

The

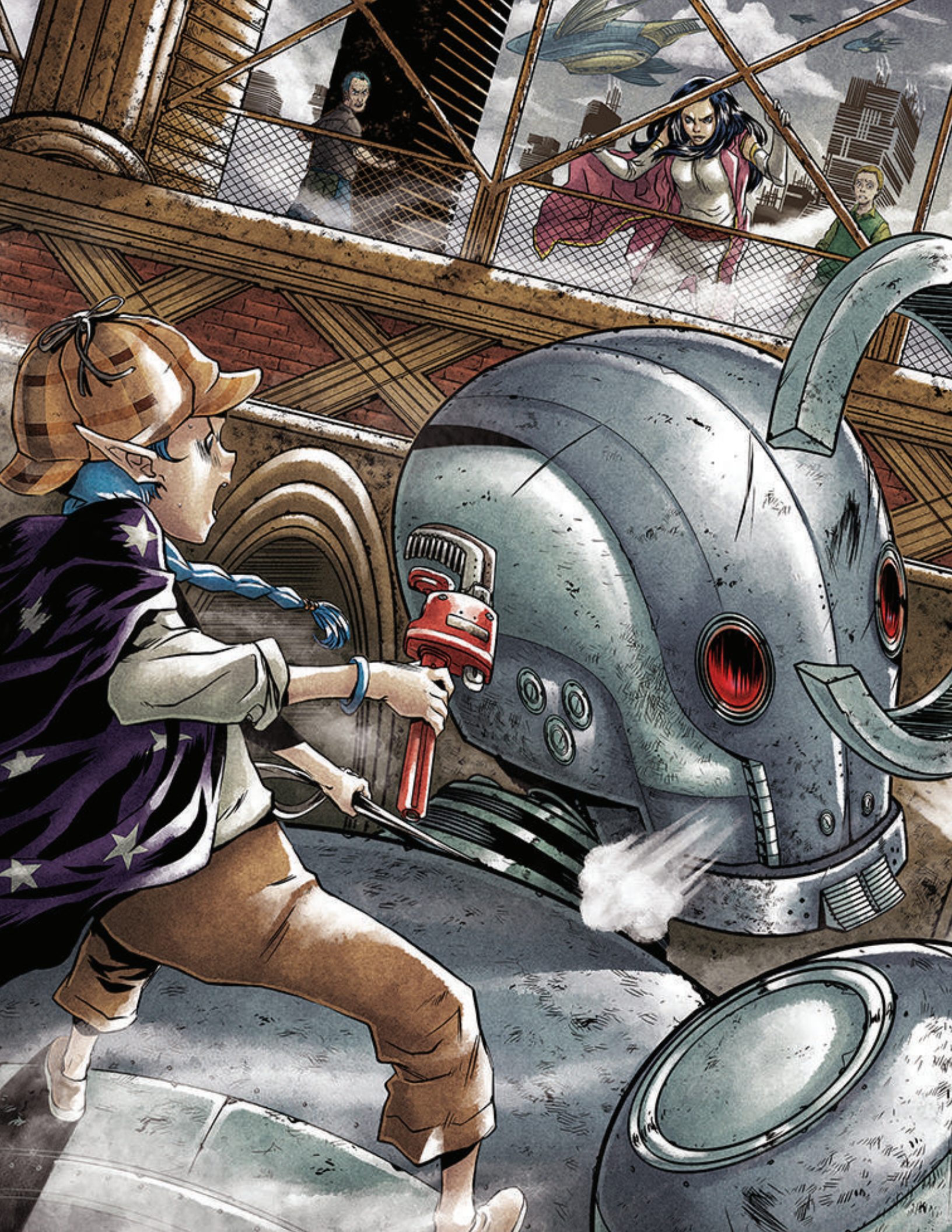
Techno Player's Guide

for the
Chuubo's
Marvelous
Wish Granting
Engine

RPG

by

Jenna Moran





The Techno Player's Guide

*for the **Chuubo's Marvelous Wish-Granting Engine** RPG*

Nobilis: Antithesis, Nobilis: the Essentials, and all included text, concepts, and game mechanics are copyright 2011-2015 by Jenna Katerin Moran.

Chuubo's Marvelous Wish-Granting Engine and all included text, concepts, and game mechanics are copyright 2012-2015 by Jenna Katerin Moran.

All art and presentation elements are copyright 2012-2015 by Jenna Katerin Moran or by the original artist or artists.

Nobilis and **Chuubo's Marvelous Wish-Granting Engine** are the creations of Jenna Katerin Moran (formerly known as R. Sean Borgstrom).

Reproduction without the written permission of one of Jenna Katerin Moran or the appropriate artistic copyright holder is expressly forbidden, except for the purposes of reviews, blank character sheets, copying reasonable selections for personal use and reference only, and printing or copying handouts and playbooks for personal use or use in a game session that you are participating in only.

The mention or reference to any company or product in these pages is not a challenge to the trademark or copyright concerned.

This book uses fantastical and supernatural elements in its setting, for its characters, their abilities, and themes. All such elements are fiction and intended for entertainment purposes only.

This book contains mature content and reader discretion is advised.

Dedication

For Robin Michael Alexander Maginn, who wanted to visit me in China;
for Lillian Elanor Tewson Heino, just in case you get into gaming someday;
and for Killian James Sebastian Maginn, whom I haven't had the chance to meet yet.

Also for Cync Brantley, Rand Brittain, Cheryl & Joseph Couvillion, Anthony Damiani,
Chrysoula Tzavelas, Kevin Maginn, Raymond Wood, James Wallis,
Dara & Anna Korra'ti, Jesse Covner, Hsin Chen, Karen Hermann,
Sonja Britt Borgstrom, and Gayle Margolis.

Special Thanks

To Karen Hermann, for helping out in a particularly rough time.



Credits

Written and Conceived by:
Jenna Katerin Moran

Visual Elements and Design Elements by:
Paolo Bosi and Claudia Cangini for Studio Shadow

with Design and Development Assistance from:
Rand Brittain, Jon Rosebaugh

Special Thanks to:
Jon Rosebaugh

Art Credits:
graphic elements, icons, and signs - Claudia Cangini
cover - Carlos Sneak
pg. 3, 8, 10, 13, 16 (image), 19, 21, 23, 42 - Kam Moody
pg. 14 - Filippo Vanzo
16 (footnote girl), 49, 59 - Miranda Harrell
pg. 33 - Claudia Cangini

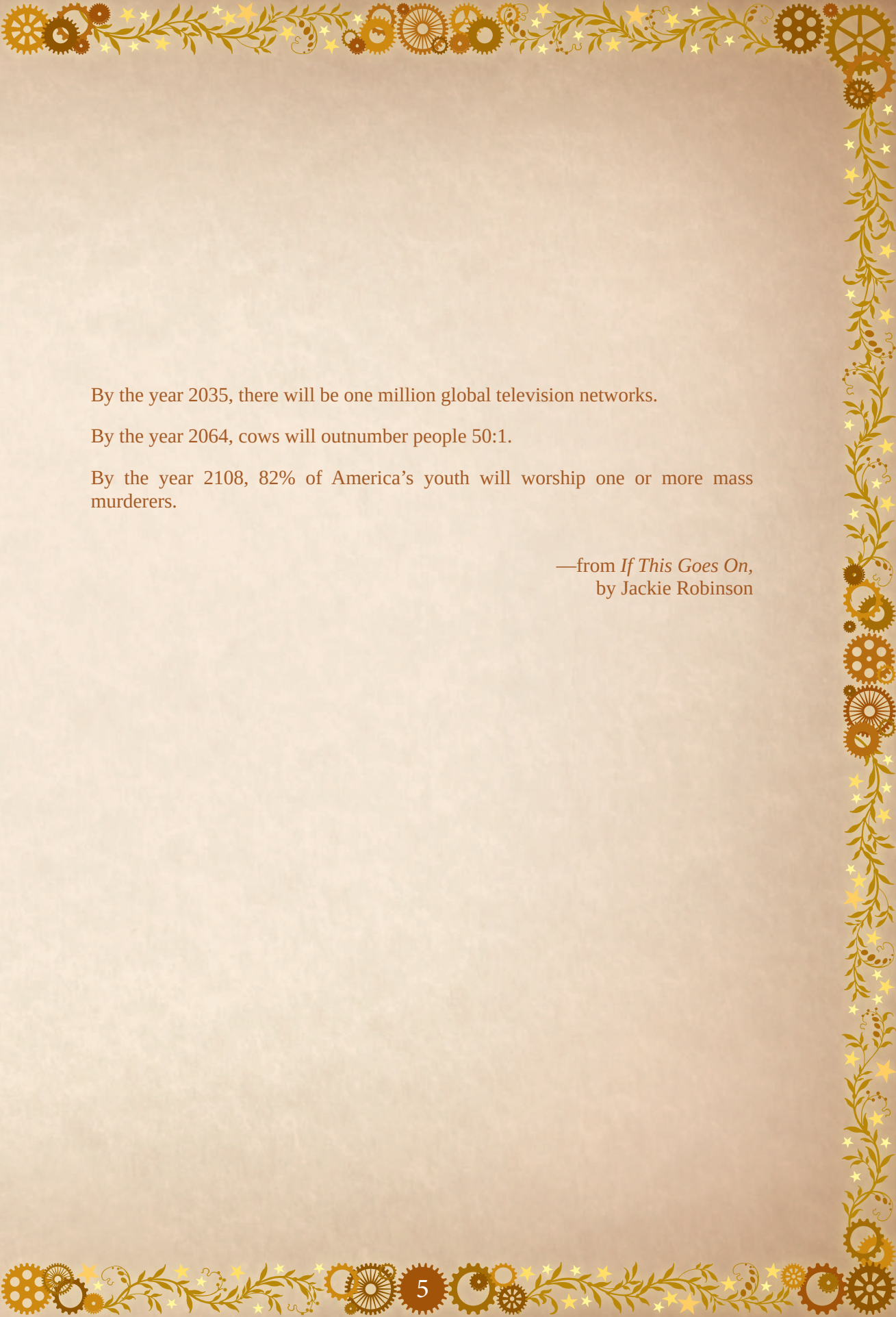




Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	6
Techno	8
XP ACTIONS	9
Foreshadowing	12
Shock (Take 1).....	13
Shock (Take 2).....	14
Sympathetic Action	15
Shock (Take 3).....	17
Discovery.....	18
Pacing and Fading	19
Hollow	22
Miscellaneous XP Actions.....	24
REACTION XP	25
QUESTS.....	29
Example Storyline Quests	37
Arcs	40
ABILITIES	43
Mundane Abilities	44
MP	49
Miraculous Abilities	50
Health Levels.....	54
TRANSITIONS AND RITUALS	55
Transitions	56
Rituals (Invoking).....	58
Rituals (Acting in).....	60





By the year 2035, there will be one million global television networks.

By the year 2064, cows will outnumber people 50:1.

By the year 2108, 82% of America's youth will worship one or more mass murderers.

—from *If This Goes On*,
by Jackie Robinson

Introduction

by Rand Brittain

The Chuubo's Marvelous Wish-Granting Engine RPG is a game of pretend.

If you're familiar with role-playing games in general, you'll know that an RPG is like a story played out during a conversation between friends, wherein each player takes on the role of one of the characters in the story (their *PC* or *Avatar*) and narrates their actions and feelings. Another player (the *GM* or *HG* [*the Hollyhock God*]) handles everything else: the other characters, the world itself, the obstacles in their path, and sometimes even the "plot." If you weren't

familiar with that, well, congratulations! You are now!


Chuubo's Marvelous Wish-Granting Engine has eight different genre variants that have slightly different rules for slightly different types of story. This rulebook is a guide for playing in the **Techno** genre. This book, and possibly a character lifepath and/or playbook, should be all you need to participate in the game as a player. (The HG will want to have the full **Chuubo's Marvelous Wish-Granting Engine** rulebook.)

The rules for the **Techno** genre/mode focus both on the things that you do and on the way you react to the rest of the game. You'll be able to take ordinary actions like "I walk down the street," and you'll also be able to take XP Actions that denote your OOC *interest* in things: how you're getting caught up in another PC's backstory or the HG's description of the sights and sounds of the city; how you're excited by or concerned about some new discovery; how some revelation has frozen you up in shock. Your ordinary actions describe what you do, and your XP Actions display your interest in what everybody else is doing.

Why are they called **XP Actions**? It's because taking those actions is what gives you **eXperience Points**, which are the fuel behind the game's advancement mechanisms. Every XP Action you take—which is to say, every time you formally notice something as catching your player-level interest—moves you another step forward in your progress through life. You'll measure that progress through both **Quests** (in the short term) and **Arcs** (in the long term). A quest is a specific project or stage in your life that you'll complete after achieving somewhere between 15-60 XP. Once you complete it, you'll receive a semi-permanent reward called a **Perk**. An Arc is a set of ~3-5 quests that form a complete story when taken together. Completing an

Gaming Terminology

- ❁ **PC or Avatar**—Player Character. Your Avatar in the world of the game.
- ❁ **NPC**—Non-Player Character.
- ❁ **Main Character**—this term isn't actually standard. A Main Character is someone at the heart of the story, including all PCs but some NPCs as well.
- ❁ **IC**—"IC" actions are taken by your character, "in character."
- ❁ **OOO**—"OOO" actions are things you do as a player, "out of character."
- ❁ **HG**—this term isn't actually standard. The HG is the "Hollyhock God," this game's equivalent of the Game Master.
- ❁ **Chuubo's Marvelous Wish-Granting Engine**—this term isn't actually standard. This is the general term for the game rules we're using, e.g. "In a **Chuubo's Marvelous Wish-Granting Engine** game, you'll have 8 points of Skills...."



Arc will give your Avatar a significant permanent upgrade.

The rest of your actions, the ones that aren't XP Actions, are expressed as **Intentions**. You form an Intention by investing a certain amount of your **Will** (a limited resource, renewing each day) and adding that to your relevant **Skill**. The resulting number will indicate just how effective, productive, or technically correct you can expect your action to be. This is slightly different from the model used in other RPGs, since you'll measure an action by its claim to effectiveness or productivity instead of "success" or "failure," or even "incredible success," but you can pretty much use these actions just like you would in any of those other games.

How often will you take XP actions as opposed to ordinary actions? That's going to vary from group to group. A **Techno** game explicitly rewards playing along with others' ideas and letting time go by, so if the players in your group are focused on taking self-directed actions, pushing forward on their immediate objectives, and spending a lot of time in IC conversation... you'll probably gain XP at a fairly sedate pace. If players in your group are more interested in being caught up in the story and letting things happen, you'll probably make much faster progress.

These are both completely okay.

The rate at which XP Actions happen will serve as a general indicator of your group's pace. Each member of your group will generally take two XP Actions in every **chapter**. How long a chapter lasts depends on which genre you're playing in. For example, in a Pastoral game, each chapter lasts a week; so, once every player has taken two XP Actions, it's time to move on to the next week. This helps keep you from getting "stuck" doing the same thing, since

every piece of XP you pick up will be moving you forward.

In a Techno game, a typical chapter will be a day long (but you'll skip the "boring" days, so only things like weekends, holidays, and adventure days count). Each time you take an XP Action, that will set the tone for a couple of hours of in-character time; once everybody has taken two Actions, it's probably time for a timeskip to the next day when something cool happens.

So, in summary:

- ✿ You play one character;
- ✿ The HG plays the world;
- ✿ In response to the HG's descriptions and the other players' actions, you'll:
 - ★ do things using actions and Intentions.
 - ★ highlight your OOC interest with XP Actions.
- ✿ Once everybody has encountered a couple of interesting things in the chapter, it's likely time to move on to another day.



Techno

Techno is one of eight ways to play the *Chuu-bo's Marvelous Wish-Granting Engine* RPG.

It's not electronic dance music. It doesn't even *come* with electronic dance music. You could hum some electronic-reminiscent dance music, but that really isn't the same.

But it's a game from the heart of the machine.

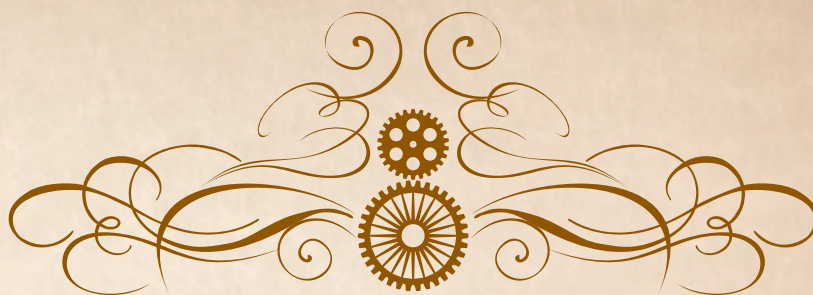
It's a game that knows it's a game, and wants you to get lost in it anyway. It's a game that wants to take some stuff that really ought to be alienating—that stands between you and your character, like the rules of the game—and use that to hook you into the flow of things instead. It's a game that wants to break a lot of walls down, bringing the player's moods into the game, taking meta-stuff and ironic stuff and silly stuff and piling it right next to the serious and meaningful stuff that happens during play; and yet, it's going to try to make that a thing that *immerses* you, that drowns you in it, instead of shoving you away.

It's a game that doesn't really care about the *why* or *how* of something being a good hook for you, it just wants you to fall into its groove.

And the first three pieces of this are:

- ⚙ The XP Actions
- ⚙ The Emotion XP *and*
- ⚙ Quests





XP Actions





XP Actions

There are four basic Actions at the core of a **Techno** game.

- ✿ **Foreshadowing**
- ✿ **Discovery**
- ✿ **Shock and**
- ✿ **??? (yet to be revealed)**

Not even roleplaying is as important, not even comparing numbers on your character sheet compares:

Those are the core things that you'll be doing during play.

Each of them is about an emotional reaction to events:


- ✿ **Foreshadowing** is about getting swept up in something.
- ✿ **Discovery** is about surprise/discovery—you've *found* something.
- ✿ **Shock** is about being stunned, overwhelmed.
- ✿ **???** is about, ah... ???

Each of them tells a story about your attention and interest, as a player:

- ✿ **Foreshadowing** is like saying, "I'm interested. Go on?"
- ✿ **Discovery** is like saying
 - ★ "Ooh, neat!"
 - ★ "Ooh, scary!" or
 - ★ "Mysterious..." and
- ✿ **Shock** is like saying "...!"

And then there's the fourth action, which isn't really an *emotion* per se:

- ✿ **Sympathetic Action (formerly known as ???)** is about feeling *someone else's* shock—your basic empathy tells you, "That person isn't just being quiet. They're saying '...!'"



You'll take these actions when you actually *feel* those things—not *deeply* or anything, but when stuff is at least a little interesting, neat, scary, mysterious, or overwhelming. When you think there's something worth reacting to.

...what if you decide that there isn't anything there, but you want to take an action anyway?

Like, some old lady is telling some story from the golden days and you know it's *supposed* to be Foreshadowing; or someone's in shock because they've dropped their sandwich on a dirty floor, and you know you're *supposed* to feel Sympathetic—but you just can't make yourself care?

You can still take Action, but it will be **Hollow**.

There's some rules for that, later on.

Gaming Terminology

XP—stands for “Experience Points.” It's stuff you use to improve your character. You want it.

Quest—In **Chuubo's Marvelous Wish-Granting Engine** you'll have a set of “quests” that your character is working on—e.g., caretaking a park or practicing your flute. You'll spend XP to advance or finish quests, earning you various rewards.

So you care about XP because whatever you're doing—trying to learn a skill, or get new powers, or have people acknowledge you as cool—it'll help you get it done.

“XP” Actions

These are called **XP Actions** because they earn the group XP. Each time you do them—up to twice per in-game “chapter”—you can add an XP to a group XP pot.

It's specifically *group* XP because I don't consider you personally responsible for any of these:

- ✿ **Foreshadowing** means someone else is being interesting;
- ✿ **Discovery**, too;
- ✿ **Sympathetic Action** needs someone else to be frozen up; *and*
- ✿ **Shock** needs someone to help.

They create interest and attention; *you* feel it—it's cooperative gameplay. So it goes in a cooperative XP pot.

Later on, when you're not busy with play, you can divide the group XP up. If there's XP left over after a division, it stays in the pot; at the end of the session, the HG should add enough XP to the pot to make the final division even out.

You *can* earn your own XP, personal XP, stuff that's all about you—

This just isn't that.



Foreshadowing



Foreshadowing

Condition: You notice that you're paying a lot of attention to something.

Action:

⚙️ Get caught up in it!

So here's what this is:

Something's happening in game. Stories. Fireworks. Neat descriptions of things. Whatever. It's not a thing you're doing. It's something someone else is doing, or that's happening in the world around you. It's kind of cool.

And you want to say: *Yes. This. This is cool. Go on.*

That's a **Foreshadowing** Action.

It's usually interrupting to say, "I'm taking a Foreshadowing Action," so you don't. Instead, it's an XP Action. You pick up an XP token, and you toss it in the group XP pot, and *bam*. And if anyone gets confused and wonders why you're doing that, you'll say:

"Go on."

Or "Foreshadowing."

Or "Red XP." (Like that icon: red.)

If you're not playing with a physical XP pot and physical tokens, you can just say "[Red

XP]" or "[Foreshadowing.]" You might even work out a hand-signal, like one-handed air-quotes, to indicate that Foreshadowing is going on.

When you do this, your character also gets interested. They get caught up in whatever's going on.

Bonus XP

As an optional rule, you can get a second group XP here if you watch/listen for a while longer—enough for one or two more things to *happen*—and then react.

...but foreshadowing what?

I don't know! Stuff that happens later, probably. Maybe it won't ever happen, but wouldn't it be cool if this came up again?

Shock (take 1)



Shock

Condition:

Action:

⚙ ...

...



Shock (take 2)



Shock

Condition:

Action:

⚙ ...

So, Shock is a bit tricky.

It's an Action that you take when you don't know what to do—when you *literally* don't know what to do, when you're stunned, frozen, when you're gaping like a fish. When you're caught, on the spot, and you don't *know* what to do.

...but that means you don't know that you should take the Shock Action, either.

How do we fix this?

I'm going to tackle this by introducing a new Action. It's called **Sympathetic Action**, and it's an Action you take when *someone else* is Shocked...



Sympathetic Action



Sympathetic Action

Condition: You notice that someone's frozen up from, e.g., overpowering emotion, a sudden change of context, a sudden spotlighting, or shock.

Action:

- ✿ Try to comfort/reassure them, offer them sympathy, or physically help.

So, this doesn't work quite the same as the other actions I've mentioned. It's not quite an emotional reaction that *you're* having—

It's something confined to the mirror neurons. It's an emotional reaction you feel on behalf of *somebody else*.

"Frozen Up"

You could take a Sympathetic Action action to help, e.g.,

- ✿ someone kind of locked up from shock or stress
- ✿ someone in a crying fit
- ✿ someone who's just been called upon in class and can't think of anything to say
- ✿ someone doing OCD stuff like moving stuff back and forth between two shelves over and over
- ✿ someone lying in the road with both legs broken. Be more honest, broken-legged person!
- ✿ a child caught in a car-seat
- ✿ a PC who's just learned that their mom is the big bad of the campaign, who isn't so much *reacting* as gaping like a thunder-struck fish...

You get the sense that they can't move forward. That they're frozen up. That they're stuck.

So you help them out.

You take in-game action to help—touch their shoulder, offer to help, listen, or whatever—and declare that you're taking a **Sympathetic Action**. Then you put an XP in the group XP pot.

What If They're Just, Like, Tragic? Not "Stuck?"

Don't read too much into the name here. **Sympathetic Action** is just **Shock**, seen from the other side—

So if they're not stuck, no matter how much sympathy you feel, you can't take a Sympathetic Action!

Bonus XP

As an optional rule, you can get a second group XP for this if you *really* unstick them—

If after you take this Action, they *explode* with emotion. If they shift gears all the way from “frozen up” to “demonstrative:”

When you went to comfort them they were all deer-in-the-headlights; but now that you’re sympathetic—

- ✿ they collapse into cathartic tears*;
- ✿ they melt in adoration;
- ✿ they start telling their story;
- ✿ they get angry at you;
- ✿ they run away;
- ✿ they vent loudly; *or*
- ✿ they step up to the plate and do something completely awesome. Hooray!

Stuff like that can give you a second group XP.

Tying It Back to Shock

As a special case, if the person you’re helping is a PC, you can offer *them* the XP Action instead. Say something like, “**Shock?**” and hold out the XP token instead of just dropping it in the pot.

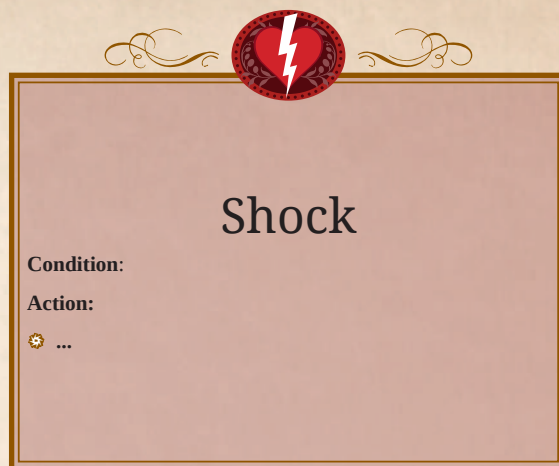
If they take it and toss it in the XP pot themselves, or even just nod and agree—it’s their Action. Not yours.

This matters mostly because you might be out of XP Actions for the chapter, or, the HG might be the one offering the XP to you!

As opposed to moping-around-pointlessly tears, which would make them still “stuck”



Shock (take 3)



This is an Action that you take when someone else *could* take a Sympathetic Action—

They’ve noticed that you’re frozen up. They’ve stepped forward to help or comfort you. But instead of making it about them, they offered you the XP Action. They said, “Shock?”

Or “Would you like to take a Shock Action?”

The act of having someone reach out to you changes things. It clarifies things. It gives you the right to actually accept—to *take* a Shock Action.

Sometimes it’s even a little retroactive—

In the moment they did that, you recovered, and now you do something big and cool. If you’re using the optional bonus XP rules, that might even earn a second group XP!



Discovery



Discovery

Condition: You're doing something you've never done, exploring somewhere new, or investigating an anomaly. And you notice that you've just found or discovered or learned something unexpected!

Action:

- ⚙️ **Declare that it's neat, mysterious, or scary enough to have an impact on you.**

Discovery is the last XP Action.

It's for *unknown territory*—you're somewhere where you don't know what'll happen next.

You're exploring a haunted house or a new street. You're trying something new or something dumb. You've found something weird going on and you don't know why, so you're trying to figure that out.

And because of that, because you don't know what'll happen next, you're listening to each new thing that the HG says for evidence of... well, something surprising.

Something scary, or mysterious, or neat.

You'll take the **Discovery** Action when you find that.

Or, another way to put it: taking the Discovery Action *decides* that something is neat, scary, or mysterious. **Taking the Discovery Action gives what you find the *meaningfulness-nature* in play.**

Bonus XP

As an optional rule, you can get a second bonus XP from **Discovery** if someone—which can and often should be you—emotes a reaction to what you find. Something at least a little more than just “I’m taking a Discovery Action: that’s neat/mysterious/scary.”

Like: *ooh.*

Or: *wow.*

Or: *I don't like that at all!*



Pacing

So here's how a **Techno** game is paced. First, we'll ignore all the dumb days—all the days when nothing is happening.

We only care about weekends, holidays, and adventures.

On each day like that, you'll have the chance to take two XP Actions. For instance, you might wind up doing something like this:

☼ Saturday:

- ★ **Discovery** as you try out a new clothing style;
- ★ **Foreshadowing** as you watch a ghost parade.

☼ Sunday:

- ★ **Shock** because you wake up at 3am with a ghost on your chest. (It turns out to just want fashion tips.)
- ★ **Foreshadowing** when your friend Suzy tells you about her past....

Events

Your game will also have **big events**—like boss fights in a fighting game, bonus rounds on a game show, or major gigs for a band. Basically, stuff that's *what the game is about, only more so*. On rare occasions you'll have a big event that's completely *unrelated* to the central focus of the game—

Like, being trapped on a runaway train—

And you'll play it out as if it *were* something that fit the game's focus. Like, if your usual big event is a boss fight, the train will be a boss fight. If your characters are masters of trivia who play a lot of game shows, you'll handle the runaway train like a gameshow. If they're musicians, the

only way to stop the runaway train might just be... the power of music.

A big event like this starts a new chapter in the middle of a day—and then, if it finishes with more than an hour or two of daytime left, it'll start another after. So, in a game about danger chefs, your Actions might look like:

DANGER... CHEF

☼ Saturday:

- ★ **Discovery** as you try out a new clothing style.
- ★ ...no second action, because before you took it, there was a

☼ Runaway Train!

- ★ **Shock...** until someone shakes you out of it. To the ovens, sous-chefs! It's time for some *dangerous cuisine*!
- ★ **Shock**, when the train's shaking collapses your danger soufflé!

☼ Saturday Evening:

- ★ **Discovery**, as you try out the dishes your fellow danger chefs put together and find something scary. "You can't make *fugu* on a runaway train!"
- ★ **Foreshadowing** as you realize that you're feeling a little bit numb...

To be continued, next time,
on DANGER... CHEF!



Fading

Taking an XP Action occupies your attention for a while—sometimes with the XP Action itself and sometimes with the other stuff that happens that scene. For instance, if someone helps you out of your Shock, you may remain frozen-up and that'll occupy you for a bit... or you may snap out of it and do something cool, and *that'll* occupy you for a bit.

And after *that* there'll be a sort of... boring... time:

A cool-down time, you know?

So I want to kind of... partly... skip the boring parts of your character's story. **After each XP Action, once the scene it's in ends, you'll kind of "fade into the background" for a while—**you're still doing stuff, maybe even *cool* stuff, but the story turns its attention away from you for a bit.

So the pattern for a day is:

- ✿ you start the day.
- ✿ you do other stuff.
- ✿ you take an XP Action
- ✿ you fade
- ✿ you unfade
- ✿ you do other stuff
- ✿ you take an XP Action
- ✿ you fade for the rest of the day
- ✿ ... or maybe unfade towards the evening and do a little bit more

The Marginally Deep Theory of Fading

So, fading does have some good effects. It helps with spotlight management, right? It keeps one player from taking up *all* the time in the game unless they don't want XP.

And it gives the HG a convenient opportunity to kind of slyly skip time forward a bit—

Maybe *someone else* will object, but *you* can't really object! You're faded!

...only, none of that is the *reason* for the fading rules. The *reason* for fading is that the scene right after an XP Action scene is usually kind of a disappointment. It's hard to live up to the promise that the XP Action created without pausing to re-gear the story.

Like, you're visiting a new restaurant that you've never been to before. And you find something neat—they *make* something neat!

That's **Discovery!**

Only... the next scene is just, like, you eating. Or discovering more neat things. Or paying and leaving. It's kind of dull.

Or worse:

You try out a new restaurant. Then an alligator bursts out of the kitchen and attacks you. **Discovery!** That's unexpectedly scary. You wrestle it, unsuccessfully, and the scene ends as it's about to bite off your face.

...only, that cliffhanger probably means that nobody knows how to move forward from there and make it cool. At minimum, the dramatic impetus that led you to that moment is expended; something new will have to happen, or you'll need to change perspective on the scene a bit, before the railroad of excitement can pick back up again.

So we fade you for a while.

The Crunchy Rules of Fading

You get to take action while faded. You *exist*. Stuff *happens*. It just... we don't pay as much attention to it in play. We skim over it. We don't put focus on it. In fact, here's the formal rules, and this is *all* that *really* happens while faded:

- ✿ Your character can miss opportunities to do things, and it's not your fault.
- ✿ Important stuff can happen to you, but then it stops moving forward until you unfade—e.g., if you're kidnapped while faded, you can't be interrogated, rescued, or escape until you unfade.

You *can* stay faded until the next chapter. **You should stay faded for somewhere between “a few in-game minutes” and “four in-game hours.”**

How long *exactly*?

It'll be up to you.

After that restaurant thing, with the neat dish, you might be done for the day. If an alligator attacked, though, we might pick up a few minutes later when you're on top of a table and the alligator is down below; or, maybe, when the alligator is sitting down next to you at the table and you're discussing what the two of you should order—it's *its* first time, too!

Reactive vs. Active Play

You'll notice that the XP Actions for the **Techno** genre are mostly *reactive*. This means that players won't be able to drive the game through XP Actions alone:

For the best possible experience you'll want the HG to come up with a constant stream of interesting events to witness and maybe even a “plot.” This is a pretty traditional mode of play for an RPG.

If you're here because you've heard that **the Chuubo's Marvelous Wish-Granting Engine RPG** is *non-traditional*... the kind of game where the players can drive things and the HG can just sit back and enjoy the show? You're not wrong, but you don't want the **Techno** genre—you're looking for a **Pastoral, Gothic, Epic, Adventure, or Fairy Tale** game, instead!

Gaming Terminology

Book—a collection of 8-20 chapters thematically tied together; a story.

Chapter—this term isn't completely standard. This refers to a short unit of play with a relatively coherent beginning and ending, usually taking 15-90 minutes of tabletop play or a week or two on a forum.

In a Techno game, a chapter covers an IC day or a big event in the game.

Scene—uh...

OK, look. A dramatic scene is a little hard to define in general, and even more so when it comes to roleplaying. So mostly I just want to be clear now that I'm using the term more often that you haven't *missed* a definition for scene. A “scene” is just... a scene. One scene of the story. If I were pressed, I'd say “a unit of stuff happening from the time a situation is established, until the time the situation changes in a way that resolves some narrative event.” But that's not a rule for you to memorize. It's the definition that I'd give you if I were *pressed*.

You can use your own theory here for what a scene is!

Whatever a scene is, a “scene” in this game is one of those.

Session—it's a “session” when the players get together for the game. I'm targeting 4-hour sessions. Online games might or might not have specific sessions.

Hollow

Here's the last piece of the core XP Actions.

Sometimes you don't want to cop to feeling anything OOC just because you take an Action. You want to treat it more like pushing a button in a game: "Foreshadowing," you push the Foreshadowing button. "Discovery." "Sympathetic Action." "Shock...!"

You're not interested in saying that something's meaningful. Interesting. Compelling.

In fact, on second thought?

You'll *deny* it.

Your **Discovery** doesn't have meaning. You just saw a napkin and you went, "Oh! Discovery!"

Why is This Here?

Hollow exists so that you're never *unable* to take the genre's core XP Actions. I don't want you to be blocked from engaging with the system because of something OOC, even something as minor and reasonable as "you have to think something's cool before you ask for more of it."

I think there's coolness here. I think you can do neat stuff with Hollow.

But that's not why it's here. It's here so that, if for some reason OOC stuff means you can't take an action the regular way, well, you can still take it Hollow.

Or, you're taking the **Shock** Action *because someone offered*. You weren't in Shock. You were thinking about how to tie slip knots. But someone held out the XP, so you're darn well taking it now.

Or, you're "**Sympathetic**," but you don't really think that somebody's *stuck*.

And **Foreshadowing**?

You "want to see more of this," sure, but not because you *want to see more of this*. You want to see more of it because—I don't know. Because you're *faking* emotion. *Faking* immersion. Or because of some meta thing. Or because you're *ironically* appreciating it. Or you think there *should* be more of it. Or you think it's dull but is *about* to be cool.

Something like that.

You take the Action. You get to take the Action, anyway. But because you don't feel the key feeling, that "go on" or "this means something" or "you're stuck" or "...!", that Action is **Hollow**.

If you're willing to *say* that—to say this means nothing to you; in fact, that it's not even "kind of cool—"

The Action is **Hollow**.

Most of the *good* reasons for this are kind of meta. Like, the HG describes a scene, and there's a napkin, and you declare a **Discovery**—because you want to see *what will happen* if that napkin is suddenly meaningful. Or, you're taking a **Foreshadowing** Action, not because the story another player is telling is *interesting*, not because you can get really caught up in it, but because it's ridiculous, and they're having trouble telling it with a straight face, and they're trying to pause and recover, and you want them

to go on instead, because watching them try is *hilarious*.

Or, you're taking that **Shock** Action because you think being in Shock is *neater* than being distracted remembering knot-rhymes about rabbits ducking into holes or whatever.

Or, you're offering **Sympathy** because you want to understand how Sympathetic Action works.

Or, you're genuinely Sympathetic, but you're calling it Hollow because you want to try Hollow stuff out.

Ultimately what a Hollow Action boils down to is that you want to see the *game* effects of an Action—but you don't buy my description of why.

So if you take an Action as a Hollow Action—basically, if you ignore all the stuff I said about what it means to you as a player, and just pay attention to the game rules, to the Conditions and Actions, and most importantly of all **declare that you're taking it Hollow?** You normally pick up a point of the Hollow “Issue.”

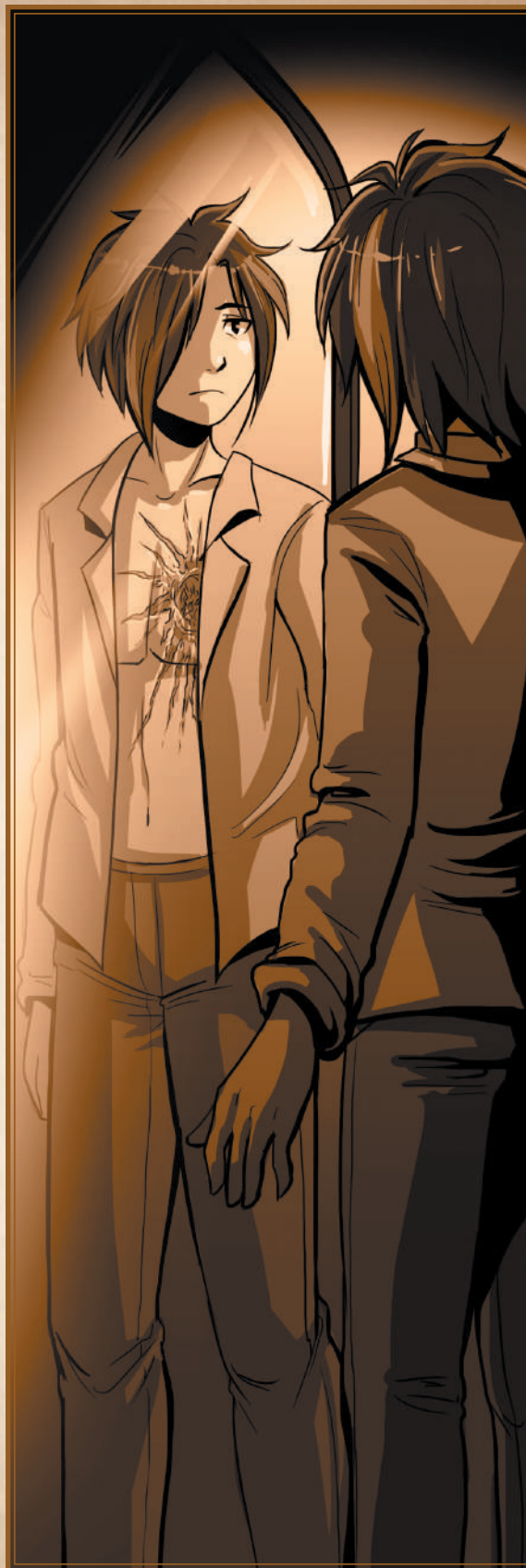
This is a Trait, ranging from 0 to 5, that tracks how alienated you are from the world of the game—ultimately “resolving” and resetting to zero when something shocks your character back to their senses.

Gaming Terminology

Issue—a game trait that tracks part of your character's life situation.

Site Issue—a game trait that tracks part of the group's situation as a whole—usually the status of a particular place or site in game.

“Resolving” an Issue—taking an action at Issue level 4-5 that brings an Issue to its close. Afterwards you'll generally have trouble picking up the Issue again for a little while—e.g., your next few Hollow Actions might not grant the Issue at all.



Actions from Other Genres

There are a bunch of other Actions available in **the Chuubo's Marvelous Wish-Granting Engine RPG**.


I don't want you to have to memorize them, though, so they have a special rule:


You can only use them when they're cool.


You don't have to memorize the list. You don't have to know how all of them work. All you have to know is that you can look one up and take it if you and the HG agree, or you and the whole group agree, that it's what you should be doing right now. If you hear "yeah, yeah, this is totally an (Action Type X)" or "you should try an (Action Type Y.)"


This is meant to discourage you from worrying about these, while still allowing you to use them when they seem like they'd fit.


Anyway, the list of these XP Actions is:


 **Decisive Action** (pg. 38, *CMWGE*). Monologue or talk about your dreams/hopes, then take a decisive action.


 **Science, Faith, and Sorcery** (pg. 37, *CMWGE*). Explain or wonder about something, propose a theory, and then risk yourself testing it.


 **(Be in) Trouble** (pg. 40, *CMWGE*). A threat approaches—declare yourself overwhelmed and outmatched!


 **Never Say Die!** (pg. 33, *CMWGE*). You're overwhelmed and outmatched—but you'll fight to your last drop of strength!


 **(Suffer) Corruption, Trauma, or Transformation/Metamorphosis** (pg. 32, 33, or 36, *CMWGE*). You've failed to completely defend against something corrupting, traumatic, or transformative. Experience surreal effects; then the corruption or whatever gets worse!


 **Wicked Action** (pg. 39, *CMWGE*). You're doing something you think is wrong. Fall into a delirious abyss of self-indulgence!

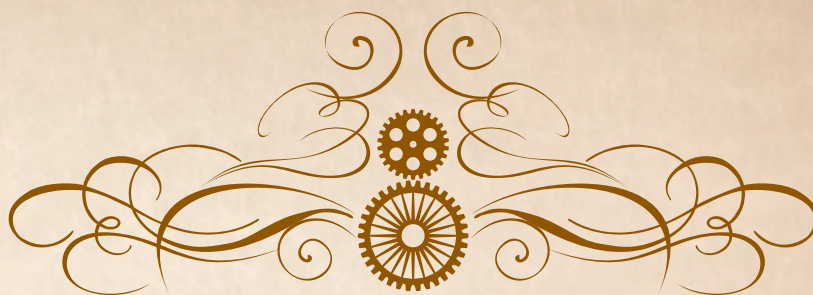
 **(Suffer) Adversity** (pg. 32, *CMWGE*). This situation sucks. It builds up until you get delirious or shut down.

 **Obsessive Action** (pg. 24, *CMWGE*). You're really worried or excited about something. It builds up until you get goofily obsessive... or just kind of short out mentally and shut down.

 **Shared Action** (pg. 21, *CMWGE*). You connect to someone while doing simple, honest stuff.

 **Shared Reactions** (pg. 21, *CMWGE*). You connect to someone while talking about what's going on.

 **Slice of Life** (pg. 22, *CMWGE*). You have an intense experience, good or bad, and the moment haunts you for a while.



Reaction XP





Reaction XP

You have, and each other player has, a *particular* reaction you're looking to get out of the rest. This is usually called "emotion XP" or your "bonus XP emotion." In a **Techno** game, I'm going to rebrand it "reaction XP."

What reaction are you trying to get?

Well, maybe you're a hapless character, so you want to get "head-desks" from the players. If you can't do that, you can't really be all that hapless! Or maybe you're a weirdo. Your thought processes are so strange that you regularly get "(overacted) speechlessness" from others.

You'll find some thoughts on how to choose your XP reaction on pg. 60 of *CMWGE*; the standard options are

- ✿ **Aww! XP**—your PC's hard life makes people go *aww*!
- ✿ **Head-Desk XP**—your PC makes people head-desk or face-palm.
- ✿ **Fist-Shaking XP**—people shake their fists, shouting your PC's name
- ✿ **"Oh no! (Name) is in Trouble!" XP**—your PC is highly kidnappable
- ✿ **(Overacted) Speechlessness XP**—your PC rants nonsense well
- ✿ **(Overacted) Shiver of Wonder/Terror XP**—your PC is creepy or holy
- ✿ **Putting my Faith in You**
(with this XP token) XP—your PC is a big brother/sister archetype
- ✿ **Offering you Comfort (with this XP) XP**—your PC: rather neurotic
- ✿ **Finger-snap and beckon over XP**—your PC is a natural minion
- ✿ **???—???**
- ✿ **Thumbs-Up XP**—your PC is kind of quiet and sweet.

...and you want to get that reaction from the other *players* through your character's actions. That is, if you have thumbs-up XP, it's not about getting other *characters* to give you a thumbs-up. They could do that all day, but if the players aren't feeling it, it won't count! And it's not quite about getting the other players to give *you* a thumbs-up, either, although I'll tell you the truth—that's murky enough that I'll count it.

...but mostly it's about *your PC* doing things that are quiet and sweet, and probably having a pretty hard life, so that later, when something good happens to them, when there's a moment of happiness, you get the other players to feel a bit of quiet warmth and give your PC a thumbs-up.


It's a storytelling reward, in short: a reward for getting a real-life reaction.

You can get reaction XP once per 15 minutes of play. (Why that? The limit is mostly to keep it from mattering *who* gives you XP, or *how many* people give you XP. It also draws a clearer line between *one* reaction and *two*.)

Meta XP


I want to introduce two new XP conditions too. They're not on the core list because they're kind of meta—the kind of thing that works well in Techno but might not do in every genre of play:

- ✿ **Indulgent XP and**
- ✿ **But Thou Must XP**



Indulgent XP

Indulgent XP, aka *Kid in a Candy Store XP*, is XP you give someone because they ask for it, or as a reward for playing the way you explicitly asked them to. You shouldn't give them too much! It's bad for them! But it's OK to just give them a little XP now and then.



But Thou Must XP

But Thou Must XP is XP given to the protagonist for playing along with unusual or dumb requirements—it's basically something that you'll offer when someone seems to be hesitating before going forward with a dumb idea, accepting a ridiculous offer, or otherwise doing something that's unwise and unrealistic. It's a *do it! Do it!* kind of thing. Plus a bit of a *just go with it and don't block me* XP.

There are two tricks to **But Thou Must XP**—

The first is that you'll only get the XP if people *know* what you're being faced with. That is, you can't just hesitate in general: that's not going to look like a plea for reaction, just maybe a **Shock**. You need someone else to have said "Come on, let's go punch some holes in some waterbeds" or "It's a gateway to a magical land of adventure! Don't *pack*! Let's just *go*!"

Or you have to have pre-committed: "I'll ask that person out today! No matter what! Even if I get a toad stuck to my head!" And then you get a toad stuck to your head, and you want to back out, you know, *not* ask them out, **But Thou Must!**

The second trick is that you don't technically have to do it just because you get XP. That is, maybe the other players are rooting you on. They want to see you ask that person out. They give you XP! But that doesn't mean you *have* to. You're in control of your character's actions! It's just, unless you're a master at scamming people into giving you XP for nothing, you need to do what thou must *sometimes*... otherwise, why would they bother giving XP?



Salute!

So the ??? above is **Salute/Fist-Pump XP**—XP you get for being stylized and larger-than-life. It's actually a standard reaction, but there's more to it than I showed off in the corebook, and I'll tell you it here.

The key to **Salute! XP**—particularly if the **But Thou Must** PC winds up kind of stealing your fist-pumping physical gesture—is that it's not just saluting *you*. It's also saluting/cheering your *catchphrases*—all the things you say and do so often that they become associated with you and your... *you-ness*. You'll want to make them so catchy and so thematic that people celebrate their appearance or steal them and use them themselves.

Like, say you're **the Ideologue**, Jasmine Apocynum. You might start with:

- ✿ “Salute! Apocynum!”
when striding into a crowd of minions or associates.
- ✿ “Logical. Sensible. Sane.”
something you throw in somewhere after saying something really heartless or crazy.
- ✿ “The world is a shell of lies and everyone's held into it by their own misconceptions.”
a generic justification for anything otherwise too hard to explain.

Once you have your catchphrases you try to use them memorably enough, often enough, and with a sufficiently catchy gesture or intonation that people cheer them on/salute them by/with:

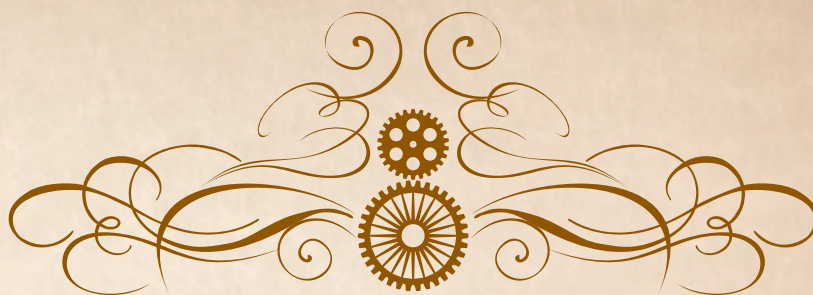
- ✿ a salute;
- ✿ a fist-pump;
- ✿ rolling their hand to get you to get on with it before you say it;
- ✿ a cheer;
- ✿ saying them just before you would; *or*
- ✿ saying, “Yeah!”

or by just tossing an XP across the table when you say a well-established or starting catchphrase. Don't be shy about stealing catchphrases from media, by the way—if they're good, they'll work just as well as your own!

Having Trouble?

You can change your XP reaction if you like. Or, if you don't want to change it, but want to bring in a bit more XP for a while, you could try this:

As an optional rule, **when you're disguised, even poorly, as another Main Character, you can use *their* XP reaction instead.**



Quests










They look sort of like this:

Major Goals

- ☐ A dog you coaxed into being your dog's friend betrays them and vanishes, and their broken heart redoubles their dedication to martial arts;
- ☐ The dog accidentally defeats you;
- ☐ The dog stumbles into the seamy underworld of (canine?) martial arts;
- ☐ You're betrayed and wounded by someone you brought in to help train your dog.

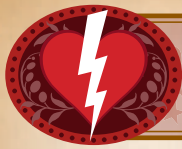
Quest Flavor

-  stake out the dog to gather blackmail material
-  train the dog with squeaky stuffed ninja puppets
-  wrestle the dog, leaving “unintentional” openings in your defense
-  build elaborate treat-dispensaries that require increasing levels of martial arts skill to access
-  and your dog do clicker training
-  subtly mourn that “other” dog that “couldn’t master the No Shadow Paw”
-  covertly interact with, e.g., sleazy “martial arts dog shelter” salesgoons while your dog watches in alarm

You can combine this with an XP Action, but you're not required to.

What are quests about? Quests are about anything in your life that can change. They're about projects you can finish. They're about tasks you can do. They're about life stages you can move through. They can even be about loving a particular band!

This is what you spend your group XP and reaction XP on. You spend it on your quests, either writing down how much you've spent or marking it off on the quest card. And you take the XP that comes in for quest-specific bonuses and you write that down/mark it off too. And eventually you'll reach the quest's target number—here, 35. When you do that, you finish the quest. At that point, something *happens*. Your life—it moves forward. You get a reward.



Generic Quest (Melodramatic)

Bonus XP

There's something that just rivets your attention when it happens; or when you think about it; or when something fits your thoughts about it.

Something you love. Something you fear. Something like...

Pick a catchphrase for this. You don't have to use the exact same catchphrase every time, but it's the core of your experience here. It's what you say to show that your attention has been totally caught.

You can earn a bonus XP towards this quest at any time (but only once per scene/15 minutes) with an emote or a statement that goes basically like that!

This can be a 15 XP, 20-25 XP, or 35-60 XP Quest

XP

15
20
25
35
60

Quest cards like this, with a few blanks for designing, are your generic “go-to” quests when you’re making your own. You don’t even really need one of *my* quest cards—an index card will probably do.

In terms of which template to go with, if your quest is...

- ✿ ...about loving or hating something, you want to start with a red card.
- ✿ ...about something challenging your identity: with a green card.
- ✿ ...something mystical, almost indescribable: with a black card.
- ✿ ...a paradigm or worldview you’ve adopted: with a blue card.
- ✿ ...a passion or fear, something you get overwrought about: you want to start with a gold card.
- ✿ ...a personal/emotional struggle: with an orange card.
- ✿ ...something in the background of your life, like living through grief? You want to start with a silver card.
- ✿ ...something you do that’s part of a simple and honest life? ...purple is best.

You can take an action to earn an XP for *one* quest like this every 15 minutes, up to once per fun scene.

Or you could build a “storyline” quest, like *Blackmailing your Dog into Learning Martial Arts*. **For *each* storyline quest you are on, you can take one 1-XP-earning action per chapter.** Quests like those also give you the chance to get a good chunk of XP through the 5-XP storyline bonuses that you don’t control.



What's the point of a quest?

Mostly, quests are here to replace all that boring stuff that *actually* goes into your life—particularly the stuff that doesn't translate well into games, like carefully reading up on the literature before reviving the dead or the endless hours of practice that go into having a band—with the in-story actions or scenes that show that that stuff's going on.

When you finish a really short quest (15 XP), you'll usually get a temporary reward: something happens, or you get a power as long as you “stay on” the quest. (You can be on up to four quests.) A longer quest has a more tangible reward: a “Perk” plus, well, *something happens*. Maybe the project you're working on finishes. Maybe you find an answer to something in life.

So the point of a quest is: **You want to use XP to fill them out. Then your life progresses.**





There's something you're doing:

You don't even have to say anything in character! You just have to be willing to hold up a sign. It's even OK if sometimes you're being ironic or making a suggestion instead of an observation, as long as an observation is more typical.

This can be a 15 XP, 20-25 XP, or 35-60 XP Quest

XP

A vertical number line with circles at every 5 units. The circles are labeled 15, 20, 25, 35, and 60.





Generic Quest (Background)

There's something you just have to live through, day by day.

You can earn a bonus XP towards this quest at any time (but only once per scene/15 minutes) by directing attention to this experience. This usually relies on a specific catch phrase—e.g., your attention drifts to the birds flying out over Big Lake, and you say, “Listen to those birds.”

...or whatever.

What catch phrase do you use?

This can be a 15 XP, 20-25 XP, or 35-60 XP Quest

A vertical number line with circles at every 5 units. The circles are labeled 15, 20, 25, 35, and 60.



Generic Quest (Work and Study)

There's something you're working on:

Pick a standard phrase to indicate this, and then just say that phrase or some close variant when you want to claim the bonus.

What's your phrase?

The idea is that by saying that, you either confirm that something is about the thing you're working on, or you make yourself a little goofy and perhaps overly earnest.

This can be a 15 XP, 20-25 XP, or 35-60 XP Quest

The absolute bog-standard storyline quest is a 35-XP quest with seven 1-XP options and three 5-XP bonuses, such as:

[illegible]

The icons on the quest cards don't mean anything in particular—they just tie similar things together. The purple icon is for pastoral stuff, interpersonal connections, and stuff like that; the blue is for monologues and decisive, player-agency action; the gold's for passion, frantic worry, obsession...

Sometimes there are “group” quests, where everybody works together to tackle the quest. The HG will explain how that works if they give you one to complete.



Winning Back your Soul with Danger Cuisine

Major Goals















The HG can award you 5 XP towards this quest when:

- ☐ You challenge an old rival in a cooking tournament.
- ☐ You reject a wicked enemy's deal.
- ☐ All hope seems lost, but the game cuts away from you to another scene somewhere else.

You can earn each bonus once, for a total of 15 XP.

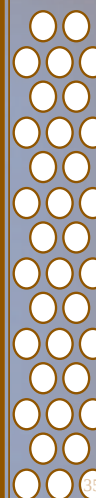
Quest Flavor

1/chapter, you can earn a bonus XP towards this quest when:

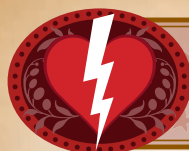
-   You explain how it happened—possibly with a completely new story—that you became a danger chef to win back your soul.
-   You're on/in an out-of-control horse or vehicle.
-   Bad luck ruins something you're working on at a critical moment.
-   Something poisons you. *Again.*
-   You try out a new, ridiculous outfit.
-   You select an ingredient.
-   You're dragged into a cooking tournament despite yourself.

You can combine this with an XP Action, but you're not required to.

XP



40



A New Job (Comedic/Stylized Version)

Major Goals











The HG can award you 5 XP towards this quest when...

- ☐ You uncover a secret fighting tournament (possibly actually just a bridge/dice tournament or something) related to the job;
- ☐ You make a new friend, often a troubled kid, overburdened and meek person your own age, or kitten;
- ☐ You use the first (or other long-awaited) money from the job on an unexpected expense for someone else.

You can earn each bonus once, for a total of up to 15 XP.

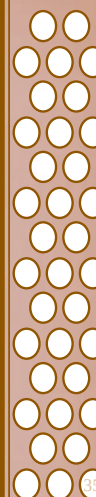
Quest Flavor

1/chapter, you can earn a bonus XP towards this quest when:

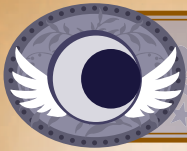
-  the business struggles with money
-   the authorities fail to understand your problems
-   an enemy appears!
-  a new client shows up
-  an older mentor explains the dizzying scope of the work
-  you're transfixed with interest in something seemingly completely unimportant, but related to the job
-   that unimportant thing comes into play sometime later on

You can combine this with an XP Action, but you're not required to.

XP



35



Magical Training

XP

Major Goals

The HG can award you 5 XP towards this quest when:

- ☐ Someone shows you a mystical secret.
- ☐ A demonic figure mocks and belittles you.
- ☐ A peer turns to evil, vice, or wickedness.
- ☐ You accidentally hurt someone with magic.

You can earn each bonus once, for a total of 20 XP.

Quest Flavor

1/chapter, you can earn a bonus XP towards this quest by:

- relying on someone else's strength while you focus on your magic
- repeated practice of your arcane abilities
- shouting the names of spells as you use them
- lecturing others on the superiority of magic
- failing to fit in
- dealing poorly with uncomfortable physical conditions
- having prophetic or potentially prophetic dreams
- getting lost in the sensation of magic roaring through you

You can combine this with an XP Action, but you're not required to.

40



Writing Example Quests for the *Chuubo's Marvelous Wish-Granting Engine* RPG

XP

Major Goals

The HG can award you 5 XP towards this quest when:

- ☐ You come up with a 5-XP quest goal that's unfavorable, or out of the player's control, or only interesting a few times over the course of the quest.
- ☐ Your fingers are too cold to type.

You can earn one of these bonuses, for a total of 5 XP.

Quest Flavor

1/chapter, you can earn a bonus XP towards this quest when you:


- design a new 1-XP bullet point for the quest options.
- pause in the quest design to play some sort of flute.
- realize sadly that you probably didn't earn XP for both of those things because you did them in the same chapter.
- try to keep the 1-XP options to about 1 per 5 total XP in the quest.


You can combine this with an XP Action, but you're not required to.

5

Arcs

As you complete quests, they form into **Arcs**—storylines that look a little like this:

 Aspect Arc	
Part 1	You struggle against a road-block on your training.
Part 2	You're presented with the option of another way of life/thinking.
Part 3	You deal with stressful, bizarre, and confusing social situations.
Part 4	You have an epic struggle against something supernatural.
Part 5	You're lost in the dark.

I've chosen "endings" for each quest that bring a certain level of closure to that stage of your life. For instance, the closure for that first quest—an "Aspect 1" or ": 1" quest—is to push *past* that road-block. The closure for the second quest is an *insight*:

Something that sorta concludes the story of that time you were presented with another way of life or thinking... by saying, "and because of that, [you] realized: X."

The closure for the third quest is shatter-

ing news—basically, I've noticed that periods of goofy social stress don't end naturally, but rather get "cut off" when something disastrous happens to put them into context.

And then the last two quests in that Arc have outcomes that are fairly predictable: the closure for an epic struggle is a victory, and the closure for time spent lost in the dark is making it home... though the experience most likely changed you!


Anyway, the idea is that each character is on an Arc like that, and you'll be looking for ways to interpret the quests you're on as fitting that general Arc. Each quest has the potential to fit into a number of Arcs in a number of ways—**Blackmailing your Dog into Learning Martial Arts**, for instance, might be an Aspect 1 or Aspect 3 quest, but it could also be Shepherd 3 or Storyteller 2. **A New Job?** Storyteller 1, Shepherd 2, or Mystic 2.

So you'll either build or look for quests that fit the stage of the Arc that you're on.

Let's talk about how this might work in practice.

Magical Training could be the first quest of your Aspect Arc. Doing that quest means that you're studying magic. Doing it as the first quest of an Aspect Arc means that "you struggle against a road-block on your training," and then at the end of the quest you push past it. So the quest is now the story of how you've hit a block in your studies of magic. 40 XP later, you push past it!

Let's say you've done that, and you need a new Aspect 2 quest. You don't want to bother making up quests or filling them in or even going looking for new ones, so you just do **Magical Training** again. This time, though, it's an Aspect 2 quest—"you're presented with the option of another way of life/thinking." Com-



bine that with a quest to study magic, and that probably means that you're learning from someone who thinks about magic differently. You're exposed to a new way of thinking or living.

I can't say that **Magical Training** is a good quest for your third Aspect quest, but maybe you're wanting to stick to the cards I just gave you—so you take a break from mystical training to blackmail your dog. That's Aspect 3: a quest where you wind up in a series of progressively goofier social situations and contexts—ranging from the stuff on the card to stuff that comes up in the game—until something shattering happens to break you out of the rut. What is that shattering thing? Maybe it's a death, or a loss, or a war—or maybe you just discover that magic and Chi are incompatible and all this thinking about martial arts is hurting your skills! That's a good excuse to rush back into **Magical Training**, this time as an Aspect 4 quest. In an Aspect 4 quest, you have to contend against a terrifying supernatural opponent. Is it a rival martial arts dog-sensei? A horrible demonic figure trying to exploit your magic or stop you from training your skills?

You make it through in the end. You will *win*.

Not every quest fits your Arc so neatly, though. You could finish a quest—

Let's say that after defeating the demonic force or the rival sensei, you're spiritually damaged. And you plan to try winning your soul back with danger cuisine, but get distracted and pick up the wrong quest card and take on **A New Job** as a fry cook instead. You know. The *non*-dangerous kind. And then it's a cool quest and you have fun with it, but when it's done you realize: that wasn't being lost in the dark and then finding your way home. That wasn't an Aspect 5 quest! That was being a fry cook. In that case, you'll have to look through the eight Arcs of five quests (for a homemade quest) or the options I've tagged in the corebook or supplement (for a canon quest) to see what kind of quest that actually *was* or what its outcome should be.

Ultimately you conclude that it was a "Shepherd 2" quest—

☼ You're having a little trouble keeping your life on an even keel.

—with the "result" that you're doing OK, but there's a big challenge coming up. Is it danger cuisine?

Most of the results are good or at least neutral, but you'll benefit even from the negative results. Even for a quest like an Aspect 3 quest, which ends in disaster—you'll still get a reward.

A 15-XP quest gives you a temporary benefit—you have to stay "on" the quest, keeping the quest card around but not adding more XP to it, to keep it, and it'll go away anyway at the end of the book. Completing a 20+-XP quest usually gives you a "Perk," instead—a little benefit for a little quest, like a new trick for a known ability, or potentially a huge power-up for a late-game high-XP quest. You can have up to eight Perks, so the gains here are finite—but around the time you start running out of room, you'll pick up the option to improve existing Perks as an alternate reward for a quest.

After you earn "enough" XP (120 XP for the first Arc in the game, after which it varies based on HG discretion) in finished quests, you'll basically "level up"—you get a large general upgrade to your power-set, and even at 2-3 quests the Arc usually ends.

You'll figure out which Arc you're on during character creation, and most of the quests you do will be a linear progression through that Arc. A typical Arc quest is 35 XP, so it's common for your first Arc to take you through three of those quests (e.g., Aspect 1, Aspect 2, Aspect 3), plus one other quest. After that, you'll start on a new Arc. Maybe it'll be 120 XP again, or maybe it'll be longer—a really long Arc might be 250 XP, in which case you might do all five Arc quests, three small (15-XP) quests for minor rewards, and a random quest that you found on the side.





Abilities



Abilities


In between XP Actions, you'll be active, doing stuff in the world of the game. Here're the **Abilities** you'll use to do this.

Your core abilities are **Skills**.

Skills are this game's description of "The things your character knows how to do." For instance, you might have a Skill like "Navigation," "Handle Yourself in a Crisis," or "Sneeze Dramatically."

Each Skill is rated from 0 to 5, or sometimes a little lower—for instance, an amnesiac super-spy might have something like:

- ✿ **Tradecraft 3.**
You're an excellent spy.
- ✿ **Athletics 3.**
You're a top athlete.
- ✿ **Amnesia 2.**
You're good at many things and you just don't know why.
- ✿ **Emotionally Commit -1.**
This never works out for you.

In general, the boundaries of these Skills are not well-defined—instead, if you try to use them in ways that you haven't used them before, you'll have a little more trouble, but at the same time, if you make a neat, scary, or mysterious discovery about your talents or lack thereof, that's a free shot at a  **Discovery** Action.

So for instance, if you want to use your **Amnesia** to ski down a mountain fighting off attackers, because as an amnesiac you don't know that you *can't* do that, you might face what's called an **Obstacle**—a penalty to your Skill—because you don't know that you *can* do that either. But on the other hand, whatever you find out is likely to be a Discovery and that'll earn your whole group XP.

You have 8 points of Skills to start out with. If you're particularly awesome, some of them might be "magical Skills" that can do the impossible, "Superior Skills" that make you inhumanly competent, the special Skill "Cool" that helps you come out on top in a conflict with others, or the special Skill "Shine" that makes you more motivational and inspirational.

There's no real rules on what Skills you can have. If you want to be a world-devouring infinite super-God, then **Superior World-Devouring Infinite Super-God 5** is a good Skill to pick; you can use your remaining three Skill points to pump up your athletic, intellectual, or macramé cred. Conversely, even if you pick up an apparently useless Skill like Underwater Basket-Weaving, you're always allowed to improvise new uses for it in play, eventually—perhaps—making it a thing to frighten off armies and monsters with.

("I am she who weaves in the water; the currents are mine, the reeds are mine: the world is mine for the shaping. I open my hands: there is a basket between them. I turn it. It opens. Its maw points towards you. Come, then, and face me, thou weak world-devouring god: *you shall see what a basket-weaver may do!*")

Will

You have 8 points of **Will**.

To do stuff, form an **Intention** by spending 0, 1, 2, 4, or 8 Will and adding that number to the rank of the most appropriate Skill. You can have up to two Intentions running at a time, but you have to stick to the Intention's basic game plan while it's up—so feel free to choose big-picture/long-term Intentions, but remember you might have to drop them if you change your mind!

After subtracting any "Obstacle" that gets in your way, your Intention gives you results like:



Result	
0 or less	it doesn't really help anything
1	at least you made yourself feel happy/competent/at peace/whatever.
2	something actually definitely happens.
3	you performed the task properly.
4	you were effective, and made progress towards your current goals.
5	you were productive: this improved your life, at least the tiniest bit.
6	you were pretty awesome. Impressive.
7	it was super-effective.
8	it was extremely productive.
9	this was the right Intention, for some nebulous meaning of "right."

Once you're done, if you spent Will on an Intention and succeeded or failed, you get 1 Will back. If the Intention just kind of petered out, you don't get that back at all. This isn't meant to be a real penalty or major tactical thing. It's just something I've noticed, in life.

Your Intentions go away, and you get all 8 Will back, at the beginning of a new chapter of play.

Conflict

The basic rule for conflict is that higher-level Intentions resolve first.

For instance, someone has the level 4 Intention to burn down my building. They set a fire, and I notice. I form a level 5 Intention to survive. Even though technically the arsonist's Intention already started, my action resolves first—

The HG takes the arsonist's action off the table until they've thought about how I survive.

They could rule that I get out in time. Or, they could rule that I manage to stop the fire and the building doesn't burn down. Whichever makes the most sense, really. Then *after* that the HG returns to resolving the arsonist's Intention. If I put out the fire, the arsonist has lost their chance to be effective at their action's primary purpose. Their life, as so often happens with arsonists, sucks.

...at least in the short term.

In the long term, if they stick by their guns, the truth is, our Intentions aren't *firmly* in conflict. They could go and set another fire. And another. And another. All under that same first Intention. And if I keep my own Intention going too, then the outcomes open up in the long term. Maybe I do just keep putting out fires. Or maybe I stop the arsonist. Or maybe the police arrive before this goes on for very long.

...but it might make more sense, eventually, if "survive" starts to mean just "get out."

What if my Intention is level 3, instead? Then the scenario plays out a little differently. The assumption here from the beginning is that the building *will burn down*. My survival is going to *have* to be by getting out, and it's even possible that I'll face an Obstacle that lowers my Intention further, because surviving in a burning building is *hard*.

Obstacles

Obstacles are a penalty to your effective Intention. Sometimes they reduce it across the board; other times, they just limit your options. (For instance, if your Intention is to “run up and greet someone,” and you have a broken leg, there’s an Obstacle to the running-up part but not to the greeting.)

Roughly speaking, Obstacles are defined as:

- ❁ **Obstacle 1.** You don’t have the appropriate resources. This is going to be rough.
- ❁ **Obstacle 2.** Success would be pretty epic.
- ❁ **Obstacle 3.** Success is practically impossible.
- ❁ **Obstacle 4.** Success would be just plain goofy.
- ❁ **Obstacle 5.** Success is outrageously impossible—paradoxical, causality-violating, literally impossible and inappropriate *too*, or whatever.

If you’re using a mundane Skill, you can think of higher-end Obstacles as *errors in the definition of what you’re actually doing*. If you “build a perpetual motion machine,” then the -5 Obstacle isn’t there to make it harder to *build a perpetual motion machine*—that’s not “hard.” That’s “thermodynamically impossible.” The Obstacle is there to say:

There’s a fundamental misconception or problem in your project plan, so it’s harder for

your efforts to be effective or productive. *You don’t know what you’re actually building.* You might still build it properly, inasmuch as anyone can build an engine like that properly. It might even be effective, in the sense that it gets you closer to your goals, or productive, in the sense that it makes your life better. But it won’t be a perpetual motion machine in a serious game. Not with a mundane Skill.

If you’re using magic, then it might actually go on forever; magic does stuff like that. For a magical Skill, big Obstacles mean something closer to:

“This is the size of the hole in the world that your magic will have to patch up.”

Bonds and Mundane Actions

A Bond is something you **must** do, or **can’t** do, or **are driven to do**.

It’s rated between 0 and 5—often, 2.

Bonds help you win conflicts and overcome Obstacles. When your Intention goes up against a conflict or Obstacle, and you have a relevant Bond, you can bring in the Bond to add the Bond level to your Intention.

Bonds can get you into trouble, but if they do, you can gain Will—anywhere from 0 to the rating of the Bond.

It is always notionally possible to do without food, water, sleep, or even air while actively fulfilling the Bond. If you’re a shark god, and you have to keep moving, and you’re marooned in orbit around a dead star—*keep moving*. Keep thrashing blindly in the dark, like a shark god should, and you’ll potentially stay alive while you do. For days. Weeks. Years. Forever.

Bonds are rare in the game world, but many PCs will have one—it’s my favorite gift to hand out to a mundane PC. You can even have multiple Bonds, although you only get the benefits from one Bond at a time.

Gaming Terminology

Sustained Action—something you are currently doing. You can be doing two things at any given time.

Tool—a bonus to a mundane Intention. Really good equipment is often a +1 Tool.

Trait—an OOC, rules-based representation of some ability or quality your character possesses. Skills are one example of a Trait.

Magic

Speaking of magic, magical Skills typically work something like this:

A magical Skill has a very small or nonexistent palette of mundane options. You might be able to use ghost magic in an Intention to read books about ghosts, or to apply makeup to look ghostly, but for the most part, everything you do with that Skill is a magic technique.

You'll typically have a fixed library of these techniques: a few at Obstacle 1, a few at Obstacle 2, and a few at Obstacle 3. You'll also be able to borrow techniques from other magical schools by adding +2 to their Obstacle. You don't actually have to know that that school of magic exists, so what this really means is "you can do almost anything at Obstacle 3-5."

For instance, there's a school of necromancy that allows you to:

- ✿ **[Obstacle 1]** Sniff out corpses, graves, and places of death at unnatural range.
- ✿ **[Obstacle 1]** Speak in voices not your own.
- ✿ **[Obstacle 2]** Summon something within a mile, twisting its path so its travels lead to you
- ✿ **[Obstacle 2]** Make a specific person unable to recognize something.
- ✿ **[Obstacle 2]** Make something unrecognizable in general.
- ✿ **[Obstacle 3]** Wake or bind a corpse or ghost into your service.

So even "Kite Magic," built around, well, magical kites, can be used to dredge up and animate a corpse at Obstacle 5—and conversely, at Obstacle 5, a necromancer can build a supreme magical kite.

Edge and Superior Skills

Advantages in a conflict are described as **Edge**. If someone has wings in an outdoors brawl, for instance—that's not a clear win for them, but it gives them a lot of mobility. How can you pin them down and beat them? It gives them an

Surface Wounds

When something messes you up, you may take a **Surface Wound**.

In order to help you play them up, these are handled as powers. If someone stabs your arm, maybe you now have +1 to bleeding and whimpering. If someone punches you really hard, maybe you now have a **Bond**: "I must keep complaining of stomach pain."

You'll also get to take an action to react, even if you're already doing two different things at once.

These may not sound like they're really great benefits, and that's because they're not. ...because, honestly, people should be motivated *not* to get stabbed in the arm or punched really hard.


But your wounds *function* purely as advantages, because that's how I want them to play. Specifically, for a Surface Wound, you'll get:

- ✿ A +1 "Tool bonus" to Intentions where you're playing up the wound.
- ✿ A level 1 Bond related to the wound
- ✿ Or, if you and the HG can quickly figure out how it works, a level 2 magical or Superior Skill related to the wound.

You can play these as real advantages, if you can justify it. Maybe that punch aligned your seven *chakra* points temporarily? Maybe getting stabbed in the arm awakens your invincible rage? But don't go out of your way to do this: instead, go for it when you can.

Surface Wounds tend to heal in 0-2 chapters, at the end of a chapter.

Protip! Sometimes you can prevent/change game-specific events (like opponent touchdowns in a football game) by taking a Surface Wound instead. This is optional and varies by game.



Edge. If someone has a better tennis racket in a tennis game, that's an Edge. If someone has nukes and someone else doesn't, in a game of global thermonuclear politics—the nukes are an Edge.

Edge is rated from 0 to 5, and it basically acts as a penalty to your opponent's Intention *for the sake of evaluating conflicts with you*. This doesn't stack with Obstacles—if an opponent is facing 2 Edge and a level 3 Obstacle, the Edge is irrelevant. If they're facing 4 Edge and a level 3 Obstacle, the Obstacle won't count—just the Edge.

Superior Skills are distinguished from regular Skills in three respects:

- ❁ If you have them, you're a little less human;
- ❁ They allow you to do things humans can't; *and*
- ❁ In a Superior Skill's core competence—that is, if you can leverage it directly and to its best effect—it gives Edge in an otherwise fair contest equal to the level of the Skill. You don't have to be using the Superior Skill to get this effect, and you may get lesser Edge for oblique applications of the Superior Skill.

The higher the rating of the Superior Skill, the more overtly supernatural it is—something like:

- 0► You're within human norms.
- 1► You're unrealistically good.
- 2► You're like a video game character (Superior Double Jump 2) or an action-movie martial artist (Superior Martial Arts 2).
- 3► You're like a beast—bears have Superior Strength 3, great cats Superior Reflexes 3.
- 4► You're far beyond human—mountains, for instance, have Superior Endurance 4.
- 5► Nothing mortal can stand against you—light, for instance, has Superior Speed 5.

There's no extra cost to have a Superior Skill—but it does require that you be not quite human, so you should only take them to represent superhuman or inhuman parts of your character design.

Perks

At the completion of **each quest***, you'll earn a **Perk**—a minor ability outside the context of your mortal Skills. Depending on the quest and how far into the game you are, you could earn anything from a new television to a permanent increase to a Skill. You're allowed to have up to eight Perks at once, which means you'll run out pretty fast, but by the time you've finished an Arc or two you'll start being able to take better Perks or to improve the ones that you have.

The core book has extensive lists of options and suggestions, but in the end, the criterion for a Perk is “something that makes sense to you, that the HG agrees is fair”—if it fits that criterion, any Perk will be fine.



MP

As a character in a Techno game, you'll probably start with either 1 or 5 MP—**Miracle Points**. These represent the “wishing power of the heart, that can make the impossible possible,” “the bleak power of despair,” or some combination thereof.

You'll use these to fuel miraculous powers (pg. 50)—there are notes on how much such things cost in the powers themselves. Even if you don't have powers like that, though, you can use MP to buy cool stuff in play.

Here's how that works.

The wishing power of the heart can en-glamour a mundane item or an abstract state and make it into something magical, powerful, or outright miraculous. Thus, if you have the MP, a light-up wand bought at a tschotske store can work wonders; vague acceptance into a group of sailors can grant sailing powers; and a store that normally sells magic-less modern body armor will stock magical chainmail just for you.

Stores and social groups that sell this kind of thing are called **MP Shops**. They aren't guaranteed to exist, but if they do, a typical roster of items might look like:

- ✿ **1 MP**—an enchanted axe that works once to cut through anything, even without your holding it, with the words “hop, hop, chop!”
 - ✿ **2 MP**—an enchanted tablecloth that can roll itself out to feed any number of people a rich feast, once, with the words “Tablecloth, turn inside out!” and roll itself back in to clean the dishes, once, with the words “Tablecloth, turn outside in!”
 - ✿ **4 MP**—a wristwatch that lets you say “Watch, roll forward,” and skip forward in time by a variable number of days; spend up to a day traveling or studying, and then say, *once*, “Watch, roll back!” to return to when you were.
- A store like this can re-enchant used items, but only while it still offers them—it can have limited or variable stocks. A more abstract store might be a necromantic faction that you become part of, which might offer:
- ✿ **1 MP**—a one-use token that'll get you in to a meeting of the faction
 - ✿ **2 MP**—you learn a magical technique used by the faction—for the rest of the story, you can spend 1-3 MP to ask 1-3 questions from a specific corpse, after which it's forever silent.
 - ✿ **4 MP**—hire a tireless servant made of bone. It'll serve you faithfully for one full week and then fall apart into dust.

In general you'll recover 1 MP (up to your normal maximum) at the beginning of each chapter. If you want to go past that, you can get more MP from **Bonds** (pg. 51)—up to the Bond's rating in MP either when a Bond gets you into trouble or when you spend a whole chapter assiduously “serving” a Bond—or from **Issues**, which the HG will hand out.

Your MP resets to its normal maximum at the beginning of a new “book” of play, though, so don't build it up for too long!

With a few rare exceptions.



Miraculous Abilities

Gaming Terminology

Arc Trait—a Trait you pick up from pursuing a given Arc, e.g. Knight (Idol Singer) or Aspect (perfect, unconquerable Ace).

Miracle—the kinds of things warring gods and demons do. A flare of power rises from the heart and burns its truth into the world.

Imperial Miracle—the kind of thing that world-dreamers, subtle deities, and cosmic principles do. A wish whispers out from the heart to shape the world.

Quest Miracle—a miracle created with a quest instead of MP. Once you get enough XP to activate it, you can keep it running until the “book” ends or until you need that quest slot for something else.

MP—the power source for miracles and Imperial miracles. Sometimes I will speak of this as wish power, “the wishing power of the heart,” or “the power of the wishing heart to change what’s possible.” However for the miracles of the Bleak Academy I suspect it is not something so glad.

Bleak power—a miraculous ability drawing on a bleak, unmaking power. These powers usually make it easy to destroy, cripple, invoke despair, and curbstomp your opponents, but there are special rules for resisting them on pg. 52-53 and on pg. 476-481, *CMWGE*.

Major power—a miraculous ability capable of doing epic things, extremely complicated things, and/or affecting large areas.

Ritual power—a miraculous ability that triggers/requires a Ritual (pg. 60) when invoked, unless the HG waives that for OOC reasons.

Mundane Abilities come from practice and talent. You’re born with some of them, or pick them up due to circumstance; you develop them with hard work and time. They’re the causal outcome of a *process*.

Miraculous Abilities aren’t.

Miraculous Abilities operate on a metaphorical level. They’re abilities that you develop because you *should* have them, because they fit who you are and what you stand for—because they’re the physical manifestation of your wishes, and connections, and morality, and your dreams. They arise, not from the mind or body, but from the heart.

Afflictions

The most common miraculous Trait is an “Affliction”—it’s the kind that even mortals have sometimes. An Affliction is just a rule—something you **must** do, **can’t** do, or **are driven to** do. Just like a Bond!

The difference is that instead of just giving bonuses to stuff you were doing anyway, an Affliction can make *new stuff happen*. The details are 100% in the HG’s hands, but if it fits, you can prompt them, e.g., saying, “I must be untrackable—that’s my Affliction—so get this guy off my tail!” Then, possibly, you lose the tail miraculously, slipping off between two buildings that were actually abutting before and after you pass.

It’s common to write an Affliction casually, like “**Affliction:** I can point at things and make them explode,” instead of “**Affliction:** I must, when I concentrate on blowing things up, kindle an explosive force inside the things I point at, which then releases. Bang!” I still cling to the can’t/must/driven to definition, though, because it means that every Affliction does *something*, as opposed to some being vague.

Auctorita

The miraculous equivalent of an Obstacle is an “Auctoritas”—a barrier rated from 0 to 5. Each Auctoritas says that something *doesn’t* happen, even when miracles are involved. When a miracle tries to violate an Auctoritas...

Unless it has “Strike” equal to the rating of the Auctoritas, that part of the miracle simply fails.

Afflictions almost always have an Auctoritas equal to their rating, and they almost never have Strike, so when two Afflictions clash, the default state is “nothing happens.”

Strike

You can usually spend MP to buy “Strike” for your miracles—one MP per point of Strike gained. You can even do this to enhance the miraculous effects of your Afflictions, if you know the HG is doing something with an Affliction and an Auctoritas is blocking it out.

This not only allows a miracle to bypass an Auctoritas—

It reduces the *rating* of an opponent’s miracle, down to a minimum of 0, for the purposes of winning a conflict between two miracles. (And, much like in a mundane conflict, the higher-level miracle gets resolved first.)

Bonds and Miraculous Abilities

A Bond is something you **must** do, or **can’t** do, or **are driven to do**.

It’s rated between 0 and 5—often, 2.


Bonds help you win conflicts and overcome Auctorita. A relevant bond can add Strike equal to its rating to a miracle—though, you only get the Strike from the largest appropriate Bond.


Bonds can get you into trouble, but if they do, you can gain MP—anywhere from 0 to the rating of the Bond. You can also get this MP for spending a whole chapter “honoring” a Bond—if you’re driven to plant trees, for instance, a whole chapter dedicated to planting trees might earn you MP.


You can also use a Bond for its mundane benefits—reduced need for sleep/food, improved Intentions, or to gain Will—even if you’re a miraculous character.


Other Miraculous Traits


The second-most-common kind of miraculous power is an “Arc Trait”—a miraculous character generally starts with 0-3. These things are pretty idiosyncratic—for instance:


 **Wounded Angel** (pg. 490, *CMWGE*) abilities turn your pain into powers.


 **Become Somebody** (pg. 494, *CMWGE*) helps you live up to a role or, more generally, fit in.


 **Reality Syndrome** (pg. 500, *CMWGE*) gives you great cosmic power, but it’s a bit tricky to use it.


 **Child of the Ash** (pg. 508, *CMWGE*) gives you a giant monster form and ties you to a distant land.


 **Spiritual** (pg. 515, *CMWGE*) connects you to an elemental force.


 **Creature of the Light** (pg. 520, *CMWGE*) makes you a compelling dramatic figure—the world is your stage.


 **Creature of Fable** (pg. 525, *CMWGE*) develops you into a story—an urban legend, a myth.

 **The Ace** (pg. 530, *CMWGE*) makes you omni-competent—more or less perfect at everything.

 **Sentimental** (pg. 533, *CMWGE*) gives you powers relating to a collection of magical/personal treasures.

 **A Keeper of Gardens** (pg. 537, *CMWGE*) lets you shape part of the world with your hands.

 **Accursed** (pg. 543, *CMWGE*) curses you, but in recompense, grants a terrifying power of destruction.

 **Primordial** (pg. 547, *CMWGE*) makes you an incarnate natural force.

You’ll find more details on all of these on the relevant pages of the *Chuubo’s Marvelous Wish-Granting Engine* RPG.

Miraculous Abilities of Other Sorts

There are also a few ways to wind up with a small and specific miraculous ability—the power to lure octopi out from the lake with your singing, limited immunity to damage, the ability to find a magical path once a season, or whatever—as a Perk for a miraculous character or, for a mundane character, as the reward for completing an Arc.

Bleak Powers

There is a bleak power of despair that yearns for everything’s unmaking. There is something out there beyond the world that looks upon reality and finds therein no good.

Miracles with this power source are terrifying and often extremely good at destroying and curb-stomping your opponents—but there’s a special option to resist them, as well.


Here’s how that works:

To see a thing is to enter a dialogue with it.

It is a common special effect of a Bleak power that it *unmakes* things—makes them never-have-been. But if you are a witness as something is destroyed, as it is made *never-have-been*, then you are watching a destruction that does not make sense on its own terms. And if you talk about it as it happens, if you *say* that it’s happening, then the lie of the “unmaking” cannot as readily hold.

It is another common special effect of a Bleak power that it is a *judgment*—

And unwitnessed, it may arrogantly claim its judgment unquestionable; but again, if you pay careful attention, if you describe what you see



as you are seeing it, you can put pressure on that judgment's righteousness.

What I mean here is that *this* is the special method of resistance:

Watch. Pay attention. Give an emotionally honest and humble account of the effects of a Bleak miracle as it happens:

That can reverse it, sometimes.

The very attention and interest that's at the heart of a Techno game's in-genre actions is, it turns out, *poison* to Bleak abilities.

Taking advantage of this... it's hard! It's scary! But if you stand there and you recite what you see, if you *watch* as the World-Breaker's Hand or whatever unmakes the world, as it devours you, as it kills you, as it destroys the world around you or before you or whatever—

There is a chance. It's not a guarantee. But there is a chance.

The eyes that see, the ears that hear, even the hand that touches—against the power in those things the Bleak power will sometimes fail. And here is how it plays out: that the Bleak power wins, at least, if it would have won; but *afterwards*, when the metaphorical or literal waters have settled, the HG must consider whether your truth and your witness have poisoned the unmaking and the judgment of the Bleak. Whether your compassion for what you witness has poisoned its malice and its uncharity. If by watching and saying what you saw, you might have unmade and unwoven the unmaking and the unweaving and turned back the tides of death.

There's a chance—not a guarantee—that the core Actions of a Techno game, or the resolution of a red or gray colored Issue, will revert the effect and make things OK. That **Foreshadowing** as you watch the end will. That **Discovery** will. **Sympathetic Action** to what's being destroyed. Maybe even **Shock**. The end of—and I know I haven't talked about this—the Issue **Mystery**, or the resolution of the Issue **Something to**

Deal With.

Sometimes that stuff will revert the effect and leave things OK. Sometimes even *better* than OK. Sometimes the power of the Bleak rolls back and the world is left fresher, newer, cleaner than it had been, or scattered with the treasures of the void, because you watched; and paid attention; and told the world what it was that you saw.

Issues

After each chapter, the HG may hand out an **Issue** to one or more PCs—

Progressing them along some personal story like:

- ✿ a calling—something they're going to need to do
- ✿ being a hero
- ✿ having something psychological or personal they have to deal with
- ✿ indulging in a vice

These are a big deal, and I hope you'll prompt the HG to include them if they get left out, but there's no content *you* have to know about in advance—

It's all on handouts and cards, which you'll either receive in that format or can look up in the main *CMWGE* book.

Health Levels

As a character in the *Chuubo's Marvelous Wish-Granting Engine* RPG, you'll typically have 3-6 Health Levels to absorb bad things that happen, divided into:

- ✿ **Normal Health Levels**, which you can lose to any kind of wound;
- ✿ **Tough Health Levels**, which you can only lose to Serious or Deadly Wounds; *and*
- ✿ **Divine Health Levels**, which you can only lose to Deadly Wounds.

When you lose your last Tough Health Level, you'll also recover all your Normal Health Levels—the wounds in them immediately heal. The same applies to your Divine Health Levels—when you lose your last Divine Health Level, you'll get your Tough Health Levels back.

A typical loadout for a PC is 2 Normal Health Levels, 1 Tough Health Level, and 0-2 Divine Health Levels depending on the game concept. When you run out of Health Levels, you're no longer a PC; instead, you're dead, or transformed, or in someone else's power. Sometimes that means you need a new PC; other times, you'll get them back in a bit, fully healed!

Surface Wounds

The HG hands these out for minor injuries. They come with a small power, as described on pg. 47. They heal in 0-2 chapters, usually at a chapter's end.

Serious Wounds

When something happens that you just can't accept, you may take a **Serious Wound**.

The first thing that happens here is that you get to *change what the wound is*. It was unacceptable! So you won't let it happen *that way*.

You don't get to change the actions that led you there, not yours, not your enemy's, but you do get to change how what happens to *you* gets resolved. If you take a **Serious Wound**, you're still hurt or changed in some fashion, but you can do things like decide that a bullet hits your arm instead of your heart; that, instead of being turned to stone, you slowed down and got tougher; that that love spell *worked* on you, but you're the most annoying in-love person that they've ever seen! And to fit this, as with a Surface Wound, you can get a temporary power—

- ✿ A +1 to Intentions where you're playing up the wound.
- ✿ A level 1 Bond related to the wound
- ✿ A level 1 Affliction related to the wound
- ✿ Or, if you and the HG can quickly figure out how it works, a level 2-3 magical or Superior Skill that relates to the wound.

Serious Wounds heal in 0-2 books, usually at the end of the book; you can, however, use a quest to speed up that healing (pg. 450, *CMWGE*).

Deadly Wounds

If a wound comes from a particularly epic source, it might be a **Deadly Wound** instead.

The powers you get from a Deadly Wound are a bit stronger—

- ✿ A +2 to Intentions where you're playing up the wound.
- ✿ A level 2 Bond related to the wound
- ✿ A higher-level Affliction related to the wound, possibly scaling with your current rank in some Issue.
- ✿ A level 3+ Magical or Superior Skill, *or*
- ✿ A miraculous ability

Deadly wounds do not heal without a quest or power; see pg. 128 and pg. 450, *CMWGE*.



Transitions and Rituals



Transition

Transition

Condition: You've just finished a transition.

Action:

✿ **Become Thoughtful and Distant.**

Sometimes the game'll touch on something inexpressible in ordinary play—something about the game or game world that can't be experienced just by hearing descriptions of the world around the PCs and then playing out your actions.

Maybe it's because it's spiritual, or highly emotional, or abstract. Maybe it's because the PCs have no real chance to witness it. It's something where in a video game you'd cut away from the protagonists to show a moment of beauty or a bit of poetry between chapters. It's something where in a movie you'd have music and landscape but not action or dialogue. It's something where in a book you'd switch to telling the reader a bit of ancient history, or a story, or an aphorism, or quoting from song lyrics.

It breaks the *process*, in short, with something that's meant to inform your emotions and your perspective on the game world without actually talking to your planning, reasoning mind.

In the *Chuubo's Marvelous Wish-Granting Engine* RPG, that's handled as a **Transition**.

The ordinary process of play stops.


Instead, the HG will quote a bit of poetry—usually just a section of a longer poem, returning to the rest in later transitions—or have the players read from a short script, usually in the roles of mysterious entities (“the Falling Man,” “the Star Woman,” “the Sufferer,” and the like.)

Or there'll be a cut-scene, not to tell the players about cool stuff happening elsewhere (you can do that, but it's not a Transition) but rather to change their beliefs about things. Like, you might show their employer making a phone call to betray them. Or show a treasure that they left behind as valueless getting appraised as worth millions after someone else found it and brought it in.

Anyway, a Transition happens when an HG invokes one, although there are often specific things that PCs can do in-world—e.g.,

- ✿ traveling on certain trains
- ✿ or to certain places
- ✿ or preparing themselves to enter a sacred space
- ✿ or armoring themselves for war

—that'll automatically bring a Transition on.



There's an XP Action that you can take whenever there's a Transition. It's effectively in-genre: the HG pre-approves it just by *having* a Transition. It means basically that when the Transition ends, your PC returns to play already faded: thoughtful, distant, emotionally or spiritually affected even if they do not know why.

Example Poetic Transition

This is a piece by Blake. I've adapted it a little for use in play, but you're free to use the original! You might use this:

- ☼ if the PCs have been dared to sleep for seven nights in a graveyard, when they do so sleep
- ☼ now and then in the story of a slower-than-light starship where the PCs wake up from cryogenic freeze centuries before the end
- ☼ preceding visits to an angel that the PCs work for in a story of Armageddon—perhaps as a hint that not all is right under Heaven.

Reading 1

And so he was quiet, and that very night,
As Tom was a-sleeping, he'd had such a
sight!—that thousands of sleepers, Dick, Jane,
Maude, and Jack, were all of them lock'd up in
coffins of black.

Reading 2

That thousands of sleepers, Dick, Jane, Maude,
and Jack, were all of them lock'd up in coffins
of black. And by came an Angel, and he'd had
a bright key, and he'd open'd the coffins &
he'd set them all free.

Reading 3

Then down a green plain leaping, laughing,
they'd ran and wash'd in a river, and shone
in the sand and naked & white, all their bags
left behind, they rose upon clouds, and they
sporting in wind;

Reading 4

And the Angel told Tom if he'd be a good boy,
He'd have God for his father, & he'd never
want joy.

Reading 5

And they washed in a river, and they shone in
the sand, and back down the plains, leaping,
laughing, they'd ran

Reading 6

And they'd opened their coffins and they'd
climbed them back in and the Angel, he'd
locked them with a bright key and grin... until

Reading 7

And they'd opened their coffins and they'd
climbed them back in and the Angel, he'd
locked them with a bright key and grin... until
all of those sleepers: Bea, Peg, Graham, and
Mack were seal'd back up tight in their coffins
of black

Reading 8

As Tom was a-sleeping, he'd had such a
sight!—he was still, cold, and quiet for the rest
of the night.

You can find an example of a script Transition
on pg. 269, *CMWGE*.



Rituals

Ritual Actions *The Invocation*

Condition: You have the OOC attention of all of the players, and there is an applicable ritual.

Action:

✿ **Invoke a Ritual!**

So sometimes, particularly in a Techno game, the world'll get weird. Things won't work well with the normal process of play. Instead there's something like... a mini-game in a video game, or a montage in a movie, or an experimental interlude in a longer book.

Things get *stylized*.

This is normally an indication that the psychic content of the moment—its effects on the mind and heart and soul of the participants—is a bigger deal than the outcome. It can also mean that something is socially fraught and people are behaving in alien ways because of it.

So we're talking...

- ✿ battles where the PCs don't control the outcome
- ✿ montages—
 - ✱ training montages
 - ✱ shopping montages
 - ✱ preparation for battle montages
 - ✱ clips from a play the PCs are putting on
 - ✱ or a movie they're watching
 - ✱ gathering votes for a bill they're trying to pass

- ✿ magical girl transformations
- ✿ creating art
- ✿ spiritual experiences
- ✿ giant robot summoning and transformation sequences
- ✿ experiences on hallucinogens
- ✿ telepathic dives into a hostile or alien target's mind
- ✿ reality television, where people “talk to the camera” after events and the game is a post-editing reality

...stuff like that.

These tend to play out in strange and disjointed moments—bits of on-topic description from the players about what happens, comments on the ritual and recent events, and people posing dramatically.

There are two XP Actions associated with Rituals.

The first is **Invoking a Ritual**.

There are usually key phrases or actions that can trigger a Ritual.

For instance,

- ✿ if there's a ritual for sailing a long distance, you might invoke it with **"Sail Away!"**
- ✿ if there's a Ritual for powering up a Marvelous Wish-Granting Engine, you might invoke it with **"I'm invoking the Ritual of the Engine."**

Usually this is in the HG's hands—the HG can veto a Ritual, or make it obligatory ("the boat isn't going anywhere without a Ritual!"), or leave it optional. Usually this is handled on a case-by-case basis—but whatever the HG decides, *someone* has to take the **Invoke a Ritual** Action and kick in the XP.* There's also a secondary requirement:

You need the OOC attention of everyone in the group.

This isn't meant to be burdensome, just: a Ritual can't coexist with normal play. You can't have two people over in a corner finishing up a conversation, or someone so distracted by texting that when they finish they start doing normal play in the middle of a Ritual. The Ritual takes the place of the ordinary game—

The normal process of time moving forward in the game stops and something *else* begins.

At the very least, there's a level 2-5 Obstacle or Auctoritas in the way of continuing with ordinary actions and ordinary play.

Because Rituals and Transitions require HG involvement to initiate, you're automatically allowed to take the relevant XP Actions.

This can be the HG, but it's usually not!



Ritual Actions

Ritual Actions

Condition: You're in a ritual. The spotlight's on you, or on someone in physical contact with you.

Action:

- ✿ Add a group XP to the pot and declare that your impending action is meaningful.

Once a Ritual starts, there are an infinite number of ways it *could* play out—each Ritual *could* have unique rules. That said, though, there's a pretty standard pattern.

The HG points out people, one by one—

They're *in the spotlight*, as is anyone else in physical contact with their PC.

At that time, they can take a Ritual Action, after which the HG will prompt somebody else. **If you think your Ritual Action is going to be cool, or mean something, you can treat it as an XP Action.**

The standard Ritual Actions are:

- ✿ stating or emoting your reaction to some recent event;
- ✿ emoting your reaction to the ritual;
- ✿ “posing” or otherwise showing off in some iconic fashion suited to the spirit of the special effects or the ritual's mood;
- ✿ taking actions that are specifically called out by a rules book or the HG as part of the ritual—most often,
 - ✿ describing a feature of a montage
 - ✿ responding to a specific prompt, like “you

come across a dying soldier. It's too late to save her. What do you do?”

- ✿ taking special actions with special rules that the Ritual allows, like special attack moves in a dueling Ritual or having an insight into some truth of the game in a meditation Ritual

- ✿ invoking a different Ritual with a Ritual prompt, combining the two Rituals thereby.

If two characters are in physical contact, they share a spotlight and can interrupt one another here; otherwise, they should not.

A Sailing Ritual

Here's an example of how a Ritual might play out:

Madeline (HG): You're on a boat! And you've just discovered a new Ritual: while on this boat, you can sail to available distant lands by calling out ‘Sail away!’

Diane: Sail away!



Madeline (HG): ...already?

Diane: I confess! It is in fact for no other reason than to sail to distant lands that we have crowded onto this boat at all.

Madeline (HG): Okay! Toss me an XP.

Edward: It's really our XP.

Madeline (HG): I'm a player too!

Edward: It goes in the *real players' group XP* pot. You are not to touch it.

Madeline (HG): Just do it so I can shut Edward up.

Diane: Done!

Madeline: You there, Heather?

Heather: Mm. What?

Diane: I'm invoking a Ritual! **Sail away!**

Heather: Oh. OK!

Madeline: All right. You can describe things you do around the boat, "pose" or show off interactions with nautical life, talk about what you hope to find at the end of the journey, or summarize weird things that you see or find on the journey.

[Madeline drops a handout on the table with some notes on the Ritual.]

Madeline: Heather.

Heather: What, me?

Madeline: Is that ... posing?

Heather: Haha. Um, I hadn't meant it to be. But, sure! My character, Julianna, is completely baffled as to why the spotlight turns to her. "What, me?... I'm... on a boat."

Madeline: Edward.

Edward: We sail through lashing waves and terrifying storms.

Madeline: Diane?

Diane: There's a giant goldfish!

Madeline: A goldfish?

Diane: It has a yin-yang symbol on its head. It's very mysterious. But I won't Discover it because I'm in the middle of another XP Action already. It rises almost to the surface, then it darts by under the boat, making it wobble and shake.

Madeline: OK. Heather again?

Heather: Round-robin?

Madeline: I ... guess?

Heather: There's a near brush with a pirate ship on the horizon. Luckily it turned out that it wasn't a pirate ship on the distant horizon *after* all but rather this really small ship piloted by ant pirates that we did not fear much at all.

Edward: Until they got at our supplies!

Madeline: You can't say that, Ed. Your characters aren't in physical contact.

Edward: I am willing to spend MP to overcome the stillness of the world and interject it!

Madeline: Fine.

Heather: Traitor.

Edward: Heeheehee.

Madeline: Diane?

Diane: I'm getting used to the rhythm of nautical life. Adjust the ropes. Holystone the deck. Fire the cannon at random islands. I pause, exhausted, in the middle of scrubbing the deck, and pose.

Madeline: Cool! It's around then that your destination, "Distant Lands," comes into sight.

Diane: Wait! Somebody should take an actual XP Action.

Madeline: ...why?

Diane: Because this is an example. You finished too fast! It's not pedagogical at all!

[Heather raises her hand.]

Madeline: Heather.

Heather chucks an XP in the group pot: I hope we'll find something to cure our sick teacher, there, at the end of the journey.

Madeline: And done.

Battle Mode

Here's a more esoteric example of a Ritual—"Battle Mode."

This Ritual is designed to emulate the kind of turn-by-turn conflicts you'll see in traditional RPGs, complete with the accompanying sense of tension, while also staying true to the basic principles of the game.

Cooperative

Battle Mode is inherently cooperative—it can resolve a fight where PCs are on "opposite sides," but not one where they confront one another directly. Handle direct PC-PC combat using the regular system or the Bluebell Park dueling rules from pg. 249 of *Chuubo's Marvelous Wish-Granting Engine*.

Round-Robin Play

By default, a **Battle Mode** Ritual plays out in round-robin order. Unless the HG actively meddles with the action order:

- ✿ each player gets a turn, in which
 - ✱ they take an action
 - ✱ followed by an HG response.
- ✿ the spotlight moves to the next player in a pre-determined order.

The "action" each player takes is not necessarily an Intention—it's just "the thing they're doing," or, "the thing you describe your PC as doing," which could fall under an existing Intention, or a new Intention, or a miracle, or some other in-

system thing. It's generally meant to play out over a few seconds IC.

The Fog of War

A key feature of the **Battle Mode** Ritual is that *questions count as actions*.

I don't think this applies to purely OOC questions—trying to clarify something already said, or asking about rules. But if you're asking about the world, that's basically a Ritual Action to find something out.

Further, it's an action that uses your turn—you'd do this *instead* of taking another action.

So in any given turn

- ✿ You can explicitly watch the enemy or the scene, and if you do that, you'll see what happens but won't be able to fully prevent it—at best, you can mitigate it.
- ✿ Or, you'll take another kind of action, in which case your information on what's going on is going to be pretty limited—you might not even know if you succeeded or you failed.
- ✿ Actions like "look for better ground" fall somewhere in between.

Overcoming these Restrictions

These constraints on the players aren't natural to the system:


Normally, anyone can act at any time and can pair up observation and action Intentions—or take a single Intention that covers both.

...but here, that kind of thing is forbidden by the Ritual.

To overcome the rules of a Ritual and act out of turn, or to break the fog of war paradigm, a PC has to overcome a level 2-5 Obstacle or Auctoritas. The HG can set the number here: aim high to make a conflict scarier and more Ritualized, aim low if the Ritual is more of a suggestion than a rule.

Enemy Scripts

A final feature of a battle Ritual is that enemies



have scripted patterns of behavior: developed on the spot, decided on in advance, or recorded in the early rounds of the fight and then used again later on. Specifically, in between the PC actions, enemies will engage in:

- ✿ *attack patterns*—1-4 sequences of moves that you can theoretically learn to anticipate either IC or OOC;
- ✿ *special attacks*—big attacks with big F/X, usually charging up for 1-2 turns (that is, 1-2 players get to act while it's charging up) before the attack happens;
- ✿ *attacks on NPCs*—when an attack pattern can't target a PC ("attack a distant enemy" when surrounded by PCs) or between attack patterns, enemies often attack NPCs. If there aren't any NPCs to attack, they'll attack the environment.

The Ritual Itself

The three special features of a fight Ritual are round-robin actions, fog of war, and scripted enemies.

On their turn, players choose between the following Ritual Actions:

- ✿ asking a question about their enemies or the state of the scene as a whole,
- ✿ asking a question about something more specific,
- ✿ observing something, to much the same effect as asking about it, *or*
- ✿ taking an action, in a somewhat blind fashion.

"Taking an action" includes both combat-relevant Intentions and the following Ritual moves,

- ✿ stating or emoting their reaction to some recent event,
- ✿ emoting their reaction to the fight or something in it,
- ✿ invoking another Ritual to somehow combine them, *or*
- ✿ "posing" or showing off their moves.

In general, emoted reactions are just indications

of IC distraction: emoting counts as your turn, and you don't take another action, and you'll only pick up new information if it's directly relevant to what you're emoting about. Posing, on the other hand, can be combat-effective:

Instead of interacting directly with the Intention or miracle system, you describe what your combat action *looks* like, and the HG rules from there. It'll depend on the group's general attitude whether a typical pose is more like "I backflip over the enemy, carving verses of poetry into his chest and head," "I'm all wary and cautious, but still stabbing 'em," or "17 damage! 32 damage! You're *Blind!*"

Fading and Battle

It's common for the HG to announce a battle. In this case, they are the one to invoke the Ritual and the one to put an XP in the pot. They're also the ones to *fade*, which means two things:

- ✿ The fog of war intensifies. When the world itself is faded, the HG is less likely to describe things that happen unless a player asks a question. But asking a question falls under the fog of war rules.
- ✿ The HG is even less likely than usual to futz with the round-robin turn order.

That said, ultimately, it's up to the HG how active to be while faded, just like it is up to a faded player.

Speaking of faded players:

If you're faded in Battle Mode, you still participate and you still take your turns—although the HG may skip you now and then. In particular, while you're faded, you can be wounded or buried under attackers or whatever, but further resolution on that has to wait until you unfade, which probably means you stop having turns of action at that time.

If *everyone* stops having turns, the Ritual ends and the HG skips forward to what happens next.

Example 1: The Faded HG

The players are playing themselves, lost in an alien land.

Madeline (the HG): The ice-wolves sweep down the hillside towards you. I'm going to put in the XP and fade for this, so we'll be going round robin, starting with Diane:

BATTLE MODE!

Diane: What are they doing?

[This is Diane's action.]

Madeline: They've closed with you in an instant; you have your eyes on one of them as it bounds towards you, but it can't quite work its way around your guard. It's kind of dancing in place there, feinting and pulling back.

Edward: Are all of them doing that?

[This is Edward's action.]

Madeline: The tide washes over your group; some are trying to circle around behind. But yeah, the ones you're directly focused on—they're a little combat-shy about attacking from the front.

Heather: Is there any safe place? Somewhere we can put our backs to a wall?

[This is Heather's action.]

Madeline: Not really; give me an Intention, though.

Heather: 3?

Madeline: You take a proper look but you're kind of exposed. At best you can move a bit in on the hill so that attacking you is awkward. As you're looking, one of the wolves surges out of the pack: it is right in your face, its teeth are

snapping, its claws are raking, I think it probably gets you.

Heather: Ack! Dragging out **Weathered** to reduce the damage?

Madeline: OK.

[She could probably stop and resolve the wound, or describe it, but she's faded, and there's fog-of-war, and she's decided to play both factors up.]

Diane: Heather! I'm going to get to her side, see about fighting back to back.

Madeline: One of them tears at your leg on the way there. Everything is gray fur and snow and pain.

Diane: Dang. Right, Intention to side kick that one as I go.

Madeline: OK.

[These things explode when hurt badly enough, and Madeline's decided that just happened—but she's faded, so she just says "OK."]

Edward: I'm huddling down behind my shield. I think we can make this.

Madeline: A tree shatters behind you.

[The wolves have an attack pattern that includes lunging out of melee to attack a distant enemy. In this case, with everyone in melee and no NPCs around, that means "a tree."]


Edward: What?

Madeline: It's all a blur.

[Edward doesn't get a useful answer because it's not his turn any more.]

Diane: Ow, ow, ow. What happened with the wolf I kicked?

[It's not Diane's turn either but Madeline, Heather, and Diane have lost track of this for a moment.]



Madeline: Exploded, you think. You've made it to Heather's side. The wolves are actually slowing down a little—like they expended a lot of energy on something. You didn't see what.

Edward: I saw what!

Madeline: Maaaybe. Heather?

Heather: If they're slowed down, I'm going to unleash my Seven Stars Form.

Madeline: Got it.

[Madeline isn't actually trying to end Heather's turn here—she's expecting more detail. But she's fallen into a speech habit of not giving much information.]

Heather: What happens?

Madeline: You tell me! At least tell me what you're doing.

Heather: I'm charging up with a brilliant white light, then appearing in seven places around three of the wolves to stab them.

[While the players are playing themselves, they've gotten some power ups.]

Madeline: The blades sink in. Ed?

Edward: I'm pushing forward, uncertainly.

Madeline: There's no real resistance. Going anywhere in particular?

Edward: Towards the others, I guess.

Madeline: You catch a brief glimpse of the pillar of light of the Seven Stars Form. Diane?

Diane: My back-to-back partner! I'm going to check on what's going on here.

Madeline: Heather's managed to blow up another three of them, so there's three left; one of them is surrounded by this swirl of ice and snow, like it's building up to a Stars form of its own.

Heather: I'm going to... can I try to interrupt it?

Madeline: You can.

Heather: I'm going to do that. Intention 5.

Madeline: It hurts. It hurts a lot. You're tearing in through a hurricane full of snow and metal. But you're just good enough to catch sight of the worst of it, duck through, dodge, and shatter the wolf's skull.

[At this point, Madeline decides that the wolves retreat, but the PCs don't realize that yet.]

Edward: I'm lashing out at one of the remaining ones.

Madeline: Your sword hits only air; it pulls back just in time.

Diane: I'm going to try to take it on from the other side.

Madeline: You corner one of the last two wolves, spear it, and it goes down.

Heather: And the last one?

Madeline: Dashing away into the hills.


Example 2: Fog-of-War with an Unfaded HG

Madeline: The wolves sweep down the hillside towards you. We'll be going round robin for this, starting with Diane—

Diane: BATTLE MODE!

[Diane tosses an XP into the pot.]

Madeline: Hahaha, you're quick! OK. They've closed with you in an instant; you have your eyes on one of them as it bounds towards you, but it can't quite work its way around your guard. It's kind of dancing in place there, feinting and pulling back. Skipping your round robin, though, 'cause your action was to trigger heightened



battlefield awareness. Ed?

[This isn't a rule, but I think it makes sense.]

Edward: Are all of them doing that?

[This is still Edward's action—Madeline is being more forthcoming, but the fog of war continues to exist.]

Madeline: The tide washes over your group; some are trying to circle around behind. But yeah, the ones you're directly focused on—they're a little combat-shy about attacking from the front.

Heather: Is there any safe place? Somewhere we can put our backs to a wall?

Madeline: Not really; give me an Intention, though.

Heather: 3?

Madeline: You take a proper look but you're kind of exposed. At best you can move a bit in on the hill so that attacking you is awkward. As you're looking, one of the wolves surges out of the pack: it is right in your face, its teeth are snapping, its claws are raking, I think it probably gets you.

Heather: Ack! Dragging out **Weathered** to reduce the damage?

Madeline: OK. Quick Surface Wound?

Heather: Bond 1—adrenaline surge. *[Heather is an old hand at picking wound effects that help her strike back harder.]* And I howl!

Diane: Heather! I'm going to get to her side, see about fighting back to back.

Madeline: One of them tears at your leg on the way there. Everything is gray fur and snow and pain.

Diane: Dang. Right, Intention to side kick that one as I go.

Madeline: It explodes in a flurry of ice and

metal. *[They're not just ice-wolves. They're snow, ice, and metal wolves!]* You've reached Heather's side.

Edward: I'm huddling down behind my shield. I think we can make this.

Madeline: They batter against your shield like rain. One of the wolves lunges past you, shattering a tree behind you.

Edward: What?

Madeline: It was a bad tree. It was looking at the wolf in a bad way. I guess? Diane.

Diane: Ow, ow, ow. What's going on with the wolves?

Madeline: The wolves are actually slowing down a little—it's like they exhausted themselves with that first push and are needing to regroup. You think it's a good time to take them out.

Madeline: Heather?

Heather: If they're slowed down, I'm going to unleash my Seven Stars Form.

Madeline: Got it.

Heather: What happens?


Madeline: You tell me! At least tell me what you're doing.

Heather: I'm charging up with a brilliant white light, then appearing in seven places around three of the wolves to stab them.

Madeline: Two of them just explode. The other is covered in red damage numbers floating in the air like some kind of weird runic shell. Ed?

Edward: I'm going to try to take another one out, pushing closer to Heather, if they're still exhausted.

Madeline: Sure. Your sword rips through the ice-wind part of a wolf's head and it explodes in a flurry of ice and snow and is gone. Diane?



Diane: I'm game if they're just going to let us kill them.

Madeline: They're not; they've shaken off the immediate exhaustion. Still going for it?

Diane: I'm more interested in staying where I can guard Heather's back.

Madeline: Fair enough. There's three left; one is seriously wounded (going by the damage numbers) and one is surrounded by this growing swirl of ice and snow, like it's building up to a stars form of its own.

Heather: I'm going to... can I try to interrupt it?

Madeline: You can.

Heather: I'm going to do that. Intention 5.

Madeline: It hurts. It hurts a lot. You're tearing in through a hurricane full of snow and metal. But you're just good enough to catch sight of the worst of it, duck through, dodge, and shatter the wolf's skull.

Edward: I'm lashing out at one of the remaining ones.

Madeline: Your sword hits only air; they're retreating, rushing away towards the hills.

Diane: I'm going to get in its way, block its retreat, pin it 'tween me and Ed.

Madeline: ... sure, that's fair. You corner that wolf, spear it, and it goes down.

Heather: And the last one?

Madeline: Dashing away into the hills, leaving bits of fur and damage numbers scattered on the stones behind.



A decorative border runs along the top, bottom, and left edges of the page. It features a repeating pattern of golden gears of various sizes, some with intricate internal designs, interspersed with stylized green leaves and small yellow stars. The background of the page is a light beige or cream color with a subtle, mottled texture.

And That's All She Wrote!

You are now prepared to play **the Chuubo's Marvelous Wish-Granting Engine** in the Techno genre. I recommend you find someone running a game and play through the character-creation lifepath on pg. 49-62 of the core!