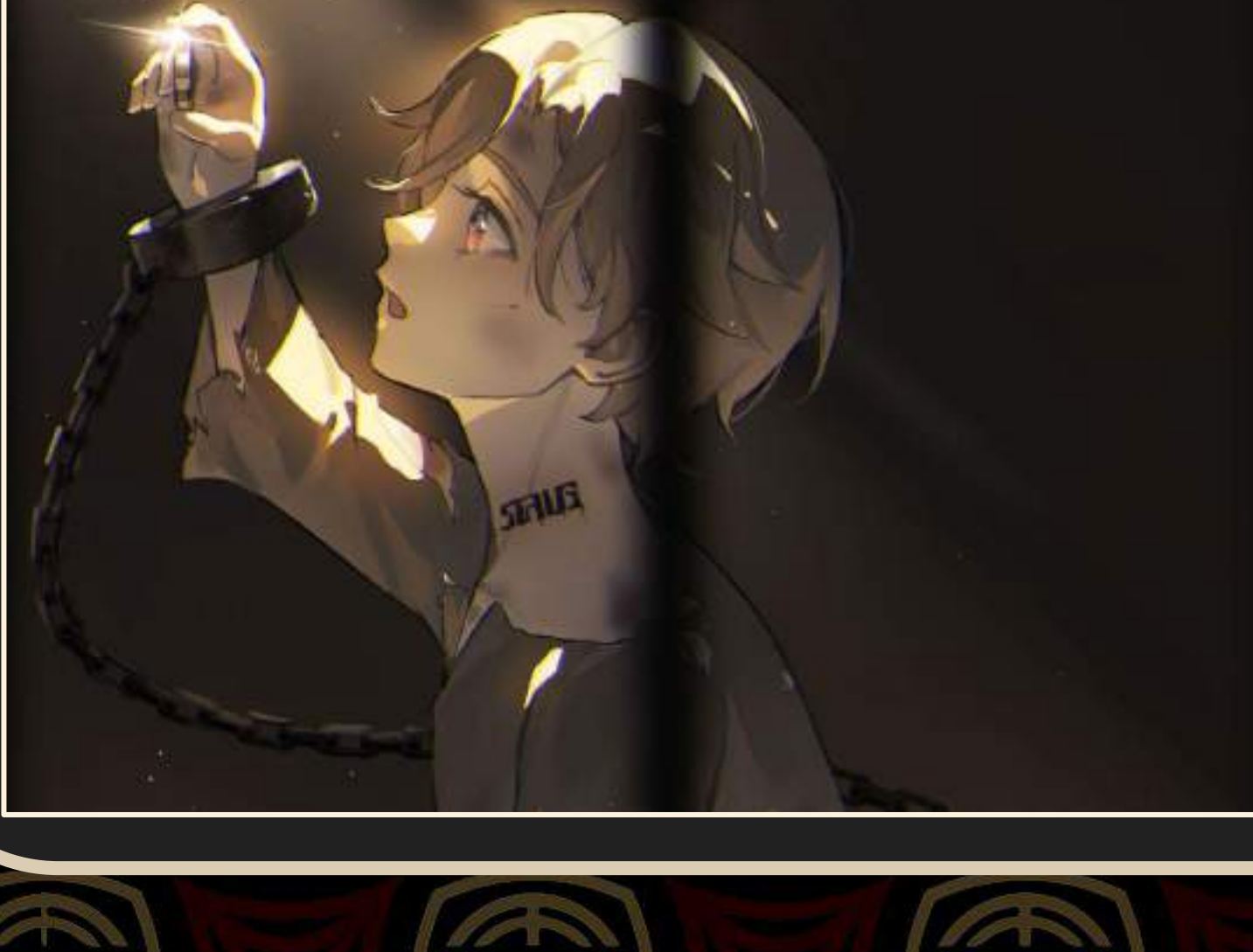
### Ghost at the Party

Any Conscription

Through some contrivance of fate, you've received an unexpected invitation to the Summer Festival hosted at the Heaven's Spire, an event whose exclusivity and prestige cannot be understated. You might have been hired as a bodyguard for a wealthy dignitary, you may be accompanying your master, or you might have a secret admirer in Youdu's highest castles that wanted you as their date. Maybe your motives are more sinister, and you've been hired as an assassin, a terrorist, or a saboteur sent to use the coagulation of Youdu's upper crust to your advantage. The Jade Sovereign desperately needs this party to go smoothly, as many of his elite supporters will begin to abandon ship if he can't defend them in his own territory. King Yama wants to use the opportunity to dismantle the Jade Sovereign's network of wealthy benefactors—by force or otherwise. Sparks will fly, and your fighting abilities, social skills and conspiratorial cloak—and-dagger will turn the tides of the Festival.



Aura Slave:



### The Thousand-Mile Road to Freedom

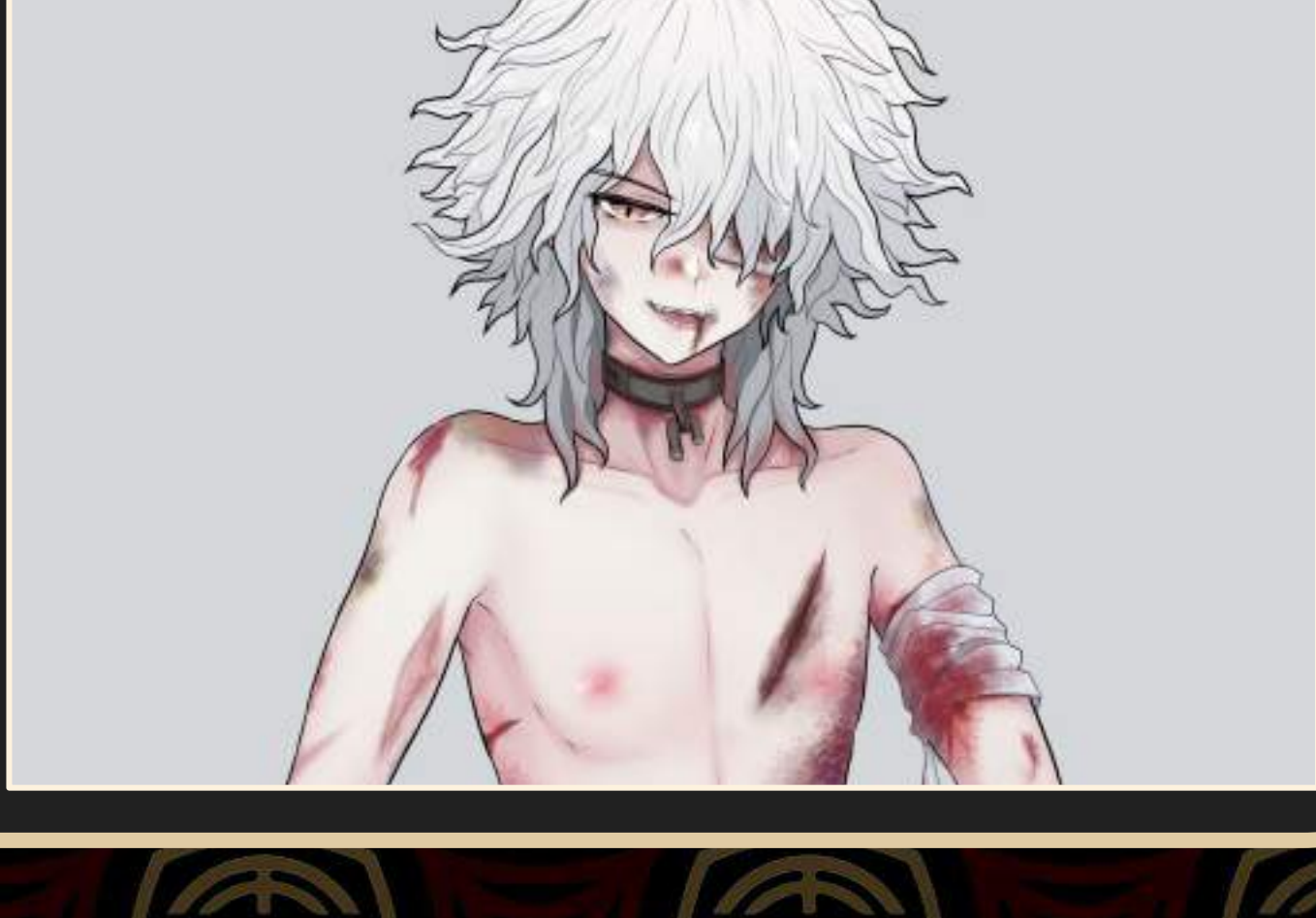
Must be an Aura Slave

You will take no shortcuts to earning your freedom. You'll do it by working odd jobs in your off hours, scrounging for pocket change to purchase yourself from bondage. It may take months or even years, but you refuse to live in fear of being caught and dragged back to your pitiful station in life. Alternatively, you can acquire your freedom through a few simpler—albeit more dangerous—methods. Winning your freedom in the Capital Arena, convincing someone more wealthy than your Conscripitor to purchase your liberation, or instigating sweeping social reform in the City Between could all finally break your fetters. None of these are without consequences or danger, and will require both tactical and combat expertise to navigate successfully.

### On The Lamb

Must be an Aura Slave

You've got to escape your oppressive bondage sometime. Instead of tirelessly laboring for scraps of money here and there to buy your freedom, you're going to run for the hills at the first opportunity. You'll have to keep a low profile, take on a new name, disguise yourself in your former master's neighborhood, and avoid run-ins with the authorities at all costs. One of the best ways to keep your pursuers off your trail is to fake your own death or plot your master's downfall. Since they'll be regularly draining your Aura for their purposes, you won't have many powers to work with if you go the route of violence.



Smuggler:



### Destroyer of Worlds

Must be a Smuggler

For all the powers and advancements afforded by Aura, there is no small measure of technologies which the Earth boasts far exceeding the imaginations of Youdu. One of these, perhaps their greatest envy, is what Youdu calls the Weapon to Exceed Divinity: the hydrogen bomb. Absurd as it may be, the existence of a weapon which could obliterate the City Between and everyone in it is functionally what forces Youdu's existence into secrecy. Negotiation is an impossibility, especially if mankind discovered how ruthlessly the Spirits once subjugated them in times forgotten to history. Your task, as the greatest smuggler this City has to offer, is to obtain such a weapon for Youdu by any means necessary. If you succeed, history will be shaped by your hands. Youdu may finally possess what it sees as sufficient leverage to reveal its existence. Or, perhaps more pessimistically, carnage unseen by the human race will unfold by your doing.

### A Sacred Artifact

Must be a Smuggler

Feared as it is, the ambition of Youdu cannot overlook the World-Turning Effigy in the endless clawing war for ultimate power. Your anonymous commissioner has given you a set of curious instructions and directions which they claim, if followed, will lead you to the means to undo one seal and one chain of the Effigy, unknown to the Dynasties and history of Youdu. How they obtained this information is anyone's guess, and answering that question will spiral into a rabbit hole itself. More pressing is the inevitable clash of interests converging on you now that this information is in your hands. Secrecy and self-defense are paramount, and you will inevitably be forced to take a side you see as moral. Or, if you can't see things their way, you might be manipulated into giving it up. When you do figure out its location, you'll be pressed with one burning problem: it's hidden somewhere in Mortal World.



Housekeeper:



### Esteemed Guest's

Must be a Housekeeper

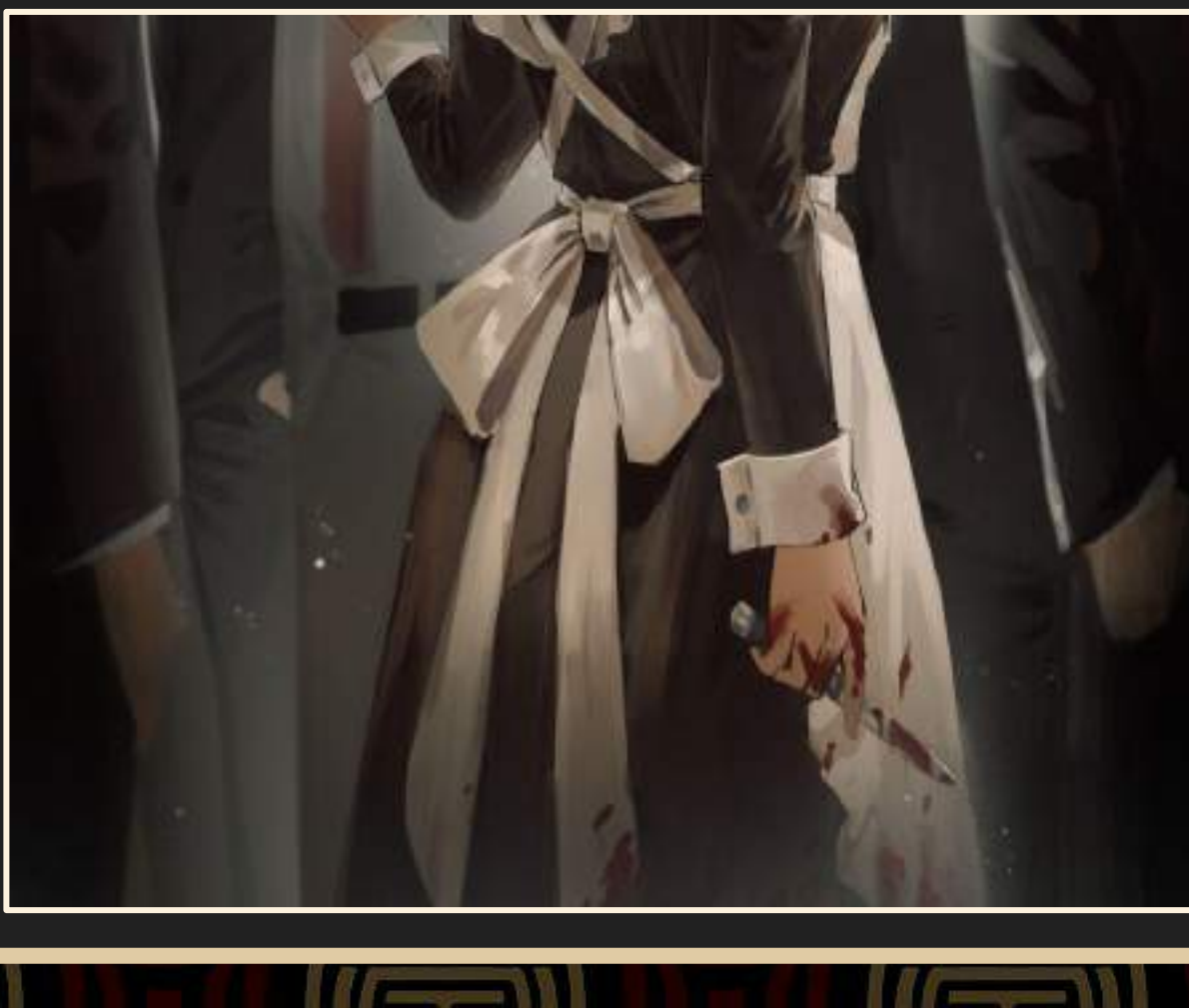
You may not be particularly fond of high society, but your master's house seems to be always occupied with them. Officials, bureaucrats, powerful Spirits... you know the type. But lately, a new type of guest has been showing up from time to time: gruff, silent, hooded and frequently armed to the teeth. They leave without a word. Is your master being extorted, or are they offering the lion's share of their fortune to some secret group of mercenaries and killers? You can't imagine the former, but the latter is equally unthinkable. What could they be financing, and can you find out before it comes to fruition?



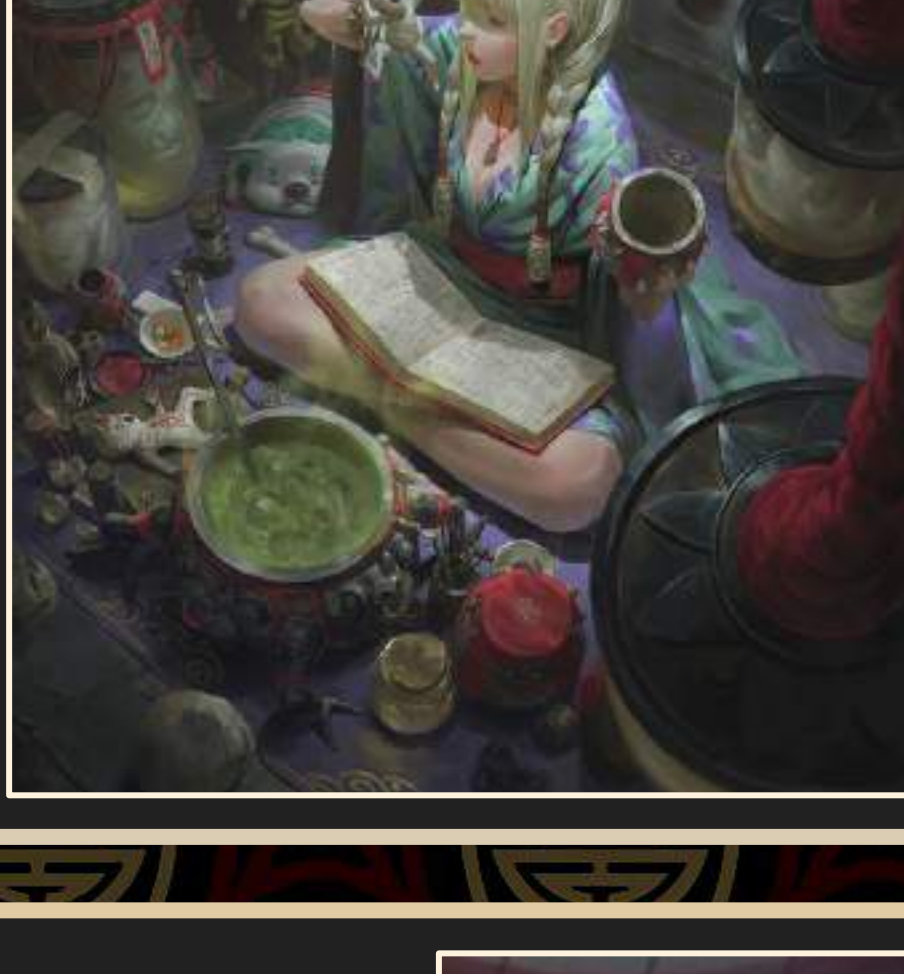
## An Estate of Secrets

Must be a Housekeeper

Your master's tasks are not so innocuous as a cleaning of the shelves or preparing a meal. They scouted you in particular for your proficiency in combat and espionage, to be abused in the highest castles of society. Your goal is to secure your master's interests through assassination, poisonings, bribery and corruption, all while maintaining the spotless image of a harmless and bumbling servile. Your acting skills will be put to the test far more than your skills as a butler or maid, and you can be expected to take the fall if your schemes of ambition are revealed. You will remain by your master's side as a personal guard and strategic confidant at all times.



## Street Vendor:



## Dirty Dealings

Must be a Street Vendor

Your little shop is not so innocent as it seems. In fact, your business is entirely a front for a much more illegal—and profitable—enterprise. A brothel under the bathhouse might bring in more profit than you can even imagine. An opium lounge behind a beaded curtain supposedly leading to your noodle bar's kitchen might be a prime location for corrupt nobles and lycoons. You might even deal in weaponry, hitmen, smuggled goods or still more nefarious goods and services. As long as you can keep your secrets hidden from the Overseers and rival criminals, you'll accumulate a small fortune in short order.

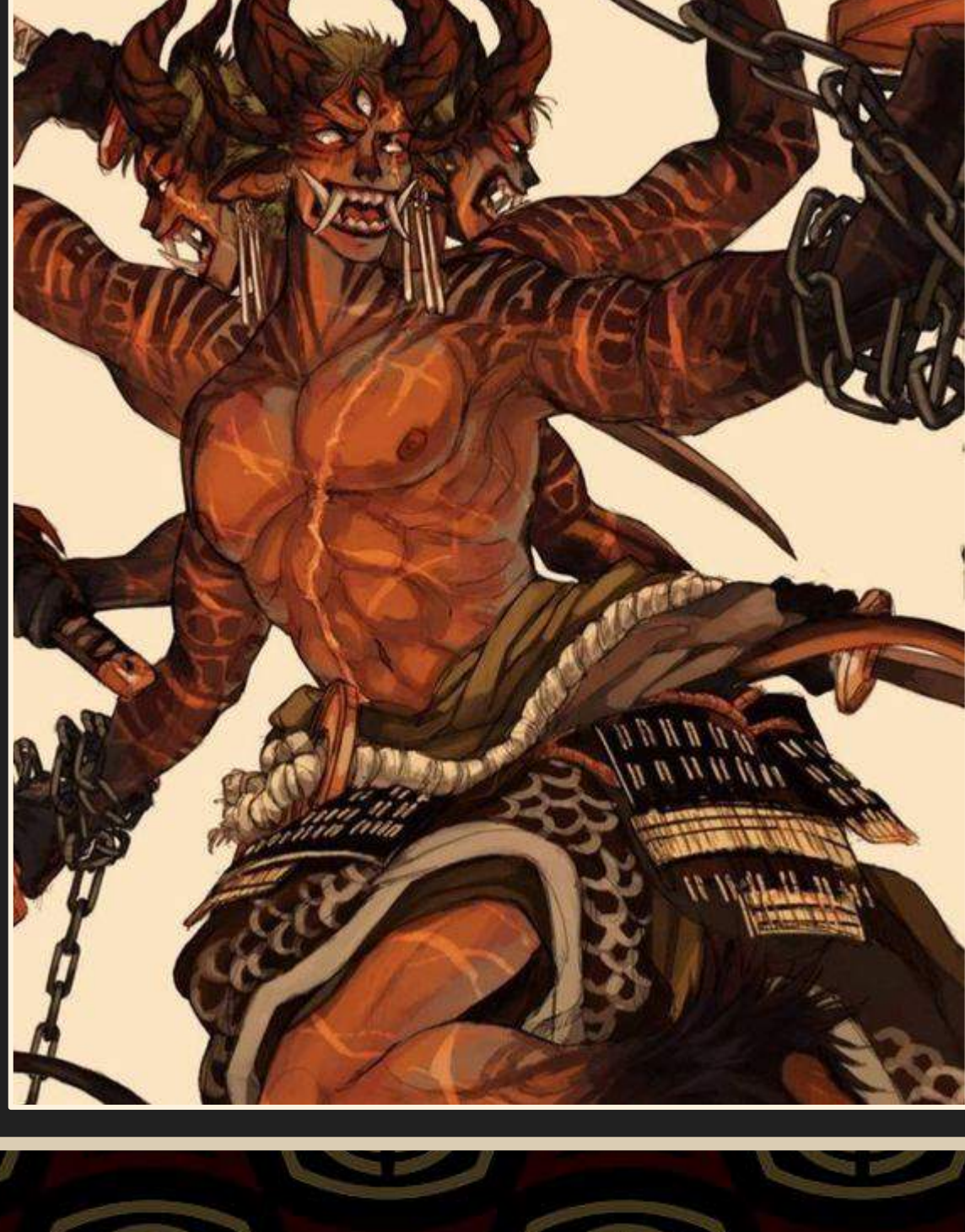
## The Mogul in Waiting

Must be a Street Vendor

You could always remain a humble merchant and make a meager profit day-by-day until you die, but you aren't that sort of breed. Your goal is to expand your middling shop into an empire, to tower over the City in a mansion of glass and rule by the power of your pocket change. You've already expanded into a guild or a famed business, but your goal is always to move forward, to expand your profit margins and see gold roll like waves into your coffers. With some ambition and competitiveness, you may become one of the richest moguls in the City in due time.



## Exorcist:



## Trigram Eviction

Must be an Exorcist

Three great Spirits of darkness have maintained control over loyal cult followings over the past century: Vuseba the Queen of Succubi, Dokurokuro the Living Grave, and the Raja Daanav, king of Ogres. None of them get along, though they all tolerate the mighty King Yama who uses them as proxies to control the underground. It has long been the goal of the Exorcist Guild to remove these tumors on the City Between, and all the terror they bring: violence, knowledge of black magic, lascivious depravity, the whole stock. Whether due to internal corruption, bribes, a lack of strong Exorcists, or a combination of all three, they've never been able to banish them all at the same time. If you've been given the assignment, it is nothing short of a suicide mission, usually given when someone refuses to accept bribery. Youdu's cultic underground would be crippled for years if you sealed even one of them, let alone all three. They might even be willing to bribe you with ten times more than your Conscript just to stay out their hair, or even more if you're willing to betray the Exorcists and work for them under the table.

## Forbidden Religion

Must be an Exorcist

While religious persecution isn't technically the job of the Exorcist's Guild, it's well within their purview to stop religious practices that are dangerous, disturbing, or criminal. You'll be tasked with investigating and stopping deviant religious practices and occult activity, with special priority given to cults of personality, human sacrifice, or groups that have developed dangerous or powerful Release Techniques. Groups that are deliberately using worship and ceremony to empower evil Spirits are gravely illegal, and you'll be sent into their dens and hidden monasteries to hunt them down to the last man.



## Negotiation

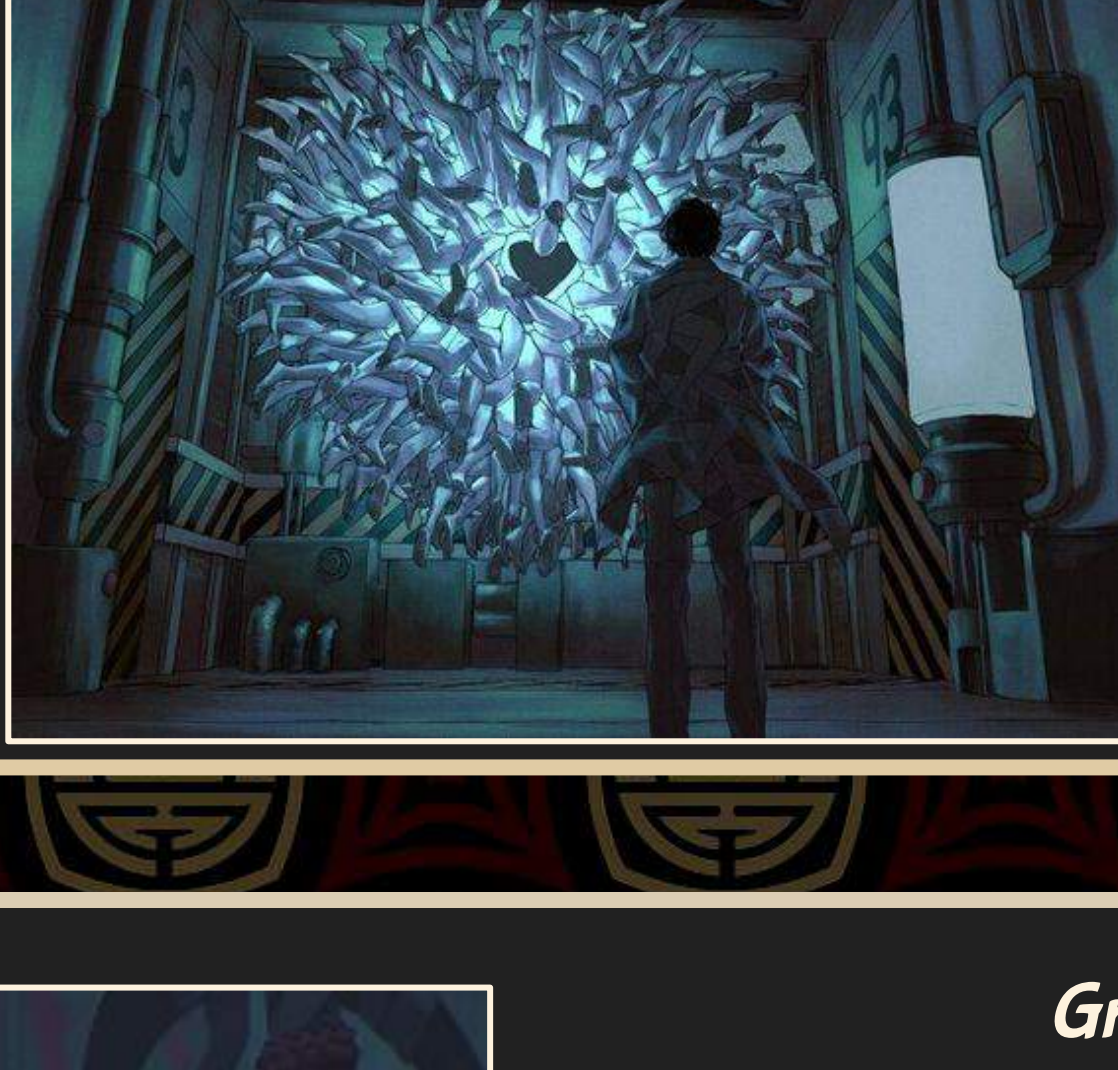
Must be an Exorcist

The best Exorcists fight more with their words than their blades, especially when they are sorely outmatched. Sometimes an Exorcist's greatest skill is discovering precisely what will appease the Spirit while causing minimal collateral damage and loss of life. It requires a special degree of ascetic patience and wisdom to discern, and may even involve deductive investigation if a Spirit refuses to speak to you. You may also be hired as a third party observing the Faustian bargains between human sorcerers and their Spirit benefactors, a privilege for which you will be compensated handsomely.

## The Haunted City

Must be an Exorcist

The bread—and-butter work of an Exorcist is dispelling domestic hauntings. Spirits are vengeful, cruel, vindictive beings, often carrying grudges against mortals that extend far into their family's heritage. It's an industry which requires you to develop a strong reputation as a fighter, a cleric and an investigator all at the same time. You can dispel some Spirits by fulfilling their unfinished business, while others will need to be challenged in much more physical terms. You'll need to have the eye of a detective and the piety of a priest if you want to find why these haunting apparitions remain persistent in their fury.



## Great Spirit Pursuit

Must be an Exorcist

Lesser Spirits are a petty prize, barely worth the effort of truly experienced Exorcists unless they've coagulated into huge hordes around a location or grudge. The most experienced Exorcists in Youdu go after Great Spirits, those with significant cult followings, secret ceremonial sects, and enormous powers at their disposal. The general pattern of a Spirit's progression is a beginning stage as a Lesser Spirit, the development of a cult following or a consistent source of unnatural Aura in secret, and a final exposition of their enormous power in an attempted coup. They use the opportunity of time and secrecy to establish themselves as a divine figure of worship, either cementing themselves forever in the hearts of their followers or facing defeat by the Exorcists. Your work demands that you investigate and dismantle these Spirits while still in hiding, before they threaten the entire City. It requires tactical expertise on the powers of Spirits, investigation into the signs of a Spirit in its infancy, and the combat prowess to both defeat an empowered Spirit and their entire following in one fell swoop. It's not a job most Exorcists are prepared for, but provides a much greater reward for those few who can meet the challenge.

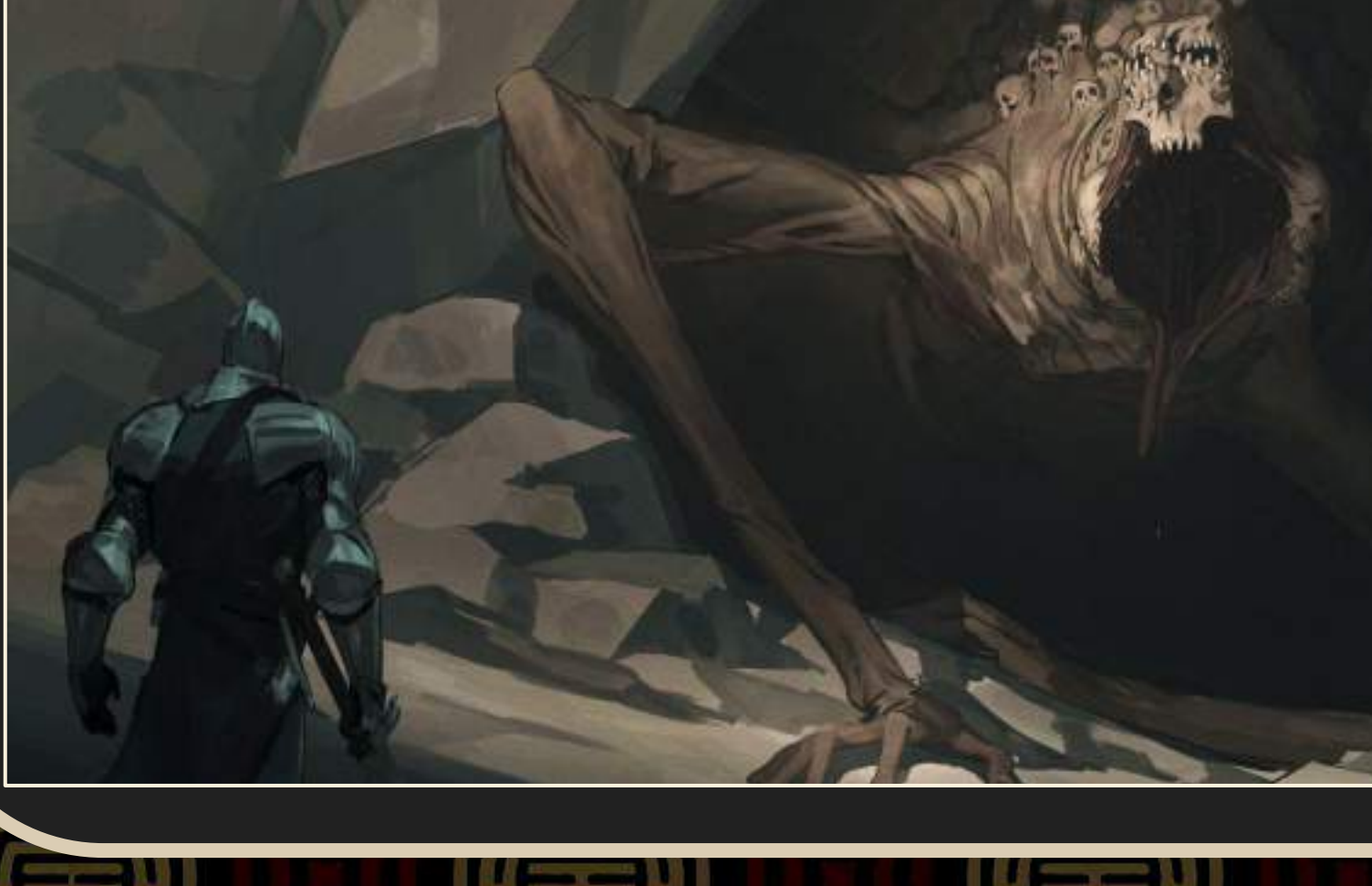
## Succubus Infestations

Must be an Exorcist

Your job is to delve into Succubus Colonies and infested homes, driving out sex Spirits at great risk to your continued virginity. Sounds fun, right? Well, until it isn't. They're great at acting innocent at first, crying crocodile tears and begging you to take them home with you, only to turn around and act like cruel brats when they find a way to beat you and drain you dry (of Aura—right?) Usually in large numbers they aren't sporting many powerful Techniques to be concerned about. Occasionally you'll encounter one with enough accumulated power to tear you to pieces, and the strong ones are extremely good at hiding among crowds of small fry. If you lose at any point, you're pretty much screwed, literally and figuratively. Every Succubus has access to the Aura Draining Technique, and in large numbers it's almost impossible to avoid all of them. They're unimaginably smug about achieving victory, and brutally sadistic once they've got you in their clutches. If you're still not turned away by this Conscriptation, just remember: Succubus Colonies are much more common than Incubus Colonies, but that doesn't mean you'll never have to deal with them. That's usually enough to turn people off. Maybe both are great to you, what do I know.



## Beast Hunter:



## Chimera Burrows

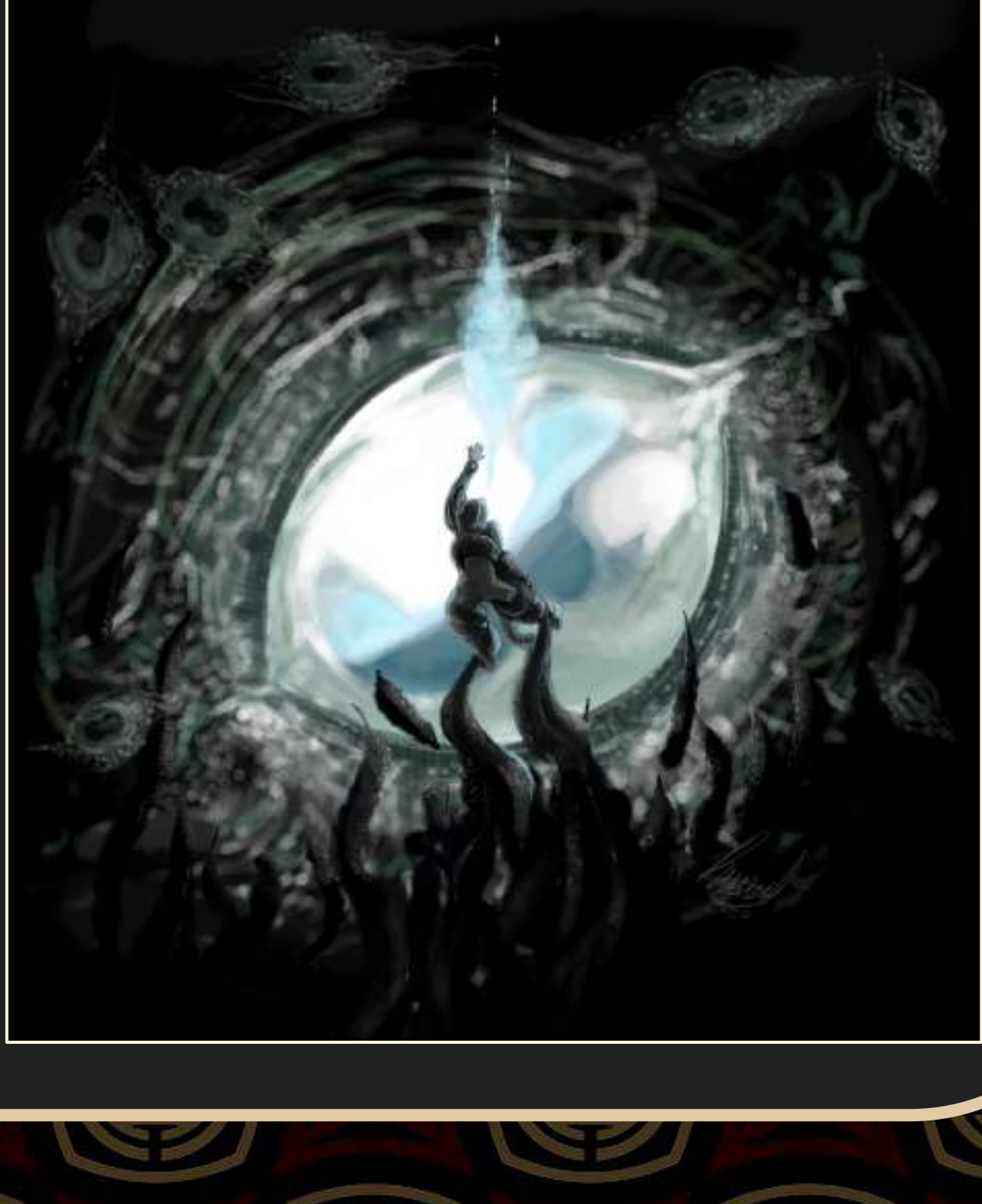
Must be a Beast Hunter

Deep in the caverns of Limbo or the jungles of the Border Wilds, hives of larvae and tunnels of eggs serve as the hidden breeding grounds for new Chimera, carefully patrolled by some of the most dangerous monsters in Youdu. Clearing out one of these Burrows and the Chimera Nucleus at its center is a rare and celebrated occasion across the entire City, though it is one of the most fatal tasks a Beast Hunter can undertake. It can take days or even weeks for an experienced team, and the labyrinth of a Chimera Burrow demands preparation of provisions, shelter, and medicine, not to mention all of the varied ways the Chimeras might throw a wrench into their plans. If you're up for the challenge, you'll need the best of the best and every possible contingency at your fingertips.

## The Oppression of the Abyss

Must be a Beast Hunter

The Abyss and its Lords are among the most mysterious and dangerous elements of the City Between, so hostile to the citizens of Youdu that even its strongest cannot explore its depths unscathed. The Beast Hunters have longed to exterminate the Abyss Lords and their spawn in their own territory, but all such expeditions have failed—until you came along. With your prodigious skill, the Beast Hunters have tasked you and a select team of their best to explore the Abyss and return alive. Succeed, and you will be the first in a long line of victories against what were once considered abominations so horrible that no man could survive them. Fail, and the Beast Hunter's ambitions will only grow more hopeless.



## The Last Dragon

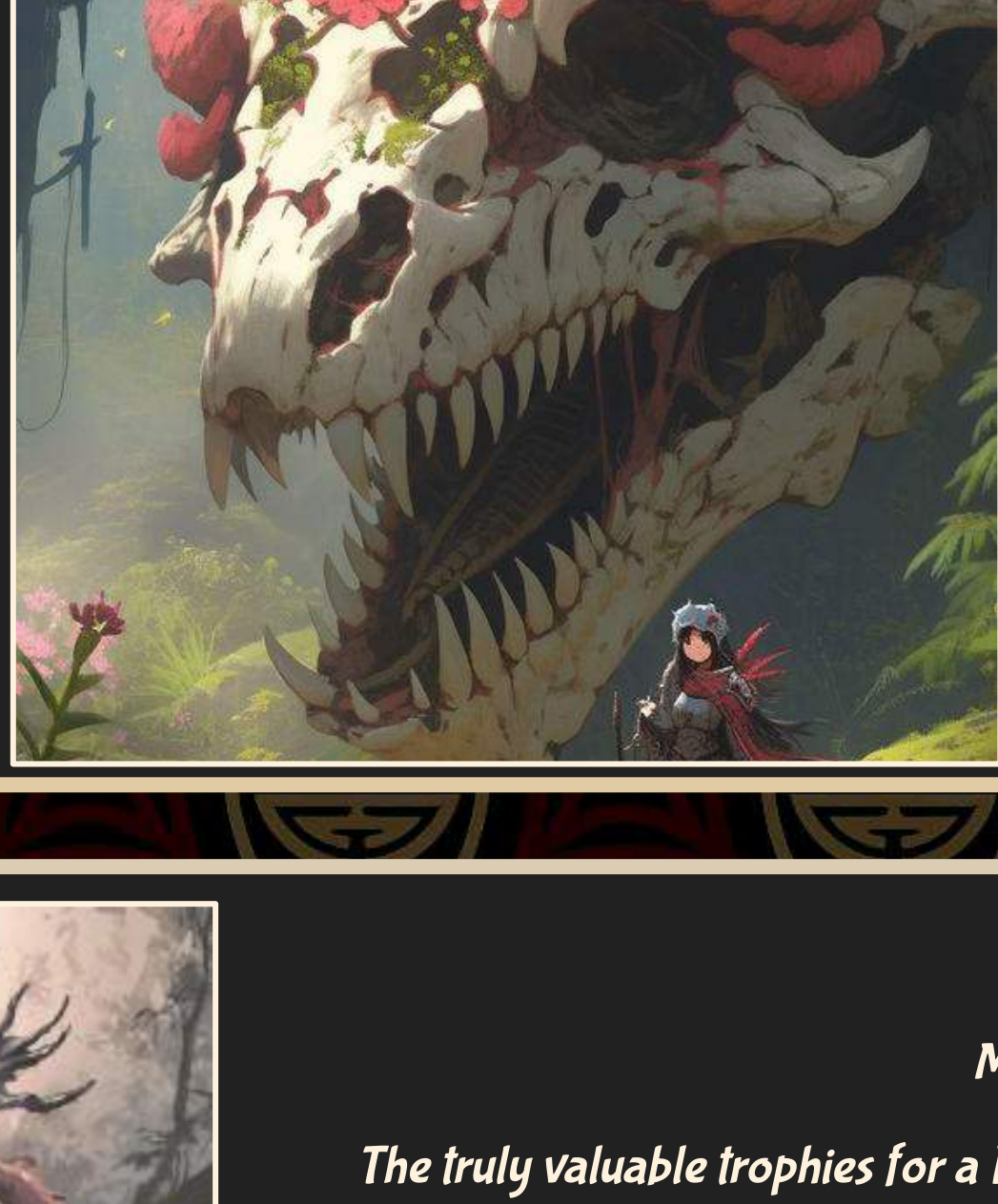
Must be a Beast Hunter

The holy grail of the Beast Hunt is to become a Dragonslayer, a title which confers almost divine reverence and honor to its attainer. To become a Dragonslayer, one must kill a dragon: a real, legendary creature of ancient fairy tales. Reports of dragons are exceedingly rare, and there are many kinds of Chimeras who are half-dragons or otherwise dragon-like, frequently mistaken by Hunters searching for acclaim. It's in doubt whether there are even any dragons left, but you're certainly willing to chase the rumors. Succeed, and you'll be one of the greatest Beast Hunters in history. Even so, your hunt will be long and onerous. Only a truly determined hunter can become a Dragonslayer. Do you have the mettle?

## Second Extinction

Must be a Beast Hunter

The City Between is old. Too old to recount. Perhaps as old as the Earth itself. And it follows that with such age, remnants of the old Earth's ecology would be found in the Chimeras. The Beast Hunters have been trying to exterminate any remnants of the dinosaurs from their eternal enemies, but it's no easy task. Ever seen a crossing between a Tyrannosaurus and a Spitting Cobra? You don't want to, and every effort has been made to reduce the presence of their old genes from the seething hives of the Border Wilds. A few rare stragglers are sighted to this day, devouring entire herds of cattle and leaving three-pronged footprints the size of minivans in their wake. You'll be lucky if you can live to tell the tale of facing one, much less succeed in killing it, but the reward and renown are well worth it.



## The Big Kills

Must be a Beast Hunter

The truly valuable trophies for a Beast Hunter are giant alpha Chimeras that loom over the jungles and dominate the gene pool if allowed to survive. A list of living alpha Chimeras is kept by the Beast Hunters, with only a dozen or so being found and tracked at a time. Killing them off takes a true master of the hunt, but keeps Chimera populations from becoming more powerful than the City Between can handle. Sometimes a single Big Kill can slaughter multiple teams of Beast Hunters before one finally brings it down, obtaining endless acclaim and a small fortune as reward.



**Surveyor:**

**The Deepest Depth**

Must be a Surveyor

Every time a new region of Spirit World is discovered, a slew of new Aura Techniques are discovered through exchanges of knowledge with its inhabiting Spirits. You are tasked with surveying surreal dimensions of dream and nightmare unplumbed by the ages, meeting gestating Spirits in their prisons and exchanging a frawl of treasures you bring for ancient knowledge and new Techniques, for your benefit and that of the highest bidding scholar. It's dangerous, deadly work, and you'll have nothing but intuition and cunning to guide you. Your payment will obviously be absurd, but some find that the risk simply isn't worth it.

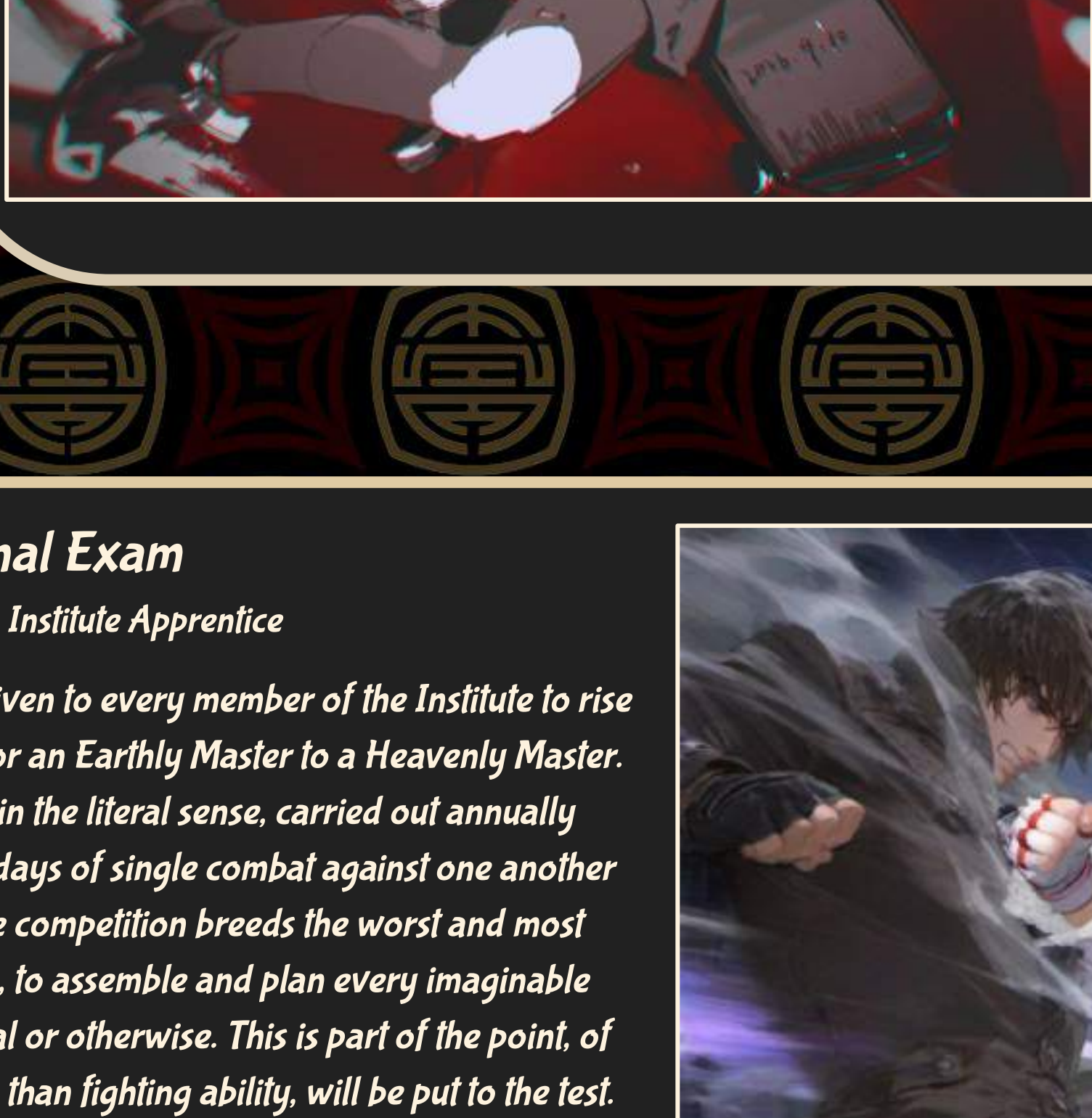


**Stalker:**

**The Macabre Art of a Gazer**

Must be a Stalker

One of the most cruel underground markets of Youdu is that of the Gazers, a subset of Stalkers that exclusively prey on normal civilians. They can be hired for petty vengeance, kidnappings, murders, evidence plantings, or to gather the intimate details of a target's private life. They disguise themselves as everyday passersby, workers on the road, shopkeepers in the streets, beggars lying beneath the pale glow of a streetlamp. Don't be fooled. A Gazer is hired for their ability to blend in. Your task as one of them depends on the subspecies of Gazer you take on. A Gazer who kidnaps their targets is called a "Maestro". One who watches someone on another's behalf, an "Illustrator". "Painters," you may have guessed, kill their victims. "Sculptors" torture them. Almost always, your work is carried out for the sake of petty vengeance, unpaid debts, or for the benefit of some sick psychopath. And it seems to be these unsavory folks—almost by a cruel miracle—who always pay the highest.

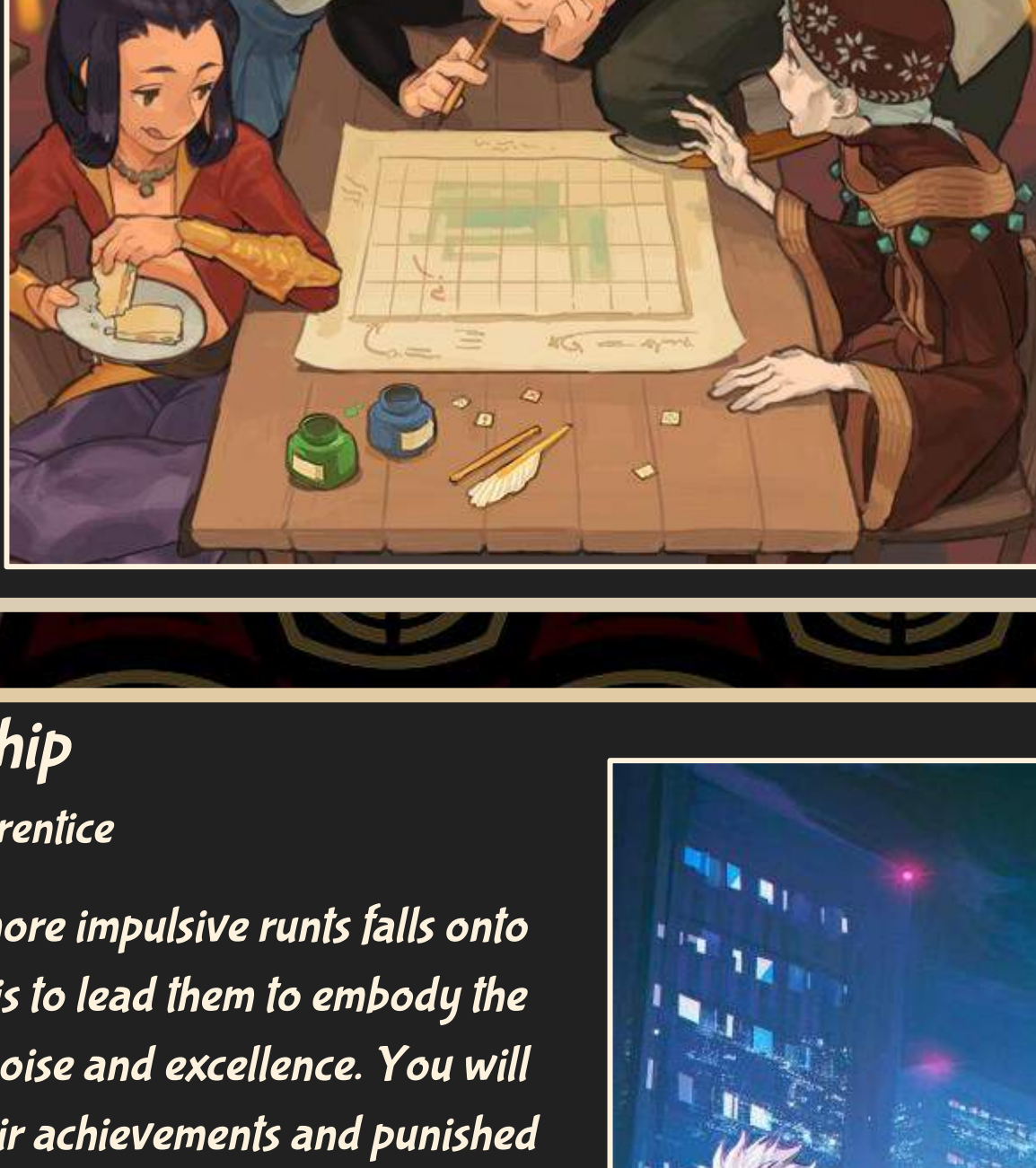
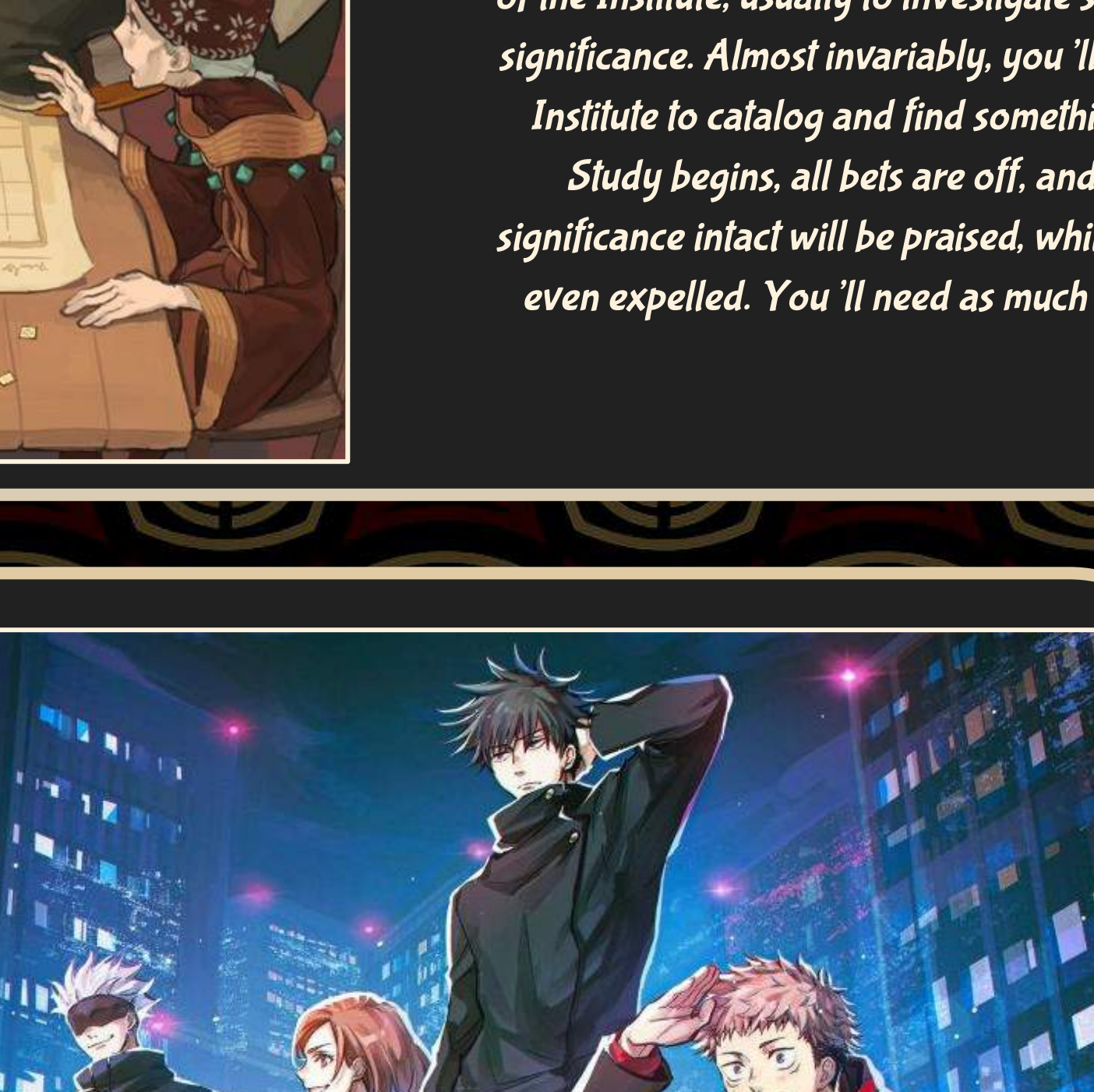


**Institute Apprentice:**

**Final Exam**

Must be an Institute Apprentice

A final hands-on combat exam is given to every member of the Institute to rise from a Pupil to an Earthly Master, or an Earthly Master to a Heavenly Master. This examination is competitive in the literal sense, carried out annually between candidates over multiple days of single combat against one another and the Masters above them. The competition breeds the worst and most ruthless ambitions of the Institute, to assemble and plan every imaginable contingency in their favor, unethical or otherwise. This is part of the point, of course. Tactics, perhaps even more than fighting ability, will be put to the test.



**Field Study**

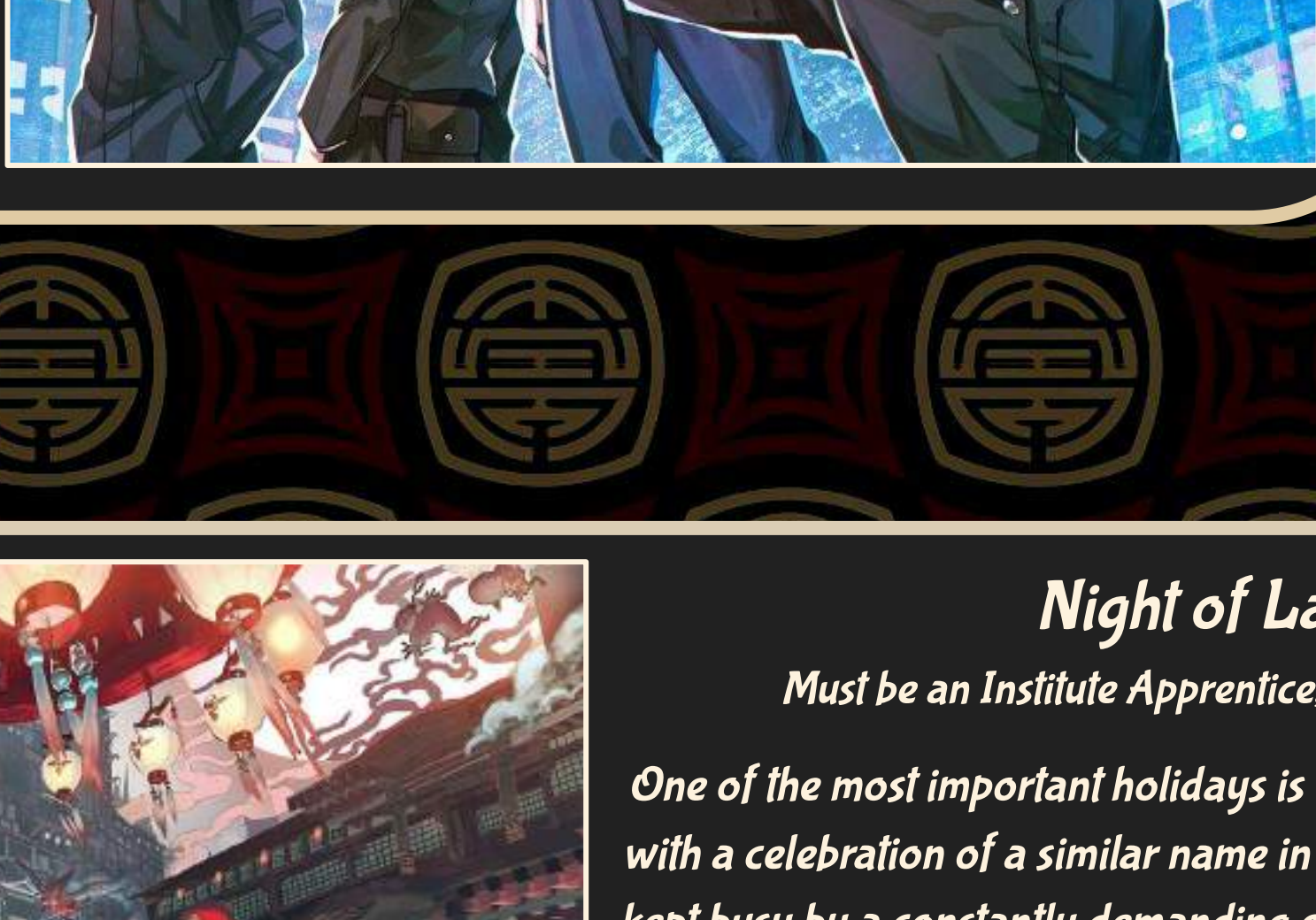
Must be an Institute Apprentice

Scholar Contracts are private missions given by outside clients to the students of the Institute, usually to investigate some matter of great historical or mystical significance. Almost invariably, you'll be competing with other members of the Institute to catalog and find something worthy of discovery. Once the Field Study begins, all bets are off, and whoever returns with their object of significance intact will be praised, while others may be shunned and potentially even expelled. You'll need as much cunning as intelligence to be victorious.

**Team Mentorship**

Must be an Institute Apprentice

The responsibility over younger, stupider, and more impulsive runts falls onto your shoulders. It's no light task, but your goal is to lead them to embody the traits which the institute holds dearest: control, poise and excellence. You will be rewarded with accolades in proportion to their achievements and punished in proportion to their failures, leading them in field studies, tactics simulations and the acquisition of new Techniques to enhance their arsenal. In no small part, you'll also be entangled in friendly—but—not-so-friendly competition with other mentors, who will seek to create a posse superior to your own and elevate their reputation.

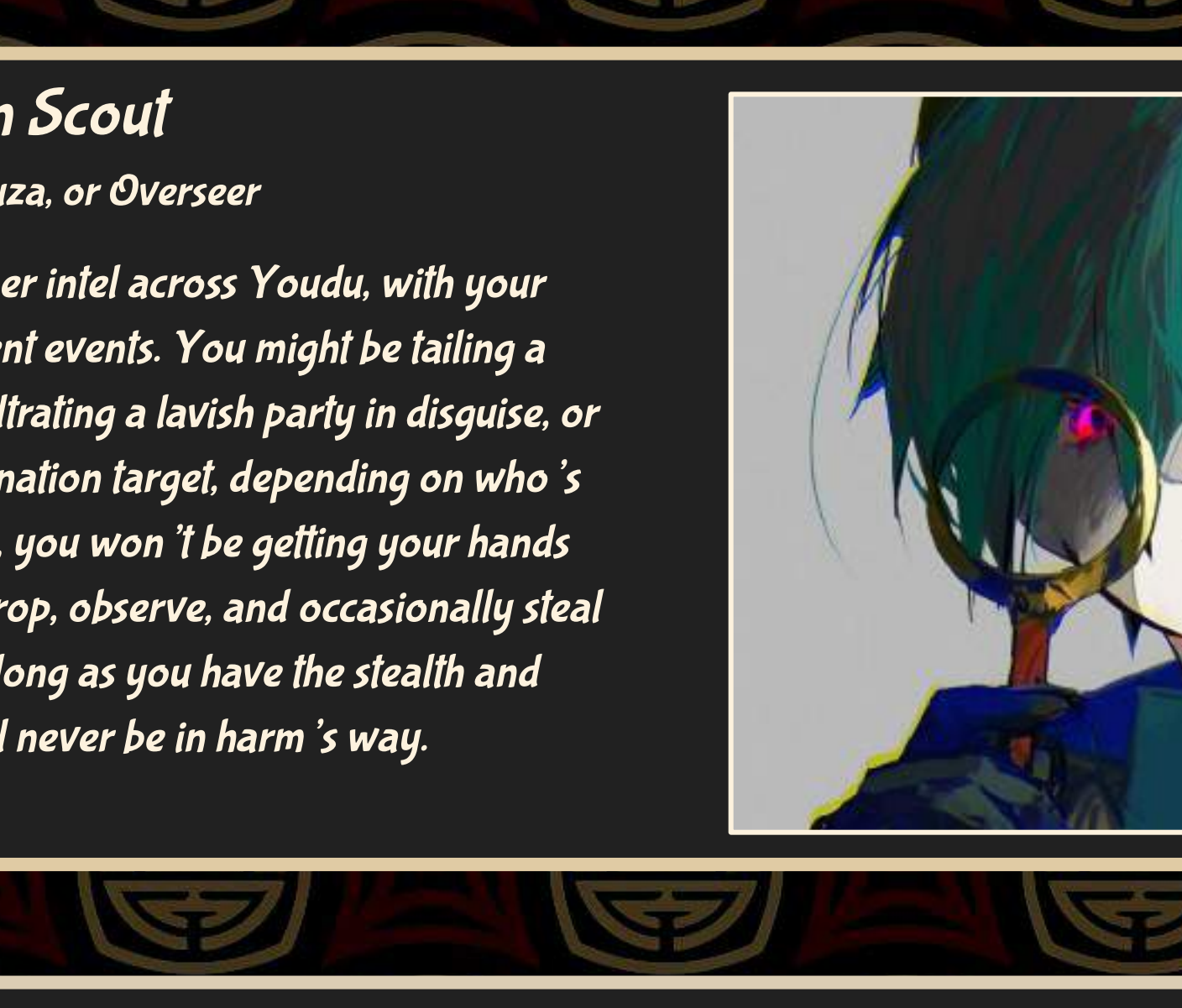


**Multi-Conscription Campaigns:**

**Night of Lantern Bugs**

Must be an Institute Apprentice, Housekeeper, or Street Vendor

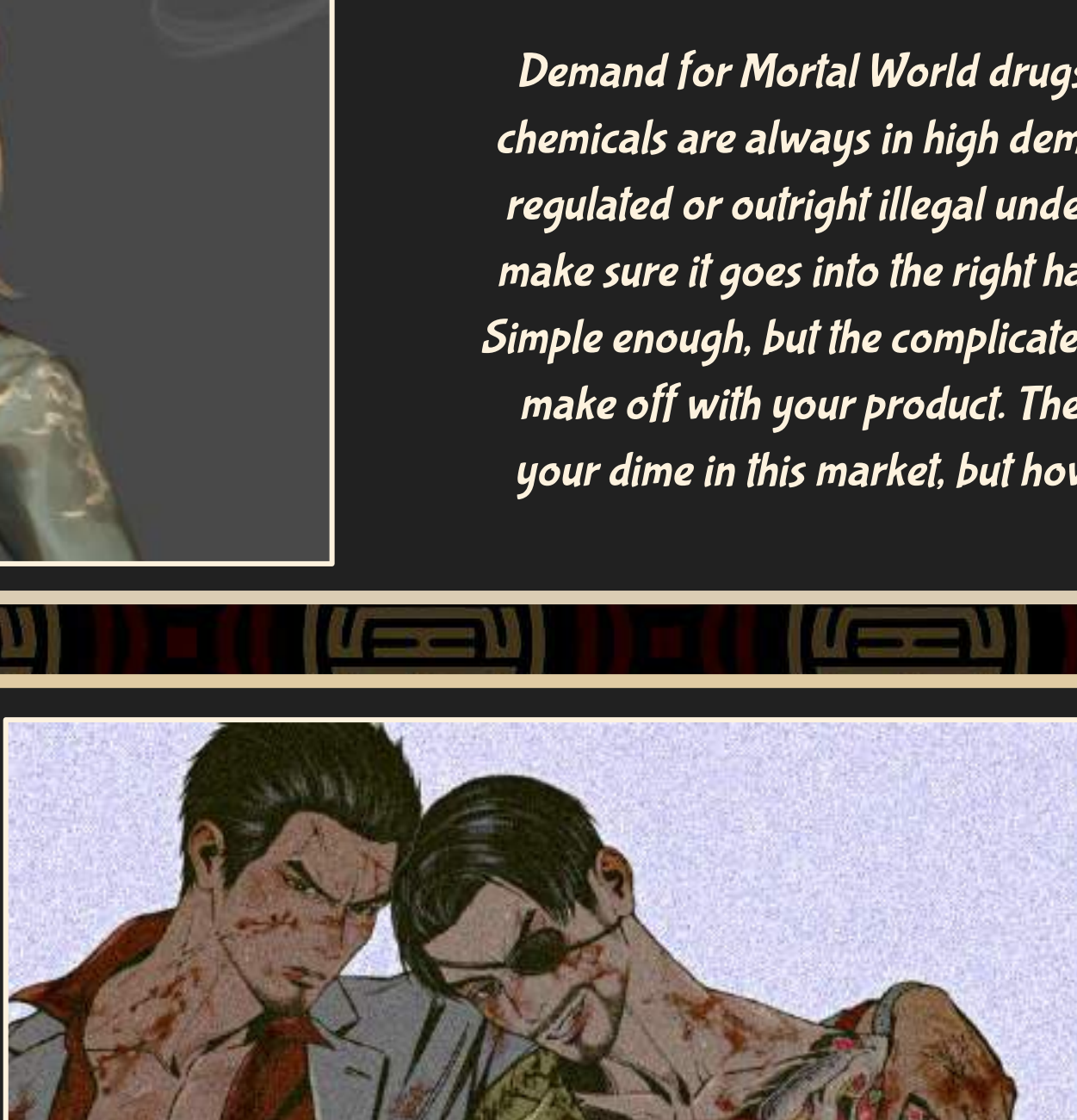
One of the most important holidays is the Night of Lantern Bugs, coinciding with a celebration of a similar name in Mortal World. Only those who aren't kept busy by a constantly demanding occupation can seem to find the time to really enjoy it, though all are welcome. In luminous parades through the Canal District, a certain species of glowing cicada emerges on the same day each year, filling the sky with their lights as they flutter in clouds overhead. Festivities, music, dancing, and a panoply of events organized by the Jade Sovereign coincide with the day. It's a truly dazzling experience, and one you'll remember for years afterward.



**Information Scout**

Must be a Stalker, Yakuza, or Overseer

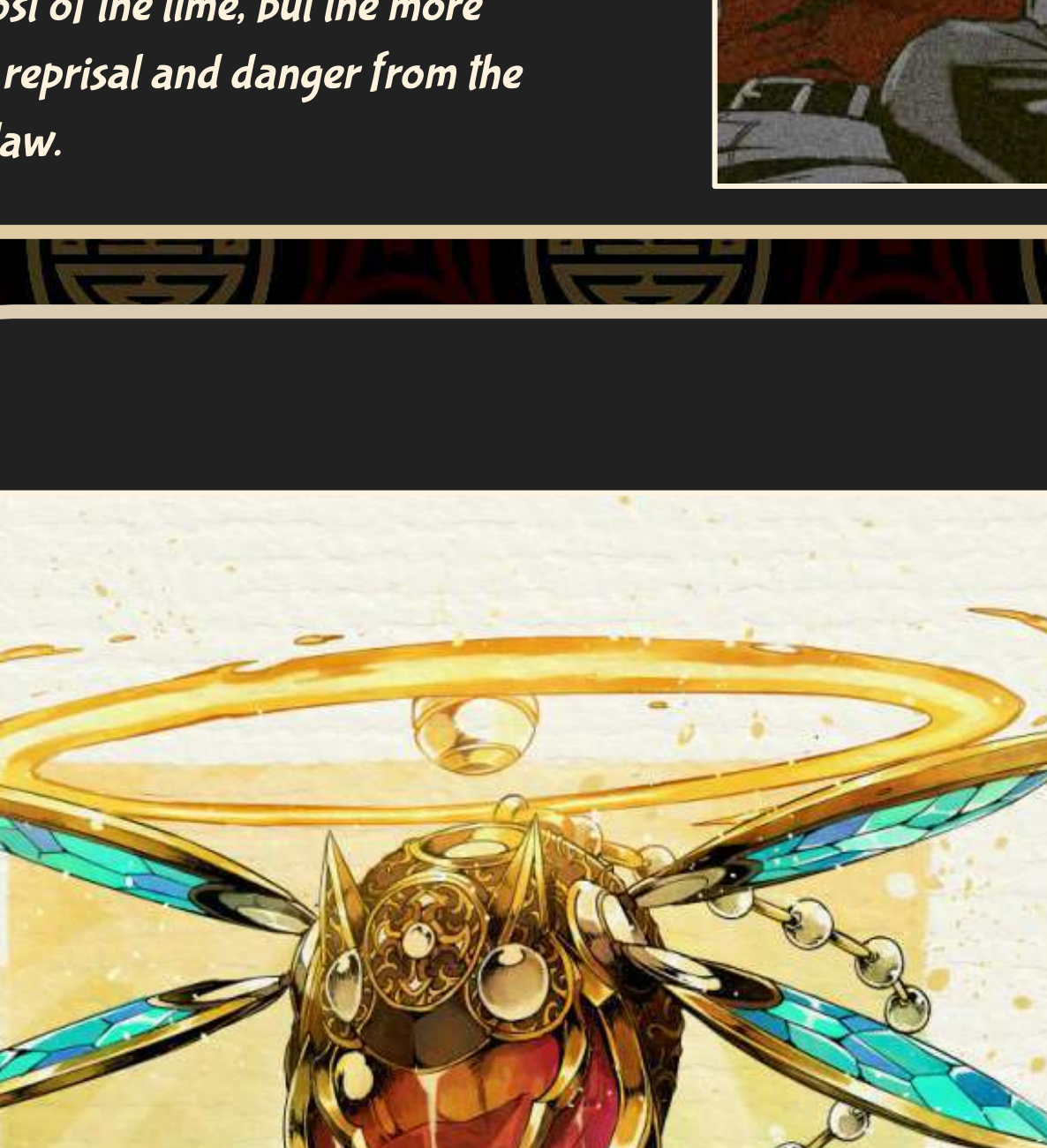
Your benefactors have hired you to gather intel across Youdu, with your assignments varying depending on current events. You might be tailing a suspected killer, casing a potential heist, infiltrating a lavish party in disguise, or determining the daily routine of an assassination target, depending on who's paying you. No matter what you're doing, you won't be getting your hands dirty directly. You'll merely have to eavesdrop, observe, and occasionally steal a document or plant some evidence. As long as you have the stealth and discretion to remain unseen you'll never be in harm's way.



**The Poison of Life**

Must be a Smuggler or Yakuza

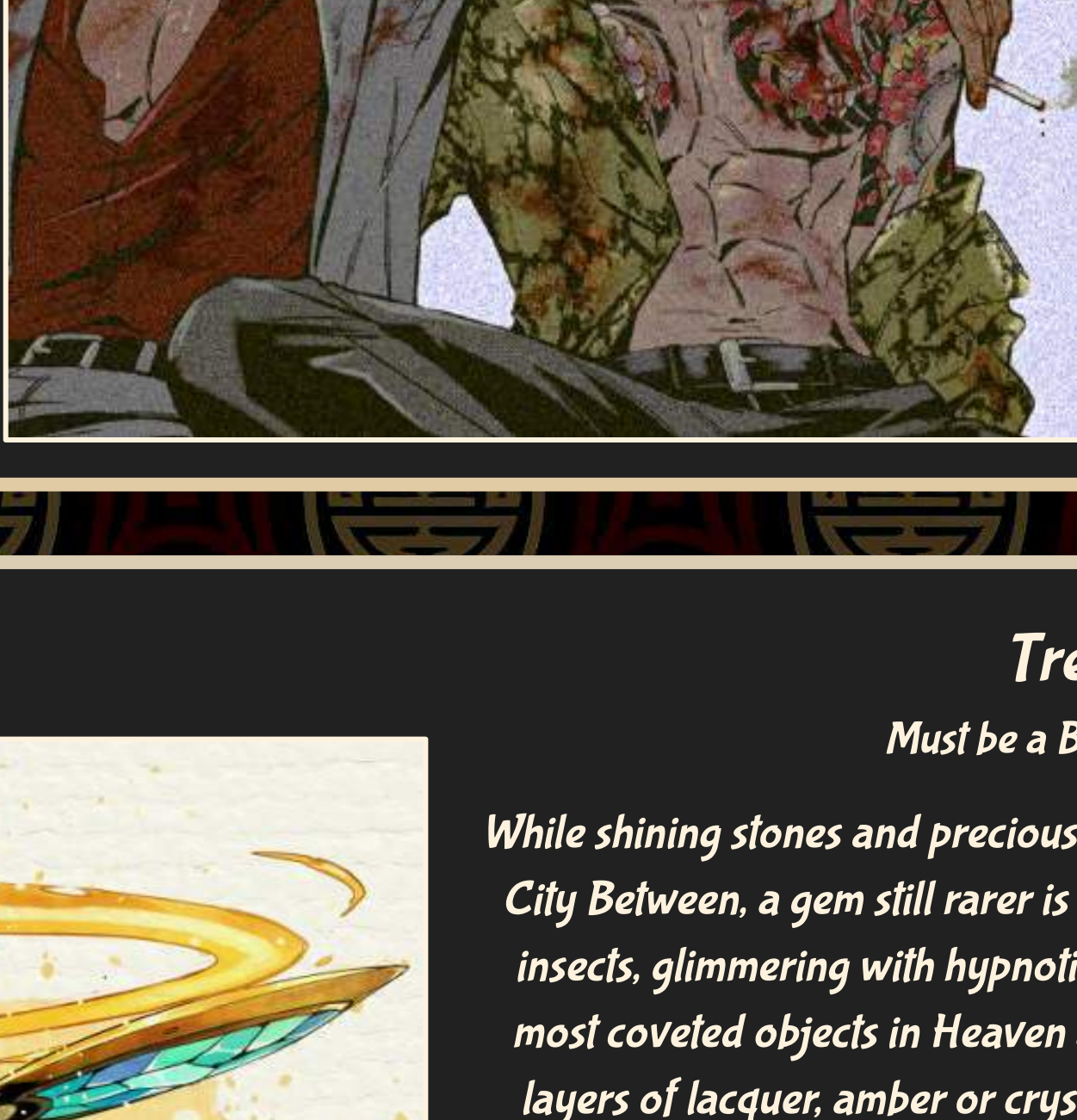
Demand for Mortal World drugs, particularly opium, tobacco and synthetic chemicals are always in high demand, given that such things are either strictly regulated or outright illegal under the puritanical rule of Yudi. Your job is to make sure it goes into the right hands for the right price without being caught. Simple enough, but the complicated part comes when some idiot thinks they can make off with your product. There will be bloodshed and beatings to make your dime in this market, but how sweet that market is when it reaches your pockets.



**An Enemy of My Enemy**

Must be an Overseer or Yakuza

As much as the police and the local criminal elements clash, there are always crimes more devious, more damaging, more cruel than either of them can stomach. The Yakuza are shockingly willing to cooperate in situations where the Overseers target other criminals over them, and the Overseers need practically all the help they can get. You in particular are the chosen ambassador of your side, sent into the foreign world of your usual adversaries and tasked with convincing them to play along to come out a winner in the end. It's like trying to make water and oil mix most of the time, but the more successful you are, the less you'll have to fear reprisal and danger from the opposite end of the law.



**Treasure Bugs**

Must be a Beast Hunter or Surveyor

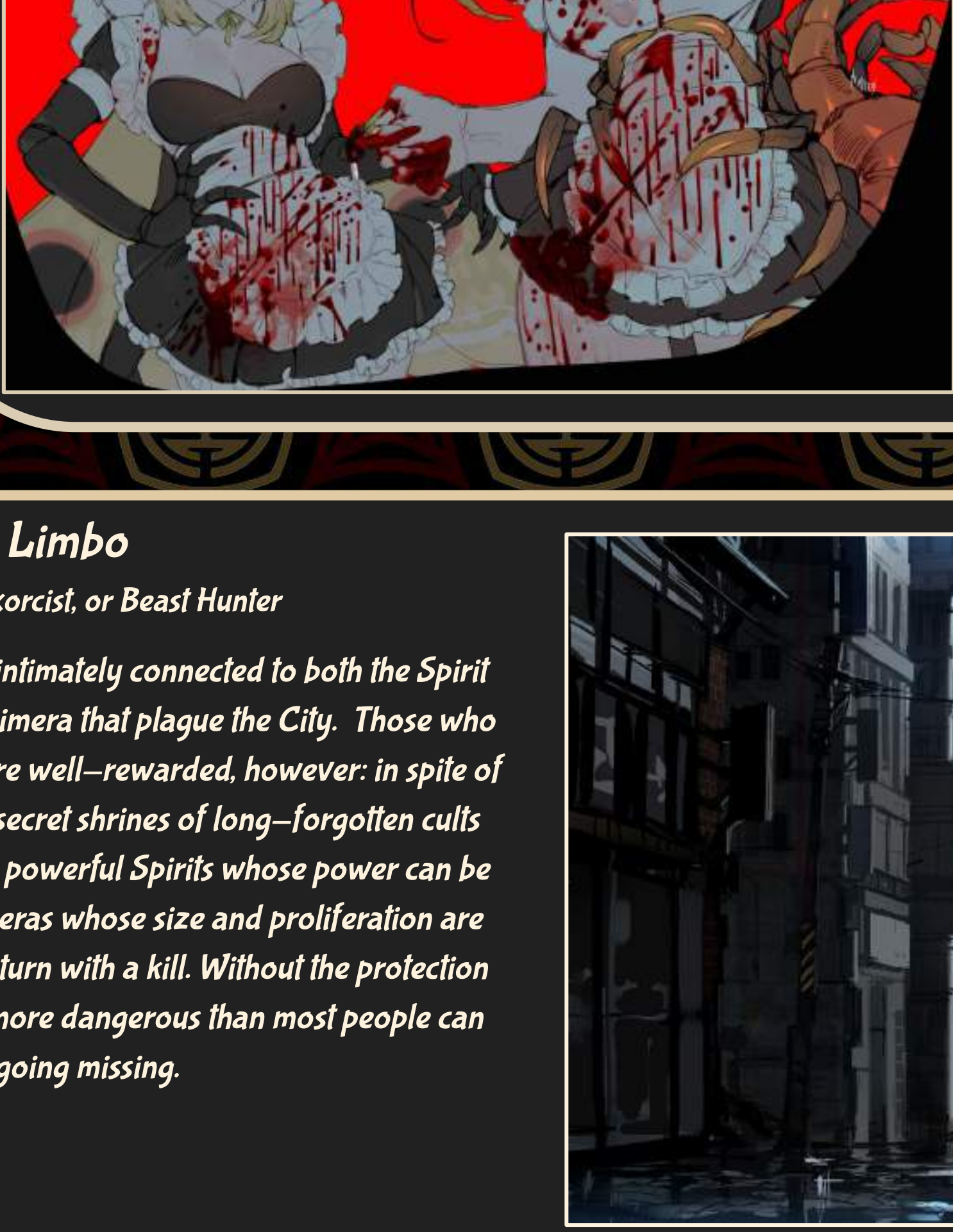
While shining stones and precious metals adorn practically every surface in the City Between, a gem still rarer is sought by collectors and jewelers. Precious insects, glimmering with hypnotizing iridescence and color, are some of the most coveted objects in Heaven and Hell alike, able to be submerged in thin layers of lacquer, amber or crystal to serve as unparalleled status symbols. Tokens of love, or treasured components for certain ceremonial offerings. Searching for them can take weeks of journeying through the Border Wilds, and even then, an extremely keen eye is required to spot them in their burrows and crevices. Different Treasure Bug species inhabit different regions and climates. In caverns, Garnet Beetles and centipedes of Aquamarine hide in the darkness where their beauty cannot be seen. In sand dunes, opalescent scorpions burrow beneath scalding sands and turquoise grubs writhe beneath the spines of cacti. In the jungles, emerald dragonflies and ruby weevils dart with such speed and precision that the human eye can scarcely follow them. If you're able to deliver them live and undamaged to your commissioners, you'll make a small fortune on each capture. In rare cases, you may even stumble upon a hive of them buried in some unexplored recess and make enough to live in luxury for months.



**Greyflesh Culling**

Must be an Exorcist or Beast Hunter

Every year, the bureaucracy of Youdu places an enormous bounty on the eradication of Greyflesh Corpses in the Great Ruin Isles, calling upon its Beast Hunters to enter the plague-infested wasteland and keep the number of shambling, leperous corpses at manageable levels. As long as proper precautions are taken, it amounts to a massive, annual hunting trip for rag-tag Beast Hunters to make some reliable coin while exploring the ruins. The Grey Plague is a fungal illness, so as long as no one sustains any wounds that break the skin and they keep their mouth and nose covered, everyone will make it out alive. Even then, the venture only becomes truly life-threatening when the spores are thick enough to produce a pungent, stormy fog or when bitten by the Greyflesh corpses. Human carcasses puppeteered by the Grey Plague are very rare, but animals like deer, wolves, monkeys and insects are much more common and fatal. The most frightening and dangerous encounters, however rare, are the unholy amalgamations of rotting flesh composed from all of these together, stitched with tendrils of mycelium and spreading thick clouds of spores wherever they shamble. Collecting proof of your kills, especially from these horrors, will be important for book keeping and rewards.



**Humanoid Chimeras**

Must be a Stalker or Beast Hunter

Humanoid Chimeras are a catastrophe of epidemic proportions waiting to happen, and are considered a kill-on-sight legal breach if they are not under the strict control of a sorceric master. They hide among us, concealing their monstrous traits to evade capture and preying on humans from the shadows. Since Chimeras are universally compatible, the danger of breeding a monstrous hybridized species of inhuman facsimiles is an ineluctable risk. The interrogation, investigation and assassination skills of a Stalker are combined with the tracking and fighting skills of a Beast Hunter in their pursuit, often in sordid duos of a serious, level-headed spy beside a brash, gusty and glory-driven monster killer. Each case requires more strength than a rogue monster and more deduction than a cold case, and the payment is far greater than both. Just don't let your emotions get in the way. Humanoid Chimeras are very, very skilled at emotionally manipulating their executioners and capitalizing on their hesitation.

**Lost in Limbo**

Must be a Surveyor, Exorcist, or Beast Hunter

Limbo is a unique place in Youdu, one intimately connected to both the Spirit World and the subterranean lives of Chimera that plague the City. Those who dare explore this horrifying landscape are well-rewarded, however: in spite of its derelict expanse, Limbo houses the secret shrines of long-forgotten cults and their offered treasures, ancient and powerful Spirits whose power can be harnessed by a skilled priest, and Chimeras whose size and proliferation are enough to make you filthy rich if you return with a kill. Without the protection of the Overseers or the City itself, it is more dangerous than most people can handle without going missing.



**Ruin Raider**

Must be a Surveyor, Smuggler, or Institute Apprentice

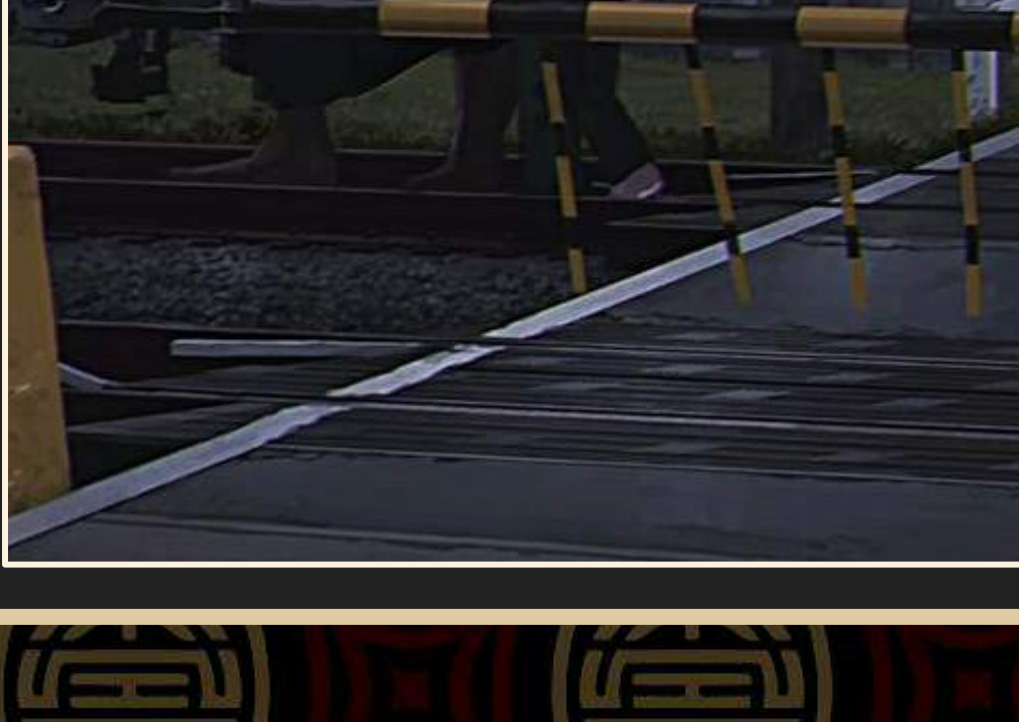
There was another City here once, one which the wheel of Kalpas has long forgotten. An entire civilization's history, legends, technologies and treasures are buried in the infinite depths of the City Between, where only this pocket world between Heaven and Hell bears the record. You could acquire new Techniques never seen before, or hidden weapons that the Overseers would confiscate in an instant, or research the secrets of how these other Cities fell—and how you might prevent the same fate in Youdu.



**Missing Persons**

Must be a Stalker or Overseer

A lot of people disappear without a trace in this great City Between Life and Death. People are swept into the void by kidnappings, trafficking, murders, Chimera attacks, baneful Spirits, cult sacrifices...the list goes on. Your job is to find out where these unfortunate souls have disappeared to. In this particular profession, the investigative skills of the Overseer and the tracking abilities of the Stalker find a most unusual middle ground, and often police and Stalkers form sordid alliances in spite of their usual squabbles.







## A Holy Murder

Must be a Stalker or Overseer

Long regarded as the ultimate cold case, the murder of Saltva Panfaetha nearly sixty years ago remains unsolved. So the legendary story goes, Panfaetha obtained enlightenment as his killer thought them dead, and removed their little finger with a dagger to see if they would rise from the pain. Upon this act, Panfaetha felt nothing, leaving no body and only the finger behind. That finger, studied, prodded, searched for every metric of knowledge it may provide, is the only evidence remaining of the murder. You are tasked with finding the killer, who, through anonymous letters, to this day taunts the Overseers with jeers and coded messages several years apart. It will take an intellect unseen across the whole City to decode every message, and no shortage of out-of-the-box analysis upon the finger itself. Your final confrontation will be violent, fought against one of the greatest and most well-hidden Aura Users in the City.

## Person of Interest: The Last Son of Ninokata

Must be a Bodyguard, Stalker, Warsmith or Insurgent

The Ninokata family is famously composed of almost exclusively women, and their ruthless policies around bloodline purity prevent them from bringing in outsiders to continue their lineage. The only legitimate male Ninokata remaining is a very young boy, and until he reaches adulthood their dynasty is in danger of extinction. The Ninokata's policy of Self-Forfeiture by Corruption threatens the very lives of the wealthy elite across the City, and the bounty on the boy's head is astronomical. If he lives, the Ninokata will maintain their ultimatum against the powerful and keep Youdu's upper crust in check with poison and daggers. If he dies, the nobility will rule unchallenged by the power of their almighty coin. His death could ripple through the power structure of Youdu, sparking chaos and war, and there's no shortage of interested parties who would benefit.



## Person of Interest: Shen Roh, Mafia Dragon

Must be a Bodyguard, Stalker, Yakuza or Overseer

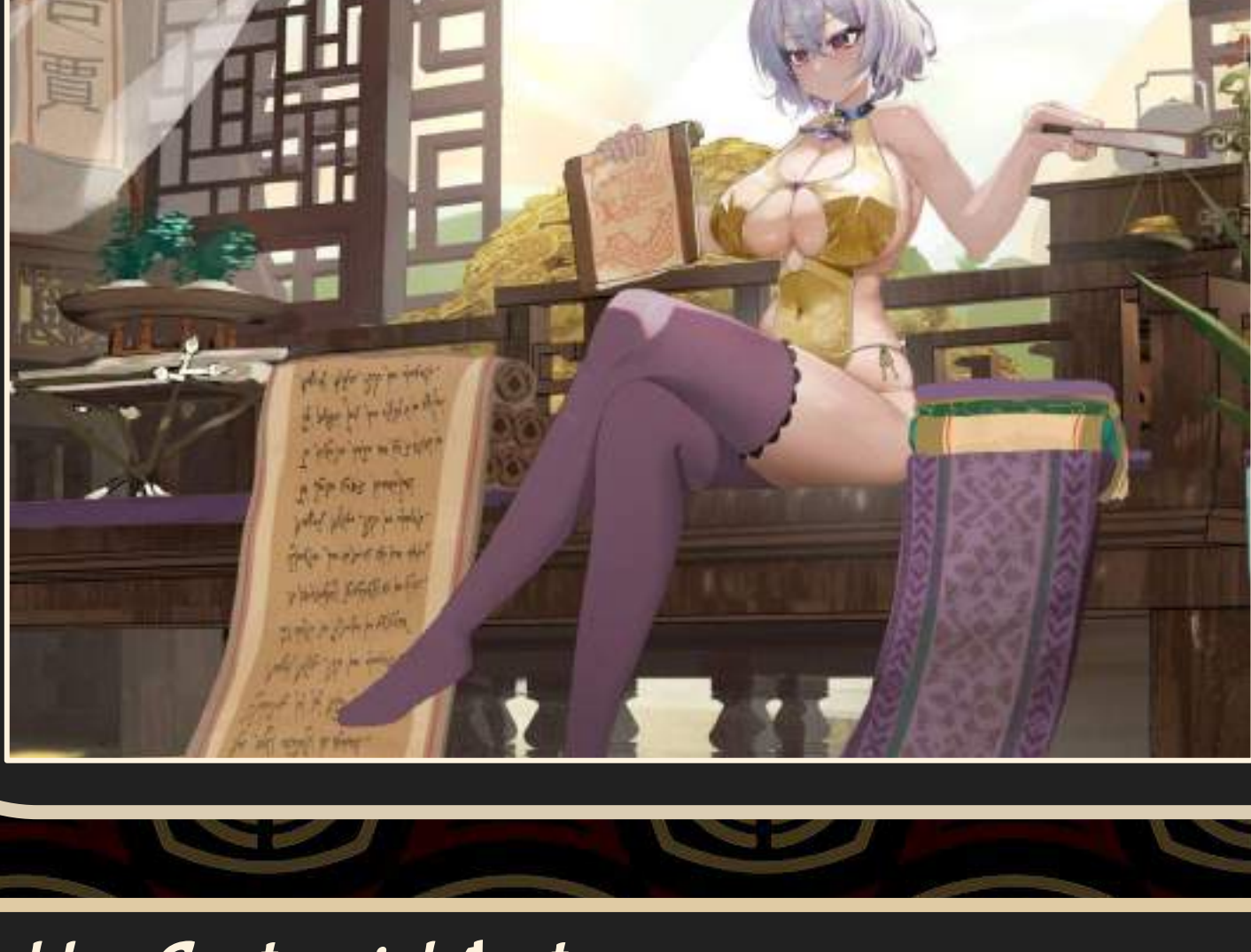
Shen Roh is the biggest dog in the City's underground, the six-fingered kingpin over a Mafia of the same name. There's no shortage of people who would love to put his empire in checkmate and ascend the power vacuum. There's also no shortage of bounties on his head. Nobody's ever made good on it, since every criminal in the City would fall on his killer like flies, but the possibility is always open to someone as strong as you. The exact extent of his abilities are only known by a close few associates, and going into a bare-knuckled fight with him before you know what he's capable of is a recipe for disaster.



## Person of Interest: The Tenth Magistrate of Hell

Must be a Bodyguard, Stalker, Overseer, Warsmith or Insurgent

The Tenth under Yama is notoriously the most easily corruptible member of the City's Magistrature, frequently flip-flopping between loyalties at the slightest convenience. While it's nice to buy a politician, if everyone is practically auctioning for him then it becomes a liability. Shin, young and crazed as he is, has made it a point to cover this vulnerability with more private protection payments than any other Magistrate in the City, and an untold number of bodyguards collect handsome royalties on his paranoia. The shadowy powers—that-be have had enough, and intend to place a price so unbelievable on his head that every assassin in the City will be hunting him to their last breath. It's your job either to prevent them from succeeding, or to claim the pot of a lifetime for yourself.



## Person of Interest: The Fourth Magistrate of Heaven

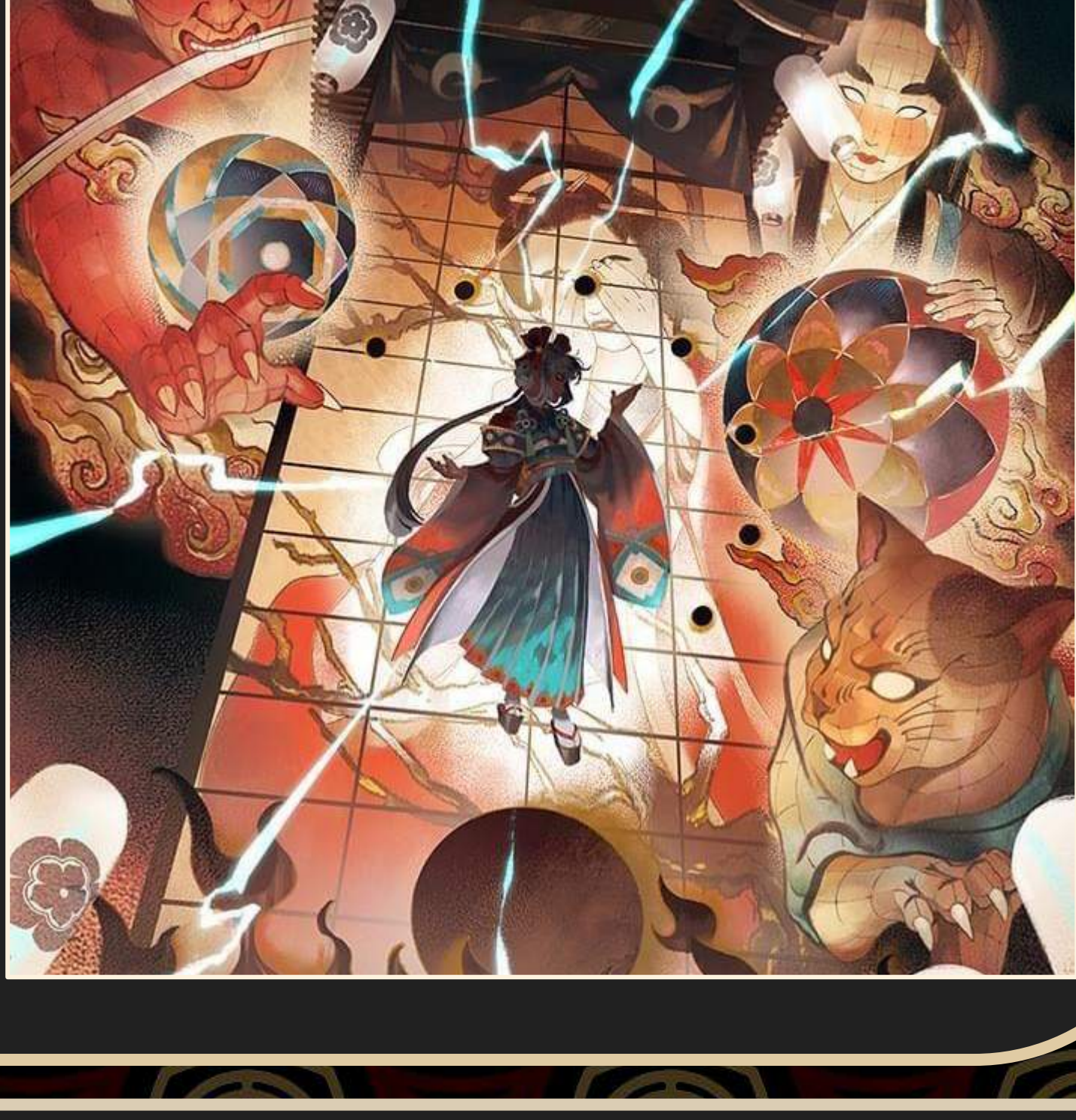
Must be a Bodyguard, Stalker, Overseer, Warsmith or Insurgent

Everyone involved in the politics of this City knows there's only one person in Yudi's cabinet of Magistrates immune to corruption, and that's the creepy wine-aunt who somehow manages to hold the entire operation up on her bare shoulders. There's quite a few people who resent the fact that Mai can't be bribed or threatened into their pockets. It's no surprise that the price on her head is astronomical. Whether you're in her vestigial coterie of bodyguards or you're aiming to ruin the last foundation of credibility the Magistrates have, the writing is on the wall. Mai must die before the City can fall. If you are being paid to kill her, it must be worth it some way or another. If you're trying to save her, you're in the line of fire.

## Person of Interest: The Golden Centennial Avatar

Must be a Bodyguard, Stalker, or Exorcist

Every hundred years, a perfect soul is reincarnated in the lineage of the Four Great Dynasties with unparalleled potential and spotless karmic balance. This child, at the proper age, will become the ideal avatar for the legendary Spirits of ancient days, and many of them ruthlessly covet the opportunity to return from Spirit World without sacrificing any of their power on an unfit physical form. Currently, the Golden Centennial Avatar is seventeen years old, and with only a few precious months remaining until they are fit for the Rite of the Dashavafara, tensions are high. The Pale Demon Clan could use the child to resurrect Yakshanek. The Majushin could use the child to give an avatar to their enlightened ancestors, Saltva Panfaetha and Sugemajo. Religious organizations are willing to stake millions on the successful protection of the Centennial, or if they are particularly desperate, their capture. It's enough to get the most powerful Stalkers in the City Between moving in fides, and armies of Bodyguards follow close behind. By taking part in the feeding frenzy, you'll have the potential to earn more than you could possibly dream of, and I'm sure you can dream of a lot. Danger will be thick and omnipresent, so if you aren't prepared to face the deadliest assassins and the strongest muscle of the present age, you should stay out of their way.



## Group of Interest: The Toad Merchant Guild

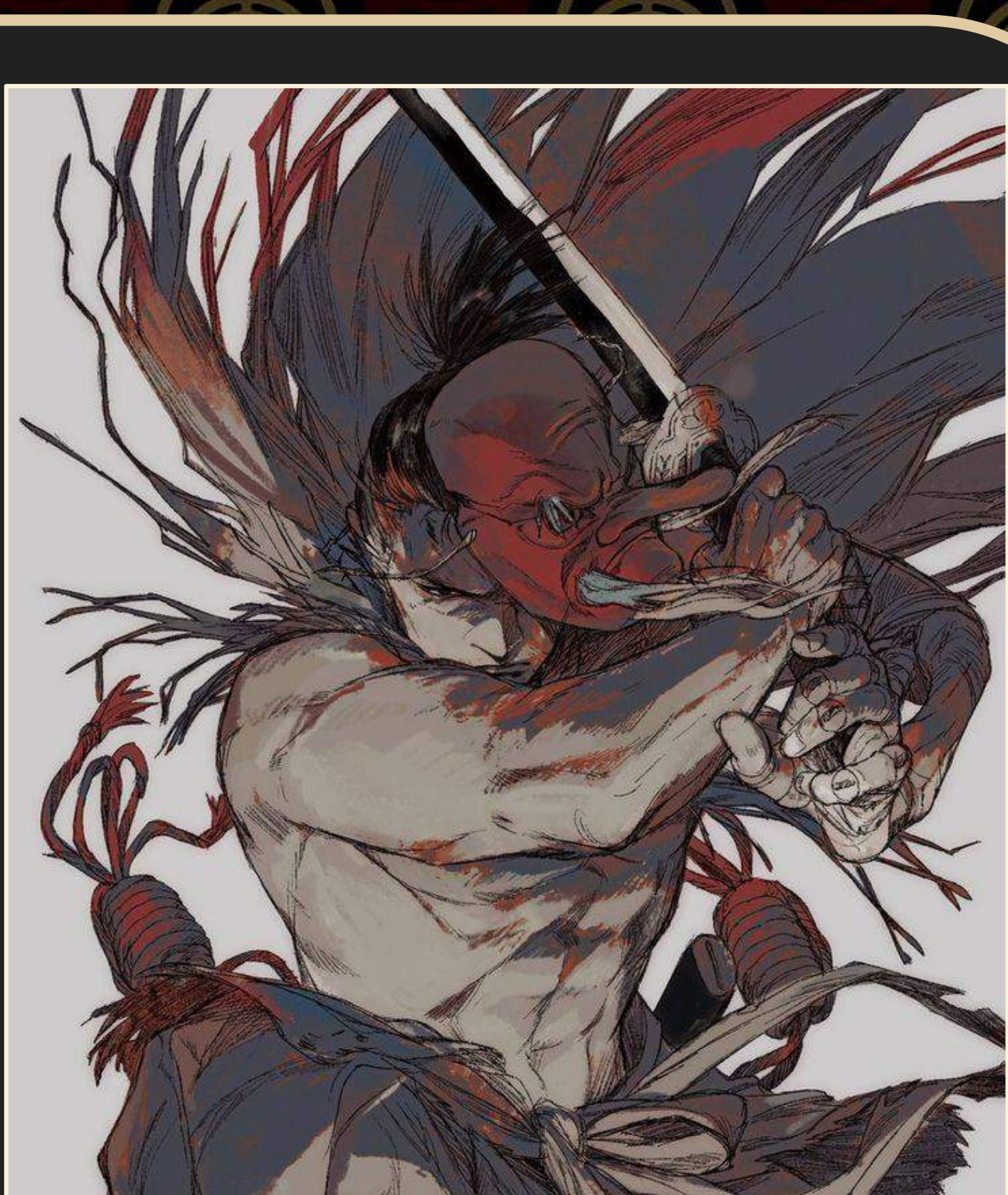
Must be a Stalker, Overseer, Bodyguard, or Street Vendor

The greed of Toad Spirits particularly is well-known in the City, commonly peddlers of assorted trinkets and shiny objects they dig out from piles of detritus in the streets. Their collective wealth, hoarded over the centuries, is coveted by quite a few interested parties who can see the collapse of their guild on the horizon. If you can orchestrate their downfall—or prevent it, if you're sided with the law—you stand to benefit greatly either from their generous thanks or their total annihilation. They're walking targets, slow, feeble, and without much power, but they are cunning enough to stay safe through the use of Bodyguards and other contingencies.

## Group of Interest: The Bloody Fog

Must be a Stalker, Overseer, Warsmith, or Insurgent

The Bloody Fog supposedly doesn't exist. They did, factually, exist in centuries past. The legendary roaming killers were greatly feared, though their existence came into question even in the age where they were most prolific. It is only now, anomalously, that rumors are spread of their inexplicable return from the history books. The Bloody Fog are anarchic slayers of men, that much is at least known. They shun all authority except for self over oneself, with the very notion of law considered an affront to individual dignity. What in times past seemed like senseless violence was, in fact, very coordinated: the Bloody Fog are as investigative as they are deadly, targeting not the figureheads of leadership but the powers that puppet them from the shadows through investigation, blackmail, torture and mutilation. Their only uniform, one which is feared greatly, is a full-facial mask, with every element of the face left to the imagination. If you are a character who views political nihilism as the only solution to the City's rot, you have been specially invited to join the resurrected organization. If you would instead oppose the Bloody Fog, you have discovered evidence that proves they have returned. Getting the world at large to believe you is another story. If aided or ignored by you, they will strike at the City's jugular in due time. All of their members are incredibly powerful, some even among the City's own leadership.



## Revolt on the Summit

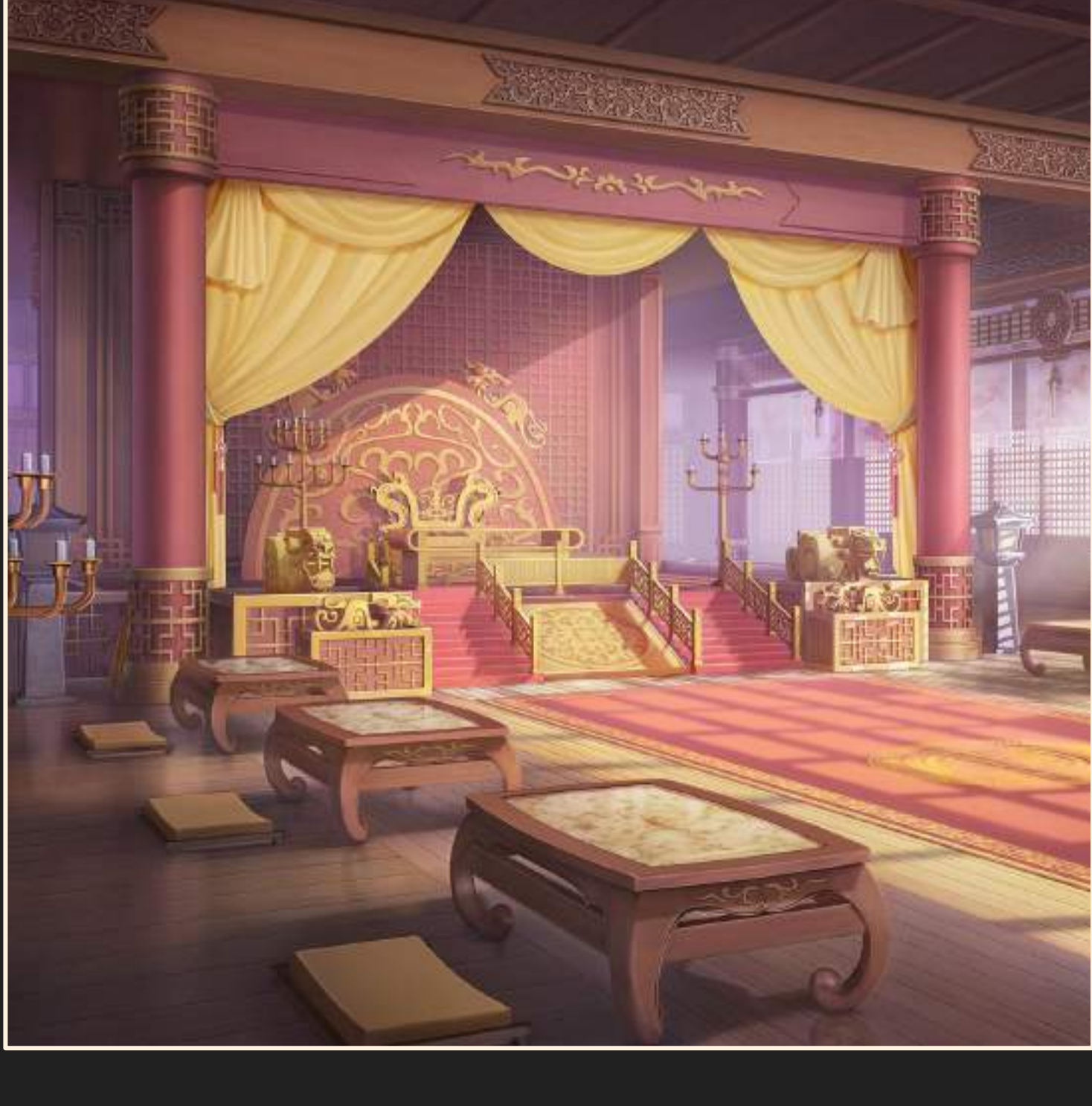
Must be a Warsmith or Insurgent

The people of Youdu have been simmering like a pot for time immemorial, broiling with revolutionary fervor as the rich get richer and the bureaucratic slug of the City's governance does nothing. Power to make the City crumble lies in their hands, if they only had someone to lead them. You might be just the person. With charisma, you might be able to bring Youdu to its knees without even raising a finger, and pick its corpse clean in the aftermath like the vulture you are. They might never even see your face. The lynchpin will be the Summit, the home of the wealthy and the powerful. Its destruction will be the domino that signals the end of an age, the stairway to your victory. Strike when the iron's hot.

## The Sovereign and the King

Must be a Warsmith or Insurgent

The Jade Sovereign and King Yama's rival claims in Youdu have verged on civil war for centuries now. Both claim the City Between as their territory, being the rightful rulers of Heaven and Hell respectively. Their tenuous agreements over the City's bureaucracy come into constant bitter conflict in even the most trivial of matters, bickering like children over as little as a single sidewalk's construction or funding disputes. Since they are both invincible combatants, they have fought regular proxy wars through the actions of their attendants and followers. Yama's Ten Magistrates of Hell regularly make shady deals to erase the misdeeds of powerful combatants on their side and ensure their entry to Paradise, while The Jade Sovereign's bodhisattvas, the seven Golden Sages, are willing to slip the secret Techniques of ancient days to their own favored fighters. If both sides could be forced into a situation where all-out war was the only option, the fissures in Youdu's governance would cause a total bureaucratic collapse. You'll need to operate from the shadows, orchestrating catastrophes and framing each side for unforgivable misdeeds if you want to bring them down, avoiding direct confrontation until the time for a coup is right. Then, you can swoop into the fray and claim the throne for yourself, becoming the unchallenged ruler of the City Between for ages to come.



## Regicide

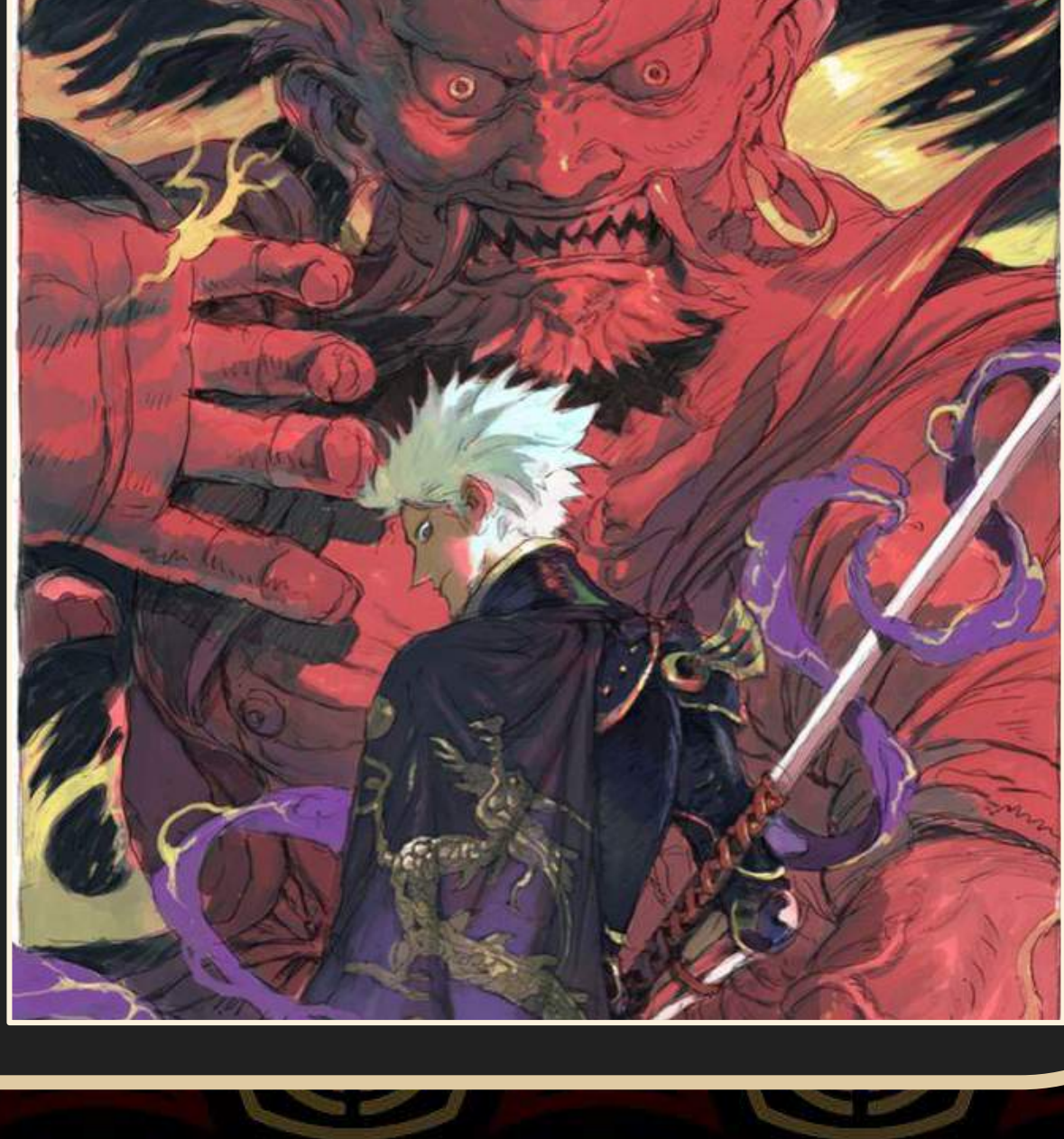
Must be a Warsmith or Insurgent

No better way to destabilize the City than to go for its throat. You are tasked with planning and executing the murder of Yama or Yudi. Or both, for bonus points. Your group of benefactors, should you succeed, will reward you with all the resources necessary to carve the City in your image, with them as your continual allies. You won't know who these benefactors are until the deed is done, but suffice it to say that they are very powerful and hiding among the ranks of the City's strongest and wealthiest. The rule of Yama and Yudi has been too long and grown rotten, like a plum in the summer's heat, gowned in flies and pungent odor. A cleansing of the City is long overdue. At any level of power available to you, the task will be nearly impossible in the absence of a literally flawless plan. Think carefully before you challenge the City's primordial leaders to the death.

## King Yama's Muscle

Must be a Stalker, Yakuza, Beast Hunter or Bodyguard

War is on the horizon, and King Yama wants to be on the winning side. He's throwing money to strong fighters like confetti so long as they join his mob of gangsters, assassins and brutes. There's quite a few perks to working with the king of demons, too: mafia favors, top shelf booze, special entrance to every club in the Devil Moon, free weapons, and enough exotic women to suffocate yourself in. The more people choose the Jade Sovereign's Orthodoxy, the more money he's willing to pay to draw you to his side. Until real conflict starts, you won't even have to do much except hang around his hideout and have a good time. He wouldn't be paying you so handsomely if he didn't think a bloody war was coming soon though.



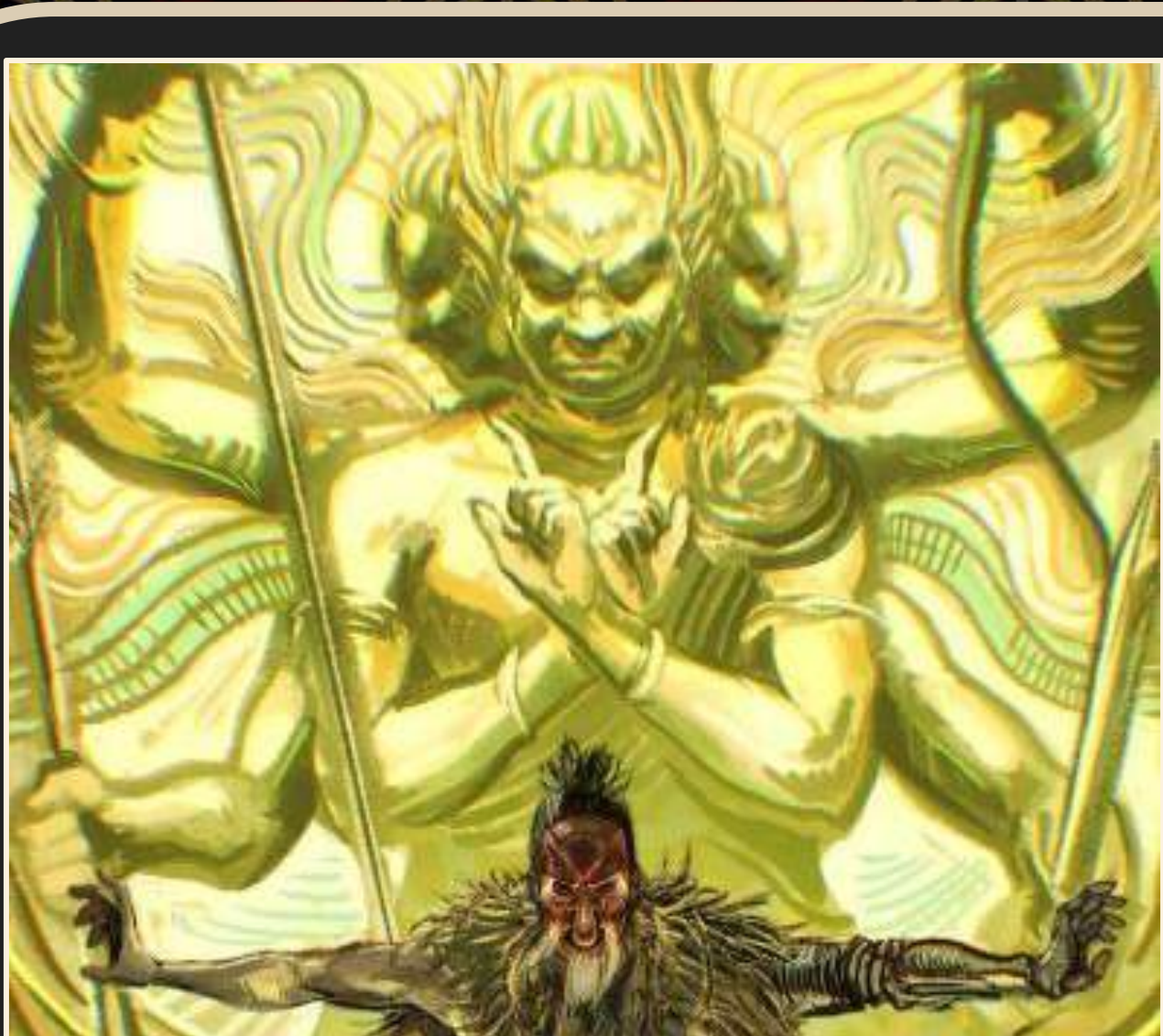
(+1 AP) if at least one other player has chosen 'The Jade Sovereign's Orthodoxy'

## The Jade Sovereign's Orthodoxy

Must be an Exorcist, Institute Apprentice, or Overseer

The Jade Sovereign is bleeding himself dry of money and favors to draw up an army from the disciplines he most respects. War is coming, and it will tear the City Between apart if law and order and authority can't prevail over criminal interests. He's willing to train anyone who values the old ways and keeps the peace, and makes a point of gathering the great masters of the Institute to hone all their abilities even further. You'll have the benefit of the best training in the City Between and the libraries of Techniques locked away in the minds of legendary sages if you're under the Jade Sovereign's wing. Until the uneasy peace falls apart, you'll only be required to maintain your abilities and train under a strong master, all while earning well beyond your keep doing it. You should know that the current peace won't last long.

(+1 AP) if at least one other player has chosen 'King Yama's Muscle'







Your choices here are only the beginning, Conscript. I can see it in those eyes, burning with newfound Aura... Youdu holds untold adventures for you. More than I could possibly offer myself. But it seems my work is done for now... Go! Off, you little rascal! Before I start to get misty-eyed...

*And when next I see you, I'll have a thousand stories to hear.*