JADECLAW
ANTHROPOMORPHIC FANTASY ROLE-PLAYING

"The first bowl sleekly moistened throat and lips,
The second banished all my loneliness
The third expelled the dullness from my mind,
Sharpening inspiration gained
from all the books I've read.
The fourth brought forth light perspiration,
Dispersing a lifetime's troubles through my pores.
The fifth bowl cleansed ev'ry atom of my being.
The sixth has made me kin to the Immortals.
This seventh...
I can take no more."

— Lu Tung, Chinese poet

Sanguine Productions Limited in association with The Laughing Bondsman presents

JADECLAW

ANTHROPOMORPHIC FANTASY ROLE-PLAYING

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No animals, anthropomorphic or otherwise, were harmed in the making of this game.

This book is a work of fantasy and fiction; any similarity to actual persons, places, or events is coincidental.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this book to Mrs. Julia Wu Chang and Captain T. K. Chang, who believed in me and for having such a wonderful daughter, my best friend and my wife, Dr. Ya-Liang Chang.

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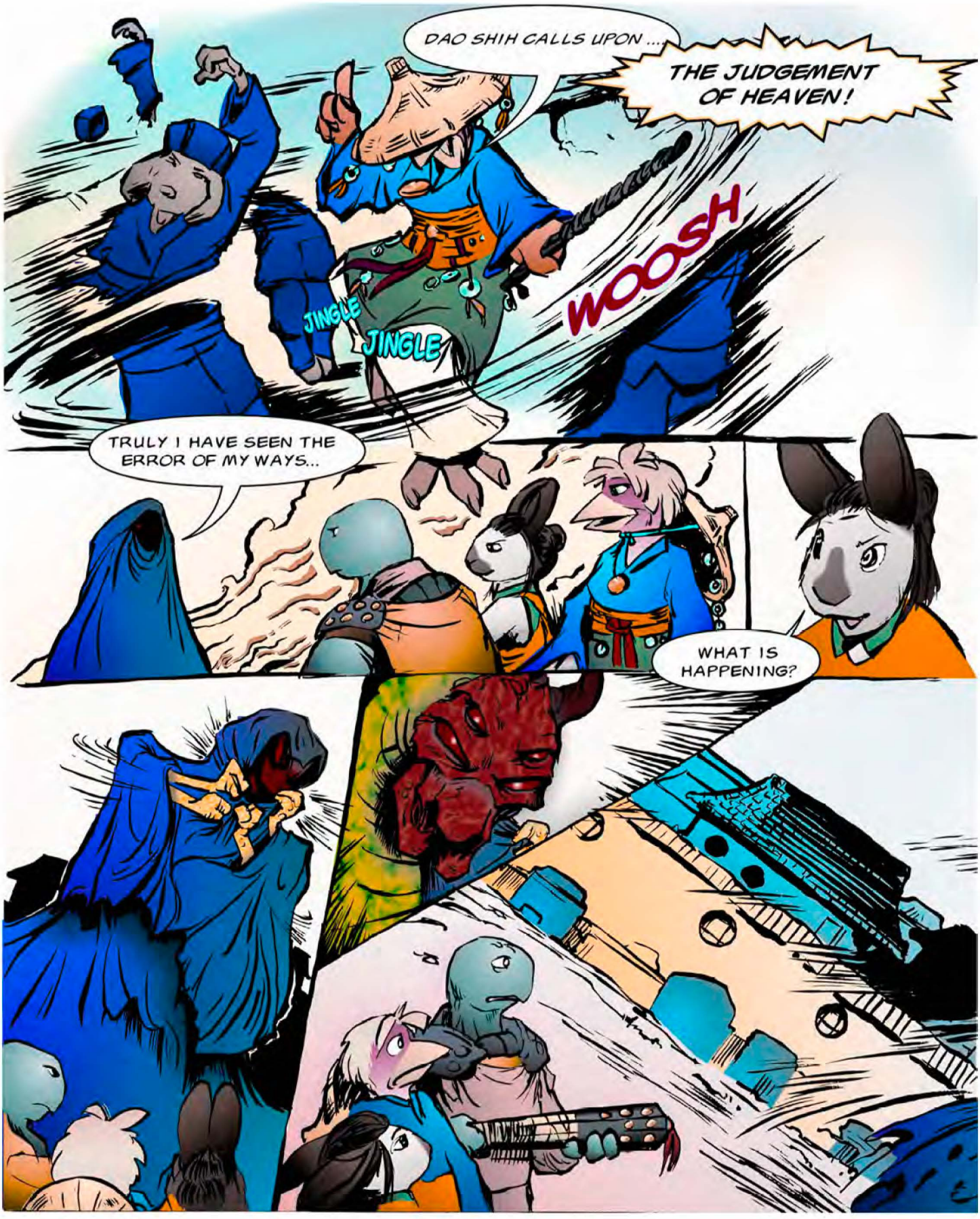
FOLLOWING THE TRAIL OF ER LIANG, THE WU SHANG HEROS ARE AMBUSHED BY THE DEMON'S MINIONS. TRAPPED, THEY PREPARE TO DO BATTLE...
DEMON! YOUR REIGN OF TERROR IS OVER! NO LONGER WILL THE INOCCENT SUFFER!
KILL THEM!
GRACEFUL KICK!
WHAM
WINDS FROM HEAVEN!
JINGLE
CRUNCH!
STRIKE THE MOUNTAIN!


DAO SHIH CALLS UPON ....
THE JUDGEMENT OF HEAVEN!
JINGLE
JINGLE
WOOSH
TRULY I HAVE SEEN THE ERROR OF MY WAYS...
WHAT IS HAPPENING?

"Zigong was always criticizing other people. The Master said, 'It is fortunate that he is so perfect himself as to have time to spare for this. I myself have none.'"

— Ancient Zhonggese proverb

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Jadeclaw: Anthropomorphic Fantasy Role-Play*. You are about to take a journey into a fantastic world of magnificent palaces, decaying ruins, ancient temples, forsaken wastelands, virtuous knights, vicious bandits, divine beings, and evil monsters. Many years ago, the Beings of Heaven descended from their domain in the sky to teach the Beings of Earth the disciplines of virtue, of honor, and of wisdom. Today, the Jade Emperor of Zhongguo rules over his subjects, empowered by the Mandate of Heaven. But as the stars turn in the sky, soon the Mandate will pass from the Blue Dragons to the White Tigers, and there are many who see this change as an opportunity to further their own goals. Some pursue ambitions of grand political careers. Others seek to reap rewards from the coming confusion and inevitable discord. And somewhere in the shadows beyond even the eyes of Heaven, there are those with darkness in their hearts who scheme a grand design of malice, destruction, and death ….

What you need to play this game

The *Jadeclaw* game requires one person to take the role of *Game Host* and one or more others to be *Players*. To play this game, you will also need:

- *Pencil and paper.* (You can also make copies of the Jadeclaw Character Sheet, on the last page of this book, or you can download and print more copies from our website.)
- *Polyhedral dice.* You will need a set of four-sided, six-sided, eight-sided, ten-sided, and twelve-sided dice — at least one for each player.

If this is your first role-playing game...

Many of the terms used in this game will be new to you. It may overwhelm you at first, so here's a quick overview.

A role-playing game is one where the *Players* assume the roles of *Characters* within the game. In *Jadeclaw,* you can pretend to be a martial-artist, a warrior, a scholar, a bandit, or any number of the personalities found in the mythical land of Zhongguo. Your Character will have a *Race* that determines their natural abilities such as how well they climb, how well they dig, and how well they swim. Your Character will also have a *Career* that allows them to perform tasks important to daily living. You customize your Character further with *Gifts* that set you apart from others, with *Flaws* that define your personality quirks or other failings, and with *Skills* to round out the rest of your abilities.

One person will be the *Game Host,* sometimes just called Host. Their role is like a director in a movie or a play — they preside over the Players and say what goes and what doesn't. Both the Players and the Game Host use the rules in this book to have a common understanding of the abilities of the fantastic beings that live in the world of *Jadeclaw.*

The basic sequence of the game is that the Game Host describes what's going on — the game's *plot.* The Players then, in the role of their Characters, tell the Game Host how they respond. The Game Host decides how this changes things, or they may roll dice as part of a *Test.* Then the Game Host tells the Players how the plot has advanced, and once again the Players react. A typical game session is between one and six hours long — basically until the Players and Host decide it's time to close the current chapter. The game itself will be played over many sessions — called a *campaign* — during which the Player-Characters will grow in ability, power, and influence.

Quick Start

To start play immediately, designate one among you to be the Game Host. That person (and that person *only*) should read the chapter "Adventure: The Silent Village and the Infernal Device" (p. 318), as well as "How to Host a Game" (p. 297). When you're ready, have all the Players sit around a table, and the Game Host will describe what's going on. It's that simple!

If you have played role-playing games before...

Jadeclaw is designed to be both accessible to new players and to veterans of one or more games. In most cases, *Jadeclaw*'s rules use terms you've probably seen before, such as "Hit Points," "Parry, Block, and Dodge," "Movement," "Combat Round," etc. Here's where the game differs from most others you've probably played:

- Dice in *Jadeclaw* are almost never added together. There are two kinds of rolls: a *Simple Roll* (where you only care about the highest-showing die) and a *Damage Roll* (where you will compare each Damage Die to an opposing Soak Die.) You will want to read the "Rolling Dice" chapter (p. 93) with a careful eye to understand the core mechanics of *Jadeclaw.*
- *Jadeclaw* does not have "character classes." Instead, characters have Skills (which represent specific abilities) and Traits (which represent a broad range, typically four times as much as a Skill, and hence are four times as expensive to improve). Skills and Traits often combine to allow you to rollmore dice together — again, they will not be added together.

How to Read a Role-Playing Game for the First Time

Instead of plowing into the book one page at a time, we recommend the following:

- Skim through the book page by page, reading only the **bold** section titles.
- Then, read through the book carefully, paying attention to the chapters that catch your interest. (If you are to be the Game Host, you'll probably want to be familiar with the whole book.)

Finally, we recommend you once again read through the *Combat* chapter carefully — this is where most of the action happens.

SAMPLE CHARACTERS

For those of you eager to jump right into the game, here are some examples of the Characters you could play in the world of *Jadeclaw*. You can also use these Characters as templates when you build your own, using the Character Creation rules that begin on page 18.

Bi Meihui

Raised from an early age to be a Sword-Dancer, Meihui has known nothing but the high life of the imperial courts. Her training had only just started when her former lord insulted a magistrate and was exiled to the far wastes, his house dissolved, and his staff turned out to the streets to fend for themselves. Having lived a very sheltered life, Meihui finds most country customs bewildering. Fortunately, her dancing skills are also formidable combat abilities, and if she is forced to turn to a life of violence to get by, she is not too proud to do what she must.

Bi Meihui relies on her upper-class accent, manners, and training in social situations. Among lessers, she will either try to bluff them into thinking she is high-class, or she will be silent. Her naïveté tends to manifest as unflagging optimism in the "better nature" of people, and she almost always assumes everyone is as Honorable as she is. In combat, Meihui prefers to fight defensively, relying on her amazing Parry ability and helping her more battle-worthy comrades move into position.

Body d6, Speed d10, Mind d6, Will d8

Habitat: Forest
Senses: Listen, Smell
Race: Red Fox d8 *Weapons:* Claws, Teeth

Career: Sword Dancer d12

			Skills *(with Favored Use)*
	d12		Acrobatics
		d10	Acting (when Sword-Dancing)
		d8	Breath-Holding (when Sword-Dancing)
d8			Climbing
	d12	d10	Dancing (Sword-Dancing)
	d12	d4	Dodge (when Sword-Dancing)
		d6	Etiquette (Sword-Dancer's)
		d4	Observation (spotting courtly intrigue)
		d6	Resolve (when Sword-Dancing)
d8			Sixth Sense
	d12	d4	Sword (with my Favorite Sword)
d8			Tracking

Gifts:	*Personal:* Improved Trait x1 (d4 to d6; 4 points) *Racial:* Claws (1 point); Keen Ears (1 point); Teeth (1 point) *Social:* Belongings: Sword (1 point) *Esoteric:* Martial Arts — Sword-Dancing (1 point); Eight-Breezes of the World (1 point); Respectfully Decline with Thousand Apologies (1 point)
Flaws:	*Internal:* Honorable (-4 points); Naïve (-1 point); Obsequious (-2 points); Single-Minded (-2 points)
Initiative:	d10, d6 (Preferred Maneuver: Eight-Breezes)
Defenses:	Dodge d12, d10, d4 Parry — Sword d12, d10, d4
Resolve	d8, d6
Move:	Dash 10 paces, Stride 2 ½ paces
Armor:	Light Leather Armor (d6 & Soak d6)
Weapons:	Quarter-Stone Sword, "Water Under the Bridge" (To-Hit d12, d10, d4; Damage d12, d6)
Special Abilities:	"Respectfully Decline": When opponent attempts an Exploit, may choose to be sent Reeling instead

Bitter Storm

Born in winter, raised in the unforgiving wastes, Bitter Storm always thought to herself that there must be a better way. Among her people, the strong take from the weak, and who could be weaker but the soft, spoiled folk of the so-called "civilized" lands of Zhongguo? With her inexhaustible attitude, Storm has descended from the frozen mountain-tops to see what all the fuss is about among the low-landers.

Bitter Storm will choose the weapon to match the circumstances. Against opponents with long weapons, she will use her Flying Fork. Against foes with short weapons, she will use her sword, hoping they get close enough so she can use her Counter-Attack Exploit. Against a single foe, Bitter Storm will maneuver for a good position, then either leap over her opponent (performing "Death from Above") or strike her foe's backside (as a "Back Stab").

Body d8, Speed d10, Mind d4, Will d8

Habitat: Forest
Senses: Listen
Race: Lynx d12 *Weapons:* Claws, Teeth

Career: Scout d6

			Skills *(with Favored Use)*
d12			Acrobatics
	d6		Cartography
d12			Climbing
	d6		Hiking
		d10	Jumping (with Death from Above)
		d4	Language: Zhonggese (cursing)
	d6		Navigation
	d6		Observation
		d12	Resolve (when out-numbered)
		d8	Spear (with my Favorite Fork)
		d4	Spear Throwing (when Aiming)
d12			Stealth
		d12	Sword (with my Favorite Sword)
d12			Tracking

Gifts: *Racial:* Claws (1 point); Night Vision (1 point); Teeth (1 point)
Social: Belongings: Sword (1 point)
Esoteric: Martial Arts — Back Stab (1 point); Counter-Attack with Natural Weapon (1 point); Death from Above (1 point); Defensive Stance (1 point); Fork Disarm (1 point); Quick-Draw (1 point); Second Parry (1 point)

Flaws: *External:* Barbarian (-3 points)
Internal: Envious (-3 points); Proud (-3 points); Stubborn (-1 point)

Initiative: d10, d4 (Preferred Maneuver: Death from Above)

Defenses: Dodge d10
Parry — Sword d12, d10 (x2); Spear d10, d8 (x2)

Resolve d12, d8

Move: Dash 10 paces, Stride 2 ½ paces

Armor: Reinforced Leather Armor (d8, d4 & Soak d8)

Weapons: Quarter-Stone Sword, "Blue Rage" (To-Hit d12, d10; Damage d12, d8);
Quarter-Stone Spear, "Icicle" (To-Hit d12, d8; Damage d8, 2d4)

Special Abilities: Counter-Attack with Claws & Teeth Exploit: on Overwhelming Defense Rolls, cause d8, d6 Damage to attackers (instead of sending them Reeling)
Quick-Draw: Light, Favorite Weapons can be Readied without Awkwardness

Hridayaja the Little Mountain

Traveling back and forth along the trade routes, Hridayaja has easily found employment as a bodyguard, guarding the caravans that make the dangerous trips back and forth from Yìndù to Zhongguo. Because of his incredible strength, size, and booming laugh, Hridayaja earned the nickname of "Little Mountain" from one of his former employers. His bi-lingual skills (as Yìndùstani is his native language) have proven useful on more than one excursion into unknown land.

Hridayaja prefers to avoid combat when he can — not because he is a coward, but because he is aware that any fracas carries the risk for injury to people on his side. If forced to fight, he prefers to end the battle quickly, by closing and then Striking Hard.

Body d12, Speed d8, Mind d6, Will d8

Habitat: Plains
Senses: Smell; Spot
Race: Elephant d4 *Weapons:* Tusks

Career: Bodyguard d10

		Skills *(with Favored Use)*	
		d4	Geography (trade routes)
d4			Herbalism
d4			Hiking
		d4	Language: Zhonggese (discussing food)
	d10	d4	Observation (when protecting someone)
	d10		Psychology
d4			Resolve
		d12	Resolve (when protecting someone)
	d10		Shield
	d10	d8	Sixth Sense (when protecting someone)
		d12	Sword (with my Favorite Sword)

Gifts: *Racial:* Robustness +3 (7 points); Strength +3 (7 points); Trunk (1 point); Tusks (1 point)
Social: Belongings: Sword (1 point)

Flaws: *External:* Barbarian (-3 points); Corpulent -2 (-2 points); Poor Sight (-3 points)
Internal: Gluttonous (-1 point); Greedy (-3 points); Superstitious (-1 point)

Initiative: d8, d6 (Preferred Maneuver: Strike Hard)

Defenses: Dodge d8
Parry — Sword d12, d8

Resolve d12, d8

Move: Dash 8 paces, Stride 2 paces

Armor: Heavy Leather Armor (d8 & Soak d12, d8)

Weapons: ¾-Stone Sword, "Laakh Shakti" (To-Hit d12, d8; Damage 2d12, 2d8)

Lazy Dragon

Born into the Kingdom of Heaven, Lazy Dragon might have had hundreds of years of bureaucratic service ahead of him if he wasn't so lax in his duties. Although he was assigned the duty of controlling the weather of a remote corner of Zhongguo, Lazy Dragon fell asleep on the job once too often, and his superior cast him out of Heaven with a bolt of divine rage. With his "body fire" removed, Lazy Dragon can no longer fly to ascend to the Kingdom of Heaven and is forced to live on earth unless he can find some way to atone for his negligence.

Lazy Dragon fidgets constantly and assumes that everyone of the Houses of Earth are belligerent and cruel. He hates to be alone and will ally himself with people who scare him the least. While he can command powerful magic, Lazy Dragon is better at supporting others than he is at fighting directly; in battle, he will hang back and use his spells to aid other, braver compatriots.

Body d6, Speed d4, Mind d8, Will d10

Habitat: Mountains
Senses: Spot
Race: Dragon d8 *Weapons:* Claws; Horns; Teeth

Career: Shén Qing d12

			Skills *(with Favored Use)*
d8			Augury
d8			Contortionist
		d4	Dodge (vs. Magic)
	d12		Literacy
	d12	d8	Lore: Magic (of the Heaven Nature)
	d12		Meditation
d8			Swimming
d8			Weather Sense

Gifts: *Personal:* Luck (3 points)
Racial: Barbels (1 point); Claws (1 point); Horns (1 point); Teeth (1 point)
Social: Belongings: *Book of the Vanishing Heavenly Stem* (1 point)

Flaws: *External:* Scofflaw (-3 points)
Internal: Gregarious (-1 point); Skittish (-3 points); Slothful (-3 points)

Initiative: d8, d4 (Preferred Maneuver: Cast)

Defenses: Dodge 2d4

Resolve d10

Move: Dash 4 paces, Stride 1 pace

Armor: Heavy Leather Armor (d8 & Soak d6)

Weapons: Claws (To-Hit d8, d4; Damage 2d6)

Magic Points: 22

Spell Lists: Being of Generative Purity; Being of Vital Purity

Spell-Casting Skills: Curing Cloud of Moxibustion 3 (Adept)
Generative Restoration 2 (Adept)
Great Chain of Gathering 4 (Adept)
Lightning Strike 2 (Adept)
Moonlight 3 (Adept)
Vivacity 4 (Adept)

Magnificent Weasel

Some are born to greatness, others rise to the occasion … and a very few are great and just keep getting better. No one is more aware of their own greatness than Magnificent Weasel. Fists can't touch him, swords can't cut him, as he moves far too quickly for anyone to get near him. Someday, he will be the greatest Empty-Hand Warrior in the world! Or so he keeps telling everyone…

Magnificent Weasel earns a living by selling his skills to those who can pay his outrageous prices. He specializes in jumping into a fray, screaming loudly as he dishes out powerful open-palm strikes. He prefers to use his Exploit of Mistaken Strike to trick his foes into striking one another and into making them look foolish. Of course, you would have to be a fool to think you could stand against the might of Magnificent Weasel….

Body d8, Speed d10, Mind d4, Will d4

Habitat: Plains
Senses: Smell
Race: Weasel d8 *Weapons:* Claws; Teeth

Career: Mercenary d6

Extra Trait: Ti Empty-Hand d12

			Skills *(with Favored Use)*	
	d6	d12	d12	Brawling (with Ti Method)
d8				Contortionist
d8		d12	d12, d4	Dodge (when out-numbered)
			d4	First Aid (on Weasels)
	d6			Haggling
		d12		Lore: Ti Method
			d8	Observation (when on the Plains)
	d6		d12	Resolve (when there's a crowd to impress)
	d6			Shield
			d10	Sixth Sense (when on the Plains)
d8				Stealth
d8				Tracking

Gifts: *Personal:* Extra Trait d4 (3 points); Prodigy: Dodge (6 points)
Racial: Claws (1 point); Teeth (1 point)
Esoteric: Martial Arts — Mistaken Strike (1 point)

Flaws: *Internal:* Garrulous (-1 point); Overconfident (-3 points); Proud (-3 points); Showoff (-2 points); Stubborn (-1 point)

Initiative: d10, d4 (Preferred Maneuver: Strike First)

Defenses: Dodge 2d12, d10, d8, d4
Parry — Brawling 2d12, d10, d6

Resolve d12, d6, d4

Move: Dash 10 paces, Stride 2 ½ paces

Armor: Heavy Leather Armor (d8 & Soak d8)

Weapons: Ti Empty-Hand (To Hit 2d12, d10, d6; Damage d12, d8 — target includes Dodge with Soak)

Special Abilities: Mistaken Strike Exploit: on Overwhelming Defense Rolls, use Dodge Score as To-Hit to redirect attacker's strike

Mei Feng

Affecting an air of quiet mystery, Mei Feng's ultimate motives are known only to her, and she does not reveal them to anyone. Many find her spooky and hard to read. The unlucky few that offend her delicate sensibilities find themselves on the end of her strange and spiteful pranks. Mei Feng prefers to travel in groups, using her wiles to advance her own goals while getting others to do the dirty work.

In combat, Mei Feng prefers magic to physical aggression. As a Teacher of Supernatural Laws, she has access to a large variety of capable spells, both offensive and defensive, and she will not hesitate to use them.

Body d4, Speed d6, Mind d8, Will d12

Habitat: Plains
Senses: Spot
Race: Qiling d4 *Weapons:* Hooves, Horns

Career: Fah Shih d10

Extra Trait: Rebellion d8

				Skills *(with Favored Use)*
d4				Augury
		d8		Camouflage
		d8		Disguise
d4				Hiking
		d8		Holdout
d4				Jumping
	d10			Literacy
	d10			Lore: Magic
	d10			Meditation
			d4	Spear (with my Favorite Spear)
		d8		Shadowing
		d8		Sleight-of-Hand
		d8		Stealth
d4				Weather Sense

Gifts: *Personal:* Extra Trait d4 (3 points)
Racial: Barbels (1 point); Extra Move +3 (3 points); Hooves (1 point); Horn (1 point)
Social: Belongings: *Book of Changes* (1 point)

Flaws: *External:* Eerie (-2 points)
Internal: Curious (-3 points); Superstitious (-1 point); Taciturn (-1 point); Wrathful (-3 points)

Initiative: d8, d6 (Preferred Maneuver: Cast)

Defenses: Dodge d6

Resolve d12

Move: Dash 9 paces, Stride 2 ¼ paces

Armor: Heavy Leather Armor (d8 & Soak d4)

Weapons: Quarter-Stone White Wax Wood Spear, "Swaying Bough" (To Hit d6, d4; Damage 3d4)

Magic Points: 22

Spell Lists: Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws; Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Spell-Casting Skills: Break the Golden Chain to Release the Dragon 1 (Adept)
Fah Shih's Fragile Aura of Lies 3 (Adept)
Fah Shih's Fragile Aura of Protection 3 (Adept)
Frugality 1 (Adept)
Gentle Permeation 3 (Adept)
Sandals for the Long Tread 2 (Adept)
Silencing 4 (Adept)
The Tenacity of the Worker 2 (Adept)

Special Abilities: Barbels: can Scry Magic, rolling d8, d4 vs. 2d10

Number 21 Mouth

As she tells it, Number 21 Mouth got her name because when she was born, her father lamented that he had yet another little one to feed. Born into poverty, she learned to fight her brothers and sisters to get what was hers. After a particularly hard year, Number 21 Mouth felt she could no longer stay on the farm and be a burden to her family, so she ran away from home to become an adventuress.

Specializing in kicks, Number 21 Mouth hopes to become a master of the Secret Kicks of Kong Dinh-Son. She is constantly looking for teachers in this Secret Martial Art. In combat, she uses her speed to attack first and to attack often, either trying to take out heavily-armored foes early or avoiding them altogether.

Body d8, Speed d12, Mind d6, Will d8

Habitat: Mountains
Senses: Listen
Race: Rabbit d10 *Weapons:* Claws

Career: Farmer d4

			Skills *(with Favored Use)*
	d4		Animal Handling
		d12, d8	Brawling (with Kick Attacks)
d10			Digging
		d12	Dodge (when out-numbered)
		d8	First Aid (on Rabbits)
d10			Herbalism
	d4		Hiking
d10			Jumping
		d4	Literacy (books on farming)
		d12	Resolve (when out-numbered)
d10		d6	Stealth
	d4		Trade: Farming
	d4		Weather Sense

Gifts: *Personal:* Prodigy: Brawling (8 points); Sure-Footed (1 point)
Racial: Claws (1 point); Keen Ears (1 point)
Esoteric: Martial Arts — Attack Twice (1 point), Kong Dinh-Son's Able Kick (1 point), Kong Dinh-Son's Forceful Kick (1 point)

Flaws: *External:* Poverty (-4 points)
Internal: Heroic (-3 points); Soft-Hearted (-3 points)

Initiative: d12, d6 (Preferred Maneuver: Attack Twice)

Defenses: Dodge 2d12
Parry — Brawling 2d12, d4

Resolve d12, d8

Move: Dash 12 paces, Stride 3 paces

Armor: Cotton Armor (d4 & Soak d8)

Weapons: Forceful Kick (To Hit 2d12, d4; Damage 2d8)

Special Abilities: Attack Twice (To Hit d12, d4; Damage 2d8)

Pei the Learned

When most people think of a wizard, they think of someone of advanced years, cultured accent, stylish robes, and radiant with power. Pei the Learned revels in her stereotype, constantly seeking out the mysteries that have become forgotten since the banishing of the Four Evils. While she says that she prefers intellectual pursuits over dire combat, she does not shy away from the challenge of battle.

When expecting trouble, Pei will call forth two or more Attendant Fireballs, supplementing their strength with an Aura of Fire. She will use the concealed dart in her fan in an emergency. Pei the Learned is always eager to talk to people — she will prefer to spare people's lives in return for secret knowledge rather than to engage in wanton slaughter.

Body d6, Speed d8, Mind d10, Will d8

Habitat: Mountains
Senses: Spot
Race: Chicken d4 *Weapons:* Beak; Claws

Career: Dào Shih d12

		Skills *(with Favored Use)*	
d4			Camouflage
		d4	Dodge (vs. Magic)
		d6	First Aid (vs. injuries caused by Magic)
d4			Herbalism
		d12, d4	Iron Fan (with my Favorite Iron Fan)
d4			Jumping
	d12		Literacy
	d12		Lore: Magic
	d12		Meditation
		d4	Resolve (vs. Magic)
d4			Tracking

Gifts: *Personal:* Prodigy — Iron Fan (6 points)
Racial: Beak (1 point); Claws (1 point)
Social: Belongings — *Book of the Way,* Iron Fan (2 points)
Esoteric: Martial Arts — Dart Fan Attack (1 point); Twice-Fold Rain of Fire (1 point)

Flaws: *Racial:* Frail (-2 points); Ill-Favored (-2 points)
Internal: Curious (-3 points); Overconfident (-3 points)

Initiative: d10, d8 (Preferred Maneuver: Twice-Fold Rain of Fire)

Defenses: Dodge d8, d4
Parry — Iron Fan d12, d8, d4

Resolve d8, d4

Move: Dash 8 paces, Stride 2 paces

Armor: Light Leather Armor (d6 & Soak d6)

Weapons: Iron Fan "Summer Breeze" (To Hit d12, d8, d4; Damage d6, d4)

Magic Points: 20

Spell Lists: Ghost Way of Earth, Ghost Way of Fire, Ghost Way of Metal, Ghost Way of Water, Ghost Way of Wood, People's Way of Fire

Spell-Casting Skills: Abandonment 4 (Adept)
Attendant Fireball 2 (Adept)
Create Fire 1 (Adept)
Dào Shih's Fragile Aura of Fire 2 (Adept)
Detect Fire 1 (Adept)
Fire Controls Earth 1 (Adept)
Misfortune of Fire 3 (Adept)

Special Abilities: Dart Fan Attack (To Hit d12, d8, d4; Damage 3d6, target includes Observation & Sixth Sense with Soak)

Slow Zi

Many a miscreant has bristled at the mention of Slow Zi's name. Most thieves seek to out-run the law, always staying one step ahead. Unfortunately, Slow Zi is notorious for not giving up. Methodical and plodding, Zi searches out clues and convinces other scofflaws to sell out their comrades. Inevitably, when he finds his target, he barges into their hideout, batters them into submission, and drags them off to collect his reward.

What Slow Zi lacks in agility and swiftness, he compensates for with a resilience that is almost supernatural. He almost never retreats in combat, relying on his Relentless Defense to shrug off attacks that would down lesser combatants.

Body d12, Speed d4, Mind d8, Will d8

Habitat: Plains
Senses: Smell
Race: Tortoise d6 *Weapons:* Teeth

Career: Bounty Hunter d4

Extra Trait: Toughness d10

				Skills *(with Favored Use)*
d6				Breath-Holding
			d4	Bribery (getting folks to rat out their fellows)
d6				Camouflage
			d4	First Aid (vs. injuries I made myself)
			d4	Literacy (with Black-Tortoise book)
	d4		d12	Mace (with my Favorite Mace)
d6		d10	d10	Resolve (when hunting a quarry)
	d4			Shadowing
			d6	Shield (with my Favorite Shield)
	d4		d4	Streetwise (hunting a quarry)
d6				Swimming
	d4			Tracking

Gifts: *Personal:* Extra Trait d4 (3 points)
Racial: Armor d6 (7 points); Teeth (1 point)
Social: Belongings — Star Scale Armor, book of *Black Tortoise School* (2 points); Reputation: as great Bounty Hunter (Uncommon, Strong; 2 points)
Esoteric: Martial Arts — Relentlessness (3 points)

Flaws: *Racial:* Lame (-3 points)
Internal: Gregarious (-1 point); Overconfident (-3 points); Proud (-3 points); Showoff (-2 points); Stubborn (-1 point)

Initiative: d10, d4 (Preferred Maneuver: Strike Sure)

Defenses: Block d6, d4 (& Shield d10)
Dodge d4 (& Shield d10)
Parry — Mace d12, 2d4 (& Shield d10)
Relentless d10, d8 (& Shield d10)

Resolve 2d10, d8, d6

Move: Dash 2 paces, Stride 1 pace

Armor: Star Scale Armor (2d10 & Soak d12)

Weapons: Half-Stone Iron Rod "Inevitable Justice" (To Hit d12, 2d4; Damage d12, d10, d4)

Shield: Regular Shield (extra d10 for Defense)

Special Abilities: Toughness: use d12, d10 vs. Death Tests

Steel Monkey

Steel Monkey never wanted to be a warrior. He always thought he could become a peaceful monk, living a life of quiet contemplation into the nature of life and the universe. However, at an early age, he discovered many things that annoyed him, and his quick temper would never let him sit idly by while the strong sought to oppress the weak. Steel Monkey has resigned himself to what he feels is his duty — to protect those who cannot protect themselves. His wanderings have led him all over the countryside, but he constantly seeks out enlightened masters, so that he may find a way to put an end to his fierce temper.

In combat, Steel Monkey seeks out the strongest opponents and tries to take them out first. Against armored opponents, he prefers the Brass Monkey Smash; against wizards and the like, he prefers a Nerve Strike.

Body d8, Speed d12, Mind d10, Will d6

Habitat: Forest
Senses: Spot
Race: Monkey d8 *Weapons:* None

Career: Nomad d4

			Skills *(with Favored Use)*
d8			Acrobatics
d8			Climbing
d8			Contortionist
	d4	d4	First Aid (on Monkeys)
	d4		Hiking
		d4	Iron Fan (with my Favorite Iron Fan)
		d4	Literacy (reading religious texts)
		d12	Mace (with my Favorite Mace)
		d4	Observation (in the Mountains)
		d10	Qi-Sao (for personal reflection)
		d12	Resolve (when angry)
	d4		Sixth Sense
	d4		Survival
d8		d4	Wrestling (Grappling)

Gifts: *Personal:* Ambidexterity (2 points); Multidexterity (1 point); Strength +1 (2 points)
Racial: Prehensile Feet (1 point); Prehensile Tail (1 point)
Social: Belongings -Shield Fan (1 point)
Esoteric: Martial Arts — Brass Monkey Smash (1 point); Entwine (1 point); Nerve Strike (1 point)

Flaws: *Internal:* Heroic(-3 points); Overconfident (-3 points); Pacifism: Cannot take a life (-1 point); Wrathful (-3 points)

Initiative: d12, d10 (Preferred Maneuver: Strike Awkward)

Defenses: Dodge d12 (& Shield Fan d6)
Parry — Mace 2d12 (& Shield Fan d6)

Resolve d12, d6

Move: Dash 12 paces, Stride 3 paces

Armor: Disc Armor (d8, d4 & Soak d8)

Weapons: Full-Stone Brass Monkey Mace "Thousand-fold Anger" (To Hit 2d12; Damage 2d10, d8, d4)

Special Abilities: Brass Monkey Smash (causes Slaying Damage, target includes Acrobatics, Dodge, and Jumping with Soak)
Nerve Strike Special — target suffers Paralysis on failed Resolve Test

Zhanshi Guizu

When he was young, Zhanshi Guizu could think of nothing but becoming the greatest warrior that ever lived. After many years of challenges, duels, and bloodshed, Guizu tired of the constant, pointless fighting, and he retired to a life of peaceful contemplation as a town doctor. However, as the years went by, Guizu found he could not resist the call of the road, the chance to test his skills and finally complete his training.

Zhanshi Guizu follows the path of the Vagrant Warrior, the master of hand-to-hand weaponry. He knows just how to strike a target for maximum effect. His goal is to eventually master every weapon of his art. In combat against baseless ruffians, Guizu will use his mastery to inflict Slaying Damage upon targets with his Mace or with his Martial Sword.

Body d8, Speed d10, Mind d8, Will d6

Habitat: Plains
Senses: Smell
Race: Ram d4 *Weapons:* Horns

Career: Vagrant Warrior d12, d4

			Skills *(with Favored Use)*
	d12, d4		Axe
d4			Climbing
	d12, d4	d4	Fencing (with my Martial Sword)
		d8	First Aid (on Sheep)
	d12, d4		Flail
d4			Herbalism
		d6	Literacy (poetry)
	d12, d4	d4	Mace (with my Favorite Mace)
		d8	Medicine (on Sheep)
		d8	Observation (when in the mountains)
	d12, d4		Polearm
d4		d12	Resolve (when fighting a duel)
	d12, d4		Spear
	d12, d4		Staff
	d12, d4		Sword
d4			Tactics

Gifts: *Personal:* Improved Trait (Vagrant Warrior to d12, d4; 6 points)
Racial: Horns (1 point); Sure-Footed (1 point)
Social: Belongings: Sword (1 point)
Esoteric: Martial Arts — Fencing Mastery (1 point); Mace Mastery (1 point); Tricky Maneuver (1 point)

Flaws: *External:* Frail (-2 points)
Internal: Drunkard (-3 points); Honorable (-4 points); Morose (-1 point)

Initiative: d10, d8 (Preferred Maneuver: Tricky Maneuver)

Defenses: Dodge d10
Parry — Martial Sword 2d12, d8, d6 (x2); Mace d12, d102d4 (x2); Other d12, d10, d4 (x2)

Resolve d12, d6, d4

Move: Dash 10 paces, Stride 2 ½ paces

Armor: Disc Armor (d8, d4 & Soak d8)

Weapons: Quarter-Stone Martial Sword "Guizu's Wind" (To-Hit d12, d10, 2d4; Damage d10, d8)
Quarter-Stone Mace "Guizu's Thunder" (To-Hit d12, d10, 2d4; Damage d10, d8)

Special Abilities: Fencing Mastery: may lower To-Hit to d10, 2d4 to cause Slaying Damage (target includes Fencing with Soak)
Mace Mastery: may lower To-Hit to d10, 2d4 to cause Slaying Damage (target includes Mace with Soak)
Tricky Maneuver: declare before attack; any hit becomes a Critical Hit but any miss becomes a Critical Miss

"What produces the Races of Earth cannot itself be of the Earth, but of Heaven. The Celestial Races of Heaven are, indeed, the ancestors of the Races of Earth. That is why the People are to be classed below, and the Celestials to be classed above. The Person's physical body and speed are given form from the influence of the numerical categories of Celestials. The Person's mind and will are directed through the influence of the Celestial's command. A Person's virtuous conduct is expressed in righteousness through the influence of Celestial's orderly principles. ... The image of the Celestial lies in the Worldly, and the Person's heart derives from Heaven."

—The Master

CHARACTER CREATION

As you create your character, try to visualize him or her. Remember that by giving more life to your character you will add greatly to your and the other players' enjoyment of the game. The character creation process is filled with lots of different choices and "opportunity costs." Your starting character will be an impressive individual, but you will probably find there are one or two things still missing. That's okay — a beginning character has room to grow.

You will find a blank character sheet on the last page of this book. Feel free to photocopy it and use it to record your character.

Step 1: Choose a name for your character.

Zhonggese list their family names first, and their given name last. So Mei Feng is from the Mei family. Some characters also prefer an epithet, such as Pei the Learned (so everyone knows that she's well educated). Others prefer more descriptive names such as Magnificent Weasel or Steel Monkey. A few folks have names that reflect their personality (such as Bitter Storm) or their history (such as Number 21 Mouth, the twenty-first born of her family).

Female names include Ai-Fen, Bi-An, Chao-Kuang, Ching-Fong, Chun-Chin, Dieu-Ai, Fangxiao, Ha-Long, Ho-Ming, Hsiao-Li, Hui-Tian, I-Li, Jia-Xin, Jun-Yi, Keng-Chong, Kuan-Ju, Lai-Yin, Lei, Ling-Hai, Man-Ying, Mei-Ming, Ming-Hong, My-Anh, Nae-Nae, Nhuan, Pei-Yee, Poh-Ghee, Quynh-Chi, Seen-Chi, Shi-Yeun, Shuk-Man, Sin-Yue, Sook-Fong, Suan-Poh, Swee-Cheng, Tan-Nei, Thiet-Tranh, Ting-Yu, Tze-Chia, Wan-Lin, Weng, Xin-Ni, Yang-En, Yeong-Chyang, Yin-Ying, Yu-Chen, Yuet-Yuen, & Zhuo-Er.

Male names include An, Anh-Huy, Byung-Kul, Chee-Len, Chi-Chi, Chih-Han, Chong-Khen, Chun-Tang, Dinh-Sang, Eng-Shinn, Guan-Cai, Haoyu, Hoang-Vuong, Hsien, Hyu-i, Ji-Wook, Jong-kyu, Ka-Hong, Kaong, Kian-Wei, Kok-Leng, Kwei-Tze, Lan-Fang, Lip-Xiang, Meng, Moh-Yen, Park, Pui-Shun, San-Gui, She, Shyh-chin, Soon-Hoong, Tae-hwan, Thanh-Phong, Tri-Tai, Tzong-shii, Wai-Yip, Wen-hsien, Xi-Wang, Yat-hang, Yi-Ke, Yong-ik, Yuan, & Zhenyu.

Step 2: Choose a Race and Career.

Write in your Race's Habitat. (If you have a choice, choose one now.) Write in your Race's Senses.

Step 3: Assign your six Traits of d12, d10, d8, d8, d6, and d4 to your Body, Speed, Mind, Will, Race, and Career.

You start the game with six Traits. (This can change later with Gifts.)

Step 4: Write in the names of Skills included with your Race and Career.

Copy the Race & Career Trait Dice next to the Skills they are included with.

Step 5: You start with 20 Character Points. Write in your Racial Gifts and Flaws, and deduct their cost from your Points.

While this number of points may vary, we recommend 20 points for most campaigns. (See "Variant Rule: Changing Starting Power ", p. 308.)

Step 6: You may spend up to 10 points on Personal, Social, and Esoteric Gifts.

Your Racial Gifts do not count against this 10-point limit. Martial Arts are considered Gifts, so you may want to turn to page 159 and look some of these up.

Step 7: You may take up to -10 points in External and Internal Flaws.

Your Racial Flaws do not count against this –10 limit.

Step 8: Write in your character's abilities.

You can find this information on the next few pages.

Step 9: Spend your remaining points on Skills. (1=d4; 2=d6; 3=d8; 4=d10; 5=d12).

Skills you spend points on can have Favored Uses — see p. 64. Skills do not "stack" on Traits; rather, you will gain multiple dice in each Skill.

You may have to buy certain minimum Skills to meet the requirements of your Martial Arts. You can only start with Basic Skills unless you take the Gift of Prodigy (p. 48).

Step 10: Choose your Equipment, including weapons and armor.

See p. 76 for a listing.

Step 11: Figure your Combat abilities.

Your To-Hit Rolls are usually your Speed & Weapon Skill Dice. Damage and Specials vary with the weapon. Your Initiative is your Speed & Mind Dice. Your Resolve is your Will Dice and Resolve Skill Dice (if any). Your Parries are usually the same as your To-Hit Rolls. Your Block is your Speed Dice & Shield Skill Dice (if any). Your Dodge is your Speed Dice and Dodge Skill Dice (if any). If you have a shield, you will get Cover Dice with all Defenses.

Step 12: Figure your Encumbrance.

Block out all boxes larger than your Lift. For each Stone carried, mark out a box on the Encumbrance track. (Note the lines that let you block out quarter-Stones.) If you have to use a negative-number box, you suffer Encumbrance (p. 20).

Definition of Terms

Body

One of the four Basic Traits, *Body* represents physical mass and ability. Higher Levels of Body mean greater strength to dish out damage and move heavy objects, and improved robustness to soak up damage.

Size

Your character's *Size* is important for determining how heavy Armor must be to cover the character, and for how much the Gift of Flight costs (p. 68).

Body Level	*Body Dice*	*Size*	*Weight*	*Height*
1	d4	4 stone	25 kg	10 hands
2	d6	6 stone	38 kg	12 hands
3	d8	8 stone	50 kg	14 hands
4	d10	10 stone	63 kg	16 hands
5	d12	12 stone	76 kg	18 hands
6	d12 & d4	16 stone	102 kg	19 hands
7	d12 & d6	18 stone	114 kg	20 hands
8	d12 & d8	20 stone	127 kg	20 hands
9	d12 & d10	22 stone	140 kg	21 hands
10	2d12	24 stone	153 kg	21 hands
Modifiers				
Gift of Strength of +1		+1 stone	+6 kg	+1 hand
Gift of Strength of +2		+2 stone	+13 kg	+2 hands
Gift of Strength of +3		+3 stone	+19 kg	+3 hands
Gift of Robustness (any)		+1 stone	+6 kg	no effect
Flaw of Frail		-1 stone	-6 kg	-1 hand
Flaw of Weak		-1 stone	-6 kg	-1 hand
Flaw of Corpulence (per +1)		+1 stone	+6 kg	no effect

A stone is 6.35 kg (approximately 14 lbs.)

A hand is 0.1 meters (about 4 inches). Note that Height isn't an important mechanic, and can be determined by the Player at character creation — but *Size* is important and must use the table here.

Strength, Lift, and Soak

Your *Strength* Dice represent your character's muscle power. Your *Lift* is how much weight (in Stone) your character can carry before they suffer Encumbrance (see above). Your *Max Encumbrance* is the maximum Encumbrance your character can ever have — otherwise, they would collapse. Your *Soak* is usually the same as your Body.

Certain Gifts or Flaws modify the way you read the Strength & Soak, improving an ability (moving down a row) or decreasing an ability (moving up one row).

> ***Example:*** No Zim Ta has a Body Trait of d8 and the Gift of "Strength +2." Normally, his Strength Die would be d8, but he reads down two rows, to d12. (His Soak is unaffected.)

Body Dice	*Level*	*Strength*	*Lift*	*Max Enc.*	*Soak*
d4	1	d4	+1	-4	d4
d6	2	d6	+2	-6	d6
d8	3	d8	+3	-8	d8
d10	4	d10	+4	-10	d10
d12	5	d12	+5	-12	d12
d12 & d4	6	d12 & d4	+6	-16	d12 & d4
d12 & d6	7	d12 & d6	+7	-18	d12 & d6
d12 & d8	8	d12 & d8	+8	-20	d12 & d8
d12 & d10	9	d12 & d10	+9	-22	d12 & d10
2d12	10	2d12	+10	-24	2d12
Modifiers					
Gift of Strength of +1		1 row down	+1	extra 2	
Gift of Strength of +2		2 rows down	+2	extra 4	
Gift of Strength of +3		3 rows down	+3	extra 6	
Gift of Robustness +1					1 row down
Gift of Robustness +2					2 rows down
Gift of Robustness +3					3 rows down
Flaw of Frail					1 row up
Flaw of Weak		1 row up	-1	less 2	
Flaw of Corpulence			*	*	

*While the "Corpulent" flaw does not actually reduce Lift or Maximum Encumbrance, each level acts as one stone worth of Encumbrance that the character cannot get rid of.

Career

Every Character starts with one *Career* and can earn more. A Career grants basic ability in some kind of job or calling. Some Careers are *Wizardly Careers* and grant spell use and Magic Points.

Character

The fictional people in the world of *Jadeclaw* are called *Characters*. Each Player controls one *Player-Character* (or PC). The Game Host controls all the supporting cast, or *Non-Player Characters*, such as major villains, twisted henchmen, oppressed shop-keepers, austere hermits, peasant villagers, and the Jade Emperor.

Combat

In the dangerous world of *Jadeclaw,* characters often get into fights. Since the blow-by-blow action of these dire confrontations requires precise narrative so everyone can participate properly, *Combat* rules are comprehensive and detailed in their own chapter, which beings on page 125.

Dice

To add the drama of uncertainty to play, *Dice* are used to add a random element of success or failure. The many ways Dice are used in *Jadeclaw* are described in the *Rolling Dice* chapter (p. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**).

Encumbrance

When a character's carried weight in stone exceeds their Lift, they suffer *Encumbrance.*

Lift minus carried weight in Stone	***Encumbrance Limit***	***Move***	***Dash***
Zero or better		— no effect —	
to -1	d12	-1	-¼
to -2	d10	-2	-½
to -3	d8	-3	-¾
to -4	d6	-4	-1
to -5	d4	-5	-1 ¼
to -6	d4	-6	-1 ½
to -7	d4	-7	-1 ¾
to -8	d4	-8	-2
each additional -1 (or fraction)	d4	extra -1	extra -¼

Flaw

A lack of ability that not everyone suffers from is called a *Flaw.* They come in two kinds: *External* Flaws represent things that come from outside of the character's personality or from the environment (such as a missing hand, poor vision, or an enemy); *Internal* Flaws are parts of the character's personality or attitude that can limit their options or hinder their judgment (such as reckless overconfidence, insatiable curiosity, desire to be a hero in defiance of common sense, or even "noble failings" such as a strong sense of honor).

Game Host

One of the participants in the game is the *Game Host,* sometimes just called Host. Their role is like a director in a movie or a play — they preside over the Players and say what goes and what doesn't. Both the Players and the Game Host use the rules in this book to have a common understanding of the abilities of the fantastic beings that live in the world of *Jadeclaw.*

Gift

A special ability that not everyone has is called a *Gift.* They come in four kinds: *Personal* Gifts, which are unique abilities that a character has (such as improved move or balance), *Racial* Gifts which are abilities given by nature (such as raking claws, snapping teeth, or prehensile tails), *Social* Gifts which improve the character's standing in society (such as great wealth, possessions, or even legal powers), and *Esoteric* Gifts which are strange or hard-to-acquire things outside the humdrum (such as martial-arts training).

Initiative

During a heated battle, combatants all strive to go first. The order of who acts when is dictated by *Initiative,* a random number determined by rolling your Initiative Dice. For most combatants, your Initiative Dice are your *Speed Dice* and your *Mind Dice.* Initiative is explained in greater detail on page 135.

Levels

Skills and Traits are measured in *Levels.* The higher the Level, the bigger the dice are, and the more dice you get to roll.

Level	***Dice***	***Skill Quality***
None	"imaginary 1"	*n/a*
1	d4	Basic
2	d6	Basic
3	d8	Basic
4	d10	Basic
5	d12	Basic
6	d12 & d4	Expert
7	d12 & d6	Expert
8	d12 & d8	Expert
9	d12 & d10	Expert
10	2d12	Expert
11	2d12 & d4	Heroic
12	2d12 & d6	Heroic
13	2d12 & d8	Heroic
14	2d12 & d10	Heroic
15	3d12	Heroic
16	3d12 & d4	Legendary
17	3d12 & d6	Legendary
18	3d12 & d8	Legendary
19	3d12 & d10	Legendary
20	4d12	Legendary
21	4d12 & d4	Mythic
22	4d12 & d6	Mythic
23	4d12 & d8	Mythic
24	4d12 & d10	Mythic
25	5d12	Mythic

Dice is the number and size of dice you get to roll. For example, if you had a Level 4 Trait, you would roll a d10.

Skill Quality is only for Skills — every 5 levels upgrades your Skill to a new Quality, which can be important for breaking a tie (p. 20). Only Skills have Quality — Traits and other kinds of dice do not. (Do not confuse "Heroic" Quality with the "Heroic" Flaw.)

Mind

One of the four Basic Traits, *Mind* represents quick wits and life experience. Higher Levels of Mind mean increased reaction time in combat, improved ability to use thinking skills, and enhanced command of the magical arts.

Player

Most of the participants in the game are *Players*. Each has a Player-Character (abbreviated PC) — which represents their persona in the game world. For example, one Player might be playing a Sheep Vagrant-Warrior as their PC, while another might have a Cat Nomad. The Players tell the Game Host what they want their Characters to do in the context of the imagined world; the Host then determines whether their actions work or not (sometimes by using dice, other times by making spot judgments) and then tells the Players the results. The Players then react.

Race

Every Character has a *Race,* be it Cat, Dog, Bear, Dragon, Qiling, or the like. The Player-Characters are sometimes called the "Races of Earth" to distinguish them from the "Races of Heaven" who live above. For example, a PC can be a Worldly Dragon, but not one of the Celestial *Blue Dragons* who live above.

Skill

Skill represents specific ability to do something, such as singing a song, talking others into doing things, knowing the proper forms of address, and fighting with a sword.

Skills are measured in Levels — the higher the Level, the bigger and the greater the dice that are rolled. Also, every 5 Levels, a Skill improves in Quality, which can decide who wins on a tie roll (p. 20)

Skills often combine with Trait Dice — the specific ways usually depend on the situation, and are discussed in the *Tests* chapter (p. 103).

Skills add the boon of Favored Use to rolls (p. 64).

Speed

One of the four Basic Traits, *Speed* represents co-ordination and swiftness. Higher Levels of Speed mean increased movement on the battlefield and improved ability to both hit a target and to avoid being hit by an attacker.

Move

Your *Move* is how fast your character gets around. In combat, your *Stride* is how far you can move to perform most Maneuvers. Your *Dash* is the fastest you can move and still be wary against danger. Your Run is how fast you move (in kilometers per hour) with an all-out Run maneuver, taking three Dashes per Round. Movement is explained in detail in the *Combat* chapter (p. 125).

Speed Level	*Speed Dice*	*Dash*	*Stride*	*Run*
1	d4	4 paces	1 pace	7 kph
2	d6	6 paces	1½ paces	11 kph
3	d8	8 paces	2 paces	14 kph
4	d10	10 paces	2½ paces	18 kph
5	d12	12 paces	3 paces	22 kph
6	d12 & d4	14 paces	3½ paces	25 kph
7	d12 & d6	16 paces	4 paces	29 kph
8	d12 & d8	18 paces	4½ paces	32 kph
9	d12 & d10	20 paces	5 paces	36 kph
10	2d12	22 paces	5½ paces	40 kph
Modifiers				
Gift of Extra Move (per +1)		+1 pace	+¼ pace	+1.8 kg
Flaw of Lame		*half*	*max 1 pace*	*half*
Each Level of Encumbrance		-1 pace	-¼ pace	-1.8 kg

Trait

Traits represent general ability to do things. Traits are more expensive to buy with points than Skills are, but they apply to a lot more activities than one Skill does.

Traits are measured in Levels (see above). As your Trait Level increases, your Trait Dice increase. Unlike Skills, Traits do not improve in Quality — they are always of "Basic Quality."

There are four different kinds of Traits:

- *Basic Traits* are Body, Speed, Mind, and Will — the four basic abilities that every normal character needs to do things.
- The *Race Trait* is ability to do things related to that race. Among other things, the Race Trait expands some senses, confers advantage in a certain habitat, increases attacking power with natural weapons, and improves one or more Skills.
- *Career Traits* grant you more dice with three or more Skills, as well as general ability in some occupation. Every characters starts with one Career and can earn more.
- *Special Traits* are fantastic abilities such as strong personality, extra finesse, improved physique, or mystical powers. Only unusual characters have even one of these.

All characters start with the four Basic Traits, one Race, and one Career. To get more Traits requires spending points (at Character Creation) or Experience (p. 253).

Will

One of the four Basic Traits, *Will* represents stubbornness, presence, and inner strength. Higher Levels of Will mean improved resistance to the machinations of others, increased ability to ignore pain and other distractions of the body, and greater capacity to cast magical spells.

Resolve

When suffering pain or injury, a combatant has to test their *Resolve* or lose their next action. Your base Resolve Dice are your *Will Dice.* Some Races and Careers include more Resolve Dice, and there is even a Resolve Skill (p. 72).

"The successful are not always clever, or the distressed, simpletons. The lucky win and the unlucky lose. With a liberal fate and good fortune, even a vulgar rat becomes noble and genteel; with a stingy fate and bad fortune, the most remarkable dragon remains wretched and miserable. If talents and virtue were to be measured by success, then the great lords invested with the domain of a town and living on the soil would all be wise men."

— attributed to Honest Huan

RACES

The landscape of Zhongguo is populated with all kinds of people — some with fur, some with feathers, some with scales. Some of these people can trace their lineage to the Twelve Houses of Earth, who rule over Zhongguo by virtue of the Mandate of Heaven handed down from the Four Houses of Heaven. Most folk are commoners, subservient to their lords or living as scofflaws in the ruins and the wastelands. Often, Barbarians are encountered from the border territories, or even from such strange far-off lands as Calabria.

You start the game with 20 Points. Out of these Points, you must pay for your Racial Gifts, and you get Points back for your Racial Flaws. Each Race is listed with their *Name* first, followed by the *Total Cost* (the sum of all Racial Gifts and Flaws). The *Racial Gifts* and *Racial Flaws* are each spelled out, with their Point Costs, to show you how the Race was built using the game rules – list these on your Character Sheet in the "Racial Gifts and Flaws" section. *Racial Skills* are the abilities each Race gets as a virtue of being that Race – list these Skills and copy the die in the first column. (See the Sample Characters, above, for an example of how this works.) Some Races have a choice between one or more Skills (representing varieties of that Race) – you must make your choice when you create the Character. *Racial Weapons* are the Natural Weapons you include your Race Dice with in To-Hit Rolls (see "Racial Weapon Attack," p. 141). *Racial Habitat* is the climate where your Race feels the most at home; for some races, this is fixed, whereas a few have a choice. *Racial Senses* are the acute senses of that Race – seeing, hearing, or smelling; once again, a member of that Race includes their Race Die when making the appropriate Tests (see "Listen Test," p. 113; "Smell Test," p. 116; and "Spot Test," p. 117). After a short description, there is some advice on how to customize a Character, but you should feel free to make your own choices.

"Looking for fish? Don't climb a tree."

Bears

(Total Cost = 7 points)

Racial Gifts:	Claws (1 point); Strength +2 (5 points); Teeth (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	None
Racial Skills:	Choose one: (Climbing or Swimming); Fishing; Tracking; Wrestling
Racial Weapons:	Claws; Teeth
Racial Habitat:	Forest
Racial Senses:	Smell

Spiritual and wise, Bears believe that they are children of the Earth. They feel closer to nature than to other people. One of their ancestors was able to stop the Great Flood during the time of the Four Evils. The bears have experienced the full cycle of a noble house—first emerging from nowhere, then becoming a leading house of Zhongguo, and finally, with the passage of time, losing that position. Since their loss of prominence, they have begun to ponder the meaning of Dào. Bears do not reply to anything without first carefully considering their words. This often makes them seem slow and ponderous.

Bear Characters usually have Body Traits of d10 or higher. They often have the Gift of "Extra Hit Point" (p. 47), the Flaws of "Overconfident" (p. 59) and "Wrathful" (p. 60) and high Skills in Wrestling (p. 74) to supplement their Race Trait.

"Of all children of Spirits,
I have the purest heart.
Faith and innocence are my currency."

Boars

(Total Cost = 1 point)

Racial Gifts:	Tusks (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	None
Racial Skills:	Digging; Herbalism; Resolve; Tracking
Racial Weapons:	Tusks
Racial Habitat:	Forest
Racial Senses:	Smell

Honest and simple, Boars possess great fortitude. Their modest appearance belies hidden strength in both mind and body. Honored traditions of chivalry and generosity are handed down from generation to generation in boar households. Boars are open and tolerant, and others find them approachable and easy to talk to. A boar will work hard to help out his family and friends. In combat, a Boar is a formidable and fatalistic warrior. The battle is considered to be his last option when all other avenues have failed.

Boar Characters usually have low Speed Traits and high Will Traits. They often have the Gifts of "Keen Nose" (p. 48) or "Sure-Footed" (p. 49), the Flaws of "Stubborn" (p. 60) or "Wrathful" (p. 60), and high Skill in Herbalism (p. 68) or Resolve (p. 72).

"Never try to catch two quarries with one hand."

"To know the road ahead, ask those coming the other way."

Camels

(Total Cost = 1 points)

Racial Gifts:	Hooves (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	None
Racial Skills:	Hiking; Survival; Tracking; Weather Sense
Racial Weapons:	Hooves
Racial Habitat:	Plains
Racial Senses:	Spot

Camels are western barbarians that live within the Great Western Desert of Xi Shamò. There are Nine Tribes of Camels, each of whom controls a number of desert oases. Competition between the tribes is fierce, leading to periodic raiding back and forth. There was once a tenth tribe, but centuries ago it was destroyed by alliance of the other nine for an unforgivable offense—poisoning water holes in the high desert.

For a price, the Camels will act as guides across the Great Western Desert. However, don't expect the service and courtesy normally found when traveling with a caravan within Zhongguo. Camels look down upon others until they have earned their grudging respect, which does not come easily. They are fierce and bad-tempered, and tend to associate with their own kind.

Camel Characters often have the Gifts of "Extra Move" (p. 47) or "Sure-Footed" (p. 49), the Flaws of "Barbarian" (p. 54) or "Taciturn" (p. 60), and high Skill in Geography (p. 68) or Local Knowledge (p. 70). Most Camels are Merchants (p. 41), Mercenaries (p. 44), or Nomads (p. 40).

Cats

(Total Cost = 3 points)

Racial Gifts:	Claws (1 point); Night Vision (1 point); Teeth (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	None
Racial Skills:	Acrobatics; Climbing; Stealth; Tracking
Racial Weapons:	Claws; Teeth
Racial Habitat:	Choose one: (Forest, Mountains, or Plains)
Racial Senses:	Listen

Cats have many stations in life. Some have formed minor houses within Zhongguo. Others roam as nomads along the Kingdom's border.

In general, Cats are sensual and mercurial beings. They follow their emotions and worldly needs rather than pursuing intellectual or spiritual goals. More often not, once their desires have been sated, they move on to look for new distractions. Certain cats, however, are very spiritual, due to their ancestral link to the White Tiger Spirit. Some of them can even sense the presence of spirits. Many cats become spirit hunters, working to rid the world of evil apparitions.

A Cat Character's Speed is usually their highest Basic Trait. They often have the Gifts of "Ambidexterity" (p. 47) or "Sure-Footed" (p. 49), the Flaws of "Proud" (p. 59) or "Slothful" (p. 60), and more Skill in Stealth (p. 73).

"Each day, I am here to announce the coming of day,
Each night, I am here to proclaim the coming of night.
My goal in life is to achieve perfection."

Chickens

(Total Cost = zero points)

Racial Gifts:	Beak (1 point); Claws (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	Frail (-2 points)
Racial Skills:	Camouflage; Herbalism; Jumping; Tracking
Racial Weapons:	Beak; Claws
Racial Habitat:	Plains
Racial Senses:	Spot

Precise and calculating, the Chicken sees their world as a huge, well-maintained bureaucracy—under their guidance, of course. To them, everyone should know the pecking order and nothing must be wasted. The Chicken is an inflexible being, a traditionalist who much prefers tried and true methods to something new and radical. Chickens can be extremely pedantic — they will nit-pick to no end.

Not known for their physical strength, Chickens would rather trade verbal barbs than physical blows. They are always willing to let others save face and to leave, but they would never end a discussion without having the final say.

Chicken Characters usually have a high Mind Trait. They often have the Gift of "Sure-Footed" (p. 49). the Flaws of "Garrulous" (p. 58) or "Skittish" (p. 60), and an Erudite Career (p. 37).

"The wise man tarries not to instruct the fool."

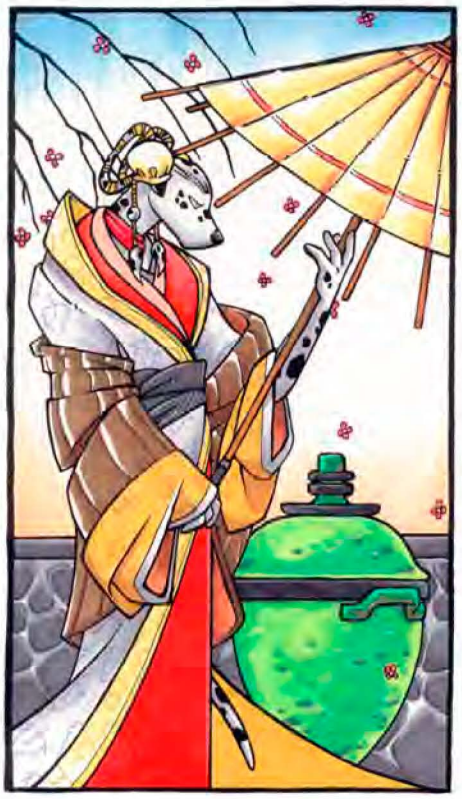
Crane

(Total Cost = 1 point plus Size)

Racial Gifts:	Beak (1 point); Claws (1 point); Flight (number of points equal to Size); Prehensile Feet (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	Frail (-2 points)
Racial Skills:	Dancing; Fishing; Flight; Swimming
Racial Weapons:	Beak; Claws
Racial Habitat:	Plains
Racial Senses:	Spot

Cold and distant, Cranes set themselves apart from everyone else. Similarly, the rest of the world often distances itself from the Crane. This is not out of any sense of resentment, but rather because, when nearing a Crane, one often feels small and insignificant. It has nothing to do with Crane's attitude or behavior, but rather one's own self-deprecation. Even when performing the most mundane tasks, the Crane has an aura of sophistication that is hard to explain and yet easily understood by everyone else. Officially, Cranes have never requested to become part of Zhongguo, but everyone else just feels that their prominent status is a given.

Crane Characters usually have a Body of d8, which makes their Racial Cost exactly 8 points. They usually have the Gifts of "Keen Eyes" (p. 48) or "Sure-Footed" (p. 49), the Flaws of "Morose" or "Taciturn" (p. 60), and one or two Athletic Skills at high Level (p. 64).



"Truth and Loyalty reside in my heart, they are forever my guides.
Heaven entrusted me to hear your grief, I will avenge all your wrongs."

Dogs

(Total Cost = 3 points)

Racial Gifts:	Claws (1 point); Howl (1 point); Teeth (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	None
Racial Skills:	Choose one: (Digging or Hiking); Tactics; Tracking
Racial Weapons:	Claws; Teeth
Racial Habitat:	Choose one: (Forest or Plains)
Racial Senses:	Listen; Smell

Driven by loyalty and integrity, Dogs love companionship. They see the world around them as vulnerable and in need of protection. They are watchful and restless; when in doubt, they do not hesitate to raise the alarm. Dogs are slow to warm up to strangers, but once they do they strike a lasting friendship with those who earn it. They would gladly lay down their lives for family, friends, and the causes they believe in. Dogs speak their minds easily, and they are unyielding when they set what is right from wrong.

As an opponent, the Dog is both honorable and a fierce warrior. They do not go out of their way to pick fights. But once induced to take up arms, the Dog is fatalistic and oblivious to future repercussions, and will fight tenaciously just to prove they are right.

Dog Characters vary wildly in what their Traits might be. They often have the Gift of "Keen Nose" (p. 48), and the Flaw of "Honorable" (p. 58). They prefer Warrior or Working Class Careers (pp. 43, 45).

"The darkest cloud cannot hide my presence,
The coldest ocean cannot quench my aura.
Feats of peace and arts of war are no stranger to me."

Dragons

(Total Cost = 4 points)

Racial Gifts:	Barbels (1 point); Claws (1 point); Horns (1 point); Teeth (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	None
Racial Skills:	Choose one: (Digging or Swimming); Augury; Contortionist; Weather Sense
Racial Weapons:	Claws; Teeth
Racial Habitat:	Choose one (Forest, Mountains, or Plains)
Racial Senses:	Spot

Vital and charismatic, the Dragon feels the weight of the world upon their shoulders. They consider it their duty to strive to the best of their abilities for the good of all. The Dragon loves to take on challenges and difficult tasks, in order to further prove their abilities.

Dragon Characters vary wildly in ability, though most will have a high Race Trait. They often have the Gift of "Extra Trait" (p. 47), with such exotic abilities as Bagua Personality, Second Sight or Venerable (see *Special Traits*, p. 61). Flaws suitable for Dragons include "Gluttonous" (p. 58), "Proud" (p. 59), "Slothful" (p. 60), "Stubborn" (p. 60), or "Wrathful" (p. 60)

"Friend, do not try to borrow combs from an elephant."

Elephants

(Total Cost = 13 points)

Racial Gifts:	Robustness +3 (7 points); Strength +3 (7 points); Trunk (1 point); Tusks (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	Poor Sight (-3 points)
Racial Skills:	Hiking; Herbalism; Resolve
Racial Weapons:	Tusks
Racial Habitat:	Plains
Racial Senses:	Smell; Spot

Elephants are barbarians from the southeastern periphery of Zhongguo. Most of them come from the land known as Yìndù. Those who travel to Zhongguo are often mercenaries or bodyguards. Others come to teach and to learn, while others still have been merchants who established the profitable Spice Route. Astute and strong, Elephants have high moral standing and are generous to those who are their friends. Any favor will be repaid tenfold, if not more. Their sense of touch is so refined that many can use their trunks as an additional third arm. Their bulk and strength make them fearsome in battle.

Rare is the Elephant Character with a Body Trait lower than d12. They often have Gifts that make them more fearsome in combat, such as "Extra Hit Point" (p. 47) or "Multidexterity" (p. 48), and they often have Flaws such as "Barbarian" (p. 54) or "Wrathful" (p. 60). Almost all Elephants have Warrior Careers (p. 43) and more Resolve Skill (p. 72).

"No melon-peddler cries, ' bitter melons!' ...
No wine-dealer cries ' sour wine.'"

Foxes

(Total Cost = 3 points)

Racial Gifts:	Claws (1 point); Keen Ears (1 point); Teeth (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	None
Racial Skills:	Choose one: (Climbing or Digging); Sixth Sense; Tracking
Racial Weapons:	Claws; Teeth
Racial Habitat:	Choose one: (Forest, Mountains, or Plains)
Racial Senses:	Listen; Smell

Though prominent among the lesser houses, the House of the Fox has been careful not to be so conspicuous as to make itself a target in the political maneuvering of the Middle Kingdom. Though Foxes have been around since the inception of Zhongguo, they never felt the need to have the status of a major house. They figured that they would let others perfect the multi-racial society before they joined in. It was only during the formation of the Zhou Dynasty that the Foxes came forward to petition for lesser house status. No one knows of the real agenda of the House of the Fox.

Being crafty by nature, Foxes often have high Mind Traits and Race Traits. They often have the Gifts of "Extra Trait" (p. 47)or "Luck" (p. 48), the Flaws of "Greedy" (p. 58) or "Scofflaw" (p. 56), and even more Sixth Sense Skill (p. 72).

"I am the motion behind all thoughts.
Through me, ideas become reality.
I come, I see, I go. The only constant is my inconsistency."

Horses

(Total Cost = 4 points)

Racial Gifts:	Extra Move +3 (3 points); Hooves (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	None
Racial Skills:	Herbalism, Hiking. Tactics
Racial Weapons:	Hooves
Racial Habitat:	Plains
Racial Senses:	Smell, Spot

Horses are driven by a happy-go-lucky attitude and a sense of independence, which causes them to go out and to visit the world. They are not bothered with formal plans or grand ideas of soul-searching. The carrots leading a Horse forward are heart's desire and intuition. Despite their impetuous and insensitive appearance, Horses are very practical and will take the short cut to reach their goal. They do not care what others may think of their actions nor do they care if their feelings are trampled upon.

Horse Characters usually concentrate on Body and Speed. They often have the Gifts of "Robustness" (p. 49) or "Sure-Footed" (p. 49), the Flaws of "Proud" (p. 59) or "Stubborn" (p. 60), and high Athletic Skills (p. 64).

"Even the swiftest leopard cannot overtake a word once it is spoken.

Leopards

(Total Cost = 3 points)

Racial Gifts:	Claws (1 point); Night Vision (1 point); Teeth (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	None
Racial Skills:	Acrobatics; Climbing; Stealth; Tracking
Racial Weapons:	Claws; Teeth
Racial Habitat:	Choose one (Forest, Mountains, or Plains)
Racial Senses:	Listen

Leopards once dwelt in what is now the northeast corner of Zhongguo. When the State of Yen annexed this land, most Leopar fled into the mountains to continue their simple way of life. Others stayed, and were granted the status of a lower house.

Leopards are solitary creatures, who have never organized into large house or clan. Once they reach adulthood,most young Leopa leave their parents in search of adventure, to establish a name, and find a mate. Rarely do they ever return. For many, old family tablet listing a few preceding generations are the only reminder of who th are.

"He watches the hunt in silence... what a superior person."

Lynxes

(Total Cost = 3 points)

Racial Gifts:	Claws (1 point); Night Vision (1 point); Teeth (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	None
Racial Skills:	Acrobatics; Climbing; Stealth; Tracking
Racial Weapons:	Claws; Teeth
Racial Habitat:	Mountains
Racial Senses:	Listen

The largest gathering of Lynx tribes can be found on the Northern Peninsula. Most of them are part of the Kingdom of Cháo-xian. Some, however, have chosen to remain independent, and live nomadic lives.

Renowned for patience and fortitude, the Lynx lives in snow-capped mountains and is willing to lie in ambush for days. They are not very social, and prefer to keep their thoughts to themselves. Others have called them the "feline snakes."

Lynx Characters are often quick-witted and quick-fingered, and will have high Speed and Mind Traits. They often have Gifts such as "Extra Trait" (p. 47) or "Sure-Footed" (p. 49), Flaws such as "Barbarian" (p. 54) or "Proud" (p. 59), and Skills that excel in patience or stillness, such as Camouflage (p. 66) or Meditation (p. 70).

"Who am I? Five stanzas are insufficient to tell this embroidery."

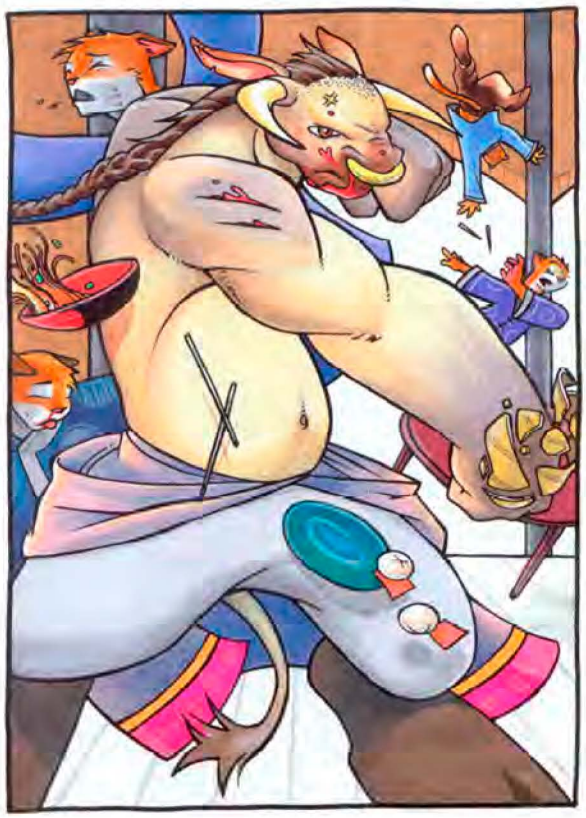
Monkeys

(Total Cost = 2 points)

Racial Gifts:	Prehensile Feet (1 point); Prehensile Tail (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	None
Racial Skills:	Acrobatics; Climbing; Contortionist; Wrestling
Racial Weapons:	None
Racial Habitat:	Forest
Racial Senses:	Spot

Driven by his irrepressible curiosity and creative energy, the Monkey will display ingenuity and wit whether trying to do so or not. They think the world revolves around them and that they make all the rules. Of course, the Monkey is not satisfied with just being the king of their own mountain — they also need to jump into other people's affairs. There, the Monkey will try to figure out their opponent's rules and beat them at their own games. Monkeys have no patience for those who are faint of heart or who are slow-witted, and they will mock them mercilessly. Monkeys will try their hand at anything and will never abandon their efforts to outsmart another. After all, are Monkeys not shrewd?

Being naturally agile, most Monkey Characters have respectable Speed and Race Traits, which they often supplement with Gifts like "Multidexterity" (p. 48) and "Sure-Footed" (p. 49). Flaws often found in Monkeys include "Envious" (p. 58) or "Showoff" (p. 60).



"Striving for stability in the cycle of life,
I am the anchor for others to cling to.
Like the mountain that stood firm against wind and water."

Oxen

(Total Cost = 11 points)

Racial Gifts:	Horns (1 point); Hooves (1 point); Robustness +2 (5 points); Strength +3 (7 points)
Racial Flaws:	Poor Sight (-3 points)
Racial Skills:	Herbalism; Hiking; Resolve
Racial Weapons:	Horns; Hooves
Racial Habitat:	Plains
Racial Senses:	Listen; Spot

Oxen are driven by unity and obedience. They learn from childhood that the source of their strength is their ability to endure and to persevere. Everything an Ox owns is obtained through hard work. They do not shrink from duty but carry their burdens proudly. Oxen perform well under pressure, but they do not like to take action without a detailed plan.

The Ox is gifted with strong resolve and a methodical mind. They base all decisions upon proven facts. Never one to either complain or to explain, an Ox is often viewed as being unapproachable and inflexible.

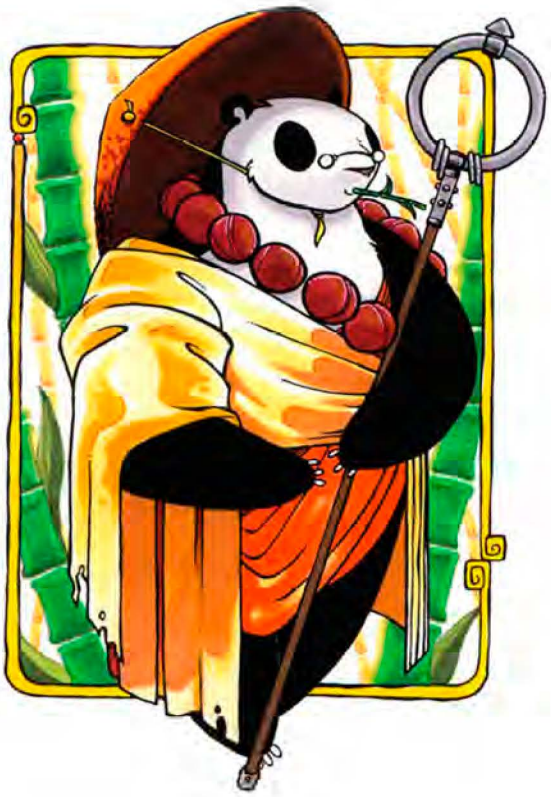
Ox Characters usually have high Body and Will Traits and low Mind and Career Traits. Gifts suitable for Oxen characters include "Extra Hit Point" (p. 47) and "Extra Move" (p. 47); suitable Flaws include "Single-Minded" (p. 60) and "Stubborn" (p. 60). Oxen usually have Working Class Careers (p. 45).

"One generation plants the bamboo, and another gets to eat their fill from it."

Pandas

(Total Cost = 4 points)

Racial Gifts:	Claws (1 point); Night Vision (1 point); Strength +1 (2 points)
Racial Flaws:	None
Racial Skills:	Camouflage; Climbing; Herbalism; Qi-sao
Racial Weapons:	Claws; Teeth
Racial Habitat:	Forest
Racial Senses:	Smell



A distant cousin of the Bear, the Panda is known to be spiritual and wise. In fact, some have said that Pandas have already achieved the Dào, for their fur is the representation of Yin and Yang — black and white. In public, they appear very stoic, and they take things in stride. Not many can recall seeing an angry Panda.

The house of Pandas was established as early as the time of the Third Sage King, but they have never been involved in politics. From time to time, a wise Panda has been invited as the teacher or advisor to the court in order to show the way.

Panda Characters often have Gifts such as "Hospitality" (p. 53) or "Luck" (p. 48), Flaws such as "Pacifist" (p. 59) or "Poverty" (p. 56), and a religious Career such as Monk or Nun (p. 37).

"Unplowed fields make hollow bellies... Unread books make hollow minds."

Phoenixes

(Total Cost = 1 point plus Size)

Racial Gifts:	Beak (1 point); Claws (1 point); Extra Wings (1 point); Flight (same as size);
Racial Flaws:	Frail (-2 points)
Racial Skills:	Augury; Flight; Herbalism; Weather Sense
Racial Weapons:	Beak; Claws
Racial Habitat:	Plains
Racial Senses:	Spot

Many are confused by the Phoenix, and by other such celestial races. People wonder whether they are truly celestial creatures come down to Earth, or earthly creatures who have achieved immortality. Other races often seek out the Phoenix to ask her advice on various matters. She is more approachable and friendly than the enigmatic Panda. However, her answer is generally just as elusive, if not more so. The House of the Phoenix is small in number. Many States consider it a great honor if a Phoenix is willing to participate in court activity.

Phoenix Characters often have a Body of d10, which makes their Racial Cost exactly 10. They often have the Gifts of "Extra Trait" (p. 47) or "Luck," (p. 48), the Flaws of "Eerie" (p. 54) or "Taciturn" (p. 60), and a Wizardly Career (p. 42).

"If in the dark he kneels to pray... he really prays."

Porcupines

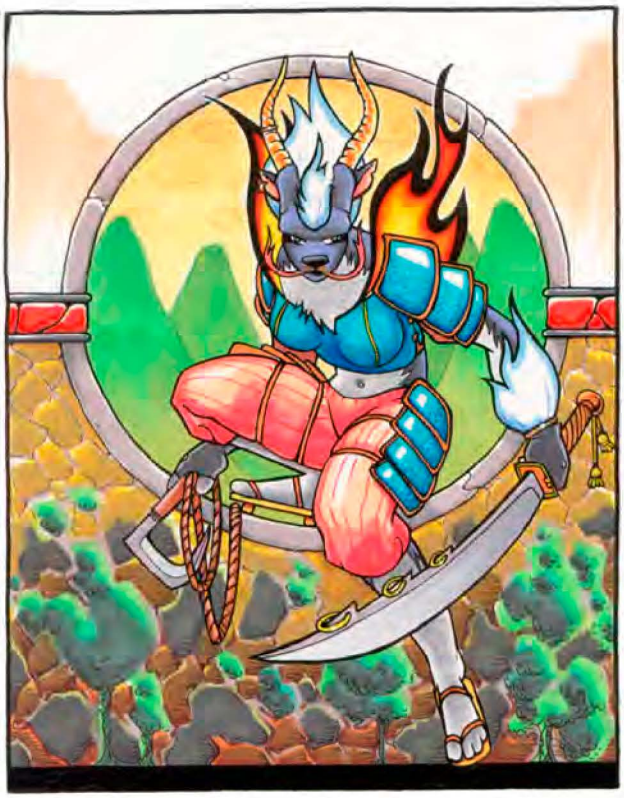
(Total Cost = 4 points)

Racial Gifts:	Barbed Spines (2 points); Claws (1 point); Teeth (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	None
Racial Skills:	Digging; Intimidation; Stealth; Tracking
Racial Weapons:	Barbed Spines; Claws; Teeth
Racial Habitat:	Forest
Racial Senses:	Smell

Poignant and short-tempered, Porcupines delight in being difficult to those around them. Without thinking of the consequences, the Porcupine loves to say outlandish things simply for their shock value. Those skilled at face-reading may ascribe Porcupine's behavior to their physical shortness; they feel that they have to talk big to make others think highly of them.

Officially, the Porcupines have never applied to be a part of Zhongguo. But their presence has become so commonplace that most people just assumed they have. All Porcupines are especially handy with needle-like sharp objects.

Rare is the Porcupine Character with a Body Trait above d6 or a Race Trait below d8. Gifts suitable for Porcupines include "Ambidexterity" (p. 47) or "Sure-Footed" (p. 49); suitable Flaws include "Pacifist" (p. 59) or "Showoff" (p. 60). They often have Trade Skills (p. 64).



"Though you hide then from other people, Heaven sees all your acts."

Qilings

(Total Cost = 6 points)

Racial Gifts:	Barbels (1 point); Extra Move +3 (3 points); Hooves (1 point); Horn (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	None
Racial Skills:	Augury; Hiking; Jumping; Weather Sense
Racial Weapons:	Hooves; Horn
Racial Habitat:	Plains
Racial Senses:	Spot

Many people debate whether Qilings are ancestral spirits of the Horse or a separate race altogether. This is rarely brought up in front of the Qilings themselves, however, and Horses cannot be bothered with such frivolous questions. Not many can withstand the fiery stare of the Qiling after such an imprudent question is asked. The answer is not given, and the questioner's fortune will suffer afterwards.

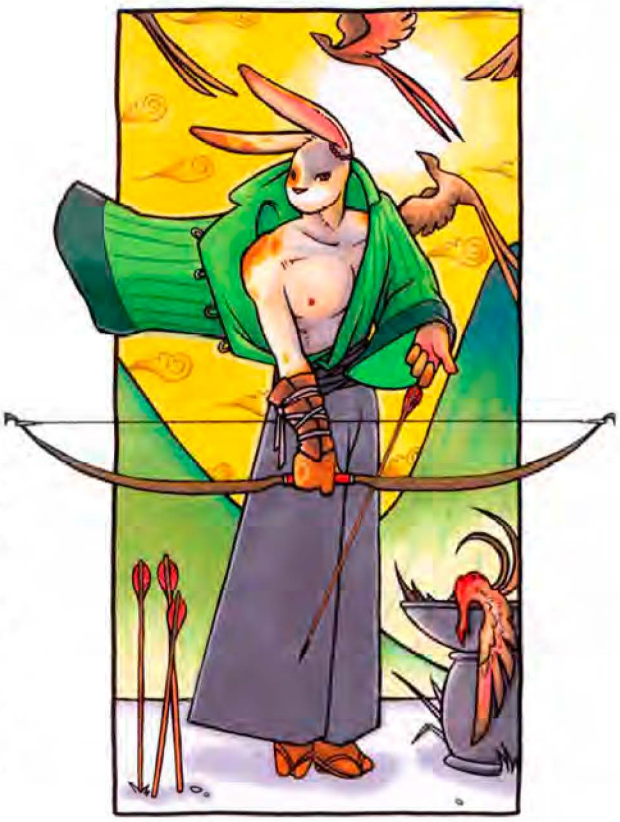
Qiling Characters have a respectable mix of Traits, and they often have the Gift of "Increased Trait" (p. 47) taken twice. Flaws suitable for Qilings include "Eerie" (p. 54) and "Honorable" (p. 58). Almost every Qiling is a Wizard of some kind (p. 42).

"There are no surprises to one who is aware.
Melodies of Hearts and Souls are what I hear,
No two souls sing same song."

Rabbits

(Total Cost = 2 points)

Racial Gifts:	Claws (1 point); Keen Ears (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	None
Racial Skills:	Digging; Herbalism; Jumping; Stealth
Racial Weapons:	Claws
Racial Habitat:	Choose one (Forest, Mountains, or Plains)
Racial Senses:	Listen



Quiet and efficient, the Rabbit tries to smooth away any friction between the ra of Zhongguo. Refined, congenial and always diplomatic, Rabbits know what words say to save face for everyone involved. The Rabbit will rarely complain openly. The follow the rules and toe the line, thus keeping the peace. And because they keep th plans to themselves, many are surprised when a Rabbit suddenly performs a swift cc during negotiations and wrestles considerations for themselves.

Tough and resilient, the Rabbit can make a surprisingly dangerous fighter. Thei inscrutable manner causes many opponents to underestimate them. Only after falli into a trap does one realize the Rabbit's resourcefulness and ruthlessness.

Rabbit Characters prefer Speed and Race to Body or Will. They often have the Gifts of "Luck" (p. 48) or "Sure-Footed" (p. 49), the Flaws of "Skittish" (p. 60) or "Taciturn" (p. 60), and high Athletic Skills (p. 64) to supplement their Racial ones

"I strive to reach apex of all things, and I always strike my target. Life is but a journey of joy."

Rats

(Total Cost = 3 points)

Racial Gifts:	Claws (1 point); Keen Ears (1 point); Teeth (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	None
Racial Skills:	Choose two: (Climbing; Digging; or Swimming); Contortionist; Stealth
Racial Weapons:	Claws; Teeth
Racial Habitat:	Choose one (Forest or Plains)
Racial Senses:	Listen

The Rat is a self-starter. They like to investigate, to map, and to control their environment. Rats are curious and like to poke their noses into anything and everything. The more one attempts to hide something from a Rat, the more the Rat feels the need to ferret it out. Besides being inquisitive, Rats are also very social. They often build a large network of friends and connections (*guan xi*), which they use to keep track of the flow of information, so that they can find the necessary data to get things done.

Rat Characters rarely have a Body greater than d8, specializing in Speed, Mind, or Race. Gifts especially suited for Rats include "Ambidexterity" (p. 47) or "Night Vision" (p. 51); suitable Flaws include "Gregarious" (p. 58) or "Skittish" (p. 60). A clever Rat does not lack for Carousing (p. 66), Local Knowledge (p. 70), or Streetwise (p. 73) to help with the *guan xi*.

"It highlights my curled horns of justice and compassion.
I strive for both peace and beauty. All things grow and mend under my care.
Come to me with your tales of woes,"

Sheep

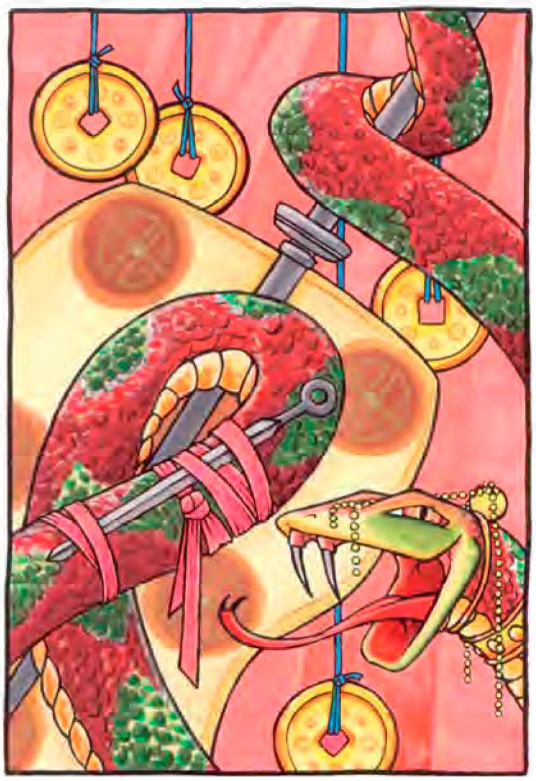
(Total Cost = 1 or 2 points)

Racial Gifts:	Horns (if male) (1 point); Sure-Footed (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	None
Racial Skills:	Climbing; Herbalism; Resolve; Tactics
Racial Weapons:	Horns; if male
Racial Habitat:	Mountains
Racial Senses:	Smell

Peaceful and harmonious, the Sheep is sensitive to change and has a narrow range of comfort. They will try to prevent strife within their sphere of influence. For this reason, others come to Sheep with problems and to meet upon a neutral ground.

The Sheep is not comfortable in any sort of direct confrontation. They would rather ask for special consideration of some sort than engage in battle. They will often make themselves appear to be the victim in order to solicit sympathy or to persuade a bystander to intervene on their behalf.

Preferring reason and contemplation over conflict, Sheep Characters usually have high Mind Traits and low Will Traits. They often have the Gifts of "Extra Move" (p. 47) or "Keen Nose" (p. 48), the Flaws of "Obsequious" (p. 58) or "Skittish" (p. 60), and an Erudite Career (p. 37)



"The key to the mysteries of life is very simple. All you have to do is but to ask."

Snakes

(Total Cost = 2 points)

Racial Gifts:	Extra Hit Points (4 points); Ophidian (1 point); Prehensile Tail (1 point); Teeth (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	No Hands (-5 points)
Racial Skills:	Camouflage; Contortionist; Tracking; Wrestling
Racial Weapons:	Teeth
Racial Habitat:	Choose one (Forest, Mountains, or Plains)
Racial Senses:	Smell

Snakes are ambitious and wise, cool and collected. They have no need to hurry, yet Snakes are quietly aggressive in their own peculiar way. Difficult to understand, Snakes do not like to reveal how they work things out, or how they arrive at their decisions. Dangerous and merciless, the Snake is a silent and intense fighter with great staying power. They are never gracious losers and will harbor a lifelong enmity.

There is a widespread myth that Snakes have a poisonous bite or spit, but such is not the case. Snakes have powerful muscles and sinewy coils that they use to crush the life from their opponents. Few Snakes become spell-casters — their lack of hands hinders their ability to cast spells … but the Snakes that *do* know the art of wizardry can often use the art from surprise.

Snakes vary widely in Traits, but most have respectable Speed, Mind, and Race. They prefer Social Gifts (p. 51). Flaws suitable for Snakes include "Envious" (p. 58)or "Wrathful" (p. 60). Most Snakes will pursue Erudite (p. 37) or Governors Careers (p. 37).

"When the mantis hunts the locust... he forgets the swallow that's hunting him."

Swallows

(Total Cost = 1 point plus Size)

Racial Gifts:	Beak (1 point); Claws (1 point); Extra Move +2 (2 points); Flight (number of points equal to Size); Prehensile Feet (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	Frail (-2 points); Weak (-2 points)
Racial Skills:	Acrobatics; Camouflage; Flight; Singing
Racial Weapons:	Claws
Racial Habitat:	Forest
Racial Senses:	Sight

Swallows are courteous, congenial, and well-mannered. They are often associated with Phoenixes. Their position is somewhat unclear to outsiders. Phoenixes treat Swallows like elder sisters treat their younger siblings. Swallows, in turn, follow the Phoenixes around like servants.

Swallows came to Zhongguo during the time of the Third Sage King. They read his Classics, and were impressed with amount of knowledge and information contained within. They petitioned and were granted status as a minor house within Zhongguo.

Swallow Characters often have a Body of d4, which makes their Racial Cost exactly 3. Gifts suitable for Swallows include "Extra Move" (p. 47) or "Luck" (p. 48); suitable Flaws include "Obsequious" (p. 58) or "Skittish" (p. 60). Swallows can never have enough Flight Skill (p. 68).

"Those who decipher my stripes and yellow will be surprised. All under Heaven is my stage, my presence demands your attention."

Tigers

(Total Cost = 3 points)

Racial Gifts:	Claws (1 point); Night Vision (1 point); Teeth (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	None
Racial Skills:	Acrobatics; Stealth; Swimming; Tracking
Racial Weapons:	Claws; Teeth
Racial Habitat:	Forest
Racial Senses:	Listen

Driven by passion and integrity, the Tiger is outspoken and courageous. They love to take on all challenges with a "never say die" attitude. Each Tiger is taught since childhood to get involved in something that will make a difference for Zhongguo—the bigger, the better. At their best, Tigers can be charming, playful and outgoing. At their worst, they are suspicious, accusing and ill-tempered.

Tough and demanding, Tigers never shrink from a good fight. The more badly outnumbered a Tiger is, the more fiercely they fight. Tigers are often accused of stirring up already tense situations

Tigers are the largest felines, and usually have high Body Traits as well as impressive Speed. They prefer Gifts that improve their physical prowess, such as "Extra Hit Point" (p. 47), "Robustness" (p. 49), or "Strength" (p. 49). Flaws suitable for Tigers include "Proud" (p. 59) and "Wrathful" (p. 60). Their Careers are usually either Governors (p. 37) or Warriors (p. 43).

"Slow work... fine work."

Tortoises

(Total Cost = 5 points)

Racial Gifts:	Armor d6 (7 points); Teeth (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	Lame (-3 points)
Racial Skills:	Breath-Holding; Camouflage; Resolve; Swimming
Racial Weapons:	Teeth
Racial Habitat:	Choose one (Forest or Plains)
Racial Senses:	Smell

Slow and meticulous, the Tortoise approaches life in a deliberate manne They value the mundane and the routine. Sudden changes confuse them, a confusion makes a Tortoise act even more slowly. Because they do things sc gradually, Tortoises have time to review and to correct any mistakes before they become major problems.

Tortoises were granted minor house status around the beginning of East Zhou Dynasty. Some said that the proposed petition request for such status had been begun as early as the time of the Third Sage King.

Tortoise Characters will usually have high Mind and Career Traits. Gift suitable for Tortoises include "Luck" (p. 48) or "Extra Trait" (p. 47) with a Special Trait such as Venerable (p. 63). Suitable Flaws include "Single-Minded" (p. 60) and "Taciturn" (p. 60).

"For a swift arrow, pull hard on the string."

Weasels

(Total Cost = 2 points)

Racial Gifts:	Claws (1 point); Teeth (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	None
Racial Skills:	Contortionist; Dodge; Stealth; Tracking
Racial Weapons:	Claws; Teeth
Racial Habitat:	Choose one (Forest or Plains)
Racial Senses:	Smell

Present throughout Zhongguo, Weasels have no formal house to represent them in politics. What they lack in clout, they compensate for with boundless energy and ambition. Weasels are never lazy but are often easily distracted form the task at hand. Lacking a head for figures or for administration, a Weasel never moves far up the ladder.

Few want to fight a Weasel. Swords won't cut them; arrows won't strike them; nets won't hold them. They are a blur of furious claws and teeth, and it is not uncommon to encounter a Weasel who has channeled almost all their waking moments in the study of a Martial Art.

Weasel Characters prefer Speed and Race to Body or Mind. Common Gifts for Weasels include "Ambidexterity" (p. 47) and "Sure-Footed" (p. 49); common Flaws include "Capricious" (p. 56) and "Naïve" (p. 58). Weasels often have Professional Careers (p. 41).

"One never needs their humor as much as when they argue with a wolf."

Wolves

(Total Cost = 3 points)

Racial Gifts:	Claws (1 point); Howl (1 point); Teeth (1 point)
Racial Flaws:	None
Racial Skills:	Hiking; Tactics; Tracking
Racial Weapons:	Claws; Teeth
Racial Habitat:	Choose one (Forest, Mountains, or Plains)
Racial Senses:	Listen; Smell

Wild and unkempt, the Wolf enjoys life to its fullest. Rejecting proper manners and etiquette, Wolves freely speatheir minds. The Wolf values the pack above all else, especially large-scale abstractions such as nations or states.

Wolves once roamed from the north down to central plains of Zhongguo. Now, they have been pushed back to the farthest northern reaches. Wolf shamans have prophesized that when the great sky she-wolf gives birth to ten pups, their time will come to retake the land that was once theirs.

Wolf Characters usually have high Body and Race Traits. They prefer Gifts that improve fighting prowess, such as "Robustness" (p. 49) or "Strength" (p. 49). Flaws suitable for Wolves include "Barbarian" (p. 54), "Coarse" (p. 57), and "Proud" (p. 59). If a Wolf does not have a Warrior Career (p. 43), then they most likely have a Combat Skill or two (p. 64).

"Honest judge, lean clerks... Powerful god, fat priests."

Yaks

(Total Cost = 11 points)

Racial Gifts:	Horns (1 point); Hooves (1 point); Robustness +3 (7 points); Strength +2 (5 points)
Racial Flaws:	Poor Sight (-3 points)
Racial Skills:	Climbing; Herbalism; Hiking
Racial Weapons:	Horns; Hooves
Racial Habitat:	Mountains
Racial Senses:	Listen; Spot

Secluded and reclusive, Yaks are rarely seen in Zhongguo. Most of them reside in the southwestern periphery of the kingdom. They practice a form of mysticism that comes from barbarian land of Yìndù. A core tenet of their faith is the belief in reincarnation. They claim that their great spiritual leader has always been with them in various incarnations, down through the centuries.

Yaks usually have high Body, Mind, and Race Traits. Gifts suitable for Yak characters include "Hospitality" (p. 53) or "Increased Trait" (p. 47); suitable Flaws include "Barbarian" (p. 54) and "Taciturn" (p. 60). The Yaks found in Zhongguo are almost always Monks (p. 37).

"Let a person be inspired by literature, established by rules of propriety, and perfected by martial study."

— attributed to Lord Canjun of Zhao

CAREERS

Every character has at least one Career. Those with the Gift of Extra Trait (p. 47) may have two or more. Your character's Career gives you a handle on your character's role in the game — a function in society. A Career Trait is *included with* at least three Skills. Whenever you would roll the Skill, you always include the Career Dice. For example, if you need to roll Resolve Dice, you would also include your Mercenary Career Dice.

Erudites (Wen)

Naturally, a high Mind works well with any of these Careers. Characters with these Careers will have specialized knowledge to deal with the numerous mysteries of the world; also, for matters inside their areas of expertise, they will know who to talk to and how to talk to them. Since an Erudite lacks weapon skills or Resolve, a Character who expects danger is encouraged to buy those Skills separately.

Academic (Shu-Seng)

An Academic is someone who studies some sort of esoteric or half-forgotten lore. Most Academics hope to impress a wealthy sponsor, so that they may draw a salary while researching their arcane studies.

Include with: (Lore of choice); Calligraphy; Literacy; Research

Ascetic (Yinshi)

Requirement: The Flaw of Poverty (-4 points)

Eschewing the cloistered life, the wandering Ascetic travels the world living an exemplary life of humility and self-denial. The devoted Ascetic takes a vow of poverty to own no more than they can carry; they avoid all earthly pleasures and maintain a countenance of spare austerity.

Include with: Hiking; Literacy; Resolve; Theology

Engineer (Gongchengshi)

To build castles, walls, bulwarks, and bridges, one needs to find at least one skilled Engineer, and maybe even a whole crew. With the gradual change from arbalest to blunderbuss, from impure iron to proven steel, and from eyeball and guesswork to surveyor's plumb and precise measurement, the science of Engineering is undergoing a rapid change, and those skilled in the new methods are in high demand.

Include with: Ciphering; Literacy; Trade: Carpentry; Trade: Stonemasonry

Functionary (Liao)

Throughout Zhongguo's government are the readers of the rules, recorders of the law, and various other bureaucrats who preside over the day-to-day affairs of the noble households.

In the past, all Functionaries were nobility, as only the wealthier classes were schooled in mathematics and law. Today, educated commoners are sometimes able to wheedle their way into positions of power.

A "Quartermaster" is a Functionary who works in the army, maintaining inventory, payrolls, and the like. A "Majordomo" is a Functionary who administers a large palace or other building.

Include with: Administration; Bribery; Ciphering; Literacy

Lobbyist (Shu-Ki)

Shu-Ki loves nothing more than of battles of tongues. Nothing amuses them more than to see confusion on their opponents' faces. Of course, Shu-Ki knows what is best for you.

Include with: Diplomacy; Etiquette; Literacy; Oratory

Monk / Nun (Seng / Nigu)

Requirements: The Gift of Hospitality (2 points), The Flaw of Poverty (-4 points)

Monks are contemplative penitents of S'allumer. They take lifelong vows of detachment from worldly things, devoting their lives to prayer and spirituality. Monks remain in abbeys that are supported by tithes and in-house businesses such as bakeries,

breweries, or copyists. It is not uncommon for individual monks, while on pilgrimage or in service to their house, to encounter adventure outside the tranquil boundaries of their abbeys.

Include with: (one Trade Skill); First Aid; Literacy; Theology

Navigator (Dao Hangyuan)

Early navigators assisted in the building of roads and canals as well as steering ships. Navigators determine location by following the stars, the path of the sun, landmarks and land formations, and other methods. Navigators can prevent sailors from getting lost across the large expanses of open sea.

Include with: Astronomy; Ciphering; Literacy; Navigation

Scribe (Wen Li)

In the absence of regular schooling and inexpensive printing, literacy is largely unknown. The Scribe is a special type of Craftsman (p. 41) who specializes in taking dictation and copying other documents. Scribes are necessary for holding any sort of court, legal or noble.

Include with: Ciphering; Craft: Calligraphy; Literacy; Heraldry

Seer (Xianjianzhe)

It is a common belief in Zhongguo that omens that foretell the future are everywhere and can be interpreted by those who can read the signs. A Seer is one who has studied these mystical methods and can interpret them to good effect. (A "seer" who uses trickery to fool others is a Charlatan, p. 51) Wealthier nobles will typically employ a house Seer.

Include with: Astronomy; Augury; Psychology; Sixth Sense

Storyteller (Yi-Ren)

Yi Ren brings joys and pleasures to her fellows. The beautiful, the tragic, the comic, the valiant, the villainous of Zhongguo all come alive through painting, poetry, singing, or dance.

Include with: (Lore skill of choice), Acting, Calligraphy, Literacy

Governors (Guan)

While most Characters would be born into these Careers, it doesn't hurt to back them up with a high Mind Trait, to reflect a superior education and refinement. Those of the Guan class will be able to speak with authority to lesser folks and will be granted special privileges. A noble brings a certain legitimacy to any party.

Dilettante (Gùi Zú)

Requirement: the Gift of Nobility (1 point or more; p. 52)

A Dilettante is a Noble who prefers to see the world rather than languish at the manor. Dilettantes are often third- or fourth-born relatives, and thus unlikely to inherit their estates, yet still able to claim the status of noble birth. Some are roustabouts in search of adventure; others are spoiled and pretentious and enjoy flaunting their status over the common ruck.

Include with: Etiquette; Fencing; Heraldry; Literacy

Diplomat (Waijiaoguan)

Requirement: the Gift of Nobility (1 point or more; p. 52)

While all Noble Houses claim to serve the Jade Emperor, their relations between each other are somewhat mixed. All Houses employ Diplomats to deliver messages, to negotiate treaties and boundaries, and to spy on one another. Diplomats depend upon their Nobility to protect them from laws and policies that hinder the common folk.

Include with: Bribery; Diplomacy; Fast-Talk; Psychology

Knight
(Jun-zi)
Requirement: the Gift of Nobility (1 point or more; p. 52)

Ever since the great teachings of the Five Classics (p. 266) became available, there have been people of means who have studied them in order to become *Jun-zi,* the "perfect gentleman or gentlewoman." A Jun-zi strives to achieve prowess as both a scholar and a warrior — to maintain composure in all situations, to discuss philosophy with teachers, to play a musical instrument to express personal feelings, and to defend against physical aggression. The Career of Knight is seen as just the beginning to a long life of study.

Include with: Etiquette; Fencing; Literacy; Resolve

Minister
(Buzhang)
Requirement: the Gift of Nobility (1 point or more; p. 52)

The government of Zhongguo does not run itself. Appointed to various offices are the Ministers, sometimes with grand titles or even meaningless ones. Many Ministers have their positions as favors granted because of relatives, or because of bribes; others rose to authority by their own skill or guile. A person with a government office who does not have the Gift of Nobility is a Functionary (p. 37).

Include with: Administration; Bribery; Diplomacy; Etiquette

Miscreants (Zei)

These Careers are best for characters with a high Speed (for being swift and sneaky) and a high Mind (for being crafty). Characters with these unsavory occupations will be in the know of the secret happenings behind closed doors and will have valuable skills necessary to "get things done."

Bandit
(Tu Fei)

Unlike the solitary Robber (below), Bandits are groups of warriors who assault their targets in groups, sometimes with uncanny precision. Bandits plague the unsafe, crumbling buildings of the inner city and the less patrolled roads. Unlike some thieves, who are forced into a life of crime out of desperation, some "career Bandits" have formidable arms and armor, with sophisticated networks and domination over large swaths of land.

Include with: Intimidation; Stealth; Streetwise; Tactics

Beggar
(Qigai)

Trying to look as pitiable as possible, Beggars plead for alms in public places, playing on people's sympathy. Some try to appear maimed or crippled or even diseased. Others carry (forged) papers of discharge from military service, claiming to be war veterans "down on their luck."

Include with: Fast-Talk; Observation; Stealth; Streetwise

Burglar
(Qiedao)

Unlike a coarse Robber or Bandit, the Burglar is much happier not encountering anyone at all. Burglars specialize in breaking-and-entry, "second story jobs," where they enter a building at night and find the most valuable items, then leave before anyone is aware. The boldest of Burglars seek new thrills by stealing items that are well guarded and largely thought as impossible to steal.

Include with: Climbing; Streetwise; Stealth; Traps

Fence
(Zei Wusuobumai)

It is rare that a thief manages to steal only money. Jewelry, weapons, rare books and the like can command heavy prices if one knows where to find a buyer. A Fence is a criminal who specializes in finding the right buyers. Some are simple pawn-brokers who trade in goods of minor value. The most aggressive Fences find out what sort of things a buyer might want, and then hire someone to steal it.

Include with: Ciphering; Forgery; Haggling; Streetwise

Gambler
(Zei Bo)

Thrilled by games of chance, or perhaps by fooling other people in a contest of wits, Gamblers attempt to make a living by winning large "pots" or sums of money. Gamblers will know how to evaluate the "odds" in many situations. The better Gamblers may become "Bookmakers," accepting and paying off bets for others. The poorer Gamblers are often forced to turn to begging or even to crime.

Include with: Ciphering; Fast-Talk; Gambling; Psychology

Highwayman (Zei Dao)

Sometimes a noble turned scofflaw out of desperation or even for thrills, but rarely a common outlaw with aspirations of grandeur, the Highwayman is one of the more curious personalities one can encounter. Highwaymen dress in finer clothes and affect a swashbuckling air as they order their victims to stand and deliver.

Include with: Etiquette; Fencing; Gun; Riding

Nomad (Di)

Living outside cities, the various Nomads know nothing of finer civilization but rather live day to day. Almost all nomads are barbarians in the positive sense — the ones who plunder and attack are properly Bandits (p. 39).

Include with: First Aid; Hiking; Sixth Sense; Survival

Pickpocket (Xiao Tao)

With nimble fingers, sharp eyes, and a stone face, the Pickpocket moves among crowds of people, looking for easy marks and small valuables. Their methods of pilfering are varied: some use a knife to cut purses free; others have confederates such as Entertainers (p.45) who distract folk while they "work the crowd."

Include with: Fast-Talk; Holdout; Sleight-of-Hand; Stealth

Procurer (Hei Dao)

A professional Procurer believes that they can do anything faster, better, and more efficiently than the government. Procurers are professional guides to the seedier parts of a city, well aware of the locations of brothels, drinking houses, drug dens, and other places of iniquity. They often seek out out-of-town thrill-seekers and, for a fee, show them the "attractions" the city has to offer. Untrustworthy Procurers lead people into ambushes, for a share of the loot.

Include with: Bribery; Carousing; Fast-Talk; Streetwise

Racketeer (Feitu-jituan)

With the rise of independent businesses within large cities, a new type of scofflaw has come into being: the Racketeer, a thug who extorts money from local businesses. Racketeers threaten store-owners and locals with vandalism and violence if they do not meet their demands of money or favors.

Include with: Brawling; Intimidation; Streetwise; Torture

Robber (Qiang Dao)

It is not wise to wander through city streets alone, especially after dark. Muggers, footpads, and other armed criminals prey upon easy targets. Some take their victim's valuables and flee — others would sooner kill and thus remove any witnesses to the crime. A lone Robber is often a desperate sort, one who operates alone, and rarely as dangerous as the Bandits (p. 39) who attack in groups.

Include with: (Combat Skill of choice); Intimidation; Streetwise; Stealth

Slaver (Zei Ba)

There is always a demand for cheap labor, especially in the remote corners of the world. The Slaver is one who collects slaves, sometimes through legitimate, legal channels, but sometimes through force and conquest. There are ambitious would-be "bandit-kings" who seek to raise a holding by capturing slaves to build their forts and to maintain their land — the noble houses frown on this, if just for the ironic comparison it implies to their own system of feudalism and serfdom.

Include with: Haggling; Intimidation; Psychology; Torture

Smuggler (Zei Zousi)

Moving stolen goods is not a light undertaking. The Smuggler is a criminal who specializes in avoiding the authorities while finding buyers and sellers of contraband goods. Successful Smugglers can command heavy prices for their ill-gotten goods, and a few can blackmail more moneys out of their customers by threatening to inform the law … although such a move is risky and invites violent reprisal. Smugglers are usually known for their brazen, confident nature and their disrespect for authority.

Include with: Camouflage; Fast-Talk; Haggling; Streetwise

Spy (Qingbao)

It is expensive and time-consuming to create accurate maps, to design strong fortifications, and to forge alliances against one's foes. To protect their investments, those in power try to keep their secrets and keep their enemies in the dark … and to discover what secrets their enemies have, one employs a Spy. The best Spies have a "cover" or second Career such as Servant or Functionary, usually lowly enough to not attracted undue attention yet with enough freedom of movement to allow access to sensitive places.

Include with: Cryptography; Disguise; Fast-Talk; Streetwise

Vagabond (Liulangzhe)

Some feel the wanderlust within their heart and simply cannot stay in one place for too long. Others tend to wear out their welcome rather quickly with their weak morals. Still others just happen to be carried by the winds of fate from place to place. Whatever the reason, a Vagabond is someone who has no franchise, no noble house, no relatives to speak for them, and has been a great many places and seen a great many things.

Include with: Fast-Talk; Geography; Hiking; Streetwise

Professionals (Ye)

Characters with these Careers will benefit from having a high Mind ... but these duties involve physical labor, so a high Body is not unreasonable, too. Of all the Careers, these folk are the most "ordinary" and thus will be able to blend into almost any social situation.

Craftsman (Gongjiang)

A Craftsman is a craftsman who has a specialized skill. Unlike a Laborer (p. 41), who can be replaced with little difficulty, the folk who can fill a Craftsman's shoes are less common, and thus they may demand greater wages, shorter hours, and more benefits.

Include with: (Trade Skill of choice); Ciphering; Haggling; Literacy

Doctor (Da Fu)

Da Fu believe that a person is composed of five elements. Any disease stems from unbalance of elements within one's body. In most cases, certain pressure points can reset the equilibrium, and others may require some external helpings of elements.

Include with: First Aid; Literacy; Medicine; Qi-Sao

Laborer (Laodongzhe)

Towers, buildings, and fortifications do not spring out of nothing — they are the product of long hours of toil and drudgery. Laborers often work 14-hour days with few breaks in inhospitable conditions for low wages and fewer thanks. Many are coarse and ill-mannered; after the work-day is done, most are eager to "whoop it up," get drunk, and otherwise carry on.

Include with: (Trade skill of choice); Brawling; Carousing; Hiking

Merchant (Shang Ren)

Merchants enjoy greater prosperity in the modern day. For years, the ruling class had strict controls on what merchants could buy and sell – sometimes they were even imprisoned or killed. Many people distruted Merchants and resented their wealth. Today, the stigma is largely gone, and Merchants are welcome in nearly every city.

Include with: Administration; Bribery; Ciphering; Literacy

Moneylender (Ye Jie)

As the wealth of the citizenry increases, so do people's debts. The Moneylender is often a pawnbroker — in return for an object as collateral, they lend a sum of money against its value, until the loan's interest builds up and the item becomes the Moneylender's. They are often found in the company of bodyguards, as they are never popular.

Include with: Administration; Haggling; Literacy; Lore: Law

Sword Dancer (Jiàn-Nú)

The Sword-Dancer combines swordsmanship with showmanship, placing their life in danger to entertain the public for a few coins and some applause. To a Sword-Dancer, few can understand the thrill of being alive within flashes of sharp edges. They often claim that the ultimate weapon skill is to strike without drawing blood.

Include with: Acrobatics; Dancing; Dodge; Sword

This Career is a requirement to learn many of the Martial Arts of Sword-Dancing (p. 180).

Tax Collector (Ye Chouji)

One day, the tax collector of the Wen prefecture fell into the river. Since he didn't know how to swim, he was about to drown. The villagers gathered by the riverbank trying to save him.

"Give me your hand, give me your hand" they all shouted, but the man did not. At that time, a monk happened to be passing by. The monk yelled to the man bobbing in the water, "Take my hand!" At once, the tax collector immediately extended his hand and grabbed the monk's arm, and the people were able to pull him out of the water. "You see," the monk clarified, "he is a Tax Collector — he is more practiced in taking than in giving."

Include with: Ciphering; Fast-Talk; Literacy; Psychology

Torturer (Ye Kaowen)

In the somewhat brutish world of *Jadeclaw*, torture is an accepted method of extracting information and confessions from criminals. A noble house or armed company may employ a full-time Torturer for the rare occasions when someone must be made to talk or to confess. Accomplished Torturers will know not only how to compel their subjects but also how to avoid leaving any tell-tale marks. They often have the Flaw of "Eerie" (p. 54) as they go on about the particulars of their craft.

Include with: First Aid; Intimidation; Psychology; Torture

Trader
(Ye Gu)

With the rise of the middle class and the popularity of coinage, the free Trader has become a common occupation. A Trader can be a one-man trading operation or the owner of a complex caravan complete with bodyguards, scouts, and outriders. Successful Traders know how to assess the value of goods and how to persuade people to buy.

Include with: Bribery; Fast-Talk; Haggling; Trade: Teamster

Tradesman
(Bashi)

Similar to a Craftsman (above), a Tradesman is more likely to interact with others on a regular basis. Craftsmen usually quote a price for a task and then work long hours in seclusion. A Tradesman often takes to the road, sent from one place to another, and overseeing a gang of lesser-skilled workers.

Include with: (Trade skill of choice); Ciphering; Literacy; Psychology

Wizards (Shu)

Those who would study magic should have a high Mind (to pass Casting Tests) and a high Will (to increase their Magic Points.)

These Careers are Wizardly Careers, and thus they increase Magic Points (p. 191). Wizardly Careers are more difficult to improve than other skills, requiring teachers or books. (See the *Experience* chapter, p. 253).

Dào Shih:
Teacher of Ways

Wise men observed how nature interacted with itself and thus became enlightened. Their belief is that all sentient beings should live in harmony with nature instead of dominating or destroying it. But then, true Dào Shih do not go out of their way to tell others their own beliefs.

Include with: Literacy; Lore: Magic; Meditation

This Career grants you the following five Spell Lists:

- *Ghost Way of Earth* (p. 205)
- *Ghost Way of Fire* (p. 206)
- *Ghost Way of Metal* (p. 206)
- *Ghost Way of Water* (p. 206)
- *Ghost Way of Wood* (p. 206)

While not necessary, you will probably want the Gift of "Belongings: *Book of the Way*" (p. 263).

Fah Shih:
Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Also known as "Change Wizards," Fah Shih observe how nature interacts with itself, and they use that knowledge to their advantage. Unlike a Dàoist Wizard, who conjures and manipulates the material world, a Fah Shih's magic is more subtle, and their works can often be explained away by coincidence.

Include with: Literacy; Lore: Magic; Meditation

This Career grants you the Spell List of the *Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws* (p. 203).

While not necessary, you will probably want the Gift of "Belongings: *Book of Changes*" (p. 263).

Shén Qing:
Being of Supreme Purity

The most ancient form of magic, the art practiced by Beings of Purity existed before written text. Purity Magic works with personal nature, either enriching the pure or punishing the wicked.

Include with: Literacy; Lore: Magic; Meditation

This Career grants you the Spell List of the *Being of Generative Purity* (p. 209).

While not necessary, you will probably want the Gift of "Belongings: *Book of Vanishing Heavenly Stem*" (p. 263).

Warriors (Wu)

High Body and Speed Traits are highly recommended for those who want to pursue these Careers. There is more to these occupations than just hacking and slashing, however — professional warriors will be wary of dangerous situations, will know the tricks of their dangerous trades, and will know how to get along with others who have endured the rigors of dire combat.

Bodyguard (Baobiao)

Persons of wealth and influence are targets for robbery, kidnapping, and other sorts of mischief — and there is a certain prestige in having a retinue of personal guardians. A good Bodyguard is not only a skilled protector but can also spot would-be assassins and ambushers by seeing through disguises and through other ruses.

Include with: Observation; Psychology; Shield; Sixth Sense

Bounty Hunter (Wu Xunluo)

When the law fails to apprehend criminals and bandits, people post rewards for their capture or their demise. Where there are bounties to be collected, the Bounty Hunter is not far away. Skilled Bounty Hunters will know not only how to find their quarry in wild places and secret hideaways but will also be able to get others to gossip about their whereabouts.

Include with: (Combat Skill of choice); Shadowing; Streetwise; Tracking

Escort (Biao Ke)

A professional Escort guards his target throughout duration of a given trip. Not only must they rely on their fighting abilities, they have to be able to negotiate their way out of troubles too. Nearly all Escorts belong to a guild, and every city has one or two branches.

Include with: (Combat Skill of choice), Hiking, Resolve, Sixth Sense

Explorer (Tan-Tze)

Despite the best efforts of the men and women of Zhongguo, cities and locations are still lost in the mist of time. Tan-tze travels cross-country in search of lost cities and mysterious locations. There are also those who keep tabs on hostile army movements.

Include with: (Lore of choice), Hiking, Resolve, Survival

Hunter (Lieren)

With little more than their own wits and skill, Hunters try to carve a living off the land, taking down game and foraging when they can. Hunters differ from Rangers (p. 44) in that the latter are agents of the law or other higher powers, whereas the Hunter is looking for subsistence. A Hunter who hunts game in places proscribed by law is a "Poacher."

Include with: Bow; Stealth; Survival; Tracking

Jailer (Wu Jian)

The concept of incarcerating people for long periods of time at the expense of the state is unknown to the people of Zhongguo. If people are held in cells and dark dungeons, it is either to await trial or ransom. Jailers see a variety of people and rarely see them for long. As part of their Career Trait, they can also recognize official documents such as mandates and pardons, but their knowledge of Law is seldom very advanced.

Include with: Intimidation; Observation; Psychology; Wrestling

Lancer (Ge Shou)

Lancers are elite soldiers who are able to leap off fast moving chariots or wagons and take advantage of the speed to strike at their enemies. They are unlikely to have strong instincts for self-preservation and often have the Flaw of "Overconfident" (p. 59).

Include with: Chariot-Driving; Resolve; Spear; Thrown Spear

Marine (Wu Shi)

Warriors who specialize in combat from ships, Marines are emerging as a new fighting force as warship technology improves. They are expected to be able to fight in ship-to-ship boarding actions, as well as maritime landings. Marines who loot and pillage for personal profit are called "Pirates."

Include with: (Combat Skill of choice); Carousing; Resolve; Swimming

Mercenary (Shougu)

Also known as a "free-sword," "white-shield," or "sword for hire," the Mercenary finds employment among the merchant class and wherever nobles find a shortage of good fighting men. Mercenaries peddle their superior fighting skills and equipment to those who need them.

Include with: (Combat Skill of choice); Haggling; Resolve; Shield

Outrider (Wu Tan)

In a large land-bound caravan or organized fighting force, one or more Outriders travel ahead, spotting for ambushes and reporting what lies ahead. Outriders are usually nobility or well-to-do, as they are expected to furnish their own riding mounts. The better Outriders can identify coats-of-arms and other identifying markings of noble houses and organizations.

Include with: Heraldry; Navigation; Observation; Riding

Ranger (Wu Soubu)

Also known as "foresters" or "game wardens," Rangers wander over the unruly countryside, often away from roads and civilized areas, to arrest poachers and to rout bandits. Typical Rangers are solitary folk who spend long periods of time alone, although it is not unusual for a band of Rangers to travel together to guard against ambushes. Most Rangers will have the Gift of "Local Investiture" (see page 53).

Include with: Bow; Hiking; Navigation; Tracking

Road Warden (Wu Dianyuzhang)

To keep the roads secure from highwaymen and brigands, Road Wardens sweep through in regular patrols. In days of yore, all Wardens were of high birth and could administer "low justice" to the ruffians they encountered. However, in modern times the Wardens are often commoners — the law obliges them to take offenders to trial. Since transporting live prisoners to court is not only tedious but also dangerous, many Road Wardens are only too willing to lash out in "self-defense" to dissuade criminals.

Include with: Observation; Riding; Tactics; Tracking

Scout (Wu Zhen)

Necessary for armed forces and for traveling caravans, the Scout travels ahead on foot, and often alone, into unknown lands and unknown danger. Lightly armed and lightly armored to avoid fatigue, and often alone and without allies or backup, the good Scout sallies forth, surveys the land, and returns with haste to report what lies beyond the horizon before anyone hostile even takes notice.

Include with: Cartography; Hiking; Navigation; Observation

Soldier (Bingshi)

For the ambitious, a career in the army can be a quick ticket to fame, fortune, and glory … or to an ignominious demise on some forgotten battlefield. In the lands of Zhongguo, Soldiers are an omnipresent force, a reminder to all that any peace is only transitory before some new and dreadful skirmish.

Include with: Hiking; Resolve; Shield; Spear

Spirit Hunter (Liè Líng)

Hunting scofflaws, criminals, and other scoundrels is no trivial task — but pursuing wizards commands a danger far beyond what any petty scofflaw has to offer. Despite the risk (or perhaps because of it), there are bounty-hunters who specialize in hunting wizards, who are colloquially known as "Spirit Hunters." A Spirit Hunter may not personally bear all wizards animosity; they are just people who are trained to deal with rogue spell-casters. In fact, a few of the most successful Spirit Hunters have a secondary career as some kind of Wizard!

Include with: Lore: Magic; Observation; Resolve; Sixth Sense

Toll Keeper (Hun Tongxingshui)

As a fee for building and maintaining the roads, and keeping them free of vandals and bandits, the road's owner often sets up toll-booths at key intervals. Toll schedules are often very complex, with extra fees for wagons, goods carried, persons of note, etc. — a Toll Keeper is expected to be able to assess the value of goods being transported and to know the appropriate tolls to levy. Many Toll Keepers are not above "shaking down" the richer travelers for a few extra coins to keep for themselves.

Include with: Bribery; Haggling; Lore: Law; Observation

Tomb Defender (Líng-mù Shì)

Since the passing of first sage king, a group of loyal followers has existed, dedicated to maintaining the final resting-place from deterioration. This tradition has passed down to each generation. Others have taken up similar positions for departed kings. However, during the dusk of the Shang dynasty, certain tombs were raided for their wealth. Líng-mù Shì had to learn to be both brave and secretive in defending and hiding their trusts.

Include with: (Combat Skill of choice); Lore: History; Observation; Resolve

Vagrant Warrior (Wu-Xià)

Xià wander across Zhongguo in search of perfection as warriors. Their goal: to become so skilled with weapons that they become an extension of their body. Though each individual Vagrant-Warrior may favor a certain weapon, the greatest among them aspire to become master of all.However, in their pursuit of excellence, they often become distracted by fighting to right wrongs and by defending the weak from the strong.

This Career is a Requirement for learning Wu Xià Shu (p. 182).

Include with: Axe; Fencing; Flail; Mace; Polearm; Spear; Staff; Sword

Watchman (Kanshouzhe)

Keepers of a thankless and demanding job, Watchmen police the city in the dark of night and in all sorts of weather, good or bad, keeping the peace and laying down the law of the land. Watchmen are trained to fight together, as militiamen, should there be a siege or attack by an organized band of pirates or other such criminals.

Include with: Brawling; Intimidation; Observation; Tactics

Yeoman (Ganbu)

The stereotypical view of warriors is that they think of nothing beyond the moment, that they thirst for nothing but violence and the shedding of blood. The Yeoman is very different — one who is no stranger to the arts of war, but also one capable of running a household or armory, or taking on some other position of power. Yeomen make a point of knowing who wields what sort of power and are constantly looking for ways to improve their own social advantage.

Include with: Administration; Bribery; Literacy; Resolve

Working Class (Yu)

While not glamorous, these Careers are the most common to be found throughout Zhongguo. A Player-Character from humble origins might have one of these. More likely, the PCs will hire Non-Player Characters with these Careers.

Many of these folks work long hours with their hands, and will have respectable Body Traits.

Boatman (Yu zhou)

River travel is faster and smoother than road travel. Similar to Coachmen, Boatmen take passengers and their cargo up and down stream. Since town gates are policed, and bridges are watched, criminals and other surreptitious types often seek travel by water, and a wise Boatman chooses passengers carefully.

Include with: Boating; Observation; Streetwise; Swimming

Coachman (Yu Keche)

The better-traveled roads have regular coaches that traverse them. Coach travel is less fatiguing than riding or walking, especially if one has a lot of baggage. With their lack of suspension and solid wooden wheels, the ride is often bumpy and interrupted by thrown wheels and broken axles, which a better Coachman must know how to fix. The richest folk own their own private coaches and will seek out a steady driver.

Include with: Animal Handling; Geography; Observation; Trade: Carpentry

Entertainer (Yu Kuandai)

Acrobats, clowns, jugglers, raconteurs, prestidigitators, dancers . . . there are a variety of Entertainers to be found throughout the land. Some Entertainers are itinerant wanderers, going from place to place and "passing the hat"; often such Entertainers are distracting a crowd while a confederate picks the pockets of distracted audience members. A few fortunate ones become the personal Entertainers of rich patrons and become known as "jesters" or "fools."

Include with: (Entertainment Skill of Choice); Fast-Talk; Psychology; Streetwise

Farmer (Dian)

On the large estates of the noble houses, Farmers raise the crops that feed the people of Zhongguo. There are innumerable folk tales of the young Farmer who leaves teary-eyed parents behind to go forth into the world to seek out a destiny of fame, fortune and glory.

Include with: Animal Handling; Hiking; Trade: Farming; Weather Sense

Fisher (Yufu)

Throughout the rivers and lakes, many Fishers cast their nets to earn their livelihood. In the larger cities, fish markets are crowded and prosperous, and competition is fierce. In the villages, things are quieter but the hours are often longer.

Include with: Boating; Swimming; Trade: Fishing; Weather Sense

Herdsman (Yu Beiliao)

Livestock in Zhongguo are often difficult to manage. One has to range over large amounts of territory as the meadows become fully grazed. Stray animals have to be rounded up. Predators and poachers may try to steal choice animals. A Herdsman leads a solitary, somewhat dull life.

Include with: Animal Handling; Observation; Tracking; Weather Sense

Messenger (Xinchai)

In the absence of regular mail service, private Messengers are necessary for carrying mail and important documents from one place to another. The poorest Messengers work only within the city or between small towns. More important ones may even have their own bodyguards.

Include with: Geography; Heraldry; Hiking; Observation

Peddler (Yu Fan)

The Peddler is a humble craftsman, one who makes clothes, foodstuffs, or other goods and then brings them into a town or city to sell. Most Peddlers own nothing more than their cart and their tools and struggle to make a living.

Include with: (Trade skill of choice); Animal Handling; Haggling; Streetwise

Sailor (Yu Shi)

Shipping trade is abundant in the ports of Zhongguo, and it can only increase as ships and navigation equipment continue to improve. Sailors spend a lot of time at sea and are often eager to cram three months worth of revelry into the three short days they spend in a port. Most Sailors are hard workers, not warriors — see the Marine (p. 43) for a different maritime career.

Include with: Boating; Carousing; Navigation; Swimming

Servant (Yu Pu)

Found wherever there are rich people, Servants do a lot of menial tasks around the household. They overhear a lot of gossip among the nobility. Servants differ in their official job titles — maids, butlers, stewards, kitchen staff, attendants — and will have an often have one or two other Skills as a specialized trade.

Include with: Etiquette; Fast-Talk; Heraldry; Psychology

Stevedore (Kûlì)

The ports of call in Zhongguo are in constant need of strong backs to load and unload the ships or caravans. Being no strangers to long hours and hardship, Stevedores sometimes work as hired muscle in gangs or for other unsavory activities.

Include with: Brawling; Carousing; Resolve; Swimming

Trapper (Yu Juantao)

Numerous snakes and lizards can be found in the countryside, and their hides are in demand for armor, for clothing, and for other sundries. A Trapper works by setting different kinds of traps over a large area and checking them on a regular basis, often staying away from civilization for months at a time. Only Trappers who work in the most desolate, lonely regions of the land need not worry about encountering bandits or other hostility; any Trapper Player Character is advised to learn a Combat Skill.

Include with: Haggling; Hiking; Survival; Traps

GIFTS & FLAWS

What makes one different from another? What are the special abilities or particular hindrances of a given person? In *Jadeclaw* game terms, the things that make someone different from someone else are *Gifts* and *Flaws*. A Gift costs Character points, and is generally considered to add ability or capacity; likewise, a Flaw gives back points, but it limits the character in some way. Gifts & Flaws are usually a simple quality (like "Nobility" or Sure-Footed"), or they have a very narrow range (Such as "Strength," which varies from +1 to +3). For more variable, generalized abilities, see Special Traits, p. 61.

Gifts

Gifts are special abilities that your character has which set them apart from others; in a similar way, Flaws are failings or handicaps that hinder your character in ways others are not.

No starting character may spend more than 10 points on Personal, Social, and Esoteric Gifts. Likewise, *no starting character may take more than -10 points in Internal & External Flaws.* These limits do not apply to Racial Gifts and Flaws. (If you want to improve a Racial Gift even more, see p. 255)

Personal Gifts

These are Gifts that are particular to individuals, but are common enough that nearly anyone can possess them (unlike Racial Gifts, which are always exclusive to particular Races.)

Ambidexterity (2 points)

You can use either hand without the "off hand" penalty. You will be able to fight with two weapons better (see "Strike Tandem", p. 138.)

This gift confers no advantage to your prehensile tail or trunk, if you have one — see *Multidexterity*, p. 48.

Extra Hit Point (4 or 8 points)

You are certainly made of tough stuff! For 4 points, you have one Extra Hit Point. For 8 points, you have two Extra Hit Points. (On the character sheet, draw an "extra" circle or two near the label of "Hit Points.")

This Extra Hit Point "comes off the top," effectively giving you extra Wounds you can suffer before having to roll vs. Unconsciousness or Death.

Extra Move (1 to 8 points)

Your Move is greater. For every 1 point, your Dash increases by 1 pace, and your Stride increases by ¼ pace.

Extra Trait (3 or 7 points)

Your character may start with another Trait, in addition to the starting 6. For 3 points, you get an extra d4 Trait. For 7 points, you get an extra d6 Trait. If you buy this Trait at character creation, you can "mix that die" in with your starting pool. These Extra Traits can be new Careers, or they can be Special Traits (p. 61)

> **Example:** Bai Zhao's player buys the Gift of Extra Trait to give Bai Zhao an extra d6. This costs 7 points. Bai Zhao's starting Trait dice are now d12, d10, d8, d8, d6, d6, and d4.

Since the most you can spend on Personal Gifts is 10 points, you may buy up to three Extra Traits (three d4s for 9 points). Note that the *Jadeclaw* Character sheet includes Extra Trait Columns.

Increased Trait (4 or 6 points)

You may increase the level of one of your six starting Traits. To increase a d4, d6, d8, or d10 one level costs 4 points. To increase a d12 Trait to d12 & d4 costs 6 points.

> **Example:** In-Leng's player buys the Gift of Increased Trait to boost In-Leng's d4 Trait to a d6. This costs 4 points. In-Leng's starting Trait dice are now d12, d10, d8, d8, d6 and d6.

Keen Ears
(1 point)

Your ears are unusually sensitive. Listen Tests (p. 113) are easier for you. You can hear sounds even in the ultrasonic range.

Keen Eyes
(1 point)

Your eyes are unusually sensitive. Spot Tests (p. 117) are easier for you.

Keen Nose
(1 point)

Your nose is unusually sensitive. Smell Tests (p. 116) are easier for you.

Luck
(3 points)

You are more fortunate than the average person is. You may "use your Luck" once per Scene. The Gift of Luck allows you to modify die rolls that *directly involve your character,* for rolls that you yourself make, or that others make in opposition to you, or that others make for your benefit.

You use your Luck *immediately* after a die roll is made that involves your character. You may take one die from that roll and have it be rolled two more times, choosing one roll from the three that is the most favorable to you. In the spirit of good role-playing, players and Game Hosts are encouraged to think up some "lucky" circumstance to explain the changes in the roll.

> **Example 1:** Huan tries to shoot a bandit with his hunting bow. He rolls a d6 and scores a 3; the bandit rolls his Dodge of d12 and scores an 11. Huan decides to use his Luck, forcing the bandit to roll two more times. The bandit rolls a 2 and an 8. Huan decides that the 2 shall stand. By chance, the bandit's expert dodge is thwarted when the arrow ricochets at an odd angle — what luck! Play continues with Huan scoring 3 vs. 2 and thus hitting the bandit.
>
> **Example 2:** Zheng He is dealt a severe blow. The Damage Dice of d12, d10, d8, and d4 come up 4, 9, 7, and 2. Zheng He may use his luck for force any one of those dice to be re-rolled, so he chooses the d10 that scored 9. It is rolled twice more, coming up 6 and 10. Zheng He chooses the 6. He must now resist Damage against 4, 6, 7, and 2. The Game Host decides that Zheng He twisted at just the right moment to ward off some of the impact of the blow — more out of dumb luck than actual skill.
>
> **Example 3:** Ji Lung tries to scramble up a rocky cliff, using his Climbing of d6 vs. a difficulty of d10. Ji Lung scores a 3 and the difficulty roll comes up 4. Ji Lung uses his luck on his own die, and rolls twice more — scoring 2 and then 1. Ji Lung takes the 3, the best out of all three rolls, but is still unable to climb the cliff. Apparently, luck is not enough.

Using Luck in Game Play

The purpose of Luck is to give PCs and major NPCs a last line of defense against certain death — a safety net to keep the die rolls from becoming overwhelming and limit the chances of a good role-playing session being spoiled by plain bad luck. *The Game Host is the final arbiter on when Luck may be used, or what Luck may be used for.* Remember that Luck is a "personal" advantage. If Shouhan strikes Ji Lung with a rice flail, Zheng He is not involved and thus cannot use his Luck to affect either party. Likewise, the Game Host should feel free to veto gratuitous uses of Luck.

Remember that Luck is limited to once a Scene — which usually means only once per fight. A player who has to use his Luck to avert disaster should become aware that his "Luck has run out" for this particular scene and should be more careful as a result. Game Hosts are encouraged to give their major NPC personalities the Gift of Luck — and to announce to the players when the villain's "Luck has run out." The Gift of Luck is what separates a generic "cannon fodder" NPC grunt from the major players in the game.

Multidexterity
(1 point)
Requirement: the Gift of Ambidexterity (2 points, p. 47*)*

You can use any hand, prehensile foot, prehensile tail, or prehensile trunk without the "off hand" penalty.

Prodigy
(6, 7, 8, 9, or 10 points)

You have a skill level beyond that of normal starting characters. You may start with one skill at Level 6, 7, 8, 9, or 10, at the cost of a like number of points. (The cost of the skill is included with the cost of this Gift — do *not* pay points for the Skill again!)

> **Example 1:** Liang Rongkai of the Ma-Zhou fights like he was born with a sword in his hand. He takes the Gift of Prodigy at Level 10 in Sword skill. He starts play with Sword skill at Level 10 (2d12). The total cost to Liang is 10 points.

The advantage of this Gift is that it is the *only* way you can begin the game with a skill over Level 5. The disadvantage of the Gift of Prodigy is that you are still limited to a maximum of 10 points of Personal, Social, & Esoteric Gifts, and the Gift of Prodigy *does* count against that total.

> **Example 2:** Pan Enrong begins the game with the Gift of Prodigy: Bow at Level 8, which costs her 8 points. Next, she wants to spend her points on Belongings (1 point), Investiture (1 point), and Sure-Footed(1 point). Unfortunately, the 8 points she spent on Bow count against her limit of 10 points on non-Racial Gifts, so she may only buy the Belongings and the Investiture. The points she spent on Claws do not count, because that was her Racial Gift.
>
> **Example 3:** Lin Tse also wants Bow skill. However, he has spent 7 points on Extra Trait: d6, and 3 points on Luck — That's 10 points on non-Racial Gifts. Therefore, the most he can spend on Bow skill is 5 points, since to spend more than that he would need the Gift of Prodigy.

Robustness
(2, 5, or 7 points)

You're tougher and hardier than most folks your size; your Soak Dice are higher by one to three levels. You cannot take this Gift if you have the "Frail" Flaw (p. 55)

"Robust" Gift	*Point Value*
Robust +1: one increase in Soak Level, +1 Size	**2 points**
Very Robust +2: two increases in Soak Level, +1 Size	**5 points**
Incredibly Robust +3: three increases in Soak Level, +1 Size	**7 points**

Strength
(2, 5, or 7 points)

You're stronger than the typical person of your Body level. Each level increases your Lift (p. 19) and your Strength Dice by 1 level. You cannot take this Gift if you have the "Weak" Flaw. (p. 56)

Gift	*Point Value*
Strong +1: +1 to Lift, one increase in Strength Level, +1 Size	**2 points**
Very Strong +2: +2 to Lift, two increases in Strength Level, +2 Size	**5 points**
Incredibly Strong +3: +3 to Lift, three increases in Strength Level, +3 Size	**7 points**

> **Example:** Manshuo has a Body of Level 2, for a d6. He also has the Gift of Incredible Strength (+3). His Lift is increased from +2 to +5, and his Strength Dice is increased from d6 to d12.

Sure-Footed
(1 point)

You have remarkably good balance. You may ignore any Penalties caused by bad footing.

Racial Gifts

These are Gifts that practically everyone of that particular race has. They are considered Gifts because not every Race has them. Characters who are not of a particular race usually cannot start with these Gifts unless they have a very unusual background and they receive special permission from the Game Host.

Armor
(3 points for d4, 7 points for d6)

Your skin is covered in extra hard plating or armor. Your natural armor can be layered with other armor, making you one tough customer indeed. Your "natural" Armor Dice are included with your Soak Dice and other Armor Dice.

For an Armor die of d4, pay 3 points. For an Armor die of d6, pay 7 points.

Barbed Spines
(2 points)

You have barbed spines all over your backside, also known as quills. Your spines lie flat against you like very thick hair, but will stand up and "bristle" when you are agitated or in combat. When in combat, your spines stand on end, and you may use the following abilities:

- You can use your Spines as a Natural Weapon, for your Strength and d6 Damage.
- If a foe Grapples you from behind, he is treated to an attack that automatically hits. Roll your Body Dice and Race Dice vs. your foe's Armor and Soak Dice, as a Damage Roll.
- If a foe attacks you with Natural Weapons such as claws, teeth, fists, etc., roll your Race Dice as additional Cover Dice against any such attacks. If your Spines Cover Dice are the ones that thwart the attack, your foe suffers Damage; roll your Body Dice and Race Dice vs. your foe's Armor and Soak Dice.
- You can remove your spines by hand and throw them at your foes, using the Thrown Spines skill (p. 74). Note that the spines do *not* shoot out from your body automatically. Like arrows, your spines are barbed and will get stuck in foes, being very painful until removed. You throw as many quills per day as the sum of your Race Dice. For example, if you have a Race Die of d6, you may throw 6 quills per day. Thrown spines require a Lift of +1 and cause your Strength and d6 Damage; see p. 133 for throwing rules.

Barbels
(1 point)

You have a mane of hair and long whiskers that are unusually sensitive to supernatural vibrations.

You may attempt to Scry Magic vs. 2d10, using your Mind and Augury ("Scry Test", p. 115).

Claws
(1 point)

You have sharp, nasty claws on your fingers that may be used to rend your enemies for Damage, as a Weapon. Depending on your race, these claws may be retractable. You have claws on both hands and both feet unless something happens to you to change that.

Extra Wings
(1 point)
Requirement: the Gift of Flight (below)

You have a pair of Wings separate from your arms. You do not have to flap your arms to fly — you may use a weapon two-handed, or carry something in your arms.

Flight
(1 point per stone of Size)

You have winged arms that allow you to fly. Your Flight Move is the sum of your Racial Dice Size and your Speed Dice.

> **Example:** Ping Chi'ing-chao the Swallow has a Body Trait of Level 4 (d10), and the "Frail" flaw. He has a Size of 9, so he must pay 9 points for the Gift of Flight. His Speed is d6, and his Swallow Trait is d8, so his Flying Move is 14.

Encumbrance subtracts from your Flight move, as usual. In addition, the Encumbrance limit of "maximum dice" limits the effective size of your Speed Dice and Race Dice.

Flying characters must maintain a minimum speed in the air or they will "stall" and fall out of the air. *Your Stall Speed is your Body Level.* You must move at least that many paces every round to remain in the air.

If your Flying "Stride" is equal to or greater than your Stall, you'll have few problems in the air. Otherwise, you'll have to Dash or Run to remain in the air.

> **Example 1:** Wenkuai the Crane has a Body Trait of Level 2 (d6), a Speed Trait of Level 3 (d8), and a Crane Trait at Level 4 (d10). Her Stall is 2.
>
> Her Flight Movement is a Dash of 18 paces and a Stride of 4 ½ paces. She can Stride and remain in the air, and thus can still fly and do normal combat maneuvers.
>
> **Example 2:** Xiaotiao has a Body Trait of Level 4 (d10), a Speed Trait of Level 2 (d6), and a Crane Trait of Level 3 (d8). His Stall is 4.
>
> His Flight Movement is a Dash of 14 paces and a stride of 3 ½ paces. That's not enough of a Stride to keep him in the air — he'll have to do Moves or Full Moves to stay in the air.
>
> **Example 3:** From the example above, Wenkuai chooses her equipment, which winds up weighing about 7 stone. Her Lift is 2, so that's 5 levels of Encumbrance, which subtracts -5 from her Move. It also reduces her Maximum Dice to d4 — she no longer calculates her Move from the sum of Speed d8 and Crane d10, but Speed d4 and Crane d4. Her Move is only 8 minus the 5 Encumbrance, which leaves her with (8-5=) 3 paces and a Stride of ¾ paces.
>
> Now she's down to a Dash of 3 and a Stride of ¾ paces. Her Stride not enough to keep her in the air anymore, so to stay aloft she must choose combat maneuvers that give her greater movement.

If you want to gain altitude, it costs 2 paces of forward movement to climb one pace. For losing altitude, you can lose one pace of altitude for each pace you move forwards. Characters who are sent Reeling lose 12 paces of altitude every Rank until they Recover. Characters who fall may suffer Damage — see p. 151.

You must use both your arms to fly —if one of your arms becomes crippled, you cannot fly. You may carry things one-handed, but you cannot use two-handed weapons and fly at the same time — you may only use Light, Easy weapons or Medium, Awkward weapons. (The Gift of "Extra Wings" (p. 50) removes these restrictions.)

Hooves
(1 point)

Your feet are sheathed in a hard substance. You do not need to wear boots or other footgear. You can kick your foes, using your Hooves as a Weapon.

Horns
(1 point)

You have one or more horns that may be used to gore your enemies for Damage, as a Weapon. Some races shed their horns on a regular cycle, whereas others do not — this depends upon your race.

Howl
(1 point)

You can let loose with a loud howl that will carry over long distances. You can communicate simple messages by variations of your howling — the Game Host may call for tests of your Race Trait.

In order to hear a Howl, one must pass a Listen Test (p.113). The volume of a Howl varies on distance: within 72 paces, a Howl is a *Loud* Noise. From up to a half-league away, a Howl is a *Normal* Noise. From up to seven leagues away over plains (less in forests or mountains), a Howl is a *Soft Noise*. The person trying to hear your Howl includes *your* Race Trait with their own Listen Dice.

Night Vision
(1 point)

You have the ability to see very well in the dark. Ignore one Penalty of bad visibility due to darkness.

Ophidian
(1 point)

You have the body of a snake. You are automatically Sure-Footed (see above), but you also lack feet. You cannot kick or make Kick Attacks. While you can be knocked down, it is easier for you to get back to a standing position. (See "Change Position," p. 136.) You can use your body for Grapple attacks (p. 140).

Prehensile Feet
(1 point)

You can use your feet as hands without thumbs. When sitting down or doing a handstand, you can use your feet as hands. Since your feet have no "thumbs," per se, you will suffer at least one Penalty to rolls involving only your feet — this includes To-Hit Rolls and Parries; this Penalty can be eliminated with the Gift of Multidexterity (p. 48).

You gain one Bonus when Climbing if your feet are free. In some situations, your feet can be used as grabbers for Grappling foes (p. 140).

Prehensile Tail
(2 points)

You have a prehensile tail. It isn't as dexterous to use as a fingered hand with a thumb, but it is still good for grabbing things, holding things, etc. The following rules apply to a Prehensile Tail:

- Your tail is treated as an "off hand" with one Penalty unless you are Multidextrous (p. 48). Your tail may only use one-handed weapons, either "Light" or "Medium" (p. 129). You cannot use your tail in co-operation with your hands for melee weapons, but you can use your tail to help you load and fire missile weapons.
- Your tail can be used as an "extra hand" when you need a hand free. In particular, your tail can be used to Grapple (p. 140)

> **Example:** No Zim Ta the monkey has a Prehensile Tail. His Lift is +5 and his Strength is Level 5 (d12). He may use a Half-Stone Weapon in his tail as a Light, Easy Weapon, or a Three-Quarter-Stone Sword as a Medium, Awkward Weapon.

Teeth
(1 point)

You have sharp, nasty teeth that may be used to bite your enemies for Damage, as a Weapon. You may Bite to Grapple as an attack (p. 158).

Trunk
(1 point)

You have a long, prehensile proboscis for a nose. You can use your Trunk as an extra grasper for Grapple attacks (p. 158). While you can hold weapons in your Trunk, you will suffer at least one Penalty to rolls involving only your Trunk — this includes To-Hit Rolls and Parries; this Penalty can be eliminated with the Gift of Multidexterity (p. 48).

Tusks
(1 point)

You have sharp, protruding teeth that may be used to gore your enemies for Damage, as a Weapon.

Social Gifts

These are Gifts that are not improved abilities inherent to your person but rather only have meaning when you are compared to other people. Social Gifts include improved wealth, noble status, and reputation.

Belongings
(1 to 4 points)

You start play with more stuff than most people. For each level you have in Belongings, you may start play with one *expensive* item. You may only take up to 4 points worth of Belongings —see *Wealth*, p. 52.

> **Example:** Gan Weiru wants to start play with a suit of metal armor and a fine sword; which are both "expensive" items. His player takes the Belongings Gift twice, for a cost of 2 points.

If you have the flaw of Poverty (p. 56),then this Gift works differently. Impoverished characters may normally start with only Cheap equipment. For 1 point of Belongings, they may start with an average-cost item. For 2 points, they may start with either two average-cost items or one expensive item.

> **Example:** Meng Shangli is but a poor sailor aboard a small coastal fishing boat. Though poor in spirit, he is a charitable soul, and befriends the captain of the vessel. One grim day, savage pirates destroy their ship, and the crew is put out of work. The elderly captain remembers Shangli's kindness and gives him a parting gift — a war-mount. The character Shangli has the Flaw of Poverty, but

his player has spent 2 points on Belongings so that he can start with an expensive animal to bear him.

Good Reputation (varies; see below)

Word of you has gotten around, and for the better. The value of your Good Reputation is proportional to *how often it affects play*, and *how strongly it affects others' opinions of you.*

Rare: Your Reputation is only known by a select group of people, such as "All Those of the Order of the Lung Jiang" or "All silk merchants." Or perhaps you're not easily identifiable by your looks.. In general, someone who knows your reputation shows up about every other play session. **1 point**

Uncommon: Your Reputation is known by a fairly large group of people, such as "All wizards" or "All court officials." Or maybe you have some easily identifying mark, such as a scar or unusual mode of dress that easily identifies you. You may even have a phenomenal level of skill that, once displayed, makes your identity known to all. At this frequency, about one person every play session recognizes you and your reputation. **2 points**

Common: You have a Reputation and almost everyone knows it, or will know it shortly. With a Common Reputation, there's no way to hide who you are short of elaborate disguises. **3 points**

Moderate: Most people will be nice and polite to you, and at least defer to you in your "area of expertise." **no additional points**

Strong: Your Reputation is really impressive. It may be that others are in awe of your skill, or strongly intimidated by your appearance. **+1 point**

Extreme: Your Reputation is unique to you and you alone. You're the type of character the bards sing about. **+2 points**

Example 1: The skilled thief Han Bonu is known to always follow through with the jobs that she accepts, or to return the entire price she accepted to do the job in the first place. This is a Good Reputation to have. However, only a few people know of Bonu, and fewer still know her reputation (Uncommon). Her thoroughness is good for positive reactions on the most part, and while it may be rare in these trying times, it's hardly unique (Strong). Bonu's player writes: "Good Reputation: Finishes a Job or Gives a Full Refund (Uncommon, Strong) 3 points" on her character sheet.

Example 2: Yiyahuanya is a ruthless, remorseless fighter, whose sword arm never tires and whose blade never fails to meet its mark. His Reputation is "Good" in the fact that his opponents are more likely to cower in fear or flee rather than dare stand against him, and he likes it that way. Yiyahuanya is over 24 stone in size and an elephant, so word gets around quickly (Common). Lesser men flee, and even those strong of heart experience a flutter in their chests at the mention of his name (Extreme). Yiyahuanya's player writes: "Good Reputation: Incredible Fighter (Common, Extreme): 5 points" on his character sheet.

As a rule, Reputations influence minor NPCs a lot more strongly than they do the major ones. For example, even though Yiyahuanya is known as a warrior of singular prowess, such a Reputation won't likely dissuade He Weinu, who fancies himself without compare (and thus has his own Good Reputation to look out for!) Also, while Lu Ximing may know she's no match for Yiyahuanya in a sword-to-sword fight, she knows she has the upper hand when it comes to a battle of wits.

Nobility (1, 2, or 3 points)

You have noble rank, either by birth or by virtue of wealth. The cost of this Gift varies.

***Gùi Rén:* Noble Blood (1 point):** You can claim lineage to one of the many noble houses. You are entitled to "high justice"; that is, you may only be tried or detained by other nobles and not commoner police. Whether you have any extra wealth or not is a separate gift; you may be from an impoverished house on the wane after years of misrule and neglect, or you may be a "bastard" child whose assertion of noble blood has some validity.

***Shì:* Knighthood (2 points):** You are a recognized knight of a prominent social order, having been "knighted" in an official ceremony. You are entitled to "high justice," as above, when held accountable to the law. In addition, you may dispense "low justice," and try peasants, commoners, and persons of low birth for petty crimes.

***Nán-jué:* Baron (3 points):** You are definitely one of the ruling class. You can only be tried for crimes by other Barons or those of higher rank than yourself. In addition, you may dispense "high justice" to Knights, as such is your office by "divine right" or the like.

Ranks of nobility higher than "Baron" are not recommended for beginning *Jadeclaw* characters.

Wealth (5 points)

Your character is independently wealthy. They have has an estate, with land, holdings, and resources that they may draw upon on a regular basis. Your character may start the game with as many Expensive Items as the size of your largest Career Die, to a maximum of 12. For example, if you have the Career of Artisan at d10 and Shén Qing at d4, you may start the game with 10 Expensive Items.

With very rare exceptions, your character should have either Local Investiture (p. 53) or the Gift of Nobility (see above).

Esoteric Gifts

These are Gifts that are highly particular to people in specialized trades or lines of work, or who have special dispensation due to luck, fortuitous circumstances, etc. **You must ask your Game Host for permission before spending points on Esoteric Gifts.**

Four-Mirrors Armor (1 point)

You have, in your possession, one of the rare suits of Four-Mirrors Armor. This armor is similar to Twin-Shield Armor, only that the design includes four octagonal mirrors, on the front, back, and midriffs.

When you are wearing Four-Mirrors Armor, you have a Magic Resistance Die of d8 (see p. 63). If you already have Magic Resistance, you now have another d8.

The weight of the Four-Mirrors is dependent on your Size. (See "Armor," p. 85.) You cannot wear Four-Mirrors that are too light or too heavy for someone of your Size. Fitting someone else's armor to your body changes the armor's weight and requires Skilled Labor (see p. 91).

A character who puts on Four-Mirrors loses 8 Magic Points immediately (down to zero). These points cannot be regained until the Four-Mirrors are removed.

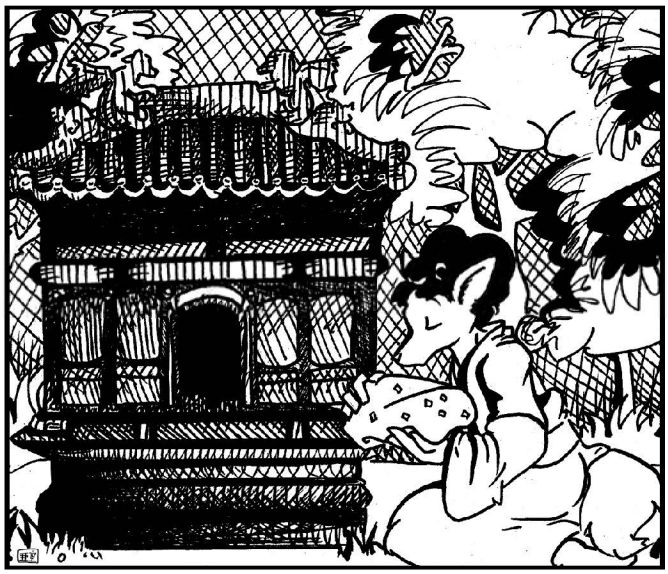
Hospitality (2 points)

Your character is a member of a charitable order of itinerant holy men or mercenary warriors. As such, you can often gain *hospitality* (free passage, room, and board) at temples, hostels, or other such places.

Local Investiture: (*place name*) (1 point)

You are a magistrate for a city or a town, such as the City of Cingui, the Town of Gou-Zhe, etc. Each Investiture is a separate gift, costing 1 point.

You are empowered to mete out "low justice" to others without noble birth in your jurisdiction. You can try criminals, write out writs of entry or writs of passage, and you can bear witness to notarize events. You may not mete out justice to Nobility unless you also have a high enough Gift of Nobility. Depending on the nature of your Investiture, you may have to pay a fee, or you may have some kind of Duty. The exact details are left up to the Game Host and Player.



Martial Art (varies – see p. 159)

Requirements vary by Martial Art

By virtue of special training, you have unusual prowess in combat situations. A Martial Art can grant you the ability to perform different Maneuvers, extra or new Defenses, new ways to Exploit the failings of your foes, new Special Results to claim when you Overwhelm them with your Skill, and even Advantages that astound and amaze lesser combatants.

Martial Arts are explained in greater detail in the *Martial Arts* chapter, page 159.

Flaws

A character may start with up to -10 points worth of External and Internal Flaws. (The Flaws acquired due to Race or Career do *not* count against these -10 points.) In exchange for getting more points, a character that is Flawed has less capability or opportunity than another who does not have the same Flaw.

Determining the Value of Flaws

Flaws have three aspects to them: *Frequency* (how often they show up in game-play), *Severity* (how bad they are for your character) and *Perspective* (how they relate to the character). Frequency and Severity determine how many points are redeemed. Perspective determines how the Flaws are role-played, whether they require an effort on the Player's part (*Internal*) or whether they are governed by game mechanics or by the Game Host (*External*).

Frequency and Severity of Flaws

Frequency of Flaw	*Point Value*
Rare: The Flaw shows up about every other play session.	**-1 point**
Uncommon: The Flaw shows up about once a play session.	**-2 points**
Common: The Flaw shows up about two or three times a play session	**-3 points**

Severity of Flaw	*Point Value*
Moderate: The Flaw limits your choices or options, but does not put you at any measurable risk, or the Flaw causes minor embarrassment.	**No change**
Strong: The Flaw often limits your options to one choice only or forces your character into situations to their detriment, or the Flaw causes major embarrassment.	**Extra -1 point**
Extreme: The Flaw renders it impossible for you to do certain things that others do with relative ease or it often risks your character's life.	**Extra -2 points**

External Flaws

External Flaws involve circumstances imposed "from without," outside your character. They represent either outside forces that you have little or no control over, such as a Bad Reputation, or they represent physical problems, such as Blindness.

External Flaws are characterized by their lengthy game mechanics and very specific descriptions of the way they work.

Bad Reputation (varies; -1 to -5 points)

People don't like you, or constantly judge you based on preconceived notions. You may have done something to deserve their scorn, or perhaps you are unfairly scandalized by rumors or even by a mistaken identity. Make up some sort of Bad Reputation and a story to go with it. (A Good Reputation is a Gift, not a Flaw... but there's no reason why you can't have both a Bad Rep and a Good Rep!)

The value of this Flaw depends on its Frequency and Severity.

Rare: Your reputation is only known by a select group of people, such as "All Those of the Order of the Lung Jiang" or "All Tax-Collectors." Or perhaps you're not easily identifiable by your looks or by your reputation. In general, someone who knows your reputation shows up about every other play session. -1 **point**

Uncommon: Your reputation is known by a fairly large group of people, such as "All wizards" or "All court officials." Or maybe you have some easily identifying mark, such as a scar or unusual mode of dress that easily identifies you. At this frequency, about one person every play session recognizes you and your reputation. -2 **points**

Common: You have a reputation and almost everybody knows it, or will know it shortly. With a Common reputation, there's no way to hide who you are short of elaborate disguises. -3 **points**

Moderate: People throw rotten fruit at you. **no additional points**

Strong: People throw rocks at you. **extra -1 point**

Extreme: People throw knives at you. **extra -2 points**

Example 1: Han Bonu is a member of a secret thieves' society known as the Midnight Blossom — as such, she wears a hairpin that identifies her status and position. Only a few know of the mystery that is the Blossom (Uncommon) and they treat them with fear and suspicion, but not outright hostility (Moderate). Bonu's player writes "Reputation: as member of the Midnight Blossom (Uncommon, Moderate) -2" on her character sheet.

Example 2: Shi Bingong, framed in the distant past for a crime he did not commit, was branded on his forehead with a mark that identifies him as a thief. This symbol is universally recognized throughout the civilized lands of the campaign (Common) and causes most people to fear and distrust him (Strong). Bingong's player writes "Reputation: branded as a thief (Common, Strong) -4" on his character sheet.

Example 3: Shen Longkuai is a legendary swordsman, renowned for his skill but also for his sense of honor, courage, and selflessness. Longkuai has both a Good Reputation as a "selfless and noble knight (Common, Moderate)" *and* a Bad Reputation as an "arrogant fool with an over-developed sense of honor (Common, Moderate)." It seems that everyone's heard of Longkuai, but everyone has heard something different. It's up to the Game Host which NPCs have heard what reputation(s) and which parts they believe.

Barbarian (Uncommon, Strong; -3 points)

You are an obvious outlander. You do not speak Zhonggese as your native language, and you will have to buy a separate Language skill (p. 69). Others will fear or distrust you, because of your odd customs, strange accent, and foreign appearance.

Not all foreigners need have the Barbarian flaw — just ones that stand out in the rigid society of Zhongguo.

Blind (Common, Extreme; -5 points)

You cannot see. You constantly suffer from an incurable State of Blindness (p. 339) Many simple tasks, such as reading a book or a map, are beyond you. Whenever you try to do something that involves sight, the Game Host may apply one Penalty or worse, or may rule such a thing impossible. On the positive side, your disability makes begging for alms easier as you play on people's sympathy.

Corpulent (varies; -1 to -5 points)

You are, shall we say, of "ample frame." Each level of the Flaw of Corpulence adds one stone of Encumbrance that you cannot get rid of.

De-clawed (Rare, Moderate; -1 points)

Requirement: must be a Race that normally has Claws

You have been de-clawed for some reason. In the world of *Jadeclaw*, being de-clawed carries a social stigma. Slaves are often de-clawed before being sold — perhaps you escaped such a grim fate. Criminals often have their claws removed to mark them as folk not to be trusted. Depending on the skill of the doctor who de-clawed you, your hands and feet may have barely noticeable changes, or they may be cruelly scarred.

Remove the Gift of Claws from your character sheet — at Character Creation, you do not spend the points on that Gift (thus, in effect, "freeing up"2 points).

Eerie (Uncommon, Moderate; -2 points)

There's something about you ... Maybe it's the way you walk, or your tone of voice, or some mode of dress, but it's definitely odd. Others are often put off by your weird countenance — some are frightened or uneasy, others are disgruntled. People are less likely to Gossip with you (p. 107) — the Game Host should raise the difficulty level. You stand out in a crowd.

Failing Health (Uncommon, Extreme; -4 points)

Your character is generally ill. Depending on the nature of the illness, your character may be coughing and wheezing a lot, or just generally possessed of a pallid, unhealthy complexion. Your character

has one less Hit Point — fill in that first circle on the character sheet. You *cannot* take the Gift of "Extra Hit Point."

Foe
(varies; -1 to -5 points)

Someone out there doesn't like you. Perhaps you bested them in some contest, causing them embarrassment and humiliation. Or maybe you hold some title or object that they covet so strongly that it moves them to bear hostility towards you. You may have wronged them by some strange circumstance, or you may have thwarted some scheme they had. Make up some reason for your Foe to not like you — the more interesting the story is, the better.

A Foe isn't necessarily one person — it could be a group of people who act in concert, to your detriment or to your demise.

The value of this Flaw depends on its Frequency and Severity.

Rare: Your Foe has limited reach in geography, or doesn't get out much. It might be that your Foe considers you merely a nuisance, and can't be bothered to act against you except when it requires little or no effort. A Rarely-appearing Foe takes a role about once every other play session. -1 point

Uncommon: Your Foe is doggedly following you — perhaps he is pursuing the same goal as you, and seeks to beat you to it. Or perhaps he is pursuing you to imprison you, to capture you, or even to kill you. Your foe is a constant source of difficulty, taking a major role in game-play about once every session or so. -2 **points**

Common: Your Foe is almost everywhere! A Foe of this Frequency is most likely someone who controls a large band of individuals or wields considerable influence in daily affairs. -3 **points**

Moderate: Your Foe seeks to humiliate you or punish you somehow. Perhaps the Foe is trying to steal your spell-books, or your signet ring, or something else that you hold dear. Maybe your Foe seeks restitution for some past wrong — perhaps you owe him some money, or a formal apology. In any event, confrontations with your Foe are inconvenient at the least but are rarely life-threatening. **No additional points**

Strong: Your Foe desires to do you bodily harm. Given opportunity, he will attempt to end your life. Whether he seeks a formal duel or "fair fight" or whether he'll resort to skullduggery and cloak & dagger methods is up to you. A Foe of this severity should be about the same power level as your character — as an NPC, he would be built on the same amount of points. **Extra -1 points**

Extreme: Not only does your Foe seek to hurt you, but he wields considerable power and influence. He may be a noble with vast sums of wealth and considerable men-at-arms to dispatch against you. Or he may be the leader of a gang of capable people, all of whom would attempt to end your life, asking no quarter and giving none. Or he himself may be a powerful individual NPC, much more powerful than yourself. In any case, a Foe of this Severity is a larger-than-life character, and his ire is not to be taken lightly — you should think twice before playing a character with a Flaw of this magnitude. **Extra -2 points**

> **Example 1:** The Huo-zhou Mandarin Lu Aonu has sworn on his honor to hunt down Feng Purou, a peasant woman who refused his advances and made a fool of him in a public square. Lust, sorrow, laughter, pain — all these emotions pale in Aonu's mind compared to his burning desire for revenge, and not a waking minute of his life passes that is not devoted to tracking his quarry *(Common)*. Aonu has a small army of followers to seek Purou out. *(Extreme)* Purou's player writes "Foe: Lu Anou the Mandarin *(Common, Extreme) -5*" on her character sheet.
>
> **Example 2:** Zhan Sutan, the beloved but wayward son of a Silk Merchant, has run off from home with a large sack of coins, which he is spending unwisely. His father wants his son to return home and learn his trade. He has the money and influence to hire agents and bounty-hunters, who can show up occasionally (Common), but these people are given strict orders to return Sutan alive and unhurt (Moderate). Sutan's player writes: "Foe: Father, wants to return me home alive and unhurt (Common, Moderate) -3" on her character sheet.

Frail
(Uncommon, Moderate; -2 points)

You have a skinny and unhealthy appearance. Your Soak is reduced by one level, and you cannot take the Gift of "Robust."

Hard of Hearing
(Uncommon, Moderate; -2 points)

Your character has trouble hearing, and suffers one Penalty on all Hearing Rolls. You can still have Keen Ears, and thus be able to hear high-pitched ultrasonic sounds … but any rolls to detect such sounds are at one Penalty.

Ill-Favored
(Uncommon, Moderate; -2 points)

Or, to use less tactful terms, you are ugly. There's something about your appearance that crosses race lines and makes you unpleasant to look upon for long periods of time. People will judge you unfairly based on your looks. On the positive side, if you are a beggar, you may be able to use your malformed appearance to beg for alms.

Lame
(Uncommon, Strong; -3 points)

Your character has a bad leg or perhaps even a peg leg. Your character's Move is half normal and maximum Stride is confined to 1 pace only.

No Hands
(Common, Extreme; -5 points)

You have no hands. You may have been born without them (such as if you are a Snake), or perhaps you have been crippled in some way.

You cannot use any weapons or tools that require hands. You will have to use hand substitutes, such as a Prehensile Tail.

Any spells you cast will cost +1 Magic Point, as you cannot make gestures to cast them (p. 194) You *cannot* use Targeting Spells.

One Arm
(Uncommon, Strong; -3 points)

Your character has only one arm. Your character cannot use a weapon two-handed, of course.

Poor Vision
(Uncommon, Strong; -3 points)

Your eyesight is poor. You suffer one Penalty on all Spot rolls. If you

use a ranged weapon, treat all range bands as one range greater. (I.E., Treat Short Range as Medium, Medium as Long, and Long as eXtreme.) For you, shots at Extreme range are too inaccurate to be effective. You may be able to get "spectacles" to correct your vision. Such lenses must be custom made for you and are an Expensive item.

Poverty
(Common, Strong; -4 points)

Your character may only start with cheap equipment. Your character only has a fraction of the starting wealth of other characters. Characters with the Flaw of *Poverty* may take the Gift of *Belongings*, but its effect is changed (p. 76).

Scofflaw
(Uncommon, Strong: -3 points)

Your character is a known law-breaker and is wanted by the constabulary. He or she will need to be careful when in the city and must keep a low profile. This Flaw assumes that the crimes are minor ones, such as purse-snatching, picking pockets, etc.

Weak
(Uncommon, Moderate; -2 points)

Your Lift is reduced by 1. Your Strength Dice are reduced by one level. You cannot take the Gift of "Strong."

Internal Flaws

Internal Flaws represent psychological, character-motivating aspects of your character, usually involving risks that otherwise "un-Flawed" characters would not take. Internal Flaws are a strong role-playing opportunity for your character.

You are expected to role-play Internal Flaws. Such Flaws are an integral part of who your character is. If the Game Host feels you're not role-playing your Flaws strongly enough, they may require you to dedicate your Experience to "buying them off" (p. 253).

Agnostic
(Rare, Moderate; -1 point)

The opposite of *Superstitious*, you do not believe in spiritualism, divinity, reincarnation, or other mumbo-jumbo. You do not necessarily refute the existence of higher powers and the like — you simply refuse to believe in anything that cannot be directly observed or measured, because there is no way you could know if that is true or not. Note that this Flaw does not mean you *disbelieve* in such things, either — you are one who doubts, not one who refutes. This Flaw is appropriate for scholars and other "learned types." It is also appropriate for Wizards, who often believe that magic is a science perpetrated by willful, deliberate acts, and not by unseen forces or by the fickle hands of unknowable deities.

Skills like Augury and Special Traits like Faith are beyond you, because you believe in free will over predestination. If you have a Religious Career, you had better keep your beliefs to yourself or you risk being accused of heresy. This Flaw combines well with the Flaw of *Curious* (p. 57)

Busy Hands
(Uncommon, Extreme; -4 points)

Also known as "kleptomania," you can't resist fetching small objects and pocketing them. It's not the monetary worth of the objects that spurs you on; it's the mere act of taking them. You may keep the items, or you may discard them soon after you take them.

A Flaw of this magnitude is very dangerous; in the *Jadeclaw* fantasy setting, there is little sympathy among the judges and the constables for compulsive maniacs.

Capricious
(Common, Moderate; -3 points)

You are subject to "flights of fancy." You may be "bubbly" and enthusiastic about each thing that comes along, or just generally curious. You are impulsive and quick to commit yourself to promises you may regret later. This is not the same as "Overconfident" (p. 56). Capricious characters may challenge a bunch of foes when outnumbered, then "come to their senses" and flee, whereas an Overconfident sort is convinced that they can "take 'em."

Coarse
(Uncommon, Moderate; -2 points)

The opposite of *Obsequious* (p. 58), you're not known for your manners. At your best, you are loud and boisterous; at your worst, you're downright rude and impolite. You have one Penalty or worse when trying to use Etiquette or when in other situations that require "good manners." However, you have little trouble with Carousing.

Curious
(Common, Moderate; -3 points)

You're too nosy for your own good. Puzzles and enigmas bother you. If there are dark caves to explore, or hidden treasures to be found, or secret mysteries to be solved, you're champing at the bit to find out the answers. You won't be able to let things go unexplained, and your foes can exploit your curious nature by withholding information from you.

Dread
(varies in Frequency, Strong; -2 to -4 points)

You have an unreasoning fear or phobia of something. It may be a certain concrete thing, such as spiders or fire. Or it could be a particular environment, such as enclosed spaces or darkness.

Whenever the source of your Dread first appears, you must pass a *Fear Test:* you roll d8 vs. the "enormity" of the source. For example, if you Dread "fire," then a candle might be a mere d4, whereas a raging forest fire may be 2d12. In general, the test is vs. d8 for "typical" situations.

Even if you Succeed on your Fear Test, you will still suffer unreasoning fright. **As long as the source of your Dread remains, you are at least *Demoralized*** (p. 339).

Here are some typical Dreads a character may have:

Dread of...	***Flaw point Value***
Being Left Alone	**-4 points** (Common, Strong)
Crowds	**-3 points** (Uncommon, Moderate)
Enclosed Spaces	**-3 points** (Uncommon, Moderate)
Fire	**-4 points** (Common, Strong)
Loud Noises	**-3 points** (Uncommon, Moderate)
Magic	**-3 points** (Uncommon, Moderate)
Spiders	**-2 points** (Rare, Strong)
Violence	**-4 points** (Common, Strong)

Drunkard
(Uncommon, Strong; -3 points)

You have a weakness for spirits and alcohol. Given the opportunity, you will often waste an hour of time to drink yourself into a state of *Drunkenness* (p. 339). Attempts to Influence you to drink are easy, if not automatically successful. You may lose the respect of others, and you may not be trusted with certain tasks if there's a danger you'll get drunk on the job.

Duty
(Uncommon, Strong; -3 points)

You have committed to doing something for someone. You may have taken an oath to uphold the law of the land. Perhaps you promised to do a favor for someone. You may even be an indentured servant, with an obligation to work off your sentence or your debt. This Flaw is Internal, as it assumes you have a personal commitment to fulfilling your Duty.

Envious
(Uncommon, Strong; -3 points)

You resent the success of others. To you, the world is filled with people who have more money, who use better equipment, who command more respect … and it's just not fair. You may be cold and distant to others, and you may sabotage other people to make yourself look better.

Faltering
(Rare, Moderate; -1 point)

The opposite of *Stubborn* (p. 58), you often second-guess yourself, and it's hard for you to make up your mind. You make a poor leader, as your subjects fail to pay you respect after putting up with your indecisiveness. Others may seek to manipulate your wishy-washy nature.

Garrulous
(Rare, Moderate; -1 point)

The opposite of *Taciturn* (p. 58), you like the sound of your own voice. You love to talk to others, to tell long stories, and to strike up conversation that is mostly one-sided. People who must endure your company for long periods of time may grow weary of your incessant prattle.

Gluttonous
(Rare, Moderate; -1 point)

You like food and lots of it. You run out of provisions more quickly than others, and you often take seconds or thirds at every meal, possibly committing a social gaffe. This Flaw goes well with "Corpulent" (p. 54).

Greedy
(Uncommon, Strong; -3 points)

You are eager for material things, especially money. If you are a freelancer, you will charge high prices for your services. You are very susceptible to bribes and other material incentives.

Gregarious
(Rare, Moderate; -1 point)

You don't like to be alone. You will seek the company of others whenever possible. Depending on your social skills and your personality, you may be a shy "wallflower" that just hangs around, or you may try to involve yourself in the goings-on.

Heroic
(Uncommon, Strong; -3 points)

Your character does good. When the downtrodden and innocent are threatened, you come to their aid. This is considered a "Flaw" because it will often limit your character's options. Villains and foes that know of your Heroic Flaw may try to bait you into traps.

The Heroic Flaw should not be confused with the Heroic Quality of Skill (p. 20)

Honorable
(Uncommon, Extreme; -4 points)

You have a highly developed sense of honor and "fair-play." You always keep your word, and it pains you to maintain a falsehood. You cannot strike a downed foe. You cannot strike from behind. This Flaw is well suited for Mercenaries, Monks, and others with a strong martial or religious code. It is a poor choice for Thieves or anyone who depends on sneakiness and underhandedness.

You may have a personal "Code of Honor" or "Code of Chivalry" that you uphold, with its own quirks, but in order to have this Flaw you must be true to all the points mentioned above. Remember that this is an "Internal" Flaw, and you will be expected to role-play it.

Lustful
(Uncommon, Strong; -3 points)

You have a weakness for romance. You cannot resist trying to date others who strike your fancy. You will often embarrass yourself in front of attractive would-be paramours. You will probably make a nuisance of yourself if your affections aren't returned, and you will be a sucker for ploys that exploit your lustful nature.

Morose
(Rare, Moderate; -1 point)

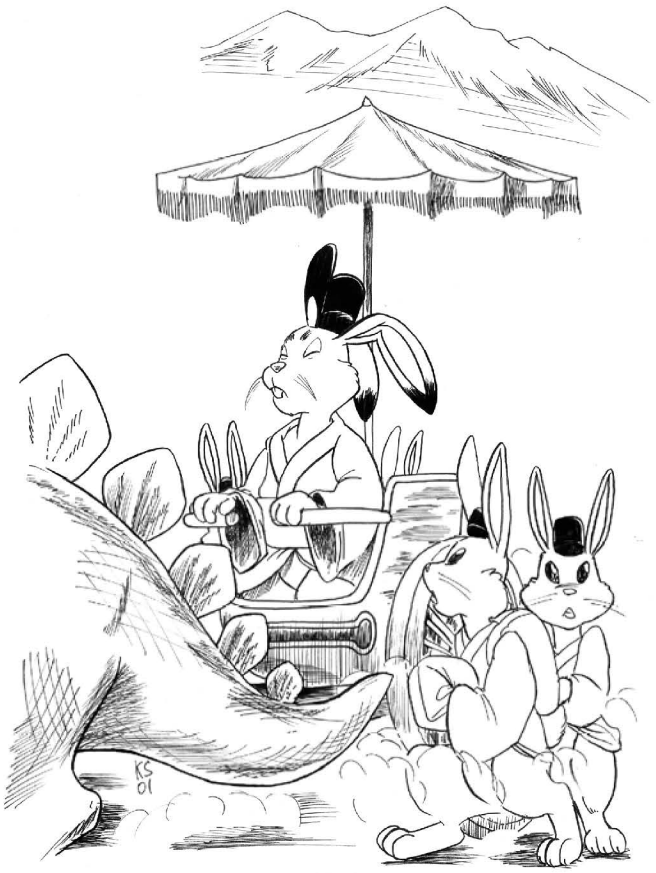
You have a tendency to be gloomy. Often you feel as if the world has treated you unfairly, and that your life is a tragic one. Although you are not actually despairing, you will often shun the company of others or you will slip into a "funk" of self-pity.

Naïve
(Rare, Moderate; -1 point)

You are somewhat credulous, and you have a tendency to take things at face value. You prefer to think of yourself as "trusting" — others often think of you as "gullible." The Game Host should reduce the difficulty of attempts to Bluff or to Influence you about things that you have little experience with.

Obsequious
(Uncommon, Moderate; -2 points)

The opposite of *Coarse* (p. 57), you fawn and kowtow excessively to others, trying too hard to be polite to your lessers and deferent to your betters. At your best, you are annoyingly polite; at your worst, you appear insincere and untrustworthy, as no one could be as polite as you are trying to be and still be earnest. You have one Penalty or worse when trying to use Etiquette or when in other situations that require "good manners." However, you have little trouble with Bribery.



Overconfident
(Uncommon, Strong; -3 points)

You know few limits. There's little you think you can't do, and you often over-reach yourself. In combat, you have a tendency to forgo defense in favor of mad charges or risky situations, such as taking on three foes at once.

Pacifist
(varies; -1. -3, or -5 points)

You have a personal code that you live by that, in the violent, grim world of *Jadeclaw*, can often be a vulnerability. There are different levels of Pacifist.

Pacifist: Cannot take a life (Rare, Moderate; -1 points)

You may never do anything that you think would kill someone. You cannot Mortally Wound someone and then leave them to die. If you *do* kill someone, you will be morose and emotionally devastated, too unconfident to claim Favored Use or Focus for at least a week.

Pacifist: May only fight in self-defense (Uncommon, Strong; -3 points)

You may never take up arms against someone else unless you are attacked yourself. You cannot Ambush others (p. 104).

Pacifist: Total non-violence (Common, Extreme; -5 points)

This is the ultimate level of Pacifist. You will never lift a hand to hurt another being. If forced into combat, you cannot Strike at anyone. You may Guard, and you may cast defensive-style magic if you are able, but you will never do anything to anyone that may cause physical harm.

Proud
(Uncommon, Strong; -3 points)

Your character has an inflated sense of self-importance. He or she most likely has some cause they serve, such as a need to convert all people to their religion or to unite the land under one rule (their rule, of course.) Such characters tend to be inflexible about some issues and can make themselves hard to get along with. This Flaw may be combined with the Flaw of "Stubborn" (p. 60) to make someone who's really bombastic.

Rivalry
(varies)

There is another character that thwarts your goals and stands between you and what you desire. Your Rival may be in the same line of work that you are and is constantly trying to "one-up" you. Or your Rival may often be after the same things that you are, meddling in your affairs. A Rival differs from a Foe (p. 55) in that a Foe wants to capture you, kill you, take your money and possessions, or inflict some other dire fate — whereas a Rival simply gains something out of keeping you from accomplishing your goals, and may not bear you any personal animosity. (Your Rival may even get a sense of enjoyment out of thwarting you.)

Circumstance	*Flaw point Value*
Your Rival is an NPC.	**-2 points** (Uncommon, Moderate)
Your Rival is another PC.	**-3 points** (Common, Moderate)
Your Rival is an equal with you, having comparable abilities, skills, and wealth.	**Default**
Your Rival has an edge over you — higher class, greater wealth, more skilled, etc.	**Extra -1 point** (becomes Strong)

If you choose your Rival to be a PC, discuss it with the PC's Player first, to get their approval and some good ideas for role-playing.

Romance
(varies; -2 to -4 points)

Your character is romantically involved with another character. This will drive your character to do certain things out of the bounds of common sense — you may lavish gifts upon the object of your affection, or you may make sacrifices to preserve them. The Frequency and Severity of this Flaw vary based on whether your love is mutual or unrequited, and whether you are involved with an NPC or a PC.

If you choose the object of your Romance to be a PC, discuss it with the PC's Player first, to get their approval and some good ideas for role-playing.

Circumstance	*Flaw point Value*
The object of your affection is an NPC.	**-2 points** (Uncommon, Moderate)
The object of your affection is another PC.	**-3 points** (Common, Moderate)
Your love is Unrequited. (Possibly he or she is unaware of your existence, is in love with another, or just despises you.)	**Extra -1 point** (becomes Strong)

Showoff
(Uncommon, Moderate; -2 points)

Whenever there's a crowd around, you can't resist doing something showy and dramatic to impress them. You may not necessarily be Overconfident (p. 59), because you only take risks whenever there's someone around to appreciate it. You also can't resist mouthing off about all the great things you've done, and stretching the truth just a wee bit to tell a more dramatic tale. You might have a Good Reputation that's only half-deserved… or even a Bad Reputation as a braggart.

Single-Minded
(Uncommon, Moderate; -2 points)

When you focus your mind on something, it *stays* Focused. You can only concentrate on one thing at a time. This makes you unsuitable for such careers as "statesman" or "military general." You can still be a good scout, but you have a tendency to "not see the forest for the trees," and may be too busy tracking your quarry to notice that it's sneaking up behind you. This Flaw can be taken with Stubborn (below) to make someone who really has a one-track mind.

Skittish
(Common, Moderate; -3 points)

You "spook" easily. Loud noises make you start, and when people jump out at you, you might faint dead away or run for your life.

This is not as serious as Dread (p.57); it's not so much that you are afraid as that your first instinct, when startled, is to flee.

Slothful
(Uncommon, Strong; -3 points)

You are lazy. You try to "cut corners" whenever you can. Perhaps you get distracted by other things, or you just prefer sleeping and daydreaming to all that hard work. You will find it hard or impossible to pursue paths of Self-Improvement that involve lots of hard work, as per the Game Host's discretion (p. 253).

Soft-Hearted
(Uncommon, Strong; -3 points)

You cannot abide cruelty. You will not stand idle while others mistreat their animals or oppress the downtrodden. You are easily moved to tears, which makes you a good sympathizer … and a sucker for scams and tricks that involve a "sob-story." You may or may not be a Pacifist (p. 59) — you may still engage in combat, especially if you are "lashing out" at the cruel fiends that distress you so. Torture and other dreadful activities are beyond your capacity.

Others may find the lengths of your compassion endearing. Warriors will think you lack courage. Thieves and scoundrels will seek to exploit your generous nature.

Stubborn
(Rare, Moderate; -1 point)

The opposite of "Faltering" (p. 58), once you make up your mind, it stays made up. You are generally difficult to get along with, because you refuse to yield on many of your opinions, even when argued with for hours.

Superstitious
(Rare, Moderate; -1 points)

The opposite of *Agnostic*, you don't walk under ladders or break mirrors. When you boast, you make sure you knock on wood. Other folks, especially "learned" types, are amused by your backward ways, but you know better. This Flaw isn't worth many points because, in the world of *Jadeclaw*, some superstitions turn out to be true!

Taciturn
(Rare, Moderate; -1 points)

The opposite of "Garrulous" (p. 58), you are not much for conversation. You prefer to keep to yourself, and you use few words or none at all; when you have nothing to say, your lips are sealed. Your Taciturn nature makes others think you're unapproachable in most social situations. You are lousy at parties, and certain things like public speaking are beyond your capacity.

Wrathful
(Uncommon, Strong; -3 points)

You're not known to keep your anger in check. In stressful situations, you may lose your cool and lash out, either with some hot-headed insults you may regret later, or perhaps with physical violence. You probably won't get far in popularity contests.

Frequently Asked Questions about Gifts and Flaws

If I have a Racial Gift that has multiple levels (such as Robustness or Strength), can I buy more levels?

Yes, you may buy additional levels in a Racial Gift, either through Experience (p. 253) or at Character Creation, using points However, such points are *Personal Gifts* and not Racial Gifts, and will count against your starting allotment of no more than 10 points in non-Racial Gifts.

> **Example:** Binkuang the Bear begins with "Strength +2," which costs 5 points. His Player decides that Binkuang should be even stronger; he spends 2 points to increase that to "Strength +3 (7 points). " Binkuang may now only spend up to 8 more points on Personal, Social, and Esoteric Gifts.

For the Gift of Prodigy (p. 48), do I have to buy the Skill separately?

No. The Gift of Prodigy *includes* the Skill. It is like the cost of the privilege of starting the game with a Skill of Level 6 through 10 is that it ties up some of the allotment of the maximum of 10 points in Personal, Social, and Esoteric Gift.

How much does the Gift of Flight (p. 50) cost?

The Gift of Flight costs 1 point for every Stone of Size. Your Size depends on your Body Trait, and is modified by the Gifts of *Robustness* and *Strength* and the Flaws of *Corpulent, Frail,* and *Weak.* See p. 19.

SPECIAL TRAITS

Requirement: the Gift of Extra Trait (p. 47)

Every character has the four Basic Traits of Body, Speed, Mind, and Will, as well as a Race Trait and one Career Trait. With the Gift of Extra Trait, a character can have an extra Career … or a *Special Trait.* Like other Traits, Special Traits provide broader ability than a Skill, and are measured in Levels. Some Special Traits represent inborn talent or ability. Others are strong personality types, or increased life experience. A few represent bizarre, supernatural abilities.

Bagua Personality

You have a strong sense of personality as understood by the Bagua, a philosophy discussed in *The Book of Vanishing Heavenly Stem.*

A character may only have one Bagua Trait.

Courage (Dânliàng)

You are known for your bravery, your leadership skills, and sometimes for your arrogance. You may not have the wisdom to temper your ambition, and you might use excessive force sometimes.

Include your Courage Trait whenever you must rally others (with a Leadership Test) or when resisting any Test where your bravery would be called into question. This Trait goes well with the Flaw of Overconfident (p. 59).

Devotion (Zhongxin)

You have great endurance for tasks that would make lesser folk walk away in disgust. Your superiors often admire your obedience; your subordinates often appreciate your acceptance of their failings. Those who find fault with you think you are weak, faltering, and lacking direction.

Include your Devotion Trait with all rolls of the Etiquette Skill. Include your Devotion Trait when trying to pass any Test to help someone else. For example, you cannot generally use Devotion to resist Fear … but if the Fear were keeping you from rescuing a comrade, then you would be entitled to include Devotion in a new roll. This Trait goes well with the Flaw of Soft-Hearted (p. 60)

Inspection (Shìchá)

You are a deep thinker, able to understand society and how other people think. For some, this means a friendly camaraderie with other people. For others, it means a cold, calculating attitude that others are pawns to be manipulated.

Include your Inspection Trait with all Appraise Tests, Haggle Tests, Listen Tests, Smell Tests, and Spot Tests. Include your Inspection Trait with all Skills of the kind "Ken" (p. 64). This Trait goes well with the Flaw of Greedy (p. 58).

Prosperity (Fánróng)

You are an open-minded sort. You have an optimistic attitude, and you have compassion for other people. You are constantly concerned about your social standing and are always looking for advancement. Some people might find your pleas for attention to be immature or superficial.

Include your Prosperity Trait in Gossip Tests, Influence Tests, or in other social situations where there is knowledge to be had and there are people to be impressed. This Trait goes well with the Flaws of Gregarious (p. 58) and Curious (p. 57).

Rebellion (Pànluàn)

You have a defiant streak within you that causes you to resent order and makes you difficult to control. You have a knack for deception. You think well under pressure, but many find you untrustworthy.

Include your Rebellion Trait with all Skills of the kind "Subterfuge" (p. 64). Include your Rebellion Trait to resist Influence Rolls or any spell resisted by Will. This Trait goes well with the Flaw of Scofflaw (p. 56).

Sensuality (Chang Yin)

Your friends enjoy your sense of humor and your zest for life. Your enemies find you frivolous, bubbly, and short on manners.

Include your Sensuality Trait when making Influence Rolls to impress people with how likeable you are. Include your Sensuality Trait with all Spot, Listen, and Smell Tests. This Trait goes well with the Flaws of Gluttonous (p. 58) and Lustful (p. 58).

Stillness (Jíjìng)

You are known for your impartiality, objectivity, and honesty. You are not given to strong displays of emotion.

Include your Stillness Trait with any rolls to resist an Influence Test to get you to do something. Include your Stillness Trait with Hide Tests or anything else that involves total lack of motion. Include your Stillness Trait with all uses of Meditation and Psychology. This Trait goes well with the Flaw of Taciturn (p. 60).

Surprise (Jingyà)

You are a determined and emotional sort. You are prone to sudden outbursts of tears, laughter, or joy. You thrive on change — few things phase you.

Include your Surprise Trait with all Ambush Tests (whether you are the ambusher or the target.) Include your Surprise Trait to resist any use of Psychology or any mind-reading spells — who knows what goes on in that brain of yours? Include your Surprise Trait when rolling against anything that might keep you from something you're determined to do, such as *Paralysis* or *Transfixation.*

Charisma

You are more charming and pleasant than the average person. Roll your Charisma Dice when trying to convince others to do something on Influence Tests (p. 109) and Leadership Tests (p. 112).

Dexterity

You can manipulate things with your hands more easily than others. Include your Dexterity Trait Dice when using a bow, crossbow, or other ranged weapon that relies on fine control, such as a gun. (Do not include Dexterity when using thrown weapons or melee weapons.) You may include your Dexterity Dice with Lock-picking Tests, Pick-pocket Tests, and other Tests where your ability to work with small, precise things comes into question.

Quickness

Your wits are sharp and you have a swiftness that is uncanny. You may include your Quickness Trait Dice when rolling Initiative, with all uses of the Dodge skill, when trying to win a Chase Test (p. 106), and on other tests where your quickness comes into question.

Second Sight

You are gifted with powers of perception. Your Second Sight Dice are rolled with Augury, Sixth Sense, and when resisting any spell that uses Mind Dice to resist.

You may also perform the *Second Sight Test* — you may roll your Second Sight Trait Dice and Observation Skill Dice (if any) to "see magic." (Despite the metaphor of sight, other dice that apply to Spot do not apply.) To see a current, but invisible magical spell, roll vs. 2d6. To see the after-effects of magic (such as a place where magic was used), roll against 2d8 if they were used in the last five minutes, 2d12 if used in the last hour, and impossible for anything longer than that. You may only make one attempt to use Second Sight per magical effect.

This Trait only lets you *see* the magic. To interpret what the magic is, you must pass a separate *Scry Test* vs. 2d10 — (p. 115). (Note that Second Sight does not help you *interpret* what the spells mean at all, it just lets you see them in the first place.)

Second Sight is not easily explainable — you cannot put into words how you can "see" the things that you can, and you are often baffled that others can't "see" what you do.

Liu Ho Pa Fa: The Eight Methods of Empty-Hand

You have been trained in one of the Empty Hand Methods (p. 185). Each Empty-Hand Method is bought as a separate Special Trait.

Method	*Long Name*	*Core Philosophy*	*Include with...*
Chi	Controlling Breathing through Concentration	The flow of internal energy must be controlled.	Brawling, Breath-Holding, Lore: Chi Method
Fu	Refraining from Exposing One's Intention	Conceal your force like a bow within the joints and bones with spiral, spring-like focus. Send it out straight as an arrow.	Brawling, Lore: Fu Method, Sixth Sense
Hsing	Imitating the Form and Postures	The more you practice, the more you understand.	Brawling, Contortionist, Lore: Hsing Method
Hsui	Following the Opponent's Move	Meet an opponent's force with circular movement, interpreting the force and yielding to it.	Brawling, Lore: Hsui Method, Psychology
Huan	Balancing Motion and Posture	Movement in one direction is related to its opposite.	Acrobatics, Brawling, Lore: Huan Method
Ku	Mastering the Force Within the Bones	Inner strength can come forth suddenly from the bones and joints, then subside.	Brawling, Lore: Ku Method, Resolve
Le	Maintaining Peace of Mind	Calmly watch your opponent with an inner stillness. Look for nothing and see everything; look for something and see nothing.	Brawling, Lore: Le Method, Meditation
Ti	Feeling that One is Suspended by the Top of the Head	When the head is raised and held high, the mind is tranquil and relaxed. There is increased alertness, awareness and vitality.	Brawling, Dodge, Lore: Ti Method

Magic Resistance

You are unusually resistant to magic. Unfortunately, your innate resistance to magic also makes it difficult for you to use magic.

- When you are the subject of a *Regular Spell,* include your Magic Resistance Trait Dice with your other dice when resisting its effects. *Even if the spell is normally not resisted, you still roll your Magic Resistance vs. the spell's Effect Dice to resist.* Magic Resistance gets in the way of even helpful magical spells.
- When you are the subject of a *Targeted Spell,* include your Magic Resistance Trait Dice with your Defense Dice when Blocking or Dodging the To-Hit Roll, and include your Magic Resistance Trait Dice with your Soak Dice when resisting the Damage. (In this way, you get "twice" as much protection.)
- When you are the subject of a *Homing or Exploding Spell,* include your Magic Resistance Trait Dice with your Defense and Soak Dice. (Unlike a Targeted Spell, you only get protection "once.")
- Subtract your total Magic Resistance Dice Size from your Magic Points. For example, if you have a Will Trait of d12 and a Dào Shih Trait of d4, you would normally have 16 Magic Points — but if you have a Magic Resistance Trait of d8, then you only have 8 Magic Points. If your Magic Points drop to zero or below, you cannot cast spells.
- When you must make a Casting Roll, include your Magic Resistance Trait Dice with the Difficulty Dice. (Magic Resistance makes it harder to cast spells.) If you are *Adept* at the spell (and thus need no Casting Roll), there is no effect.

Magic Resistance is explained in the Tests chapter (p. 103) and in the Magic chapter (p. 189).

Piety

You have a sense of faith that is stronger than most folks'. You may have earned this quality, or you may have been born with it, or you may be extensively educated. You can use your Piety Dice on any roll involving the Five Classics Skills, as you are inherently aware of their nuances. These Skills are: Augury; Etiquette; Heraldry; History; Poetry.

Toughness

Your spirit is willing, and your flesh is made of stronger stuff. You may roll your Toughness Trait with Resolve and all Tests for Unconsciousness and Death. (Soak Dice are unaffected.) Note that the Toughness Trait is one of the few things that helps to pass a Death Test.

Venerable

You are very, very old — seventy, eighty, or (in the case of Dragons, Qilings, and Tortoises) perhaps a hundred years or more.

Include your Venerable Trait with any Influence Rolls you make against middle-aged or young people, as your long years entitle you to respect. You may also use your Venerable Trait to resist any Influence Rolls made by people younger than you, as you can be stubborn if you want to be. Include your Venerable Trait on Know Tests when you can claim to "have been there and done that" because of your advanced age. While not required, this Trait combines well with the Flaws of "Failing Health" or "Stubborn," or the Special Traits of Second Sight or Toughness.

SKILLS

Unlike Careers, which represent general life experience and versatility, *Skills* represent specialized ability in a narrow field. Specialists will have both a high Skill and a high Career that's included with that Skill.

Getting a little something for nothing: Favored Use

At the time you buy your Skill, you may choose a *Favored Use*. You may have only one Favored Use per skill. You can also leave the Favored Use blank, and (with the Game Host's permission) fill this in during play — even in the middle of a game session! A Favored Use does not cost any extra points. Players are encouraged to come up with Favored Uses for all their skills! The Host may disallow Favored Uses that are too broad. For example, "Sword (Fv: when fighting)." shouldn't be allowed — that's not very "particular." A better Favored Use might be, "Sword (Fv: when fighting my lifelong Foes)."

You can change your Favored Uses later on using Experience (p. 253).

Favorite Weapon

For any weapon skill, such as Sword, Axe, etc., you can declare one particular weapon to be your *Favorite Weapon* as a special type of "Favored Use." When using that weapon, you can claim the advantage of re-rolling one "1." If you have Expert Skill or better, you may have additional Favorite Weapons as a Gift (see *Martial Arts*, p. 159.)

> ***Example:*** Mei Feng declares her long-sword to be her Favorite Weapon. Her player writes "Sword (Fv: Favorite Weapon)" on her character sheet. When striking, parrying, disarming, etc. using a Sword, Mei Feng gets to re-roll any single die that shows a "1" *if* she uses her Favorite Sword.

The disadvantage is that if you lose your Favorite Weapon, you don't get the advantage of Favored Use any more. (You can find a new Favorite Weapon by spending Experience points — see p. 253) Players are encouraged to role-play the use of their Favorite Weapons by giving them names such as "Great Storm of the Dawn" or "Willow Bending in the Breeze."

Kinds of Skills

Skills are subdivided into different kinds. Some Careers say "(Combat Skill of choice)" or "(Lore Skill of choice)." When you first write down the Career on your character sheet, you must choose one skill of that kind for the Career to apply to. The kind of Skill will also determine the path of Self-Improvement (p. 253) later on.

- *Athletic Skills* represent physical ability or endurance to perform tasks of the body.
- *Combat Skills* are used with To-Hit Rolls when attacking others.
- *Entertainment Skills* can be used to impress crowds, to amuse others, and to make a living as a performer.
- *Five-Classics Skills* are related to the five traditional books of Zhonggese literature.
- *Influence Skills* can be used to convince others to do certain things, such as in an Influence Test.
- *Ken Skills* are related to perception, to knowing what's going on.
- *Lore Skills* represent experience or learning in fields of knowledge.
- *Mystic Skills* involve supernatural forces beyond those of most folks' understanding.
- *Subterfuge Skills* are used to deceive others.
- *Trade Skills* can be used to earn a living — Skilled Labor (p. 91).
- *Unencumbered Skills* are limited by Encumbrance (p. 130).

Accounting
[Trade]

A boring yet often necessary capacity, Accounting is the Skill of maintaining and counting inventory and managing transactions of cash. Accounting may require Ciphering Skill (below) when the numbers get very large.

Possible Favored Uses: *When maintaining my personal household; when left alone and not interrupted.*

Acrobatics
[Athletic, Unencumbered]

This Skill covers the ability to swing from the rafters, landing gracefully from a height, and other show-off maneuvers. (While Acrobatics Skill, by itself, does not improve your defenses, it is a Requirement to learn many fancy Martial Arts that do.)

Possible Favored Uses: *When Changing Position; when Falling.*

Acting
[Entertainment, Influence]

This Skill is the art of lying, pretending, and imitating. A good actor can make you believe almost anything. Actors who have learned stories or humor may entertain crowds for money, food or lodging.

Acting assists in passing Bluff Tests (p. 110)

Possible Favored Uses: *When Bluffing others; when playing to a crowd.*

Administration
[Influence, Trade]

The mainstay of the bureaucrat, Administration is the skill to run a household, a shop or a province. An administrator makes sure all the staff is fed and paid, and all the stores are stocked. This skill differs from Accounting in that Administration also can be used to work through the "red tape" to get favors out of other bureaucrats.

Possible Favored Uses: *Delegation; storing goods; smuggling.*

Animal Handling
[Influence, Lore, Trade]

The many beasts of Zhongguo, from the docile cao xi-yi to the fierce lei feng, require special knowledge to deal with. Animal Handling Skill covers the care, feeding, and training of non-sentient animals.

Animal Handling can be used as an Influence Test (p. 109) on any animal (i.e., non-sentient creatures who have no Mind Dice).

Possible Favored Uses: *With Cao xi-yi; with fan naio; with zhong zi-yi; when driving herds.*

Astronomy
[Lore]

This skill is the science of watching the stars and recording their movements. The scholars of Zhongguo rely on their naked eyes to regard the heavens, lacking any fancy equipment. Regardless, they have a reputation for great accuracy, based on centuries of collected observations.

Possible Favored Uses: *Predicting the future; knowledge of constellations.*

Augury (Yi Ching)
[Five Classics, Mystic]

Omens of the future are everywhere. By studying this Skill, you become well-versed in the *Book of Changes*, one of the Five Classics of Zhonggese literature.

In a world of superstition, where unseen forces have a hand in everything, Augury skill can be used to read the omens.

Possible Favored Uses: *Divination by throwing coins; divination by turning to a random page in a book; divination by throwing lots.*

Axe
[Combat]

This is the skill of using unbalanced hafted bladed weapons, such as axes. Axe Skill combines with your Speed Trait for To-Hit Rolls with Axe Attacks and for Parry Defenses with Axe.

Possible Favored Uses: *With my favorite axe; when striking from ambush.*

Boating
[Trade]

This Skill is necessary to drive a boat or other water vessel.

Possible Favored Uses: *Sailed; poled; paddled; pulled*

Bow
[Combat]

This is the Skill to use any sort of bow, a two-handed Ranged Weapon. Bow Skill combines with your Speed Trait for To-Hit Rolls with Ranged Bow Attacks.

Possible Favored Uses: *With my Favorite Bow; striking from ambush; with Aimed Shots.*

Brawling
[Combat]

This Skill is the ability to fight with all Natural Weapons — your fists, your feet, your claws, your teeth, your horns, or anything else you are naturally gifted with.

Brawling Skill combines with your Speed Trait for To-Hit Rolls with Bare-Handed Attacks, Kick Attacks, and Empty-Hand Method Attacks.

Brawling Skill combines with your Speed Trait and your Race Trait for To-Hit Rolls with Racial Weapon Attacks.

Brawling Skill combines with your Speed Trait for a Bare-handed Parry.

Possible Favored Uses: *Fists; feet; Claws; Teeth; Horns; with one Empty-Hand Method; when striking from ambush.*

Breath-Holding
[Athletic, Mystic]

This is the Skill of controlling your breathing. Many Races have the ability to conserve their breath for long periods of time (see "Suffocation," p. 152). Some philosophies teach how breath is a kind of body-energy, and by controlling it, one can live longer and healthier.

Possible Favored Uses: *When able to take a deep breath before-hand; when swimming.*

Bribery
[Influence]

This is the skill of "greasing palms" and buying people off, to either look the other way, or permit you safe passage or do some other minor favor. In many places, bribery is nearly official, it is simply part of the cost of doing business with bureaucrats.

Possible Favored Uses: *Guards and officials; racketeers and criminals; nobles and aristocrats.*

Calligraphy
[Trade]

The written form of the Zhonggese language has numerous alphabets, from the short-hand form to fancy letters that require superior artistic capacity. This Skill is the craft of writing, typically with brush and ink, but sometimes with charcoal pencil.

Possible Favored Uses: *Formal announcements; with illustrations.*

Camouflage
[Subterfuge, Unencumbered]

Camouflage is the Skill of hiding big things, and leaving them unattended, such as putting things in hidden places or concealing things under bushes and leaves in the underbrush.

Camouflage gives you an edge in a Hide Test (p. 109). To conceal things on your person, use the Holdout skill (p. 69).

Possible Favored Use: *In the forest; in a crowd*

Carousing
[Entertainment, Influence]

This Skill can be used to be the life of the party. When you are at a tavern, you can buy drinks for folks, trade rumors and gossip, and possibly even drink someone under the table. Carousing is sometimes called a "low skill," since it is for dealing with the lower classes — you use Etiquette when trying to impress high society. Carousing is a necessary skill for practitioners of Drunken-Style Martial Arts (p. 176)

Possible Favored Use: *When Gossiping at my favorite tavern; when fighting using Drunken-Style.*

Cartography
[Trade]

This Skill covers both the making of maps and the reading of maps. Most maps are inaccurate, hastily-scrawled affairs — separating the good from the bad can require some tough tests, or even the use of Research Tests (p. 115).

Possible Favored Use: *Mountains; forest; buried treasure.*

Census-Taking
[Ken, Trade]

This skill allows you taking the public census, and to supervise public behavior and morals.

Possible Favored Use: *Public decency; counting households.*

Chariot-Driving
[Trade]

This skill, reserved to only the richest nobility, is the ability to drive a war-chariot in combat.

Possible Favored Use: *With my favorite chariot; with my favorite team*

Ciphering (Mathematics)
[Lore]

Imagine doing math without the benefit of decimal places, the number zero, or even "Arabic numerals." Even basic addition and subtraction can be a baffling ordeal in Zhongguo, and those folks without even a d4 in Ciphering will be hard-pressed to do any division simpler than "one for you, one for me."

Possible Favored Use: *Converting money; determining shares.*

Climbing
[Athletic, Unencumbered]

This is the skill of moving vertically. It covers scaling walls, clambering up trees, and clinging to sideways surfaces.

Possible Favored Use: *Trees; cliffs.*

Contortionist
[Athletic, Entertainment]

This Skill is the art of twisting and turning in strange ways, often used by traveling performers and clowns to entertain gawkers. Contortionist Skill can also be used to free oneself from bonds or escape a Grapple (p. 140).

Possible Favored Use: *Showing off for a crowd; escaping from bonds; escaping from Holds.*

Crossbow
[Combat]

This is the Skill to use crossbows in combat — a weapon consisting of a bow fixed crosswise on a wooden stock, with grooves on the stock to direct the projectile. With training, one can even use the complicated Repeating Crossbow.

Crossbow Skill combines with your Speed Trait to determine your To-Hit Roll for Ranged Crossbow Attacks.

Possible Favored Use: *With my favorite crossbow; striking from ambush; with Aimed Shots.*

Cryptography
[Trade]

Secret societies, mysterious wizards, and crafty spies all make use of complicated codes and innuendo. The art of making and breaking secret codes is the Skill of Cryptography. Solving a code where you know the key is a routine task, but cracking another person's code can be maddeningly difficult. In addition, this skill can help you spot codes hidden in seemingly-innocent letters, pictures, etc. Codes take on an entirely new dimension when they are written in the calligraphy of Zhongguo.

Possible Favored Use: *Names; places; military movements.*

Dancing
[Entertainment, Unencumbered]

This skill allows oneself to perform controlled body motions in time with music. You should specialize in a specific kind of dance, such as the religious, courtly, or peasant. This Skill is used with the Martial Art of Sword-Dancing (p. 180)

Possible Favored Use: *With the "Eight Breezes of the World"; with my favorite dance.*

Digging
[Athletic]

This is the Skill of digging holes, making tunnels, and creating subterranean excavations. When combined with Camouflage, Digging can be used to hide things underground.

If an exact distance is necessary, roll your dice — your Score is the distance (in paces) that you can dig a tunnel wide enough to admit someone of your own Size, in an hour.

Possible Favored Use: *In my Racial Habitat; making underground homes; hiding things.*

Diplomacy
[Influence]

The art of letting someone else have it your way. Diplomacy is used to peacefully resolve differences through discussion and negotiation. Diplomacy takes a minimum of five minutes, and usually much longer — to negotiate more quickly, see the Fast-Talk Skill.

Possible Favored Use: *Trade deals; in writing*

Disguise
[Subterfuge]

Sometimes, you want to pass yourself off as someone of a different Career, or even Race. The art of Disguise is difficult, but many a clever scheme has succeeded and a sly person eluded others by its use.

Disguise can help you pass a Bluff Test (p. 110) to convince others that you're someone you're not. This skill is complemented nicely by Acting (p. 65).

Possible Favored Use: *As Nobility; as the opposite gender; as a different Race.*

Dodge
[Athletic, Unencumbered]

A very valuable skill, representing the ability to get out of the way of attacks. Dodge is modified by Encumbrance (p. 130).

Dodge combines with your Speed Trait for the Dodge Defense (p. 127).

Possible Favored Use: When flying; against bullets; against arrows & bolts; against thrown weapons.

Etiquette (Li Ching)
[Five Classics, Influence]

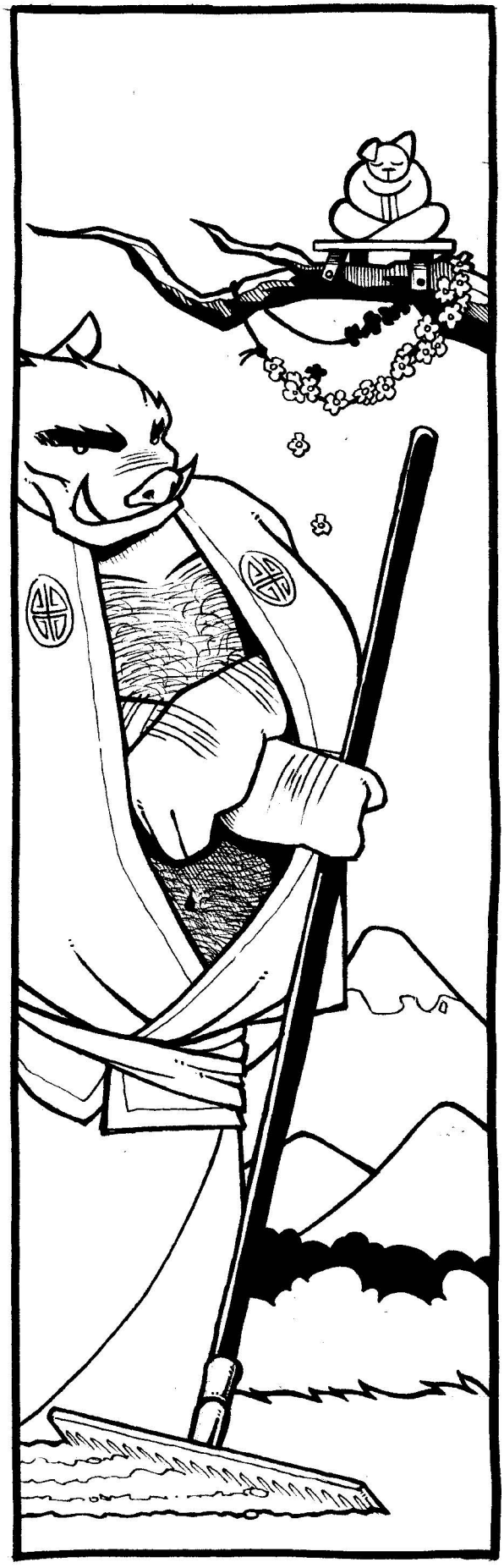
They say the nobility are not like the common folk. At social functions, there are certain rules of speaking, decorum, and gentility. Besides allowing you to show off your superior upbringing, Etiquette will let you Gossip with the upper crust (p. 107).

Possible Favored Use: *At dinner parties; amongst a particular clan.*

Fast-Talk
[Influence]

The mainstay of liars, cheats, and con men, the Fast-Talk skill is the quickest skill to use in an Influence Test (p. 109) to get someone to do something against their better judgment.

Possible Favored Use: *Bluffing; begging; on people affected by Mesmerism.*



Fencing
[Combat, Unencumbered]

This is the skill of using light, balanced swords known as foils in a rigidly stylized form of combat, popular with nobility in their duels of honor. Whereas a peasant soldier will emphasize strength in his attacks, a properly civilized noble knows that it is better to be precise.

Fencing Skill combines with your Speed Trait for To-Hit Rolls with Melee Soft Sword Attacks and for Parry Defenses with Soft Sword.

Fencing Soft Swords Parry with a +1 Bonus.

Possible Favored Use: *With my Favorite Soft Sword; when fighting a duel; showing off in front of a crowd*

Fighting Rope
[Combat]

This is the skill of using Fighting Ropes – weights or blades attached to flexible ropes or chains. Fighting Rope Skill combines with your Speed Trait for To-Hit Rolls with Fighting Rope Attacks and for Parry Defenses with Fighting Rope.

Possible Favored Use: *With my Favorite Fighting Rope; striking from ambush.*

Fighting Wheel
[Combat]

This is the skill of using a sharpened wheel made for use in combat. Fighting-Wheel Skill combines with your Speed Trait for To-Hit Rolls with Fighting-Wheel Attacks and for Parry Defenses with Fighting-Wheel.

Possible Favored Use: *With my Favorite Fighting Wheel; striking from ambush.*

First Aid
[Trade]

When some one is hurt, you know what to do. You can use First Aid to patch up folks after combat (p. 151). For long-term treatment or for serious injuries, use the Medicine Skill.

Possible Favored Use: *With my own Race.*

Fishing
[Trade]

Many folks find sustenance from rivers, lakes, or the ocean. Fishing is used instead of Survival skill for Forage Tests when there are appropriate fishing grounds nearby. To properly fish, one needs special gear, such as nets, poles, bait, etc.

Possible Favored Use: *Pole; net; spear.*

Flail
[Combat]

This is the skill of using jointed weapons or chains in combat. It is popular among the lower classes, who often use flails as a farming implement, to harvest grain and rice. A peasant with a sword would be imprisoned — a peasant with a rice flail will be ignored.

Flail Skill combines with your Speed Trait for To-Hit Rolls with Flail Attacks. (Flails do *not* Parry.)

Possible Favored Use: *With my favorite Flail.*

Flight
[Athletic, Unencumbered]

This is the Skill of flying with speed and grace. See the Gift of Flight for more details (p. 50).

Possible Favored Use: *Stunt flying.*

Forgery
[Trade]

The skill of falsifying documents or signatures, or for seeing false documents for what they are. Forger is particularly useful for creating passes for entering a city or writing false letters of recommendation. Accomplished forgers will need other Skills to pass off sophisticated fakes, such as Literacy.

Possible Favored Use: *Passes; signatures; deeds*

Gambling
[Trade]

There are numerous games of chance where wagers are made and money is passed. To win you will need the Gambling skill. Many gamblers are a talkative lot — you may be able to sneak in a Gossip Test (p. 107) while gaming. Gambling Skill can be also used to detect a cheat … or if you, yourself, want to cheat.

Possible Favored Use: *Dice; cards*

Geography
[Lore]

Geography is the knowledge of the lay of the land, the location of the towns, forests, rivers, and streams.

Possible Favored Use: *Roads; towns, territories*

Haggling
[Influence, Ken]

Not everyone in Zhongguo uses money — many use a barter system, trading this for that. And there are no standard prices for goods or services. Thus, the art of Haggling is popular in any town.

Use this Skill to determine how much an item is worth relative to a specific situation, location, and time, and to argue with others about how much an item is worth.

Possible Favored Use: *Arms and armor; rare books; precious metals and stones; foreign goods.*

Heraldry (Shang Zhou)
[Five Classics, Lore]

You are knowledgeable about the famous mandarins, especially of the Shang and Zhou dynasties. You have had some degree of education in the Book of *Shang Zhou*, one of the Five Classics. You will know the history of the noble houses of Zhongguo.

Possible Favored Use: *Of one clan of choice.*

Herbalism
[Lore]

Herbalism is the knowledge of plants and their uses. This skill includes how to find and prepare herbs and other plant products. Herbalism can be used to secure the necessary components for using First Aid and Medicine.

Possible Favored Use: *Medicines; poisons; river plants.*

Hiking
[Athletic, Unencumbered]

When traveling cross-country, you can use this skill to increase the distance you can cover per day of travel. This Skill is most useful if the entire party has it.

Possible Favored Use: *Over roads; over plains; over hills and mountains; over deserts.*

History (Shu Ching)
[Five Classics, Lore]

This is the Skill of knowing the past of Zhongguo, from the story of creation, to the story of Qián Qiling, to the present today. A knowledge of History is essential for a complete education.

Possible Favored Use: *Folk tales; religion; of a province of choice.*

Holdout
[Subterfuge]

A mainstay of spies and assassins, this is the Skill of hiding objects on your person. How do you get that knife into the governor's feast? Under your cloak of course, and this is the skill. (See the Search Test, p. 116.)

Possible Favored Use: *My Favorite Weapon of choice; stolen items.*

Intimidation
[Influence]

This is the skill of influencing people without winning friends — bullying, snarling, spitting, growling, yelling, and all that nasty stuff your mom told you not to do. You can also use this skill to bully folks into divulging information (see *Interrogation Test*, p. 108).

Possible Favored Use: *In combat; when outnumbered; when showing off; when my Aura is active.*

Iron Fan
[Combat]

This is the skill of using Iron Fans, a blade that unfolds from a center-grip into a semi-circle. Iron Fan Skill combines with your Speed Trait for To-Hit Rolls with Iron Fan Attacks and for Parry Defenses with Iron Fan.

Possible Favored Use: With my Favorite Iron Fan; striking from ambush.

Jumping
[Athletic, Unencumbered]

This is the Skill of jumping great distances or heights. It is a requirement for many Martial Arts.

Possible Favored Use: *High jump; from roof to roof.*

Language: (name)
[Lore]

In *Jadeclaw*, it is assumed that everyone speaks the common language of Zhongguo. Other languagesare bought as separate skills. Choices include:

- ***Calabrese:*** The main trading language of the Calabrese island, spoken by many who use the shipping routes to the east.
- ***Yìndùstani:*** The language from far Yìndù, spoken by many traders.

As a rule, the Game Host may choose to limit the use of social skills and the like by your biggest Language die. For example, when doing Research on a manuscript written in Calabrese, if your Language: Calabrese is only d8, then none of your Research Dice can be higher than d8.

Possible Favored Use: *Formal events; local dialect.*

Leadership
[Influence]

Getting a group to follow your orders, especially when their lives are at risk, is no trivial matter. Heroes may be born, but leaders are made. Among other things, the Leadership skill will keep your followers around when they try to rout against overwhelming odds (see the Leadership Test, p. 112).

Possible Favored Use: *When out-numbered; when yelling at the top of my lungs; when leading my hand-picked elite crew with whom we've survived worse odds; when I'm at the front of my troops*

Literacy
[Lore]

This skill allows you to read and write the five-thousand odd pictographs of the Zhonggese language.

In the world of *Jadeclaw*, characters cannot read unless they have Literacy Dice! If you don't have Literacy from either the Skill or from a Career, then you can't read anything, at all.

Literacy Skill is important for book research (p. 255).

Possible Favored Use: *When reading my favorite spell-book; gleaning for content; when reading poetry.*

Local Knowledge: (place of choice)
[Lore]

With Local Knowledge you can know where to run, know where to hide and who has the best ale. This skill covers knowledge of a town, city, or local spot, such as "The Cingui Region," "the Kogan Zu River," "Xoing-Zhe Holdings," etc. Knowledge of larger regions is covered by the Geography skill (p. 68).

Many tests give the "home turf advantage" to someone who has Local Knowledge, such as the Ambush Test (p. 104) and the Chase Test (p. 106).

Possible Favored Use: *Bars; hiding places; ambush sites.*

Lock-picking
[Trade]

Possessed by many thieves, and a few honest folk. This skill lets one do that fine work necessary to open closed locks without the proper keys.

Possible Favored Use: *When using my Favorite lock pick; on doors; on chests.*

Lore: (of choice)
[Lore]

This is the skill of obscure knowledge or science — things only a highly-educated person would know. Lore can be used to pass Know Tests (p. 111) and to help in Research Tests (p. 115). Some Lore Skills described in this game include:

- ***Empty-Hand Method:*** There are eight of these: Chi, Fu, Hsing, Hsui, Huan, Ku, Le, and Ti. Each Method is part of the *Liu ho po fa,* "six coordinations, eight methods," the discipline of harmony. Most people only know one Lore, because they only know one Empty-Hand Method.
- ***Law:*** the knowledge and practice of law, with appropriate punishments.
- ***Magic:*** You know about magical spells and the ways of wizards.
- ***Religion:*** You know of ghosts, celestials, and of the practices of priests.

The Players and Game Host are encouraged to invent other kinds of Lore.

Mace
[Combat]

This is the skill of using blunt concussion weapons such as maces or clubs. Mace Skill combines with your Speed Trait for To-Hit Rolls with Mace Attacks and for Parry Defenses with Mace.

Possible Favored Use: *With my Favorite Mace; striking from ambush.*

Medicine
[Lore, Trade]

This is the Skill of long-term patient care. Medicine Skill is used to prevent the Mortally-Wounded from dying and to heal Wounds over time.

Possible Favored Use: *On a Favorite Race; diseases, serious Wounds*

Meditation
[Mystic]

This is the Skill of focusing one's mind to better be in tune with the ways of the universe. This Skill is used to recover lost Magic Points more quickly.

Meditation is concerned with the energy of the soul; to cultivate the energy of the body, see the Qi-Sao skill.

Possible Favored Use: *In my private study; in a temple; while burning incense.*

Musical Instrument: [of Choice]
[Entertainment]

This Skill makes pleasant coherent sound with any type of musical instrument.

Possible Favored Use: *With my Favorite instrument.*

Navigation
[Trade]

This is the Skill of determining location and direction using the sun, moon, and stars, anywhere. Any ship passing out of sight of the shore needs a navigator.

Possible Favored Use: *Under the winter stars; at dawn.*

Observation
[Ken]

This skill is used quite a bit — it's a measure of your ability to perceive what's going on, to see what's out of place, and to be actively aware of danger. (To be passively aware of danger, you would do well to get the Sixth Sense Skill.)

Possible Favored Use: *In the Forest; in the Plains; in the Mountains; at night; things out of place, in combat.*

Oratory
[Trade]

This Skill allows you to prepare speeches. It lets you speak before an audience in clear, understanding, and hopefully convincing manner.

A skilled orator will know how to read a crowd's emotions and how to improvise appropriately.

Possible Favored Use: *To the troops; to the commoners.*

Painting
[Trade]

This skill allows you to create pleasing works of art on paper, canvas, or walls.

Styles of painting in Zhongguo range from cleverly realistic portraits and landscapes, to ornate pieces portraying fantastic creatures, or even complex decorative patterns.

Possible Favored Use: *Using an art style so incredibly specialized that only other sophisticates such as myself can appreciate it.*

Poetry (Shih Ching)
[Entertainment, Five Classics]

This skill allows you to conjure images with limited words. The Poetry of Zhongguo has strict rules governing how it is written, what subject matter it can contain, and even what words may be used — the Skill of Poetry will keep you apprised of the law.

Possible Favored Use: *Reciting classic poetry; composing new poetry.*

Polearm
[Combat]

This is the skill of using very long weapons with blades or points or a combination of the two. Polearm Skill combines with your Speed Trait for To-Hit Rolls with Polearm Attacks and for Parry Defenses with Polearm.

Possible Favored Use: *With my Favorite Polearm; striking from ambush.*

Psychology
[Ken]

This skill covers sizing up your opponents, reading their body language and tone of voice. It lets you see through such skills as Fast-Talk, and lets you tell if someone's lying to you.

Possible Favored Use: *Detecting lies; a particular race; among nobles; among ruffians.*

Qi-Sao
[Mystic]

In Zhongguo, it is common knowledge that the body cultivates and harnesses energy in its organs and in its spirit. The knowledge of "energy cultivation" is the skill of Qi-Sao. Skilled Qi-Sao practitioners can use exotic techniques for both healing and harming the body.

High Qi-Sao Skill is a requirement for many Martial Arts.

Possible Favored Use: *When meditating; at the sunset; with my Dim Mak.*

Research
[Ken]

This skill is used to review tomes of forgotten lore and to glean the useful bits of information from various sources. Scholars use Research when in their libraries and studies to learn about the world and the secrets of the past.

Possible Favored Use: *When in my personal library; when researching spells; family histories.*

Resolve
[Athletic]

The mainstay of the warrior, Resolve is necessary to overcome pain and injury. Anyone who fights for a living needs this Skill, and the higher, the better.

Possible Favored Use: *When standing my ground; when fighting my hated enemies; when fighting in formation; when protecting my lord; when protecting my love interest; against magic.*

Riding
[Athletic]

This is the skill for riding beasts of burden, such as the zhong xi-yi. When riding a mount, no combat skill can be higher than your biggest Riding die (known as the Riding Limit.) For example, if your biggest Riding die is d8, then none of your To-Hit Dice (while riding) can be larger than d8 (p. 130).

Possible Favored Use: *At a gallop; in combat.*

Seduction
[Influence]

This is the Skill to win the hearts of others, using the right motions, words, and tone of voice.

Possible Favored Use: *With alcohol; with flattery.*

Shadowing
[Ken, Subterfuge]

This is the Skill of following someone without your target being aware that they are being followed. Those highly-skilled with Shadowing will be able to pursue people without their knowing. This skill is usually opposed by Stealth (p. 73).

Possible Favored Use: *In the city; in the wilderness; while riding.*

Shield
[Athletic]

This is the skill of using a Shield to protect yourself from harm. Shield Skill combines with your Speed Trait for Block Defenses with Shield. Note that this Skill is *not* necessary to gain the Cover Dice from carrying a shield — it is needed only to use the Block Defense.

Possible Favored Use: *Blocking missiles; blocking melee combat; against Homing Attacks.*

Singing
[Entertainment]

This skill allows you to utter a series of words or sounds in a pleasant and emotional way.

Possible Favored Use: *With modern music; with folk music; when entertaining nobles.*

Sixth Sense
[Ken, Mystic]

Ever get that funny feeling that you're being watched? The Sixth Sense skill represents an experienced adventurer's sensitivity to danger — when to have one's back to the wall, how to sit and still be able to draw your weapon, where traps and snipers might be hiding, etc. This skill is used to keep from losing Ambush Tests (p. 104).

Possible Favored Use: *Against magic; against law enforcement; against my particular foes.*

Sleight-of-Hand
[Subterfuge, Unencumbered]

This is the Skill of picking the pockets of others without their notice, of hiding things within your hand, and of drawing weapons from concealment.

Sleight-of-Hand is an active skill that requires concentration and presence of mind; to hide things on your person to avoid discovery, use the Holdout Skill.

Possible Favored Use: *In crowds; when using a confederate to distract observers.*

Spear
[Combat]

This is the skill of using long, pointed weapons. Spear Skill combines with your Speed Trait for To-Hit Rolls with Spear Attacks and for Parry Defenses with Spear.

Possible Favored Use: *With my Favorite Spear; striking from ambush.*

Spell-Casting: (spell of choice)
[Mystic]

In order to improve your odds of casting a certain spell, you can learn a Spell-Casting skill for a given spell. Spell Casting of each spell is a separate Skill — you must specialize. Details on Spell Casting are in the "Magic" chapter (p. 189).

Possible Favored Use: *At night; when shouting at the top of my lungs; when wearing my spell-casting robes.*

Staff
[Combat]

This is the skill of using a balanced, long rod in two hands for combat. Staff Skill combines with your Speed Trait for To-Hit Rolls with Staff Attacks and for Staff Defenses with Axe. Parries made with Staff have a +1 Bonus.

Possible Favored Use: *With my Favorite Staff; striking from ambush.*

Stealth
[Subterfuge, Unencumbered]

Need to pass undetected? This skill lets you walk quietly, cling to shadows, and generally move past unwelcome prying eyes.

Possible Favored Use: *At night; in urban settings; in the woods.*

Strategy
[Lore]

The mainstay of generals and rulers of state, this Skill allows you to maneuver large troops to great effect during times of war.

Possible Favored Use: *In my Favorite province; with cavalry; with infantry.*

Streetwise
[Ken]

This is the skill of mingling with the criminal element, to know the "word on the street" and where to go to get certain unsavory services (see the Gossip Test, p. 107).

Possible Favored Use: *Finding places to sell or buy illegal items; finding a safe house.*

Survival
[Lore]

Survival is the skill of finding food and shelter in the wilderness, using a Foraging Test (p. 107).

Possible Favored Use: *Finding shelter; in the mountains; in the desert.*

Swimming
[Athletic, Unencumbered]

This skill determines how fast and how well you can swim. This skill is limited by Encumbrance (p. 130).

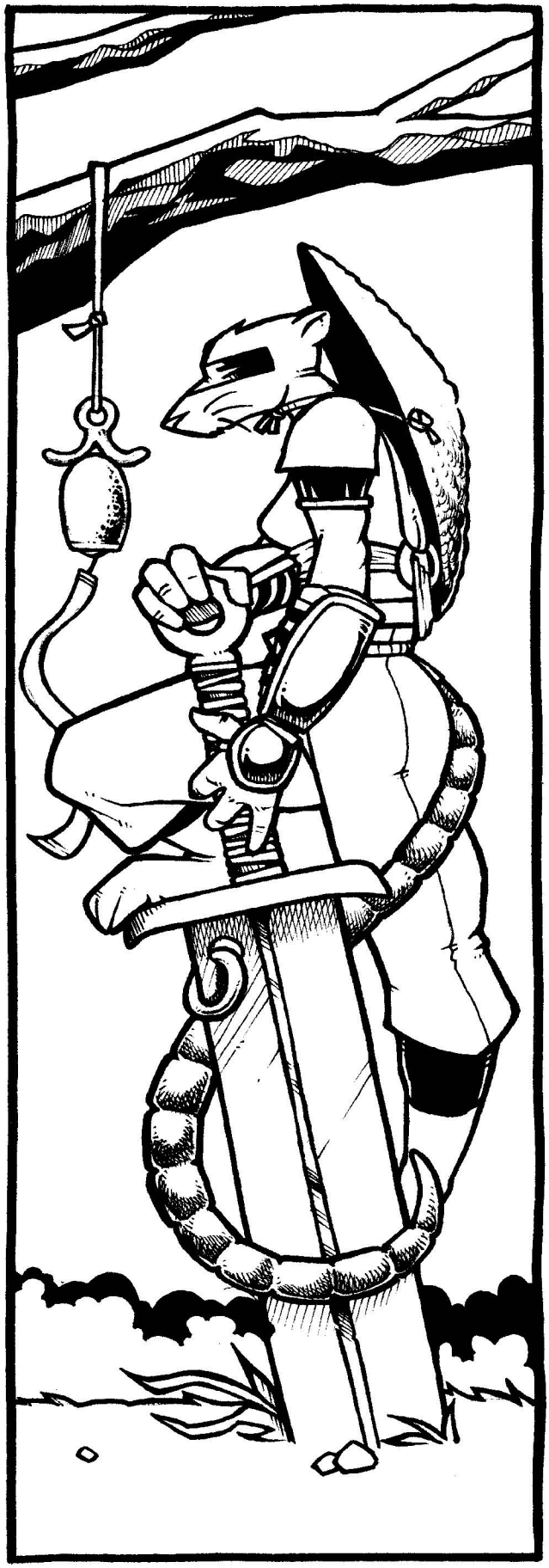
Possible Favored Use: *In salt water; in fresh water; while submerged.*

Sword
[Combat]

This is the skill of using a balanced, bladed weapon. It includes daggers and knives as well as longer kinds of swords, but not Soft Swords; for such finesse weapons, see the Fencing Skill (p. 68).

Sword Skill combines with your Speed Trait for To-Hit Rolls with Melee Sword Attacks and for Parry Defenses with Sword.

Possible Favored Use: *With my Favorite Sword; striking from ambush.*



Tactics
[Ken, Lore]

Tactics is the skill of fighting as a group. Tactics Skill combines with a leader to modify order of attacks in combat (p. 135).

Possible Favored Use: *With a party of close friends.*

Thrown Axe
[Combat]

This Skill combines with your Speed Trait for To-Hit Rolls with Ranged Thrown Axe Attacks.

Possible Favored Use: *With my Favorite Axe; striking from ambush; after Aiming; when Focused.*

Thrown Mace
[Combat]

This Skill combines with your Speed Trait for To-Hit Rolls with Ranged Thrown Mace Attacks.

Possible Favored Use: *With my Favorite Mace; striking from ambush; after Aiming; when Focused.*

Thrown Rope
[Combat]

This Skill combines with your Speed Trait for To-Hit Rolls with Ranged Thrown Rope Attacks.

Possible Favored Use: *With my Favorite Rope; striking from ambush; after Aiming; when Focused.*

Thrown Spear
[Combat]

This Skill combines with your Speed Trait for To-Hit Rolls with Ranged Thrown Spear Attacks.

Possible Favored Use: *With my Favorite Spear; striking from ambush; after Aiming; when Focused.*

Thrown Spines
[Combat]
Requirement: the Gift of Barbed Spines (2 points)

This is the skill of removing your spines by hand and then throwing them at people. Thrown spines require a Lift of +1 — see p. 133 for throwing rules. This Skill combines with your Speed Trait for To-Hit Rolls with Ranged Thrown Spine Attacks.

Possible Favored Use: *For the first time today; striking from ambush; after Aiming; when Focused.*

Thrown Sword
[Combat]

This Skill combines with your Speed Trait for To-Hit Rolls with Ranged Thrown Sword Attacks.

Possible Favored Use: *With my Favorite Sword; striking from ambush; after Aiming; when Focused.*

Thrown Wheel
[Combat]

This Skill combines with your Speed Trait for To-Hit Rolls with Ranged Thrown Wheel Attacks.

Possible Favored Use: *With my Favorite Wheel; striking from ambush; after Aiming; when Focused.*

Torture
[Trade]

This is the art of extracting information from people (p. 108). Torture is also used for punishment.

Possible Favored Use: *With a favorite implement; on the wounded.*

Tracking
[Ken]

A must for any hunter, this skill lets you follow tracks, as well as identify them. Skilled trackers can also tell details about their quarry, such as the make of their shoes, their size and weight, and their speed of travel. For characters with keen noses, this skill is expanded to include odors and scents.

Possible Favored Use: *For game; for people; at night; in the Forest; in the Mountains; in the Plains; for old trails.*

Trade: (of Choice)
[Trade]

Trades include commonly skills developed through apprenticeships. Trades are found in almost any village or town. Examples of these skills are given in the Equipment and Services section (p. 76). Each Trade must be bought as a separate Skill.

Possible Favored Use: *When in my personal workshop; rush jobs; for a specific clientele.*

Traps
[Ken, Trade]

This is the skill of building and removing mechanical traps. A skilled trapper can trap anything, or anyone.

Possible Favored Use: *Pit Traps; spring Traps.*

Weather Sense
[Ken, Mystic]

This skill aids in predicting the weather, a useful skill whether you are a farmer or a mighty general.

Possible Favored Use: *Before a battle; predicting rain in the spring; with Lightning Strikes.*

Wrestling
[Combat, Unencumbered]

Wrestling is the skill of unarmed combat that emphasizes grabbing, holding, and crushing your opponent into submission.

This Skill combines with your Speed Trait for To-Hit Rolls with Wrestling Attacks.

Possible Favored Use: *Pinning; crushing; disarming.Frequently Asked Questions About Skills*

Frequently-Asked Questions About Skills

How do I list Skills on the Character Sheet?

Write each Skill on a line on the Character Sheet. List any Favored Use in parentheses. Copy the dice from any Race, Career, or Special Traits that are included with the Skill in the part of the scroll on the same line.

Traits do not stack "on top" of Skills — rather, you gain multiple Dice in the Skill. Refer to the sample characters to see how this cascading works.

How do Traits work with Skills?

Your Race and Career Trait are *included with* Skill Dice when you roll. Trait Dice are independent from each other and from Skill Dice. When buying Skills, you list those independently of Skill Dice on your character sheet.

> **Example:** Chingis is a Weasel, so his Race Trait is included with Contortionist, Dodge, Stealth, and Tracking; his Race Trait is d10. He also has the Career of Burglar, which is included with Climbing, Streetwise, Stealth, and Traps; his Career Trait is d12.
>
> If Chingis were to make a roll that used the Skill of Stealth, he would roll his Race Trait of d10 and d12. Without any Skill, those would be the only dice he rolls.
>
> Chingis puts one point into the Skill of Stealth, which gives him a d4. Now if he has to make any rolls that use Stealth, he will roll his Skill Die of d4, and his included Trait Dice of d10 & d12.

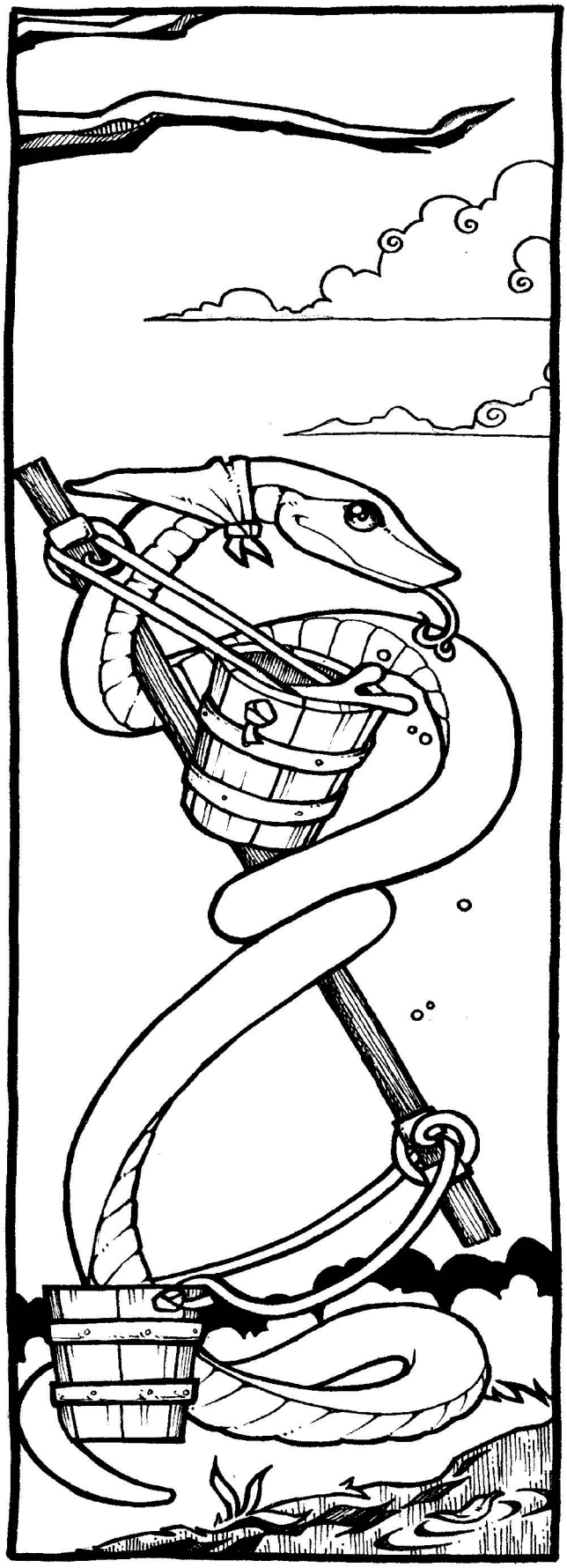
Some Special Traits are always included with Skills. The basic Traits of Body, Speed, Mind, and Will are sometimes, but not always, included with Skills — p. 99.

What is a Favored Use, and when do I have to declare it?

If you have even only a d4 in a Skill, then you may also have a Favored Use. List the Favored Use in parentheses after the Skill Name. Favored Use is described on page 9.

You don't have to list a Favored Use right away — you may just leave it blank. If you have a Skill with no Favored Use declared, you may declare one at any time, *even during the middle of a play-session*, even after rolling your dice and seeing a 1 staring up at you. (This is sometimes called an "epiphany.") Once you declare your first Favored Use, you cannot declare a new one for that Skill without spending Experience (p. 253).

> **Example:** When Chingis first buys his Stealth Skill, he decides to leave the Favored Use blank. Later, during a gaming session, Chingis is caught trying to purloin a Cher-Zou merchant's string of coins. While trying to elude the guards, Chingis declares his Favored Use for Stealth to be "When fleeing the scene of a crime." If Chingis had already had a Favored Use declared, he couldn't just change it on the fly like this — he would have to spend Experience.



EQUIPMENT & SERVICES

Money

The basic unit of money in Zhongguo is the *bù-qián* (cloth money). This coin is most commonly found in the hands of the common people and peasants and looks like a circular disk with a hole in the center. A second coin, the *jin-dao* (golden blade), most commonly used by the merchant class, looks somewhat like a miniature broadsword. The third coin is the *zhu-yù* (jewel jade) and looks like a flat lantern with a hole in the center. There are 30 bù-qián to one jin-dao, and 300 jin-dao to one zhu-yù. With peasant wages at only one bù-qián per day (or less), few have even seen an jin-dao, much less a zhu-yù. In Mâjing, the best craftsmen are said to earn a jin-dao a day. For convenience, all prices listed here are in bù-qián.

The amounts of money listed here are for campaign purposes; starting characters need only review the *Cost* column for Cheap, Average, and Expensive items. Remember that a starting character can have as many Cheap- and Average-cost items as they can carry. Gifts and Flaws such as *Belongings, Poverty* and *Wealth* modify what you're allowed to start with.

Starting Equipment and Pocket Change

Characters who have neither the Gift of Wealth or the Flaw of Poverty start with a quantity of bù-qián equal to the sum of their Career Traits. For example, if you start with a Ranger Trait of d10 and a Mercenary Trait of d4, then you start play with 14 bù-qián in coins, as well as all the Cheap and Average Equipment you are able to carry.

Characters with the Gift of *Wealth* (p. 52) start with the same number of coins, but in jin-dao instead of bù-qián. They also have a number of Expensive items equal to their *single-highest* Career Trait die (*not* the total), to a maximum of 12.

Because of their rarity, Characters do not start out with any zhu-yù.

Characters with the Flaw of *Poverty* (p. 56) start with no pocket change at all, and all the Cheap equipment they can carry.

To start with additional items, you need the Gift of *Belongings* (p. 51).

Suggested Starting Equipment, by Character Type

Expensive items are marked with an asterisk (*).

- ***Erudites:*** Scholarly Sword* or Knife, writing paper, ink and stone, brush, chop (signature stone)
- ***Governors:*** Martial or Scholarly Sword*, Armor of choice (if any), letter of investiture, vestments of office*, chop (signature stone).
- ***Miscreants:*** Throwing Knives, Darts, or Iron Balls, lock-picking tools, hooded lantern, large empty sack.
- ***Professionals:*** Knife, Armor of choice, appropriate tools.
- ***Warriors:*** Weapon of choice, Armor of choice (if any), first aid kit.
- ***Wizards:*** Lamp Staff, ink and stone, paper, brush, scroll tube, bells, incense.
- ***Working Class:*** Knife or Work related Weapon of choice (such as spade or hammer), Armor of choice (if any).

How Equipment is described

First the *Item* name is listed. *Price* is always listed in bù-qián, and is a "standard value," rarely fixed, and is subject to a Haggle Test (p. 108). *Cost* is the relative value of the item (Cheap, Average, or Expensive) for starting characters. (See "Belongings," p. 51.) *Weight* is listed in stone (6.35 kg). *Availability* is how often the item can be found throughout Zhongguo, subject to an Availability Test (p. 104). *Load* is how much the item weighs, in stone. (A stone is 6.35 kg or 14 lbs.) *Reach* is a weapon's striking distance, in paces. *Damage Dice* are used to determine how much injury the weapon causes to targets. *Parry* is the whether the weapon cannot Parry ("none") or can ("normal") or even if it has a Bonus. *Light, Medium,* and *Heavy* are the minimum Lifts required to use the weapon as a Light, Medium, or Heavy Weapon.

Weapons

Because of the dynamic differences between regions and physical sizes of the inhabitants of Zhongguo a single weapon design will vary in size and design from region to region. Many weapon designs also have origins that can be found in mundane tools used in everyday life. Devices such as the rake, spade, and trident are weapons originally used by the peasant armies of the days of old when they simply took up the tool the used most and went to war. Over time, these weapons have been improved upon, decreasing their usefulness as tools and making them into true weapons.

Each of the weapons listed below should be considered the "base" to a wide variety of similar weapons. A weapon master would be proficient at not just one weapon but up to eighteen, or more. In martial arts studies base weapons are used as the starting points to a variety of weapons. The three main weapons were the staff, the sword or saber, and the spear. From these, one would be able to build skills in other weapons that would share some similar design or strikes. It is not uncommon for a well-trained warrior to be carrying three weapons: a ranged or long-handled weapon to use before closing to hand-to-hand combat, a personal weapon for close quarters fighting, and finally, a hidden weapon such as a knife or throwing coins.

As metallurgy advanced, so did the weapons. First, weapons were made of copper and brass, soft and brittle metals that had killing capability but damaged easily and had to be reshaped or discarded. Iron followed these poor metals and quickly replaced it because of its incredible strength and ability to keep an edge. As metal refining advanced and techniques developed to harden metal through use of water and repeated beating, smiths began making weapons of exceptional quality. With the discovery of steel they began making weapons of renown. Legends developed as advances in design produced some of the finest weapons seen in the world. The art of making the weapon was as important as the art of using it.

Steps to choosing a Weapon:

- Find the Skill the weapon uses for its To-Hit Roll. (Axes for axes, Fencing for soft-swords, etc.)
- Decide how heavy a weapon you want – match your Lift to the weapon's Light, Medium, or Heavy rating. (Light Weapons can be used one-handed. Medium Weapons can be used one- or two-handed. Heavy Weapons *must* be used two handed. See "Easy Weapon," p. 127 and "Awkward Weapon," p. 126, for the differences.)
- Decide what kind of weapon you want – the kind determines what Weapon Specials you are permitted to use. Certain Martial Arts require specific weapons, as well.

Carried Weapons

Axes

Shorter than a Polearm, an Axe has a thick blade on a shorter handle, specialized for hacking an opponent.

Name	*Weight*	*Reach*	*Damage*	*Parry*	*Light*	*Medium*	*Heavy*	*Cost*	*Price*	*Availability*
Hatchet	1/8	1	d8	normal	2	1	—	average	8	Common
Quarter-Stone Axe	¼	1	d10	normal	3	2	1	average	15	Common
Half-Stone Axe	½	1, 2	d10, d4	normal	5	3	2	average	30	Uncommon
3-Quarter Stone Axe	¾	1, 2	d10, d8	normal	7	5	3	average	45	Uncommon
Full-Stone Axe	1	1, 2, 3	2d10, d4	normal	9	6	4	expensive	60	Rare

Kinds of Axes:

- **Short Axe (Fu)** • *(Light or Medium Axe — Special: Slash)* • Though not widely used, the Short Axe is a simple weapon that originated from the hand-axe tool. Sometimes used in pairs by those of exceptional strength (read: those who are using them as Light Weapons), with the Martial Art of "Shuang Fu" (p. 169).
- **Long-Handled Battle-Axe (Da Yue)** • *(Heavy Axe — Special: Slash)* • An uncommon weapon because of its size and weight, the Long-Handled Battle Axe is used by only the strongest of warriors. This weapon consists of a massive axe head mounted upon a wooden or metal pole.

Fencing Weapons (Soft Swords)

Soft Swords use a different fighting style than "hard swords." Their light, flexible blades make them superior Parrying Weapons — all Soft Swords give one Bonus to Parry rolls. Fencing Weapons can only be Light, and used in one hand.

Name	*Weight*	*Reach*	*Damage*	*Parry*	*Light*	*Medium*	*Heavy*	*Cost*	*Price*	*Availability*
Small Soft Sword	1/8	1	d6	one Bonus	2	—	—	expensive	50	Very Rare
Quarter-Stone Soft Sword	¼	1	d10	one Bonus	3	—	—	expensive	100	Very Rare
Half-Stone Soft Sword	½	1, 2	d10, d4	one Bonus	5	—	—	expensive	200	Very Rare
3-Quarter Stone 'Sword	¾	1, 2	d10, d8	one Bonus	7	—	—	expensive	300	Extremely Rare
Full-Stone Soft Sword	1	1, 2, 3	2d10	one Bonus	9	—	—	expensive	400	Extremely Rare

Kinds of Soft Swords:

- **Martial Sword** • *(Light Soft Sword — Special: Slash)* • The Martial Sword (also known as the Male Sword) and is both an offensive and defensive sword. While the blade is still flexible, the Martial Sword has a sharper, heavier edge than the Scholarly Sword, which gives it a better cutting edge.

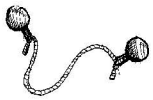
- **Scholarly Sword** • *(Light Soft Sword — Special: Improved Disarm)* • The Scholarly Sword (also known as the Female Sword) and is considered a defensive sword, with its rounded tip. Its blade is lighter than a Martial Sword's. The signature technique of the Scholarly Sword is to strike a foe's weapon so hard that the sword partially (or completely!) wraps around; a quick twist, and many foes will be disarmed.

Fighting Ropes

These weapons are uncommon and require a great deal of skill to use. Many of these weapons require the wielder to build up momentum by either swinging the item overhead or at the side in a circular motion. Some even require the users to wrap them around a body part, such as the knee, the back and/or arm to snap them at their opponent a great velocity. Ropes can be made of silk, hemp, natural fibers, or even chain links. *Ropes do not Parry.*

Name	*Weight*	*Reach*	*Damage*	*Parry*	*Light*	*Medium*	*Heavy*	*Cost*	*Price*	*Availability*
Quarter-Stone Rope	¼	1,2,3	d4	*none*	3	2	1	average	15	Uncommon
Half-Stone Rope	½	1,2,3	d8	*none*	5	3	2	average	30	Uncommon
3-Quarter Stone Rope	¾	1,2,3	d8, d4	*none*	7	5	3	average	45	Rare
Full-Stone Rope	1	1,2,3,4	2d8	*none*	9	6	4	expensive	60	Rare

Kinds of Fighting Ropes:



- **Double Headed Hammer (Shuang Tou Chui)** • *(Light, Throwable Rope — Special: Concussion, Entangle Arm, Entangle Leg)* • Consisting of two metal balls on a rope, the Double Headed Hammer was a weapon that was thrown at a target. Used primarily to dismount a rider, the weapon was thrown at the feet of the mount causing the rider to be flung off. This weapon can be used with the Martial Art of "Double-Headed Attack" (p. 164).

- **Plum Flower Claw (Mei Zha)** • *(Medium Rope — Special: Improved Disarm, Entangle Arm, Entangle Leg)* • The Plum Flower Claw comes in many varieties. This weapon is a disk with articulated metal "fingers" that radiate from the edges of the disk. It is attached to a long rope and thrown at a target. When the rope is pulled upon, the fingers flex inward, clutching whatever they have made contact with. This weapon does little damage but can used to ensnare an opponent or weapon, preventing him from maneuvering or fleeing.

- **Rope Dart (Sheng Biao)** • *(Medium or Heavy Rope — Special: Entangle Arm, Entangle Leg, Impale)* • A long rope weapon, the Rope Dart is simply a small dagger-like blade mounted on the end of thin silk rope up to five paces long. The weapon is "thrown" at the target by using a swinging motion to build up momentum and then released. It can be guided a small amount by using the body as a fulcrum and bending the rope as it travels towards its target. There is also a handle made of bamboo through which the rope travels that can be used a braking device to stop the path of the dart and recover it quickly. The Rope Dart can be used with the Martial Arts of "Improved Rope-Dart Fighting" (p. 165) and "Fantastic Rope-Dart Fighting" (p. 171)

- **Sectional Steel Whip (Jie Bian)** • *(Medium Rope — Special: Entangle Arm, Entangle Leg, Slash)* • This weapon is normally as long as the wielder is tall. The Sectional Steel Whip is made up of twelve steel bars connected by short links of chain. There is a handle at one end and dagger-like points at the other. This weapon is used to sting out at an opponent, much like a sword thrust, or it can be swung about using the sharp blade to slash opponents.
- **Soft Whip (Pi Bian)** • *(Light Rope— Special: Entangle Arm, Entangle Leg, Improved Disarm)* • Made of lizard hide and tendons, the Soft Whip was mainly used by charioteers. The weapon is used more in a defensive manner than anything else. With its exceptional length it is quite simple for a skilled user to the wrap Soft Whip around an opponent's weapon and pull it from their grasp. In the right hands, it can be used to deal out extremely painful injuries.

Fighting Wheels

With their large blades and strange prongs or tines, Fighting Wheels are excellent Parrying Weapons, granting one Bonus. Many users fight with two — one in each hand. (The Penalty for "off-hand" would be cancelled by the weapon's Bonus.)

Name	*Weight*	*Reach*	*Damage*	*Parry*	*Light*	*Medium*	*Heavy*	*Cost*	*Price*	*Availability*
Small Fighting Wheel	1/8	1	d4	one Bonus	2	—	—	expensive	50	Very Rare
Quarter-Stone 'Wheel	¼	1	d8	one Bonus	3	—	—	expensive	100	Very Rare
Half-Stone 'Wheel	½	1	d8, d4	one Bonus	5	—	—	expensive	200	Very Rare
3-Quarter Stone 'Wheel	¾	1, 2	d8, d8	one Bonus	7	—	—	expensive	300	Extremely Rare
Full-Stone 'Wheel	1	1, 2	2d8	one Bonus	9	—	—	expensive	400	Extremely Rare

Kinds of Fighting Wheels:

- **Cymbal (Nao)** • *(Light, Throwable 'Wheel — Special: Slash)* • Originally a musical instrument, the Cymbal is usually made of brass with razor sharp edges. This weapon was almost always used in tandem with another Cymbal. Together they could make loud clashing noises to confuse an attacker. This weapon may be thrown.

- **Sun-Moon (Zi Wu)** • *(Light 'Wheel — Special: Improved Disarm)* • Designed to fight against an opponent armed with one or two swords, the Sun-Moon consists of a two curved blades, one pointing forward and the other back towards the wielder of the weapon. The space formed between the two blades acts as the handle with the arc of the rear facing blade acting as a guard.

- **Wheel (Lun)** • *(Light, Throwable 'Wheel — Special: Slash)* • The Wheel is a perfectly circular blade. There are a number of designs for this weapon. Some are perfectly smooth while others have points protruding from the blade similar to the Sun-Moon. The back of the ring is the handle, with the wielder's hand actually in the center of the ring. This weapon was usually used in tandem with another ring and can be thrown.

Flails

Made of links of chain or even small blades, Flails wrap around at strange angles when swung in wide arcs. *Flails do not Parry.*

Name	Weight	Reach	Damage	Parry	Light	Medium	Heavy	Cost	Price	Availability
Weighted Chain	1/8	1	d8	*none*	2	1	—	average	5	Common
Quarter-Stone Flail	¼	1	d10	*none*	3	2	1	average	10	Common
Half-Stone Flail	½	1, 2	d10, d4	*none*	5	3	2	average	20	Uncommon
3-Quarter Stone Flail	¾	1, 2	d10, d8	*none*	7	5	3	average	30	Uncommon
Full-Stone Flail	1	1, 2, 3	2d10, d4	*none*	9	6	4	average	40	Rare

Kinds of Flails:

- **Four-Section Staff (Si Jie Tang)** • *(Heavy Flail — Entangle Arm, Entangle Leg, Slash)* • Similar to the Three Section Staff, the Four Section Staff has four sections, allowing for a long reach. It also has a metal blade at the head of the first section. While difficult to use in enclosed spaces, this weapon is quite devastating when used in the open.
- **Iron-Chain-Link Club (Tiao Lian Jia Bang)** • *(Medium Flail — Specials: Entangle Arm, Entangle Leg, Upset)* • Similar to the Sweep, this weapon has a shorter handle with a longer chain and slender metal rod. This weapon is designed to sweep and entangle.
- **Soft Hammer (Ruan Chi)** • *(Light or Medium Flail — Specials: Entangle Arm, Entangle Leg, Impale)* • Similar to a ball and chain, the Soft Hammer consists of a wooden handle connected by a short iron chain to a metal spiked ball.
- **Sweep or Broom (Shao Zi)** • *(Medium Flail — Specials: Concussion, Entangle Arm, Entangle Leg)* • This weapon consists of a long staff joined together by a chain or rope to a smaller staff.
- **Three-Section Staff (San Jie Gun)** • *(Medium Flail — Specials: Double Attack Entangle Arm, Entangle Leg)* • Made of three short wooden staves, the Three Section Staff is a weapon difficult to master. The third link gives it more flexibility and still retains a good reach.
- **Steel Whip (Gang Bian)** • *(Light Flail – Specials: Entangle Arm, Entangle Leg, Slash)* • Also called the "flexible sword," the Steel Whip is several blades chained together.

Iron Fans

Iron Fans are primarily used by Wizards or Erudite combatants. They resemble regular fans, except they are made of overlapping plates of iron instead of paper.

Name	Weight	Reach	Damage	Parry	Light	Medium	Heavy	Cost	Price	Availability
Small Iron Fan	1/8	1	d4	normal	2	—	—	expensive	60	Rare
Quarter-Stone Iron Fan	¼	1	d8	normal	3	—	—	expensive	120	Very Rare
Half-Stone Iron Fan	½	1	d8, d4	normal	5	—	—	expensive	240	Very Rare
3-Quarter Stone Iron Fan	¾	1, 2	d8, d8	normal	7	—	—	expensive	360	Extremely Rare
Full-Stone Iron Fan	1	1, 2	2d8	normal	9	—	—	expensive	480	Extremely Rare

Kinds of Fans:

- **Dart Fan (Shi Shan)** • *(Light Fan — Special: NONE)* • A symbol of rich and scholars, the Fan is nothing like its mundane sibling. The metal edges of the fan are razor sharp. The Fan is also a weapon of choice of some priests that deal with casting magic. This weapon is often used in tandem with another Fan. This weapon allows you to use the Martial Art Maneuver "Dart Fan Attack" (p. 162).
- **Shield Fan (Bi Shan)** • *(Light Fan — Special: NONE)* • A fan made of metal overlapping plates, the Shield Fan is larger than the Dart Fan, and it can also be used with Shield Skill as a shield (p. 72). The Shield Fan *cannot* be used to both Block and Parry in the same Round.

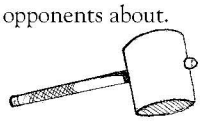
Maces

Large, unbalanced bludgeoning weapons, Maces are brutal but effective.

Name	Weight	Reach	Damage	Parry	Light	Medium	Heavy	Cost	Price	Availability
Club	1/8	1	d6	normal	2	1	—	cheap	5	Common
Quarter-Stone Mace	¼	1	d10	normal	3	2	1	average	15	Common
Half-Stone Mace	½	1, 2	d10, d4	normal	5	3	2	average	30	Uncommon
3-Quarter Stone Mace	¾	1, 2	d10, d8	normal	7	5	3	average	45	Uncommon
Full-Stone Mace	1	2, 3	2d10, d4	normal	9	6	4	expensive	60	Rare

Kinds of Maces:

- **Brass Monkey (Tong Hóu)** • *(Heavy Mace — Special: Concussion)* • This is not so much a weapon as a training tool used by Martial Schools to strengthen the arms of their students. The weapon is made entirely of brass and is approximately three feet in length. The weapon resembles a monkey with arms crossed and legs and tail pointing straight down to form the handle. At times the Brass Monkey has been used to defend the school. A Three-Quarter Stone or heavier Brass Monkey is needed to use the Martial Art of "Brass Monkey Smash" (p. 161).
- **Club (Bang)** • *(Light Mace — Special: Concussion)* • A simple improvised weapon made of wood or metal used to knock opponents about.
- **Hammer (Chui)** • *(Medium Mace — Special: Concussion)* • These weapons look like simple mallets with a large wooden head and short handle. The use of two Hammers by those of exceptional strength is not uncommon.



- **Iron Ruler (Tie Che)** • *(Light Mace — Special: Concussion)* • Commonly used by officers of the court and their lawmen to keep order in the streets, the Iron Ruler is a simple weapon, made from a very short rod of metal. They range in styles some with handles and flat striking areas.

- **Long Hammer** • *(Heavy Mace — Special: Concussion)* • Similar to a Long Staff, this weapon has a massive mallet head on the end of a wood or metal pole. This weapon is only used by warriors of exceptional strength.
- **Long Rod (Chang Bang)** • *(Heavy Mace — Special: Concussion)* • This weapon is a long rod with a weighted object at the end, sometimes called the "long staff" (but it uses Mace Skill, never Staff Skill). These weapons are heavy and awkward, and are preferred weapon for mounted combatants or for footmen who plan to take down mounted combatants. Sometimes the ball is covered with lizard-teeth, more for show than any increase in damage.

- **Pestle (Chu) or Iron Rod (Tie Jian)** • *(Light or Medium Mace — Special: Concussion)* • These weapons resemble swords without a cutting blade — instead, they have a metal rod. They vary in size.

Polearms

Longer and more balanced than Axes, Polearms specialize in keeping opponents at a distance. Unlike a Spear (which is primarily a stabbing weapon), Polearms have longer blades or hooks for tripping or slicing opponents.

Name	Weight	Reach	Damage	Parry	Light	Medium	Heavy	Cost	Price	Availability
Quarter-Stone Polearm	¼	2, 3	d8	normal	2	1	1	average	10	Common
Half-Stone Polearm	½	2, 3	d8, d4	normal	4	3	2	average	20	Common
3-Quarter Stone Polearm	¾	3, 4	2d8	normal	6	4	3	average	30	Uncommon
Full-Stone Polearm	1	3, 4	2d8, d4	normal	8	5	4	average	40	Uncommon

Kinds of Polearms:

- **Brush Polearm (Bi)** • *(Medium Polearm — Special: Concussion)* • This uncommon weapon is found in the Southern States of Zhongguo. The Brush Polearm consists of a brass hand clutching a metal "pen" or "brush" mounted on the end of a metal or wooden staff. This weapon is used for powerful over-head and sweeping strikes that literally punch through armor. This weapon is Useable with the Martial Art Special of "Brush Bludgeoning Stab" (p. 163).
- **Eyebrow Tip Broadsword (Mei Jian Dao)** • *(Light Polearm — Special: Slash)* • The lightest of the Long Handled Broadswords, the Eyebrow Tip Broadsword has a very narrow blade that arcs closer to the tip.
- **Fire Hook (Huo Gou)** • *(Light, Medium, or Heavy Polearm — Special: Improved Disarm, Upset)* • Similar to a hooked firefighting tool, the Huo Gou resembles a smaller version of the Long Handled-Broadsword. On the back of the blade is a hook. When used in tandem, two Light Fire Hooks can be used for the "Vast-as-Heaven Fire Hook Attack" (p. 169).

- **Halberd (Ji)** • *(Medium Polearm — Special: Slash)* • Another weapon commonly found within the Imperial Army and guards, the Halberd is used for sweeping and stabbing maneuvers. The head of this weapon has a spear point with a single crescent blade mounted below and to the side.
- **Heaven-Earth Sun-Moon Saber (Qian Kun R Yue Dao)** • *(Heavy Polearm — Special: Slash)* • A rare weapon, the Heaven-Earth Sun-Moon Saber is about two paces long. It consists of a long pole with two curved blades at both ends. Along the pole are two handles with hooks protruding forward similar to that of halberd. This weapon can be used with the Martial Art "Double-Headed Attack" (p. 164).

- **Long Handled Claw (Zhua)** • *(Medium or Heavy Polearm — Special: Concussion, Slash, Upset)* • This odd and very rare weapon resembles a large clawed hand on the end of a metal or wood staff. The weapon has many uses. It can be used to deal out concussive blows with the back of the hand, trip an opponent, and slash with its brass-clawed fingers.

- **Long Handled-Broadsword (Da Dao)** • *(Medium Polearm — Special: Slash)* • This is the standard long weapon of the Imperial Guard. Often there are rings on the back side of the blade to make noise and distract an opponent.

- **Nine-Dragon Trident (Jiu Lung Cha)** • *(Heavy Polearm — Special: NONE)* • Sometimes called the "king of all weapons," this aberration was designed to shred any part of the opponent with which it might come into contact. The many hooks and blades can twist an opponent's weapon out of their hands, shred their clothing and exposed body-parts, or even strike multiple times in a spinning dervish of destruction. In the hands of an untrained user, the Nine-Dragon Trident is clumsy and ineffective (and has no Weapon Specials of its own.) With extreme training, this weapon has several Specials available as Basic, Expert, and Heroic Martial Arts.
- **Rake (Ba)** • *(Light, Medium, or Heavy Polearm — Special: Improved Disarm, Upset)* • Resembling a farmer's tool, the Rake is used for sweeping and hooking attacks.
- **Shovel or Spade (Chan)** • *(Medium Polearm — Special: Slash)* • A large flat metal disk or shovel is fitted to a hardwood rod. The edges of the disk or head have a razor-sharp edge.

- **Sky Halberd (Fung Tian Hua Ji)** • *(Medium Polearm — Special: Impale, Upset)* • Simply a larger version of the standard Halberd. This weapon has two crescent shaped blades on either side of the spear tip.

Spears

Originally designed from a single stalk of bamboo with its striking end sharpened, the Spear is known as the "King of the Long Weapons" and is the most common weapon found throughout Zhongguo. Over a thousand years, many different Spears have been developed. Many have "blood-stoppers" or tassels attached below the head of the spear. While some spears were thrown, most are used in hand-to-hand combat much in the same way staffs are.

Name	*Weight*	*Reach*	*Damage*	*Parry*	*Light*	*Medium*	*Heavy*	*Cost*	*Price*	*Availability*
Dart	1/8	1	d4	normal	1	0	—	cheap	4	Common
Quarter-Stone Spear	¼	1, 2	2d4	normal	2	1	1	cheap	8	Common
Half-Stone Spear	½	1, 2	d8, d4	normal	4	3	2	average	16	Uncommon
3-Quarter Stone Spear	¾	2, 3	2d8	normal	6	4	3	average	24	Uncommon
Full-Stone Spear	1	3, 4	2d8, d4	normal	8	5	4	average	32	Uncommon

Kinds of Spears:

- **Double- Headed Spear (Shuang Tou Qiang)** • *(Medium Spear — Special: Impale)* • Lighter and shorter than a typical spear, the Double-Headed Spear has a spear tip mounted upon each end of the shaft. This weapon is Useable with the Martial Arts Special "Double-Headed Attack " (p. 164).
- **Flying Fork (Fei Cha)** • *(Light, Throwable Spear — Special: Impale)* • A thrown version of the trident. This weapon is Useable with the Martial Arts Special "Fork Disarm" (p. 164).
- **Fork Staff (Cha Gan)** • *(Light Spear — Special: Slash)* • The rarest of the forks with only two prongs curving outward, the Fork Staff is used to sweep rather than to thrust. This weapon is Useable with the Martial Arts Special "Fork Disarm" (p. 164).

- **Heavy or Lance Spear (Mao Qiang)** • *(Heavy Spear — Special: Impale)* • The longest of the spears, it is also the heaviest. With its tremendous reach this weapon is often used by or against lizard riders or charioteers, and for siege work.
- **Hook-Scythe Spear (Gou Lian Qiang)** • *(Medium Spear — Special: Impale)* • Though this weapon does no more damage than a spear of the same size it is a bit more versatile with the addition of a hook at the base of the spear point. This weapon is useable with the Martial Art Special "Hook-Scythe Chop" (p. 164).
- **Rod Spear (Gun Qiang)** • *(Light Spear — Special: Impale)* • The simplest of spears, this weapon consists of a rattan rod with a crude metal head.
- **Steel Fork (Gang Cha)** • *(Heavy Spear — Special: Impale)* • Similar to the Three-Tined Fork, this weapon is made completely of metal and is much longer. This weapon is Useable with the Martial Arts Special "Fork Disarm" (p. 164).
- **Three-Tined Fork (San Gu Cha)** • *(Medium Spear — Special: Impale)* • Originally used as a hunting weapon, the Three Tined-Fork is now used to fight with. This weapon has a trident head mounted on the tip of a rod or staff and stands about as high as its user. This weapon is Useable with the Martial Arts Special "Fork Disarm" (p. 164).
- **Throwing Spear (Biao Qiang)** • *(Light, Throwable Spear — Special: Impale)* • This is a much better balanced version of the Gun Qiang designed for throwing.
- **White Wax Wood Spear (Bai La Gan Qiang)** • *(Light Spear — Special: Impale)* • This spear is designed to be extremely flexible. While it may not do a lot of damage because of its weight, it can "wrap" around an opponent's weapon, thus making it easier to disarm them. This weapon is Useable with the Martial Arts Exploit "Soft Disarming Exploit" (p. 161) and the Special "Soft Improved Disarm" (p. 164).

- **Wind Mouth Broadsword (Fung Zui Dao)** • *(Heavy Spear — Special: Impale)* • While called a broadsword, this weapon functions mainly as a spear with a very long spear tip and a shorter handle. This weapon is useable with the Martial Arts Specials "Wind-Mouth Cleave" (p. 164).

Staffs

The Staff is a very common weapon, though it comes in many forms. The weapon is normally a wooden pole soaked in oil but can also be made of metal or a combination of wood and metal. *Staffs require two hands to use.*

Name	*Weight*	*Reach*	*Damage*	*Parry*	*Light*	*Medium*	*Heavy*	*Cost*	*Price*	*Availability*
Quarter-Stone Staff	¼	1	d6	one Bonus	—	2	1	cheap	4	Common
Half-Stone Staff	½	1, 2	d10	one Bonus	—	3	2	cheap	8	Common
3-Quarter Stone Staff	¾	1, 2	d10, d4	one Bonus	—	5	3	average	12	Uncommon
Full-Stone Staff	1	1, 2, 3	d10, d8	one Bonus	—	6	4	average	16	Uncommon

Kinds of Staffs:

- **Lamp Staff (Deng Zhan)** • *(Medium Staff — Special: Double Attack)* • A weapon common among monks, this weapon is also used by troops to clear a path for the Emperor. The staff varies in height and has a large brass ring mounted to the top of it with multiple brass rings joined to it.

- **Rod (Gun)** • *(Heavy Staff — Special: Double Attack)* • This is the most basic of staffs and covers a majority of them. The size of this weapon ranges from region to region and with the stature of the user.

Swords

The preferred weapon of the wealthy, the Sword comes in many forms, but all arehilted weapons with a cutting edge, and many have a stabbing point. These Swords are often called "proper swords," "hard swords," or "sabers," to distinguish them from the Soft Swords used with Fencing.

Name	*Weight*	*Reach*	*Damage*	*Parry*	*Light*	*Medium*	*Heavy*	*Cost*	*Price*	*Availability*
Dagger	1/16	1	d6	normal	1	—	—	average	15	Uncommon
Knife	1/8	1	d8	normal	2	1	1	average	30	Rare
Quarter-Stone Sword	¼	1	d12	normal	3	2	1	expensive	60	Very Rare
Half-Stone Sword	½	1, 2	d12, d4	normal	5	3	2	expensive	120	Very Rare
3-Quarter Stone Sword	¾	1, 2	d12, d8	normal	7	5	3	expensive	180	Very Rare
Full Stone Sword	1	1, 2, 3	2d12	normal	9	6	4	expensive	240	Extremely Rare

Kinds of Swords:

- **Broadsword (Dao)** • *(Medium Sword — Special: Impale, Slash)* • Also known as a wide-blade sword, as its head is wider than the base, this blade has only one sharp edge. While some broadswords can be used to stab they are primarily slashing weapons. Often these weapons are adorned with ribbons or handkerchiefs on the handles and a wide circular wrist guard at the base of the blade.
- **Cave Broadsword (Wo Dao)** • *(Heavy Sword — Special: Impale, Slash)* • A long gently sloping blade that maintains an equal width the entire length, until it tapers to a point. Designed to sweep the legs of the mounts ridden by warriors in combat, this weapon is the longest of broadswords and is found most commonly among the officers of the King's Imperial Guard.
- **Large Chopping Broadsword (Da Ken Dao)** • *(Heavy Sword — Special: Cleave)* • The largest of the swords, this weapon looks like almost any other broadsword and requires two hands to use. It is a typical tool for executioners where the weight of the weapon and downward swing ensures clean cuts.
- **Nine-Ring Broadsword (Jiuquan Dao)** • *(Medium Sword — Special: Cleave)* • This is a Broadsword with rings on the backside of the blade. (Whether it has nine rings or a different number, it's always called a "nine-ring broadsword.") When swung, the rings flip over to the front to give the weapon an extra kick. Unfortunately, the rings also make the weapon cumbersome to carry, as regular sheaths will not hold them.
- **Scrape Broadsword (Xiao Dao)** • *(Light, Throwable Sword — Special: Impale)* • A short broadsword with a very narrow blade, this weapon can be hidden in a sleeve or boot. Tassels or scarves are usually tied to the handles to help balance in flight.
- **Short Sword (Duan Dao)** • *(Light Sword — Special: Impale, Slash)* • Similar in fashion to a normal broadsword except in size, the short sword is often concealed under heavy clothing.

- **Sleeve Sword (Xiao Li Dao)** • *(Light Sword — Special: Impale, Slash)* • Named such because it is carried in the user's sleeve, this weapon is rare and used by assassins and thugs. It can be used as a knife, but if the spring is activated, the weapon extends to its full length. This weapon may be used with the Martial Art of "Sleeve Sword Surprise" (p. 162).

Ranged Weapons

Bows

While there are quite a variety of bows in Zhongguo, most are designed to be fired while riding a lizard or chariot and are considered light or medium bows. The Bow fires an arrow made of reed or rattan with a metal tip. There are many types of arrow tips that can be used ranging from the simple points to a whistle point used to signal troops. *Bows require two hands to use.*

Name	*Weight*	*PB*	*S*	*M*	*L*	*X*	*Damage*	*Light*	*Medium*	*Heavy*	*Cost*	*Price*	*Availability*
Bow, 1-Stone Draw	1/8	—	3	6	15	30	3d4	—	1	—	average	11	Common
Bow, 2-Stone Draw	1/8	—	6	12	30	60	2d6, d4	—	2	1	average	12	Common
Bow, 3-Stone Draw	1/8	—	12	24	60	120	2d8, d4	—	3	2	average	13	Uncommon
Bow, 4-Stone Draw	1/8	—	15	30	75	150	d10, d8, d4	—	4	3	average	14	Uncommon
Bow, 5-Stone Draw	1/8	—	18	36	90	180	2d10, d4	—	5	3	average	15	Rare
Bow, 6-Stone Draw	¼	—	30	60	150	300	2d10, d8	—	6	4	average	16	Rare
Bow, 7-Stone Draw	¼	—	35	70	175	350	3d10	—	7	5	average	17	Very Rare

Kinds of Bows:

- **Bow "Gong Jian"** • *(Medium Bow — Special: Impale)* • Made of bamboo, rattan, or hardwood, this weapon is the most common of bows and can be found almost everywhere.
- **Large Bow "Da Gong Jian"** • *(Heavy Bow — Special: Impale)* • Similar to the Bow, the Large Bow is simply bigger. These weapons are usually made of hardwood or metal.

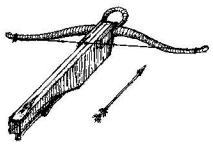
- **Sling Bow "Dan Gong"** • *(Medium or Heavy Bow — Special: Concussion)* • Similar in design to a Bow, the Sling Bow has two strings attached to a pouch. Iron balls, round rocks, or baked clay are used as projectiles.

Crossbow

Different from a Bow, the Crossbow attaches a bow to a crossbar upon which rests the bolt. A trigger is used to fire this weapon, releasing the string catch. The Crossbow traditionally delivers a more accurate shot with more power. The crossbow fires a short, heavy arrow, called a bolt. Crossbows require two hands to load.

Name	*Weight*	*PB*	*S*	*M*	*L*	*X*	*Damage*	*Light*	*Medium*	*Heavy*	*Cost*	*Price*	*Availability*
Pistol Crossbow	1/8	1	4	8	20	40	2d6	2	1	1	average	15	Uncommon
¼-Stone Crossbow	¼	1	12	24	60	120	2d8	3	2	1	average	30	Rare
½-Stone Crossbow	½	1	20	40	100	200	2d8, d4	5	3	2	expensive	60	Rare
¾-Stone Crossbow	¾	1	28	56	140	280	3d8	7	5	3	expensive	90	Very Rare
Full-Stone Crossbow	1	1	36	72	180	360	3d8, d4	9	6	4	expensive	120	Very Rare

Kinds of Crossbows:



- **Arms-Open Crossbow (Bi Zhang Nu)** • *(Light Crossbow — Special: Impale)* • Made from hardwood and rattan, the Arms Open Crossbow can be loaded by hand without the use of a foot-brace or pulley.
- **Foot-Open Crossbow (Jue Zhang Nu)** • *(Medium Crossbow — Special: Impale)* • This crossbow has a larger bow and rest and requires much more pull to reload the weapon. A loop is built into the front of the weapon to place the user's foot into to pull against.
- **Sling Crossbow (Dan Zhang Nu)** • *(Medium Crossbow — Special: Concussion)* • Like the Sling Bow, the Sling Crossbow is used to hurtle round projectiles rather than a bolt.
- **Waist-Open Crossbow (Yao Zhang Nu)** • *(Heavy Crossbow — Special: Impale)* • This is weapon is the largest of the Crossbows. The Waist Open Crossbow requires a crank or other mechanical device to re the weapon.

Slings

The Sling is a pouch with two strings attached to it, of hemp or leather. A rock or metal ball is placed in the pouch; the attacker swings the pouch until they get a great velocity, then they let go of one end, flinging the ball with great velocity. Slings have poor range compared to other weapons, but they are cheap to make and to maintain, and many folks have nothing but time to practice using them. *Include your Strength Dice with your Sling Damage.*

Name	*Weight*	*PB*	*S*	*M*	*L*	*X*	*Damage*	*Light*	*Medium*	*Heavy*	*Cost*	*Price*	*Availability*
Pocket Sling	1/8	1	2	4	10	20	d4*	1	—	—	cheap	1	Common
Quarter-Stone Sling	¼	1	4	8	20	40	d6*	2	1	—	cheap	2	Common
Half-Stone Sling	½	1	6	12	30	60	d8*	3	2	1	cheap	3	Common
¾ -Stone Sling	¾	1	8	16	40	80	d10*	5	3	2	cheap	4	Common
Full-Stone Sling	1	1	10	20	50	100	d12*	7	5	3	cheap	5	Common

* Unlike other Ranged Weapons, include your Strength with this Damage.

There is only one kind of Sling. It claims a *Concussion Special.*

Thrown Weapons

(To-Hit Speed & appropriate Thrown Weapon Skill Dice; Damage is Strength & Weapon Dice – see p. 133)

The ranges at which a Light, Throwable weapon can be thrown depends on how much greater your Lift is than the weapon's *Light* Rating. Any Light Axe, Mace, Spear, or Sword can be thrown.

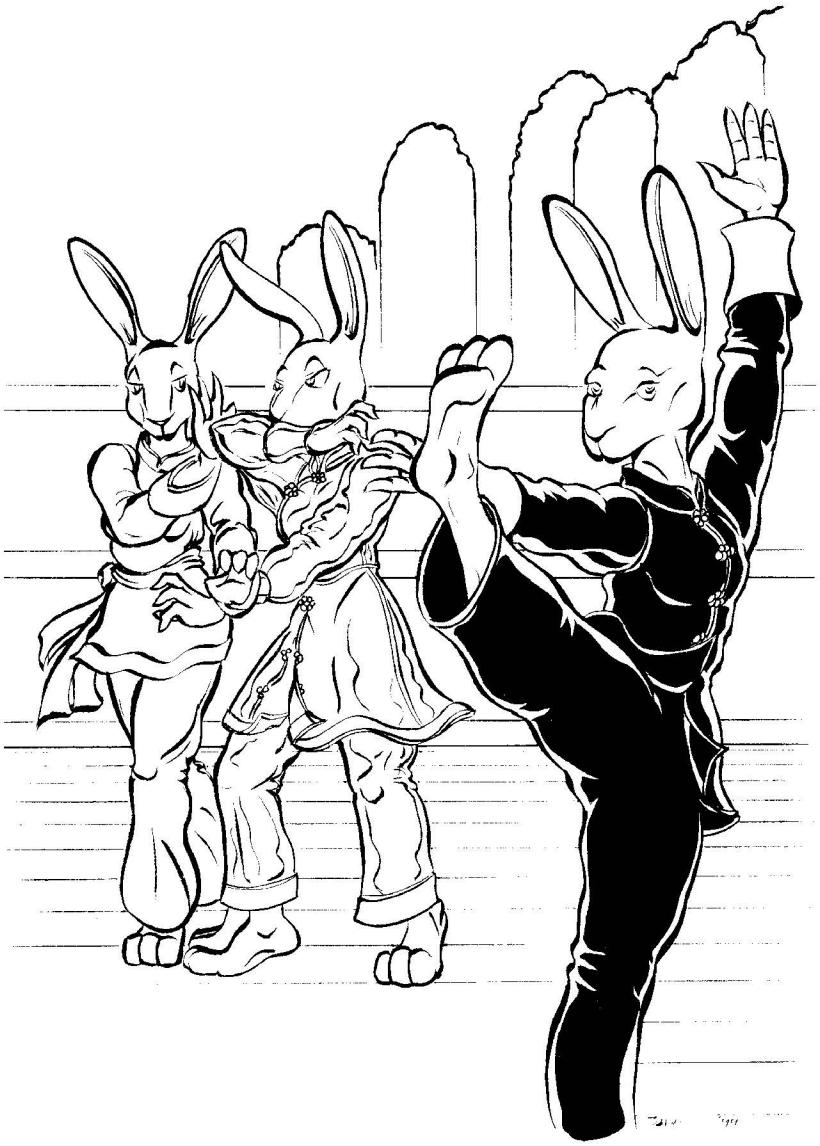
Lift minus "Light" rating	*Range Band*			
	Short	*Medium*	*Long*	*eXtreme*
zero	—	1	2	5
1	1	2	5	10
2	2	4	10	20
3	3	6	15	30
4	4	8	20	40
5	5	10	25	50
6	6	12	30	60

Natural Weapons

Obviously the most common weapons to be found, as they have no cost. The Zhonggese are famous for their inventiveness in finding ways to fight using what nature has given them. All Natural Weapons use *Speed Dice and Brawling Dice* for their To-Hit Dice. Racial Weapons include your *Race Dice*, as well. The Damage for a Beak, Claws, Hooves, Horns, Teeth, or Tusks attack is your *Strength Damage and d6.* The Damage for a Bare-Handed Attack is simply your Strength Dice. The Damage for an Empty Hand Attack is your *Strength Dice & your Empty-Hand Method Trait Dice.*

Kinds of Natural Weapons:

- **Bare-Handed** • *(Damage none; Special: Concussion)* • Fists, elbows, punches, kicks – basically any strike made without another kind of weapon. Bare-handed Attacks use only your *Strength Dice* for Damage Dice.
- **Beak** • *(Damage d6; Special: Impale)* • Few avians have mastered the use of this weapon, but for those who have, they can lunge at their foes with swift and deadly effect.
- **Claws** • *(Damage d6; Special: Slash)* • For avian races such as Chickens and Swallows, they must either kick the target or grab the target with their hands and rake their claws across the target's lower body. Mammalian Races like Cats and Dogs can use the Claws on their hands.
- **Empty-Hand Method** • *(Damage Empty-Hand Trait Dice; Special varies)* • See page 185 for more details.
- **Hooves** • *(Damage d6; Special: Concussion)* • The preferred method of attacking with Hooves is to trample a downed foe, but in a pinch, a good swift kick works.
- **Horns** • *(Damage d6; Special: Impale)* • Only male Sheep have Horns, but Oxen, Dragons, Qilings, and Yaks of either gender have them. Most Qilings have too much dignity to swipe at opponents with their heads.
- **Teeth** • *(Damage d6; Special: Bite to Grapple)* • A popular weapon with Wolves, a particularly savage technique is to bite the target, then rend them with either the fore-claws or with a short, Carried Weapon.
- **Tusks** • *(Damage d6; Special: Impale)* • Boars and Elephants attack with their Tusks by rearing their heads in swift arcs.



Armor

The weight of a combatant's Armor is proportional to their Size (p. 19).

Type	Armor Dice	Weight of Armor for a Person of Size... 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	Cost	Price	Availability
Cotton Armor	d4	¼	¼	¼	¼	¼	¼	½	½	½	½	½	¾	¾	¾	¾	¾	cheap	6	Common
Vine Armor	d4	¼	¼	¼	¼	¼	¼	½	½	½	½	½	¾	¾	¾	¾	¾	cheap	6	Common
Light Leather	d6	¼	¼	½	½	¾	¾	1	1	1	1 ¼	1 ¼	1 ¼	1 ¼	1 ½	1 ½	1 ½	average	12	Common
Heavy Leather	d8	¼	½	¾	1	1	1 ¼	1 ¼	1 ½	1 ½	1 ¾	2	2	2	2 ¼	2 ¼	2 ¼	average	18	Uncommon
Disc Armor	d8, d4	½	¾	1	1 ¼	1 ½	1 ¾	1 ¾	2	2 ¼	2 ¼	2 ½	2 ½	2 ¾	3	3	3 ¼	average	24	Uncommon
Brigandine	d10	½	1	1 ¼	1 ½	1 ¾	2	2 ¼	2 ½	2 ¾	3	3	3 ¼	3 ½	3 ½	3 ¾	4	average	33	Uncommon
Hauberk	d12	¾	1 ¼	1 ½	2	2 ¼	2 ½	2 ¾	3	3 ¼	3 ½	3 ¾	4	4	4 ¼	4 ½	4 ¾	average	39	Rare
Twin-Shield Armor	2d8	1	1 ½	2	2½	3	3 ¼	3 ¾	4	4 ¼	4 ½	5	5	5½	5 ¾	6	6 ¼	expensive	51	Rare
Star Scale Armor	2d10	1 ¼	2	2 ½	3	3 ¾	4	4 ½	5	5 ¼	5 ¾	6	6 ½	7	7 ½	7 ½	8	expensive	63	Very rare
Sleeve Armor	d12, d10	1 ½	2 ¼	3	3 ¾	4 ¼	5	5 ½	6	6 ½	7	7	8	8 ½	8 ½	9	9 ½	expensive	78	Very rare
Four-Mirrors	2d8	1 ½	2 ¼	3	3 ¾	4 ¼	5	5 ½	6	6 ½	7	7	8	8 ½	8 ½	9	9 ½	*see p. 52*	360	Extremely Rare

Kinds of Armor:

- **Brigandine (Kai Jia)** • This armor is a series of rigid plates (usually 7 to 9 centimeters long) lining the inside of a cloth or leather garment. Brigandine is one of the oldest kinds of armor in Zhongguo; many ornate designs have developed in each of the noble houses to denote rank and status (which can be determined by those with the Etiquette or Heraldry Skills).
- **Cotton Armor (Mian Jia)** • Popular in the northern regions, where winter lasts more than half the year, this armor is made of thick layers of cotton with small steel plates in between, held together with bronze rivets. Cotton armor is easy to maintain, with needle and thread.
- **Disc Armor (Mingguang Kai)** • This is basically Heavy Leather with a few well-placed discs of metal on the chest, backside, and over some of the joints. The extra metal adds weight but also some protective value. Disc Armor is sometimes called "Mirror Armor" because its metal plates are similar to those of the Four-Mirrors, but without the resistance to magic.
- **Four-Mirrors (Sijing Kai)** • An improvement over Twin-Shield Armor, Four-Mirrors are shiny, octagonal plates worn on the chest, backside, and midriffs. Wearing Four-Mirrors grants the wearer a d8 of Magic Resistance Dice. (See page 52.)
- **Hauberk** • The most costly of the "average armor," a Hauberk is a long coat of steel rings, riveted together. This armor is popular with barbarians and foreigners. Most Zhonggese prefer either the lighter Disc Armor (for mobility), Brigandine (to show their status), or heavier armor (if they can afford it).
- **Leather Armor (Light [Pi Jia] or Heavy [Da Pi Jia])** • Popular among soldiers and militia, Leather Armor is light and cheap. It is made of large pieces stitched together by pulled leather-thread. Light Leather is hardened in water; Heavy Leather is lacquered in a waxy substance that adds weight but also resilience.
- **Sleeve Armor (Tongxiu Kai)** • A step up from Twin-Shield Armor, this suit also covers the shoulders and arms. The added protection combined with increased expense makes Sleeve Armor a popular choice among fighting nobles.
- **Star-Scale Armor (Xingling Kai)** • Constructed of three-pointed, star-shaped plates, each is fastened to fabric at the outside of their points, so that each point is covered by the center of another plate. This construction makes Star-Scale Armor very tough, but also very rigid and cumbersome, and thus it is less popular than Twin-Shield Armor.
- **Twin-Shield Armor (Liangdiang Kai)** • Popular with cavalry or chariot-riders, this armor is two large pieces in-laid with layers of metallic chips, held together with leather straps at the top and a girdle around the waist. The arms are only lightly protected, but are also free to use bows or throwing spears.
- **Vine Armor (Teng Jia)** • Popular in the warmer, southern climes, Vine Armor is made from plant fibers that are first soaked in water for fifteen days, dried for three, then soaked in oil for seven more. Vine Armor not only resists water but is also buoyant, so it is popular with marines and sailors. Vine Armor is also sensitive to extreme temperatures (such as fire or cold) and is difficult to maintain, as it does not patch very well.

Shields

Shields offer *Cover Dice* – extra Dice for any Defense: Parry, Block, or Dodge. In fact, you cannot Block unless you have a Shield in the first place.

Type	*Load*	*Cover Dice*	*Notes*	*Cost*	*Price*	*Availability*
Shield Fan	½	d6 for Defense	May be used to Block, using Speed & Shield Dice, *or* may be used to Parry, using Speed & Iron Fan Dice. (Only one Defense per Fan per Round.)	expensive	75	Extremely Rare
Small Shield (Buckler)	½	d8 for Defense	May used to Block, using Speed & Shield Dice.	cheap	8	Uncommon
Shield	1	d10 for Defense	May used to Block, using Speed & Shield Dice.	average	15	Rare
Heater Shield	2	2d10 for Defense	May used to Block, using Speed & Shield Dice.	average	30	Very Rare
Wall Shield	4	2d12 for Defense	May used to Block, using Speed & Shield Dice.	expensive	60	Very Rare

Equipment

Food, What You Eat

Everyone needs to eat, from the lowliest of peasants to the Emperor himself. The most common staple in every diet is rice. Rice is the building block of all meals or is the meal itself. With the exception of the poorest folk, who usually find themselves eating millet, everyone eats rice! Rice can be cooked quickly, and it can also be kept for weeks and even months. Meat is a class distinction. The more meat you eat, the wealthier you are. The basic drink is water. Tea is usually the preferred drink in social situations.

Item	*Price*	*Cost*	*Weight*	*Availability*
Millet — ground grains and water, peasant food	1	Cheap	¼	Common
Bun — round bread, usually served with rice	1	Cheap	¼	Common
Rice Ball — with vegetables	2	Average	¼	Uncommon
Meat Dish — a well-to-do dinner, with sides	10	Expensive	¼	Very Rare
Spices — makes anything taste better	4	Expensive	¼	Very Rare
Water — the source of life (Outside civilization, this may require a Foraging Test, p. 107)	--	Cheap	¼ per day	Common
Tea — almost as common as water	1	Cheap	½	Common
Wine — made from some kind of fruit or rice (one day's worth)	¼	Cheap	½	Common
Ale — watered down and old (one day's worth)	1/8	Average	½	Uncommon
Good Wine or Ale — stronger stuff (one day's worth)	½	Expensive	½	Rare

Clothing, What You Wear

Clothing is a mark of class in Zhongguo. The type of fabric, the color and decorations on the fabric, jewelry, headgear and footwear all tells something about the wearer's position in society. Men always wear a *kuan* (hat) in public and women a hairpin. Clothing of the lower class is usually made of hemp, Merchants and the middle class usually of cotton, and the upper class and nobility of silk. Even certain colors of fabric have their place: yellow can only be worn by members of the Imperial family, other nobility wear bright colors, the wealthy or merchant class normally wear dull colors except black and blue which are reserved for the poor, white is worn when in mourning and red is worn for weddings.

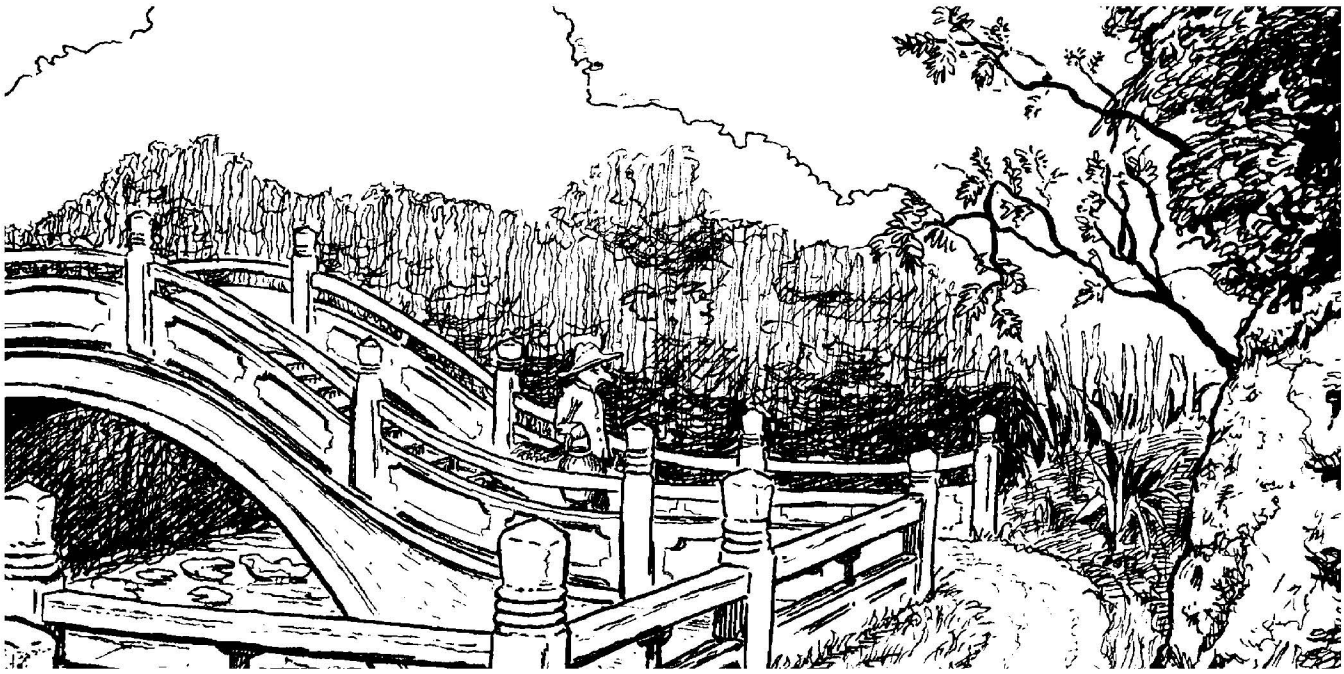
For fancier clothes, multiply the prices here: by 5 for middle-class clothes; by 50 (or more) for upper class.

Item	*Price*	*Cost*	*Weight*	*Availability*
Loin cloth — usually reserved for criminals	-	Cheap	-	Common
Shirt — simple pull-over	1	Cheap	-	Common
Jacket — basic shirt with cloth "buttons"	2	Cheap	-	Common
Trousers — simple pants with drawstring	2	Cheap	-	Uncommon
Belt — simple rope	1	Cheap	-	Uncommon
Hat — made of bamboo or reeds	1	Average	¼	Uncommon
Kuan — made of wood	1	Average	¼	Uncommon
Hemp Lu — single sole sandals	2	Cheap	-	Uncommon
Hemp Lu — double sole sandals	3	Average	-	Uncommon
Wooden Hairpin — for men and women	1	Average	-	Rare
Straw Rain Coat — worn around shoulders	4	Cheap	½	Rare
Shen-I — loose robe	3	Average	¼	Uncommon
Umbrella — wax paper	7	Average	¼	Very Rare

Travel Gear

This is the basic stuff for travelers. Hosts may wish to assume characters have one of each item the character can afford. The weight for flasks, backpacks and cases do not include the weight of the contents.

Item	Price	Cost	Weight	Availability
Backpack — a bag with a shoulder strap	2	Average	-	Uncommon
Gourd — holds a day's water	2	Average	-	Uncommon
Metal flask — same, only metal	16	Expensive	-	Rare
Pouch — hemp or cotton bag with a draw-string	2	Cheap	-	Common
Purse — leather with a latch and a strap	4	Average	-	Uncommon
Travel Blanket — helps protect from the road	4	Average	-	Uncommon
Fire Kit — flint, steel and kindling	2	Average	-	Uncommon
Cooking Pot — holds a quart	4	Cheap	¼	Common
Pot Stand — holds the pot out of the fire	4	Average	½	Uncommon
Chop Sticks — for eating food with	2	Cheap	-	Common
Wooden Bowl — plain, for food	2	Average	-	Uncommon
Ceramic Dish — fancy, for food	8	Average	-	Rare
Ceramic Cup — for tea	4	Average	-	Uncommon
Tea Pot — for boiling water	12	Average	1	Uncommon
Large Hemp Tent (with poles) — a good shelter	120	Expensive	6	Rare



Personal Items

In Zhongguo, personal items are usually highly valued and kept close to one's person.

Item	Price	Cost	Weight	Availability
Dice — small objects with dots	2	Cheap	-	Common
Cards — more stuff for gambling	8	Average	-	Rare
Jewel box — small box with a lock	16	Expensive	-	Rare
Whistle — noise maker	2	Cheap	-	Common
Wooden Flute — for music	8	Average	1/8	Uncommon
Horn — for announcing yourself	14	Expensive	1/8	Rare
Incense — to burn in honor of one's ancestors	1	Cheap	-	Common
Incense Holder — to burn incense in	28	Average	¼	Uncommon

Trades Gear

This covers a broad range of items needed by professionals to do their jobs.

Item	*Price*	*Cost*	*Weight*	*Availability*
Candles — basic illumination	2 per dozen	Average	¼	Uncommon
Lamp — better illumination	12	Expensive	¼	Rare
Paper — mashed plants	3 per 4 sheets	Average	-	Uncommon
Velum — more durable and permanent than paper	4 per sheet	Expensive	-	Rare
Charcoal/Chalk — for making marks	1	Cheap	-	Common
Chop — personalized signature stamp	10	Average	-	Rare
Ink Stick and Stone — add water and grind	10	Average	-	Rare
Brushes -for writing	10	Average	-	Rare
Eye glasses — to help with Poor Vision	400	Expensive	-	Extremely Rare
Scroll Case — water resistant tube	4	Average	-	Rare
Lock Picks (wooden) — difficult to use	30	Average	-	Rare
Lock Picks (metal)	90	Expensive	-	Very Rare
Woodworking tools — various	20	Average	2	Rare
Metalworking tools — various	80	Expensive	2	Very Rare
Whetstone — for sharpening metal	4	Average	-	Rare
Bandages — helps stop bleeding	2	Average	¼	Rare
Ointment — prevents infection	20	Expensive	¼	Very Rare
Small Idol(wooden) -identifies one's deity (plain)	4	Cheap	-	Common
Small Idol (gold) — fancy	50	Average	-	Rare
Small Idol (jade) — very impressive	120	Expensive	-	Extremely Rare
Incense — smelly	1	Cheap	-	Common
Incense — smells good	2	Average	-	Rare
Bell — to summon or dismiss ghosts	5	Average	-	Rare
Lute — to make music with	88	Expensive	4	Very Rare
Bagua Mirror – to reflect bad Qi	100	Expensive	-	Very Rare
Bagua Compass — prevents ghosts from leading you astray and determines feng-shui position	100	Average	-	Rare
Firecrackers — to scare away spirits and ghosts	1per dozen	Cheap	-	Uncommon
Fan (bamboo) — to cool one's self	3	Cheap	-	Uncommon

Adventuring Gear

Adventurers have additional needs. Take a look and see what you will need.

Item	*Price*	*Cost*	*Weight*	*Availability*
Wooden Wedge	1	Cheap	¼ per 4	Common
Iron Spike	3	Average	¼ per 2	Uncommon
Rope — a "chain" or 22 paces of hemp rope	3	Average	1	Uncommon
Pole — a two-pace straight stick	2	Cheap	¼	Common
Torch — pitch on a stick, burns for two hours	1/6	Cheap	¼ per 12	Common
Hooded lantern — unidirectional and protected from wind when the hood is down, metal	8	Average	¼	Rare
Storm Lantern — lantern protected from the wind, omni-directional, metal and glass	16	Expensive	¼	Very Rare
Lantern oil — in a flask, enough for 24 hours	2	Average	¼ per 2	Uncommon
Manacles — to bind the villains or captives	10	Expensive	½	Rare

Transport

In Zhongguo, many people get about on foot. Most of the nobles will ride in chariots when crossing the open country side and most middle class and merchants (and their body guards) will have mounts. Regardless of class, a riding animal, wagon, or chariot is a sign of stature!

Item	*Carries…*	*Price*	*Cost*	*Availability*
Zhong xi-yi – a giant lizard not afraid of a rider or combat, used by nobles to pull chariots	20 stone	300	Expensive	Very Rare
Cao xi-yi — a giant lizard for hauling, also used as heavy cavalry	20 stone	400	Expensive	Uncommon
Cart — two wheels	50 stone	800	Expensive	Uncommon
Carriage — 4 wheel, 2 Cao xi-yi, and side doors for the passengers.	70 stone	1,000	Expensive	Rare
Chariot, Riding — two wheels, 2 riders, requires 2 beasts-of-burden	50 stone	1,200	Expensive	*
Chariot, War — two wheels, 3 riders, requires 4 beasts-of-burden	75 stone	5,000	Expensive	**
Wagon — four wheels, requires 2 beasts-of-burden	100 stone	1,600	Expensive	Uncommon
Wagon, Long — four wheels, two Cao xi-yi, this wagon is designed to be linked to other wagons of the same type, forming a connected "train" or caravan where the riders can walk between the wagons without touching the ground	100 stone	2,000	Expensive	Rare
Wagon, War — eight wheels, 8 Cao xi-yi, carries 25 soldiers and can be used as a platform for a general or a weapon	200 stone	2,800	Expensive	Very Rare

*Only characters with the Gift of "Nobility: Noble Blood" may purchase a riding chariot. **Only characters with the Gift of "Nobility: Baron" may purchase a war chariot.

Services

Not everything valuable is an object. The following sections detail several services you might be interested in purchasing, from transportation to medicine. Game Hosts should remember that each service must be purchased from someone — this is an excellent opportunity for role-play.

Carriage

A good amount of overland transportation in Zhongguo is done by vechiles drawn by peasants, not animals, and is widely available in most towns Transport services charge per the league, rounded up. Carriers charge by the load, not by the passenger. These carriers will only take a limited number of passengers, no discounts for partial loads. Sea vessels are the only exception; they charge full fare per berth, price is still per league.

Item	*Price per League*	*Passengers*	*Availability*
Kago — two men carrying a seat slung from a stick	1	1	Common
Palanquin — Four bearers, two sticks, enclosed box, seating can be above or below the sticks	2	2	Uncommon
Handcart — A two wheeled chair with two handles for a person to hold onto while running, pulling the rider	1	1	Uncommon
Wagon — for town to town travel, seating on the floor	1	8	Common
Carriage — in town or out, no springs, a rough ride	4	4	Rare
River ferry — usually a raft connected to a rope and pulley, best way to cross a river	2	8	Any river town or crossing
River/Lake boat — ride with the freight, usually on deck	1	6	Uncommon
Sea vessels, cheap — in the hold, usually on the floor or if paying, in hemp "sling" bunks.	1 or Indenture	Varies	Common
Sea vessels, expensive- with a stateroom, one bed each	2	4 in 1 room	Extremely Rare

Vittles and Lodging

If you are staying somewhere other than your own home, or if you are eating someone else'sfood, you will have to pay for it. Here is a quick listing of average prices. They will very depending on location and exactly who the business caters to.

Item	*Price*	*Availability*
Bare Bones — millet and water, you will not starve	2	Common
A Simple Meal — rice balls, veggies, a bun, and tea	6	Uncommon
A Good Meal — rice with meat, a choice of several veggies and buns, tea, and wine or ale	15	Rare
Common room — move the tables aside and sleep where you eat	1	Common
Bunk room — separate but not private	4	Uncommon
Private room — up to 4 can stay	16	Rare
Private room with bath — and services	24	Very Rare
Steam and Bath (open) — for cleaning, relaxing and socializing	2	Rare

Care

Medicine in the land of Zhongguo is some of the most advanced in the world. Because of the diverse cultures present in and around the kingdom, the forms of medicine vary from town to town while several different forms are available in the major cities and capitals.

Item	*Price*	*Availability*
Visit from a doctor, priest, or monk (Medicine of 2d6)	2	Uncommon
Visit from a good doctor or monk (Medicine of 2d10)	4	Rare
Stay in a hospital common room (plus doctor's fees)	6	Very Rare
Stay in a hospital private room (plus doctor's fees)	8	Extremely Rare
Charity in a local temple (Medicine of 1d6)	Free to the pious	Uncommon
Charity with a visit from a monk (Medicine of 2d10)	Free to the pious	Extremely Rare

Skilled Labor

There is a vast supply of skilled labor in Zhongguo. The style of the work is dependent on the region the craftsman or tradesman comes from. As with all things, the higher the quality the more it will cost. There are usually nine ranks involved in skilled labor, with a one being a wet behind the ears student and nine being a Master.

The price is typically 3 bù-qián per day for a low level craftsman, 12 bù-qián per day for mid level, and 24 bù-qián per day for a Master craftsman. The rates for tradesmen are lower: 2 per day for a low-level, 8 for a mid-level,and 14 for a Master. These rates do not include the cost of any materials, and they are, of course, open to negotiation as per a Haggle Test (p. 108).

The following is a sample list of crafts and trades. Many of the occupations are not found in the smaller villages and towns. Craftsmen are almost never seen in these small population centers and rarely in towns. Tradesmen are more common and seen even at the village level though usually for the most common necessities such as clothing and tack. A bookmaker would not be found in a small farming village.

Labor Service	*Price*	*Availability*
Low level Craftsman	3 / day	Rare
Mid level Craftsman	12 / day	Very Rare
Master Craftsman	24 / day	Extremely Rare
Low level Tradesman	2 / day	Uncommon
Mid Level Tradesman	8 / day	Rare
Master Craftsman	14 / day	Very Rare
Low level Wizard	12 / day	Extremely Rare
Mid level Wizard	24 / day	Extremely Rare

Crafts

Calligrapher — who both writes ideograms and illustrates
Jeweler, Gold or Silversmith
Limner — portraits
Optician — extremely rare (-2 penalty on Availability)
Scribe — copyist for books
Tailor — specialty clothes

Trades

Armorer
Barber — dentist and minor surgery
Bowyer — bow maker
Chandler — candle maker
Cobbler — shoe maker
Cooper — barrel maker
Cutler — knife maker
Draper — clothes for everyone
Fletcher — arrow maker
Gunsmith
Joiner — furniture maker
Mercer — cloth maker
Saddler — saddles and tack for the Cao xi-yi
Stationer — bookmaker (not a bookie)
Tanner — leather worker
Tin smith or Blacksmith
Wainwright — wagon maker

Zhongguo has a large amount of unskilled labor — usually peasants down on their luck, or *indentured servants* (criminals working off their punishment). For simple tasks, such as digging ditches or hauling lumber or building materials, these people would be used. The peasants would normally be paid in rice for their day's worth of work.

Magical Labor

For the use of spells, most Wizards will charge a day's pay for their services as if they were a master craftsman (since Magic is such a high craft). Of course, mercenary monks may try to extract much greater fees. Many Wizards will refuse to cast Delayed Spells or Persistent Spells for hire; others will charge exorbitant fees, starting at one jin-dao per Magic Point spent. Sometimes, however, one might find a Wizard that will offer his or her services for free and in the name of their teacher or school.

Teaching Services

After earning Experience, characters may want to follow a path of Self-Improvement that requires being taught (p. 255). Hiring a teacher costs the same as hiring someone's services for the whole day. An instructor can teach 3 topics in a whole day.

Frequently Asked Questions about Equipment

How big is a "stone"?

A stone is 6.35 kilograms, or 14 pounds. The stone is the standard unit of weight in the game of *Jadeclaw*.

What do the coins look like?

The *bù-qián* is a circular coin about 40 mm in diameter (almost 2 inches) with a larger hole in the center and weighs about 8 grams. The are made of common metals (varies from each minting). There are about 793 bù-qián to the stone.

A *jin-dao* is a little smaller: 33mm in length and 15mm wide looking somewhat like a broadsword with a small hole where the handle ends, and weighing 5g (exactly 1,270 to the stone). Modern jin-daos are usually made of zinc and then plated with gold — ancient ones of solid gold are hard to find, as most have been melted down.

The *zhu-yù* is the largest weighing nearly 13 grams apiece (nearly 488 per stone). This lantern-shaped coin is made of jade with a gold-square insert in the enter. Only the elite of society can carry zhu-yù.

All three coins are recognized in Zhongguo and accepted as payment for goods and/or services. The amount of the coin may vary from year to year depending on the general feeling towards the emperor. Each coin has imprinted upon it the characters representing the royal seal of the Emperor, the year the coin was minted, and the phrase *Li Zhu-yù Yu-shi*, "Strength Comes From Knowledge."

What do people eat?

For the herbivores, food consists of grains, leaves, boiled seeds, and bread. For those who crave meat, there is a popular trade in hunting small game and in raising *cao xi-yis*, lizard-like beings bred as beasts of burden or for slaughter. Weak wine is usually more popular than water, which can become stagnant. Spices and salt are used regularly, but in small amounts due to their expense..

What armor should I wear?

The most popular armor is Disc Armor. It provides reasonably good protection, doesn't weigh too much, and is average cost.

"The successful are not always clever, and the distressed are not always simpletons. The lucky win and the unlucky lose. With a liberal fate and good fortune, even a vulgar Rat becomes noble and genteel; with a miserable fate and bad fortune, the most remarkable Dragon remains wretched and miserable. If talents and virtue were to be measured by success, then the great lords invested with the domain of a town and living on the soil would all be wise men."

— from *An Essay on the Book of Changes* by Honorable Er Ailing

HOW TO PLAY *JADECLAW*

In *Jadeclaw*, dice are used to add a random element. Who knows whether you'll jump that gap, con that merchant, or finally vanquish your hated rival? Die rolling not only determines whether you did something or not, but how well you did it. In this chapter, we'll explain how the basic kinds of die rolls work in the game.

Dice Notation: "#d#"

Jadeclaw uses five kinds of dice: the *four-sided*, the *six-sided*, the *eight-sided*, the *ten-sided*, and the *twelve-sided*. Dice shorthand uses the letter "d" followed by the number of sides on the die. For example, "d8" refers to an eight-sided die. For multiple dice, put a number in front of the "d," such as "2d6" for rolling two six-sided dice. In *Jadeclaw*, you might have such varied combinations as "2d12, 3d10, d8, & d4."

Die *Size* refers to number of faces

The number of sizes on a die is called its *Size*. A twelve-sided die is considered to be "bigger" or greater in Size when compared to a ten-sided die. If a die "increases in Size," it steps up to have two more faces; for example, a four-sided die would grow in Size to become a six-sided die. Increases are explained in greater detail under *Bonuses*, below.

Don't add those Dice together!

With very rare exceptions, dice are *not* added together in *Jadeclaw*. With a Simple Roll, you are just concerned with the biggest die showing. With a Damage Roll, you'll be comparing each die to another die.

What you see is what you get

There are no "plusses" or "minuses" in *Jadeclaw*. What numbers are showing on your dice are the numbers you'll be using. You may be adding more dice, changing the sizes of the dice you have, and sometimes re-rolling the dice, but whatever comes up is what you'll be using.

Simple Rolls

Most rolls in *Jadeclaw* are about either-or propositions: Did you or didn't you? And how well did you do it? This common game mechanic is called a *Simple Roll*.

Roll your Dice — the highest-showing die is the *Score*

For a Simple Roll, roll your dice and find the one that rolled the biggest number. That die is your *Score*.

Almost every roll in *Jadeclaw* is *contested* — someone else will be rolling dice against you. Most often, the Game Host will be playing the role of other characters, who will oppose you for some reason. Perhaps they don't want to be fooled, or perhaps they have designs upon your character's life!

A contest usually involves two kinds of dice against one another. For example, you may be trying to use your cunning to deceive someone, which (in game terms) might be represented as a contest of Fast-Talk Dice vs. Psychology Dice. Or you may be trying to win a formal debate, which may be a contest of your character's Oratory Dice vs. another's Oratory Dice.

Success or *Failure?* ...

If your Score is *greater* than the Score you oppose, your result is a *Success*. If your Score is *less* than the Score you oppose, your result is a *Failure*.

> ***Example:*** You want your character to climb a tree. The Game Host rules that this task is a typical one and assigns a difficulty of 2d6. Your character's Climbing Dice are d10 and d4. You roll a 7 and a 2 for your character; the Host rolls a 3 and a 4. Your biggest showing die — your Score — is 7, vs. the Host's biggest showing die (the Host's Score) of 4. You have won the contest, having scored a *Success*. The Game Host says that your character climbs the tree.

... Or is it a *Tie?*

Quality Makes a Difference

Sometimes, both contestants will have the exact same Score. In most cases, this result is a *Tie*. A Tie can be a partial resolution, or maybe it's not a clear victory for either side.

> ***Example:*** Ao Shatou and Su Liuao engage in an arm-wrestling contest. Ao rolls 2d12; Su rolls 2d10 & d4. Ao's dice come up as 5 and 3; Su's dice come up as 5, 4, and 2. Ao and Su compare their biggest dice, which are both 5. This contest ends in a Tie. The Game Host rules that the two of them are still locked in an iron grip, and unless one of them concedes, they will have to roll again.

The only Tie-breaker is whether one character has a higher *Quality* of expertise, which is determined by Skill (p. 20). Every 5 Levels of Skill improves Quality: from *Basic* to *Expert* to *Heroic* to *Legendary* to *Mythic*. (To help you remember this order, note that the Qualities are in alphabetical order, from worst to best.) If you have a better Quality than your opposition, you *Succeed* (instead of *Tie*) when both Scores are equal.

Example: Wu Shousu attempts to convince her disapproving father that she was nowhere near the gambling dens last night — a task that will prove difficult, since she *was*. The Game Host rules that this will be a contest:

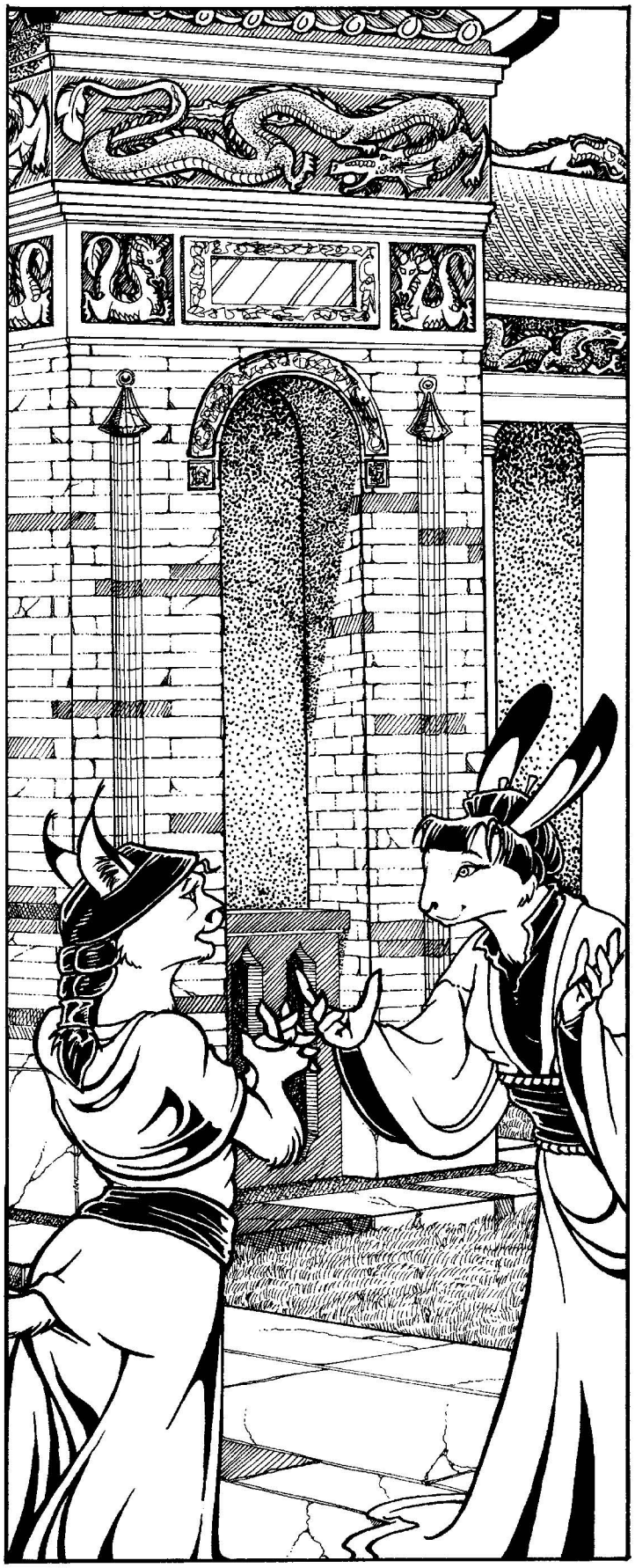
Wu's player will be rolling her Will Trait of d10 (representing her nerve) and Fast-Talk Skill of d12 (the skill of convincing others — which is at a Basic Level of Quality)

The Game Host will roll the father's Mind Trait of d8 (for experience and perception) and Psychology Skill of d12, d4 (the skill of sensing other's motives — and his Level of Skill is Expert Quality).

Wu's dice come up 9 and 4, for a Score of 9. Her father's dice come up 9, 3, and 2 — also a Score of 9. Normally, this would be a Tie...

However, the father has an Expert Quality of Skill, whereas Wu's Quality is only Basic. Therefore, the father Succeeds and Wu Fails. After all, Wu's father is an Expert at seeing through deceptions.

Wu curses under her breath. She cannot wait for the day when her Fast-Talk Skill improves to Expert Quality and she's able to fool her domineering father. Of course, that will have to wait until after she's re-tiled the roof, as part of her punishment....



"5 or more": *Overwhelming*

If your Score is greater than your opposition by a margin of 5 or more, then you have and *Overwhelming Success*. Likewise, if you're beaten by a margin of 5 or more, you have an *Overwhelming Failure*.

Overwhelming results are something more than just typical results. A Failure to climb a tree is probably just lost time and lost pride; an Overwhelming Failure might mean a stumble and injury. A Success with a kick would mean Damage to your opponent; an Overwhelming Success might be a blow so skilled that it knocks your foe down. The Players and the Game Host are encouraged to come up with little "extras" for Overwhelming results.

The *Tests* chapter and the *Combat* chapter lists all sorts of outcomes for both results and Overwhelming results.

Honest Han tries to use a false vendor license to avoid arrest. Han rolls his Forgery Dice and scores a 3; the officer arresting him rolls his dice and scores an 8. This is no ordinary Failure for Han — it's an Overwhelming Failure!

The Game Host rules that, had this been an ordinary Failure, the officer might've let Han go with a stern warning or perhaps a fine ... but this Forgery is *so* terrible that the officer decides to make an example of those who would so insult the intelligence of the servants of the law.

"All ones": *Botching*

If your Score is 1 (that is, all your dice came up showing 1, making 1 your biggest number), then you have *Botched* your roll.

Botches represent gross incompetence or negligence, or (sometimes) that one-in-a-million event that's just plain bad luck. Botches happen most often for those who attempt activities with little or no

skill — especially for those who are only rolling a single die.

> ***Example:*** In-Leng mixes up saltpeter, sulfur, and charcoal in her lab, trying to make gunpowder. She reaches a critical juncture and has to make a roll. Rolling a mere 1d10, her die comes up a 1. In-Leng *Botches* her roll and is treated to a dire explosion! Ouch.

On an opposed roll, if *both* parties Botch — that is, they both Score a mere 1 — then the Game Host may rule that the result is a Tie, instead. A "double Botch" should be two incredible displays of ineptitude that amuse onlookers. Favored Rolls (p. 97) are much less likely to Botch.

On Simple Rolls, *Bonuses* Increase Dice Size

Sometimes, circumstances will be more favorable. You may be attacking someone from advantage, or perhaps you've taken more time or have better tools. You may receive a *Bonus* to your roll. **A *Bonus* improves each of your Dice by one size.** A d4 becomes a d6; a d6 becomes a d8; a d8 becomes a d10; and a d10 becomes a d12.

> ***Example:*** Mai Li tries to convince the bartender to let him have "just one more glass of wine" before she closes up shop. Normally this would call for a roll: Mai Li's Mind & Fast-Talk of d10 & d6 vs. the bartender's desire to close up shop (which the Host decides is worth 2d10). However, Mai Li drops a few coins on the counter to make her more amenable. The Host rules that this gives Mai Li one Bonus.
>
> Mai Li's dice increase in size: the d10 becomes a d12, and the d6 becomes a d8. Mai Li will roll d12 & d8 to try to win the contest.

Since d12s cannot increase in size, you carry over the size increase to your next smallest die. If all your dice become d12s, then include a new d4 and start increasing that one.

> ***Example 1:*** Shi Xintan decides to "Strike Sure" with his sword, which gives him one Bonus on his To-Hit Roll. Shi Xintan normally rolls d12 & d6.
>
> His d6 increases to a d8.
>
> His d12 can't increase, so that increase carries over to his next smaller die, the d8 — that one improves to a d10.
>
> Shi Xintan will roll d12 & d10 to hit with his sword.
>
> ***Example 2:*** Later, Shi Xintan Focuses for one Round, then Strikes Sure using his Focus for a Bonus To Hit (p. 138). Now he has earned *two* Bonuses, which are good for *two* size increases on his dice.
>
> His d6 increases to a d10.
>
> His d12 can't increase two sizes, so the two increases carry over to his next smaller die: the d10. After one increase, it becomes a d12. There's one increase left — that one carries over to start a d4.
>
> With two Bonuses, Shi Xintan's dice have become 2d12 & d4.

You can think of a Bonus as "one size increase per die." If you have one die, you get one size increase; if you have two dice, you get two size increases, etc. It might help to hold out one finger for each size increase, then put each finger away as you increase a die.

On Simple Rolls, *Penalties* Force Re-Rolls

Just like Bonuses represent improved circumstances, *Penalties* represent lack of time, poor preparation, and general misfortune.

A *Penalty* forces you to re-roll all your Dice. Your final Score is the *worse* of the two rolls.

> ***Example:*** Du Cheng-fa, standing on a slippery river-bed, swings madly with his axe. With a lack of good footing, he's got a Penalty to his roll.
>
> He rolls his dice of d12 & d10. The first time he rolls a 2 and a 5, for a Score of 5. The second time he rolls an 8 and a 4, for a Score of 8. Du Cheng-fa's worst Score out of both rolls is a 5, so that's what he's stuck with.

If you have *two* Penalties, then you must roll *three times* and take the worst out of the three rolls. If you have *three* Penalties, then you must roll four times, etc.

> ***Example:*** Shuang Fa-kuan is trying to scale a cliff in a torrential rain *and* at night. The Game Host rules that bad weather is worth one Penalty and that poor visibility is worth one Penalty. Shuang Fa-kuan will have to roll her Climbing Dice *three times* and take the worst out of all three rolls. She Scores a 7 the first time, a 1 the second time, and a 4 the third time. The worst Score is that 1 — a Botch! She curses her over-confidence as she finds herself plummeting to the ground below. Let's hope the rain has made the mud soft!

Bonuses and Penalties cancel one another out

If you have one Bonus, and one Penalty, you're back to "neutral." Likewise, if you have two Bonuses but one Penalty, then you have merely one Bonus.

Damage Rolls

The other common roll in *Jadeclaw* is the *Damage Roll.* Rather than simple results such as Success and Failure, a Damage Roll will result in either nothing, or one or more *hits.* ***The attacker rolls Damage Dice. The defender rolls Soak Dice.***

For Damage Rolls, every die matters!

Unlike Simple Rolls (where only the highest-showing die matters), Damage Rolls will use every die.

Roll the Damage Dice. Arrange each one from highest-showing value to lowest-showing value. Roll the Soak Dice. Arrange each one from highest-showing value to lowest-showing value.

Compare the highest-showing Damage Die to the highest-showing Soak Die, the next-highest Damage Die to the next-highest Soak Die, and so on:

- ***If the Damage Die's value is higher, the attacker scores one hit.***
- ***If the Damage Die's value is higher by a margin of 5 or more, the attacker scores two hits.***

Out of Soak Dice? The "imaginary 1"...

If there are more Soak Dice than Damage Dice, there's no problem. But what if there are more Damage Dice than Soak Dice?

If the defender runs out of Soak Dice, compare remaining Damage Dice to the number 1. Damage Dice that show 2 or more score one hit; Damage Dice that show 6 or more score two hits.

Note that Damage Dice that show 1 never score hits, for any reason.

Botching on the Soak Dice – an extra hit!

If the Soak Dice come up all 1's (a* Botch*), then the defender suffers one hit, above and beyond all other hits.

And rolling all 1's means that the Damage Dice are likely to hurt — a lot. Botches on Soak Rolls usually happen for combatants who aren't wearing any armor or other protective gear.

On Damage Rolls, *Bonuses* Increase Dice Size

Just like Simple Rolls, a* Bonus *improves the size of your Damage Dice by one step. The most common Bonus for Damage is the "Strike Hard" Maneuver, explained in greater detail in the *Combat* chapter.

> ***Example:*** Magnificent Weasel decides to "Strike Hard" with his Empty-Hand Attack. His Damage Dice are normally d12 & d8, but the "Strike Hard" Maneuver grants him a Bonus. One size increase for each die means that the d12 stays the same, and the d8 improves to d12. Magnificent Weasel will strike for 2d12 Damage.

On Damage Rolls, *Penalties* Remove the Smallest Die

Unlike Simple Rolls, a* Penalty *removes your smallest die from your mix. Don't even roll that die! Remove it before you even roll.

> ***Example:*** Fighting with a broken staff, Biaochi suffers one Penalty on Damage. Normally, he rolls 2d8 and d4 for Damage. With one Penalty, he throws out his d4 before he even rolls.

Bonuses and Penalties cancel one another out

Just like Simple Rolls, one Bonus cancels out one Penalty.

Combination Rolls: when one die roll is both a Simple Roll *and* a Damage Roll

Sometimes, a single roll might be compared as both a Simple Roll *and* a Damage Roll. Or your dice might be compared twice — once for one use, again for another use. Until you get the hang of the rules, it's probably for the best to ask before you scoop your dice off the table, to check that there's not some other duty they might perform.

> ***Example:*** While defending a peasant from the depredations of foreign devils, Jupi is shot in the back by an arrow from a dishonorable barbarian's bow.
>
> First, the bow's Damage of d8, d6 & d4 is rolled vs. Jupi's Soak of d8 & d6. The Damage Dice come up 7, 6, and 2.
>
> Jupi's Soak Dice come up 8 and 3. As a Damage roll, 7 is less than 8, 6 is more than 3 (one hit), and 2 is more than an imaginary 1 (one hit). Jupi suffers 2 hits.
>
> Since Jupi was injured, he now has to pass a Resolve Test, which is a Simple Roll: Jupi's Will & Resolve Dice vs. the Damage Roll he just suffered. Jupi will roll his d10 & d6 vs. the 7, 6, and 2 already sitting on the table. Jupi's dice come up 9 and 2. As a Simple Roll, Jupi has won a Success on the contest; he avoids being sent Reeling due to pain.

In *Jadeclaw*, there are a few times when a single die roll might serve more than one purpose. For example:

- A Damage Roll that scores a Wound becomes a Simple Roll to be defeated in a Resolve Test (p. 147).
- A Simple Roll to Cast a magic spell vs. Difficulty Dice may turn those dice into Damage Dice to hurt an enemy (p. 106).

Other Modifiers to Die Rolls

Besides Bonuses and Penalties, there are a few other ways dice might be modified.

Including more dice

A common way to modify a roll is to *Include* a new die. There's nothing too complicated here — simply throw that die in with the rest of them. Included dice are subject to Bonuses, Penalties, Favor, and Limits just like everything else.

> ***Example:*** Cowardly Zhu gives ground to the drunken gangster who attacks him — Zhu chooses to Retreat (p. 133) from the attack. Zhu is allowed to include an extra d8 — a Retreat Die — with the other dice he will roll to defend himself from the assault.

Remove dice before you roll, not after!

Some particular tricky martial arts might require you to *Remove Dice*. ***When you must* Remove your biggest die, *simply take that die out of the set you were about to roll.***

> ***Example:*** Number 21 Mouth wants to use the "Attack Twice" maneuver, which requires her to remove her biggest die. Normally, she rolls 2d12, d10, and d4 to hit. Her biggest die is a d12, so she removes that one. Now she will roll d12, d10, and d4.

Limits put a cap on die size

Sometimes, no matter how good you may be, things just aren't right for you to realize your full potential. In game terms, your dice may be *Limited in size.*

When you have a* Limit, *reduce all dice bigger than the Limit to that Limit.

> ***Example:*** Wei Kuangrui is carrying too much equipment, and is suffering an Encumbrance Limit of d8.
>
> Wei Kuangrui normally has Dodge Dice of d12, d10, and d4. However, his Encumbrance Limit applies to those dice. Since no die can be bigger than d8, his Dodge Dice drop to 2d8 and d4.

Favored Rolls let you re-roll one 1

Sometimes, circumstances are "just right" for something you want to do. Your dice may become *Favored.*

On a Favored Roll, you may re-roll one 1. For example, if you rolled your d12, d10, & d8, and they came up 4, 6, and 1, you could re-roll the 1. If it came up 7, your Score has improved! If it comes up 1, then there's really no change.

You may only re-roll one 1. If you have a choice between multiple 1's to re-roll, you should choose the largest die.

The most common time a die roll is favored is when you are using Skill Dice for you *Favored Use* (p. 64), on a Simple Roll.

Slaying Damage: always 2 hits per die

Certain martial arts teach more effective ways of hurting your foes. Lucky hits may result in grievous injury. And some targets, especially unholy monsters, are unusually susceptible to certain kinds of attack. Sometimes, you might encounter *Slaying Damage.*

***For each* Slaying *Damage Die that is higher than a Soak Die, the attacker scores* 2 hits *— regardless of whether the die exceeds by 1 or by* 5.** In other words, every Slaying Damage Die does 2 hits when it scores hits at all. Slaying Damage is more likely to be "maximized."

Enervated Damage: merely 1 hit per overwhelm, nothing otherwise

Some powerful magic, and some kinds of martial arts, may make you tougher. You might encounter *Enervated Damage.*

An Enervated *Damage Die must defeat a Soak Die by 5 or more to score even* 1 hit. *Enervated Damage Dice that only defeat Soak Dice by 4 or less (or not at all) score* no hits. In other words, each Enervated Damage Die scores 1 hit when it overwhelms a Soak Die, and nothing otherwise. Enervated Damage is greatly reduced compared to normal Damage.

No Damage is both Slaying *and* Enervated — the two effects cancel each other out.

Kinds of Dice

All of your dice come from somewhere. Some of them represent experience and craft; some of the represent inborn talent. Some of them are part of the environment, while others are there because of what's going on at the moment.

Every die has one or more *descriptions* that gowith it. Some modifiers only work on certain kinds of dice. There's lots of kinds of dice you can have, but some of the common ones (and why the kind matters) are described here:

- *Trait Dice* represent generalized ability to do things. You have your *Basic Trait Dice* of Body, Speed, Mind, and Will, for doing the things that most everyone can get away with. Your *Race Trait Dice* represent instinct and your nature by birth. Your *Career Trait Dice* are your experience and your nurture by upbringing.

- *Skill Dice* are specific abilities you learn to do certain things and to pass certain tests. When Skill Dice combine with Trait Dice, they are referred to simply by the name of the skill. For example, when Mercenary Career-Trait Dice combine with Resolve Skill Dice, it's simply called "Resolve Dice."
- *To-Hit Dice* are what you roll to hit someone. *Defense Dice* are what you roll to avoid being hit.
- The *Retreat Die* represents you giving ground to an attacker — it helps you defend, but you have to have somewhere to retreat to!
- *Cover Dice* represent shields, walls, plants, and other people in between you and an attack.
- When you use ranged weapons (such as a bow), you might try to shoot a target that's far away — and that target gets *Range Dice* to use to avoid being hit.
- *Armor Dice* are your protective equipment. *Personal Soak Dice* are your body's inherent ability to resist Damage. Armor Dice might be removed or ignored because of special weapons and attacks, but you always get your Personal Soak Dice!
- If you are a Wizard, you use *Casting Dice* to craft a spell, rolling against its *Difficulty Dice*. In turn, the spell yields *Effect Dice* to use against other targets, who may oppose you — they may use their *Resistance Dice* to lessen or shrug off your magic.

... and so on. Whew! There's quite a lot of this stuff, but don't worry about memorizing it all at once. The rules are pretty clear when to use what kinds of dice, and how they are modified.

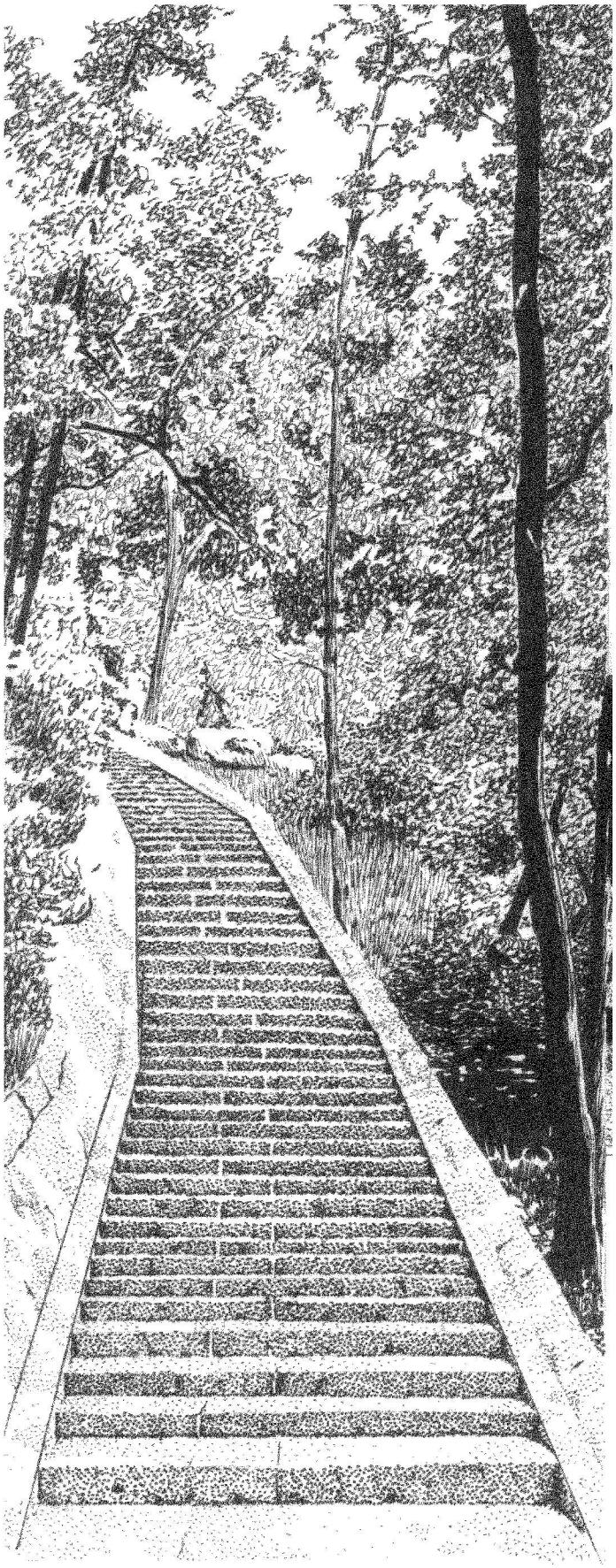
Frequently Asked Questions about Dice Rolling

There seems to be a lot of "randomness" and "dice rolling." Why is that?

The purpose of dice-rolling is to add drama and suspense to the game. When you roll a die, you have some idea what's going to come up, but what will come up is uncertain. Anyone, at any time, could Botch a roll.

As a tip for Game Hosts: try not to overuse dice rolls. Don't roll dice if it appears it's going to be a tedious exercise. If everyone is reasonably assured of the outcome of some event, use Host fiat to decide what it will be and move on. The amount of "dice-rolling" vs. "intuition" is a matter of personal taste and will vary from gaming group to gaming group. A good rule of thumb is that if the character is rolling dice that are the same size (or bigger) in the same quantity (or more), and that what they're doing is neither dire (i.e., has dreadful consequences if it fails) or contested (i.e., no one is actively trying to stop them), then they can just declare Success without rolling.

> **Example:** No Zim Ta wants to repair his broken crossbow, an intermediately difficult task of 2d8. He has a Mind Trait of d10 and a skill of "Craft: Bowyer" of d8. With a combined skill roll of d10 & d8, that's more than the 2d8 difficulty. As long as things are nice and quiet (no rush jobs, no improvised materials, etc.), No Zim Ta should just be able to declare a simple Success and fix his crossbow.



When the text says, "roll 2d6," do I add those dice together?

No. For a *Simple Roll*, you only take the biggest of those two dice. For a *Damage Roll*, you'll be comparing each of those dice against someone else's dice. There are very, very few occasions where you add dice together, and these are emphatically noted in the text. For the most part, "what you see is what you get" — what's on the die is what you use.

Why aren't dice added together?

In *Jadeclaw,* everyone has a chance of beating someone else in a Contest. Even if your opponent is rolling 4d12 and you're stuck with only 1d4, you could roll a four and they could roll all ones. It's also simpler to tell if you "Overwhelm" someone or not—only scores of 6 and up Overwhelm.. and if you Score a 8 or better, you yourself can't be Overwhelmed. After a while, these comparisons may come quickly to you, which was our goal when we designed this system.

What is the proper sequence of modifiers for Simple Rolls?

1. Include any new dice.
2. Remove dice, if directed.
3. Limit die size, if directed.
4. Use Bonuses (if any) to increase die size.
5. Roll.
6. If the dice are Favored, re-roll any one 1.
7. Note the Score.
8. For each Penalty, go back to Step 5, and roll again.

What is the proper sequence of modifiers for Damage Rolls?

1. Include any new dice.
2. Remove dice, if directed.
3. Limit die size, if directed.
4. Use Bonuses (if any) to increase die size.
5. For each Penalty, remove the smallest die.
6. Roll.
7. If the dice are Favored, re-roll any one 1.
8. Compare dice.

When are Trait Dice included with Skill Dice?

A Race or Career Trait that is written to be included with a Skill is *always* included with that skill. For example, the Mercenary Trait Dice are *always* included with Haggling, and the Bear Trait Dice are *always* included with Wrestling.

The four basic Traits of Body, Speed, Mind, and Will may or may not be included with a Skill; it depends on circumstance. For example, if one is trying to sneak past vigilant guards, the Game Host may rule that Speed applies to Stealth … but for skulking in some darkened alcove, waiting for people to leave, that's something else — probably Will to summon the strength to remain still. Specific Tests will mention specific dice.

As a general rule, here are when the four Basic Traits should be included:

- **Body:** for tests involving physical size or strength, such as Intimidating folks or consuming large quantities of alcohol (I.E., Carousing). Note that folks with the Gifts of Strength or Robustness may roll increased dice.
- **Speed:** for all To-Hit Rolls with weapons, and for all Defense Rolls (I.E., Parry, Dodge, and Block Rolls). Also for many uses of "gross motor skills," such as Acrobatics. *Not* for "fine motor skills" such as repairing watches or picking locks.
- **Mind:** for anything involving "bookish" or learned thinking, such as doing math or puzzling through long legal documents. Often included with Know Tests to recall something. Also, Observation Tests, Ambush Tests, and anything else involving "quick wits." For Influence Tests where craft and cleverness are more important than stubbornness. For anything where being smart and book-learned would help. *Not* for things based on intuition or supernatural ken, such as Augury or Meditation.
- **Will:** with all uses of the Resolve Skill. For anything where steadfastness and willpower would apply. For Influence Tests where confidence and self-image is important.

Players are encouraged to come up with creative ways to include their Traits to the uses of Skills.

How big should Difficulty Dice be?

For Contests, you will be rolling against someone else's dice. For example, to win at a wager on a game of dominos, you might roll your Gambling Dice vs. your opponent's Gambling Dice.

As the Game Host, sometimes you may ask players to roll against a fixed Difficulty Dice. The *Tests* chapter (p. 103) covers this in lots of detail, but here's a general guideline:

Difficulty of Test	*Suggested Difficulty Dice*
Trivial	**d4**
Simple	**2d4**
Routine	**2d6**
Intermediate	**2d8**
Difficult	**2d10**
For Experts Only	**2d12**
For Heroes Only	**3d12**
For Legends Only	**4d12**

For example, Climbing a ladder would probably be a Simple Test (2d4), whereas Climbing a tree might be Routine (2d6), Climbing a cliff might be Intermediate (2d8), Climbing an old temple's wall might be Difficult (2d10), and Climbing a modern castle wall might be For Experts Only (2d12).

Summary of Die Rolls

Simple Rolls

Your Best Die Showing is…	*Simple Comparison*
A "one"	**Botch**
Less than your opposing die by 5	**Overwhelming Failure**
Less than your opposing die	**Failure**
Tied with opposing die	**Tie**
Greater than opposing die	**Success**
Greater than opposing die by 5	**Overwhelming Success**

Bonus: increase all dice by one size.
Penalty: roll again, take worse of the two Scores.

Damage Rolls

Each Damage Die vs. Soak Die…	*Damage*
A "one"	no hits
Less than your opposing die by 5	no hits
Less than your opposing die	no hits
Tied with opposing die	no hits
Greater than opposing die	**one hit***
Greater than opposing die by 5	**two hits†**

Bonus: increase all dice by one size.
Penalty: remove smallest die before rolling.

* *Slaying* Damage = 2 hits; *Enervated* Damage = no hits
† Enervated Damage = 1 hit

Summary of Levels and Bonuses

Level	*Dice*	*one Bonus*	*two Bonuses*	*three Bonuses*	*four Bonuses*	*five Bonuses*	*six Bonuses*
none	**zero**	d4	d6	d8	d10	d12	d12 & d4
1	**d4**	d6	d8	d10	d12	d12 & d4	d12 & d6
2	**d6**	d8	d10	d12	d12 & d4	d12 & d6	d12 & d8
3	**d8**	d10	d12	d12 & d4	d12 & d6	d12 & d8	d12 & d10
4	**d10**	d12	d12 & d4	d12 & d6	d12 & d8	d12 & d10	2d12
5	**d12**	d12 & d4	d12 & d6	d12 & d8	d12 & d10	2d12	2d12 & d4
6	**d12 & d4**	d12 & d8	2d12	2d12 & d6	2d12 & d10	3d12 & d4	3d12 & d8
7	**d12 & d6**	d12 & d10	2d12 & d4	2d12 & d8	3d12	3d12 & d6	3d12 & d10
8	**d12 & d8**	2d12	2d12 & d6	2d12 & d10	3d12 & d4	3d12 & d8	4d12
9	**d12 & d10**	2d12 & d4	2d12 & d8	3d12	3d12 & d6	3d12 & d10	4d12 & d4
10	**2d12**	2d12 & d6	2d12 & d10	3d12 & d4	3d12 & d8	4d12	4d12 & d6
11	**2d12 & d4**	2d12 & d10	3d12 & d6	4d12	4d12 & d8	5d12 & d4	5d12 & d10
12	**2d12 & d6**	3d12	3d12 & d8	4d12 & d4	4d12 & d10	5d12 & d6	6d12
13	**2d12 & d8**	3d12 & d4	3d12 & d10	4d12 & d6	5d12	5d12 & d8	6d12 & d4
14	**2d12 & d10**	3d12 & d6	4d12	4d12 & d8	5d12 & d4	5d12 & d10	6d12 & d6
15	**3d12**	3d12 & d8	4d12 & d4	4d12 & d10	5d12 & d6	6d12	6d12 & d8
16	**3d12 & d4**	4d12	4d12 & d10	5d12 & d8	6d12 & d6	7d12 & d4	8d12
17	**3d12 & d6**	4d12 & d4	5d12	5d12 & d10	6d12 & d8	7d12 & d6	8d12 & d4
18	**3d12 & d8**	4d12 & d6	5d12 & d4	6d12	6d12 & d10	7d12 & d8	8d12 & d6
19	**3d12 & d10**	4d12 & d8	5d12 & d6	6d12 & d4	7d12	7d12 & d10	8d12 & d8
20	**4d12**	4d12 & d10	5d12 & d8	6d12 & d6	7d12 & d4	8d12	8d12 & d10

AHEM...
URR?
I-I-INSPECTOR! I HAD NOT R-R-RECEIVED A NOTICE OF YOUR IMPENDING VISIT!
IF YOU HAD, THEN THIS WOULD NOT BE A SURPRISE INSPECTION, WOULD IT?
IMAGINE MY CONSTERNATION TO FIND YOU SLEEPING DURING WORKFUL HOURS... AND TO FIND THAT THE WEATHER THAT HAD BEEN SCHEDULED TO BE A...A...
A STANDARD RAIN, THIRD CLASS, MY LIEGE.
A THIRD-CLASS RAIN! AND INSTEAD I FIND A SLEEPING DRAGON...
...AND A RUNAWAY FLOOD!

M...M...MY LORD, I OFFER A THOUSAND APOLOGIES! MY EARLIER ZEALOUSNESS TO CARRY OUT THE WILL OF HEAVEN AS LAID OUT BY THE LAW MUST HAVE EXHAUSTED ME AFTER...
SPARE ME!
YOU DARE LAY CLAIM TO ASSERT THE WILL OF HEAVEN!? LAZY DRAGON, THIS IS THE LAST OF YOUR TRANSGRESSIONS - THE LAST TIME YOU WOULD FAIL YOUR DUTY TO HEAVEN!!!
BY THE POWER VESTED IN ME BY HIS AUGUSTNESS PERSONAGE OF JADE - I DISCHARGE YOU FROM YOUR OFFICE!! YOU ARE CAST OUT!!
NO LONGER WILL YOU DISGRACE THE HEAVEN-COURT! DESCEND! DESCEND TO THE BASE EARTH BELOW...
...AND DO NOT RETURN!

TESTS

During your campaign, you'll find that conflict situations will arise often. Someone will try to talk his way out of a tricky situation. Someone will try to sneak past someone—or run away when she gets caught! Someone will try to dig up some dirt on what's going on. To that end, this chapter lists the common *Tests* you'll encounter while playing *Jadeclaw*.

Definition of Terms

Bonus

A *Bonus* is a modifier that increases the size of your Dice. See p. 95.

Circumstance

Time, place, and other conditions may alter the *Circumstances* of how a Test is used. Different Circumstances can impose Penalties or Limits, grant Bonuses or new Dice, or even completely change the Dice used.

Dice

When rolling in a test, you'll be using different kinds of *Dice*. When a descriptor is listed for Dice, you use *the Skill Dice and any Race Dice, Career Dice or Special Trait Dice that are always included with that Skill.* Do *not* include Basic Traits of Body, Speed, Mind, or Will unless you are specifically told to do so!

> ***Example:*** A Test to appraise the value of a weapon might call for Sword Dice. Even though Sword Dice are often combined with Speed, it's not appropriate in this case.

Difficulty

Against "neutral" things, such as the environment or a subjective judgment about someone's personality, a Test is made against a set *Difficulty Dice*. These dice vary from test to test.

Hits

Some Tests have variable results, measured in *Hits*. Hits are determined by a "Damage Roll" – see p. 95.

Outcome

After rolling dice, the *Outcome* is the result of the dice comparison: *Success, Tie,* or *Failure*. See "Simple Rolls," p. 93.

Penalty

A *Penalty* is imposed when conditions are less than ideal to perform a Test, usually forcing a re-roll. See p. 95.

Attacking from surprise: The Ambush Test

It's inevitable. Some craven souls will strike without honor and under the cover of darkness, with malice in their hearts and weapons in their hands. Any time one group tries to execute a surprise attack against another group, it is called an Ambush. The Ambush can be as brutish as twenty men running out of the bushes and swarming on their foe like angry ants, or it can be as subtle as a sniper on a high rooftop shooting through an open window with a crossbow.

The party attacking from surprise is called the Ambusher. The party being attacked is called the Target.

There are so many different ways to ambush that not always the same skills apply. What follows is a table of some of the more common Ambushing circumstances, and what Dice are relevant.

Circumstance (include all that apply)	*Ambusher includes...*	*Target includes...*
Default: The basic dice for any Ambush	Speed Dice	Sixth Sense Dice
Alert: The target is wary and alert for ambushes.	—	Mind Dice
Home Turf Advantage: The ambush is in a local spot.	appropriate Local Knowledge Dice	appropriate Local Knowledge Dice
Habitat: The ambush spot is in your Racial Habitat	appropriate Race Dice	appropriate Race Dice
Hiding Places: The ambush spot has lots of good hiding places.	Camouflage Dice & Stealth Dice	Observation Dice
Confederate: The ambushers have someone in the target's party to distract them.	confederate's Disguise Dice & Fast-Talk Dice	Psychology Dice

The Host should make decisions as to what dice are valid for a given Ambush Test based on the location, time of day, etc. For example, travelers without Night Vision might not be allowed to use Observation in the dark, or ambushers might not be allowed to use Camouflage if there are no trees or brush to hide behind.

For simplicity, the Host should use the biggest dice of both Ambusher and Target, rather than bother with rolling every combatant's dice. Since most "mobs" of NPCs all have the same size dice, this won't be too much of a problem.

Once the Game Host has decided on all the relevant dice, the contest can be rolled.

Ambusher's Dice vs. Target's Dice	*Effect on Ambusher*	*Effect on Target*
Ambusher Botches	none	Focused
Target Succeeds	none	none
Ambusher & Target Tie	Focused	Focused
Ambusher Succeeds	Focused	none
Target Botches	Focused	Reeling

Focused combatants start the battle with the Focus advantage (p. 138). If you're using miniatures, place a blue "Focused" counter next to each figure.

Reeling combatants start the battle Reeling (p. 132). If you're using miniatures, place a red "Reeling" counter next to each figure.

Finding something you want: The Availability Test

Sometimes you need to find an item or a service in a town — a room for the night, a replacement sword, a good homeopath to cure your nasty cough, or a chalcedony stone. To answer the question of whether you can find what you need, you may be called upon to pass an Availability Test.

The basic rule of Availability is that the bigger the population in the area, the more likely you'll be able to find what you're looking for. Roll the Area Size Dice vs. the difficulty of Availability.

Area Size	*Area Dice*
Hamlet (population 10+)	d6
Village (population 100+)	d8
Town (population 1,000+)	d10
City (population 10,000+)	d12

Availability of Item	*Difficulty*
Common: cheap clothes; wooden knives; torches and candles; bad food; pack animals; a cheap hostel	2d4
Uncommon: good clothes; steel knives; lamp oil; good food; untamed mounts; a private room at a decent inn; tradesman	2d6
Rare: fine clothes; swords and other weapons; shuttered lantems; leather and metal armor; fine food; tamed mounts; coaches for travel; a furnished room at a quality inn; craftsman	2d8
Very Rare: plate armor; fine cuisine; war-worthy mounts; a private luxury coach; a room with a private bath and attending servants, history books and religious texts; semi-precious gems; knights-errant	2d10
Extremely Rare: magical books and items; rare artifacts; precious gems; spell-casters for hire	2d12 or worse, perhaps unavailable

The Game Host should see fit to modify these rolls based on the rarity of the item, the time of year, the customs of the area, etc. For some goods or services (especially ones relevant to an adventure plot), the Host may simply rule whether it can be found or not. For example, any big city has moldy bread, dirty water, and flea-infested cots available. The Availability Test should only be used for requests out of the ordinary, and the Host is encouraged to make quick "spot judgments" when common sense dictates that the adventure should just go on.

Result	*Outcome*
Botch	*Wild Goose Chase.* You spend all day looking around, but what you seek is nowhere to be found. You are probably the victim of bad advice, of a prank, or maybe even of brigands who send you off into an ambush.
Overwhelming Failure	*Not available.* What you're looking for simply isn't out there.
Failure	*No luck today.* At the Host's discretion, you can try again tomorrow.
Tie	*Not exactly what you want.* You find somebody offering a service or selling goods similar to what you want . . . but different enough to make you think twice. The goods could be shoddy, or the location could be suspect, or anything odd the Host can think of.
Success	*Available!* You find it after searching for one to twelve hours. (See below for details.) If you can't finish searching in one day, you'll have to continue looking tomorrow.
Overwhelming Success	*Available, and how!* Not only will you find it after searching, but it will be special somehow. Perhaps the seller is "highly motivated" and will cut you a deal, possibly because of a surplus.

This test is to determine whether something is available or not—to find out *where it is* requires you to search for it. As a guideline, it takes as many hours to search for it as the difficulty Score that was rolled. These hours may have to be spread over two or more days. The Game Host should make the difficulty roll in secret — you won't know how much time the Test requires until the Host tells you the Test is done.

> **Example:** Nam-hoang is in the town of Huan Zongse, searching for a scribe to copy a book for him. The Host calls for an Availability Test.
>
> Huan Zongse is a town, good enough for an Area Size Die of d10. A copyist scribe is a skilled laborer, which is Rare—the difficulty of finding one is 2d8.
>
> Nam-hoang rolls the Area Size Die and scores a 7. The Host rolls the difficulty dice and gets 3 and 5, for a score of 5. That's a success for Nam-hoang—he's in luck and a copyist for hire is available.
>
> The Host rules that since the difficulty score was 5, it takes Nam-hoang 5 hours of walking around to find the scribe.

At the Host's discretion, you may try a Gossip Test (p. 107) with the locals to determine Availability of a particular good or service. A Success will get you some clues on where to search, cutting your search time in half, but it will not verify whether it is available or not. An *Overwhelming Success* will tell you whether it's available and how to go straight to it, or whether it's not available at all.

Once you find what you're looking for, you'll have to pay for it. You can use a Haggle Test (p. 108) to argue over its price.

Greasing Palms: The Bribery Test

A special kind of Influence Test, a *Bribery Test* is when you try to manipulate someone by giving them money, material goods, or other favors.

This is slightly different from a typical Influence Test, where you might try talking your way out of a situation; with a Bribe, you're not trying to fool or to convince anyone — you're offering money or services so someone will do what you want, and you don't really care if they believe you or not.

Situation for Bribery	*Difficulty*
The favor you're asking for is a *minor one*, such as overlooking a minor offense or petty vandalism.	2d6
The favor you're asking for is a *major one*, such as asking for a gate to be left open or something else that could get one reprimanded.	2d8
The favor you're asking for is a *severe one*, such as getting private letters or something that could get one fired.	2d12
The favor you're asking for is an *extreme one*, such as asking someone to commit a felony or to overlook one, or something else that could get one killed.	3d12 or more, even impossible

Bribery Dice vs. Difficulty	*Outcome*
Botch, Overwhelming Failure	Disaster! A corrupt official will take your money, then jail you (or worse!) to cover it up. Otherwise, the target reacts in the worst way possible.
Failure	Your target does not accept the bribe. Depending on how crooked they are, they may be angry, they may "overlook" the attempt, or they may ask for more money.
Tie	You're too subtle in your attempts, or the target simply isn't interested. The Host may let you try again, if you still have time.
Success	Your target takes the bribe.
Overwhelming Success	Your target takes the bribe and may throw in something "extra" for you.

Circumstance	*Modifier*
Your bribe is a day's pay for your target.	none
Your bribe is a week's pay for your target.	one Bonus
Your bribe is two weeks pay for your target.	two Bonuses
Your bribe is a month's pay for your target.	three Bonuses
The target is greedy or corrupt.	one Bonus, or more

Using mighty magic: The Casting Test

If you are a Wizard, you must make a Casting Test to cast any spell that you are not Adept at.

See the *Magic* chapter (p. 189) for more details.

Retreat and pursuit: The Chase Test

Sometimes you may have to pursue someone, or you may be pursued yourself! Often folks try to get away. When one character pursues another, a Chase has started. These Chase Test rules are designed to be "abstract"—if you're using miniatures on a tactical map, you will probably want to use the Advanced Combat rules (p. 135) to resolve Chases … until the combatants leave the tactical map.

The simplest way to resolve a Chase is to have both parties roll their Speed Dice—if the pursuer rolls higher, they catch up; if the pursued rolls higher, they get away. For more complicated Chases, here are some suggested modifiers:

Circumstance	*Modifier*
You have Encumbrance that limits die sizes to d10, d8, d6, or d4.	Reduce all dice to your Encumbrance Limit.
You have an Area Knowledge skill appropriate to the area.	Include your Area Knowledge dice. (Home turf advantage)
You're being pursued, and there are lots of twists, corners, shadows, etc. for hiding.	Include your Stealth dice.
You're the pursuer, and the ground is good for Tracking.	Include your Tracking dice.
The Chase passes through a crowded area, where innocent bystanders can get in the way or provide a distraction.	Include your Shadowing dice.
You have multiple Speed Dice. (For example, your Speed is Level 6, good for d12 & d4)	Add your Speed Dice (and Speed Dice only) together for the comparison. (Yes, this is one of the few instances in *Jadeclaw* where we add dice.)
You have the Gift of Extra Move.	Add your Extra Move to your Score. (Yes, this is one of the few instances where you add something to a die roll.)
You are riding a mount or driving a chariot.	Substitute the mount's Speed Dice for yours, and include your Riding Skill.

Resisting supernatural fright: The Fear Test

Sometimes you may be susceptible to losing your nerve. Certain monsters and magical effects may cause fear. To pass a Fear Test, roll your Will Dice and Resolve Skill Dice (if any) vs. the difficulty of the test, and compare the results to the table below.

Will & Resolve Dice vs. Fear Dice	*Outcome*
Botch	*Faint Dead Away.* You immediately lose 1 Fatigue and fall Unconscious.
Overwhelming Failure	You suffer *Terror* for the remainder of this Scene.
Failure	You suffer *Fear* for the remainder of this Scene.
Tie	You suffer *Demoralization* for the remainder of this Scene.
Success	*No effect.* You are briefly thrilled by the moment, but it passes.
Overwhelming Success	*No effect.* You don't even flinch.

Hunting for food: The Foraging Test

Any outdoorsman should know how to live off the land. While out in the wilderness and away from the city, you can try a Foraging Test to get food and water.

The difficulty of the test is determined by how plentiful the landscape is for foraging.

Environment	*Difficulty of Foraging*
Idyllic: Grassland; river valley	2d6
Hospitable: Hills, forest	2d8
Challenging: Swamp; mountains	2d10
Wasteland: desert; famine-blight	2d12 or worse

To forage, you use your *Mind Dice* and your *Survival Dice,* if any. If you are in your Race's Habitat, you may include your Race Die as well.

First, compare as a Simple Roll to determine how your day went...

The Foraging Test is a combination roll. You will first compare the dice as a Simple Roll, to see if you found anything to eat.

Mind & Survival Dice vs. Difficulty	*Outcome*
Botch, Overwhelming Failure	*Disaster!* You trip and fall, are attacked by a hostile animal, or incur some other mishap. The Host can invent something, or simply have you suffer 3d6 Damage vs. your Soak and Armor.
Failure	*Unpleasant day.* Your day is miserable, but otherwise uneventful.
Tie	*Unusual event.* Something happens that's not life-threatening but is inconvenient. Perhaps you brush up against some poison oak, or maybe something you ate has you under the weather.
Success	*Uneventful day.* Just another hard day in the wilderness.
Overwhelming Success	*Productive day.* Treat your roll as a *Slaying Damage* roll for determining meals found.

...Then as a Damage Roll – each hit is one meal

Compare your Foraging Dice against the difficulty as a Damage Roll. Each hit you score is one meal — that is, one man-day worth of food and water.

> ***Example:*** Trung-Hoa is lost in the Zhaoze swamps. Fortunately, he's not just quick-witted (with a Mind of d10), he is an experienced Ranger (d8) and is skilled in Survival (d6). His Foraging Roll is d10, d8 and d6.
>
> Trung-Hoa spends the first day looking for food and water. Trung-Hoa 's player rolls his dice, which come up 7, 6, and 2. The difficulty of Foraging in a swamp is 2d10—the dice come up 8 and 3. As a Simple Comparison, Trung-Hoa failed his roll and thus takes all day to scrounge anything up.
>
> As a Damage Roll, Trung-Hoa scores 2 hits, for two man-days worth of food and water. He can consume one today, then spend all day tomorrow looking for a way out of the swamps.

Gathering information: The Gossip Test

Without good "mass media" such as newspapers, rumors and idle gossip are usually the only way "news" gets around. A Gossip Test can be used to get information about things. Most people are willing to talk about their lives and goings-on — the hard part is getting them to talk about what interests you. Skilled Gossips can steer the conversation to "the good stuff" and not appear too pushy.

The skill used to Gossip depends on the situation. For ale houses and taverns, Carousing will allow one to mix with the drinkers and rabble-rousers. For formal occasions among the social elite, Etiquette is the skill to make a good impression and to converse as "civilized" people do. For the dark shadows among the criminal element, Streetwise is useful for getting the "word on the street." At the Game Host's discretion, other Skills or Traits can be used for Gossip—for example, two Mercenaries might chat a bit about the news that affects them, so their Career Traits might come into play. As a general rule, the skill used for Gossip determines the Gossip that one hears.

Situation for Gossip	*Suggested Dice*
An ale house, tavern, inn, or any place with a crowd where libations are served	Carousing
Mixing with nobles or the upper class at a formal function or dinner	Etiquette
Dens of iniquity, bad parts of town, and among the criminal element	Streetwise
Mingling with members of the same Race	matching Race
Mingling with professionals, talking shop, asking favors out of professional courtesy	matching Career

The Host decides the difficulty of the Gossip test based on the secrecy of the information sought, from 2d4 for common knowledge to 2d12 or more for closely held secrets. For most Gossip Tests, the standard difficulty of 2d6 should be fine.

Some characters may find it hard to Gossip, such as those who are Coarse, Eerie, Ill-Favored, or Skittish. The Game Host should raise the difficulty of Gossip Tests for characters who either offend and intimidate others, or who are easily offended and intimidated themselves.

Gossip Dice vs. Difficulty	*Outcome*
Botch, Overwhelming Failure	You have committed a severe faux pas. Depending on your company and the skills you used, you may be escorted off the premises or treated to a beating.
Failure	You don't learn anything useful.
Tie	You hear some of the latest buzz, but not in as much detail as you might like.
Success	You hear all the latest news: births, marriages, deaths, scandals, crimes, weird happenings, etc. This is a good situation for role-playing. The exact amount of time this takes is left up to the Game Host.
Overwhelming Success	Not only do you get the latest news, but you also get some "inside information." Exact details are left up to the Host.

Gossiping takes about an hour—usually about 50 minutes of idle conversation and 10 minutes of useful bits. The Player and the Host are encouraged to "fast forward" and role-play out the useful bits.

Making them talk: The Interrogation Test

A special kind of Gossip Test, an *Interrogation Test* is when where you use brute force (or the threat of force) to convince someone to tell you what you want to know.

The Interrogation Test is different from the Gossip Test (p. 107) because you're not trying to surreptitiously get information out of someone in conversation — you're trying to browbeat the information out of them without regard for social niceties. It is also much faster. Of course, you may get into trouble with the authorities if you go around threatening the citizenry.

For each question you ask, roll your Intimidation skill vs. your target's Will. On a *Success*, your target will be compelled to answer, but they may try a Bluff Test (p. 110) to lie to you. On an *Overwhelming Success*, your target will not only answer your question but will answer it truthfully (no Bluff Test allowed).

Each question takes about a minute.

Getting Nasty—Using physical violence or Torture during Interrogation

Life in the world of *Jadeclaw* is sometimes cruel and brutish. In the interests of expediency, an Interrogator can use either physical violence or Torture on the target of their questions.

Physical violence will only work if the target is restrained, or cowed, or otherwise cannot get away or defend. (If the target can get away or defend, then the Interrogation has turned into a Combat!) *Roll your Strength, Will, and Intimidation vs. your target's Soak Roll, Armor Roll, Will, and Resolve.*

If you are using a club or some other weapon, include the weapon's Damage with the roll. This roll is not only an Interrogate Roll, as above, but is also a Damage Roll, scoring hits as a damaging attack. The target can only answer your question if he or she is not knocked Unconscious (or killed!) by the blow.

Torture Skill is not so much the methods of inducing pain on the target, but also how to keep the target from weakening or passing out. The scope of torture methods and tools is left to the Host and Players' imaginations. Roll your Torture Skill, Body, and Intimidation vs. your target's Soak Roll, Will, and Resolve. Unlike the use of violence, above, the use of the "sophisticated" Torture Skill only causes one Wound on the target per Successful use. An accomplished torturer will apply First Aid between Torture Interrogate tests to keep the victim from passing out.

Arguing over price: The Haggle Test

Most people don't want to pay full price for anything, and Player Characters are no exception. The Game Host may call for a Haggle Test — a contest of the Mind & Haggling Dice of the buyer vs. the Mind & Haggling Dice of the seller.

Appraising an item

For most items, the Game Host may simply quote prices off the lists in the *Equipment* chapter. However, prices and item quality certainly varies from place to place. The Game Host can simulate varying prices by first calling for an *appraisal test.*

When appraising an item's value, personal experience goes a long way. The Career Trait of "Merchant" is always appropriate to include, as appraising is what Merchants do best. You should also include any Career Trait dice that may be relevant — for example, when judging how much armor is worth, the career of Mercenary would probably help. Hosts and Players are encouraged to use their Career Trait Dice in creative ways.

The difficulty of appraising an item is usually the same as its Availability (see above).

Availability of Item	*Difficulty to Appraise*
Common	2d4
Uncommon	2d6
Rare	2d8
Very Rare	2d10
Extremely Rare	2d12 or worse
Item has been doctored, disguised, or tampered with (using Forgery)	include Forgery Dice with difficulty

On a *Success*, the appraiser will know what the fair value is of the item. On a *Failure*, they will suffer one Penalty to the Haggle Test; on an *Overwhelming Failure* or *Botch*, they will suffer two Penalties.

Note that the buyer and the seller may have appraised the item at completely different values! What the seller thinks the value is and what the buyer thinks it is may not be the same, depending on how each appraised the item.

Haggling over an item's price

Haggling over personal items rarely takes more than five minutes—most merchants would be eager to find friendlier customers after that. "Negotiations" on very expensive items, especially custom commissions, can take longer.

Buyer Dice vs. Seller Dice	*Outcome*
Seller Botches	The seller gets flustered, and will let the item go for 50% of its appraised value.
Buyer Overwhelmingly Succeeds	The seller will let the item go for 80% of its appraised value.
Buyer Succeeds	The seller will let the item go for 90% of its appraised value.
Tie	Both the buyer and the seller agree on 100% of the appraised value.
Seller Succeeds	The seller will let the item go for 120% of the appraised value.
Seller Overwhelmingly Succeeds	The seller will let the item go for 150% of the appraised value.
Buyer Botches	The seller finds the buyer to be either particularly insulting or downright gullible, and manages to work the asking price up to 200% of the appraised value, or more.

Not being seen: **The Hide Test**

When you want to conceal yourself to evade discovery, whether by hiding in shadows or covered in bushes. Hiding is different from Sneaking (p. 116) in that you're not moving around or trying to "get past someone," but are sitting quite still. Hiding is as much your knowledge of good concealment techniques as your self-discipline to remain still and quiet.

The roll is your Mind, Camouflage and Stealth Dice vs. the Mind and Observation Dice of anyone who passes by. If you Succeed, you remain hidden.

This "simple" Hide Test is when you're trying to avoid casual discovery. If people are actively searching the area for you, you must defeat a Search Test (p. 116), below.

Getting others to do what you want: **The Influence Test**

Sooner or later, someone's going to want someone else to do something for them… or to have something not done to them. You might want to convince a scholar to let you look at his books, or to get a merchant to open his shop after-hours, or to convince a henchman to investigate that strange noise inside the cave. Whenever you try to persuade an NPC to do something, it can call for an Influence Test.

Influence Tests use different skills and other rolls dependent on the situation. What always applies is one's Charisma Dice, the universal ability to charm and to convince others (p. 62). Depending on your character's attitude and the kind of Influence, you may be trying to use your wits (and thus your Mind Trait) or your sheer bravado (which would be your Will Trait).

Situation	*Suggested Dice*
You're lying to someone (that is, trying to *Bluff* them).	Acting
You want to use money to convince someone.	Bribery
You would like to convince someone and have it stick for longer than five minutes.	Diplomacy
You're pretending to be something or someone you're not.	Disguise
You need to convince someone in a hurry—five minutes is good enough.	Fast-Talk
You want to scare someone and impress them with how fearsome you are.	Intimidation
You want to persuade a magistrate in a court of law.	Law
You want to speak to a crowd.	Oratory
You want to win the love of someone.	Seduction

Circumstance	*Difficulty*
You want to Influence someone to do something they would normally do anyway.	2d6
You want to Influence someone to do things they are mildly opposed to doing.	2d8
You want to Influence someone to do things they are strongly opposed to doing.	2d12
You want to Influence someone to do things they are vehemently opposed to doing.	3d12 or more, even impossible
You're trying to *Bluff* a target.	Target's Mind & Psychology Dice

Influence Dice vs. Difficulty	*Outcome*
Botch	*Worst Reaction!* Your target has the worst possible reaction to your pathetic attempt to influence. They may even be incited to violence.
Overwhelming Failure	*Poor Reaction*. Your target not only refuses your Influence, but will probably act against it, if it's not too inconvenient to do so. Hotheaded sorts may lash out at you.
Failure	*Bad Reaction*. Your target refuses your Influence. You will need to wait a long time before trying again.
Tie	*Neutral Reaction*. Your target is indifferent to your Influence. If there's time, you can try again.
Success	*Good Reaction*. Your target is disposed to act by your Influence.
Overwhelming Success	*Best Reaction*. Your target is moved beyond words by your Influence. Your target will not only do as you asked but will also be inclined to go the "extra mile."

Although Player Characters can have Influence skills used upon them, the Players may always choose how their characters may act. In the spirit of "good role-playing," Players might decide to let their Characters be influenced.

An Influence Test usually takes about a half-hour to an hour, and often longer. The exception is a Fast-Talk Test, which never takes more than five minutes.

Someone who is *Mesmerized* (by a magical effect) is vulnerable to Influence Tests — you may attempt one Influence Test per minute, ignoring any Ties, Failures, or Botches.

Lying and deceiving: The Bluff Test

A special kind of Influence Test, a *Bluff Test* is when you're trying to convince someone that you are telling the truth when you are not. Bluffing includes not just feigning ignorance, but also pretending to be unconscious, changing the topic of conversation, and (in a pinch) lying.

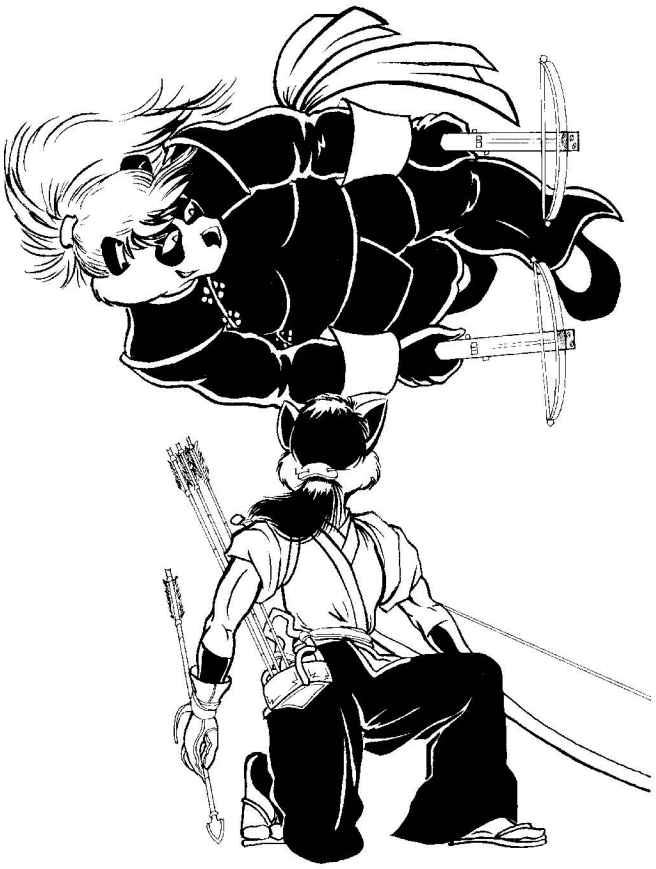
Depending on the kind of Bluff, you may be trying to out-smart someone or confuse them with big words (which would let you include your *Mind* dice) or you may just be lying outright (which requires strong nerves and firm control, and would let you include your *Will* dice). If you have the Special Trait of Charisma (p. 62), you may always include that with your Bluff attempt.

The skill best used for Bluffing is *Acting*, the ability to control your mannerisms and voice to cultivate a key reaction in others.

Bluff Dice vs. Target's Mind & Psychology	*Outcome*
Botch, Overwhelming Failure	Your lie is blatantly transparent, if not downright insulting. Your target is likely to become angry and hostile and may be moved to violence.
Failure	Your target sees through your Bluff.
Tie	Your target is suspicious . . . but can't think of any good reason to disbelieve your story. Yet.
Success	Your target believes you.
Overwhelming Success	Your target wholeheartedly believes you, without a doubt.

Don't let Influence Rolls dominate the role-playing!

Some Players will be disposed to raising their Influence Skills as high as they can, and then they will use them as often as they can, trying to Influence every NPC they can, no matter what the odds of success are or how little sense it makes. Such "brute force" use of Influence Tests is contrary to the spirit of role-playing. At the very least, Game Hosts should ask the Player to role-play a sentence or two of what their Character is saying.



Leaping great distances: The Jump Test

Your character may try to Jump across gaps and over obstacles. A Jump Test can be part of any Maneuver that permits a Dash as part of its movement. Roll your Body Dice, as well as all your Jumping Skill dice (if any). Characters weighed down with lots of gear won't be able to Jump as far. Jump Dice may not exceed the maximum permitted by your Encumbrance.

Type of Jump	*Run-up*	*Distance in Paces*	*Height in Paces*
Standing forward jump	None	Score ÷ 4	Score ÷ 20
Standing high jump	None	none	Score ÷ 10
Running broad jump	2 paces per 1 pace of distance	Score ÷ 2	Score ÷ 10
Running high jump	4 paces per 1 pace of height	none	Score ÷ 5

Type of Jump is the name of the Jump Test to be performed. Run-up is the minimum distance required that you must "run up" to get the full distance. If you can't run this full distance for whatever reason, you won't be able to Jump your full distance. Distance in paces is the full distance you Jump, horizontally. Height in paces is what you clear vertically.

Jumping Dice are limited by Encumbrance

Reduce all your Jumping Dice to your Encumbrance Limit, as appropriate. See *Encumbrance*, p. 130

Remembering and recalling: The Know Test

Sometimes it may be relevant to the adventure whether your character "knows" a bit of information or not. Who is the Captain of the Guard? Where is the Sword-Pool Shrine? What is the appropriate color to wear to a formal function? The Game Host may call for a Know Test to see if your character is aware of specific bits of esoteric knowledge.

Field of Knowledge	*Suggested Dice*
Historical facts or mythic legend (these tend to blur together in *Jadeclaw*)	appropriate Lore
Locations of landmarks and streets; local offices and points of interest	Local Knowledge
Guild structure and procedures	appropriate Career Dice
Local laws, judges, and procedures	Law
Habits of animals, their marks and breeds	Animal Handling

The Host decides the difficulty of the Know Test based on the availability of the knowledge, from 2d4 for common to 2d12 (or more) for secret knowledge.

Result	*Outcome*
Botch, Overwhelming Failure	*Blatantly wrong information.* Your character is woefully misinformed, and you should role-play this for effect, whether comic or tragic.
Failure	*Doesn't know.* Your character's knowledge in this area is lacking.
Tie	*Partial information.* It's on the tip of your character's tongue . . . maybe something could jog your character's memory.
Success	*Knows.* Your character knows the relevant details.
Overwhelming Success	*Knows, and how.* Your character knows everything about this particular thing in more detail than most.

A Know Test differs from a Gossip Test (p. 107) in that Know Tests are for historical or "common" information, whereas Gossip tests are for current events. For example, "Who runs the Guild Hall?" might be covered by either a Know Test (using Local Knowledge) or a Gossip Test. As a rule, the skill used determines the information one gets. Area Knowledge would tell you where the hall is, the title of who runs it, and maybe who is currently the Guild Master; a Gossip Test probably wouldn't tell you where it is, but it would probably tell you who runs the Guild and what the locals think of him.

Don't use Know Tests as a substitute for good role-playing!

Some Game Hosts may be tempted to "lead" the PCs through their adventure plots by using Know Tests. For example, a Host might plot a scenario that puts the party in a spot, then have them "roll a Know Test" to move to the next plot points. If the Players aren't challenged to think for themselves but rather to depend on Know Tests to "tell them what to do," they will probably become bored with the game and will feel constrained and powerless to affect the goings-on. Also, if the Host lets the Players use Know Tests instead of interactions with characters, the Players might try to "plow through" the plot using die rolls instead of creative thinking or interactive game-play, and the Host will become bored. Role-playing is about conflict and uncertainty—you should always try to keep the dynamics of conflict in the hands of the Players and the Host.

Rallying the troops: The Leadership Test

It takes a firm voice, a stern demeanor, and an image of self-confidence to lead. Leadership skill is what separates the leaders from the followers.

Leadership Tests can be called upon for two principal things: to keep NPCs from *routing* and fleeing the battlefield, and to *rally* a comrade to remove an Abnormal Status that affects them.

To use Leadership is an action; in the Advanced Combat Rules, "Rally" is a Third-Rank Maneuver. (Using Leadership as an aid to Initiative is not an action and has its own special rules — p. 135) If the leader chooses not to Rally, or is otherwise busy with other Maneuvers, then assume that the leader has simply *Failed* on their Rally Test.

To call upon Leadership, your character must be both confident and competent. Your character cannot be suffering from an Abnormal Status such as *Confusion*, *Rage*, or *Fear* that prevents that (p. 339).

Combat Event	*Difficulty*
Half the combatants on your side have gone down.	2d8
Your side is outnumbered two to one, or is facing great opposition.	2d8
Three-fourths of the combatants on your side have gone down.	2d10
One of your comrades is suffering from an Abnormal Status, which could have been resisted by Mind, Will, or Career	same as the Dice your comrade failed to resist

Result	*Outcome*
Botch, Overwhelming Failure	*Full Rout!* Your allies lose any confidence they may have had in you, turn tail, and run. If they cannot flee, they will surrender.
Failure	*Partial Rout.* One or more of your allies flee the field or surrender. The total number of those who flee is usually equal to the Difficulty Score. (For example, if the biggest Difficulty Die came up 6, then six of your allies will flee.) Cowardly and craven allies flee first, followed by the wounded, then others at the Host's discretion.
Tie	*Stand Your Ground.* Only cowards and the desperate will flee (such as those with Flaws like "Skittish" or who have suffered 6 or more Wounds).
Success	*Rally.* No one on your side flees. You may choose one combatant on your side and cure one or more of their abnormal Mental States and Emotional States.
Overwhelming Success	*Heroic Rally!* Allies on your side are spurred to unusual levels of bravery, at the discretion of the Host. You may choose *three* combatants on your side and cure one or more of their abnormal Mental States and Emotional States.

Hearing things: The Listen Test

Listen Tests are sometimes required to hear noises. In general, a Listen Test is usually required to hear a noise that's quieter than other sounds around it. For example, a Listen Test would be required to hear someone slowly drawing a sword (a Soft noise) if you were being distracted by conversation (a Normal noise).

Your dice for a Listen Test are your *Mind Dice* and your *Observation Dice*. If "Listen" is one of your Racial Senses, you may include your *Race Dice* as well.

Volume of Noise	*Difficulty*
Soft: whispering or sub-vocalizing; the turn of a key; the slow, careful drawing of a sword or cocking of a trigger; someone tip-toeing at three paces per Round or slower	2d12
Normal: standard conversation; the opening or closing of doors; someone walking at six paces per Round or slower	2d8
Loud: shouting or spell incantation; a door being broken down; the sounds of combat; someone running at seven paces per Round or faster	2d4
Thundering: a lightning strike; fireworks; a flooding rain	none

Circumstance	*Modifier*
You are doing nothing but sitting and actively listening.	two Bonuses
You have the Gift of "Keen Ears."	All sounds are one level louder to you. (Loud becomes Thundering; Normal becomes Loud; Soft becomes Normal.)
You have the Flaw of "Hard of Hearing."	one Penalty
A wall separates you and the noise.	All sounds are muffled one level. (Soft noises can't be heard at all.)

Defying spells: The Magic Resistance Test

The fantastic world of *Jadeclaw* includes supernatural powers, such as powerful wizardry. You may command magic yourself, or you may be the target of hostile spells. To avoid succumbing to supernatural power, you may have to pass a *Magic Resistance Test*.

Target's Resistance vs. Spell's Effect Dice	*Result*
Botch	Target suffers ill effects indefinitely — must be cured by mundane or magical means.
Overwhelming Failure	Target suffers ill effects for the remainder of this Scene (five minutes).
Failure	Target suffers ill effects until the end of the third Round after this one.
Tie	Target suffers ill effects until the end of this Round.
Success	Target suffers no ill effects.
Overwhelming Success	Target suffers no effects at all and may openly sneer at the caster.

Circumstance	*Outcome*
Target has an appropriate Resistance	Target includes Resistance Dice with their roll.
Target has an appropriate Vulnerability	Spell Effect Dice includes Vulnerability Dice.
Spell has more than one effect	Target suffers only one ill effect, depending on which of their dice rolled the lowest. (See below.)
Lowest Score suffers worse effect	Lowest Resistance Score in the Group suffers a worse effect. (See below.)

Spells with Multiple Effects

There are some spells that may cause one of two or more adverse effects. *Keep the Resistance Dice separate,* in terms of Body, Speed, Mind, Will, etc. Whichever Resistance Die rolls the lowest will determine which of the effects the target suffers.

When the score shows a tie on multiple dice, resolve the ties in the following order: Body, Speed, Mind, Will, Race, Careers (in alphabetical order), Skills (in alphabetical order), Special Traits (in alphabetical order), and miscellaneous dice (in alphabetical order).

Dice that aren't specifically listed as Resisting the Spell should be removed from the mix when determining which is lowest. Remember that this discrimination is only necessary if the target doesn't Succeed on their Resistance Test — don't do extra work!

> ***Example:*** Jiang Lin-Xiu must resist the spell "The Taming Power of the Great," which is resisted by Body & Will and is listed as causing "Fear/Incompetence." If Lin-Xiu successfully resists the spell, then she doesn't have to worry about anything. If she doesn't, however…
>
> If Lin-Xiu rolls the lowest on her Body, then she will suffer Fear. If she rolls the lowest on her Will, she will suffer Incompetence.
>
> If her Body & Will dice come up as a Tie, then will suffer the first effect listed: Fear. If she has a secondary resistance die, like an Aura, and that rolls the lowest, then remove that die from the mix and go to the second-lowest die.

Spells where the Lowest Score in the Group suffers Worse

Some Group spells have an extra effect for the person in the effect who rolls the lowest on their Score. (A few spells are cast at a Group, but only a single target is affected — the one with the lowest Score.)

In case one or more combatants have tied for the lowest score, the single target closest to the caster suffers, or the Game Host should make a spot ruling.

This worse effect is *instead of* the other effect — don't apply both effects to the target!

Duration is still figured as above. Usually, by the process of elimination, the lowest-scoring target rolled pretty low and is going to suffer for a long time.

Recovering Magic Points: The Meditation Test

When a wizard sleeps, he or she may recover magic points. After sleeping for a *full* eight hours, roll your Wizard Traits and add the dice together. The sum is the number of Magic Points you recover. (Characters without Wizard Traits recover 1 Magic Point for every full eight hours of sleep.)

To recover lost Magic Points faster, you can try to pass a *Meditation Test*. By spending an hour in quiet contemplation of the universe, you can try to recover the energies you have spent. You roll your Meditation Dice vs. the difficulty of the conditions.

Environment	*Difficulty*
A shrine built specifically for wizard's meditation.	None ("imaginary 1")
A quiet place of contemplation, free from interruption and noise.	2d4
A private room at a busy inn, with distracting background noise.	2d6
A shared room where others are present.	2d8 or worse
A place with frequent interruptions and lots of noise.	2d10 or worse, maybe impossible

Mediation Dice vs. Difficulty	*Result*
Botch, Overwhelming Failure, Failure, Tie	*Nothing.* You waste an hour.
Success	*Recover one Magic Point.*
Overwhelming Success	*Recover two Magic Points, and roll again.* You may keep rolling and recovering lost Magic Points as long as you keep rolling Overwhelming Successes.

"Working the crowd": The Pickpocket Test

If you are of a certain mien, you may want to remove an object from someone else's person without their knowledge; such legerdemain is called a *Pickpocket Test*. It takes a lot of skill and discipline to become an accomplished pick-pocket, as getting caught is usually very dangerous.

You roll your *Sleight-of-Hand Dice* and *Dexterity Dice (if any)* vs. the target's *Mind Dice* and *Observation Dice (if any)*. If you're just picking random items out of a crowd, the Difficulty is usually 2d6.

Sleight-of-Hand Dice & Dexterity Dice vs. Mind & Observation Dice	*Result*
Botch	*Caught red-handed!* Not only is your target aware, but a constable or other authority saw you try to pinch the item. If you can, run!
Overwhelming Failure	*Caught!* Your target catches your straying hands.
Failure	*Suspicion.* You must Succeed at a Bluff Test (p. 110) or you are caught, as above.
Tie	*No effect.* You don't get anything, but you're also not caught.
Success	*Success.* You retrieve a random item or two from your target — the Host decides what you get (a purse, a small knife, a brooch, etc.)
Overwhelming Success	*Great success!* You retrieve the most valuable item from your target — once again at the Host's discretion.

Circumstance	*Modifier*
There's a street performance going on, or something else that has distracted your target.	one Bonus
You're trying to pick the pocket of the same person more than once.	cumulative one Penalty
You've been picking pockets in this area for more than one day, and the locals are starting to get suspicious of you.	cumulative one Penalty
Your target is skilled at concealing items on their person.	Include the target's Holdout Dice with the Difficulty Dice.

It takes but a moment (one Round) to pick someone's pocket.

Unearthing forgotten lore: The Research Test

If you don't know the answer to a question, then you must look it up. A *Research Test* requires you to spend time doing academic type research: reading in libraries, studying in the field, attending lectures, speaking with other academics, etc.

A Research Test is different from a Gossip Test in that it's not "current events" you're after, but history and science facts. Often the Game Host can call for a Research Test if a Know Test is failed—the Host may also rule that certain bits of esoteric knowledge (often relevant to the plot of the adventure) require a Research Test as well.

Roll your *Mind Dice* and *Research Dice (if any)* vs. the Difficulty of the research — typically 2d6, but can be greater for obscure facts.

Circumstance	*Modifier*
You're researching in a library.	Include *Literacy Dice* with your dice; if you have no Literacy, impose at least one Penalty
You're an expert on this topic.	Include appropriate *Lore Dice* with your dice.
You're researching a place you know well, such as your home town.	Include appropriate *Local Knowledge Dice* with your dice. (Home Turf Advantage)

A Research Test is like a Know Test, except it requires at least a day of research (maybe more) and allows you to use your Research Skill dice. See the Know Test (p. 111) for more details. However, unless the character has a Scholar Trait or the Literacy skill, researching in a library will be impossible.

Resisting pain: The Resolve Test

Whenever you suffer injury, you must pass a *Resolve Test* or you may be sent Reeling. This is discussed in more detail on page 72.

Your Will & Resolve Dice vs. the Damage Roll	*Result*
Botch	Extra 1 Wound
Overwhelming Failure	Fall Down and Sent Reeling
Failure	Sent Reeling
Tie	Nothing (defender wins on ties)
Success	Nothing (cry out in pain or dismay)
Overwhelming Success	Nothing (may remain silent or may sneer openly at attacker)

Detecting magic: The Scry Test

Some Magic Spells allow you to scan for certain kinds of information. For example, "Detect Earth" allows you to scan for magic (or the residue of magic) of the Earth Nature. The Game Host should roll the Difficulty dice in secret.

The dice you roll for your Scrying depends on the method you are using to Scry. *When using a magical spell, you can only Scry for the appropriate Nature.* For example, using "Inspect Weather" will allow you to make a Scry Test for magic of the Weather Nature, such as whether a "Lightning Strike" was cast recently, but it would not tell you if you a "Ladle of Mud" had been used. Refer to the "Wiles of the Immortals" listing for the natures of spells (p. 210). If you use an inappropriate Scrying spell, the Game Host should roll the Difficulty Dice anyway.

Method of Scrying	*Dice to Roll*
Using the sensitivity of Barbels	Augury & Lore: Magic vs. 2d10
Using Second Sight	Mind, Second Sight, & Lore: Magic vs. 2d10
Using a "Detect" Spell	Mind & Lore: Magic vs. 2d8
Using an "Inspect" Spell	Mind & Lore: Magic vs. 2d6
Using a "Know" Spell	Mind & Lore: Magic vs. 2d4

Method of Scrying	*What it can Scry for…*
Barbels	Magic of *any* Nature
Detect, Inspect, or Know Changes Magic	Magic of the Earth, Fire, Heaven, Lake, Mountain, Thunder, Water, or Wind Nature
Detect, Inspect, or Know Earth	Magic of the Earth Nature
Detect, Inspect, or Know Fire	Magic of the Fire Nature
Detect, Inspect, or Know Metal	Magic of the Metal Nature
Detect, Inspect, or Know Purity Magic	Magic of the Healing, Heaven, Unholy, Unreal, or Weather Nature
Detect, Inspect, or Know Water	Magic of the Water Nature
Detect, Inspect, or Know Wood	Magic of the Wood Nature
Second Sight	Magic of *any* Nature

Outcome	*Result*
Botch, Overwhelming Failure	*Misinformation.* You think there was magic where there was none, or you think the wrong kind of magic was at work.
Failure, Tie	*Nothing*
Success	*Basic details.* You will know the names of appropriate spells cast within a dozen paces of where you stand, from within the last five minutes (or that are currently active).
Overwhelming Success	*Advanced details.* You will know the names of any Delayed Spells within a dozen paces of you, and of all appropriate spells cast in the last 24 hours.

Finding hidden things: The Search Test

A Search is a systematic step-by-step inspection of an area. Unlike a Spot Test, a Search is an "active" process—you must get in there and poke around.

There are different types of Searches. Each one takes a variable amount of time to search an area, and makes a different amount of noise (which is important to midnight skulkers searching for valuables in places they shouldn't be — see the Listen Test, p. 113)

The kind of search determines *how much you can search in a minute,* the *volume of noise* (which may matter if you're trying to be stealthy), and *the kind of Dice you roll vs. the kind of Dice the target rolls.*

For example, if you're Searching someone's house, the Difficulty would be the Mind & Camouflage skill of the person who hid something in the house. (The Game Host can assume 2d6 as a standard difficulty.) If an item was just misplaced or is concealed from casual observers, the difficulty is "none" and you're just trying to beat the "imaginary 1."

Kind of Search	*One minute searches…*	*Noise*	*Roll…*
Ransacking Search	25 paces square (5 × 5)	Loud	Mind & Observation vs. Mind & Camouflage
Careful Search	9 paces square (3 × 3)	Normal	Mind, & Observation vs. Mind & Camouflage
Quiet Search	1 pace square	Soft	Mind, & Observation vs. Mind & Camouflage
Pat-down search	one person	Soft	Mind, & Observation vs. Mind & Holdout

Circumstance	*Modifier*
You're outdoors, in your Racial Habitat.	Include your Race Dice.
You're searching a place you know well, such as your home town.	Include appropriate *Local Knowledge Dice* with your dice. (Home Turf Advantage)

On a *Success,* you will typically find all hidden items.

The amount of time a search takes varies based on the situation. Places with poor lighting, lots of detritus and garbage, and crowds of people milling about will take longer to search than big, empty, well-lit ones. The Game Host may impose a Penalty, or they may rule that especially hard-to-find items, such as a needle in a haystack, can only be found on an *Overwhelming Success.*

Detecting odors: The Smell Test

Many races in the *Jadeclaw* fantasy setting have acute senses of smell. The scent of an area or a target tells a lot about it, such as who has passed by recently, and what they may have left behind. Hunters can also locate targets by smell, which can be handy in the dark.

Your dice for a Smell Test are your *Mind Dice* and your *Observation Dice.* If "Smell" is one of your Racial Senses, you may include your *Race Dice* as well.

Environment	*Difficulty*
Nice calm day, or indoors	2d6
Targets are upwind of you	2d6
Targets are downwind of you	2d10

Mind, Observation, & Race Dice vs. Difficulty	*Result*
Botch	*Loud Sneeze.* This is a Loud Noise, and may alert passersby.
Overwhelming Failure, Failure, Tie	*Nothing*
Success	*Strong odors only.* Exception: If you have the Gift of a Keen Nose, see *All Scents,* below.
Overwhelming Success	*All Scents.* You can detect trace odors clearly enough to discriminate between one person or another.

If you are in complete darkness or are blind, you can try to find a target using your sense of smell. Choose a target, then make a Smell Test against that target. If you get an outcome of "All Scents," you have a "scent lock" on that target for the rest of the encounter. Your visibility penalty drops to a maximum of -2 vs. that target alone. (Fighters with Keen Noses and Night Vision are fearsome in the dark.)

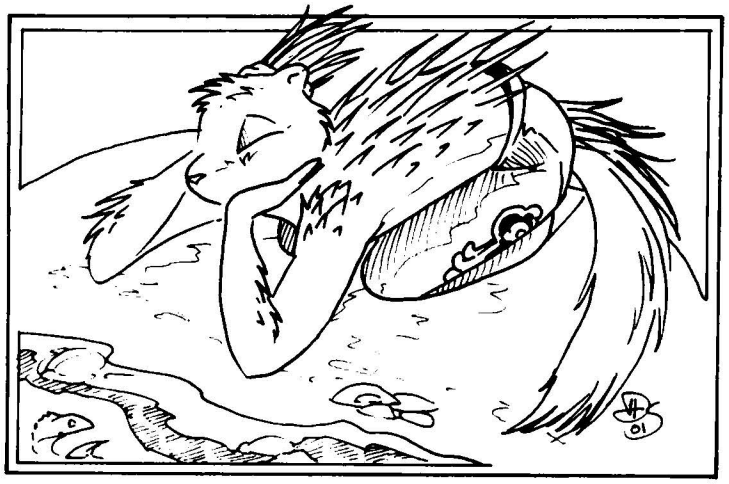
Evading detection: The Sneak Test

Inevitably, a Player Character will try to get past someone and not be seen. The Game Host can call for a simple roll of Speed Dice and Stealth Dice vs. difficulty, based on the situation. Or the Host may opt for greater complexity, using Listen Tests and maybe Spot Tests for sentries to try to locate you (below). Compare your *Speed Dice & Stealth Dice* against the sense rolls of people trying to Listen to you and Spot you. Success means you sneak by.

Environment	*Difficulty*
Vigilant guards on a wall, during the day.	2d12
Untrained bodyguards guarding a large house, at night.	2d8
Improvised militia squinting into thick fog.	2d4

Circumstance	*Modifier*
You're sneaking outdoors, in your Racial Habitat.	Include your *Race Dice.*
You're sneaking in your home town.	Include appropriate *Local Knowledge Dice* with your dice. (Home Turf Advantage)
You're trying to sneak past an important NPC or PC.	Use the target's Mind Dice, Observation Dice, and Local Knowledge Dice (if appropriate) as the Difficulty Dice.

To remain in one place and avoid detection, use the Hide Test, p. 109. To sneak up on someone and to strike from surprise, use an Ambush Test, p. 104



Seeing things: The Spot Test

Strangely enough, the sense of vision is rarely keen among the races of *Jadeclaw*. Use Spot Tests when your ability to see things comes into doubt.

Your dice for a Spot Test are your *Mind Dice* and your *Observation Dice*. If "Spot" is one of your Racial Senses, you may include your *Race Dice* as well.

Situation	*Difficulty*
One nondescript person in a crowd	2d6
A concealed knife on someone's person	2d8
A shiny ring on a busy street	2d10
Someone standing still and shrouded in darkness	2d12

Mind, Observation, & Race Dice vs. Difficulty	*Result*
Botch, Overwhelming Failure, Failure	*Missed it.* Whatever it was, you didn't see it.
Tie	*Fleeting glimpse.* You saw it just for a moment, out of the corner of your eye.
Success	*Spotted!* You get a good look.
Overwhelming Success	*Scrutinized.* You get a really good look, and see a lot of details.

Circumstance	*Modifier*
You have the Gift of Night Vision.	Ignore penalties due to darkness. (The Host should lower the Difficulty Dice by one size or more if part of it is due to darkness.)
You have the Gift of Keen Eyes.	Treat Results as one level higher. Failures become Ties; Ties become Successes; Successes become Overwhelming Successes.
You have the Flaw of Poor Vision.	Treat Results as one level lower. Overwhelming Successes become Successes; Successes become Ties; Ties become Failures.

Getting there: The Travel Test

Player Characters are an adventuresome lot — and often one has to go far to find adventure. Traveling from place to place happens a lot in the *Jadeclaw* role-playing game.

The easiest and most common form of transportation is walking. Those that walk a lot try to invest in a good set of boots.

Those who can afford riding mounts will ride if they can. Not only are mounts expensive to acquire, they are also expensive to maintain, requiring stables, saddles and reins (or "furniture"), food (hay and alfalfa, not just grass), and water.

Terrain	*Leisurely Pace*	*Forced March Difficulty*
Sky (only for those who can fly)	8 leagues/day	2d6
Roads	7 leagues/day	2d8
Plains	6 leagues/day	2d10
Grasslands	5 leagues/day	2d12
Hills	4 leagues/day	3d12
Swamp	3 leagues/day	4d12
Mountains	2 leagues/day	5d12

Terrain is the general landscape that you're crossing. If you're crossing mixed terrain, the Game Host can either proportion out the traveling speed over the diverse terrain or simply use the worst terrain.

Leisurely Pace is the number of leagues you travel after a whole day's worth of effort, which is assumed to be 9 hours (including a an hour break for lunch). A league is about 5.6 kilometers. To travel farther than the Leisurely Pace, you can do a *Forced March* (see below).

You can also try to pick up the pace, with a *Forced March*. You can try one roll of your *Body Dice* and *Hiking Dice (if any)* vs. the *Forced March Difficulty*, as a *Damage Roll*. For each Hit, you can travel one extra league. If you are riding, use the mount's Body Dice and Hiking Dice, not yours — and it is the mount that suffers the Fatigue.

> **Example:** Zha Daozi is traveling across hills, good for 4 leagues a day at a leisurely pace. To cross more ground, he tries a Forced March. His Body is d12, and his Hiking skill is d6—he is also a Wolf, and his Race Trait of d6 is included with Tests where Hiking is relevant.
>
> Zha Daozi's player rolls 9, 5, and 3. The difficulty dice come up 3 and 1. Zha Daozi has scored 4 hits, so he travels 4 extra leagues that day, for a total of 8.

In a party of two or more, each traveler must make separate rolls against the difficulty roll. The distance a party travels is the slowest of all people involved.

Traveling costs *Fatigue* — 1 for every two hours. Since Traveling assumes an hour "rest" for lunch, you can assume that, on a day of nothing but traveling, you're down 2 Fatigue after the morning walk, you're only down 1 after lunch, then you're down 3 at the end of the day. This Fatigue may be relevant if you're waylaid while on the road for a fight.

A Forced March costs double: 1 Fatigue every hour. That means that you're down 4 Fatigue in the morning, 3 after lunch, then 5 at the end of the day. You're also very, very tired.

Fatigue losses from travel represent a gradual "wearing down" during the day—as such, they don't force rolls for Unconsciousness. However, if you get involved in a fight, the hits caused by Fatigue will hinder you (p. 147).

Glory and survival: The Warfare Test

In the savage world of *Jadeclaw*, sporadic outbreaks of war are a grim fact of life. Characters may be pressed into militias or other levies to participate in large-scale battles. Sometimes, parts of these battles may be "gamed out" using the Advanced Combat rules (p.135). Other times, it's not necessary, especially if the war is a "backdrop" for the main role-playing setting of an adventure. For quickly resolving the effects of warfare, the Game Host may call for a Warfare Test.

The Warfare Test involves a *lot* of dice—basically, almost every die you have that's useful for surviving in wartime. It also has two parts—the *Warfare Survival Test* and the *Warfare Glory Test*.

Your relevant Warfare Dice include:

- Your *To-Hit Dice* for the Weapon that you'll be using during the battle. (E.g., If you have Sword skill, but are forced to use a Spear, then you can't use your Sword Skill Dice.)
- Your Shield Skill Dice
- Your Soak Dice and Armor Dice
- Your Shield Cover Dice
- Your Tactics Dice
- Your Wizard Trait Dice, if any
- If you have *Local Knowledge Skill* relevant to the battlefield, you may include those dice, too (home turf advantage).

Game Hosts may allow Players to include other dice, if the Players can come up with some very convincing and clever reasons to do so. Note that, in the chaotic and shifting field of battle, your personal ability matters less than your ability to work with others… thus "typical" combat skills such as Dodge and Resolve do not show up on this list, nor does the Speed Trait.

Battle Situation	*Difficulty Dice*
Easy Battle: You outnumber the opposition 2 to 1, or the opposing troops are "green" and are poor fighters, etc.	4d6
Normal Battle: You and your opposing forces are about even.	6d6
Formidable Battle: The opposing forces have better equipment, or greater numbers, etc.	6d10 or worse

Alternatively, the Game Host can find the Warfare Test Dice of the "typical" soldier in the opposing forces, and use that as the difficulty dice.

> **Example:** On a grim winter morning, the Junkuai advance guard prepares to engage a company of Beilang.

The average Junkuai soldier has a Weapon skill of d12 and a Shield skill of d10. Troops have a Soak of d10, on average, and no one wears worse than Disc Armor, which is good for a d8 and d4 on Armor rolls. All troops have Medium Shields (d10) and strong training in Tactics, for a d6. The Junkuai get to roll d12, 3d10, d8, d6, and d4

The Beilang, on the other hand, have Weapon skills of d10 and Shield skills of d8. Their average Soak Die is a d8, but their armor is Chain Mail (d10) and their shields are Large (d12). The Beilang function as one mind—each of their soldiers as a Tactics of d10 and, since they are Wolves, they can include their Race Trait of d8. The Beilang will roll d12, 3d10, and 3d8.

The Host rules that both forces are on unfamiliar ground, so neither gets an Area Knowledge Bonus. Also, neither can claim significant advantage due to fortifications, or numbers, etc.

Any Character who must make a Warfare Test opposing the Junkuai has a difficulty of d12, 3d10, d8, d6, and d4. Any Character who fights against the Beilang must test against a difficulty of d12, 3d10, and 3d8.

The Warfare Survival Test

Roll the Difficulty Dice vs. your Warfare Test Dice, as a Damage Roll. Each hit scored against you is scored as one Wound. It is rare for anyone to enter battle and to come away untouched. You may have to makeUnconsciousness Tests (p. 148) or even Death Tests (p. 148). *Keep those difficulty dice on the table for the next test!*

Example: In the example mentioned above, Junkuai Li is a random soldier in the line against the Beilang.

Li rolls his d12, 3d10, d8, d6, and d4—his rolls come up (arranged high to low) 7, 7, 6, 4, 4, 2, and 1.

The Game Host rolls the difficulty dice of d12, 3d10, and 3d8—the dice come up (also arranged high to low) 12, 10, 6, 5, 3, 3, and 2.

As a Damage Comparison, Li suffers a whopping six hits. That's enough to force two saving throws against Death! Fortunately, Li beats both the first test of his d10 Body vs. d4 and the second one vs. d6. He must also test his Will and Resolve vs. d12 or he'll pass out on the field, which may or may not have campaign effects.

The Host keeps those difficulty dice on the table for the Glory Test.

The Warfare Glory Test

Compare the same difficulty dice against a *separate* roll 6d6 as a *Damage Roll*. For each hit the Difficulty Dice score against that 6d6, you have earned one *Glory Point*.

Glory Points	*Glory Achieved*
no hits	**Miserable performance.** Your commander will hear of this, and you will be punished somehow — a demotion, if you're lucky.
1 to 2 hits	**Poor performance.** Others who fight along side you whisper about you behind your back. Perhaps you were just unlucky, and they fear you're some kind of jinx. Or perhaps they joke about your combat prowess.
3 to 4 hits	**Acceptable performance.** You fight capably.
5 to 6 hits	**Good performance.** You managed to strike down a commander, or dodge some "impossible" attack. Others were impressed.
7 to 8 hits	**Excellent performance.** You were the first to break through the line, or you stole the foe's standard. Your commander will probably award you a medal.
9 hits or more	**Phenomenal performance.** You managed a feat only the grandest heroes are capable of.

Example: Li has had a tough day. Let's see how well he did in the eyes of his fellows.

The Game Host rolls 6d6 for the Glory Test. The dice come up 6, 6, 5, 3, 2, and 1.

The difficulty dice of the Survival Test, from before, are compared against the Glory Dice: 12, 10, 6, 5, 3, 3, and 2 against 6, 6, 5, 3, 2, and 1.

The comparison yields 8 hits. That's enough for an Excellent Performance. It looks like Li fought well today.

The Warfare Test simulates one day of grim battle. At the Host's discretion, more tests may be called for. In *Jadeclaw*, large-scale battles are not uncommon but are hardly a daily occurrence. Most battles are either quick and decisive, over in one day — the losing side usually retreats to re-group. A longer, protracted war is usually a siege — a large army surrounds a fortified town or castle, preventing reinforcements and supplies from arriving, attempting to starve the people inside until they surrender.

Getting Complicated: Glory Dice and Survival Dice

Everyone fights differently. Some are bold and daring, at the front of their line with a strong heart and a quick blade. Others are more reserved, placing greater value on their own lives than on victory for their own side. To simulate this, a Warfare Test can employ Glory Dice and Survival Dice.

- *Glory Dice:* You may add dice from d4 to 3d12 to the difficulty dice on your Warfare Survival Test. These dice will mean you're more likely to take Damage … but you'll also reap greater rewards on your Warfare Glory Test.
- *Survival Dice:* Or you may add dice from d4 to 3d12 to your own dice for the Warfare Survival Test AND the Glory Test Dice. This will mean you're less likely to take Damage, but you'll also reap less reward.

You may not add both Glory Dice and Survival Dice. This is an either-or proposition.

Example: Some might say Chan Nuofu is "craven"—he prefers to think of himself as "self-preserving."

Chan Nuofu finds himself pressed into the Junkuai-Beilang battle mentioned above, on the side of the Beilang. Nuofu is a poor fighter—even with arms and armor provided to him, he rates as only 3d8, 2d6, and d4. More concerned with survival than glory, Chan Nuofu chooses Survival Dice: he increases his own pool to 3d12, 3d8, 2d6, and d4.

When Nuofu rolls his Survival Test, his dice come up 11, 11, 6, 5, 4, 4, 3, 3, and 1. The difficulty dice, are based on the Junkuai' ability: d12, 3d10, d8, d6, and d4. Their dice come up 9, 8, 7, 5, 5, 2, and 2. Chan Nuofu takes only 2 hits—a good day. If he can get some decent First Aid, he'll be fine.

Nuofu now rolls for Glory—and those 3d12 count against him. It's now a roll of 3d12 and 6d6 vs. the Junkuai' dice. The Glory Dice yield 11, 6, 6, 4, 3, 3, 3, 3, and 1. Compared to the Junkuai's dice, that's only 3 hits. Nuofu barely manages to put in a good show.

After the first battle, troops tend to think less of Glory and more of Survival. If NPCs are to make two or more Warfare Tests back-to-back, they will most likely start adding Survival Dice.

Use Warfare Tests when the backdrop of war is important but not the focus of action.

Role-playing is about dynamic conflict, and the Warfare Test is very "abstract" and impersonal. This test is designed to simulate when the Player Characters or Major NPCs are involved in large-scale battles involving more than two dozen combatants—armed

conflict well beyond the focus of the *Jadeclaw* game, which is geared towards "one-on-one" affairs. The Warfare Test should be used to remind Players how dangerous war can be without bogging down the game. This test should never seem arbitrary or random, but a "plot point" in the framework of a larger adventure.

Frequently Asked Questions about Tests

I want to pass a Test, but I don't have any of the Skill Dice or Trait Dice that are listed as relevant. What can I do?

You can always try to get one Bonus, using extra time, extra materials, or other resources at hand. One Bonus will raise no dice at all (Level "zero") to a d4 (Level 1).

If that doesn't work, be creative. Is this something that might apply to your Race, or your Career?

Since most Tests involve the ability to think quickly, the Game Host may let you use your Mind Dice, perhaps with one Penalty or worse.

> ***Example:*** Ezhong wants to haggle over the price of a crossbow. He wants to try a Haggling Test (p. 108). Unfortunately, he does not have the Haggling skill. A Scholar by trade, Ezhong knows nothing of the finer points of heft, balance, draw length, and trigger-locks of a finely-made crossbow. The Game Host decides that Ezhong may substitute his Mind Dice, but at one Penalty.
>
> Ezhong has a Mind Die of d12. With his one Penalty, he must roll the die twice and take the lower roll. He first throws an 8, then he throws a 4. Ezhong compares the 4 vs. the merchant's score of 8. It's a Failure, but not an overwhelming one—Ezhong may not be a good judge of weapons, but he's worldly enough to not be taken to the cleaners.

Can other kinds of dice be used in Tests?

Absolutely! The Players and Game Host are encouraged to come up with creative ways to use their Races, Careers, and other Traits to their advantage. See the *Skills* chapter, (p. 64), for some ideas.

How many times can I try a Test?

For some tests, you either succeeded or you didn't, and can try again. For example, if you failed to Climb the wall the first time, you can try again later. Most activities take about five minutes, although the Game Host should make their best judgment.

For tests involving personal interactions, such as Gossip Tests and Influence Tests, usually only one try is permitted — people get tired of constantly being bothered, so repeated attempts will usually only annoy the NPCs.

Quick Reference to Tests

I want to…	*Test*	*Typical Dice Rolled*	*Page*
Argue over the price of something.	**Haggle**	Haggling vs. Haggling	108
Attack from surprise.	**Ambush**	Speed vs. Sixth Sense (with Mind for vigilant folks)	104
Bribe someone.	**Bribery**	Bribery vs. Will	105
Browbeat someone for information.	**Interrogate**	Body and Intimidation vs. Will and Resolve)	108
Cast a spell.	**Casting**	Mind, Wizard Trait vs. difficulty	106
Catch someone who's running away.	**Chase**	Speed vs. Speed	106
Change someone's mind.	**Influence**	Mind OR Will, Charisma, skill vs. difficulty & Will	109
Chat with folks, learn what's news.	**Gossip**	Carousing, Etiquette, OR Streetwise vs. difficulty	107
Detect magic.	**Scry**	Mind, appropriate Lore vs. 2d10, 2d8, 2d6, OR 2d4	115
Fight in a war.	**Warfare**	varies	118
Find out where they sell something I want.	**Availability**	area size vs. difficulty	104
Find somebody who can do something I need done.	**Availability**	area size vs. difficulty	104
Find something hidden.	**Search**	Mind, Observation vs. Mind, Camouflage	116
Forage for food in the wilderness.	**Foraging**	Mind, Survival (appropriate Race Habitat Dice) vs. difficulty	107
Get "the word on the street."	**Gossip**	Carousing, Etiquette, OR Streetwise vs. difficulty	107
Get my Magic Points back (without sleeping).	**Meditation**	Meditation vs. difficulty	114
Get the drop on someone.	**Ambush**	Speed vs. Sixth Sense (with Mind for vigilant folks)	104
Hear something.	**Listen**	Mind, Observation, appropriate Race vs. difficulty	113
Hide.	**Hide**	Camouflage, Stealth vs. Mind and Observation	109
Hunt for food.	**Foraging**	Mind, Survival (appropriate Race Habitat Dice) vs. difficulty	107
Jump a great distance.	**Jump**	Body, Jumping	111
Keep my allies from fleeing or routing.	**Leadership**	Charisma, Leadership vs. difficulty	112
Know if someone's telling me the truth.	**Bluff**	Mind OR Will, Charisma, Fast-Talk vs. Mind and Psychology	110
Lead your allies into battle.	**Leadership**	Charisma, Leadership vs. difficulty	112
Lie to someone.	**Bluff**	Mind OR Will, Charisma, Fast-Talk vs. Mind and Psychology	110
Live off the land.	**Foraging**	Mind, Survival (appropriate Race Habitat Dice) vs. difficulty	107
Look something up in a library.	**Research**	Mind, Research vs. difficulty	115
Make someone do something.	**Influence**	Mind OR Will, Charisma, skill vs. difficulty & Will	109
Move silently.	**Sneak**	Stealth vs. difficulty	116
Pick someone's pocket.	**Pickpocket**	Dexterity, Pickpocket, Sleight of Hand vs. Mind, Observation	114
Play dumb; pretend I don't know something I do.	**Bluff**	Mind OR Will, Charisma, Fast-Talk vs. Mind and Psychology	110
Remember something that my Character should know but I don't.	**Know**	Mind vs. difficulty	111
Resist pain.	**Resolve**	Will, Resolve vs. Damage Dice	147
Resist supernatural fear.	**Fear**	Will, Resolve vs. difficulty	106
Run away.	**Chase**	Speed vs. Speed	106
Scan for magical effects.	**Scry**	Mind, appropriate Lore vs. 2d10, 2d8, 2d6, OR 2d4	115
See if I know something.	**Know**	Mind vs. difficulty	111
See something.	**Spot**	Mind, Observation, appropriate Race vs. difficulty	117
Smell something.	**Smell**	Mind, Observation, appropriate Race vs. difficulty	116
Snap someone out of an Abnormal Mental State.	**Leadership**	Charisma, Leadership vs. difficulty	112
Sneak past someone.	**Sneak**	Stealth vs. difficulty	116
Torture someone.	**Interrogate**	Body and Intimidation vs. Will and Resolve)	108
Walk a long distance.	**Travel**	Body, Hiking vs. difficulty	117
Work a crowd, picking pockets for quick funds.	**Pickpocket**	Dexterity, Pickpocket, Sleight of Hand vs. Mind, Observation	114

LATER THAT DAY IN THE CAPITAL . . .
FISH FOR SALE!
SPICES!
JINGLE
THAT WALK... THOSE CLOTHES... THAT MUST BE THE MAN THAT DEFEATED HONG ZHAOSHI. THIS IS THE MAN THAT OPPOSED THE TRIAD!
HUH?
GET HIM!

PUNCH!
BLOCK!
JAB!
SLAP!
PUNCH!
DODGE!
GRRRRRRRR....!
PUNCH!
GRAB!
THRUST!
BLOCK!
DON'T PLAY WITH HIM! FINISH IT!
FINAL BLOW!
WHAM
COWARD! COME BACK HERE!

"No one doubts the bravery of daring Tiger, yet their lives are short.
No one questions the bravery of undaring Rabbit, yet their lives are long.
With these two things, in one case there's a profit, in the other there's harm."

— from *The Superior Theory of Arms* by Ran Tiankuo

COMBAT

Sometimes, conflict becomes dire. Tempers flare, hackles rise, and swords are drawn. When two or more characters have at one another, this is called Combat. In *Jadeclaw*, we have tried to make room for those players that wish to model more complex combat situations while not jeopardizing game flow. The rules provide for both Basic Combat and Advanced Combat, which can be used at the Host's discretion.

Combat Time, Game Time, and Real Time

Much like a movie or a book, a role-playing game setting can often span long periods of time, such as months or years. For example, if nothing much interesting is going to happen until the Summer Solstice, then all the players and the Host may agree to "fast forward" until the setting's date is the Solstice. We call this sort of time *game time* because it's the time that takes place for the characters in the game. This is different from *real time*, which is what's going on for the players and Host and can't be glossed over or slowed down no matter what.

On the other hand, sometimes it becomes important to describe everything in meticulous detail, moment by moment—and that time is when lives are at stake. We call this *combat time*. It's similar to the way novels suddenly expand in detail during a particularly grim action sequence, or they way a movie might lurch into slow motion.

Combat time is further broken down into *Rounds*. Simply put, each combatant gets one swing in each Round. Since a Round is about the time it takes each person to do something, it's not a precise measure of time, but somewhere around six seconds or so.

Definitions of Terms

Abnormal Status

Certain Flaws, magical spells, and other circumstances may cause a combatant to suffer an *Abnormal Status,* such as *Confusion, Fear,* or *Paralysis.* Combatants suffering from Abnormal Status have their abilities impeded in some way until the Status can be cured. A few Statuses are improved. See p. 339 for a listing.

Abort

Many Long Maneuvers prevent you from Defending yourself while you do them. If someone comes up to you and tries to kill you, however, you may want to give up early to preserve your life. Giving up on a Long Maneuver to use a Defense is called *Aborting.* When you Abort a Long Maneuver, you must start over.

Action

A catch-phrase for "doing something." Actions include *Defenses, Maneuvers,* and *Free Actions.*

Advantage

An *Advantage* is something a combatant can do or a penalty they can ignore that is not typical of most folks. For example, someone who has the Advantage of being Sure-Footed can ignore penalties due to bad footing; someone who has the Advantage of Night Vision can see better in the dark. Unlike Exploits, Maneuvers, or Specials, you can claim any number of Advantages at any one time.

Armor Dice

Armor Dice (often simply called Armor) represents either a natural carapace (such as a Tortoise's shell) or worn, protective gear (such as a leather jacket or a suit of chain mail). Armor Dice is almost always included with Soak Dice when resisting Damage Rolls, although there are a few exceptions.

Awkward Weapon

Sometimes a weapon is clumsy and cannot be used as effectively as one that is not. In game terms, an *Awkward Weapon* is one that can only be used with Awkward Maneuvers, never easy ones.

A weapon can be Awkward for any of the following reasons:

- Because it is so big. Heavy Weapons are always Awkward. Medium Weapons are Awkward when used in one hand. (See Handedness.)
- Because the weapon is not ready. Swords that are in their sheaths, spears that are still covered, etc. must be readied before use, and the act of readying them makes them Awkward for that Round. Note: Natural Weapons are *always* ready.
- Because the combatant is suffering some abnormal status, such as Confusion.

There is no "double-awkwardness" — a weapon is either Awkward or it's not.

Block Defense

One Defense against an opponent's To-Hit Roll is the *Block.* To Block, you must have a ready Shield.

When Blocking with a shield, your Defense Dice are your *Speed Dice and your Shield Dice* (from Skill and Career).

Note that shields all have their own *Cover Dice,* which is included with *all* Defenses (Block, Parry, and Dodge) against attacks from the front, regardless of which one you are using at the time.

There is no penalty for using a Shield in your Off-Hand.

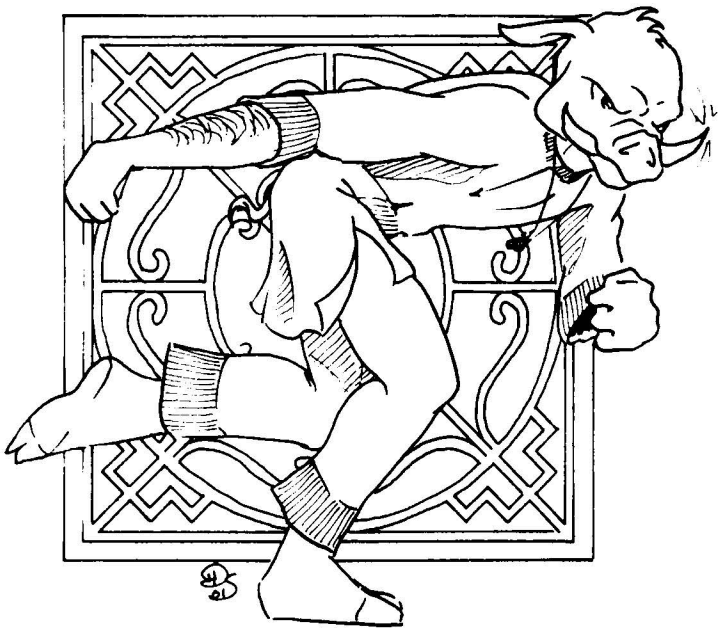
You may Block once per Round per ready Shield.

Bonus

Striking from behind, using the "Strike Sure" Maneuver, spending your Focus, etc. can all grant one or more *Bonuses* to a combatant.

Each one Bonus increases all affected dice by one size. Since d12s can't get any bigger, any "extra size" that would normally enlarge a d12 is carried down to the next smallest die. If there are no new dice, then the size increase grants an extra d4 — go from there.

Bonuses and Penalties cancel one another out. So a combatant with one Bonus and one Penalty has no modifiers to dice at all.



Charge

The *Charge* is a Maneuver where a combatant moves their Dash, makes a To-Hit Roll, and is then immediately sent Reeling. In effect, someone who Charges this Round will lose their attack for next Round, as they will have to Recover from Reeling.

Cluster

A *Cluster* is a sphere with a radius of three paces.

Combatant

A *Combatant* is anyone involved in a fight, whether on your side (a *Friend*) or not (a *Foe*).

Concealed Weapons

Folks may want to conceal weapons on their person. Such weapons can only be found with a Pat-Down Search Test. Withdrawing a concealed weapon takes a full Round, and is a Long Maneuver.

Counter-Attack

A kind of *Exploit,* a Counter-Attack is a counter-attack in response to someone else's attack. A Counter-Attack is an automatic, successful attack that does Damage.

Cover

Cover makes you harder to hit; in game terms, Cover Dice are Defense Dice that are included with any of your Defense Rolls (Parry, Block, Dodge, etc.). Some typical cover dice:

- *Shield Dice* are Cover Dice against any attack made to the front of the combatant. (This Cover Dice applies to all Defense Rolls, too — not just Block.)
- Soft Cover such as bushes and hedge-rows counts as a Cover Die of d8.
- Hard Cover such as a stone wall counts as a Cover Die of d12, if some of the combatant is exposed. Combatants who are craven cowards may withdraw from the fray and thus be completely out of line-of-sight and harm's way.
- When determining line-of-sight for Ranged Combat, other combatants in the way count as Cover Dice — typically, use their Body Dice (since that also determines Size) as Cover Dice.

Damage

When a To-Hit Roll is successful, the target almost always suffers a *Damage Roll.* The Damage caused by a weapon varies according to its type:

- For melee weapons and thrown weapons, the Damage Dice are your Strength Dice and your Weapon Damage Dice.
- For missile weapons, the Damage is simply the Weapon's Damage Dice.
- For magic, the Damage varies. See Magic, below.
- Special circumstances, such as Overwhelming To-Hit Rolls or the "Strike Hard" Maneuver, may improve Damage.

Dash

A kind of Movement, your *Dash* is how far your character moves when running all-out, measured in paces. The Dash is usually more than the Stride, but it limits your combat actions.

Dodge Defense

All combatants can *Dodge,* which is trying to get out of the way of an attack. A combatant needs no special equipment or circumstances to Dodge.

When Dodging, your Defense Dice are your *Speed Dice and Dodge Dice* (if any). Note that a combatant without any Dodge Dice at all is surely risking a Botch.

Combatants weighed down with too much stuff find it harder to avoid attacks. Dodge Dice are subject to the *Encumbrance Limit.*

There is no limit on the number of times a combatant can Dodge in one Round.

Easy Weapon

An *Easy Weapon* is one that you can use simply and straightforwardly. Easy Weapons include all Natural Weapons, Light Weapons used in one hand, and Medium Weapons used in two hands. When using an Easy Weapon, you can use the Easy

Weapon Maneuvers, which are much better than the Awkward Weapon Maneuvers.

Empty-Hand Weapons

There are eight Empty Hand strikes known in Zhongguo. For purposes of combat, an Empty Hand attack is its own "Weapon."

- To use an Empty Hand attack, you must have at least a d4 in the Special Trait: Empty Hand Method. Each of the eight Empty Hand techniques requires a different Trait.
- Empty Hand Attacks require both hands to be empty. If you have a Carried Weapon or shield in either hand, you may not use an Empty-Hand Weapon.
- The To-Hit Dice for a Empty Hand attack are your *Speed Dice* and your *Brawling Dice*. (Note that your Empty Hand Trait is included with Brawling.)
- Your Damage Dice are your own *Strength Dice* and your *Empty Hand Trait Dice*.

Empty Hand attacks may be Parried, Blocked, or Dodged.

Exploit

The opposite of a Special, an *Exploit* is something you can do to take advantage of another's clumsiness in battle or a particular lucky break. You may use your Exploit on someone when you Overwhelm on a Defense Roll.

The Exploit you can use is dependent on what Defense you used (Parry, Block, or Dodge), and often on what weapon or shield you used to defend yourself with, too.

Exploits never overlap. Although you may have the choice of two or more Exploits you can use at any one time, you may only choose one against any one attack.

Facing

All combatants can see in their front 180 degrees just fine. Any combatant in the front 180 degrees is said to be *in front* of you; anyone else is *behind* you.

You can Parry and Block attacks made from in front of you normally. The Cover Dice from your shield only works from attacks made in front of you.

When attacking a combatant from behind, you receive a +1 To-Hit Bonus.

A combatant who is not Reeling may Retreat (p. 133) from an attack from Behind. The attacker still gets the one Bonus to hit, but the defender gets an extra Retreat Die. During a Retreat, the defender can have any facing they want, and will most likely turn to face their attacker; if they do so, they may Parry or Block their attacker.

Fatigue

Exhaustion, weariness, hunger, loss of breath, and minor scrapes and bruises may cause a combatant to suffer *Fatigue*. Fatigue causes Hit Point loss that can be quickly recovered.

Fatigue is usually non-fatal ... but when a combatant runs out of Hit Points to lose from Fatigue, then the combatant will start suffering Wounds.

Focus

A combatant with *Focus* is one who is cool and collected in the middle of the frantic battle. Focus can be used to claim certain bonuses to To-Hit or Defense Rolls, can be used to Interrupt another's action, or can be used to claim the Special Maneuver of "Strike Focused." If you are using miniatures, place a blue counter next to a Focused combatant.

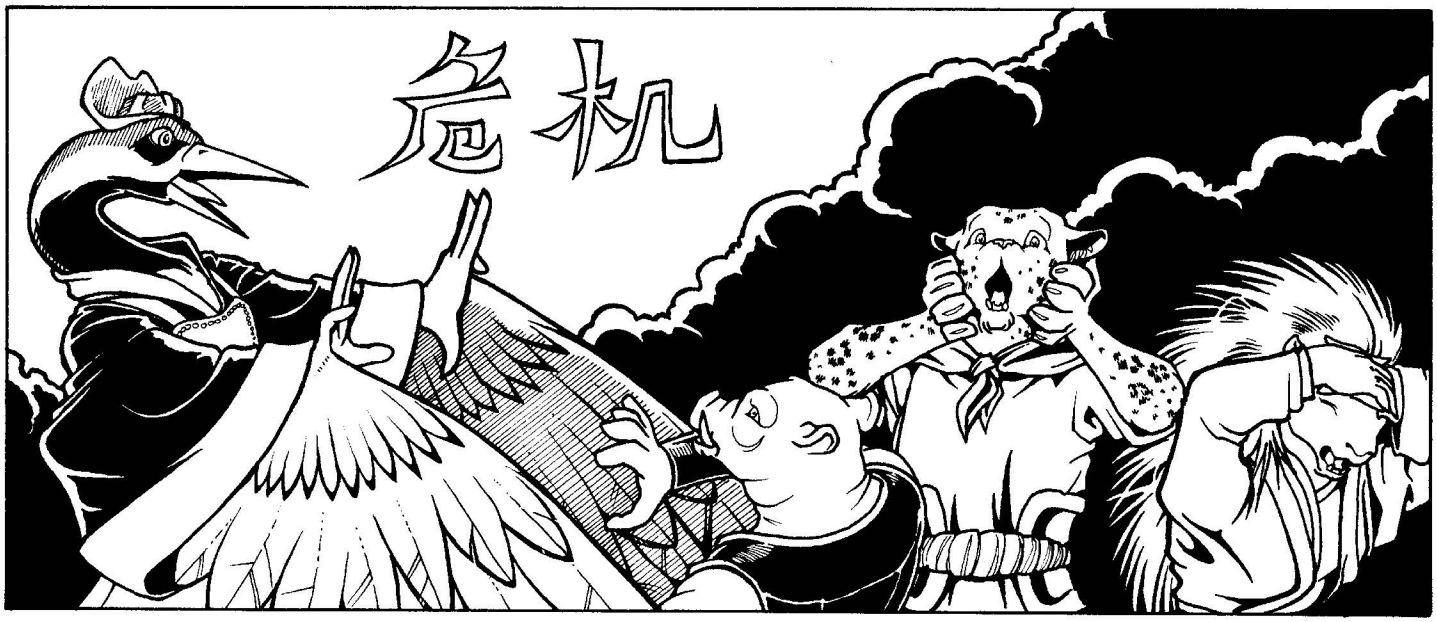
Follow-up

Some Maneuvers (such as "Crush") require that some other action be taken first, and are known as *Follow-up* Maneuvers. (The action that must be taken first is called a *Set-up*.)

Free Action

Most things that combatants do have an opportunity cost. A combatant can only chose one Maneuver in a Round, and their Defenses get used up. Some activities, however, are *free actions*. Within reason, there is no limit to the number of free actions a combatant can perform in one Round. (As always, the Game Host has final say.) Some free actions include:

- Talking to comrades.
- Making a Listen, Spot, or Smell Test.
- Resisting an Influence Test.
- Being the target of a Magic Resistance Test.
- Dropping a weapon already in hand.
- Dropping a small shield.
- Dismissing a spell that you've cast.



Group

Two or more foes within four paces of one another constitute a *Group,* for purposes of Magic.

Guard

One of the "Zero-Rank" Maneuvers, *Guarding* confers the following benefits:

- The combatant gains two Bonuses to all Defense Rolls.
- The combatant may Parry and Block twice as many times as normal.

The disadvantage of Guarding is that it is not an attack. When Guarding, you're not attacking anyone else.

Hands

Each weapon requires one or more hands to use. Light Weapons need only one hand. Heavy weapons require two hands. A Medium Weapon can be used in one hand (and is thus *Awkward*) or two hands (and is thus *Easy*).

Every combatant has one *Good Hand,* which is either the left or the right hand (chosen at character creation). The other hand is the *Off-Hand,* and suffers from the Off-Hand Penalty of -1. (The Gift of Ambidexterity removes this Penalty.)

Hand Substitutes

The Gifts of Ophidian, Prehensile Feet, Prehensile Tail, and Trunk give a combatant one or more "hand substitutes." These substitutes can be used for one-handed tasks (such as using Light Weapons) but not for two-handed tasks (such as using Heavy Weapons.)

Having multiple grabbers is certainly an aid to many tasks. The advantage of hand substitutes is represented by a combatant's Race Trait, which is often included with such "handy" Skills as Climbing and Wrestling.

Prehensile Feet, Prehensile Tails, and Trunks are always Off-Hands unless the combatant has the Gift of Multidexterity (p. 48).

Hand substitutes can *never* substitute for free hands for casting Magic or for using Empty Hand Methods.

Heavy Weapon

A *Heavy Weapon* is one where your Lift is barely adequate to pick up the weapon. Heavy Weapons are normally Awkward and always require two hands to use.

Hit Points

Hit Points are a basic measure of a combatant's ability to withstand punishment. Most characters have 13 Hit Points. Hit Points are lost in two ways: from *Fatigue* (which may force Unconsciousness) and from *Wounds* (which may risk both Unconsciousness and Death.)

Initiative

At the beginning of every round, most combatants will roll *Initiative.* This determines who may strike first. Combatants who roll higher than others are said to "win the Initiative."

Combatants who claim Zero-Rank maneuvers do not roll Initiative. Zero-Rank Maneuvers take effect for the entire combat round, and are always defensive in nature, such as Guard and Recover.

Combatants who are following orders can benefit from Leadership (p. 135).

Leadership

Any group of combatants may have a Leader. The Leader calls out orders and boosts morale.

A Leader must be competent and confident. Leaders lose their Leadership advantage when they are sent *Reeling,* or when they suffer from conditions such as *Confusion, Fear,* or *Rage.* A Leader must be able to see the battle and to give orders — hiding Leaders, or ones who have been *Silenced* and cannot speak, will lose their advantage.

Light Weapon

A *Light Weapon* is one where your Lift is enough so that you can use the weapon easily in one hand. Light Weapons are normally Easy to use and can be thrown.

Limit

Sometimes, no matter how good you are, conditions keep you from utilizing your full capacity. In other words, sometimes there is a *Limit* on how large your dice can be.

When a Limit is imposed, reduce any dice that are larger than the Limit to the size of the Limit. ***Do this before rolling the dice.***

For example, if your Encumbrance Limit is d8, then none of your Dodge Dice may be larger than d8 — if any are, reduce their size to d8. If you had Dodge dice of d12, d10 and d4, you would now have Dodge dice of 2d8 & d4.

Some common Limits:

Encumbrance Limit: When using an *Unencumbered Skill,* no die may be larger than your Encumbrance Limit, as determined by how much weight you are carrying over your Lift. Unencumbered Skills include Acrobatics, Dancing, Dodge, Fencing, Flight, Jumping, Stealth, Swimming, and Wrestling.

Riding Limit: When fighting while mounted, almost all physical actions (including To-Hit Dice and Defense Dice) are subject to your Riding Limit — no die may be larger than your biggest Riding Die.

Long Maneuver

Any maneuver that spans more than one Rank of Initiative is a *Long Maneuver.* If your Long Maneuver is interrupted, you will have to start over from the beginning. Most Long Maneuvers forbid you from defending yourself while you perform them, except if you Abort (p. 139)

Magic

Wizards will often attempt to smite their foes by commanding supernatural power. The use of *Magic* in combat is treated in greater detail in the Magic chapter (p. 189)

Maneuver

Each combatant performs one action per Round, which is called that combatant's *Maneuver.* Maneuvers are broken up into various categories, such as:

- ***Universal:*** this Maneuver can be performed at any time by anyone; no training or equipment is necessary.
- ***Natural:*** this Maneuver uses a combatant's Natural Weapon. These Maneuvers are always fast and accurate.
- ***Easy:*** this Maneuver uses a combatant's Easy Weapon. Like Natural Maneuvers, these are always fast and accurate.
- ***Awkward:*** this Maneuver uses a combatant's Awkward Weapon. These Maneuvers are slow to use, but they work with the larger, more damaging weapons.
- ***Martial:*** these Maneuvers require that the combatant have special training and that special circumstances for Usability be met. Only combatants with the appropriate Gift can use a Martial Maneuver.
- ***Melee:*** Maneuvers that involve hand-to-hand combat.
- ***Thrown:*** Maneuvers that involve throwing a weapon at a target.
- ***Ranged:*** Maneuvers that involve using a ranged weapon such as a bow or crossbow.

Each combatant performs one Maneuver per Round.

Maneuvers can claim *Special* results. You can only perform one Maneuver per Round.

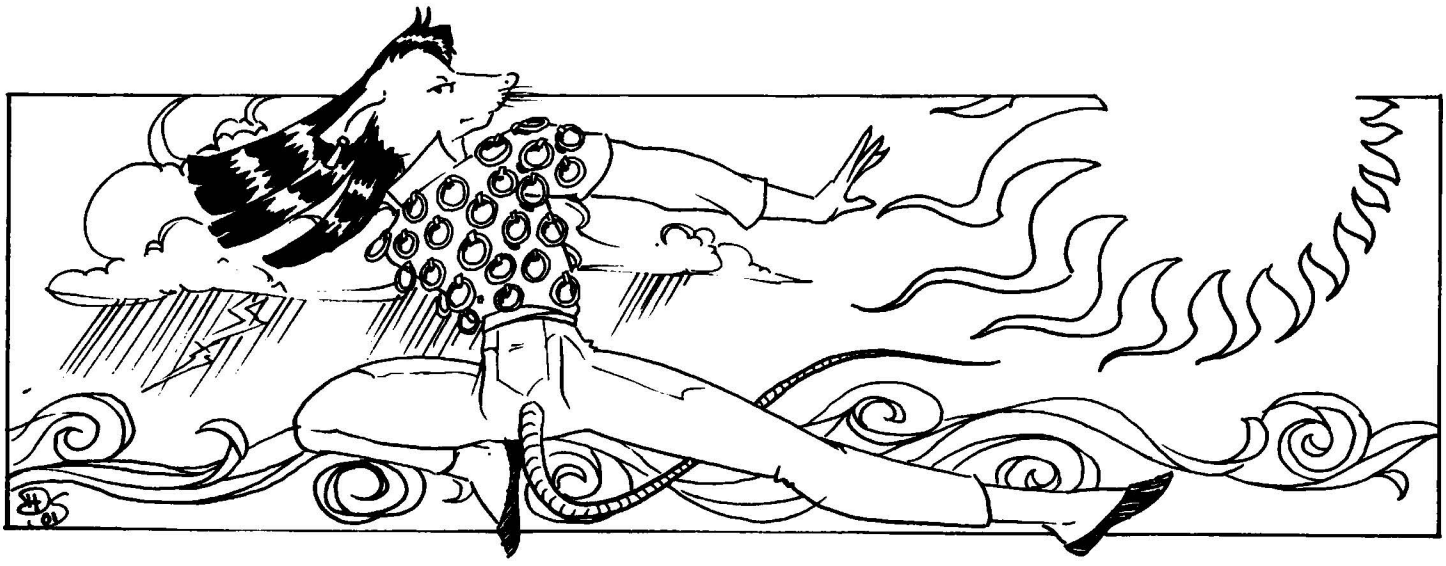
Medium Weapon

A weapon that is between Light and Heavy. Such a weapon is Easy to use in two hands, but Awkward to use with only one hand.

Melee Combat

A *Melee* is fight between hand-to-hand combatants, using weapons with reach.

- Melee Weapons have *Reach,* which is the maximum distance they may strike, measured in paces.
- The To-Hit Dice for a Melee Weapon are your *Speed Dice* and your *Weapon Dice.* Each kind of Melee Weapon has its own Skill: Axe, Sword, etc.
- The Damage Dice for a Melee Weapon are your *Strength Dice* and



the weapon's own *Damage Dice*.

- Melee Attacks may be Blocked, Parried, or Dodged.

Natural Weapon

Natural Weapons are built into the combatant's body, such as fists, claws, and teeth.

- Natural Weapons are *always* ready to use. They are never Awkward.
- The To-Hit Dice for a Natural Weapon are your *Speed Dice,* your *Race Dice,* and your *Brawling Dice (if any).* Brawling Dice work with all Natural Weapons.
- Your Damage Dice are your own *Strength Dice* and the Natural Weapon's *Damage Dice.*
- Natural Weapons may be Parried, Blocked, or Dodged.

Off-Hand

At character creation, pick a good hand — your left, or your right. The other one is your Off-Hand.

Using a weapon with your Off-Hand suffers one Penalty for all To-Hit Rolls and all Parries. (Blocks with shields do *not* suffer this penalty.)

If you have Ambidexterity, neither hand is your Off-Hand.

If you have Multidexterity, *no* limb suffers this penalty.

Pace

The standard unit of distance in *Jadeclaw* is the pace, which is one meter in length.

Parry Defense

Combatants often deflect or redirect other's attacks by using their own weapons — this is called the *Parry Defense.*

When Parrying with a weapon, your Defense Dice are your *Speed Dice and your Weapon Dice* (from Skill and Career).

Some weapons are better at Parrying, such as Fencing Weapons — they receive one Bonus on Parries. Some weapons, such as Flails, cannot Parry.

Any Parry made with a weapon in an Off-Hand suffers one Penalty.

Barehanded Parry

You may Parry with your bare hands. Your Defense Dice are your *Speed Dice and your Brawling Dice* (from Skill and Career). Unlike To-Hit Rolls, do not include your Race Dice (unless they specifically apply to Brawling, such as a Monkey's.)

A combatant with two hands can Parry twice (once per hand) just as if they had two weapons. Remember that Parries with the Off-Hand suffer one Penalty.

Penalty

Fighting with the off-hand, being sent Reeling, becoming confused, etc. all can force one or more *Penalties* on a combatant.

- On *Simple Rolls* (such as Initiative, To-Hit Rolls, and Defense Rolls), each Penalty forces the combatant to roll again. If the new Score is worse, that one stands. (So a combatant with one Penalty takes the worse Score of two rolls, a combatant with two Penalties takes the worst Score of three rolls, etc.)
- On *Damage Rolls* (including Soak Rolls, rolls to resist Exploding Spells, etc.), each Penalty forces the combatant to remove their smallest die before they even roll them. For example, a

combatant that normally rolls 2d12 & d4 for Damage, when suffering one Penalty, rolls only 2d12.

Sometimes, a Penalty only affects certain kinds of dice. For example, a combatant might suffer one Penalty to *Armor Dice* (but not Soak Dice). If the combatant normally rolled d10 Armor and d8 Soak, they would lose the d10 from Armor.

Bonuses and Penalties cancel one another out. So a combatant who has one Bonus and two Penalties only suffers one Penalty.

Position

During a combat, your character may be lying down, standing up, kneeling, in the air, or some other *Position.* A combatant's Position can limit their options in battle.

Range

The distance between two combatants is the *Range,* measured in paces. The longer the Range, the harder it is to hit someone with a ranged attack. For purposes of To-Hit Rolls, Range is divided into bands of *Point-Blank, Short, Medium, Long,* and *eXtreme.*

Ranged Combat

Ranged Combat is a fight using bows, crossbows, and other projectile weapons (as opposed to Thrown Weapons).

- Ranged Weapons have *Ranges:* Point-Blank, Short, Medium, Long, and eXtreme. The farther away the target is, the harder it is to hit, represented by *Ranged Defense Dice.*
- The To-Hit Dice for a Missile Weapon are your *Speed Dice* and your *Weapon Dice.* Each kind of Missile Weapon has its own Skill: Bow, Crossbow, etc.
- Missile Weapons have fixed Damage Dice. (Do not include the attacker's Strength Dice.)
- Ranged Attacks can always be Dodged. Bows and Crossbows may be Blocked. (Projectiles faster the eye can see – such as the half-mythical gunpower bullets – normally cannot be Blocked, but the Cover Dice from a shield are still included with Defense Rolls.)

Rank

In Advanced Combat, the Round is divided into three *Ranks:* First, Second, and Third. The sequence for a typical Round would be:

- The "zero Rank" when combatants declare that they are Guarding, or when they Recover from Reeling.
- All First-Rank combatants act.
- All Second-Rank combatants act.
- All Third-Rank combatants act.
- The "end of Round," when a spell's duration may expire.

Simply put, the Easy stuff goes off in the First Rank, the Awkward stuff and the spell-casting goes off in the Second Rank, and anyone who got to the Third Rank alive and can't think of anything to do should claim Focus.

Reach

The distance a melee weapon can strike someone is called its *Reach,* measured in paces. Most weapons strike at up to 1 pace away. Some weapons can *only* strike 2 paces away or more. Reach is of greater interest to folks who use miniatures.

Ready

When you have your weapon out and are ready for battle, your weapon is *Ready.* It's always obvious to other combatants that your weapon is Ready.

Weapons are *Awkward* while being made Ready. For simplicity, it's easiest to assume that anyone drawing a sword or the like can only use Awkward Maneuvers for the first Round, and may act normally after that.

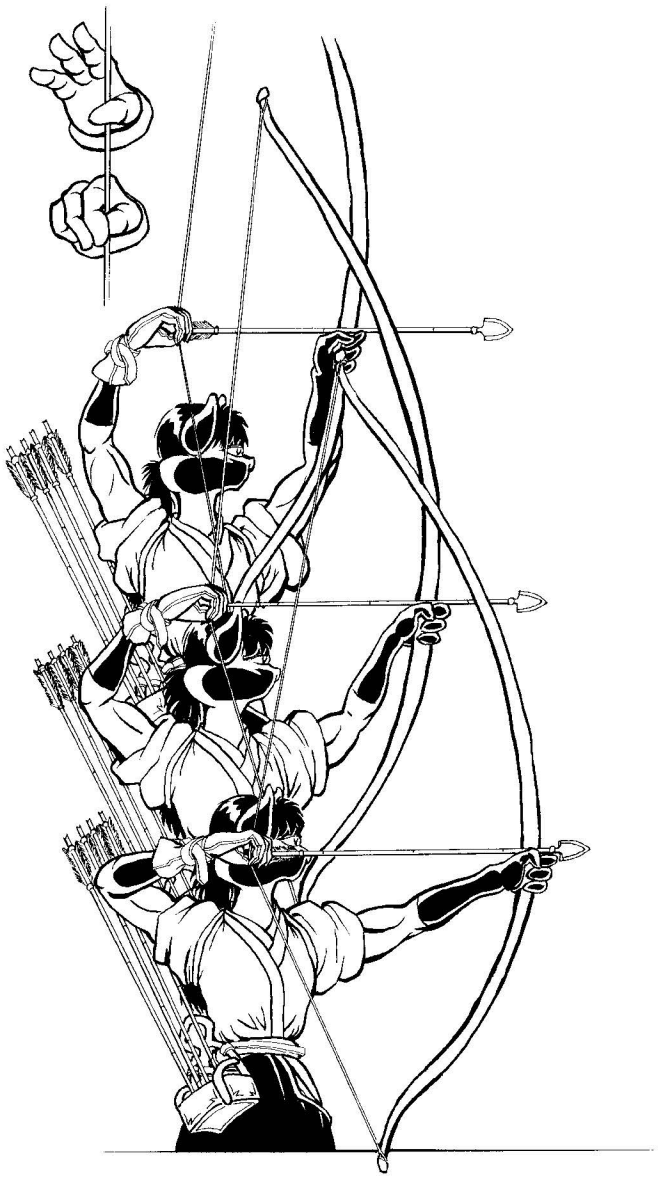
Only Ready Weapons may parry. A combatant may Ready and Parry with it at no opportunity cost — but unready weapons are still Awkward for the Round.

A combatant may normally Ready only one weapon per Round.

Reeling

Combatants that suffer injury may be sent *Reeling.* A Reeling combatant loses their next combat action.

Someone who fails to pass a Resolve Test (p. 147) is sent Reeling. Other circumstances, such as failed actions or magic, may send someone Reeling.



Removing Dice

Some special attacks require you to remove dice. Remove the dice before you roll. For example, Hao-nhien normally rolls d12, d10, and d8 to hit. If he had to remove the biggest die, then he'd only roll a d10 and a d8.

Resolve Test

Combatants who suffer pain or injury will have to pass a *Resolve Test,* which is a Simple Contest of the combatant's *Will Dice and Resolve Dice (if any)* vs. *the Damage Dice of the attack (as if it were a simple roll.)*

Combatants that Fail the Resolve Test suffer as follows:

- *If the combatant has yet to act this Round, then they lose their action.* (In affect, they "blow their action to Recover," automatically.)
- *If the combatant has already acted this Round, then they are sent Reeling.* They will have to Recover next Round.

A combatant does not need to make a Resolve Test unless they suffer Fatigue or Wounds from the attack. Attacks that "bounce off armor" do not cause pain or injury, and thus do not force the Resolve Test.

Retreat

A standing combatant may *Retreat* from an attack. (A lying-down combatant can "roll out of the way," too.) Sitting combatants, Reeling combatants, etc. may not Retreat.

A combatant must Retreat away from the attack. Which direction is "away" is up to the Game Host. As a rule, a Retreat never decreases the distance between the attacker and the defender.

A Retreat is always a minimum of 1 pace of distance, and a maximum of the combatant's Stride.

Retreating grants the following advantage:

- Against a Melee Attack, the Retreating combatant gains an extra d8 on their Defense Dice — known as the *Retreat Die.*
- Against a Thrown Attack, Ranged Attack, or Targeting Attack, the Retreating Combatant increases the effect Range, and the target may claim Cover Dice from anything they can move behind — other combatants, stone walls, etc.
- Against a Homing or Exploding Attack, the Retreating combatant gains a Retreat Die of d8 to include with their other dice when resisting Damage.

A combatant may only Retreat once per Round.

As part of the Retreat, the combatant may change their facing to any direction. If the Retreat turns the combatant to face the attacker, they may immediately use their shield's Cover Dice against the attack! However, Retreating does not negate the +1 "From Behind" Bonus.

Regardless of how far the combatant Retreats, the To-Hit Roll is still attempted.

Round

Jadeclaw plays out combat in terms of *Rounds,* an abstract amount of time where everyone performs one Maneuver. The length of a Round varies but is assumed to be six seconds long.

In Advanced Combat, the Round is divided into three Ranks — First, Second, and Third.

Run

The *Run* is a Long Maneuver, where a combatant moves their Dash three times in one Round. (In Advanced Combat, this is one Dash per Rank.) Combatants that Run cannot attack. Combatants who run can only use Defenses if they Abort (p. 139).

Soak Dice

Every combatant has an inherent ability to shrug off Damage, known as their *Soak Dice.* For most combatants, their Soak Dice is the same as their Body Dice.

Soak Dice are included with Armor Dice when resisting Weapon Damage.

Special

Every weapon gets a *Special* result that it can use when you Overwhelmingly Succeed on a To-Hit Roll.

Specials never overlap. Although you may have the choice between two or more Special results, you may use only one Special result per attack. You *don't* have to pick your Special before your To-Hit, but you *must* choose your Special before you make your Damage Roll.

Exploits, such as the Counter-Attack, can *never* claim the Special result. Only To-Hit Rolls with Maneuvers can.

Stride

One-fourth as long as the Dash, the *Stride* is the usual distance a combatant moves with most attacks. The Stride is also the maximum distance of a Retreat.

Thrown Weapons

Any Light Weapon can be thrown at a target. The To-Hit Roll always uses a Thrown Weapon Skill.

- Thrown Weapons have Ranges: Short, Medium, Long, and eXtreme. The farther away the target is, the harder they are to hit. The stronger the thrower is, the longer these ranges are.
- The Range a weapon can be thrown is dependent on the difference between your Lift, and the Minimum Light Lift required to use the weapon – see page 84.
- The To-Hit Dice for a Thrown Weapon are your *Speed Dice & Thrown Weapon Dice.* Each kind of Thrown Weapon has its own Skill: Spear, Sword, Axe, etc.
- The Damage Dice for a Thrown Weapon are the thrower's *Strength Dice* and the weapon's own *Damage Dice.*
- Thrown Weapons can be Blocked or Dodged.

To-Hit Roll

When attacking a target, you must make a *To-Hit Roll,* which is usually your *Speed Dice* and your appropriate *Weapon Dice* from Skills, Career Trait, and other sources. The target usually Defends using Block, Parry, or Dodge.

Unknown Attackers

Combatants you were not aware of may attack you. Perhaps there are rooftop snipers, or perhaps someone was hiding in that rain barrel.

Adventurers are notoriously sensitive to danger and are constantly wary of assault. The *Sixth Sense* skill represents the capacity to always sit by the wall not the window, to guard one's flank at all times, etc. This is reflected in the Ambush Test (p. 104).

When in a combat situation (weapons ready, time measured in Rounds, etc.), you may be attacked by combatants you couldn't perceive. However, combatants are assumed to be watchful for danger at any angle. *A combatant's Defense Dice (Parry, Block, or Dodge) against an unknown attacker can be no larger than their largest Sixth Sense die, or d4, whichever is better.* This is called the "Sixth Sense Limit."

For example, In-Leng the Fox has a Sixth Sense die of d8 just from being a fox. When attacked from an unknown source while she is in combat, none of her Defense Dice may be larger than d8. Her friend Vesper has no Sixth Sense dice at all; he may only roll d4s against unknown attackers.

Unknown attackers may be in front or behind the defender. For example, a defender may be carrying a torch while being shot at by archers cloaked by darkness. Attacks made from behind gain one Bonus (p. 128 Facing).

Wounds

Cuts, punctures, broken bones, and other life-threatening circumstances are represented by *Wounds*. Wounds cause Hit Point loss that takes a long time to recover. Suffering six or more Wounds can be fatal.

Basic Combat

If you are new to *Jadeclaw*, you may want to use the *Basic Combat* Rules. These rules are simplified, so you're losing some level of detail, but they are easier to learn.

In Basic Combat, all Player Characters go before Non-Player Characters.

In Basic Combat, the Round is divided into three parts: *Easy, Awkward,* and *Final.*

The Easy Part

1. All Player Characters use their Natural and Easy Weapons.

   An Easy Weapon is a Light Weapon used in one hand, or a Medium Weapon used in two hands. Player-Characters may act in any order. We recommend having the PCs act in the seating order of their Players, from left to right.

2. All Non-Player Characters use their Easy Weapons.

The Awkward Part

3. All Player Characters use their Awkward Weapons.

   An Awkward Weapon is a Medium Weapon used in one hand, or any use of a Heavy Weapon.

4. All Player Characters cast their spells.

   In Basic Combat, magic use happens after all Easy Attacks have been resolved.

5. All Non-Player Characters use their Awkward Weapons.
6. All Non-Player Characters cast their spells.

The Final Part

7. Anyone who didn't act claims *Focus.*

   Focus is a status that can give you an advantage on the next Round. (p. 138)

8. The Round ends – resolve End of Round Issues (p. 138).

Advanced Combat

After you become familiar with the *Jadeclaw* rules, you will want to upgrade to *Advanced Combat.* These rules offer greater detail than the Basic Combat rules.. Some players will find that these Advanced Rules add greater detail to the game, making the fight scenes more exciting and full of complex tactics, tricky moves, and hard choices to make. Other players may find that Basic Combat is more than enough complexity for a simple role-playing game. If you are to use these rules, we recommend that both Game Host and the Players master Basic Combat before moving on to these Advanced rules.

Sequence for the Combat Round

1. Zero-Rank Maneuvers occur; other combatants roll Initiative.
2. First-Rank Maneuvers occur, from 12 to 1.
3. Second-Rank Maneuvers occur, from 12 to 1.
4. Third-Rank Maneuvers occur, from 12 to 1.
5. End of Round (Unconsciousness, Durations, and the Environment.)

"Before Initiative": the Zero Rank

Some combatants will make a commitment to a Maneuver that works before Initiative is even rolled. These are called *Zero-Rank Maneuvers.*

You need not roll Initiative if you choose a Zero-Rank Maneuver. Simply declare your intention to do so. (Actually, out of the two Maneuvers listed here, the only one you might choose to declare is Guard, because you only choose to Recover if you've been sent Reeling.)

Rarely, it might matter who's going to choose a Zero-Rank maneuver before someone else. (For example, a Player might want to know if an NPC is going to Guard, so they might choose to attack.) If it matters, a combatant with a higher Quickness Trait waits to decide on a Zero-Rank maneuver before a combatant with a lower Quickness (and before those with *no* Quickness!). Then it's combatants with the higher Speed Traits, then the ones with higher Mind Traits.

The "Guard" Maneuver

When you really need to preserve your life, or you don't have any weapons of your own, you may choose to *Guard.* Guarding is a Zero-Rank maneuver, so it begins before any combat maneuvers.

While Guarding, you cannot attack. You get twice as many Parries and Blocks. You gain two Bonuses to all Defenses.

Since Guarding is a Zero-Rank Maneuver, you need not worry about having a low Initiative and not being fast enough to reap the rewards of two Bonuses to your Defense.

If you are using miniatures, place a yellow *Guarding* counter next to your figure.

The "Recover" Maneuver

If you are Reeling, you need to *Recover.* Recovering is a Zero-Rank maneuver, so if you were sent Reeling last Round, then you'll be fine at the beginning of this Round. Of course, you can't do anything else but Recover, but at least your Defenses are restored to normal.

Remember — you can always perform an early Maneuver *later* in the Round! This means that if you haven't acted yet (that is, you've not performed a Maneuver yet), and you're suddenly sent Reeling, then when your Initiative comes around you will Recover. You've "lost your action," but at least you're only out of it for one Round.

If you are using miniatures, remove the red *Reeling* counter from next to your figure.

Who goes first: Initiative

In Advanced Combat, it is the quick and the clever who may seize the day. All combatants must roll *Initiative* to determine who acts first.

Everyone rolls Initiative (Speed Dice and Mind Dice)...

Each combatant rolls their *Initiative Dice.* For most folks, this is their *Speed Dice and Mind Dice.* Some folks will have *Quickness Dice* to include, and certain magic effects may modify this roll.

Combatants who are performing a Zero-Rank Maneuver (such as Guard or Recover) need not roll Initiative.

... or maybe a leader's Leadership Dice and their own Tactics Dice

Before a combat starts, a group may have designated a *leader,* who must have at least a d4 of Leadership Dice. If they have one, then all combatants may use the leader's *Leadership Dice* and *their own Tactics Dice* instead of their own Speed and Mind Dice as their Initiative.

The Leadership rule is more for mobs of Non-Player Characters, who will often have low Traits and will benefit from the inclusion of a larger Leadership die.

A leader is always obvious. They have to be able to see what's on the battlefield, and they have to shout orders and be understood by their subjects. A leader must be competent and confident and must not be suffering from anything that prevents that (*Abnormal Status,* p. 339). The opposition will probably seek to take out the leader at the earliest opportunity.

The Game Host may use a piece of paper as a work-sheet, writing down what each of the combatant's Initiatives are, so that they may count down the numbers more easily.

To keep from being clobbered by lots of numbers, the Game Host will probably use *Group Initiative* for the NPCs — p. 299

Resolving Ties on Initiative: Quickness, Speed, Mind

One or more combatants may be tied for Initiative. If the tied combatants are Player-Characters, then they may choose between the two of them who gets to act first. If a tie-breaker is needed, use the combatant's Traits:

- Biggest Quickness Trait (This means a combatant with Quickness wins any tie against those who don't have it.)

- Biggest Speed Trait
- Biggest Mind Trait

If two or more combatants are *still* Tied after all that comparison, then they must act simultaneously. The Game Host should decide what the Non-Player Characters will do, in secret.

The First Rank
(The "Easy" Part)

Most of the action during a Round happens in the First Rank, as those who have "won the Initiative" — that is, who rolled higher Initiative Scores than their targets — attempt to reap the advantage of going first.

On the First Rank, in Initiative order, each combatant must choose to *act* or to *wait* until the Second Rank

When a combatant's Initiative is called, they must choose to whether to act now or act later.

A combatant who acts *now*, on the First Rank, chooses a First-Rank Maneuver. They may choose any of the Universal Maneuvers, or perhaps a Maneuver they have learned as a Martial Art.

> ***Example 1:*** In-Leng has an Initiative Score of 9. Her opponent, Slow Zi, has an Initiative Score of 2. On the First Rank, In-Leng has the option of choosing a First-Rank Maneuver ... or waiting.
>
> In-Leng chooses to act, and picks a First-Rank Maneuver: "Strike First." Slow Zi, with his lower Initiative, must wait until after In-Leng's Maneuver before he may act.

Combatants that choose to wait, to act *later*, have decided not to act on the First Rank. They must wait for the Second Rank before they may choose a Maneuver.

> ***Example 2:*** Magnificent Weasel has an Initiative Score of 10. His opponent, Mei Feng, has an Initiative Score of 4. On the First Rank, Weasel has the option of choosing a First-Rank Maneuver ... or waiting.
>
> Weasel chooses to wait. Now Mei Feng may choose to act — she chooses a First-Rank Maneuver: "Charge." Weasel will have to endure Mei Feng's attack — he cannot act until the *Second* Rank, because he chose to wait.

The "Strike First" Maneuver

For many, "Strike First" is the Maneuver of choice. This Maneuver works with Natural or Easy Melee Weapons, and it's quick. You move your Stride, roll To-Hit, and your opponent rolls to Defend.

(In Basic Combat, all combatants with Natural and Easy Weapons are assumed to Strike First.)

The "Fast-Cast" Maneuver

What's the point of winning the Initiative if you're just going to go through the ponderous motions of casting a spell, while your foes attempt to end your life? As a wizard, you may "Fast-Cast" a spell. *Fast-Casting costs one extra Magic Point.* For example, "Dragon Bellow" normally costs 5 Magic Points to cast — if you Fast-Cast it, you must spend 6 Magic Points.

The "Charge" Maneuver

Sometimes, you have to perform a daring, selfless act. You can use the "Charge" Maneuver with any Melee Weapon (Natural, Easy, or Awkward). You may move up to your full Dash (unlike other offensive Maneuvers, where you may only move your Stride).You roll To-Hit, and your opponent rolls to Defend.

The disadvantage of Charging is that you leave yourself exposed. *Immediately after Charging, you are sent Reeling.* Since you've already acted this Round, you will have to Recover next Round. And until next Round, you are Reeling and have a Penalty for all Defense Rolls.

If you are using miniatures, then first advance your figure up to your target, then place a red *Reeling* counter next to it.

The "Dash" Maneuver

Sometimes, you have to get to a better position. You can use the "Dash" Maneuver to move any direction, up to your full Dash. You may not attack. You retain your full Defenses of Parry, Block, and Dodge.

The "Change Position" Maneuver

Combatants that are lying down will probably want to get up — this requires a *Change Position* Maneuver. You Change Position at your Initiative; at that point, you may move your Stride in any direction. As soon as you Change Position, you have the Defenses appropriate to the new position.

Position	*Attacks*	*Defenses*	*Movement*	*Acrobatics?*
Standing	Normal	Normal	Normal	
Kneeling	Awkward	one Penalty*	*None*	2d8†
Lying Down	one Penalty	one Penalty*	Stride only	2d10†
Flying	Normal	Normal	Normal	
Falling	one Penalty	one Penalty	down only	2d8†

* No Penalty for crossbows or similar mechanical weapons.

† If you have the Gift of "Ophidian" (p. 51), this Difficulty is only 2d6, and you may include your Contortionist Dice.

You can attempt to Change Position as a free action by using Speed & Acrobatics (p. 65) vs. a difficulty based on your current position, as in the table above. If you *Succeed* or better, you leap to a Standing (or Flying) position on the First Rank at your Initiative, and may immediately choose a different Maneuver. If you *Tie*, you may become Standing but you lose your action. If you *Fail*, not only do you not stand but you also are sent Reeling.

Other First-Rank Maneuvers

There are more than just the Maneuvers described here. A variety of Natural Weapon Maneuvers are described later in this chapter. Certain Martial Arts will add new Maneuvers.

Any Zero-Rank Maneuver

You may change your mind and decide to Guard. Or you may be sent Reeling by some attack or circumstance, and if you've not chosen a Maneuver yet, you will choose to Recover immediately.

The Second Rank
(The "Awkward" Part)

For those who have survived the events of the First Rank, or for those patient enough to wait for opportunity, the Second Rank holds the most promise of doing something in line with their goals.

For those who "lost the Initiative" — that is, who rolled lower Initiative Scores than their targets — the Second Rank is where they can exact their revenge. After all, what's the points of "Striking First" if your opponent already did? Better to "Strike Hard" and answer swiftness with strength.

Combatants who are waiting must choose to either act, or wait until the Third Rank

Just like the First Rank, a combatant can either act now or wait until the Third (and final) Rank. A combatant who chooses to wait will have to endure any Second-Rank Maneuvers directed against them.

The "Strike Sure" Maneuver

A popular choice with those of low skill, or those who are suffering some kind of Penalty, *"Strike Sure" gives you one Bonus to your To-Hit Roll.* (See the *Rolling Dice* chapter, p. 95, for how Bonuses work.)

This Maneuver works with Natural or Easy Melee Weapons. You move your Stride, roll To-Hit, and your opponent rolls to Defend.

The "Strike Hard" Maneuver

The second-most popular Maneuver, *"Strike Hard" gives you one Bonus to your Damage Dice.* (See the *Rolling Dice* chapter, p. 95, for how Bonuses work.)

This Maneuver works with Natural or Easy Melee Weapons. You move your Stride, roll To-Hit, and your opponent rolls to Defend.

Striking Hard is popular with those who lost the Initiative — after all, if you're going to go last, you might as well make it worth your while.

The "Strike Awkward" Maneuver

Only Natural and Easy Weapons can Strike First, Strike Sure, or Strike Hard. Awkward Weapons must make do with the "Strike Awkward" Maneuver. You move your Stride, roll To-Hit, and your opponent rolls to Defend.

Weapons can be Awkward because they're Heavy (p. 129), or because they're Medium Weapons used in only one hand (p. 130). Weapons can also be Awkward because you had to get them Ready (p. 132). And sometimes you're suffering from an abnormal status like *Confusion* that makes everything you do Awkward.

The "Cast " Maneuver

If you're a wizard, you have to take time to compose your spell if you want to use your energies efficiently. The "Cast" maneuver allows you to cast a spell — you spend the listed Magic Point cost.

The "Strike Tandem" Maneuver

If you have two Light Weapons — one in either hand — you may use them both against your foe. Roll To-Hit *twice* — once for each weapon. Your target will have to Defend twice. Note that a combatant usually only gets one Parry per weapon and one Block per shield — by attacking twice, you may exhaust their good Defenses so that they must rely on their poor ones!

Unless you are Ambidextrous, the weapon in your Off-Hand suffers a Penalty on its To-Hit Roll (p. 131).

Yes, you may attack with two Claws, or two Bare Hands (but *not* a Claw and a Bite, or a Bite and a Kick, or other strange combinations).

Empty-Hand Methods *require* the use of two hands — they may not Strike Tandem.

Other Second-Rank Maneuvers

There are more than just the Maneuvers described here. A variety of Natural Weapon Maneuvers are described later in this chapter. Certain Martial Arts will add new Maneuvers.

Any Zero-Rank or First-Rank Maneuver

As above, you may suddenly decide that discretion is the better part of valor and Guard in the middle of the Round. Or you may have been sent Reeling — once again, if you haven't chosen a Maneuver yet, you will choose to Recover if you're Reeling. Or perhaps a break in the line has formed, and now it's time to Charge!

The Third Rank
(The "Final" Part)

If no likely opportunity presented itself earlier in the Round, and no one has harmed you, then you may find yourself in the Third Rank without having chosen a Maneuver yet.

There's nothing more to wait for — choose a Maneuver!

This is the very end of the Round — a combatant who waited on the First Rank and waited on the Second Rank must choose a Maneuver now. If the combatant doesn't choose a Maneuver, they will automatically perform the *Focus* Maneuver (if they are capable of doing so.) Otherwise, the combatant takes no action this Round.

The "Focus" Maneuver

Combat Maneuvers represent quick, rash activity — seizing the moment for all possible advantage. Sometimes, you want to bide your time and wait for something to arise, or you want to carefully and deliberately seize an advantage. In game terms, if you get to the Third Rank without having chosen a Maneuver yet, you can choose to *Focus*.

If you are using miniatures, place a blue *Focused* counter next to your figure.

Focus can be used to reap a variety of advantages, from Interrupting someone who has Initiative over you, to increasing your defenses, to using a special Maneuver — "Strike Focused" — to score an automatic Special Result. See *The Advantage of Focus*, p. 150, for how this works.

Focus requires competence and confidence. Combatants who are *Demoralized* or *Incompetent* cannot Focus. Likewise, abnormal status such as *Confusion, Fear, Rage,* etc. will prevent Focus.

Becoming Focused this Round will allow you to use the "Strike Focused" Maneuver *next* Round (p. 150).

The "Rally" Maneuver
Requirement: Leadership die of d4

If you have Leadership, you may attempt to use it to remove abnormal status from a comrade (p. 112).

You can Rally anyone who is suffering from a failure of spirit. In other words, you can use the "Rally" Maneuver to help someone overcome a status that could've been resisted with Mind, with Will, or with Career. (Yes, this includes combinations like "Speed and Mind" — if at least one of these three mental traits was involved, you can attempt to Rally your friend to resist it.)

Any other Maneuver

This is it — the last time to do anything this Round! If you wanted to Charge in this narrow window so that you can Recover quickly when the Round rolls over to the next one, go for it! Or maybe your targets have lined up into a nice Group for your spell, and now is the time to Cast it. You can perform any Zero-, First-, or Second-Rank Maneuver in the Third Rank.

Note: don't feel obligated to do something because if you don't, you'll "lose your action." If you can't think of anything to do, then claim Focus, as above. As a Game Host, you should have your NPC combatants claim Focus whenever they can, especially if they out-number the PCs — so that they can use advantages such as Interruptions and Striking Focused.

The End of the Round

The "clean-up phase" of combat, the end of the Round is the time to do some housekeeping issues and other miscellany.

Combatants may fall Unconscious

The end of the Round is when combatants who have suffered 3 hits or more must test their Will and Resolve vs. the Unconsciousness Difficulty Dice. Those that Fail the Test will pass out (p. 148).

Durations expire

Any effect that only lasts for one Round (such as a status caused by hostile magic) ends now. If the effect is to last for three Rounds, then this ends the first Round, and it will last for two more Rounds after this one. (So you can read "three Rounds" to mean "until the End of the Round comes up three times.") If you are using miniatures, remove one counter that you are using to represent duration.

The Hostile Environment takes effect

Combatants who cannot breathe will suffocate (p. 152). Combatants who are on fire will suffer Burning Damage (p. 152). Other negative things, as a result of the "neutral environment," will take effect at this time.

Accusations, threats, pleading, and surrender

Similar to a dramatic pause in a movie or a book, the Player-Characters and the NPCs may take this moment to role-play their reactions to the Round's fighting. Some combatants might beg for mercy; others might demand that the Player-Characters concede the battlefield to their superiority.

Combat should never be looked upon as a tedious exercise, but as a dramatic event in the story-line to move the plot along. Use the time between Rounds to add tension and to reinforce the scene.

If the leader fails an Unconsciousness Test and passes out at the end of the Round, then the other NPCs will likely surrender if they don't feel they can win the Initiative without the Leadership & Tactics Dice they just lost.

Long Maneuvers

Some Maneuvers take more than one Rank to finish. Any Maneuver that spans more than one Rank of Initiative is called a *Long Maneuver.*

Giving up early to use a Defense: *Aborting* a Long Maneuver

Most Long Maneuvers only allow Defenses if the target *Aborts* the long Maneuver. This means that, if the target decides to claim a Defense, they must stop performing the Maneuver. For some Maneuvers, this means only a partial result. (For example, if you Abort running on the Second Rank, then you didn't run as far as you wanted to). For others, it means no results at all. (If you Abort an Aiming Maneuver, then you lose any advantage for next round.)

The "Run" Maneuver

Sometimes you just need to get somewhere in a hurry. If you choose the *Run* Maneuver, you may move 3 times your Dash in a single Round — once on the First Rank, once on the Second Rank, and once on the Third Rank. You may move in any direction and have any facing.

The Run Maneuver represents an all-out mad sprint to get somewhere. *You may not use any Defenses while Running.* Of course, Running may increase the distance between you and any Ranged Attacks, which may increase the Range Dice you include with your Defense.

You may run past other combatants freely, if you can trace a path around them. Unless they have Focus to use to Interrupt you, they will lack the coherency to stop your progress.

You may not Defend yourself while Running. If you choose to Abort the Run for any reason (say, to use a Defense), then you stop Running for the rest of the Round.

The "Aim" Maneuver

To better focus on a target, you may choose to *Aim*. You must choose a target to Aim at. Aiming begins on the First Rank, and you must be able to keep your target in view until the Third Rank.

If you successfully Aim at a target *this* Round, then *next* Round you treat the target as one Range Band closer — Short becomes Point-Blank; Medium becomes Short; Long becomes Medium; and eXtreme becomes Long.

You may not Defend yourself while Aiming. If you Abort the Maneuver (for example, to Defend yourself), then you also lose the Aiming advantage.

The "Concentrate" Maneuver

Some things, especially lasting magical spells, require a determined effort to direct or to sustain their effects. Some activities may require you to take the *Concentrate* Maneuver. While Concentrating, you may not move more than your Stride, nor may you attack. However, you may Defend yourself normally.

Grappling, Entangling, and Wrestling

Combatants may use the Wrestling skill to Grapple opponents. Grappling is when you grab someone and hold them against their will. Unconscious or willing people need not be Grappled—they merely count as Encumbrance.

The following maneuvers can be performed using *Speed & Wrestling Dice* for the To-Hit Roll. Your target may Defend with the standard Parry, Block, or Dodge.

Only "short" weapons, such as daggers and Claws, can be used by grappling opponents against one another. (In game terms, a short weapon is one with a Reach of 1, and *no longer*.)

Effects of Being Grappled

Neither combatant may Dodge. The grappler may choose to Dodge at any moment—but he or she must let go of their foe to do so, immediately ending the Grapple. Neither combatant may Move. To move with a Grappled foe, you perform the "Shove" follow-up maneuver (see below).

The grappled opponent may Parry and Block normally. The grappler can Parry or Block with any free hands (or hand substitutes) they may have.

Grapples assume two Grabbers

To Grapple your target properly, you need to have at least two hands (or hand substitutes) on the target.

If you Grapple with only one grabber, you suffer a -1 on any contests to keep your opponent from Breaking Free. You *must* have two grabbers to Crush or Pin.

Grappling with Teeth

Biting To Grapple is a Special Hit that can happen when an attacker scores an Overwhelming Success when using Teeth as a Natural Weapon. Biting to Grapple not only does Damage, it lets you hold onto your foe with your teeth. Biting to Grapple leaves both hands free for both combatants.

Biting to Grapple can be followed with the *Worry* Maneuver. To Worry a foe requires no To-Hit Roll — you simply roll your Strength & Teeth Damage vs. the target's Armor and Soak.

Grappling by Entangling

Weapons such as Flails can be used to *Entangle* a target's limb. When you first Entangle the foe, you must choose what limb is entangled.

If you Entangle an *Arm* (or tail, or other arm substitute), the combatant cannot use weapons with that arm until they Break Free.

If you Entangle a *Leg*, the combatant cannot move (or Retreat, for that matter) until they Break Free.

The "Disarm" Follow-Up Maneuver with a Grapple

If you used a *Weapon Grab* on your opponent, you may Follow-Up with a Disarm. Roll your Strength & Wrestling Dice vs. your foe's Strength and Weapon Dice.

On a *Success*, you have disarmed your opponent — the weapon falls to the ground. You still have your foe Grappled.

On an *Overwhelming Success*, you may take the weapon away from your foe, to be Ready to use immediately. If you take the weapon away, you forfeit the Grapple.

The "Disarm" Follow-Up Maneuver with an Arm Entangle

If you used an Entangle on your opponent's arm, you may follow up with a Disarm. Roll your Strength & Weapon Dice vs. your foe's Strength and Weapon Dice. On a *Success* or better, you have disarmed your opponent — the weapon falls to the ground. (Entangles do not take away.)

The "Pin" Follow-Up Maneuver

If you have Grappled an opponent, you may follow-up with a *Pin* Maneuver. Roll your Strength & Wrestling Dice vs. your foe's Strength, Wrestling, and Contortionist Dice. If you *Succeed* or better, your foe is Pinned.

To Pin your foe, you must have something to pin them against, such as a wall. If you want to pin them against the ground, your foe will fall to a lying position while you yourself fall to a kneeling position (p. 136).

While you have your foe Pinned, they suffer one Penalty on future Break Free attempts. You only need one grabber to keep them pinned — there is no Penalty for doing so.

The "Crush" Follow-Up Maneuver

If you have Grappled or Pinned an opponent, you may follow up with a *Crush* Maneuver. No To-Hit Roll is necessary. You must use at least two grabbers to Crush.

Roll your Strength & Wrestling Dice vs. your foe's Strength, Wrestling, Contortionist, Soak, and Armor Dice, as a Damage Roll.

The maximum Damage you can cause on a Crush attack is 2 Wounds. (Unless you learn the Martial Arts to improve this maximum, such as "Improved Crush" and "Fantastic Crush.")

A Crush attempt does not end your Grapple. You may Crush again next round.

The "Shove" Follow-Up Maneuver

If you have successfully Grappled your opponent, you may follow up with a *Shove* Maneuver. No To-Hit Roll is necessary. You must use at least two grabbers to Shove.

Roll your Strength & Wrestling Dice vs. your foe's Strength, Wrestling, and Acrobatics Dice, as a Damage Roll. For each hit you score, you may move your foe 1 pace in any direction.

If your Shoving distance is equal to your Stride or less, then it does not break the Grapple. If your Shoving distance is greater, and you choose to Shove your foe that far, then you must stop after moving your Stride but your target continues the remaining distance in a straight line.

If your target was moved a distance equal to their own Stride or less, there is no ill effect. If your target was moved more than their Stride, then they fall down unless you keep them Grappled.

The "Break Free" Maneuver

Breaking Free is a First-Rank Maneuver. The Grappled combatant rolls their *Strength Dice, Wrestling Dice,* and *Contortionist Dice.* The Grappling combatant rolls their *Strength Dice* and *Wrestling Dice.*

Your Strength, Wrestling, & Contortionist Dice vs. the Grappler's Strength & Wrestling Dice	***Outcome***
Botch	*Strain yourself.* Suffer 1 Fatigue
all Failures, Tie	*No change.* You are still Grappled.
Success	*Break Free.* You may move your Stride in any direction.
Overwhelming Success	*Shrug Off.* You may immediately choose any First-Rank Maneuver that you know.

Kinds of Attacks

Each attack in the game can be broken down by *what it uses for To-Hit Dice, how it is defended against,* and *what Maneuvers it can use when attacking.*

Melee Attacks

Also known as hand-to-hand combat, a Melee Attack is any attack at close-quarters. The cut of an axe, the stabbing of a spear, the swinging of a flail, the swipe of a claw — these are all Melee Attacks.

Melee Attacks can be Parried, Blocked, or Dodged.

Melee Attacks have a maximum *Reach,* the distance at which you can strike. Unless stated otherwise, you may use any given Melee Attack at an opponent no more than 1 pace away.

Barehanded Attack

Attacks made with the fist are *Barehanded Attacks.* The To-Hit Roll for Barehanded Attacks is your *Speed Dice* and your *Brawling Dice.* In *Jadeclaw,* most fighters will prefer to use their Racial Weapons.

Bare Hands use Natural Maneuvers.

Racial Weapon Attack

Attacks made with Claws and Teeth are *Racial Weapon Attacks.* The To-Hit Roll for Racial Weapon Attacks is your *Speed Dice,* your *Race Dice,* and your *Brawling Dice.*

Racial Weapons use Natural Maneuvers.

Kick Attack

Certain Martial Arts teach how to make *Kick Attacks,* which are usually better than Bare-Handed or Racial Weapon Attacks alone. The To-Hit Roll for a Kick Attack is your *Speed Dice* and your *Brawling Dice.* Even though a Kick Attack may include Claws or Hooves with its Damage, you do *not* include your Race Dice with your To-Hit Roll.

Kick Attacks use Natural Maneuvers.

Empty-Hand Method Attack

Attacks using the eight Empty-Hand Methods are also Melee Attacks. Empty-Hand Methods require that both of the attacker's hands be empty — no weapons or shields in either hand! The To-Hit Roll for Empty-Hand Methods is your *Speed Dice* and your *Brawling Dice.* (Note that Empty-Hand Method Traits are included with Brawling Dice.)

Empty-Hand Methods use Natural Maneuvers.

Wrestling Attack

Wrestling attacks require that the attacker have at least one free hand (or hand substitute). The To-Hit Roll for Wrestling Attacks is your *Speed Dice* and your *Wrestling Dice.*

Wrestling Attacks use Wrestling Maneuvers.

Carried Weapon Attack

Most attacks in *Jadeclaw* will be made using swords, axes, polearms, and other *Carried Weapons.* The To-Hit Roll is your *Speed Dice* and the *Weapon Dice* from Skills (and Careers, and other Traits) that are appropriate to the class of weapon: Axe, Mace, Polearm, Sword, Staff, etc.

Carried Weapons use Easy or Awkward Melee Maneuvers.

Ranged Attacks

A Ranged Attack is any attack that takes place at a distance. The farther away a target is, the harder they are to hit. Any given Ranged Attack has *Range Bands* of Short, Medium, Long, and eXtreme. (A few Ranged Attacks have a Point-Blank range.)

The farther away a target is, the harder it is to hit – targets at Short Range include d10 with their Defense Dice; at Medium Range, 2d10; at Long Range, 3d10; and at eXtreme Range, 4d10.

Ranged Attacks may be Dodged. All Ranged Attacks (*except* for gun bullets and other rare weapons) can be Blocked. Thrown Weapon Attack

Any Carried, Light Weapon can be thrown. The To-Hit Roll for a Thrown Weapon Attack is your *Speed Dice* and your *Thrown Weapon Dice* that are appropriate to the class of weapon being thrown. (Note that the skill for using the weapon in Melee Combat is completely different from the skill for using it in Ranged Combat!)

Thrown Weapons use Thrown Weapon Maneuvers.

Missile Weapon Attack

Bows, Crossbows, and Slings hurl projectiles at the target that are slow enough to be seen with the naked eye, and are called Missile Weapons. The To-Hit Roll for a Missile Weapon Attack is your *Speed Dice* and the *Weapon Dice* that are appropriate (Bow, Crossbow, or Sling).

Missile Weapons use Easy or Awkward Ranged Maneuvers.

Targeting Spell Attack

Some wizards can call forth terrible magic, such as Lightning Strikes, peach-wood arrows, and torrents of mud to smite their foes. The To-Hit Roll for a Targeting Spell is your *Speed Dice* and your *spell's appropriate Skill Dice.*

The Skill used to target your foe varies with the spell:

Targeting Spell	*Speed Dice and . . .*
Attendant Fireball	Iron Fan Dice
Ladle of Mud	Digging Dice
Lightning Strike	Weather Sense Dice
Righteous Arrow	Bow Dice

Targeting Spell Attacks can be Blocked or Dodged.

Targeting Spells use Magic Maneuvers.

Special Attacks

Some attacks target an area, such as firecrackers, bombs, or certain magical spells. These weapons are similar to Ranged Attacks, in that they strike at a distance. However, they are not Blocked or Dodged in the usual manner.

Many hostile spells can have their effects lessened or avoided entirely. See the *Magic* chapter for details.

Kinds of Defenses

To avoid injury, most combatants will employ a *Defense* to thwart your attack.

Parry

Most weapons can be interposed between yourself and another attacker, to thwart them. This kind of Defense is called a *Parry.*

Parry Dice are your *Speed Dice* and your *Weapon Dice* — usually the same as your To-Hit Roll. Some weapons have improved Parrying ability, such as Bonus only for Parries. Other weapons cannot Parry at all.

You normally get one Parry per weapon, per Round. (Martial Arts can improve this.)

You suffer a Penalty if you Parry with a weapon in your Off-Hand (p. 131).

Block

Block Dice are your *Speed Dice* and your *Shield Dice.*

You get one Block per shield, per Round.

There is no Penalty for using a shield in your Off-Hand — in fact, that is the preferred method.

Dodge

Dodge Dice are your *Speed Dice* and your *Dodge Dice* from Skill and other Traits.

There is no limit to the number of times a combatant may Dodge in a Round.

Dodge Dice are subject to the Encumbrance Limit — if you carry too much stuff, you will lose the ability to Dodge effectively.

Other

Martial Arts, and some magical spells, may add new kinds of Defenses. Refer to the write-up of the specific Defense to see how it works. Other Defenses work like super-Blocks, super-Parries, or super-Dodges — they work against some things but not others. Unless stated otherwise, you are only entitled to one use of a new kind of Defense, per Round.

No Defense at all: the "imaginary 1"

Sometimes, a combatant will have no Defense whatsoever. They may be Unconscious or Asleep, oblivious to what is going on. They may be Paralyzed and held in place, unable to move. They may be completely unaware of a hostile attacker in the darkness. Or they may be suffering so many Penalties (such as being Reeling and Lying Down — a whopping three Penalties) that they may elect not to Defend at all (and perhaps hope that their Armor will save them!)

If you attack a helpless combatant, you must still roll To-Hit — you need only beat the Level-Zero Difficulty of 1. If you *Botch,* then your attack will fail. What you're really hoping for is to get an Overwhelming Success so that you can claim a Special Result and do more Damage.

Combatants that claim no Defense at all do not risk bungling their Defense, since they're not even trying to defend.

Inanimate objects, by definition, take no Defenses. Combatants may still roll to hit — they will probably want to claim their Special Results.

Where it all happens: the Combat Results Table

Roll your To-Hit Dice vs. your opponents' Defense Dice. Compare the Results.

The To-Hit Roll is just like any other Simple Roll (p. 97). The better your To-Hit Roll, the more likely you are to injure your target.

Attacker's To-Hit Dice vs. Defender's Defense Dice	*Outcome*	*Result*
Attacker Botches	Disastrous Failure	Attacker is sent Reeling, and Defender may Exploit Attacker.
Attacker Overwhelmingly Fails	Attacker is Exploitable	Defender may Exploit a Melee Attacker.
Attacker Fails	Miss	Nothing. (Defender has thwarted attacker.)
Attacker and Defender Tie	Miss	Nothing. (Ties go to the Defender.)
Attacker Succeeds	Hit	Defender suffers Damage from the attack.
Attacker Overwhelmingly Succeeds	Special Hit	Defender suffers Damage and the weapon's Special Hit.
Defender Botches	Bungled Defense (and possible Special Hit)	Defender is sent Reeling and suffers Damage. If Attacker has Overwhelmed (Score of 6 or higher), they may claim a Special Hit as well.

Sent Reeling

If the combatant is the Attacker, not only does their attack fail, but next Round they will have to choose to Recover — they have lost both this Round's attack *and* next Round's attack.

If the combatant is the Defender, then their next Maneuver must be to Recover. If they've not yet acted this Round, they will Recover this Round. If they have already used a different Maneuver, then they will Recover next Round.

If you are using miniatures, place a *Reeling* counter next to the figure.

Nothing

There is no appreciable result for this attack. If the Defender used a Parry, then there is the clattering of blades, or the loud crack of haft upon haft, or a dramatic sweep of the arms as an attack is deflected. If the Defender used a Block, then their shield resounds as it thwarts the deadly assault. If the Defender used a Dodge, then they stepped nimbly out of the way of the attack. The Game Host and Players are encouraged to describe the attack in colorful terms — especially for Tied rolls, which should be close brushes with danger, just barely averted.

Remember that Quality of Skill can turn a Tie into a simple Success! (p. 20)

Defender suffers Damage

With this result, the Attacker's weapon has struck the target true. Roll the Attacker's Damage Dice vs. the target's Soak Dice. Each hit caused inflicts 1 Wound upon the Defender.

Leave those Damage Dice on the table for the Resolve Test!

Don't snatch up those dice! If the target suffers 1 Wound or more, they will have to pass a *Resolve Test*, which will be against the same Damage Roll you used to injure them.

Special Hit

Some attacks land on the target better than others. A *Special Hit* happens when the attacker Overwhelmingly Succeeds on their To-Hit Roll. (Certain Maneuvers, such as "Strike Focused," may allow Special Hits on merely Successful To-Hit Rolls.)

Every Weapon has one or more Special Hits it can claim. For example, Claws can "Slash" a target, for an extra d6 Damage.

Some Special Hits are more Damage — in which case, simply include the extra Damage with everything else. Some Special Hits affect the target's Soak, or change the Damage type to Slaying.

Universal Special Hits:

Chance to Disarm: Instead of hurting your target, you may choose to disarm them instead. The odds of this working depends on the kind of weapon you are using.

- *Natural Weapon:* Roll a Contest of your Strength vs. your target's Strength — if you Succeed, your target is disarmed.
- *Melee, Thrown Weapon:* If your weapon is same weight, or more, than your foe's, then you are automatically successful. If your weapon weighs less, roll a Contest of your Strength vs. your target's Strength — if you Succeed, your target is disarmed.
- *Bow, Crossbow, Sling:* Roll a contest of your Weapon Damage vs. the target's Strength — if you Succeed, your target is disarmed.
- *Targeting Spell:* Your target is automatically disarmed.

If you choose this Special, your foe takes no Damage from your attack. Don't choose this Special if your foe has no carried weapons!

Trip: Roll Damage as normal, and your opponent falls to a Kneeling position.

Weapon Special: Every Weapon has one or more Specials that are particular to that weapon — choose one of them.

Martial Special: If you have the right Gift, and you meet the conditions for Usability, then you can use a Martial Special against your target.

Something Else: The Game Host and the Players are encouraged to come up with other Special Results.

Exploitable

An Exploit is when a combatant takes advantage of another's unlucky break or lack of skill to put their foe at a disadvantage, or even to harm them.

You can choose any Exploit that is currently Useable. Everyone knows the "Send Foe Reeling" Exploit, mentioned below.

Normally, you may only Exploit someone in Melee Combat. There are only a few Exploits that work against Ranged Combat (such as "Mistaken Strike").

Universal Exploit: Send Foe Reeling (Useable vs. any Melee Attack)

Send Foe Reeling: You place a quick kick to your foe's chest, or you step out of the way at the very last minute, or you do something else that really impresses onlookers — role-play it! Your foe is sent *Reeling*.

This is the "default" Exploit — any combatant can use this Exploit vs. any Melee opponent they Overwhelmingly Defend against, to send their attacker Reeling.

All other Exploits are *Martial Arts* — secret moves and proficiencies whereby a Defender uses an Attacker's strength against them. These Exploits, and the circumstances where they can be used, are explained in the *Martial Arts* chapter (p. 159).

Examples of To-Hit Rolls

Example 1: Zuobian attempts to claw Yuobian with one swipe of her large paw.

Zuobian's swipe is a Natural Attack. To hit, she will roll her Speed Dice of d8 and her Brawling Dice of d10. Her "Dog Racial Weapons" include Claws, so she will include her Dog Race Trait of d6. She rolls her dice, which come up 3, 7, and 5. Her highest-showing die is her Score of 7.

Youbian will defend by Parrying with her bare hands. Her Parry will be her Speed Dice of d10 and her Brawling Dice of d8. She rolls her dice, which come up 8 and 2. Her highest-showing die is her Score of 8.

Zuobian has *Failed* to win the contest, so her attack is thwarted. Youbian deftly locks her wrist around Zuobian and brushes her claws aside to avoid injury.

Example 2: No Zim Ta hurls his spear at Chuo the brigand.

No Zim Ta's weapon is a Quarter-Stone Spear hurled at the target — a Thrown Weapon Attack. To hit, he will roll his Speed Dice of d6 and his Spear-Throwing Dice of d8.

He rolls his dice, which come up 2 and 1. However, No Zim Ta is fighting with his Favored Spear, and thus he claims the Favored Advantage to re-roll one 1. After the re-roll, No Zim Ta's dice are showing 2 and 8. His Score is 8.

Chuo will defend by Dodging. He will use his Speed Die of d8. He lacks Dodge Dice from Skill, Career, or any other source. He is, however, carrying a shield, which is good for an extra Cover Die of d8 on any Defense Roll. His dice are 2d8. He rolls them and they come up 3 and 2. His Score is 3.

No Zim Ta has *Overwhelmingly Succeeded* on his To-Hit Roll. Not only has he hit his target, he also scores a Special Hit. The Special for his Spear is "Impale: foe loses smallest Armor die."

Example 3: Baichi attempts to strike Zhuanjia with his sword.

Baichi's weapon is a Half-Stone Sword held in the hands — a Carried Weapon Attack. To hit, he will roll his Speed Dice of d8 and his Sword Dice of d10 and d6. He rolls his dice and they come up 4, 3, and 3. His Score is 4.

Zhuanjia defends by Blocking. She will roll her Speed Dice of d6, her Shield Dice (from Career and Skill) of 2d12, and her Cover Dice from her Shield of d8. She rolls her dice and they come up 3, 12, 2, and 4. Her Score is 12.

Baichi has *Overwhelmingly Failed* the To-Hit Roll. Not only has he failed to hit his target, but (because this is a Melee Attack) Zhuanjia may now *Exploit* Baichi. She may choose to send him Reeling. If she knows any Martial Exploits, she may be able to use those, as well.

Modifiers to To-Hit Rolls

There are lots of things that can affect your To-Hit Roll. Here are the more common modifiers, although your Game Host may rule that other things might affect your To-Hit roll.

Circumstance	***Modifier***	***How to Avoid***
You're lying down, and using a weapon that is *not* a crossbow or similar mechanical weapon.	one Penalty	Get up as a Change Position maneuver.
Your weapon is Awkward.	Can only use Awkward Maneuvers	Use an Easy weapon instead of an Awkward one, or use Focus to eliminate Awkwardness.
You are using a one-handed weapon in your off-hand.	one Penalty	Have the Gift of Ambidexterity.
You have bad footing.	one Penalty	Have the Gift of Sure-Footed, or move to better ground.
The lighting is torchlight or poorer.	one Penalty	Have the Gift of Night Vision, or find some illumination.
The lighting is starlight or poorer.	two Penalties	Have the Gift of Night Vision, or find some illumination.
You're blinded, or in pitch darkness, such as a cave.	three Penalties	Find some illumination.
You're Riding on a mount.	No attack die may be higher than your highest Riding Die (the "Riding Limit")	Dismount, or get a Riding die of d12.
You attack from behind.	one Bonus; target gets no Cover from shield or cloak	If you are Honorable, you cannot attack from behind.
You're attacking an unsuspecting target.	one Bonus; target gets no Defense	If you are Honorable, you cannot attack unsuspecting targets.
Target at Range is obscured by soft cover (bushes, hedges, etc.)	Target gains a d8 Cover Die	Find a new route for line of sight.
Target at Range is obscured by hard cover (stone wall, etc.)	Target gains a d12 Cover Die	Find a new route for line of sight.
Target at Range is totally obscured by cover.	Shot is impossible	Find a new route for line of sight.
Target at Range is in Melee with someone else.	Target gains opponent's Body Dice as Cover Dice	Find a new route for line of sight.
You are using a crossbow and you have something to Brace against.	one Bonus, but you cannot Defend	If you need to Defend, you lose your bonus.

Wounding your target: *Damage Dice vs. Soak Dice*

If your attack is successful, it's likely that your target will suffer Wounds.

Roll the Damage Dice of your weapon vs. your target's Soak Dice – each hit you score is one Wound

Example 1: Gongzheng strikes Heqing-heli with her bow.

Gongzheng's attack is a Ranged Weapon, so her Damage Dice are simply the Weapon's Damage Dice of d10, d8, and d4. She rolls, and her dice come up 5, 3, and 1

Heqing-heli's Soak Dice include his Personal Soak Die of d8 and his Armor Die (from his Heavy Leather) of d8. He rolls, and his dice come up 6 and 2.

The Damage Roll comparison is:
- 5 vs. 6 = no hits
- 3 vs. 2 = one hit
- 1 vs. "imaginary 1" = no hits

As a Damage Roll, Gongzheng has scored 1 hit. Heqing-heli will suffer 1 Wound.

Example 2: Bingbu Yanzha strikes Ruo the hapless peasant, with his sword.

Yanzha's attack is a Carried Weapon, so his Damage Dice are his Strength Die (of d10) and the Weapon's Damage Dice (of d12 & d4). He rolls, and his dice come up 11, 7, and 3.

Ruo has his Personal Soak Dice of d6, and he is wearing no Armor. He rolls his die, and it comes up 1 — a Botch!

The Damage Roll comparison is:
- target Botched = one extra hit
- 11 vs. 1 = two hits (Overwhelm)
- 7 vs. "imaginary 1" = two hits (Overwhelm)
- 3 vs. "imaginary 1" = one hit

As a Damage Roll, Yanzha scored 6 hits. Ruo will suffer 6 Wounds.

Example 3: Shuai throws his dagger at Iron Kuija and successfully hits.

Shuai's attack is a Thrown Weapon, so his Damage Dice are his Strength Die (of d8) and the Weapon's Damage Die (of d6). He rolls, and his dice come up 4 and 3.

Iron Kuija has her Personal Soak Dice of d12 and her metal Armor is good for another d12. She rolls her dice and they come up 9 and 5.

The Damage Roll comparison is:
- 4 vs. 9 = no hits
- 3 vs. 5 = no hits

As a Damage Roll, Shuai scored no hits. Iron Kuija suffers no Damage from this attack.

If you scored a Special Hit, then you may include more Damage Dice, or your target's Soak Dice might be effected. These effects vary from Special to Special. You must modify the dice before rolling the contest.

Example 4: No Zim Ta strikes at Chuo with his Spear. He rolls his To-Hit Roll vs. the target's Defense Roll, and he scores an Overwhelming Success. He chooses his Weapon's Special of *"Impale: foes loses smallest Armor Die."*

No Zim Ta's attack is a Thrown Weapon, so he includes his Strength Die (of d8) and his Weapon Damage Dice (of 2d4). He rolls his dice, and they come up 3, 4, and 2.

Chuo has a Personal Soak Die of d6 and an Armor Die of d8. He must remove that Armor Die before he rolls in the Soak Contest. He rolls his one die and it comes up 2.

The Damage Roll comparison is:
- 4 vs. 2 = one hit
- 3 vs. "imaginary 1" = one hit
- 2 vs. "imaginary 1" = one hit

As a Damage Roll, No Zim Ta has scored 3 hits. Chuo will suffer 3 Wounds.

Injury, Unconsciousness, and Death: *Hit Points*

Most combatants have 13 *Hit Points*, which are a measure of how much physical punishment a body can take.

General Exhaustion: *Fatigue*

Fatigue represents the kind of punishment and abuse a body takes that is generally not life-threatening.

Fatigue forces *Unconsciousness Tests*. Every time the combatant passes an Unconsciousness threshold, they must test their Resolve vs. the current difficulty or pass out.

Suffocation, starvation, and severe physical effort can cause Fatigue, as well as blunt weapons (representing trauma). Some magical effects can also cause Fatigue, as well.

Serious Harm: *Wounds*

Wounds represent broken bones, torn flesh, and blood loss — the kinds of punishment that could be the end of one's life.

Wounds force both *Death Tests* and *Unconsciousness Tests*. Every time a combatant passes a Death threshold, they must test their Body Trait (and Toughness Trait, if they have one) vs. the difficulty or become Mortally Wounded, or even Dead.

Not all Combatants have 13 Hit Points

Those combatants with the Flaw of "Failing Health" (p. 54) have only 11, and are effectively "down 1 hit" all the time. Those with Extra Hit Points have 1 or more Hit Points on top of these.

Being sent Reeling from injury: the *Resolve Test*

Whenever a combatant suffers injury, they may lose their next action, or even be sent sprawling due to pain. A combatant that suffers injury must pass a *Resolve Test*. The Resolve Test is a simple roll: your *Will Trait Dice* and all *Resolve Dice* (if any) vs. the *Damage Roll you just suffered.*

You only need to roll a Resolve Test if you suffer injury!

If you pass a Damage Test without suffering any Wounds (perhaps because of your superior Armor, or maybe even by virtue of your Soak), then you need not roll the Resolve Test! In effect, you "shrugged off" or "bounced" the Damage.

Your Will & Resolve Dice vs. the Damage Roll	***Result***
Botch	Extra 1 Wound
Overwhelming Failure	Fall Down and Sent Reeling
Failure	Sent Reeling
Tie	Nothing (defender wins on ties)
Success	Nothing (cry out in pain or dismay)
Overwhelming Success	Nothing (may remain silent or may sneer openly at attacker)

Botching the Resolve Test means an *extra 1 Wound*

If your Resolve Dice come up all ones, then you've Botched the Resolve Test. *You immediately suffer 1 Extra Wound due to shock.*

If you have no Resolve Dice, then you're just relying on your Will Dice … and if that's only one die, then your odds of Botching are really good.

Falling Down

A combatant that Overwhelmingly Fails a Resolve Test falls down. (If using miniatures, place the figure on its face) Such a combatant will have to use their next action to Recover from Reeling…and then they'll be on the ground until they can take a "Change Position" maneuver or use Acrobatics to leap to their feet (p. 136).

Sent Reeling

If you are sent Reeling, you will lose your next action (either this Round if you haven't acted yet, or next Round if you already did) because you will be forced to take the Recover from Reeling maneuver.

Nothing

If you Succeed or better on the Resolve Test, then there is no appreciable effect. (For role-playing purposes, an Overwhelming Success is more impressive than a regular Success, representing superior discipline over pain.)

> ***Example 1:*** Heqing-heli suffered 1 Wound earlier. He must now test his Resolve.
>
> Gongzheng's highest-showing die was a 5, so that is the number Heqing-heli must test against.
>
> He rolls his Will Trait of d6 and his Resolve Dice of d8 & d6 vs. the 5, as a *Simple Roll*. He rolls his dice, and they come up 7, 4, and 2. Since the Resolve Test is a Simple Roll, we are only concerned with his highest-showing die — the 7.
>
> Heqing-heli's Score of 7 is higher than the Damage Score of 5. Gritting his teeth, he shrugs off the pain and keeps on fighting normally.
>
> ***Example 2:*** Ruo the peasant was struck down by Yanzha's sword.
>
> Yanzha's highest-showing die is an 11. Ruo has only his Will Trait of d6 — he has no Resolve from either Skill or other Traits. He rolls his die and it comes up 3.
>
> Comparing 3 vs. 11, Ruo has Overwhelmingly Failed the Resolve Test. Ruo Falls Down, knocked senseless from the shock of the blow, and is sent Reeling.
>
> Ruo's next Maneuver choice has to be the "Recover" maneuver.
>
> ***Example 3:*** Iron Kuija was struck by Shuai's thrown dagger, but the weapon bounced harmlessly off her thick hide and solid armor.

Iron Kuija suffered no Damage from the attack, so she doesn't even have to test her Resolve.

3 Wounds or More: The *Unconsciousness Test*

At the end of every Round, a typical combatant who has suffered 3 or more hits (of either Fatigue or Wounds) will probably have to roll an *Unconsciousness Test*. The target rolls their Will Dice and Resolve Dice (if any) vs. Difficulty Dice set by the injury they have suffered: for 3 hits, d4; for 4 hits, d6, etc. (See p. *149*.)

Your Will & Resolve Dice vs. Unconsciousness Dice	***Result***
Botch, all Failures	Become Unconscious
Tie	Stagger
Success	Nothing — roll again next Round
Overwhelming Success	Stabilize

Become Unconscious

If you *Fail* the Unconsciousness Test or worse, then you immediately fall down and lapse into *Unconsciousness*. Unconscious combatants cannot take any action or any Defenses.

A combatant that falls Unconscious will not wake up until several hours later. The Game Host can make a spot ruling, or they can use the Unconsciousness Difficulty Score as the number of hours the target stays Unconscious. For example, if the combatant failed to beat a Score of 7, then they are Unconscious for 7 hours.

Stagger

If you *Tie* on your Unconsciousness Test, then you do not fall Unconscious, but you stagger about, barely on the threshold of consciousness.

If you are currently Grappling someone, you let go.

If you have a Carried Weapon, you immediately drop it. You will drop anything else in your hands, as well. You will not drop a shield, as that is strapped to your arm.

If you are suffering from bad footing, you fall down. (Combatants with the Gift of "Sure-Footed" never suffer from bad footing.)

The Game Host may rule that some other unfortunate circumstance happens, as well.

Note: the Unconsciousness Dice are simply Basic Dice. If you have Expert Resolve Skill or better, then you don't *Tie* on this test — you *Succeed*. (p. 20).

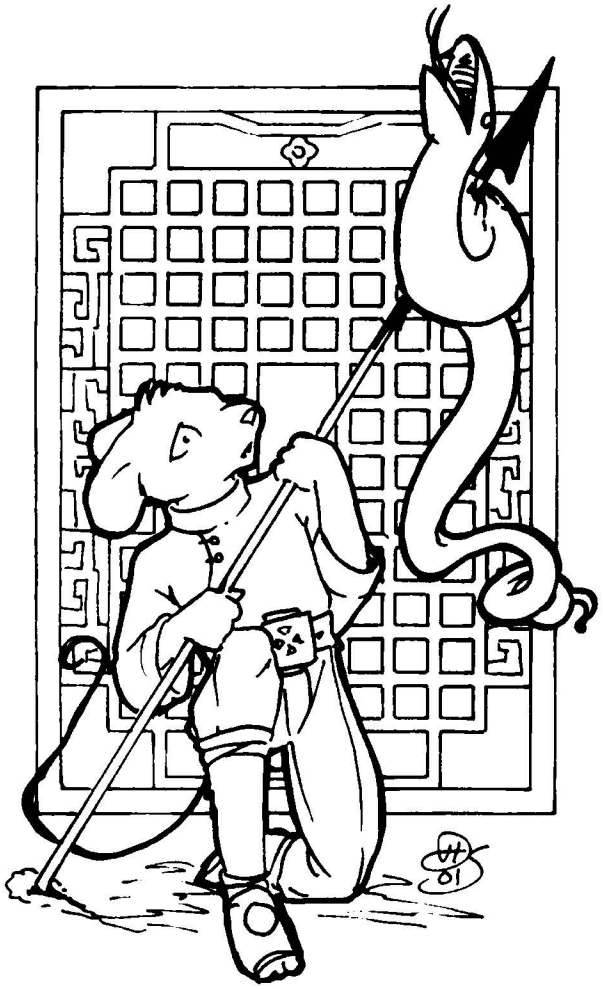
You will have to test vs. Unconsciousness again at the end of next Round.

Nothing

If you simply *Succeed* on the Unconsciousness Test, then do not fall Unconscious … this Round. You will have to roll again at the end of next Round.

Stabilize

If you *Overwhelmingly Succeed* on the Unconsciousness Test, then not only do you not fall over, you also need not test again for Unconsciousness until you suffer a new injury.



For Game Hosts, it can become tedious to remember which NPCs have stabilized and which ones have not. The Game Host may simply rule that "unimportant" NPCs never stabilize, and must roll every Round — only PCs and major NPCs may stabilize. This has the advantage that it reduces record-keeping.

> ***Example:*** After being peppered with arrows, Heqing-heli has suffered 3 Wounds.
>
> At the end of the Round, because Heqing-heli is suffering 3 Wounds, he must pass an Unconsciousness Test vs. the difficulty of d4.
>
> Heqing-heli rolls his Resolve Dice — his Will Dice of d8 & 2d6, and his Score comes up 6. The Unconsciousness Die comes up 2.
>
> Since he Succeeded on the Test, Heqing-heli remains conscious and may fight next Round. Unfortunately, he didn't Overwhelmingly Succeed on the Test, and he will have to test again next Round.

6 Wounds or More: The *Death Test*

Immediately upon suffering 6 Wounds or more, most combatants will have to pass a *Death Test*. Only Wounds force Death Tests — Fatigue does not.

You must pass one Death Test for each threshold you cross — one for having suffered 6 Wounds, one for having suffered 7

Wounds, etc. Roll each Test in order of mounting severity — first the d4 (for -6), then the d6 (for -7), then the d8 (for -8), etc. until you *Fail* your roll or worse. (See p. 149.)

Your Body Dice vs. Death Dice	*Result*
Botch	Instant, Gruesome Death
Overwhelming Failure	Death
Failure	Mortally Wounded
Tie	Brush with Death
Success	Nothing
Overwhelming Success	Nothing

Instant, Gruesome Death

A combatant that *Botches* the Death Test is instantly killed. A death like this is usually nasty and severe, such as a shattering blow to the ribs, a piercing stab directly into the heart, or even a decapitation. (Roll no more Death Tests for this combatant.)

Death

A combatant that *Overwhelmingly Fails* a Death Test perishes almost instantly. The Game Host may rule that they have one last moment to give a look of recognition, or to blurt out one last sentence before their life ebbs away. (Roll no more Death Tests for this combatant.)

Mortally Wounded

A combatant that simply *Fails* a Death Test becomes *Mortally Wounded.* Mortally-Wounded combatants immediately fall over and can take no action, similar to being Unconscious. A Mortally-Wounded character must get medical attention within one hour or they will die.

(Roll no more Death Tests for this combatant until they suffer a new injury.)

Brush with Death

If you *Tie* on a Death Test, you must pause and take a moment to reflect upon the transitory nature of life.

You will have to roll more Death Tests if you have passed more thresholds.

Nothing

If you *Succeed* or better on a Death Test, then you are okay … unless you have passed more thresholds — in which case, you must roll more Death Tests.

> ***Example 2:*** Ruo just suffered 6 Wounds. He must immediately test to avoid Death. He has crossed the threshold marked "d4," so a d4 is what he Tests against.
>
> Ruo rolls his Body Die of d6, and scores a 2. The Difficulty Die of d4 comes up 3. Ruo has *Failed* the Text — he is Mortally Wounded. (Having crumpled like a rag doll from the sword-blow that sorely wounded him, Ruo does not rise.)
>
> If Ruo had rolled a 1 on his Body Die, he would have Botched and instantly perished.

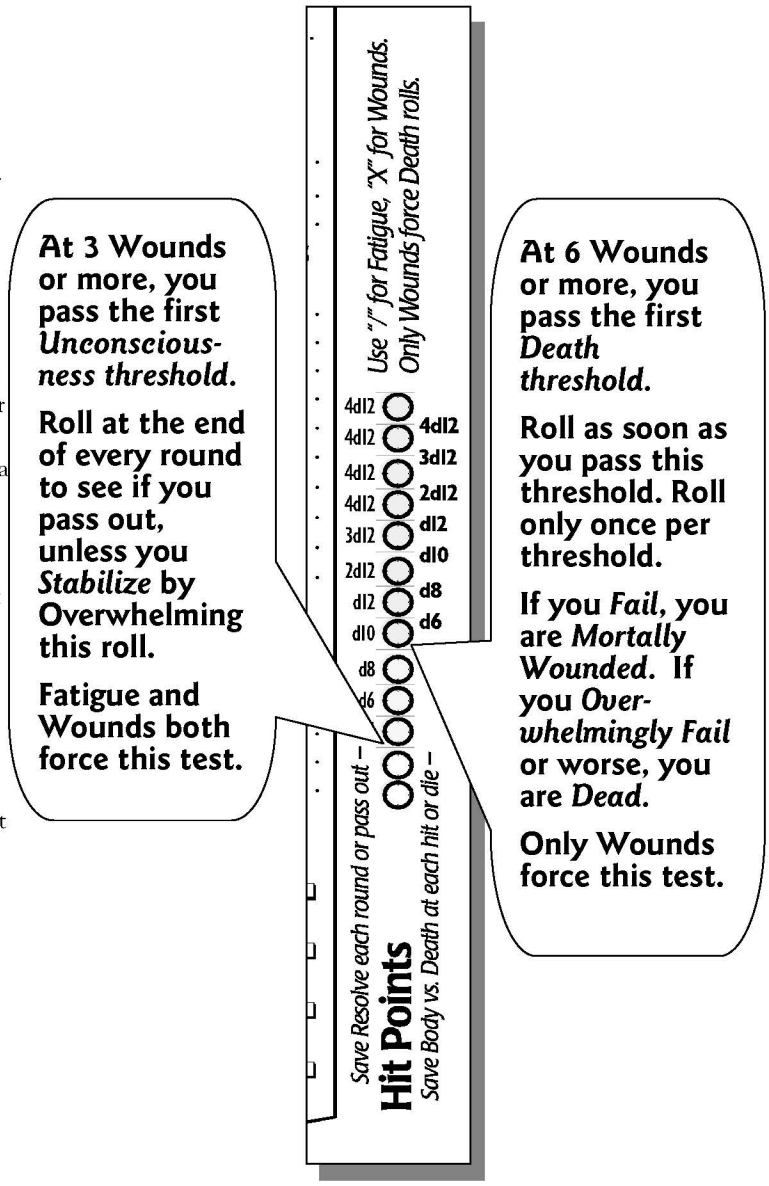
> If Ruo had *Tied* or better on the Death Test, then he would not automatically be helplessly unconscious … however, he would have to pass an Unconsciousness Test at the end of the Round, and very well may have passed out, anyway.

13 Wounds or More: *Mortally Wounded*

Any combatant that suffers 13 or more Wounds is automatically *Mortally Wounded.*

The Game Host may rule that unimportant NPCs are instantly Dead. Otherwise, the target must roll for each Death Test threshold they passed, until they get to -13, where they are simply Mortally Wounded.

Hit Points as shown on the Character Sheet



Taking your time:
The advantage of *Focus*

A Focused combatant is one that is prepared and ready for trouble. A combatant can become Focused by spending an entire Round not doing anything but waiting. Focus also represents combatants who are "lying in wait" for a foe, as in an Ambush (p. 104). If you are using miniatures, place a blue "Focused" counter next to the combatant's figure.

During a combat round, a combatant may spend the Focus to gain one of the following benefits. After choosing your benefit, remove the "Focused" counter. Each combatant may choose only one Focus benefit per combat Round. You must spend the Focus before making any relevant die rolls, such as To-Hit Rolls.

Use of Focus	*Result*
for Defense	You may spend your Focus on one Defense Roll, gaining one Bonus on a single Defense roll (Parry, Block, or Dodge).
to Hit	You can spend your Focus on an attack To-Hit roll, gaining one Bonus on your To-Hit Dice.
for Spell-Casting	You may reduce the number of Magic Points spent on a spell by 1, down to zero. Only *Regular, Targeting, Homing,* and *Exploding Spells* may have their cost reduced this way.
to remove Awkwardness	You may spend your Focus to eliminate the Awkwardness disadvantage on your weapon. You may now choose an Easy Maneuver.
to Interrupt	You can interrupt someone else with a higher Initiative. You may "act" before they do, because you are prepared. (If your target is also Focused, he or she may spend their Focus to Interrupt yours, negating both.)
to Strike Focused	as a Third-Rank Maneuver, you can Attack, where any hit is a Special Hit.

The advantage of Focus is cumulative with your Maneuver

For example, you may "Strike Sure" for one Bonus to hit and use your Focus to Hit for another Bonus, gaining two Bonuses on your To-Hit roll. The only exception is "Strike Focused", which is its own Maneuver – see below..

Focus ends as soon as you perform your Maneuver

As soon as you "act" — that is, choose your Maneuver for the Round — you lose your Focus. You must either spend your Focus now for some advantage (such as To-Hit) or lose the advantage.

You can only spend Focus for the Bonus to Defense if you are attacked before you act. Once you have chosen your Maneuver, the Focus is gone.

You can *Interrupt* with any appropriate Maneuver for the Rank

If you Interrupt on the First Rank, you can choose any First-Rank maneuver. If you Interrupt on the Second Rank, you can choose any First- or Second-Rank Maneuver. If you Interrupt on the Third Rank, you can choose any Maneuver. (Technically, you could interrupt to "Guard" if it ever becomes necessary.)

Focus requires confidence and competence

If the combatant is sent Reeling, or Guards, or loses self-confidence and readiness for any reason, the Focus is lost. Likewise, abnormal mental status such as *Fear*, *Confusion*, or *Rage* will prevent a character from becoming Focused.

A character can "maintain Focus" by doing nothing — in effect, taking the "Focus" Maneuver every round.

The "Strike Focused" Maneuver

You can only take this Third-Rank Melee Maneuver if you currently have Focus. (In other words, you must take the Third-Rank Maneuver "Focus" one round, then the Third-Rank Maneuver "Strike Focused" the second round.)

If you hit with the "Strike Focused" Maneuver, you may treat a regular Success as an *Overwhelming Success*. In other words, you may claim a Special Hit on a simple Success.

Recovering from Damage

Eventually, the battle will end. Some folks may have fled the battlefield, or the fields may lie strewn with the bodies of the broken. The survivors will want to bind their wounds and to heal up as fast as possible.

Recovering from Fatigue is easy: Lose 1 every hour

An hour of rest recovers one Fatigue. Rest means nothing more strenuous than talking or light manual labor. It *does* include Meditation (p. 114).

You cannot recover Fatigue if you're starving, dehydrated, or can't breathe. See *The Hostile Environment* (p. 151).

Short Term Healing:
Use First Aid to convert 1 Wound to 1 Fatigue

After any fight where you suffer Wounds, someone (either you or another character) may attempt to use the First Aid skill to try and restore a single Wound . *Only one Wound per combat can be restored.* The difficulty for the test depends on how long is spent on the First Aid:

- For a proper dressing taking five minutes, roll vs. 2d6.
- For a rush job of only a minute, roll vs. 2d10.

Roll your Mind Trait and First Aid Skill Dice vs. the difficulty and check your result on the table below.

Mind & First Aid vs. Difficulty	***Outcome***
Botch	Oops! Target suffers 1 Fatigue.
all Failures	No effect.
Ties, all Successes	Convert 1 Wound to 1 Fatigue

You are only permitted one First Aid roll after each encounter. First Aid cannot heal the wounds you suffered during earlier battles — only this one. (You may want to circle the wounds you suffered in previous fights, so you don't forget which ones you suffered in this last fight.)

Only one successful First Aid attempt is permitted. If multiple people attempt, just take the first Success you get and convert one Wound to Fatigue.

Long Term Healing:
Recover using Body vs. care

After applying First Aid to your combat wounds, the rest of healing takes longer. Once per day (usually when your character wakes up in the morning in "game time"), you may roll to see if your character heals.

Your character rolls to heal using his or her *Body Trait Dice vs. the healing difficulty,* which is based on your living conditions:

- ***Easy:*** A whole day of bed rest.
- ***Medium:*** A day of minimal physical activity, with sleep on a pallet or floor.
- ***Hard:*** A day with leisurely Travel, or a combat encounter, or one with sleep outside.
- ***Extreme:*** A day with extreme labor, or a Forced March, or very poor living conditions.

Total Wounds	***Living Conditions:***			
	Easy	***Medium***	***Hard***	***Extreme***
1	d4	2d4	2d6	2d8
2	d6	2d6	2d8	2d10
3	d8	2d8	2d10	2d12
4	d10	2d10	2d12	3d12
5	d12	2d12	3d12	3d12
6	2d12	3d12	3d12	4d12
7	2d12	3d12	4d12	4d12
8	3d12	4d12	4d12	4d12
9 or more	3d12	4d12	5d12	6d12

Body Dice vs. Healing Difficulty	***Outcome***
Botch	*Backslide!* Your injuries have become infected, or some other complication. Suffer 1 Wound.
all Failures, Tie	No effect.
Ties, all Successes	Convert 1 Wound to 1 Fatigue

Professional care:
Use Medicine Skill to Heal Faster

Characters treated by someone with the Medicine Skill may heal even faster. *Once per day, roll the healer's Medicine Skill Dice against the Long Term Healing Difficulty, reading the table as above.*

Note that Botches on Medicine rolls can cause backslides — so always hire competent doctors! Also, as the skill implies, Medicine requires materials to work with: acupuncture needles, moxa burning, herbs (from successful Herbalism Tests), etc.

Natural healing combined with Medicine may result in a combatant healing 2 Wounds per day.

The hands of fate:
Treating Mortal Wounds

A combatant who has been *Mortally Wounded* may be treated by a doctor. The doctor must make *a Test of their Medicine Dice vs. the current Death Difficulty Dice.* If the doctor *Ties* or better, the patient is no longer in mortal danger, and may start healing, as above.

Such an attempt takes 15 minutes. Since the combatant has only an hour to live, a maximum of only four tries can be made. Only one character may try Medicine per patient at any one time.

Certain magical spells may save one from Mortal Wounds, as well, or even a good First Aid roll. If a Mortally Wounded combatant can be healed to 5 Wounds or less, and thus out of mortal danger, then the combatant is no longer at risk of death. Combatants who are not healed out of mortal danger must still be treated, but at least the Death Difficulty Dice will be smaller.

Beyond the pale:
Raising the Dead

A character who is Dead can only be revived by use of the spells that allow re-rolls of the Death Test (such as "Generative Restoration"). However, even these powerful spells are not without limits.

A Dead character suffers one Wound every hour after they have died — if this Wound loss brings a character beyond the threshold of life-returning spells, the character is beyond hope.

Dead characters cannot benefit from healing of any kind, other than magic that specifically works on the Dead.

The Environment

There are lots of things other than just the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune that can hurt a character. Here's a listing of the more common ones, but the Host should feel free to invent new ones if needed.

Falling

Sometimes, a character may take a bad spill, either because he's knocked off a cliff, or perhaps he's been bodily thrown by a dis-

agreeable fellow, or maybe he's a flying character who has lost balance and failed to recover. *For falling, the Damage is one Level per pace fallen, up to a maximum of 50 Levels (10d12).* (See "Levels," p. 20.) So, if you fall off an eight-pace cliff, that's Level 8 Damage, or d12 & d8.

Armor is less protective against Falling Damage. *Only include your biggest Armor Die vs. Falling Damage.* For example, if your Armor is good for d12, d10 & d8, you only roll keep the d12. Your Soak is still fully effective.

Characters with Acrobatics skill may take less damage when falling. *Roll your Acrobatics Skill Dice with your Soak Dice when resisting Falling Damage.* (Do not include the Speed Dice.) This assumes that you're reasonably active and awake—the Host should decide when Acrobatics can and cannot be used.

> ***Example:*** In-Leng takes a bad spill—and a five-story fall. That's 15 paces down, which is Level 15 damage, or 3d12. In-Leng's Soak against the Damage is a d6 from her Body, plus her best armor die of d10. She also has Acrobatics at Level 7, good for d12 & d6.
>
> The Falling Damage comes up 11, 7, and 4. In-Leng rolls d12, d10, and 2d6 for 9, 9, 2, and 1. She suffers 2 Wounds.

An object falls about 170 paces in a single Round, so only high-altitude fliers will take more than one Round to hit the ground.

Fire

In a low-tech fantasy setting such as *Jadeclaw*, illumination is commonly torches or lanterns, which are a constant fire hazard. Magical fire, such as "Attendant Fireball," not only causes damage as a typical attack but may also set someone on fire.

A character on fire suffers 2d6 Damage every Round. Armor is less protective against Burning Damage. *Only roll your biggest Armor Die vs. Burning Damage.* For example, if your Armor is good for d12, d10 & d8, you may only keep the d12. You still roll all Soak Dice, as appropriate.

Being on fire is treated as an Abnormal Status — see *On Fire* in the Appendix (p. 341).

Property Damage

One nice thing about martial arts is using your ability to kick through doors and break bricks to show off. Powerful magic may cause a great deal of Property Damage, as well, with Cluster-affecting Magic or with the Dàoist Magic "Dispels."

In game terms, an inanimate object has Soak Dice based on its primary makeup. For example, a cart is primarily composed of Wood, whereas a castle wall is mostly Stone. The Game Host should determine the Soak of the object. Objects do not have "Hit Points" — rather, determine how much damage was caused in a single hit.

A combatant who attacks an inanimate object must still roll To-Hit — the object has no defense and only has the "imaginary 1." The attacker is hoping for an Overwhelming Success so that they may claim a Special Result. Objects wielded by an opponent, such as their weapons and armor, use the opponent's defenses (such as Parry and Dodge.) A successful Parry never risks Property Damage.

Inanimate objects only care about Wounds — they ignore Fatigue for purposes of Property Damage.

Object	*Soak*	*Hits to cause Property Damage*		
		Light	*Medium*	*Heavy*
Earth	2d6	1	2	4
Wood	2d8	2	4	6
Stone	2d10	3	6	9
Metal	2d12	4	8	12

> ***Example:*** Magnificent Weasel tries to kick down a wooden door. The Game Host rules that this will require Medium Property Damage. Magnificent Weasel will have to roll his Kick Damage against the door's Wood Soak of 2d8 and will have to score 4 hits or more to break it down.

Light Damage: destroy an earthen rampart; chop down one pace's worth of soft growth; destroy a Dagger; remove the metal from Disc Armor (making it Heavy Leather Armor); make a fist-sized hole in a stone wall; shatter a brick.

Medium Damage: remove a one-pace square area of mud or dust; remove a dust cloud; kick open a door; destroy a hedge; chop through a single tree.

Heavy Damage: remove a 3x3 pace square area of mud, dust, or hedges; destroy a tree to splinters or ash; blow a 3-pace wide hole in a palace wall; shatter a suit of Plate Mail.

As a general rule, Weapons that suffer Light Damage become less useful — they can still be used to fight, they just may not claim Special Results. Weapons that suffer Medium Damage are broken and must be repaired. Weapons that suffer Heavy Damage are obliterated, beyond repair.

Weapons are designed for use on people, not on inanimate objects. Combat-worthy Swords and Axes used to chop down doors and walls will become dull — usually by losing their ability to score Special Results, as per Light Damage.

Damaging objects can be as complicated as the Game Host wants it to be. For example, if the Game Host wants to, they may assign Hits to an object so it can be gradually damaged, such as someone chopping down a tree with an axe. Or they can adjust the hits needed up or down, depending on the size of the object (more hits for larger, fewer for smaller).

Suffocation

A character can hold their breath for about three minutes, if they are inactive, doing nothing. In full fighting form, a character that cannot breathe suffers a 2d6 Damage roll vs. their Body Trait (not Soak) at the End of the Round. Armor Dice do not apply. Each hit causes one Fatigue. After all Fatigue are exhausted, apply hits as Wounds, as normal, until the character either dies or can breathe again.

The skill of Breath-Holding can greatly increase the amount of time one can hold their breath. *Include Breath-Holding Skill Dice with your Body Dice when resisting the 2d6 Damage from suffocation.*

Starvation

A character that misses one day's worth of meals cannot recover Fatigue or heal by natural means. They must still make Healing Tests ("Long Term Healing," p. 151), but they can only backslide or stay the same — they cannot heal Wounds. (Magical healing will still be effective.)

A character that misses two days worth of meals will suffer one Fatigue. Each subsequent day without food inflicts one Fatigue, until the character can finally eat or collapses (due to a failed Resolve Test), whereupon they can only recover consciousness with some kind of aid.

Remember that a combatant who has lost all Hit Points to Fatigue will then suffer Wounds (p. 128).

Thirst

A character that goes without water for one day cannot recover Fatigue or heal by natural means. After 24 hours without water, the character will suffer one Fatigue every hour, until the character can finally drink or collapses (due to a failed Resolve Test), whereupon they can only recover consciousness with some kind of aid.

Remember that a combatant who has lost all Hit Points to Fatigue will then suffer Wounds (p. 128).

Frequently-Asked Questions about Combat

Can I attack without *any* dice for the weapon I'm using?

Yes you can. If you have no dice for using the weapon, because you have no Skill and no appropriate Careers, you'll only be rolling your Speed Dice to hit. Remember that with only one die (and no Favored Use), your odds of Botching the roll are very high. If you think it's worth the risk, you can also Parry with it.

If I already get two Parries, and I use a maneuver that grants double Parries like "Guard," do I get four Parries?

Yes. Likewise, if you had three Parries, it would double to six, etc. You are still only permitted one Defense against any one attack.

Why are Empty-Hand Methods considered "Weapons" instead of Maneuvers?

Empty Hand Methods are considered to be Natural Weapons because they can be used with almost any Maneuver. (You can only perform one Maneuver per Round.) Thus you can "Strike Hard" with Le Method, for example. You could also "Strike Focused" for that automatic Special Hit. And you can combine Empty-Hand Methods with Martial Arts Maneuvers and Specials.

If I haven't acted yet in the Round, and someone sends me Reeling, do I fail to act this Round *and* next Round?

No. You only lose your next "action."

You can always choose to perform an early Maneuver later in the Round … and since Recovering from Reeling is a Zero-Rank Maneuver, you will automatically choose that as your next Maneuver.

While Reeling, you have one Penalty to all Defenses. When you Recover, that Penalty goes away. If you haven't acted yet this Round, the "window of opportunity" where other folks can exploit that Reeling can be very small — often between Initiatives in the same Rank.

Universal Maneuvers

Anyone can do these, at any time. These Maneuvers require no special equipment.

Maneuver	*Ranks of Initiative*			*Move*	*Defense*	*Effect*
Dash	First			Dash	Normal	Move your Dash in any direction (p. 136)
Focus			Third	Stride	Normal	Gain an advantage for next round (p. 138)
Change Position	First			Stride	Normal	Stand up (p. 136)
Guard	Zero			Stride	two Bonuses	Forgo attack to only defend; double normal number of Parries and Blocks (p. 135)
Recover	Zero			Stride	Normal	Recover from Reeling (p. 135)
Run	First	Second	Third	*Dash* ×3	Abort	Move 3 times your Dash in any direction (p. 139)
Break Free	First			Special	Special	Attempt to break free of a Grapple or Entangle (p. 140)

Natural Weapon Maneuvers

You can use these Maneuvers Barehanded or with any Natural Weapons you may possess.
Natural Weapons are always Ready.

Maneuver	*Ranks of Initiative*			*Move*	*Defense*	*Effect*
Break Free	First			Special	Special	Attempt to Break Free
Charge	First			Dash	Special	Attack, then send self Reeling
Flying Tackle	First			Dash	Special	Attempt to grapple foe; automatically fall down
Follow-up	First			None	Special	Use an appropriate follow-up
Grapple		Second		Dash	Normal	Attempt to grapple; must have two grabbers free. Set-up for Grapple Follow-ups.
Strike First	First			Stride	Normal	Attack with weapon
Strike Hard		Second		Stride	Normal	Attack with one Bonus to Damage
Strike Sure		Second		Stride	Normal	Attack with one Bonus to hit
Weapon Grab		Second		Dash	Normal	Attempt to wrest away foe's weapon; must have one grabber free

Easy Melee Weapon Maneuvers

You may use these Maneuvers with Light Weapons held in one hand, and Medium Weapons held in two hands.
Your weapons must be Readied before use. (Unready Weapons are considered Awkward in the Round that they are Readied.)

Maneuver	*Ranks of Initiative*			*Move*	*Defense*	*Effect*
Charge	First			Dash	Special	Attack with weapon, then send self Reeling (p. 136)
Strike First	First			Stride	Normal	Attack with weapon (p. 136)
Strike Hard		Second		Stride	Normal	Attack with one Bonus to Damage (p. 137)
Strike Sure		Second		Stride	Normal	Attack with one Bonus to hit (p. 137)
Strike Tandem		Second	Third	Stride	Normal	Strike with two weapons (p. 138)
Strike Focused			Third	Stride	Normal	*Requires Focus;* treat simple Success as Overwhelming Success

Empty-Hand Maneuvers

You may use these Maneuvers with Empty Hand attacks, if you know any.
Both of your hands must be Empty. You may drop what is in your hands at no opportunity cost.

Maneuver	*Ranks of Initiative*			*Move*	*Defense*	*Effect*
Charge	First			Dash	Special	Attack with Empty Hand, then send self Reeling
Strike First	First			Stride	Normal	Attack with Empty Hand
Strike Hard		Second		Stride	Normal	Attack with one Bonus to Damage
Strike Sure		Second		Stride	Normal	Attack with one Bonus to hit

Awkward Melee Weapon Maneuvers

You may use these Maneuvers with Medium Weapons held in one hand, and Heavy Weapons held in two hands.
You may use these Maneuvers with Unready Weapons — after use, those weapons become Ready.

Maneuver	*Ranks of Initiative*	*Move*	*Defense*	*Effect*
Charge	First	Dash	Special	Attack with weapon, then send self Reeling
Strike Awkwardly	Second	Stride	Normal	Attack with weapon

Easy Missile Weapon Maneuvers

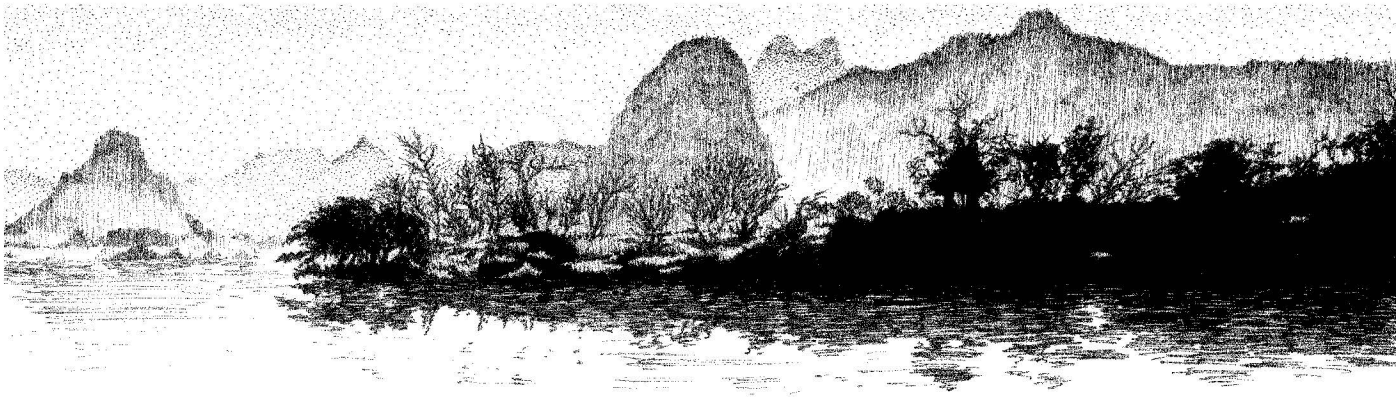
You may use these Maneuvers with Light Weapons held in one hand, and Medium Weapons held in two hands.

Maneuver	*Ranks of Initiative*	*Move*	*Defense*	*Effect*
Aim	First Second Third	Stride	*Abort*	Choose one target — next Round, target loses one Ranged Defense Die (p. 140)
Fire a Loaded, Easy Crossbow	First	Stride	Normal	Fire an Easy Crossbow
Load & Fire an Easy Bow	First	Stride	Normal	Load & fire an Easy bow at a target
Load an Easy Crossbow by Hand	First Second	Stride	*Abort*	Load an Easy Crossbow for next round
Throw Weapon	Second	Stride	Normal	Throw your weapon at someone

Awkward Missile Weapon Maneuvers

You may use these Maneuvers with Medium Weapons held in one hand, and Heavy Weapons

Maneuver	*Ranks of Initiative*	*Move*	*Defense*	*Effect*
Aim	First Second Third	Stride	*Abort*	Choose one target — next Round, target loses one Ranged Defense Die (p. 140)
Fire a Loaded, Awkward Crossbow	Second	Stride	Normal	Fire an Awkward Crossbow that has been loaded in a previous Round.
Load & Fire an Awkward Bow	First Second	Stride	Abort	Load & fire an Awkward bow at a target
Load an Awkward Crossbow by Gaffle	First Second Third	None	*Abort*	Load a Medium Crossbow for use next round
Prepare an Awkward Crossbow by Cranquelin	First Second Third	None	*Abort*	Prepares a winch for loading a Heavy Crossbow; requires two hands (Part 1 of 2)
Load an Awkward Crossbow by Cranquelin	First Second Third	None	*Abort*	Use a winch to load a Heavy Crossbow; requires two hands (Part 2 of 2)



Thrown Weapon Maneuvers

You may use these Maneuvers with any Light Weapon. Your To-Hit Dice are your *Speed Dice* and your *Thrown Weapon* Combat Skill (not the same Skill used for Melee Combat, Parries, etc.)

Maneuver	*Ranks of Initiative*			*Move*	*Defense*	*Effect*
Aim	First	Second	Third	Stride	*Abort*	Choose one target — next Round, target loses one Ranged Defense Die (p. 140)
Throw Weapon		Second		Stride	Normal	Throw your weapon at someone

Wrestling Maneuvers

You can use these Maneuvers with your hands or with hand substitutes.

You can drop anything in your grabbers as a free action, and thus you can be Ready at any time if you have to be.

Maneuver	*Ranks of Initiative*			*Move*	*Defense*	*Effect*
Grapple		Second		Stride	Normal	Attempt to Grapple foe. Must have two grabbers free.
Weapon Grab		Second		Stride	Normal	Grab at foe's weapon. Must have one grabber free.
Flying Tackle	First			Dash	Normal	Attempt to Grapple foe. Must have two grabbers free. Attacker automatically falls down.

Follow-Up Maneuvers

Each of these Maneuvers requires that you perform a Maneuver before-hand, as a *Set-Up*.

Set-Up	*Follow-Up*	*Rank...*	*Move*	*Defense*	*Effect*
Weapon Grab	**Disarm**	First	Stride	Normal	Roll Strength & Wrestling vs. foe's Strength & Weapon Skill; disarm them on Success
Bite to Grapple	**Worry**	First	*None*	Parry, Block	No To-Hit Roll necessary; Strength and Teeth Damage vs. opponent's Soak
Grapple	**Pin**	First	*None*	Parry, Block	Roll Strength & Wrestling vs. foe's Strength, Wrestling, & Contortionist to pin foe
Grapple	**Crush**	First	*None*	Parry, Block	Roll Strength & Wrestling vs. foe's Strength, Wrestling, & Contortionist to injure foe
Grapple	**Shove**	First	*Special*	Parry, Block	Roll Strength & Wrestling vs. foe's Strength & Wrestling as Damage roll; move 1 pace per hit
Entangle Arm	**Disarm**	First	Stride	Normal	Roll Strength & Weapon Skill vs. foe's Strength & Weapon Skill; disarm them on Success
Entangle Leg	**Takedown**	First	Stride	Normal	Roll Strength & Wrestling vs. foe's Strength, Wrestling, & Acrobatics to knock foe down

Special Maneuvers

These Maneuvers can only be performed if you have certain powers or if certain conditions are met.

Maneuver	*Ranks of Initiative*			*Move*	*Defense*	*Effect*
Strike Focused			Third	Stride	Normal	Requires Focus; claim your Special even on a simple Success (p. 138)

Martial Arts Maneuvers

These Maneuvers can only be performed if you have the appropriate Gifts and *if you can meet certain conditions of Usability.* The last column shows the page where the Martial Art Maneuver is described.

Maneuver	*Ranks of Initiative*			*Move*	*Defense*	*Effect*	*Page*
Aiming on the Draw	First	Second	Third	Stride	*Abort*	Draw an arrow, aim, and fire — target loses one Ranged Defense Die	161
Attack Thrice	First	Second	Third	Stride	Normal	Attack three times with the same weapon	172
Attack Twice	First	Second		Stride	Normal	Attack twice with the same weapon	167
Back Stab		Second		Stride	Normal	Trade "from behind" bonus for improved outcome	161
Body Language		Second		Stride	Normal	Requires Focus; claim your Special even on a simple Success	167
Brass Monkey Smash			Third	Stride	Normal	Slaying Damage; target includes Acrobatics, Dodge, & Jumping with Soak	161

Maneuver	*Ranks of Initiative*			*Move*	*Defense*	*Effect*	*Page*
Butterfly-Landing-on-Iron-Pillar Kick	First			Dash	Normal	Attack does no Damage — target is knocked back 1 pace per hit, must test Speed & Acrobatics vs. Damage or fall down	161
Cartwheel Kick		Second		Dash	Normal	Move number of paces equivalent to To-Hit Roll; all targets you pass must Defend or be Kicked	167
Climbing the Mountain		Second		Stride	Normal	Include Jumping Dice with To-Hit Dice	162
Combat Casting	First			Stride	Normal	"Fast-Cast" Targeting Spell at normal Magic Point cost	162
Cornered Fighting	*zero*			Stride	Normal	Treat foe's Failed To-Hit Roll as an Overwhelming Failure	162
Coup de Grace		Second		Stride	Normal	Remove two biggest To-Hit dice. Attack with improved outcome: Tie becomes Success; Success becomes Overwhelm. If target Fails Resolve Test, becomes Mortally Wounded.	172
Dart Fan Attack	First			Stride	Normal	Ranged Attack (Short 1, Medium 2, Long 5, eXtreme 10); Damage 3d6; target includes Observation, Sixth Sense with Soak	162
Death from Above	First			Stride	Normal	Claim +1 "from behind" bonus from the front	162
Defensive Stance	*zero*			*None*	three Bonuses	Do not attack; Double normal Parries and Blocks	162
Double Kick		Second		Stride	Normal	Kick with both feet; attack causes Slaying Damage	168
Earth Strike			Third	Stride	Normal	Causes Slaying Damage; target includes Acrobatics, Flight, & Jumping Dice with Soak	168
Earth-Shaking Stomp Kick		Second		Stride	Normal	Target suffers Slaying Damage from Kick	162
Evasion	First			Stride	one Bonus	Do not attack; Double normal Parries and Blocks	168
Final Blow			Third	Stride	Normal	Attack with one Bonus To-Hit *and* one Bonus to Damage	168
Graceful Assault		Second		*None*	Normal	Attack with one Bonus To-Hit (with Awkward Weapon)	168
Gracing-the-Moon Kick	First			Stride	Normal	Include Jumping Dice with To-Hit Dice	162
Heaven and Earth Meet in the Middle	First					Strike with two weapons	168
Heaven Strike			Third	Stride	Normal	Causes Slaying Damage; target includes Acrobatics, Contortionist, & Dodge Dice with Soak	168
Hero's Charge	First			Dash	Normal	Attack normally (unlike Charge, is not sent Reeling)	168
Improved Body Language	First			Stride	Normal	Requires Focus; claim your Special even on a simple Success	172
Keyhole Shot	First	Second	Third	*Abort*	Normal	Remove biggest To-Hit die; ignore target's Shield & Cover Dice	172
Knock Down	First			Stride	Normal	Successful hit does no Damage but knocks target down	162
Light Walk	First	Second	Third	*Special*	Normal	Do not attack; Leap several paces	172
Master Stroke		Second		Stride	Normal	Remove biggest die; Successful hit is Overwhelming Success	168
Nimble Assault	First			*None*	Normal	Attack on First Rank (with Awkward Weapon)	168
Refined Assault		Second		*None*	Normal	Attack with one Bonus to Damage (with Awkward Weapon)	169
Ricochet		Second		Stride	Normal	Bounce attack off walls, suffering one Penalty to Damage per bounce	173
Shadowless Attack	First			Stride	Normal	Include Quickness Trait with To-Hit; attack may be invisible	162
Shuang Fu	First			Stride	Normal	Attack twice with two Easy Light Axes	169
Sleeve Sword Surprise	First			Stride	Normal	Slaying Damage; target includes Observation & Sixth Sense w/Soak	162
Third Leg Kick	First			Stride	Normal	Kick with both feet, balancing on tail; attack causes Slaying Damage	163
Thrice-Casting	First	Second	Third	Stride	Normal	Cast a Targeting Spell three times	173
Tricky Maneuver		Second		Stride	Normal	Successes & Failures are Overwhelming	163
Twice-Casting	First	Second		Stride	Normal	Cast a Targeting Spell twice	169
Vast-as-Heaven Hook Attack			Third	Stride	*None*	Strike at a group of targets with increased reach	169
Whirlwind Attack		Second		Stride	Normal	Use To-Hit as a Group Attack vs. all targets in Reach	173

Weapon Specials

You may claim these Special Results depending on the weapon you are using. Each Special varies depending on the kind of Weapon you are using, as chosen in the "Equipment" chapter on page 76.

Biting to Grapple

You may grapple your opponent with your weapon. If you use your teeth, this is a Set-Up for the Crush (p. 140). It costs you no action or opportunity to release your foe from your weapon.

Cleave

Include an extra d8 with your Damage Dice. The extra d8 from the Cleave is modified by all Bonuses and Penalties to Damage.

Concussion

If the target *Fails* their Resolve Test, they suffer 1 Fatigue; if the target *Overwhelmingly Fails* their Resolve Test, they suffer 1 Wound. This Fatigue loss is in addition to all other effects of failed Resolve Tests. There is *no effect* if the target did not need to make a Resolve Test — that is, if none of the Damage Dice were able to get any Wounds past the Soak Dice.

Crush

Not only have you grabbed your opponent, you may immediately Crush them (p. 140) as part of the same attack.

Double Attack

You may strike your opponent first with one end of your staff, and then the other end, in rapid succession. Roll the Damage and Soak contest *twice.*

Entangle Arm

Not only do you cause Damage to your target but you have also Entangled the target's arm. The combatant may not use weapons that require that arm until they Break Free (p. 141).

Entangle Leg

Not only do you cause Damage to your target, but you have Entangled the target's leg. The combatant cannot move or Retreat until they Break Free (p. 141).

Impale

Target loses smallest Armor die. Don't even roll it — remove it first. Does not affect Soak.

Improved Disarm

If your weapon weighs more than your target's, you automatically *Disarm* them *and* you Strike them for Damage. If your weapon weighs the same or less, then you may choose whether to automatically Disarm them or to Strike them.

Slash

Target suffers an extra d6 Damage. Include this d6 with your Damage Dice. The extra d6 from the Slash is modified by all Bonuses and Penalties to Damage.

Upset

Your target automatically falls down *and* suffers Damage. If your target is mounted, they also suffer d8 Falling Damage when pulled to the ground.

"For the apprentice, paths to falsehood lie either in having a small ambition or in being flippant. If his ambition is small, he will be easily satisfied. If he is easily satisfied, then there will be no need for him to advance. Being flippant, he begins to think that he already knows what he does not yet know and that he has already studied what he has not studied."

— from The Book of Hei Gui Shù (Black Tortoise School) by Master Chen Wû

MARTIAL ARTS

Introduction

Unlike the Universal Maneuvers, Exploits, and Specials, *Martial Arts* require that the character have certain Gifts in order to claim their benefits. The cost for each Martial Art varies, as described below.

Types of Martial Arts

Exploits: Useable when you *Overwhelmingly Succeed on a Defense Roll.* You may Exploit one opponent, once per Defense.

Specials: Useable when you *Overwhelmingly Succeed on a To-Hit Roll.* You may claim one Special Result per To-Hit Roll.

Defenses: Either this is an improved Defense (such as extra Parries or Blocks) or a brand new Defense (such as Portentousness or Relentlessness).

Maneuvers: Useable as your combat action that Round. You may only use one Maneuver per Round.

Advantages: A catch-all category, these Martial Arts modify other Maneuvers, actions, or circumstances. There is no limit to the number of Advantages you may claim at any one moment.

Minimum Levels of Skill ...

Most Martial Arts require a minimum Level of Skill to even attempt them. The Skill represents the intense training the character has gone through to perform these extraordinary feats. *A character cannot learn a Martial Art if they do not meet the necessary Requirements.*

Basic Martial Art: Can be used with any Combat Skill — or even lack of Combat Skill, such as when the combatant is only rolling their Speed Trait.

Expert Martial Art: The combatant may only make To-Hit Rolls and Defense Rolls with Combat Skills of Expert Quality (Level 6, or d12, d4) or better.

Heroic Martial Art: The combatant may only make To-Hit Rolls and Defense Rolls with Combat Skills of Heroic Quality (Level 11, or 2d12, d4) or better.

... Other abilities ...

In addition to Skill Level, most Martial Arts have other requirements as well:

- ***A die in a Skill.*** Unlike Level of Skill, above, a die can also come from a Race Trait or a Career Trait, or even a Special Trait. To qualify as a requirement, the Trait must be one that is listed as *included with* the Skill.
- ***A Gift.*** For example, all Kicks require the Gift of "Sure-Footed." Many advanced Martial Arts require the Gift of more basic versions — for example, the Martial Art "Third Parry" requires the Gift of "Second Parry."
- ***Lack of a certain Flaw.*** For example, a few Martial Arts are beyond the capability of those who are Honorable (p. 58).

...And sometimes a bit more

Many an adventurer has traveled the world seeking out the mysterious ways of the ***Secret Martial Arts.*** These techniques are obscure, and those who know them do not teach them to just anyone.

Secret Martial Arts not only have Requirements in game terms but they also require a "campaign event" where someone imparts the secrets of the technique upon the character. The methods of secret teachings are explained in the *Experience* chapter (p. 253).

Secret Martial Arts are Esoteric Gifts. You must get special permission from the Game Host to begin the game with them.

When you can perform the Art: Usability

Martial Arts not only require great discipline but also ideal circumstances: level ground, balanced weapons, good physical health, etc. One reason why Martial Arts take so much training is not necessarily because any one art is difficult to learn, but that one must learn so *many* arts when each one has such a narrow window of opportunity where it can be used. Even though a combatant has learned a Martial Art, it must also be *Useable* at the given time, place, and circumstance.

Every Martial Art has some limitation on Usability, such as type of weapon (such as only Melee Weapons), Handiness of the weapon (such as only Easy Weapons), the size of the weapon (such as only Light Weapons), or the familiarity of the weapon (such as only Favorite Weapons).

> ***Example:*** Far-Seeking Justice wants to use the "Expert Special: Double Arrow." However, that Special is only useable with his Favorite Bow. When he is forced to use a bow that is not his Favorite, he is not accustomed to the unusual draw-strength, the odd curve of the wood, and numerous other incongruities that prevent him from truly realizing his greatness.

Basic Martial Arts

Since none of thse Martial Arts require anything more than basic skill, any veteran warrior can have one or two of these.

Basic Advantages

Ground-Fighting
(1 point)
Requirement: a die in Contortionist of d10

Useable when your Encumbrance Limit is d10 or better.

You have your *full* Defenses when lying down.

Quick Draw
(1 point)
Requirement: Speed Trait of d8

Useable with any Light, Favorite Weapon.

You may ready a carried weapon *without* suffering Awkwardness. Does not affect Awkwardness from inadequate Lift, from being on the ground, etc. Does not work on concealed weapons (but see *Legerdemain*.)

Voice of Command
(3 points)
Requirement: Charisma Trait of d4

Useable when you are the leader.

When the combatants that you lead must pass Resolve Tests or must resist any effect that includes Will Dice, they may include your Charisma Trait Dice.

Basic Defenses

Handler's Secrets
(1 point)
Requirement: a die in Animal-Handling of d4

Useable when you could use a Parry Defense against an animal's attack.

Your advanced knowledge of animals allows you to avoid their attacks more easily.

You gain a new defense: the *Animal-Handling Defense*. You may use this once per Round (except when Guarding, when you may use it twice per Round.) Your Defense roll is your *Speed & Animal Handling Dice*.

You may use the Animal-Handling Defense *only* against non-sentient animals. (That is, against creatures with no Mind Trait.)

Parry Thrown Objects
(1 point)

Useable with your Favorite Weapon.

You can use your Parry Defense against thrown objects and sling bullets.

Portentousness
(3 points)
Requirement: Second Sight Trait of d4

Useable when you could use a Dodge Defense.

You are keenly sensitive to danger on a supernatural level. You can step out of the way of an attack at the exact right moment so that it misses you with the minimum amount of effort.

You gain a new defense: the *Portentous Defense*. You may use this once per Round (except when Guarding, when you may use it twice per Round). Your Defense roll is your *Mind & Second Sight Dice* (and no Speed Dice). You may use Portentous Defense any time you could Dodge — including in the Resistance vs. Homing and Exploding Attacks.

Relentlessness
(3 points)
Requirement: Toughness Trait of d4

Useable when you could use a Dodge Defense.

Your indomitable nature allows you to steel yourself against flinching and pain that would sway a lesser fighter. You can swat arrows out of the air with your bare hands, and you wade through weapon attacks as if they were twigs and branches in your way.

You gain a new defense: the *Relentless Defense*. You may use this once per Round (except when Guarding, when you may use it twice per Round). Your Defense roll is your *Will & Toughness Dice* (and no Speed Dice). You may use Relentless Defense any time you could Dodge — including in the Resistance vs. Homing and Exploding Attacks.

Second Block
(1 point)

Useable with any shield.

You may Block twice per Round. .

Second Parry
(1 point)

Useable with your Favorite Weapon.

You may Parry twice per Round.

Basic Exploits

Counter-Attack with Natural Weapon
(1 point)

Requirement: Race Trait of d8

Useable with any Defense, when your attacker is only 1 pace away.

You automatically hit your opponent with a Natural Weapon. Roll your Strength and Natural Weapon Damage vs. your attacker's Armor and Soak.

Counter-Attack with Off-Hand Weapon
(1 point)

Requirement: a die in the Skill for the Off-Hand Weapon of d8

Useable when you are fighting with two weapons, you have a Light Weapon in your off-hand, and your attacker is within its Reach.

You automatically hit your target with an Easy weapon in your off-hand. Roll your Strength and Weapon Damage vs. your attacker's Armor and Soak.

Note that you do *not* have to be Ambidextrous to use this Exploit.

Entwine
(1 point)

Requirement: The Gifts of "Multidexterity" and "Prehensile Tail"

Useable when you Parry using Brawling and your Prehensile Tail has no Carried Weapon.

Your tail wraps around your opponent's weapon, and you snatch it out of their hands. You immediately have it for your own use.

Leg Grapple
(1 point)

Requirement: a die in Brawling of d4

Useable when you use Brawling to Parry someone's Kick attack.

You immediately Grapple your opponent's leg. .

Shield Bash
(1 point)

Requirement: a die in Shield Skill of d4

Useable when you Block a Melee Attack, and your attacker is only 1 pace away.

You automatically hit your attacker with your shield. Roll your Strength Damage & d6 vs. your opponent's Soak and Armor.

Soft Disarming Exploit
(1 point)

Requirement: Mind Trait of d8; a die in the appropriate Weapon Skill of d8

Useable with any Rope Weapon or with a White Wax Wood Spear.

You can wrap your weapon around your target's weapon, possibly disarming them. If your weapon weighs more than your target's, you automatically *Disarm* them *and* you Strike them for Damage. If your weapon weighs the same or less, then you may choose whether to automatically Disarm them or to Strike them.

Basic Maneuvers

Aiming on the Draw
(1 point)

Requirement: Speed Trait of d8; a die in Bow Skill of d8

Useable with any Medium, Favorite Bow.

You can draw an arrow on the First Rank, designate a target on the Second Rank, and fire your Bow on the Third Rank *with* the benefit of Aiming (p. 140).

This is a Long Maneuver — if you Defend yourself for any reason, you must Abort.

Back Stab
(1 point)

Requirement: a die in Stealth of d10

Useable with a Favorite Weapon and when you can claim the "From Behind" Bonus.

With a Back Stab *you do not claim the one Bonus for attacking from behind.* Instead, treat any Tie as a *Success,* and a Success as an *Overwhelming Success.* In effect, you are trading the one Bonus for improved outcome.

Brass Monkey Smash
(1 point)

Requirements: Lift of +4; a die in Mace Skill of d8

Useable with a Brass Monkey Mace (p. 80).

To most folks, the Brass Monkey is a training tool. In your trained hands, you can bring the Brass Monkey down on a foe in an attack that (if not carefully avoided) is devastating.

This attack causes *Slaying Damage* to your target. Your target may include their *Acrobatics, Dodge, & Jumping* (if any) with their Soak Dice.

Butterfly-Landing-on-Iron-Pillar Kick
(1 point)

Requirement: Speed Trait of d8; the Gift of "Sure-Footed"

Useable with a Brawling Kick.

This attack does no Damage. Instead, the target is knocked back 1 pace for every Wound your attack would cause. The target must test their Speed & Acrobatics Dice vs. the Damage Roll as a Simple Contest or be knocked to a Lying position.

Climbing the Mountain
(1 point)
Requirement: a die in Jumping of d4r; a die in Acrobatics at d4

Useable when there is a wall nearby *and* your Stride is 3 paces or more.

You can run up a wall, back-flip off it, and strike your opponent.

Include your Jumping Dice with your To-Hit Dice. Note that Jumping Dice are subject to the *Encumbrance Limit.*

Combat Casting with [Spell of Choice]
(1 point)
Requirement: being Adept at [Spell of Choice]

Pick a Spell when you purchase this Gift (of type Homing, Exploding, or Targeting). You may now cast that spell in the First Rank *without spending the extra 1 Magic Point.* .

You may buy this Gift multiple times. Each time it enables you to Combat-Cast a different Targeting Spell.

This Gift only works with Homing, Exploding, and Targeting Spells. It does *not* work with any other type of spell (Regular, Defense, Privilege, Delayed, Synecdoche, Persistent, etc.)

Cornered Fighting
(1 point)
Requirements: a die in Contortionist of d10

While using this maneuver, you cannot attack, but you gain twice your normal number of Parries and Blocks, just like Guarding. In addition, your ability to defend becomes superior: treat any *Failed To-Hit Rolls* as *Overwhelmingly Failed To-Hit Rolls,* allowing you to claim your Exploit against the attacker.

Dart Fan Attack
Requirement: Speed Trait of d8; a die in Iron Fan of d8

Useable with a loaded Dart Fan.

You can fire a spring-loaded dart from your Dart Fan. This requires a First-Rank Maneuver, as a Ranged Attack; your To-Hit Dice are your Speed & Iron Fan Dice. Your attack causes 3d6 Damage — your target includes their Observation & Sixth Sense Dice (if any) with their Soak.

Death from Above
(1 point)
Requirement: a die in Acrobatics of d10; a die in Climbing of d10; a die in Jumping of d10

Useable when your Encumbrance limit is d12, you have a Stride of 2 paces or better.

With this attack, you attempt to leap over your foe and strike them from behind. Imagine if your target didn't exist — if you could Stride from where you are to where you'd be behind your foe (right through the space they occupy), then you may attempt the Death from Above.

You claim the "from behind" advantage on your foe when performing this maneuver (one Bonus to hit). In addition, your foe *may not Retreat* from this attack.

If your To-Hit Roll is successful, then you *must* wind up behind your foe, facing the direction of your choice. If your To-Hit Roll failed, then you must stop in front of your foe.

Defensive Stance
(1 point)
Requirement: a die in Resolve of d10

Useable whenever you can Defend.

Just like Guarding, you get double your normal Parries and Blocks. You also get three Bonuses to every Defense, instead of two.

Earth-Shaking Stomp Kick
Requirement: the Gift of "Sure-Footed"; can NOT have the Flaw of "Honorable"

Useable with a Brawling Kick on a foe that is Lying Down.

If successful, your attack does *Slaying Damage* to the target.

Gracing-the-Moon Kick
(1 point)
Requirement: the Gift of "Sure-Footed"; a die in Jumping of d4

Useable with a Brawling Kick.

Include your Jumping Dice with your To-Hit roll.

Knock Down
(1 point)
Requirements: a Lift of +2

Useable with a Favorite Weapon.

This attack causes no Damage to your target. Instead, roll your Strength & Weapon Damage vs. the target's Strength, Acrobatics, and Contortionist Dice as a Simple Roll. If you *Succeed,* your foe falls down.

Shadowless Attack
(1 point)
Requirement: Quickness Trait of d4

Useable with any Easy, Favorite Weapon.

Include your Quickness Trait with your To-Hit dice. This attack moves so quickly that onlookers might not even see it. *Keep your Quickness Dice separate from the rest of your To-Hit Dice.* Onlookers must make a Spot Test vs. those Quickness Dice to even see this attack happen. Only works with melee weapons.

Sleeve Sword Surprise
(1 point)
Requirements: Mind Trait of d8; a die in Holdout of d8; a die in Sword of d8

Useable with a concealed Sleeve Sword (p. 83).

You spontaneously draw your Sleeve Sword and attack. Your target's sensitivity to danger and awareness helps protect them from your attack.

Your attack causes *Slaying Damage.* Your target may include their *Observation & Sixth Sense Dice* (if any) with their Soak.

Third-Leg Kick
(1 point)
Requirement: the Gifts of "Multidexterity," "Prehensile Tail," and "Sure-Footed"

Useable with a Brawling Kick, when your Encumbrance Limit is d12.

You perform a quick flip back onto your tail, then you attempt to plant both your feet on your target in a powerful kick. If successful, your attack does *Slaying Damage* to the target.

Tricky Maneuver
(1 point)
Requirement: Mind Trait of d8

Useable with a Favorite Weapon.

With this maneuver, you are trying to use your skill to fool your opponent, to strike them in an unexpected way; however, you will also make yourself vulnerable if your opponent sees it coming. With this Maneuver, on your To-Hit Roll, treat any *Success* as an *Overwhelming Success;* however, treat any Failure as an *Overwhelming Failure.*

Basic Specials

Brush Bludgeoning Stab
(1 point)
Requirement: Mind Trait of d8; a die in Polearm of d8

Useable with a Brush Polearm.

The target loses their lowest Armor Die (not Soak) *and* if the target *Fails* their Resolve Test, they suffer 1 Fatigue; if the target *Overwhelmingly Fails* their Resolve Test, they suffer 1 Wound. .

Cymbal Crash
(1 point)
Requirement: a die in Fighting Wheel of d10

Useable when you fight with two Cymbals (p. 78) (one in each hand), when the target does *not* have the Flaw of "Hard of Hearing" (p. 55).

You crash your two cymbals together either against your foe's head, or right next to their ears. Your target is *Confused* for 3 Rounds — unless they have the Gift of Keen Ears, in which case they are *Confused* for the rest of this Scene.

Dispel Aura
(1 point)
Requirement: a die in Lore: Magic of d8

Useable with a Favorite Melee Weapon on a target with an appropriate Aura.

You know the weaknesses inherent to supernatural Auras, and you can strike at the points of your target's body where they are most vulnerable. If your target has an Aura, that Aura is immediately dispelled. If your target does *not* have an Aura, then you must choose a different Special.

Double-Headed Attack
(1 point)
Requirement: Body Trait of d8; Speed Trait of d8; a die in the appropriate Weapon Skill of d8

Useable with a Double-Headed Hammer, Double-Headed Spear, Easy Heaven-Earth Sun-Moon Saber, or Shuang Tou Qiang.

You strike your opponent with one end of your weapon, then the other. Roll the Damage vs. Soak Contest *twice*.

Fork Disarm
(1 point)
Requirements: a die in Spear of d8

Useable in Melee combat, with a Flying Fork, Fork Staff, or Three-Tined Fork.

If your weapon weighs more than your target's, you automatically *Disarm* them *and* you Strike them for Damage. If your weapon weighs the same or less, then you may choose whether to automatically Disarm them or to Strike them.

Hook-Scythe Chop
(1 point)
Requirements: Mind Trait of d8; Will Trait of d8; a die in Spear of d8

Useable with a Hook-Scythe Spear.

Your target loses their lowest Armor Die (but not Soak) and you include an extra d4 of Damage.

Nerve Strike
(1 point)
Requirement: a die in Qi-Sao of d10

Useable with any Weapon that can claim a Concussion Special.

You can strike pressure points on your target's body. If they Fail their Resolve Test, they become *Paralyzed* for 3 Rounds. If they *Overwhelming Fail* their Resolve Test, they become *Paralyzed* for the rest of this Scene. If they *Botch* their Resolve Test, they become *Paralyzed* for 8 hours.

Nine-Dragon Concussion
(1 point)
Requirements: Mind Trait of d8; a die in Mace of d8; a die in Polearm of d8

Useable with a Nine-Dragon Trident.

If the target *Fails* their Resolve Test, they suffer 1 Fatigue; if the target *Overwhelmingly Fails* their Resolve Test, they suffer 1 Wound. This Fatigue loss is in addition to all other effects of failed Resolve Tests.

Nine-Dragon Impale
(1 point)
Requirements: Mind Trait of d8; a die in Polearm of d8; a die in Spear of d8

Useable with a Nine-Dragon Trident.

Your target removes their lowest Armor Die (but not Soak Dice).

Nine-Dragon Disarm
(1 point)
Requirements: Speed Trait of d8; Mind Trait of d8; a die in Polearm of d8

Useable with a Nine-Dragon Trident.

If your trident weighs more than your target's weapon, you automatically *Disarm* them *and* you Strike them for Damage. If your trident weighs the same or less, then you may choose whether to automatically Disarm them or to Strike them.

Nine-Dragon Slash
(1 point)
Requirements: Mind Trait of d8; a die in Axe of d8; a die in Polearm of d8

Useable with a Nine-Dragon Trident.

Include an extra d6 with your Damage.

Nine-Dragon Trip
(1 point)
Requirements: Mind Trait of d8; a die in Polearm of d8; a die in Staff of d8

Useable with a Nine-Dragon Trident.

Roll Damage as normal, *and* your target automatically falls to a Lying position.

Soft Improved Disarm
(1 point)
Requirements: Mind Trait of d8; a die in the appropriate Weapon Skill of d8

Useable with any Rope Weapon or with a White Wax Wood Spear.

You can wrap your weapon around your target's weapon, possibly disarming them. If your weapon weighs more than your target's, you automatically *Disarm* them *and* you Strike them for Damage. If your weapon weighs the same or less, then you may choose whether to automatically Disarm them or to Strike them.

Sundering Blow
(1 point)
Requirement: a Lift of +5

Useable with any Favorite Melee Weapon used in two hands.

With this maneuver, you can render a foe's Armor less effective through sheer physical force. The target suffers a permanent one Penalty to their armor rolls — in effect, remove the armor's smallest die. Further uses of this Special continue to reduce the armor. As the tattered bits of the armor continue to hang on the target, Encumbrance is not reduced in any way.

This Special only works on worn Armor, not on magical or natural armor, nor does it effect a target's personal Soak Dice. The armor can be repaired by anyone with the appropriate Trade Skill.

Wind-Mouth Cleave
(1 point)
Requirements: Lift of +3; Will Trait of d8; a die in Spear of d8

Useable with a Wind-Mouth Broadsword.

Include an extra d8 with your Damage.

Expert Martial Arts

Each of these Martial Arts requires at least one skill of Expert Quality (d12, d4 or better). The only way to start the game with a skill this high is as a Prodigy (p. 48) — and no character can start the game as a Prodigy in more than one Skill. Remember — *a Trait combined with a Skill does not make an Expert Skill.* For example, a Bodyguard Trait of d12 and a Sixth Sense Skill of d4 is *not* "Expert Sixth Sense Skill." .

Expert Advantages

Blind Melee Fighting
(1 point)
Requirement: The Gifts of "Keen Ears" and "Peripheral Sense"; Expert Observation Skill; Expert Sixth Sense Skill

Useable with any Melee Attack.

If you can hear, ignore *all* To-Hit roll penalties caused by darkness.

Extra Favorite Weapon with [Weapon Skill of Choice]
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Weapon Skill with [Weapon of Choice]

You may have *two* Favorite Weapons for one skill; alternatively, you may have one Favored Use *and* one Favorite Weapon. It still costs 1 Experience to change a favorite weapon after a choice is made.

Far Shot
(1 point)
Requirement: The Gift of "Keen Eyes"; Expert Bow Skill

Useable with a Favorite Weapon.

Your Range Dice are only d8 in size, not d10.

Humble Withdrawal
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Sixth Sense Skill

Useable when you are sent Reeling.

When you are sent Reeling, you do *not* suffer one Penalty on your Defenses.

Improved Crush
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Wresting Skill

Useable when you Crush a target.

You can claim up to 3 Hits of Damage per Crush, instead of 2.

Improved Ground-Fighting
(1 point)
Requirements: the Gift of "Ground-Fighting"; Expert Contortionist Skill

Useable with any Maneuver, when your Encumbrance Limit is d10 or better.

You do not suffer Awkwardness for lying down.

Improved Retreat
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Acrobatics Skill

Useable when you Retreat and your Stride is 2 paces or better.

Your Retreat defense die is d10, not d8. Your Stride must be 2 paces or better — if it drops below that for some reason (such as from Encumbrance, injury, magic, etc.), you may not claim this advantage.

Improved Rope-Dart Fighting
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Fighting-Rope Skill

Useable with a Rope Dart (p. 78).

You are able to swing your Rope Dart with greater effective reach. Add one pace to your Reach. This Advantage does not work with other Rope Weapons.

Instant Stance
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Acrobatics Skill

Useable when your Encumbrance Limit is d10 or better.

You may rise from a lying Position to a Standing position instantly; no roll is required.

Legerdemain
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Sleight-of-Hand Skill

Useable with a concealed Light Weapon.

You can draw a Light weapon from concealment without any opportunity cost. Such a weapon is Ready at your Initiative to Defend yourself with, and for Easy Maneuvers. .

Oddly enough, Legerdemain does *not* work on weapons in plain sight — only ones you've concealed on your person, such as up your sleeve, in your boot, etc. To draw other weapons quickly, you will need the Gift of *Quick Draw* (p. 160).

Limit Break
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Resolve Skill

When your life is on the line, you are able to summon incredible reserves of power. Whenever you pass a Death Test, for *whatever* reason, you gain the following advantages:

- If you are currently Reeling, you recover *instantly.* (Remove any Reeling counters.)
- Also, if you are suffering from any hostile magic or other circumstance, you may remove them *all.* This includes, but is not limited to, *Blindness, Confusion, Fear, Paralysis, Silence,* and *Terror.* It does *not* include *Rage* or *Berserk.*
- Also, you immediately gain *Focus.* (If using miniatures, place a Focus counter next to your figure.)

Nerves of Steel
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Resolve Skill

Useable with any Ranged Maneuver.

You can Dodge while Aiming *without* losing the advantage of Aiming.

Peripheral Sense
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Observation Skill

Useable with any Defense, when you have both competence and confidence, and you are not Reeling.

Others may not claim the Bonus for being behind you.

Roll with Blow
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Acrobatics Skill

Useable when you Retreat.

When Retreating, you may include your Retreat Die with both your Defense Dice (to avoid getting hit) *and your Soak Dice* (to avoid suffering Damage.)

Expert Defenses

Block Bullets
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Shield Skill

Useable when you Block.

You can use your Block Defense against gun bullets. (Normally, combatants can only Dodge bullets.) Gunpower weapons are rare outside the province of Lu.

Block for Others
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Shield Skill

Useable when you Block.

You can use your Block Defense to defend anyone within 1 pace of you. Doing so uses up one of your Blocks for the Round.

You cannot Retreat when using "Block for Others.".

You cannot claim any *Exploits* when using "Block for Others."

Parry Arrows
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Weapon Skill; the Gift of "Parry Thrown Objects"

Useable when you Parry with an Easy, Favorite Weapon using an Expert Skill.

You can use your Parry Defense against arrows, but *not* crossbow bolts, gun bullets, or other projectiles.

Parry for Others
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Weapon Skill

Useable when you Parry with an Expert Weapon.

You can use your Parry Defense to defend anyone within Reach of your Weapon. Doing so uses up one of your Parries for the Round.

You cannot Retreat when using "Parry for Others.".

You cannot claim any *Exploits* when using "Parry for Others."

Third Block
(1 point)
Requirement: the Gift of "Second Block"; Expert Shield Skill

You may Block three times per Round.

Third Parry
(1 point)
Requirement: the Gift of "Second Parry"; Expert Weapon Skill

You may Parry three times per Round.

Expert Exploits

Counter-Attack with Brawling
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Brawling Skill

Useable when you Parry with Brawling, and your attacker is 1 pace away.

You automatically hit your opponent with your fist, foot, or other Bare-Handed Attack. Roll your Strength Damage vs. your target's Armor and Soak.

Counter-Attack with Parrying Weapon
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Weapon Skill

Useable when you Parry with your Favorite, Expert, Easy Weapon, and your attacker is within your Weapon's Reach.

You automatically hit your opponent with your weapon. Roll your Strength and Weapon Damage vs. your target's Armor and Soak.

Disarming Exploit
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Weapon Skill

Useable when you Parry with a Favorite Weapon, using an Expert Skill.

Not only do you defend yourself, you may disarm your attacker. You automatically Disarm if your weapon is the same weight or heavier, than your attacker's. If your weapon weighs less (or you only have a Natural Weapon), roll a Contest of your Strength vs. your Target's Strength — if you win, your target is Disarmed. Don't choose this Exploit if your foe has no carried weapons.

Grab with Brawling Parry
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Brawling Skill

Useable when you Parry using Expert Brawling Skill.

You automatically grab your attacker. You may use this as a set-up for any Wrestling Maneuver that requires a Grab.

Mistaken Strike
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Dodge Skill

Useable when you Dodge vs. a Melee or Ranged Attack.

You may re-direct an attack to strike a different target. For melee attacks, this is anyone within reach of your attacker's weapon. For Ranged Attacks, this is anyone within the line of fire between you and your attacker or past you in a straight line; you may use your Retreat to put someone in the line of fire.

Leave your Dodge Dice on the table. The target of the Mistaken Strike defends against the Dodge dice that you rolled. As with all other Exploits, your target does *not* suffer any Special hits — only regular attacks.

Pinning Exploit
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Polearm, Spear, Sword, or Fencing Skill

Useable with a Polearm, Spear, Sword, or Soft Sword that you are Expert with.

You can stab your opponent's clothing or armor and pin them to a wall, table, or the like. You *must* drop the weapon you use to pin your target like this — it remains stuck in their clothes.

Your target becomes pinned. They may not Retreat, Stride, or Dash. All of their attacks and defenses suffer one Penalty.

Your target may free themselves one of three ways: .

- They may remove their clothing, a first-Rank maneuver, requiring a roll of Speed & Contortionist vs. d6 and *their own Armor Dice.* If they *Succeed,* they are immediately free, but Reeling. If they *Overwhelmingly Succeed,* they are free and may act normally. *Removing Clothing includes removing Armor — your foe loses all Armor Dice.*
- They may tear themselves free, a first-Rank maneuver, requiring a roll of their Strength vs. your Strength and *their own Armor Dice.* If they *Succeed,* they tear themselves free but are sent Reeling. If they *Overwhelmingly Succeed,* they are free and may act normally. This Maneuver allows the target to retain their Armor.
- They may remove the weapon that has them pinned, a second-Rank maneuver, requiring a roll of Strength vs. the Weapon's Damage. On a *Success,* they are free, and they have the Weapon ready in their hand for immediate use. This Maneuver allows the target to retain their Armor.

Strength of My Enemy
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Contortionist Skill

Useable when you Parry a melee attack that has a reach of 1-pace or less.

You may re-direct a foe's own attack against their own person! Roll the Weapon's Damage *without any Strength Dice* vs. the target's Soak and Armor.

Sword-Clap
(1 point)
Requirements: The Gift of "Ambidexterity"; Expert Brawling Skill; Expert Resolve Skill

Useable when you Parry with Brawling *and* both your hands are free.

You may clap your hands around the edge or haft of your opponent's weapon (whether it is a Sword or not — that's just a fancy name). Immediately, you may then *either* Disarm your opponent *or* twist the weapon and make them fall to a Lying position. If you Disarm, you immediately have the weapon Ready for your own use.

Expert Maneuvers

Attack Twice
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Weapon Skill

Useable with any Easy, Favorite Weapon .

With this maneuver, you launch two To-Hit Rolls — one on the First Rank, and one on the Second Rank. *For both attacks, remove your biggest die (usually one d12) before rolling.*

Your opponent must defend separately against each attack. Since most combatants only get one Parry, your foe may have to rely on a different Defense against your second attack.

Body Language
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Psychology Skill

Useable with a Favorite Weapon, when you have Focus.

A better kind of "Strike Focused," this maneuver allows you to use your superior ability to read folks' body language. You spend your Focus and Strike on the Second Rank, with improved outcome: treat any hit as a *Special Hit.*

Cartwheel Kick
(1 point)
Requirement: the Gift of "Sure-Footed"; Expert Acrobatics Skill; Expert Brawling Skill

Useable with a Brawling Kick.

Roll your To-Hit Dice — you *must* move that many paces in a straight line. If you are unable to move that many paces, reduce your Score to whatever distance you are able to move.

Every target you pass is attacked by your Kick. They must Defend against your Score.

Double Kick
(1 point)
Requirement: the Gift of "Sure-Footed"; Expert Acrobatics Skill

Useable with a Brawling Kick, when your Encumbrance Limit is d12.

You perform a quick flip back onto your hands, then you attempt to plant both your feet on your target in a powerful kick. If successful, your attack does *Slaying Damage* to the target.

Earth Strike
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Weapon Skill

Useable with an Easy, Favorite Weapon.

You hold your weapon's haft high, so that the top drags low to the ground, in an underhand style — the "Earth Grip." You then swing the weapon upwards, sometimes with the tip furrowing the earth, before bringing it to bear on your target.

Your attack causes *Slaying Damage.*

Your opponent's ability to move upwards helps them resist your attack. *The target includes their Acrobatics Dice, Flight Dice, & Jumping Dice (if any) with their Soak Dice.* These Dice are subject to the Encumbrance Limit, as always.

Evasion
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Acrobatics Skill

Similar to Guarding, you gain double your normal Parries and Blocks, but you do not attack. The difference is that you may move your Dash instead of your Stride.

Final Blow
(1 point)
Requirement: Will Trait of d10 or better; Expert Weapon Skill

Useable with an Easy, Favorite Weapon.

Basically, this is a combined "Strike Sure and Strike Hard" maneuver. You gain a Bonus To-Hit *and* a Bonus to Damage.

Graceful Assault
(1 point)
Requirement: Mind Trait of d10 or better; Expert Weapon Skill

Useable with an Awkward, Favorite Weapon that you have Expert Skill with.

Basically, this is a "Strike Sure" with an Awkward Weapon. You attack in the second Rank with one Bonus To-Hit.

Heaven and Earth Meet in the Middle
(1 point)
Requirements: The Gifts of "Ambidexterity," "Earth Strike," and "Heaven Strike"; Expert Weapon Skill

Useable with two Easy Light Weapons, provided at least *one* of them is a Favorite and that you are Expert with both.

You are able to strike with two weapons in the First Rank.

Heaven Strike
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Weapon Skill

Useable with an Easy, Favorite Weapon.

You hold your weapon at the base, with its top raised high — the "Heaven Grip." Your attack then slashes or stabs downward. This attack can be very useful against slower targets, especially those weighed down by armor.

Your attack causes *Slaying Damage.*

Your opponent's ability to move downwards helps them resist your attack. *The target includes their Acrobatics Dice, Contortionist Dice, & Dodge Dice (if any) with their Soak Dice.* (Do *not* include their Speed Trait with Soak!) These Dice are subject to the Encumbrance Limit, as always.

Hero's Charge
(1 point)
Requirement: The Gift of "Sure-Footed"; Expert Weapon Skill

Useable with an Easy, Favorite Weapon that you have Expert Skill with, when your Encumbrance Limit is d10 or better.

You can move your full Dash *and* attack, without being sent Reeling.

Master Stroke
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Weapon Skill

Useable with a Favorite Weapon that you have Expert Skill with.

With a Master Stroke, remove your biggest die (usually one d12) before rolling To Hit. Treat any Tie as a *Success*, and any Success as an *Overwhelming Success.*

Nimble Assault
(1 point)
Requirement: Speed Trait of d10; Expert Weapon Skill

Useable with an Awkward, Favorite Weapon that you have Expert Skill with.

Basically, this is a "Strike First" with an Awkward Weapon. You attack in the first Rank instead of the second.

Refined Assault
(1 point)
Requirement: Will Trait of d10; Expert Weapon Skill

Useable with an Awkward, Favorite Weapon that you have Expert Skill with.

Basically, this is a "Strike Hard" with an Awkward Weapon. You attack in the second Rank with a Bonus to Damage.

Shuang Fu
(1 point)
Requirements: The Gift of "Ambidexterity"; Expert Axe Skill

Useable with two Easy Light Axes, provided that *both* of them are Short Axes (p. 77).

You are able to strike with two Light Axes in the First Rank.

Twice-Casting with [Targeting Spell of Choice]
(1 point)
Requirement: the Gift of "Combat Casting" with [Targeting Spell of Choice]; Expert Skill with [Targeting Spell of Choice]

You can hurl the same Targeting Spell *twice* in one Round, paying the normal Magic Point cost twice. ***Remove your biggest die (usually one d12) before rolling To-Hit.*** You must spend Magic Points to cast the spell twice.

You can only buy this Gift with Targeting Spells — not with any other kind of spell. You must be Expert in the Skill required to Target the spell, not in the Skill of casting the spell itself. For example, if you were getting the Gift of Twice-Casting Lightning Strike, you would have to have Expert Weather Sense Skill.

Vast-as-Heaven Hook Attack
(1 point)
Requirement: Speed Trait of d8; Mind Traitof d8; Lift of +3; Expert Polearm Skill

Useable with two Light Fire Hooks (p. 80).

This attack strikes multiple combatants. Treat this as a Group attack that can strike all foes within 4 paces of you.

Roll your To-Hit Dice once; all targets in the Group must Defend against that number. *The maximum number of foes that must Defend is your To-Hit Score.* For example, if you Scored a 7, then only 7 targets need make Defense Rolls. As with all Group effects, the closer targets are affected before the farther ones. (This probably won't be an issue unless you roll really low or have a lot of targets.)

For Bonuses or Penalties, use the least favorable condition for all attacks. If some combatants would give you a Bonus (for example, because you are striking from behind) but others would not, then you cannot claim the Bonus. You can choose not to include certain targets in the Group if you don't like the modifiers they impose on your To-Hit Roll.

Expert Specials

Cut-and-Thrust
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Sword Skill

Useable with your Favorite Sword.

Your target loses their smallest Armor Die *and* you include an extra d6 Damage.

Improved Concussion
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Mace Skill

Useable with your Favorite Mace.

If target *Fails* their Resolve Test, they lose 1 Wound. If the target *Ties* or better on their Resolve Test, they suffer 1 Fatigue. There is no effect if the target was not forced to make a Resolve Test.

Improved Disarm
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Weapon Skill

Useable with any Favorite Weapon.

If your weapon weighs more than your target's, you automatically *Disarm* them *and* you Strike them for Damage. If your weapon weighs the same or less, then you may choose whether to automatically Disarm them or to Strike them.

Improved Entangle
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Flail Skill

Useable with your Favorite Flail.

You may grapple your opponent with your weapon *and* your target loses 1 Fatigue. It is a free action for you to release your foe from your Flail's Entangle.

Improved Impale
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Spear Skill

Useable with your Favorite Spear.

Your target loses their *two* smallest Armor Dice (I.E. — two Penalties to Armor.) .

Improved Slash
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Axe Skill

Useable with your Favorite Axe.

Your target suffers an extra d10 Damage.

Improved Trip
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Polearm Skill

Useable with your Favorite Polearm.

Roll Damage as normal, *and* your target automatically falls to a Lying position.

Nine-Dragon Cut
(1 point)
Requirements: The Gift of "Nine-Dragon Slash"; Mind Trait of d8; a die in Spear of d8; Expert Polearm Skill

Useable with a Nine-Dragon Trident.

Include an extra 2d4 with your Damage.

Nine-Dragon Gore
(1 point)
Requirements: The Gift of "Nine-Dragon Impale"; Mind Trait of d8; a die in Spear of d8; Expert Polearm Skill

Useable with a Nine-Dragon Trident.

Your target removes their lowest Armor Die (but not Soak Dice) *and* you include an extra d4 with your Damage.

Nine-Dragon Double-Attack
(1 point)
Requirements: Speed Trait of d8; Mind Trait of d8; a die in Axe of d8; a die in Mace of d8; a die in Spear of d8; a die in Staff of d8; Expert Polearm Skill

Useable with a Nine-Dragon Trident.

You strike your target twice. Roll the Damage vs. Soak contest twice.

Repeated Attack
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Weapon Skill

Useable with any Light, Favorite Melee Weapon or with Natural Weapons.

You strike your target *twice*. Roll the Damage vs. Soak contest twice. Your target may have to pass two Resolve Tests.

Strike to Pin
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Weapon Skill

Useable with any stabbing Weapon and when there is something to pin your target to.

You can stab your opponent's clothing or armor and pin them to a wall, table, or the like. *If you choose this Special, your foe suffers no Damage from your attack.*

If you used a melee weapon, you *must* drop the weapon you use to pin your target like this — it remains stuck in their clothes. If you used a bow or a crossbow, there is no penalty.

Your target becomes pinned. They may not Retreat, Stride, or Dash. All of their attacks and defenses suffer one Penalty.

Your target may break free — see *Pinning Exploit* (p. 167) for how this works.

Triple Attack
(1 point)
Requirement: Expert Staff Skill

Useable with your Favorite Staff .

You may strike your opponent with the lead end of your staff, then the trailing end … and then back around again with the lead end. Roll the Damage vs. Soak contest *three times*.

Heroic Martial Arts

These Martial Arts represent single-minded devotion to the craft of combat. Each of these Martial Arts requires at least one skill of Heroic Quality (2d12, d4 or better) — impossible for a beginning character.

The masters capable of these Martial Arts are few and very far between.

Heroic Advantages

Additional Favorite Weapon with [Weapon Skill of Choice] (2 points)

Requirement: The Gift of "Extra Favorite Weapon"; Heroic Weapon Skill

You may have *three* Favorite Weapons for one skill; alternatively, you may have one Favored Use *and two* Favorite Weapons. It still costs 1 Experience to change a Favorite Weapon, after character creation.

Fantastic Crush (2 points)

Requirement: The Gift of "Improved Crush"; Heroic Wresting Skill

Useable when you Crush a target.

You can claim up to 4 Hits of Damage per Crush, instead of 2 or 3.

Fantastic Ground-Fighting (2 points)

Requirements: The Gifts of "Ground-Fighting" and Improved "Ground Fighting"; Heroic Contortionist Skill

Useable when your Encumbrance Limit is d10 or better.

You may move your Stride while lying down.

Fantastic Retreat (2 points)

Requirement: The Gift of "Improved Retreat"; Heroic Acrobatics Skill; a Stride of 3

Useable when you Retreat, and your Stride is 3 paces or better.

Your Retreat defense die is d12, not d8. Your Stride must be 3 paces or better — if it drops below that for some reason (such as from Encumbrance, injury, magic, etc.), you may not claim this advantage.

Fantastic Rope-Dart Fighting (2 points)

Requirement: Heroic Fighting-Rope Skill

Useable with a Rope Dart (p. 78).

You are able to swing your Rope Dart with greater effective reach. Increase your Weapon's Reach by one *and* two paces. This Advantage is only useable with Rope Darts, and is not cumulative with "Improved Rope-Dart Fighting" (p. 165).

Light Stance (2 points)

Requirements: The Gift of "Sure-Footed"; Heroic Acrobatics Skill; Expert Qi-Sao Skill

Useable when you are Unencumbered.

Your ability to balance is simply miraculous. You can stand on a narrow twig, the top of a fence, or a fragile tree branch as if it was good footing.

For purposes of whether you can stand on something, your weight is only 1 Stone, plus the weight of any items you carry.

Very Far Shot (2 points)

Requirements: The Gifts of "Far Shot" and "Keen Eyes"; Heroic Weapon Skill

Useable with a Favorite Ranged Weapon with which you have Heroic Skill.

Your Range Dice are only d6 in size, not d10.

Heroic Defenses

Fourth Block (2 points)

Requirements: The Gifts of "Second Block" & "Third Block"; Heroic Shield Skill

Useable with a Block Defense.

You may Block four times per Round.

Fourth Parry
(2 points)
Requirements: The Gifts of "Second Parry" and "Third Parry"; Heroic Weapon Skill

Useable with an Easy, Favorite Weapon with which you have Heroic Skill.

You may Parry four times per Round.

Improved Block for Others
(2 points)
Requirements: The Gift of "Block for Others"; Heroic Shield Skill

Useable with a Block Defense.

You can use your Block Defense to defend anyone within 1 pace of you. Doing so uses up one of your Blocks for the Round.

You *may* Retreat when using "Improved Block for Others." You *must* Retreat towards the target you want to Defend! If you move at least 1 pace towards them, you may claim your Retreat Die on your Block Defense.

You still may not claim any Exploits when using "Improved Block for Others."

Improved Parry for Others
(2 points)
Requirements: The Gift of "Parry for Others"; Heroic Weapon Skill

Useable when you Parry with a Heroic Weapon.

You can use your Parry Defense to defend anyone within Reach of your Weapon. Doing so uses up one of your Parries for the Round.

You *may* Retreat when using "Improved Parry for Others." You *must* Retreat towards the target you want to Defend! If you move at least 1 pace towards them, you may claim your Retreat Die on your Parry Defense.

You still may not claim any Exploits when using "Improved Parry for Others."

Parry Bolts
(2 points)
Requirements: The Gifts of "Parry Thrown Objects" and "Parry Arrows"

Useable with an Easy, Favorite Weapon with which you have Heroic Skill.

You can parry crossbow bolts.

Heroic Maneuvers

Attack Thrice
(2 points)
Requirement: The Gift of "Attack Twice"; Heroic Weapon Skill

Useable with an Easy, Favorite Weapon with which you have Heroic Skill.

With this maneuver, you launch three To-Hit Rolls — one on the First Rank, one on the Second Rank, and one on the Third Rank. ***For all attacks, remove your two biggest dice (usually 2d12) before rolling To-Hit.***

Your opponent must defend separately against each attack. You may very well exhaust all their Parries and Blocks by the time you get to the third attack.

Coup de Grace
(2 points)
Requirement: The Gift of "Master Stroke"; Heroic Weapon Skill

Useable with a Favorite Weapon with which you have Heroic Skill.

With a Coup de Grace, remove your two biggest To-Hit dice (usually 2d12) before rolling To-Hit. Treat any Tie as a Success, and any Success as an Overwhelming Success.

In addition, if the target Fails their Resolve Test, they are Mortally Wounded, as per a failed Death Test (p. 148). If the target Overwhelmingly Fails their Resolve Test, they are instantly killed as per an overwhelmingly failed Death Test.

Improved Body Language
(2 points)
Requirement: Heroic Psychology Skill

Useable with an Easy, Favorite Weapon, when you have Focus.

Even better than "Body Language," but only useable with Easy Weapons — you spend your Focus and Strike on the *First* Rank, with improved outcome: treat any hit as a *Special Hit.*

Keyhole Shot
(2 points)
Requirement: The Gift of "Keen Eyes"; Heroic Weapon Skill

Useable with a Favorite Ranged or Thrown Weapon with which you have Heroic Skill.

This is a Long Maneuver, but you don't get to make your To-Hit Roll until the Third Rank. ***Remove your biggest die (usually a d12) before rolling To-Hit.***

When using this maneuver, your target may not claim any Cover Dice from your shot, whether from Shields, other combatants, walls, etc. (Your target may still Block — they just may not include any Cover Dice from their Shield.)

Light Walk
(2 points)
Requirements; The Gifts of "Light Stance" and "Sure-Footed"; Heroic Acrobatics Skill; Heroic Jumping Skill; Expert Qi-Sao Skill

Useable when you are Unencumbered.

You do not attack when making this Maneuver. Instead, you leap into the air. Roll your Jumping Dice, *and separate out the three biggest dice.*

On the First Rank, you leap the number of paces on the biggest die. On the Second Rank, you leap a number of paces on the second-biggest die. On the Third Rank, you leap the number of paces on the third-biggest die (if there is a third die).

Similar to "Run," you may not defend while using this Maneuver — you must Abort.

You must land on something between the three jumps. However, it need not be something that can support 1 stone of weight. You can jump off a tree branch, off water, off a paper awning, etc. If you *end* your movement on something that can't support 1 Stone (perhaps because you had to Abort the maneuver), then you will fall.

Ricochet
(1 point)
Requirement: Mind Trait of d10; Heroic Weapon Skill

Useable with a Sling, Thrown Weapon, or Targeting Spell with which you have Heroic Skill.

You can bounce your attack off one or more hard surfaces to strike your target. You can perform this maneuver with sling bullets, thrown weapons, or Targeting Spells. Arrows and crossbow bolts cannot Ricochet.

You must have appropriate surfaces to bounce your attack off. For example, wood may be good enough for Thrown Axes, but it will have to be stone or metal for Lightning Strikes. The Game Host is the final arbiter of what's a good surface and what's not.

Ricochets increase the effective range between you and the target — measure the distance along the entire path, when determining Short, Medium, Long, or eXtreme range.

Your attack suffers one Penalty in Damage for each bounce. An attack can't bounce more times than it has Damage Dice — for example, a Thrown Axe doing d12, d8, and d4 Damage can't bounce more than 3 times. This may mean the attack winds up doing no Damage to the target! If you're still within range, and your attack hits but has lost all Damage Dice due to bouncing, it can still claim Special hit results, and it could still cause Damage if your target Botches their Soak Roll.

A Ricochet attack can allow you to ignore cover, to strike from behind for one Bonus to hit, and to get around Shields and the like.

If you attack someone with a Ricochet attack that you can't see (because they're around a corner, for example), you suffer all normal penalties to hit for a blind attack.

Thrice-Casting with [Targeting Spell of Choice]
(2 points)
Requirements: The Gift of both "Combat Casting" and "Twice-Casting" with [Targeting Spell of Choice]; Heroic Skill with [Targeting Spell of Choice]

Useable with any Targeting Spell with which you have both the Gift of "Combat Casting" and "Twice-Casting."

You can hurl the same Targeting Spell *three times* in one Round, paying the normal Magic Point cost to throw it. ***Remove your two biggest dice (usually 2d12) before rolling To-Hit.*** Naturally, you must spend Magic Points to cast the spell three times.

Whirlwind Attack
(2 points)
Requirement: Heroic Weapon Skill

Useable with an Easy, Favorite Weapon.

This attack strikes multiple combatants. Treat this as a Group attack that can strike all foes within Reach of your weapon. No combatant may be struck more than once.

Roll your To-Hit Dice once; all targets in the Group must Defend against that number. *The maximum number of foes that must Defend is your To-Hit Score.* For example, if you Scored a 7, then only 7 targets need make Defense Rolls. As with all Group effects, the closer targets are affected before the farther ones. (This probably won't be an issue unless you roll really low or have a lot of targets.)

For Bonuses or Penalties, use the least favorable condition for all attacks. If some combatants would give you a Bonus (for example, because you are striking from behind) but others would not, then you cannot claim the Bonus. You can choose not to include certain targets in the Group if you don't like the modifiers they impose on your To-Hit Roll.

Heroic Specials

Fantastic Disarm
(2 points)
Requirement: Heroic Fencing Skill

Useable with your Favorite Soft Sword.

Your target is Disarmed *and* you Strike them for Damage, regardless of the difference in the weight of your weapons.

Nine-Dragon Triple-Attack
(2 points)
Requirements: The Gift of "Nine-Dragon Double Attack"; Speed Trait of d8; Mind Trait of d8; Expert Axe Skill; Expert Mace Skill; Expert Spear Skill; Expert Staff Skill; Heroic Polearm Skill

Useable with a Nine-Dragon Trident.

You strike your target three times. Roll the Damage vs. Soak contest three times.

Thrown Weapon Return
(2 points)
Requirement: Heroic Thrown Weapon Skill

Useable with any Thrown Weapon, when the target is at Medium Range or closer.

In a brazen display of skill, you can bounce your Thrown Weapon off your target to return to your hand.

Secret Martial Arts

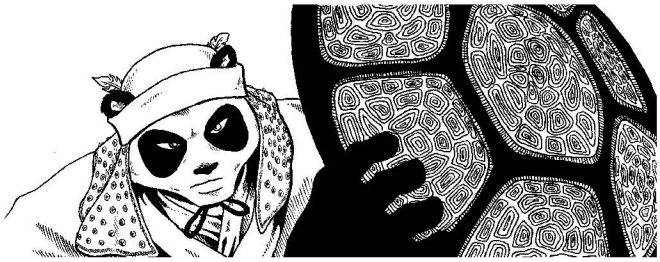
In the dark corners of lawlessness in the sprawling cities … at the summits of the remote mountain fastnesses … under the shadows of the impenetrable forest canopies … and in places even more strange are the practitioners of the Secret Martial Arts. Encountering folks who know these methods is the stuff of legend. Getting someone to teach you these techniques involves great sacrifice and many tedious hours of study. Improving Secret Martial Arts requires special Experience (p. 253).

Hei Gui Shù (School of Black Tortoise)

No one is sure who originated this school of gong fu. Based on the Tablet of Masters, Hei Gui Shù was founded in the sixth year of King Ren-bang of the Quan Dynasty (2197) by Master Chen Wû. Master Ju Wei is the 22nd Master of this school. The philosophy behind Hei Gui Shù is to outlast your opponent, to get them to waste their energy while you conserve yours. When the enemy is exhausted, then you strike. An apprentice has to learn to use the qi to help reinforce the body.

Practitioners often harden their bodies by repeatedly striking their fore-arms and shins against training dummies, or by breaking and resetting their knuckles until their fingers become hard and their claws (if any) become calloused and large. It is said that the ultimate skill of the Black-Tortoise school is the ability to control the flow of energy through the body to avoid damage, up to and including moving the internal organs around to avoid attack.

Black-Tortoise masters often become bodyguards to the rich, as their skill in defeating foes and their sensitivity to danger is legendary. They carry round metal shields, often with eight sides, like a tortoise shell. Hei Gui Shù does not teach the use of any weapons.



One Post to Support Heaven (Expert Advantage; 1 point)

Requirement: Expert Resolve Skill

When you *Overwhelmingly Succeed* on a Resolve Test, you may *negate one Wound of Damage* from the attack you just suffered. Does not work on Wounds suffered in other attacks — just the one you are currently testing Resolve against.

One Post to Support Earth (Heroic Advantage; 2 points)

Requirement: The Gift of "One Post to Support Heaven"; Heroic Resolve Skill

When you merely *Succeed* on a Resolve Test, you may *negate one Wound of Damage* from the attack you just suffered. Does not work on Wounds suffered in other attacks — just the one you are currently testing Resolve against.

Look to the Heavens and Shout (Heroic Advantage; 2 points)

Requirement: Heroic Resolve Skill

With a loud cry, you stomp heavily on the ground and hold your hands (or shield, or weapon) forward in a defensive position. You are able to channel your internal flow of energy to resist the assaults of those who would seek to harm you.

This maneuver does not attack. Instead, if you do suffer any Damage, all attacks cause only *Enervated Damage*.

Heaven Turns and Earth Circles (Expert Advantage; 1 point)

Requirement: Expert Resolve Skill

Whenever you *Succeed* on a Resolve Test, you may attempt to Disarm your opponent. *Leave your Resolve Roll on the table.* Your opponent must immediately test their To-Hit Dice (Speed & Weapon Dice) vs. your Resolve Roll. If they *Fail,* they are Disarmed of any weapon they carry in one hand (but not in two hands). If they *Overwhelmingly Fail,* they are disarmed of any weapon they have, regardless of size.

The Sun Shines on the Worthy and the Wanting Alike (Legendary Advantage; 3 points)

Requirement: The Gifts of "One Post to Support Heaven" and "One Post to Support Earth"; Legendary Resolve Skill

Useable when you suffer a Melee Weapon Attack.

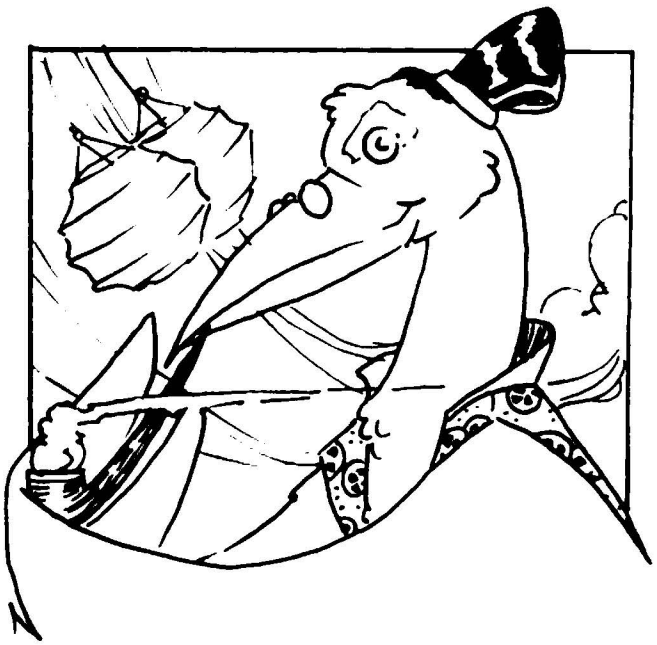
Summoning forth an extraordinary control of body energy, you can actually channel some of the hostile force back at the attacker! If you *Succeed* on a Resolve Test, not only do you negate one Wound of Damage, but your attacker must test *their own Resolve Dice* vs. the Damage you just suffered, with all appropriate results for failure.

Bái Hè Shù (School of White Crane)

With her blood-red forehead on her white feathers, the Crane is often viewed as an emblem of the yin & yang existence. As the stories tell it, the first Crane traveled the world, migrating to northern Zhongguo to Yang-zhou (Sheep State) and teaching White Crane in the 29th Year of King Cun-Bei of the Quan Dynasty (2091). She took as pupils Wong Yun Lam, Chu qi Yiu, Chan Yum, Chou Heung Yuen, and Wong Lam Hoi. These men were the five great grand masters who were responsible for the spread of White Crane. Wong Yun Lam even became the teacher of Imperial Palace Guards whose duty is to protect the Imperial Family. From his students, Ng Siu Chung emerged and officially formed Bái Hè Shù in the 48th Year of King Hsin of the Quan Dynasty (2363). At the great hall of Bái Hè Shù is the tablet listing all the masters since the time of Ng Siu Chung to present Chan Hak Fu, the 16th Master.

The Bái Hè style is typified by calculated study of an opponent's moves while maintaining a graceful posture. The fighter must maintain rigid attention to stance, poise, and gesture, preferring to trip opponents up on their own moves rather than causing harm through direct action.

Practitioners of Bái Hè Shù fight with empty hands, with their beaks (if any), or with the *jiann*, the long and slender fencing blade.



White Crane Nods Her Head to Heaven & Earth (Basic Maneuver; 1 point)

Requirement: Race Trait of d8; The Gift of "Beak" or "Teeth"

Useable with a Natural Weapon Attack made with a Beak or with Teeth.

This Second-Rank Maneuver causes *Slaying Damage*. Your target may include their *Acrobatics Dice, Contortionist Dice, & Flight Dice* (if any) with their Soak Dice.

White Crane Plucks the Fish From the Water (Basic Special; 1 point)

Requirement: The Gifts of "Prehensile Feet" and "Sure-Footed"

Useable with a Kick Attack.

Not only do you cause Kick Damage (Strength Dice and Claw Dice, if any), you have also Grappled your target.

White Crane Twists her Neck to Four Corners (Basic Advantage; 1 point)

Requirement: a die in Contortionist of d10

Others cannot claim the one Bonus for attacking you from behind.

White Crane Bores the Brush (Expert Exploit; 1 point)

Requirement: Expert Fencing Skill

Useable when you have a Soft Sword.

You strike your opponent with your Soft Sword, causing *Slaying Damage*. Your opponent's knowledge of your technique helps them against your attack – your target includes their *Fencing Dice* and *Flight Dice* (if any) with their Soak Dice.

White Crane Alone In Mid Winter Pond (Basic Maneuver; 1 point)

Requirements: The Gifts of "Sure-Footed" and "White Crane Twists Her Neck to Four Corners"

This Zero-Rank maneuver has a variety of effects:

- You do not attack.
- You stand upon one leg, with your hands out-stretched. You cannot Dash, Stride, or otherwise move.
- You have *unlimited* Parries and Blocks. You may still only use one Defense per attack.
- You suffer an Encumbrance Limit of d4. This means that your *Dodge Dice* drop to d4.
- Your ability to defend becomes superior: treat any *Failed To-Hit Rolls* as *Overwhelmingly Failed To-Hit Rolls*, allowing you to claim your Exploit against the attacker.

Drunken-Fist School

Another popular style among the underprivileged, Drunken-Fist is named after the way it simulates the unpredictable movements of a drunk. Practitioners of the style specialize in fake pratfalls, random strikes and feints, and in using found objects such as chairs, tables, clothes, etc. as weapons. Masters of the art can even fight while intoxicated, and a few claim superior performance when they are extremely drunk. By tradition, a Drunken-Fist practitioner believes their fighting style is superior to Beggar's Gang School.

Drunken Style
(1 point)
(Basic Advantage; 1 point)
Requirement: a die in Carousing of d4

Useable with Brawling, with Mace, or with Sword.

You are a master of the Drunken Style:

- You can use strange gestures, wobbling motions, and deceptive moves to strike your opponent from surprise. Include your Carousing Dice with your To-Hit Dice with Brawling, with Mace, or with Sword.
- Any die-roll you make that involves Carousing Dice does not suffer from being Awkward or lose Favored Use due to *Drunkenness* (p. 339). You are still unable to Focus, however.

The Superiority of Drunken-Fist Style
(Basic Exploit; 1 point)
Requirement: The Gift of "Drunken Style"; a die in Carousing of d4

Useable when you Defend against any To-Hit Roll that includes Fast-Talk.

You immediately Counter-Attack your opponent *and* you send them Reeling.

Fast Drinker
(Expert Maneuver; 1 point)
Requirement: Expert Carousing Skill

Useable when you have a bottle of wine or other alcohol.

You can uncork a bottle and drink the entire contents, become drunk almost instantly. You can use this Long Maneuver (First, Second, and Third Ranks) to drain a bottle of wine and put yourself into a state of *Drunkenness*.

Seasoned Drinker
(Expert Advantage; 1 point)
Requirement: Expert Carousing Skill

Useable when you suffer from Drunkenness.

You no longer lose the Initiative when you are Drunk. You may roll Initiative normally.

The Spit
(Expert Maneuver; 1 point)
Requirement: Expert Carousing Skill

Useable when you have a mouthful of alcohol.

As a Second-Rank Maneuever, you can uncork a bottle of wine, fill your mouth with the contents, and then spit the wine out at your foes. Use only your *Carousing Skill Dice* (no Speed!) to hit, as per a Homing Attack. Combatants who are hit are *Blinded* for 1 Round for every hit they suffer, as the alcohol stings their eyes.

Stumbling Out of Harm's Way
(Expert Advantage; 1 point)
Requirement: Expert Carousing Skill

You can include your Carousing Skill Dice with your Block or Dodge when resisting any Homing Attack. (There is no advantage for Exploding Attacks.)

Drunk with Power
(Heroic Maneuver; 2 points)
Requirement: Heroic Carousing Skill

Useable with Brawling or with Sword, when you are in a state of *Drunkenness*.

This Second-Rank Maneuver is an Attack with an improved outcome. Treat any *Success* as an *Overwhelming Success*, allowing you to claim a Special on your opponent.

Gout of Flame
(Heroic Maneuver; 2 points)
Requirement: The Gift of "The Spit"; Heroic Carousing Skill; Expert Resolve Skill

Useable when you have a mouthful of alcohol and an open flame (held in your hand) to Spit across.

As a Second-Rank Maneuever, you can uncork a bottle of wine, fill your mouth with the contents, and then spit the wine out at your foes.

Use only your *Carousing Skill Dice* (no Speed!) to hit, as per a Homing Cluster Attack. Combatants who are hit suffer 1 Wound of Fire Damage for every hit you score.

Gài Bang (Beggars' Gang) School

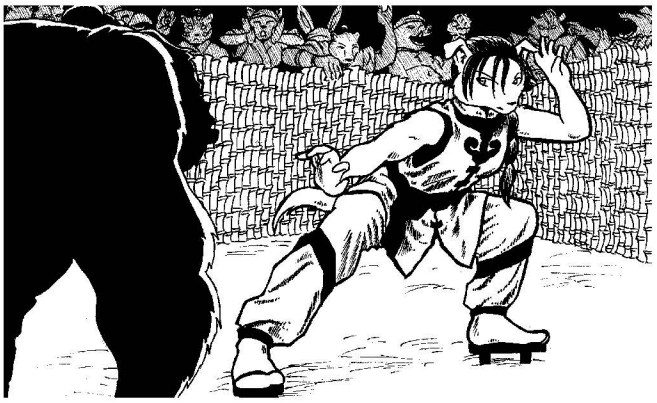
The story-tellers speak of a time when the Beggars' Gang were being picked on by a disagreeable prince, who was using their lowly status as an excuse to abuse them any chance he could. Lacking confidence and skill, the Beggars were forced to endure his repeated mistreatment. One day, a rat Dàoist monk dressed in rags interfered with a particularly savage beating the prince was giving out. The rat was able to fight off the prince and his five hangers-on without even being touched. The grateful beggars led the monk back to their gathering spot. They bowed before him, thanking him profusely and pleading that he would teach them his fighting arts. After such a display of sincerity, the rat agreed — however, he warned them that they must never use this style in aggression or in hatred, or he would personally remove this knowledge from everyone. The Beggars gave their solemn oath … the oath known today as *Gài Bang*. Satisfied, the rat stayed with them for eight years and taught them what he knew.

Beggar's Style
(Basic Advantage; 1 point)
Requirement: a die in Fast-Talk of d4

Useable with Brawling, with Mace, or with Staff.

You are skilled at misdirecting your target, by goading them, mocking them as you swing, and saying you're about to do one thing when you're really going to do the other. *Include your Fast-Talk Dice with your To-Hit Dice.*

You must be able to speak to your target to use this. Also, the Beggar's Style requires confidence and competence — an Abnormal Status that prevents that (such as *Confusion, Demoralization, Fear,* or *Incompetence*) will also deny you the use of Beggar's Style.



Harrying the Target
(Basic Advantage; 1 point)
Requirement: The Gift of "Beggar's Style"; can NOT have the Flaw of "Honorable"

Useable whenever you use Beggar's Style with your To-Hit Dice, *and* you are claiming the one Bonus for attacking from behind.

If you *Succeed* on your To-Hit Roll, you automatically send the target Reeling, regardless of what damage you might cause.

A Lesson in Humility
(Basic Maneuver; 1 point)
Requirement: The Gift of "Beggar's Style"; can NOT have the Flaw of "Honorable"

Useable with a Barehanded Attack.

As a Second-Rank Maneuver, you are able to strike at a place unprotected by armor, or to otherwise deal out an assault against the target that others are either not crafty enough to know or are too morally-upright to use. Those who are highly observant or who are wise to deceit will be able to reduce your effectiveness.

If you hit, your attack causes *Slaying Damage.* However, your opponent includes *all their Observation Dice and Psychology Dice with their Soak Dice* when resisting the Damage.

Improvisation
(Basic Advantage; 1 point)
Requirement: The Gift of "Beggar's Style"; a die in Sleight-of-Hand of d4

Useable when you can grab random objects lying around.

You can use the environment to assault people, as if you have a supply of "specialty weapons" as long as there are items in the environment to use, such as chairs, bowls, chopsticks, etc. When using an Improvised Weapon, your To-Hit Roll is *your Speed Dice & your Sleight-of-Hand Dice.* The weapon's Damage is your *Strength Dice & 2d4.*

You may Parry with the weapon: your Parry is your *Speed Dice & Sleight-of-Hand Dice.* However, Improvised Weapons suffer Damage when they Parry other Weapons. The Game Host may rule that the weapon just breaks, or that it must Soak up the Damage.

An Improvised Weapon has one or more Specials that it can use based on what it is. For heavy, blunt things, it should be the *Concussion* Special (p. 158); for flexible things like ropes or chains, it should be the *Entangle Arm* or *Entangle Leg* Special (p. 158). The Game Host should rule what Weapon Special the object can claim.

The Improvised Weapon must be something you can pick up. As a general rule, it requires two hands if it weighs ¼ your Lift or more in Stone, or one hand if it weighs less. The maximum weight of an Improvised Weapon is ½ your Lift.

Improvised Weapons are *always* Awkward.

> ***Example:*** De-clawed Su has a Lift of +3. An Improvised Weapon that weighs ¾ Stone requires him to use two hands. An improvised weapon that weighs ½ stone or less would require only one hand. The maximum weight of an improvised weapon would be 1 ½ Stone.

The Superiority of Beggar's Gang Style
(Basic Exploit; 1 point)
Requirement: The Gift of "Beggar's Style"

Useable when you Defend against any To-Hit Roll that includes Carousing with its To-Hit Roll.

You immediately Counter-Attack your opponent *and* you send them Reeling.

Lin Kuei Shù (Forest-Ghost School)

No one really knows who the Lin Kuei were … or *are*. The consensus is that they were a secret society who lived in the eastern woods at a secret monastery, where they were the keepers of the secrets of the deadliest martial arts of the known world. Rumors abound that their "pure technique" allows one to kill with a touch, or even a gaze. Today, the style known as Lin Kuei Shù embodies the common moves of the stealthy assassin, combining quiet and quick movements with deadly accuracy.

Practitioners of Lin Kuei Shù either avoid weapons or use tiny ones such as concealed knives or sleeve-loaded darts. Many know the arts of disguise and misdirection.

Caress of the Ghost (Expert Maneuver; 1 point)
Requirement: Expert Torture Skill

Useable with any weapon that can claim a Slash Special.

Your sophisticated knowledge of anatomy allows you to strike your opponents for increased effect. This is a Second-Rank Attack Maneuver that causes *Slaying Damage.*

Your opponent's knowledge of these vulnerable spots will help them instinctively guard them. *The target includes their Medicine Dice & Torture Dice (if any) with their Soak Dice.*

Kiss of the Ghost (Expert Maneuver; 1 point)
Requirements: The Gift of "Legerdemain"; Expert Sleight-of-Hand Skill

Useable with any concealed Light Weapon.

This is a Second-Rank Maneuver that is also an improved *Legerdemain.* Not only can you draw a weapon from concealment with no opportunity cost and are able to attack with it, you also claim *Slaying Damage.*

Your opponent's awareness of attack will help protect them from your surprise. *The target includes their Observation Dice & Sixth Sense Dice (if any) with their Soak Dice.* (Racial Sense Dice do not help, nor do Keen senses.)

You may only use the Kiss of the Ghost with weapons you draw from concealment. You will have to conceal the weapon again to use this Maneuver again.

Fleeting Presence of the Ghost (Heroic Advantage; 2 points)
Requirements: The Gift of "Legerdemain"; Expert Holdout Skill; Heroic Sleight-of-Hand Skill

Useable with any Light Weapon.

Shortly after making an attack (that is, a To-Hit Roll), you may conceal the weapon you just used on your person, with no action or opportunity cost. Such a weapon is no longer Ready and is unable to Parry.

Naturally, you must have some way to conceal the weapon, such as in clothes, behind a curtain, etc. The Game Host may call for rolls of your Holdout skill vs. difficulty, as appropriate (p. 116).

This Gift combines well with "Kiss of the Ghost," allowing you to use that Maneuver every Round.

Dim Mak (Legendary Special; 3 points)
Requirements: Heroic Brawling Skill; Expert Medicine Skill; Expert Observation Skill; Expert Qi-Sao Skill; Legendary Torture Skill

Useable with a Barehanded Attack.

Learned accounts differ wildly on what the Dim Mak, or "death touch," really is (or if it even exists). Reputedly the ultimate assassin's weapon, the attack causes vibrations in the target's body, disrupting their internal harmony.

The only known Dim Mak is the technique taught by the Lin Kuei. In order for this attack to work, you must score a Special Result to hit your target, and you must damage your target with your Bare Hands — not with Claws, with an Empty Hand technique, or anything else — just your Strength Dice.

If your target successfully suffers 1 Wound, they become afflicted by the *Dim Mak.*

Once every hour, the target suffers 1 Fatigue, and is unable to naturally heal. Once the target has suffered too much Fatigue, the Damage will carry over into Wounds.

The effects of Dim Mak can be removed in the following ways:

- By a roll of Medicine vs. 3d12.
- By the successful use of magic of the Healing Nature vs. 3d12.

The Secret Kicks of Kong Dinh-Son

Accounts differ on whether the man known today as Kong Dinh-Son ever existed. He is certainly the main character in a number of folk tales and operas, where he is described as a large leopard without a sense of humor. Sometimes, he is comically oblivious to what is going on, and often gets into comic mischief by those who exploit his lack of awareness. Other stories portray him as an uncompromising avatar of justice, immune to indolence, temptation, and any other vices as he metes out his personal justice as dictated by his code of honor. Stories of Kong Dinh-Son are often punctuated by the hero's use of one of his special kicks upon some malefactor.

The "Seven Secret Kicks," as they came to be known, are more complex than their names describe them. Rather, the seven kicks are a combination of stances, observations, and opportunities. In game terms, the Kicks are not their own maneuvers, but improvements to other Kick attacks. Four of them are Specials that increase the Damage of the Kick. Three of them are Advantages that improve the Damage of any Kick attack. The Seven Secret Kicks must be learned in order, and the commitment to Brawling Skill is extreme and unforgiving.

Kong Dinh-Son's Able Kick
(Expert Special; 1 point)
Requirements: The Gift of "Sure-Footed"; Expert Brawling Skill, with "Kick" as a Favorite Weapon

Useable with any Kick attack.

If the target *Fails* their Resolve Roll, they suffer an extra 1 Wound. (If the target did not need to roll a Resolve Test, there is no effect.)

Kong Dinh-Son's Forceful Kick
(Expert Advantage; 1 point)
Requirements: The Gifts of "Sure-Footed" and "Kong Dinh-Son's Able Kick"; Expert Brawling Skill, with "Kick" as a Favorite Weapon

Useable with any Kick Attack.

You may include an extra d4 Damage with any Kick attack.

Kong Dinh-Son's Impressive Kick
(Heroic Special; 2 points)
Requirements: The Gifts of "Sure-Footed" and "Kong Dinh-Son's Forceful Kick"; Heroic Brawling Skill, with "Kick" as a Favorite Weapon

Useable with any Kick Attack.

The target suffers an extra 1 Wound, above and beyond all other Wounds caused. Since the target suffered injury, this *will* force a Resolve Test.

Kong Dinh-Son's Mighty Kick
(Heroic Advantage; 2 points)
Requirements: The Gifts of "Sure-Footed" and "Kong Dinh-Son's Impressive Kick"; Heroic Brawling Skill, with "Kick" as a Favorite Weapon

Useable with any Kick Attack.

You may include an extra 2d4 Damage with any Kick attack.

Kong Dinh-Son's Powerful Kick
(Legendary Special; 3 points)
Requirements: The Gifts of "Sure-Footed" and "Kong Dinh-Son's Mighty Kick"; Legendary Brawling Skill, with "Kick" as a Favorite Weapon

Useable with any Kick Attack.

The target suffers an extra 1 Wound, and *must* attempt a Resolve Test. In addition, if the target *Fails* their Resolve Test, they suffer another 1 Wound.

Kong Dinh-Son's Righteous Kick
(Legendary Advantage; 3 points)
Requirements: The Gifts of "Sure-Footed" and "Kong Dinh-Son's Powerful Kick"; Legendary Brawling Skill, with "Kick" as a Favorite Weapon

Useable with any Kick Attack.

You may include an extra 3d4 Damage with any Kick attack.

Kong Dinh-Son's Supreme Kick
(Mythic Special; 4 points)
Requirements: The "Gifts of Sure-Footed" and "Kong Dinh-Son's Righteous Kick"; Mythic Brawling Skill, with "Kick" as a Favorite Weapon

Useable with any Kick Attack.

The target suffers an extra 2 Wounds, above and beyond all other Wounds caused. Since the target suffered injury, this *will* force a Resolve Test.

Sword-Dancing

Although the art of Sword-Dancing was not developed as a fighting form, this does not change the fact that the art is nothing less than deadly. Professional Sword-Dancers entertain at court with their fast movements and co-ordination, swinging their sharp blades in a display unforgiving of error. Sword-Dancers are invariably sleek and handsome, dressed in the finest clothes and carrying one or two expensive, stylish swords. A Dancer requires a sponsor to buy their first sword and to lodge them while they train, and there are always more people eager to learn than there are positions available in noble houses. The best Sword-Dancers dance with a partner, in a coordinated "fight" where their swords clash against one another, faster and faster, until their motions are but a blur to on-lookers.

While Sword-Dancing can be used for combat, it is intended to be an art form. Those seeking to use the form for dire purposes might want to also get the Gifts of Ambidexterity (p. 47), Counter-Attack with Off-Hand Weapon (p. 161), Counter-Attack with Parrying Weapon (p. 166), Earth Strike (p. 168), Heaven Strike (p. 168), and Heaven and Earth Meet in the Middle (p. 168).

Sword-Dancing
(Basic Advantage; 1 point)
Requirement: Sword-Dancer Career of d4

Useable with your Favorite Sword.

You are trained in the art of Sword-Dancing, a beautiful expression of athletics that is both gentle and deadly.

Include your Dancing Dice with your *Parry Dice*. Note that Dancing Dice are subject to the *Encumbrance Limit*.

Eight Breezes of the World
(Basic Maneuver; 1 point)
Requirement: Sword-Dancer Career of d8

Useable with an Easy, Favorite Sword.

This maneuver represents the eight basic strokes that are the fundamentals of Sword-Dancing. The exact stroke chosen would depend upon which one would look better to the audience at the time. Despite their showy nature, the Eight Breezes are each very deadly.

Your attack causes *Slaying Damage*.

Your opponent's knowledge of Sword-Dancing moves will help them avert the attack, as well as their ability to see through your deceptive moves. *The target includes their Dancing Dice & Psychology Dice (if any) with their Soak Dice.* (Their Dancing Dice are subject to the Encumbrance Limit.) If these additional Soak Dice mean the target takes no Damage, the Game Host may rule that the target was "just barely missed" and that no blood was shed.

Respectfully Decline with Thousand Apologies
(Basic Advantage; 1 point)
Requirement: Sword Dancer Career of d12

Useable when someone attempts to Exploit when you attack them using your Favorite Sword.

Whenever someone attempts to Exploit you, you may choose to be sent Reeling instead. (Of course, if their Exploit *was* to send you Reeling, there is no real effect.)

Showmanship
(Expert Defense; 1 point)
Requirement: Will Trait of d8; Expert Acting Skill

You have a new defense: the *Showmanship Defense*, which is your Acting Dice and *nothing else* (no Speed, etc.) The Showmanship Defense can be used against anything you could Parry, once per Round.

The Showmanship Defense is unusual in that *it does not suffer the one Penalty for Reeling.*

Diving Gracefully Aside
(Expert Defense; 1 point)
Requirement: Expert Dancing Skill; a die in Acrobatics of d4

You may include your Acrobatics Dice with your Resistance Dice whenever you resist a Homing or Exploding attack.

Appearances are Everything
(Expert Advantage; 1 point)
Requirement: Sword-Dancer Career of d12, d4; Expert Acting Skill; Expert Breath-Holding Skill

Useable whenever you are sent Reeling and you have an Encumbrance Limit of d12 or better.

As part of your professionalism, you must never be seen stumbling upon the stage. Whenever you would be sent Reeling (for *any* reason), you may instead suffer 1 Fatigue. This Fatigue loss does not force a Resolve Test, but you may have to pass an Unconsciousness Test at the end of the Round.

Yes, you can combine this Advantage with "Respectfully Decline with Thousand Apologies," so that when your Sword Parry is Overwhelmed, you choose to suffer 1 Fatigue.

Pursuit of a Perfect Dream
(Heroic Advantage; 2 points)
Requirement: Sword-Dancer Career of d12, d4; Heroic Acting Skill; Heroic Breath-Holding Skill

Useable whenever you must pass a Resistance Test that includes Speed, Mind, or Will Dice, for *whatever* reason.

After having endured for so long as a Sword-Dancer, you can literally convince yourself as well as onlookers that you are unfazed. Whenever you *Fail or Overwhelmingly Fail* (but not Botch) a Simple Resistance Test that includes Speed, Mind, or Will Dice, you may choose to instead suffer 1 Fatigue. This Fatigue loss does not force a Resolve Test, but you may have to pass an Unconsciousness Test at the end of the Round.

Huó Huǒ Shān Shu (Volcano School)

Many folk believe that wizards are a civilized, over-educated lot, foreign to the body-discipline of combat or the decisiveness of the battlefield. Those who are trained in Volcano School are quite the opposite of this conceit. A calling mostly pursued by Dàoist Wizards, Volcano-style fighters learn how to manipulate both the energies from without to call forth deadly effects on their foes and the energies from within to use their bodies as deadly weapons. Volcano School is named after how it teaches one to use the magical Auras of Fire and Mountain not simply as aids to spell-casting but also as empty-hand weapons.

Volcano School fighters usually wear either the traditional wizard's garb of long flowing robes or the traditional martial-artist's outfit and tied pants. They fight with empty-hand, with staff, or with an iron fan (the weapon necessary for the "Attendant Fireball" spell).

Fists of Fire
(Basic Advantage; 1 point)
Requirement: The ability to cast an Aura of Fire

Useable when you fight Bare-Handed and have an Aura of Fire.

By directing the flow of your internal energy, you can focus your Aura of Fire into your fists.

You gain a new weapon: the *Fists of Fire*. For To-Hit Rolls, this weapon uses Brawling Skill & Speed. For Damage, the Fists of Fire uses your *Aura of Fire Dice & Strength Dice*.

Being their own weapon, the Fists of Fire do *not* combine with Claws or other Natural Weapons, nor do they combine with Empty-Hand Methods.

The "Fists of Fire" have their own Special Result:

| ***Special: On fire.*** The target catches on fire (p. 341).

While others can see the glowing energy within your fists, you are not actually on fire yourself.

Body of the Mountain
(Expert Advantage; 1 point)
Requirements: The ability to cast an Aura of Earth; Expert Resolve Skill

Useable when you have an Aura of Earth.

By directing the flow of energy around your body, you may focus your Aura of Earth into supernatural Armor. Your Body of the Earth *replaces* all Armor Dice you currently have (if any) with your Aura of Earth Dice.

The Sweeping Gestures of the Iron Fan
(Expert Advantage; 1 point)
Requirement: Expert Iron Fan Skill

Useable when you have a Ready Iron Fan.

You enjoy the following benefits against certain kinds of magical attack:

- When defending against Targeting Spells, you may use your Iron Fan Parry instead of your Dodge.
- You may include your Iron Fan Dice with your Speed, Dodge, and other dice when resisting Damage from any Homing Spell. (There is no benefit for Exploding Spells.)

Volcano Staff Avalanche
(Expert Maneuver; 1 point)
Requirement: Expert Staff Skill

Useable with a Medium Staff.

Similar to the way a choking cloud of ash can suffocate and kill as debris rains down upon hapless victims, you are able to strike at your opponent's body to knock the wind out of them and crush their lungs. This Second-Rank attack causes *Slaying Damage.*

Your opponent's ability to regulate flow of air through their body helps them resist your attack. *The target includes their Breath-Holding Dice (if any) with their Soak Dice.*

Volcano Fan Cut
(Expert Maneuver; 1 point)
Requirement: Expert Iron Fan Skill

Useable with a Ready Iron Fan.

You are able to strike your opponent on their gates of energy flow. This Second-Rank attack causes *Slaying Damage.*

Your opponent's knowledge of their internal energy helps them resist your attack. *The target includes their Meditation Dice (if any) with their Soak Dice.*

Twice-Fold Rain of Fire
(Expert Maneuver; 1 point)
Requirement: Expert Iron Fan Skill

Useable with a Ready Iron Fan, when you have two Attendant Fireballs (p. 211).

As a Long Maneuver, you are able to lash out with *two* Fireballs — one on the First Rank, and one on the Second Rank.

Thrice-Fold Rain of Fire
(Heroic Maneuver; 2 points)
Requirement: Heroic Iron Fan Skill

Useable with a Ready Iron Fan, when you have three Attendant Fireballs (p. 211).

As a Long Maneuver, you are able to lash out with *three* Fireballs — one on the First Rank, one on the Second Rank, and one on the Third Rank.

Wu Xià Shù (Vagrant-Warrior School)

More than one warrior has gone on a long pilgrimage to study the way of the Vagrant-Warrior, learning the use of almost every hand-to-hand weapon. Vagrant-Warriors are typified by their seriousness and their wanderlust, and by their broken noses and gnarled hands from too many training-related injuries. Some master Vagrant-Warriors become expensive mercenaries, as not only are they nonpareil in the arts of combat, but they can also train others in their techniques. A few are errant adventurers, exploring the world in search of new things, or perhaps new opponents with which to test their skills. More than one Vagrant has practiced a philosophy of non-violence, learning their arts for the sake of discipline and not for shedding blood.

Warriors of Wu Xià Shù can fight with axes, maces, swords, shields, pole-arms, spears, soft swords, and almost any hand weapon imaginable. They often carry a variety of weapons so that they can have the full range of their techniques available to them.

Axe Mastery
(Basic Advantage; 1 point)
Requirements: The Vagrant-Warrior Career Trait of d12, d4

Useable with any Axe.

Your advanced knowledge of weapon techniques allows you to strike with your Axe for increased Damage. If you choose to call upon your Mastery, ***remove your biggest die (usually a d12) before you make your To-Hit Roll.***

If your To-Hit Roll is successful, your attack will cause *Slaying Damage.*

Your opponent's knowledge of the weapon helps protect them against your Mastery. *If you choose to make the attack Slaying, your opponent includes their own Axe Dice (if any) with their Soak Dice.*

Fencing Mastery
(Basic Advantage; 1 point)
Requirements: The Vagrant-Warrior Career Trait at d12, d4

Useable with a Scholarly Sword or Martial Sword.

Your advanced knowledge of weapon techniques allows you to strike with your Soft Sword for increased Damage. If you choose to call upon your Mastery, ***remove your biggest die (usually a d12) before you make your To-Hit Roll.***

If your To-Hit Roll is successful, your attack will cause *Slaying Damage.*

Your opponent's knowledge of the weapon helps protect them against your Mastery. *If you choose to make the attack Slaying, your opponent includes their own Fencing Dice (if any) with their Soak Dice.*

Flail Mastery
(Basic Advantage; 1 point)
Requirements: The Vagrant-Warrior Career Trait at d12, d4

Useable with any Flail.

Your advanced knowledge of weapon techniques allows you to strike with your Flail for increased Damage. If you choose to call upon your Mastery, ***remove your biggest die (usually a d12) before you make your To-Hit Roll.***

If your To-Hit Roll is successful, your attack will cause *Slaying Damage.*

Your opponent's knowledge of the weapon helps protect them against your Mastery. *If you choose to make the attack Slaying, your opponent includes their own Flail Dice (if any) with their Soak Dice.*

Mace Mastery
(Basic Advantage; 1 point)
Requirements: The Vagrant-Warrior Career Trait at d12, d4

Useable with any Mace.

Your advanced knowledge of weapon techniques allows you to strike with your Mace for increased Damage. If you choose to call upon your Mastery, ***remove your biggest die (usually a d12) before you make your To-Hit Roll.***

If your To-Hit Roll is successful, your attack will cause *Slaying Damage.*

Your opponent's knowledge of the weapon helps protect them against your Mastery. *If you choose to make the attack Slaying, your opponent includes their own Mace Dice (if any) with their Soak Dice.*

Polearm Mastery
(Basic Advantage; 1 point)
Requirements: The Vagrant-Warrior Career Trait at d12, d4

Useable with any Polearm.

Your advanced knowledge of weapon techniques allows you to strike with your Polearm for increased Damage. If you choose to call upon your Mastery, ***remove your biggest die (usually a d12) before you make your To-Hit Roll.***

If your To-Hit Roll is successful, your attack will cause *Slaying Damage.*

Your opponent's knowledge of the weapon helps protect them against your Mastery. *If you choose to make the attack Slaying, your opponent includes their own Polearm Dice (if any) with their Soak Dice.*

Spear Mastery
(Basic Advantage; 1 point)
Requirements: The Vagrant-Warrior Career Trait at d12, d4

Useable with any Spear.

Your advanced knowledge of weapon techniques allows you to strike with your Spear for increased Damage. If you choose to call upon your Mastery, ***remove your biggest die (usually a d12) before you make your To-Hit Roll.***

If your To-Hit Roll is successful, your attack will cause *Slaying Damage.*

Your opponent's knowledge of the weapon helps protect them against your Mastery. *If you choose to make the attack Slaying, your opponent includes their own Spear Dice (if any) with their Soak Dice.*

Staff Mastery
(Basic Advantage; 1 point)
Requirements: The Vagrant-Warrior Career Trait at d12, d4

Useable with any Staff.

Your advanced knowledge of weapon techniques allows you to strike with your Staff for increased Damage. If you choose to call upon your Mastery, ***remove your biggest die (usually a d12) before you make your To-Hit Roll.***

If your To-Hit Roll is successful, your attack will cause *Slaying Damage.*

Your opponent's knowledge of the weapon helps protect them against your Mastery. *If you choose to make the attack Slaying, your opponent includes their own Staff Dice (if any) with their Soak Dice.*

Sword Mastery
(Basic Advantage; 1 point)
Requirements: The Vagrant-Warrior Career Trait at d12, d4

Useable with any Sword.

Your advanced knowledge of weapon techniques allows you to strike with your Sword for increased Damage. If you choose to call upon your Mastery, ***remove your biggest die (usually a d12) before you make your To-Hit Roll.***

If your To-Hit Roll is successful, your attack will cause *Slaying Damage.*

Your opponent's knowledge of the weapon helps protect them against your Mastery. *If you choose to make the attack Slaying, your opponent includes their own Sword Dice (if any) with their Soak Dice.*

Wu Bei Yao Lue (Superior Theory of Archery)

The term "martial art" implies discipline and the study of refined lore of military techniques, and few arts exemplify those qualities more than Wu Bei Yao Lue, the study of the bow. Practitioners of this art are rare — not only is the study time-consuming and difficult, but the martial art is often controlled by the local rulers, lest the secret skills pass into enemy hands. Indeed, in some places it is illegal to teach Wu Bei Yao Lue without a special license… or it may be illegal to teach it at all!

A master of this school learns how to shoot targets at extreme distances, how to retain concentration to aim in circumstances where others cannot, and even to shoot targets they cannot see.

Blind Bow Fighting
(Expert Advantage; 1 point)
Requirement: The Gifts of "Keen Ears"; Expert Bow Skill; Expert Observation Skill; Expert Sixth Sense Skill

Useable with any Bow Attack.

If you can hear, ignore *all* To-Hit roll penalties caused by darkness or blindness.

Double Arrow
(Expert Special; 1 point)
Requirement: Expert Bow Skill

Useable with your Favorite Bow, when you fire two arrows instead of one.

If you score your Special result, then *two* arrows hit your target, not just one; roll Damage twice. If you only Succeeded on your To-Hit roll, then only one arrow struck your target true.

Concentrating the Mind to Pierce the Flea
(Expert Maneuver; 1 point)
Requirement: Expert Bow Skill; Expert Qi-Sao Skill

Useable with a Favorite Bow.

As a Third-Rank Maneuver, you may attack with your Bow and include your *Mind Dice* with the Bow Damage, but your target may include their *Meditation Dice & Qi-Sao Dice* with their Soak.

As Many Arrows as Stars in the Sky
(Heroic Maneuver; 2 points)
Requirement: The Gift of "Quick-Draw"; Heroic Bow Skill

Useable with an Easy, Favorite Bow, when you have enough arrows.

You can fire an arrow every Rank, as a Long Maneuver.

Yes, you *can* combine this with Double-Arrow, and use up *two* arrows per Rank (for a total volley of up to six arrows). If you score your Special Result, then a single target would be struck with two arrows.

The Moon Rising in One's Breast
(Heroic Special; 2 points)
Requirement: The Gift of "Dispel Aura"; a die in Lore: Magic of d10; Heroic Bow Skill

Useable with your Favorite Bow, when the target has an Aura.

The same as "Dispel Aura," (p. 163) except that it only works with Bows, and at a distance.

"The body combines and coordinates with the mind.
The mind combines and coordinates with the idea.
The idea combines and coordinates with the *qi*.
The *qi* combines and coordinates with the spirit.
The spirit combines and coordinates with the movements.
The movements combine and coordinate with the universe."

-- from The Six Combinations are Achieved through the Eight Methods
author unknown

EMPTY-HAND METHODS

Requirement: an Empty-Hand Trait at d4 or better

Known collectively as *Liu ho po fa* ("six coordinations, eight methods), the Empty-Hand Methods were originally developed by monks and scholars as a form of exercise. Educated Zhonggese believe that harmony is the key to peace and long life. The Empty-Hand Methods are sometimes called "six tries, eight punches," because many find learning all of the methods to be too time-consuming, and they instead prefer to focus on the immediate application of the study: striking people with fists, palm, fingers, and thumbs. Many boast that an accomplished Empty-Hand fighter can strike for more Damage than any weapon known, through dedicated focus of their internal energy, or *qi*.

For game purposes, the "Empty Hands" are Weapons — they do Damage just like a weapon. Empty Hands are Natural Weapons, in that they cannot be dropped and are a part of your body (as opposed to Carried Weapons).

Empty Hands are just that — empty hands. To use an Empty Hand Method, the attacker must have two hands free, and they must have nothing in either hand. Empty Hand Methods do not combine with Claws or other Natural Weapons. Hand substitutes, such as Prehensile Tails, do not qualify as Empty Hands.

All Empty Hand Methods use *Speed & Brawling* for the To-Hit Roll. (Note that Empty Hand Traits are always included with Brawling.) If the attack hits, the Damage is the attacker's *Strength & Empty Hand Trait Dice* (but not Brawling or any other Skill Dice.) Since there is no upper limit to Trait Dice, a highly-trained practitioner could eventually learn to deal out devastating attacks.

While the Empty Hand Methods are potentially very strong, each one has a weakness. Every Empty Hand Method is opposed by a Skill that (if the target has that Skill) they may include with their Soak when resisting the Empty Hand's Damage. If the target has Traits that are always included with that skill, they may include those as well.

> ***Example:*** Magnificent Weasel strikes Bikeng Loujing with the Empty Hand Method of Ti ("Sounding the Gong.") Magnificent Weasel's Ti Method Trait is d12 and his Strength is d8, so this attack will do d12 & d8 Damage.
>
> Bikeng Loujing has a Soak of d6 and Cotton Armor (d4). He also has the Skill of Dodge (the weakness of the Ti Method) at d12, and his Career Trait of "Sword Dancer: d10" is always included with Dodge, as well. Bikeng Loujing's Soak vs. the Empty Hand Method of Ti is d12, d10, d6, and d4.

Chi Method: "Working the Bellows"

The attacker delivers a sharp blow to the target's abdomen in an upward motion, knocking the wind out of the target. If delivered expertly, the blow strikes quickly and forcefully enough that the air doesn't have time to escape, rupturing an air pocket inside the target.

The attacker includes their Chi Method Trait with their Strength for Damage. The target includes their Breath-Holding Dice (if any) with their Armor and Soak.

> ***Special: Rupturing Blow.*** If your target *Fails* their Resolve Test, they also suffer 2 Fatigue, above and beyond all other Damage.

Fu Method: "Concealing the Intent"

The most mysterious of Empty Hand methods, this attack puts its emphasis on harmony with the Tao and the universe. The attacker lets go of consciousness awareness and allows the natural universe to direct their attack. No two witnesses of the Fu Method describe what they saw the same way — one might swear it was a direct fist blow to the face, another will have seen a quick jab to the ribs, et cetera. The attacker, however, will not know exactly what strike they just performed, for they will have acted without thought.

The attacker includes their Fu Trait with their Strength for Damage. The target includes their Sixth Sense Dice (if any) with their Armor & Soak.

> ***Special: Mysterious Blow.*** In addition to suffering Damage, the target becomes *Confused* for three rounds.

Hsing Method: "Snapping the Twig"

The attacker quickly seizes one of the target's limbs and attempts to wrench it right off. The motion is a quick one of opportunity, and the style emphasizes getting clear quickly, so typical grappling and wrestling techniques are ineffective. However, a flexible target can often quickly wrench free before much (if any) Damage is caused.

The attacker includes their Hsing School Trait with their Strength for Damage. The target includes their Contortionist Dice (if any) with their Armor & Soak.

> ***Special: Disarming Blow.*** You automatically Disarm your target *and* cause Damage, as above.

Hsui Method: "Deceiving the Prey"

The martial arts masters of the Hsui School teach the finer arts of feinting to strike in one place … then suddenly lashing out in another direction. It is said that to avoid the assault of the Deceiving-the-Prey strike, one must not only watch the hands of the attacker, but also their eyes. Those skilled in reading body language and who are wary of deceit can avoid the brunt of this attack.

The attacker includes their Hsui Trait with their Strength for Damage. The target includes their Psychology Dice (if any) with their Armor & Soak.

> ***Special: Deceptive Blow.*** In addition to doing Damage, the attacker may move the target 1 pace in any direction and change the target's facing to any direction (regardless of which direction the target is moved).

Huan Method: "Collapsing the Wall"

The attacker twists around and body-slams the target. The real trick to the Collapsing-the-Wall Technique is to use the target's own weight against them. The best way to avoid injury is not to resist but to move with the attacker.

The attacker includes their Huan School Trait with their Strength for Damage. The target includes their Acrobatics Dice (if any) with their Armor and Soak.

> ***Special: Knockdown Blow.*** The target automatically falls down in addition to suffering Damage.

Ku Method: "Opening the Gate"

The students of the Ku school learn about the eight "pain gates" found within their bodies. By redirecting one's energy from one gate to the other, one can "close their gate" and avoid feeling pain. Also, if one knows where the vulnerable gates are on the target, they can strike them for catastrophic effect. Unfortunately, those who are inured to pain and suffering have greater resistance to this attack.

The attacker includes their Ku Trait with their Strength for Damage. The target includes their Resolve Dice (if any) with their Armor & Soak — not *Will* Dice, but Resolve Skill Dice and any dice from Race or Career.

> ***Special: Toppling Blow.*** The target is automatically sent Reeling, in addition to suffering Damage. The target is sent Reeling whether they pass their Resolve Test or not (or even if one is not required because they do not suffer injury.)

Le Method: "Redirecting the Soul"

Drawing upon a mystical understanding of the corporeal form, the attacker delivers a blow with extended fingers that would apparently not be forceful enough to cause any harm — but in effect, the attacker is striking out against the target's internal *chi*, causing an imbalance that inflicts pain, seizures, and possibly even death. Those who are able to channel their spiritual energy have achieved a greater balance of internal energy and thus resist this attack more effectively.

The attacker includes their Le Trait with their Strength for Damage. The target includes their Meditation Dice (if any) with their Armor & Soak.

> ***Special: Draining Blow.*** In addition to causing Damage, examine your Damage Dice as a Simple Roll — your target loses a number of Magic Points equal to your Score (down to zero).

Ti Method: "Sounding the Gong"

Not very subtle, but frighteningly effective — the attacker leans forward and strikes the target with both palms extended. A traditional Ti practitioner will let out a loud shout as they deliver the blow. The best defense is to get out of the way.

The attacker includes their Ti Trait with their Strength for Damage. The target includes their Dodge Dice (that is, from Race, Career, or Skill — and *not* their inherent Speed Dice) with their Armor & Soak.

> ***Special: Resounding Blow.*** Your attack ignores any Armor Dice the target has (natural or worn).

!
.. RIDERS !
RUMBLE
BROTHERS ! WE MUST GET THE MESSAGE TO THE EMPEROR ! IF WE DO NOT, ALL IS LOST !
GO AHEAD, QUICKLY ! I WILL STAY HERE AND DELAY THE TRAITOR AND HIS HENCHMEN !
WE WILL GO...
STAND WELL BROTHER ! WE WILL WARN THE EMPEROR.

...MASTER?
火!
YOU SHALL NOT PASS THIS POINT. THE EMPEROR WILL LEARN OF YOUR TREASON AND THEN YOU WILL KNOW FEAR!

"When the reality of the Ultimate of Nonbeing, the essences of Yin-Yang, and the Five Agents come into mysterious union, integration ensues. Heaven Above constitutes the male element, and Heaven Below constitutes the female element. The interaction of these two material forces engenders and transforms into countless things. The countless things produce and reproduce, resulting in an unending transformation."

— from A Commentary on the Wiles of the Immortals by Qiaoji Buxiu

MAGIC

Throughout the history of Zhongguo, various Celestials have descended from the Kingdom of Heaven to spend time with the virtuous people among the Races of Earth. Some of their teachings were recorded into books. To the casual reader, these books are nothing more than parables, stories, wild tales, and advice on how to live a long and happy life. To those initiated in the mysteries, these books describe how to manipulate supernatural forces and to mold the very shape of creation.

Practitioners of magic are rare. It takes a keen mind, dedicated study, and long hours of tedious reading to be able to cast spells with any reliability. Most folks are too poor to afford universities or scholarships, and must work for a living. The practice of magic, then, is usually reserved for the rich and the educated.

The three kinds of magic typically available to starting Player-Characters are *Changes Magic, Dàoist Magic,* and *Purity Magic.* While Wizards are still very rare — no more than one in a thousand — these three kinds of magic are far more common than other kinds.

Definition of Terms

Adept

When your Level in the Skill of Spell-Casting a particular spell becomes equal to the spell's Magic Point cost, then you have become *Adept* at the spell. You no longer need make Casting Rolls — the spell always works.

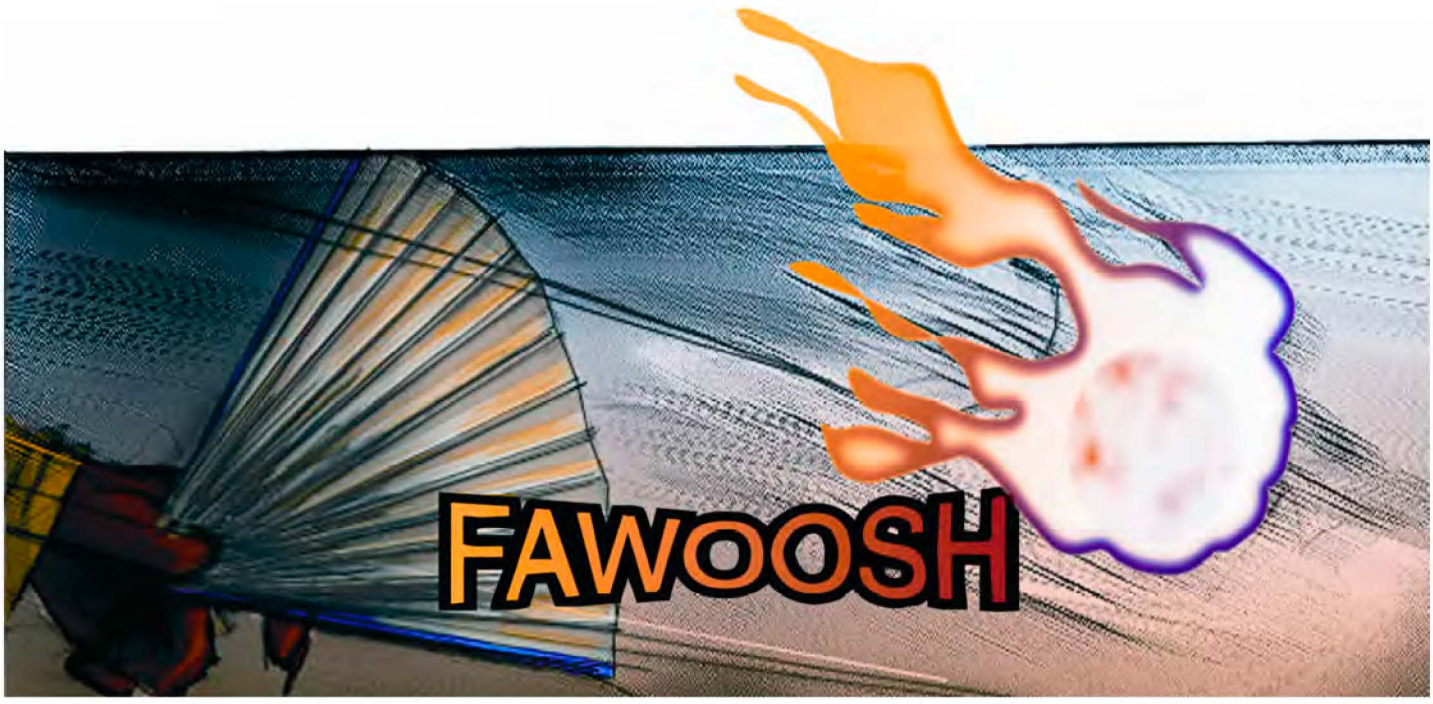
Aura

A type of spell, an *Aura* is an energy that surrounds the target, affecting it in some way. A target may only have one Aura at one time — a stronger Aura suppresses or dispels a weaker one.

Auras have three aspects to them: *Dice, Subtype,* and *Nature.*

Aura Dice Depend on Wizardly Career

The first part of an Aura's name is the Wizardly Career it is associated with, such as "Dào Shih's Proper Aura of Fire." When you cast the spell, you may choose the *Dice* that will measure the strength of the Aura. This can be a small as a d4 to as large as the Trait Dice of the associated Wizard Trait. For example, if your Dào Shih Career is d8, then your Aura of Fire could be d4, d6, or d8. Once you have chosen the Dice of your Aura, it never changes — you will have to re-cast the spell (and spend Magic Points again) to change it.



Aura Subtype Determines Duration

There are five subtypes of Auras:

- A ***Fragile*** Aura lasts until the end of the current Scene, or until its Dice modify some roll, whichever comes first. Then it "shatters" and disappears. Fragile Auras cannot be dismissed.
- A ***Proper*** Aura lasts until the end of the current Scene, or until the caster dismisses it.
- An ***Enduring*** Aura is Persistent — it lasts until dismissed or dispelled. However, as long as it is active, it ties up Magic Points.
- An ***Auspicious*** Aura is a Defense Spell— it costs a Magic Defense, not a Maneuver, as an action to enable it.
- An ***Imposing Aura*** is the only kind of Aura the caster may normally cast upon someone else. It lasts for the rest of the scene.

Aura Nature Modifies How Your Magic Works

An Aura changes your Nature, and a change in your Nature effects how Magic works, both for you and against you. Aura Dice can be included in one of four ways:

- With the *Casting Dice* you roll to cast a spell;
- With the *Effect Dice* when your spells roll for effect;
- With your *Resistance Dice* when you roll to resist another spell's effect;
- As extra Effect Dice from someone *else's* spell, because you are vulnerable to their effect (hence the name *Vulnerability Dice.*)

To see the effects of Aura upon Magic, see page 252.

No One May Have More than One Aura

A target can never have more than one active Aura. If a target has a new Aura cast upon them (such as a Imposing Aura, or perhaps a Proper one to replace a Fragile Aura), the new Aura must roll a contest of its Dice vs. the current Aura — if it *Ties* or better, the old Aura is dispelled and the new one supplants it. Otherwise, the new Aura fails to take effect.

Since dismissing a Proper, Enduring, or Auspicious Aura takes no time, a caster can be assumed to be dismissing their old Aura in favor of a new one at the exact moment they cast the new one.

Rarely, a supernatural creature might have an *inherent Aura* — one that it cannot get rid off. If the creature has a new Aura imposed upon it (whether from someone else or from its own spell-casting), its inherent Aura is only suppressed if the new Aura defeats the inherent Aura in a contest. (A Fragile Aura would automatically lose, since it shatters the very first time its dice are rolled.) When the new Aura is removed or expires, the inherent Aura returns. An inherent Aura *cannot* be dispelled.

Bounty

A *Bounty* Spell is a Delayed Spell that defrays the cost of another spell of the same Nature. For example, the "Twice-Fold Bounty of Metal" costs 1 Magic Point to Delay. When you cast "Clear Path," a spell of the Earth Nature, you normally have to spend 3 Magic Points. If you release the Bounty of Earth, you subtract 2 Magic Points from the cost, so you need only spend 1 Magic Point to cast it.

You may release any number of Bounties, of any Nature, when casting a spell. For example, you could release a Bounty of Earth and a Bounty of Heaven at the same time, and both would work with "Clear Path," which is both of the Earth and the Heaven Nature.

Bounty Spells only reduce the cost of other spells — they never restore Magic Points. For example, if you released two Bounties to cast "Clear Path," above, you would defray 4 Magic Points worth of cost; since "Clear Path" only costs 3, the extra point is simply lost.

The advantage of a Bounty is that it reduces the Magic Point cost of other spells. The disadvantage is that it must be Delayed beforehand, and it ties up Magic Points that could otherwise be spent on other things.

Bounty Spells do *not* reduce the cost of Delayed Spells or Persistent Spells

You can only use Bounty Spells to reduce the cost of Regular, Homing, Exploding, Targeting, Defense, and Privilege Spells.

Casting Dice

If you are not Adept at a spell, you have to pass a Casting Test to activate the spell. You roll your *Casting Dice* vs. the Difficulty Dice of the spell.

Your Casting Dice include your Mind Dice, one Wizard Trait's Dice, the Spell-Casting Skill for the appropriate spell, and possibly dice from an Aura.

Counterspell

A quicker kind of *dispel* (see below).

Difficulty Dice

When you cast a spell that isn't one at which you're Adept (see above), you must roll your Casting Dice vs. the Difficulty Dice to make the spell work.

Dismissal

Some magical effects, and many Persistent Spells, can be *dismissed.* Dismissing requires conscious thought and does not happen "accidentally." Dismissal does not require any Maneuver, Defense, or action.

Dispelling

Ending a spell, often against the original caster's wishes, is called *dispelling* the effect. There are all kinds of dispelling magic. Spells might be dispelled before they have a chance to take effect, or their effects may be removed later.

Effect, and Effect Dice

Whatever your spell does is called its Effect. Many spells have Effect Dice for testing their results.

Most spells are resisted by the target, inflict Damage, or otherwise have a variable effect. Such variables are represented by Effect Dice.

For many spells, *the Difficulty Dice and the Effect Dice are the same.* When the dice are the same, *use the same Difficulty Roll as the Effect Roll.*

Effect Dice are often increased by the inclusion of appropriate Aura Dice.

Lists

Wizards learn spells in groups called *Lists*. Each List has different Requirements that must be met before the spells on that List can be cast. Once you meet the Requirements, you may make Casting Tests to cast any spell on that list.

Some lists are "Advanced Lists" that require a Wizard to be Adept at one or more spells on a less-demanding List.

Magic Points

When you cast a spell, you must spend *Magic Points* to fuel the supernatural energy. Magic Points represent the wizard's personal energy and ability to manipulate the environment by esoteric means.

If you cannot spend enough Magic Points, you cannot cast the spell. There are no ill effects for running out of Magic Points. All beings will have Magic Points, but Wizards have more.

Wizards can normally recover spent Magic Points by resting or by meditating. Points spent on Delayed and Persistent spells remain tied up until those spells are released (p. 191).

Magic Resistance Test

Most spells (especially those with hostile intent) require a *Magic Resistance Test* to determine their effect. The typical Magic Test is the spell's *Effect Dice* vs. one or more of the target's dice. Most spells are resisted by two or more Basic Traits (Body, Speed, Mind, or Will), and sometimes other Traits such as Race or Career.

The Special Trait of Magic Resistance is *always* included in a Magic Test to resist an effect.

The Special Trait of Second Sight is always included *whenever the Mind Trait* is included to resist an effect.

The Magic Resistantce Test is in the Tests chapter, p. 113.

Nature

Every spell is made up of one or more *Natures*. Natures affect the way spells interact with one another. Certain kinds of Auras and spells affect spells depending on the Natures that make up the spell.

Privilege

A kind of *dispel*, based on a contest of Wizard Traits (p. 193).

Release

While a Delayed Spell is waiting to become active, it ties up Magic Points that cannot be spent on anything else. While a Persistent Spell remains active, it also ties up Magic Points that cannot be spent on anything else. When these spells end, the Magic Points that power them are said to be *released*. These Magic Points can now be recovered – though they do not return immediately.

Requirements

For most spells, you merely need meet the Requirements of a List to cast the spell. A few spells are more stringent, however. Some spells may require the caster to have an Aura; others might require the caster to have some prop, such as the Iron Fan required for "Attendant Fireball."

Resistance Dice

A character may have increased strength to oppose certain kinds of magic. The character may have one or more *Resistance Dice* to roll to pass Magic Tests and to use as Soak to resist Damage.

Auras can add Resistance Dice vs. certain Elements.

Spell-Casting Skill

In order to improve your odds of casting a certain spell, you can learn a Spell-Casting skill for a given spell. Spell Casting of each spell is a separate skill — you must specialize. Once your Spell-Casting Skill Level becomes the same as the spell's Magic Point cost, you have become Adept — you no longer need roll to Cast the spell!

Synecdoche

A Synecdoche Spell is one that uses the philosophy of "the part to connect to the whole." This kind of spell has no range limitations, and does not require line of sight — instead, the caster must have an object that once belonged to the target of the spell. This object is the Synecdoche or "link" to the target.

Links derive their magical connection to their target by their sympathy with their target, which can decrease over time. As a general rule, the more personal the item is, the longer the Synecdoche lasts.

Item	*Duration of Synecdoche*
The target's own hair	*Forever*
The target's Favorite Weapon or other Favorite item	*100 years*
An article of the target's clothing	*Half as long as the target owned it.* For example, if the target owned a hat for four years, then once removed the hat would retain Synecdoche for two years.
An item with a Delayed Spell	*As long as the spell remains Delayed on the item, plus half again as long after the Delayed spell is released.* For example, if someone had a "Wellspring of Life" on them for four days before it was released, then they will retain Synecdoche to the caster for two more days.
Coins or other money that the target has handled	*No Synecdoche at all.* Too many people have handled the money as well and left their own imprints upon it.

The caster must hold the link in their hand (or prehensile foot, or other grasping appendage) when they cast the spell. The caster need not know to whom the link applies.

Strong magic can destroy the Synecdoche link, such as the "Void" spell (p. 248).

Types of Spells

There are nine different types of spells in *Jadeclaw*.

Regular: Automatically "hits," but usually is resisted by Traits, Skills, or something else.

Targeting: Can be Blocked or Dodged.

Homing: Special — automatically hits target, but they include their Cover Dice and Retreat Dice with their Soak & Armor Dice. Also, the target may include *either* their Block Dice *or* their Dodge Dice.

Exploding: Special — automatically hits target, but they include their Cover Dice, Dodge Dice, & Retreat Dice with their Soak & Armor Dice.

Defense: A spell that takes no time to cast. If used as a defense against a spell, you only get one attempt to thwart the attack, just like any other defense. Some Defense Spells are attacks in their own right. If a Defense spell is hostile, you can only use it against combatants you can defend against: those who are in front of you that you can see (see Facing, p. 128). You are normally entitled to one Defense Spell per Round. Defense Spells include *Counterspells* and *Privilege Spells*.

Privilege: A special type of Defense Spell, used to prevent certain kinds of spells from being cast (p. 191).

Delayed: A spell that ties up Magic Points until it takes effect at a later time. Releasing a Delayed spell is usually effortless, requiring no maneuver or special action. Some Delayed Spells are released when some condition or circumstance is met.

Bounty: A special type of Delayed Spell, a Bounty spell is released to reduce the Magic Point Cost of spells of the same Nature. See the entry under *Bounty*, above.

Persistent: A spell that ties up Magic Points while it is in effect. When the Persistent spell ends, the Magic Points are released.

Aura: Comes in five subtypes. *Fragile*, *Imposing*, and *Proper* Auras are Regular Spells. *Auspicious Auras* are Defense Spells. *Enduring* Auras are Persistent Spells.

Vulnerability Dice

A character may have increased susceptibility to certain kinds of magic. The character may have one or more *Vulnerability Dice* to include with the opposed dice of a Magic Test or with a spell's Damage Dice. Vulnerability Dice make the spell more likely to affect the character in a detrimental way.

For example, if you have a d8 Vulnerability to Fire, then any Fire Spells used against you include an extra d8 with their Effect. Auras often include one or more Vulnerabilities.

Wizard

Somebody who casts spells is called a Wizard. Career Traits related to magic are called *Wizardly Career Traits* (or sometimes *Wizard Traits*); these Traits add to starting Magic Points (see below).

The Six Steps to Using a Spell

1. Choose a Maneuver
2. Spend the Magic Points
3. Cast the Spell
4. Determine the Scope
5. Targets may Resist
6. Determine the Duration

Manifesting the power: Spell-Casting Maneuvers

To cast a spell outside of a combat situation, you usually just have to tell the Game Host of your intention. During a combat, it's a bit more complicated, as those who see you casting a spell may want to stop you!

In the Basic Combat System, you cast spells after all "Easy" weapon attacks are resolved.

In the Advanced Combat System, spell-casting is a Maneuver.

Maneuver	Ranks of Initiative			Move	Defense	Effect
Cast a Spell		Second		Stride	Normal	Cast a spell normally
Concentrate	First	Second	Third	Stride	Abort	Maintain a spell that requires concentration
Fast-Cast a Spell	First			Stride	Normal	Cast a spell at +1 Magic Point Cost
Focus			Third	Stride	Normal	Build up one Bonus for next Round

In addition to these maneuvers, there are also *Spell-Casting Martial Arts Maneuvers* (p. 159) that highly-accomplished Wizards might know.

Defense and Privilege Spells do not require Maneuvers, only Defense

You cast these spells as a *Magic Defense*. You are normally permitted one Magic Defense per Round. Even if a Defense Spell is being used "offensively," it is still a Magic Defense and does not require a Maneuver. You may only use Magic Defenses when you are capable of defending — for example, if you are performing a Long Maneuver like "Aim," using a Magic Defense would Abort the Maneuver.

Releasing and Dismissing Spells do not require any Maneuvers, but something else

Releasing a Delayed Spell means that some condition is met that makes the spell take effect. For many Delayed Spells, such as a Bounty, this requires but a thought. Releasing a spell requires only conscious thought —no Maneuver is required.

However, the *conditions for release* may have their own opportunity costs — which is usually a Magic *Defense*. For example, the spell "Delay Earth " specifically makes any Earth Spell into a Defense Spell, using up a Magic Defense for that Round.

> ***Example:*** In-Leng wants to release a Delayed "Sword of Lightning." The condition for releasing this Delayed Spell is that In-Leng must take a Magic Defense to release the lightning.

Likewise, *dismissing* a spell, unless specified otherwise, is a free action.

Special Rules for Delayed Spells

Delayed Spells are powered by the magic that was first invested in them when Delayed. You do not need to spend any extra Magic Points if you cannot speak or make gestures when you release a Delayed Spell — that cost was paid before. However, if you release a Targeting Spell, you must have a hand free so you can direct the spell towards your target (p. 202). Likewise, there is no extra Magic Point cost for releasing a Delayed Spell on the First Rank.

Where the energy comes from: Magic Point Cost

The energy to power a spell must come from somewhere. Every living being has energy within them, simply from the force of their Will. Wizards, being more harmonious with the supernatural, have even greater reserves of energy to draw upon. In game terms, this energy is called *Magic Points*.

A character's Magic Points are the sum of their Will Trait and all Wizard Traits.

> ***Example:*** Pei the Learned has a Will Trait of d10 and a Dào Shih Trait (a Wizard Career) of d12. Her Magic Points are 22.
>
> Magnificent Weasel has a Will Trait of d8 and no Wizard Careers. His Magic Points are 8.

To cast a spell, the Wizard must have enough Magic Points to fuel the *Cost* of the spell. For example, the Cost of the "Dragon Bellow" spell is 5. A Wizard must have 5 Magic Points to spend to cast the spell. You must spend these points if the spell is cast successfully, and you may lose them if you Fail your Casting Test.

> ***Example:*** Pei the Learned wants to cast the "Dragon Bellow" spell, which costs 5 Magic Points. Since her Magic Point reserve is still fresh, she can easily do this. Pei's Magic Point reserve drops from 22 to 17.

Modifiers to Magic Point Cost

Circumstance	*Modifier*
You are spending *Focus* to reduce Magic Points.	-1 Magic Point cost for Regular, Homing, Exploding, and Targeting Spells. *(No effect for Delayed, Defense, Persistent, or Privilege Spells.)*
You are "Fast-Casting" in the First Rank of the Round.	+1 Magic Point Cost.
You are "Casting" normally in the Second Rank.	No change (default).
You lack competence, because you are suffering from *Incompetence, Confusion,* etc.	+1 Magic Point Cost.
You cannot speak in a Normal volume of voice, because you want to be stealthy, you are gagged, etc.	+1 Magic Point Cost.
You cannot make gestures, because you lack a free hand.	*Targeting Spells* are impossible. Otherwise, +1 Magic Point Cost.
You are releasing a *Bounty Spell* of an appropriate Nature.	See p. 190.

Casting Some Spells Out of Combat costs one less Magic Point

If you have all the time in the world, and you have both confidence and competence, then you may cast any *Regular Spell, Homing Spell, Exploding Spell, Targeting Spell, Defense Spell,* or *Privilege Spell* and spend one less Magic Point. (There is no cost reduction for Delayed Spells or Persistent Spells.)

In game terms, this is identical to taking the "Focus" Maneuver, followed by the "Cast a Spell" Maneuver. If you're out of combat, we're not measuring time in Rounds, so you can be assumed to Focus, then Cast.

Calling forth the supernatural: The Casting Roll

When you make a Casting Roll, you roll a variety of dice trying to beat the Difficulty Dice of the spell. The dice you roll are:

- Your *Mind Dice.*

> ***Example:*** Pei the Learned tries cast the "Dragon Bellow" spell. Her Mind Trait is d10.

- Your *Wizard Trait Dice* that are associated with the spell. (If a spell is on more than one list, you may include all appropriate Wizard Dice when casting the spell.)

> ***Example:*** "Dragon Bellow" is a Dàoist Magic spell. Pei may include her Dào Shih Trait of d12 when casting the spell.
>
> Since the "Dragon Bellow" spell is also part of Changes Magic (which uses the Fah Shih Trait) and Purity Magic (which uses the Shén Qing Trait), if Pei had either of those Wizard Traits, she could include those, too. Alas, she does not.

- Your *Spell-Casting Skill* in that particular spell. Note that Spell-Casting Skill may entitle you to *Favored Use* (p. 64) on the Casting Roll.

> ***Example:*** Pei the Learned has the Skill "Spell-Casting: Dragon-Bellow d8." She includes the d8 with her dice.

- If the Aura helps in Casting, then you include your *Aura Dice.* Different kinds of Auras help with different Natures of spells (p. 191).

> ***Example:*** The "Dragon Bellow" spell has the Natures of Earth, Mountain, and Weather. The Auras of Fire, of Mountain, and of Progress assist in the Casting of spells of those Natures.
>
> Pei currently has a Proper Aura of Fire of d12. Since the Aura of Fire assists in the Casting, she may include this d12 with her other dice for the Casting Roll.
>
> Pei will roll 2d12, d10, and d8 vs. the spell's Difficulty Dice of 5d10.

Outcome of the Casting Test

Casting Dice vs. Difficulty Dice	*Outcome*
Botch	*Destructive Cycle.* Something untoward happens to the caster. Maybe a harmful spell hits their friends instead, or an angry ghost is summoned, or the like. The default scenario is that the caster is *Confused* for 3 Rounds and the Magic Points are spent (and wasted).
Overwhelming Failure	*There is No Water in the Lake.* The caster suffers from mild disorientation. They become *Incompetent* for 3 Rounds. The spell fails to work, and the Magic Points are spent (and wasted).
Failure	*Disharmony of Heart and Mind.* The spell fails to work, and the Magic Points are spent (and wasted).
Tie	*Gathering Clouds but Distant Thunder.* The spell fails to work, but no Magic Points are spent.
Success, Overwhelming Success	*Moment of Power.* The spell works normally, and the Magic Points are spent.

> ***Example:*** Pei the Learned rolls her dice, and they come up 9, 8, 2, and 2. Her Score is 9.
>
> The Difficulty Dice are rolled, and they come up 8, 7, 6, 3, and 2. Their Score is 8.
>
> Pei has earned a *Success* on her Casting Roll. Her spell works!

When the Difficulty Dice and Effect Dice are the same, *use the same roll for both!*

For almost all spells, the Difficulty Dice and the Effect Dice are the same. When they are, leave those Difficulty Dice on the table! Use the same roll for both the Difficulty and the Effect. (This means that the better Wizards will be able to command the greater Effects.)

> ***Example:*** Pei's player does not immediately scoop up those Difficulty Dice! Since the "Dragon Bellow" spell has 5d10 both as its Difficulty Dice *and* Effect Dice, the one roll will stand for both Difficulty and Effect.

Getting Better: becoming Adept *at a Spell*

If you have a Spell-Casting Skill of a Level equal to the Magic Point Cost, you need not make a Casting Roll. You are *Adept* at the spell — you always succeed when casting it.

> ***Example:*** Pei has the skill "Spell-Casting: Dragon Bellow d8," which is Level 3. However, the spell costs 5 Magic Points to cast. Because her Skill Level is less than 5, she is not Adept and must pass a Casting Test to see if the spell works.
>
> If Pei can increase her "Spell-Casting: Dragon Below" skill to Level 5 (d12), then her Skill Level will become equal to the Magic Point Cost, and she will become *Adept* with "Dragon Bellow" — she will never need roll to Cast again.

How strong the spell is: Effect

Whatever a spell causes is its *Effect*. Almost all spells have a variable level of measuring their results, which is represented by *Effect Dice*. The bigger these dice are, the more likely a spell is to overcome resistance and to yield greater results.

If not otherwise specified in the spell's description, the Effect Dice are the same as the Difficulty Dice to cast it.

Auras may add Effect Dice

The major purpose of an Aura is to add more Effect Dice to a spell. For example, a d8 Aura of Earth increases the Effect Dice of all spells you personally cast of the Earth Nature, by d8.

Include your Aura Dice *after* any Casting Rolls. (Auras only add Effect — they don't add Difficulty!)

> ***Example:*** In-Leng attempts to Cast an "Better to Bend as a Reed than to Break as a Tree," which has a Difficulty of 5d8. The Difficulty come up 7, 5, 5, 4, and 1. Her own Casting Score is a 9, so she easily casts the spell.
>
> In-Leng has a Proper Aura of Wind of d12, which boosts the Effect Dice of this spell (as it has the Wind Nature). Now that she has successfully cast the spell, she rolls her Aura of d12, which comes up 11. She includes that 11 with the Spell's Effect Dice.

When Difficulty Dice and Effect Dice are the same, use the same Roll for both

The better spell-casters are able to consistently cast spells with greater results. To simulate this, when a spell's Difficulty Dice and Effect Dice are the same (and that's true for almost all spells), then roll the Difficulty Dice *and leave that roll on the table.* If the caster can Succeed on the Casting Test, use the same Difficulty Dice roll as the Effect Dice roll.

Note that Auras and such add Effect Dice, *not* Difficulty Dice. Include any extra Effect Dice from Auras *after* the Casting Test is made.

Who or what is affected by the spell: Scope

The kind of targets, and the number of them, that are affected by a spell may vary. The entirety of what a spell affects is called its *Scope*. There are five different kinds.

You, or "The Caster"

A spell with a Scope of "you" may only be cast on yourself. Most Auras and many spells related to sensory powers only work for yourself.

Target

The majority of Regular Spells only affect a single target. This target can be any one person of any size, an animal of any size, or (sometimes) an inanimate area no more than 2 paces tall by 2 paces wide by 2 paces long.

If you so choose, a single target can be yourself — thus, a scope of "Target" is more flexible than just "You."

Unless the spell states otherwise, a Target may be no farther away from the caster than a "stone's throw" of 72 paces.

Group

A *Group* is anywhere from one to twelve single Targets. Each Target can be no more than 4 paces from any other Target.

You only roll the Effect Dice of a Group Spell once. All targets will Resist the same roll.

The maximum number of targets in a Group is the same as the Score of the Effect Dice. For example, if your "Flooding Deluge" Effect Dice of 4d10 are rolled, and the dice come up 9, 8, 4, and 1, then your highest-showing die is a 9 — up to 9 targets may be affected.

A Group can be simple, such as "all my foes," or something complicated, such as "all those wearing red" or "all the women with polearms but *not* the one carrying the emerald broach."

The definition of a Group must be something you, as the spell-caster, already know. For example, you couldn't define a group as "only those who know the name of my master" if you didn't already know which targets knew that information. It is always the caster that defines the Group — the spell itself has no sensory information of its own. The Game Host, as always, should rule what Groups are acceptable.

If a Group is too large, then the closer combatants are affected before the farther ones. Following the above example, if you direct your Flooding Deluge against 12 combatants but your Score is only 9, then only the closest 9 targets will suffer the Deluge.

Unless the spell states otherwise, no one Target in a Group may be farther away from the caster than a "stone's throw" of 72 paces.

Cluster

A Cluster is a sphere, three paces in radius. The caster chooses a center, and then everything within 3 paces of that center might be affected. In this way, Clusters are like bombs, concerned only with area. Unlike Groups, Clusters are not selective, affecting friend and foe alike within their 3-pace radius.

You only roll a Cluster's Effect Dice once. All targets will Resist the same roll.

Unless the spell states otherwise, the center point of a Cluster may be no father away from the caster than a "stone's throw" of 72 paces.

Targets can Retreat out of Homing & Exploding Clusters

Homing and Exploding Spells provoke a defense. If a target can Retreat from within the Cluster's area to out of the Cluster's area, they may include their *Retreat Die* of d8 (p. 133) with their Defenses. They must still Resist the Effect, but at least they get an extra die. (This rule is only for Homing and Exploding Clusters — it does not apply to other kinds of spells, such as Homing Groups or Regular Clusters.)

The Landscape

A few spells, especially ones of the Weather Nature, affect the entire Landscape. This Landscape is defined by the caster when they cast the spell, but it cannot be larger than 8 leagues wide and 8 leagues tall, and never more than 99 paces tall. In addition, the caster must be somewhere in that Landscape — at the very center, or perhaps at the very edge.

Spells of this Scope are regulated by the Court of Heaven. Those authorized to control the weather carry Letters of Investiture that specify, in precise legal terms, what Landscapes the caster is permitted to affect with their magic.

Most spells only affect certain parts of the Landscape, such as the crops or the rivers. Refer to the spell for the specifics on what it affects.

Whether a Spell Affects a Target: Resistance

Some spells, especially ones of a beneficial nature, simply work or "go off" when cast. Other spells, especially those of a hostile intent such as "Misfortune of Fire," may be challenged by their targets. When a target opposes a spell's effect, they are said to *Resist the spell.*

Simple Resistance as a "Yes or No" Question

Spells that cause some abnormal status, such as Confusion or Fear, are Resisted as per the *Magic Resistance Test* described in the *Tests* chapter on p. 113. The Resistance Test determines whether the target is affected, and for how long and (in a few cases) how severely.

Targeting Spells are Ranged Attacks

Targeting Spells, such as "Righteous Arrow," are treated as Ranged Attacks (p. 141). These spells roll To-Hit vs. Defense (Block or Dodge). If they hit, they cause Damage vs. the target's Soak. In this way, Targeting Spells are just like bows and crossbows.

Homing Spells are Resisted by Block or Dodge, and Soak

A Homing Spell automatically "hits" the target — it's just a question of how much Damage it causes. The target chooses to resist the spell by either using a Block Defense or a Dodge Defense.

If the target Blocks, they Resist with their *Speed Dice, Shield Dice, Cover Dice* (from shield), *Armor Dice,* and *Soak Dice.* (The target must use one of their Block Defenses for the Round.)

If the target Dodges, they Resist with their *Speed Dice, Dodge Dice, Cover Dice* (from shield), *Armor Dice,* and *Soak Dice.* (The target must be able to Dodge to use Speed Dice and Dodge Dice.)

The Resistance to a Homing Spell is a straight Damage Roll: the Homing Spell's Effect Dice vs. the Target's Resistance Dice. Each hit causes one Wound.

All Penalties or hindrances to the target's Defense will effect them. For example, a target that is Lying Down suffers two Penalties on their defenses — against a Homing Spell, they would remove their smallest two dice before rolling their Resistance. Likewise, a helpless or unconscious target (which could not Block or Dodge) would Resist using only Armor Dice and Soak Dice.

Targets can Retreat away from Homing Clusters

If the Homing Spell has a Scope of "Cluster" and the target can Retreat from within the Cluster's area to out of the Cluster's area, they may include their *Retreat Die* (p. 133) with their Defenses. They must still Resist the Effect, but at least they get an extra die.

Exploding Spells are Resisted by Dodge and Soak

An Exploding Spell automatically "hits" the target — it's just a question of how much Damage it causes.

The target resists with their ability to Dodge: their *Speed Dice, Dodge Dice, Cover Dice* (from shield or from any available cover), *Armor Dice,* and *Soak Dice.* (The target must be able to Dodge to use Speed Dice and Dodge Dice.)

The Resistance to an Exploding Spell is a straight Damage Roll: the Exploding Spell's Effect Dice vs. the Target's Resistance Dice. Each hit causes one Wound.

All Penalties or hindrances to the target's Defense will effect them. For example, a target that is Lying Down suffers two Penalties on their defenses — against an Exploding Spell, they would remove their smallest two dice before rolling their Resistance. Likewise, a helpless or unconscious target (which could not Dodge) would Resist using only Armor Dice and Soak Dice.

Targets can Retreat away from Exploding Clusters

If the Exploding Spell has a Scope of "Cluster" and the target can Retreat from within the Cluster's area to out of the Cluster's area, they may include their *Retreat Die* (p. 133) with their Defenses. They must still Resist the Effect, but at least they get an extra die.

Other Effects on Resistance

There are a few other things that may increase or decrease a target's resistance.

Resistance Dice

Some targets are more unlikely to be affected by some kinds of magic. In game terms, some targets have extra *Resistance Dice.*

Most Auras change a target to make them more resistant to spells of another Nature, allowing them to include their Aura Dice as Resistance Dice to opposed spells. The Special Trait of Magic Resistance adds Dice that are used to resist *all* spells.

Against *Regular* Spells (and other spells with simple resistance), the target includes their Resistance Dice with the other dice they use to resist the spell.

Against *Targeting* Spells, the target includes their Resistance Dice with *both* their Defense Roll to avoid being hit *and* their Soak Roll to avoid taking Damage.

Against *Homing* and *Exploding* Spells, the target includes their Resistance Dice with all their other dice.

Vulnerability Dice

Some targets are more likely to be affected by some kinds of magic. In game terms, some targets have extra *Vulnerability Dice.*

Most Auras change a target to make them more vulnerable to spells of another Nature, forcing them to include their Aura Dice as Vulnerability Dice to opposed spells. One particular Aura, the Aura of Weakness, serves only to make the target more vulnerable to *every* kind of spell!

Against *Regular* Spells (and other spells with simple resistance), the spell includes the target's Vulnerability Dice with its own Effect Dice, making it more likely to affect the target.

Against *Targeting* Spells, the target suffers *twice.* The caster includes the target's Vulnerability Dice with *both* their To-Hit Roll to strike the target *and* their Damage Roll to hurt the target.

Against *Homing* and *Exploding* Spells, the caster includes the target's Vulnerability Dice with their effect Dice, making the spell more likely to hurt the target.

In any one Cluster or Group, probably only one target is Vulnerable, so roll their Vulnerability Dice separate from everyone else's. (Don't re-roll the Effect Dice just for one target.)

A Target Can Be Both Resistant and Vulnerable

Many spells have two or more Natures, and a target may find itself both Resistant *and* Vulnerable to the same spell. Resistance and Vulnerability do *not* cancel one another out — there's simply more dice on both sides.

How long the spell lasts: **Duration**

Duration of spells varies quite a bit.

One Round

This spell ends at the End of the current Round. (Thus its Duration is technically less than "one *full* Round," since you had to cast it sometime in the Round.) Spells usually only have this Duration if the target Tied on their Resistance Roll.

Three Rounds

The typical Duration for hostile spells, this spell ends at the End of the third Round after it is effected. (Thus its Duration is technically less than "three *full* Rounds," since you had to cast it sometime in that first Round.) Spells usually have this Duration if the target Failed on their Resistance Roll.

The Rest of the Scene

Many spells last "for one Scene" or "for the rest of the Scene." Being more of an art than a science, spells are not measurable by precise clocks down to the very second with any regularity. If a time scale is needed, a Scene should not last more than five minutes. Most beneficial spells and Auras have a Duration of one Scene.

Indefinitely

Rarely, a spell's magical effect remains "forever." This Duration is usually only for spells where a target *Botches* their Resistance Roll. Such spells must be dispelled or otherwise rendered ineffective.

Until Released

A *Persistent* Spell has a continuing effect that lasts indefinitely. (Of course, the Persistent Spell also ties up Magic Points while it is active.) Usually, releasing a spell requires but a thought, whereupon the spell immediately ends and the Magic Points may be recovered.

Instant, or "no duration"

Spells can cause an effect that lingers beyond their original duration. For example, a "Lightning Strike" lasts but a moment, but the Damage it causes lingers until repaired or healed. The results these spells have cannot be "dispelled" — Wounds must be healed, broken items must be repaired, etc.

Until a condition is met

A few spells remain active or linger on the target until a specified condition or circumstance happens. For example, the spell "The Largesse of the Great Household" allows you to lend one of your Skills to someone else until you want that Skill back; when you decide to take the Skill back, the spell ends ("poof!").

The essence of magic: **Nature**

Everything in the universe has some property to it that defines how it interacts with others. Wizards make reference to the *Nature* of things, and specifically how that applies to spells. Every magical spell has one or more Natures that affect Casting Rolls, Effect Dice, and Resistance Dice.

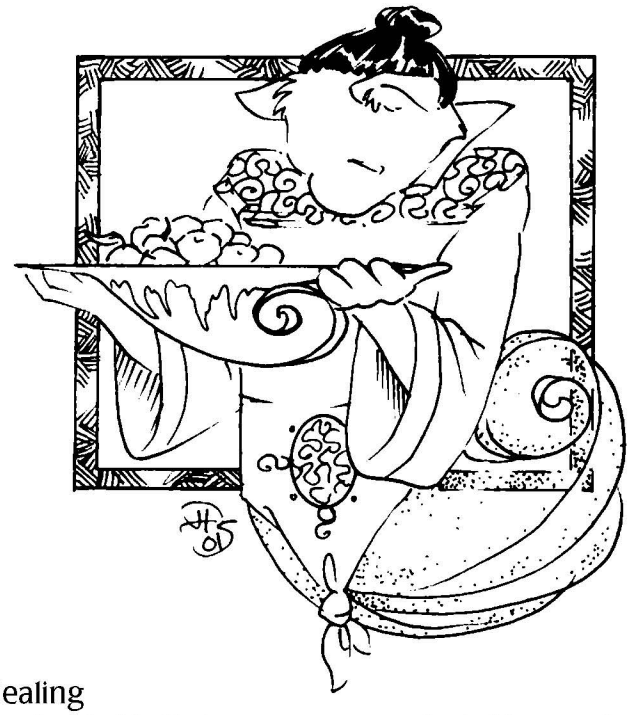
The following is a list of the common Natures of Magic, as known throughout Zhongguo.

Earth

One of the "Five Dàoist Elements," Earth represents base substance. From a spiritual aspect, it refers to desire or study of material things. Unlike the Nature of Mountain, which represents stagnation, solidity, and constancy, Earth is mutable and causes change, just like soil encourages crops to grow. Earth is aided by Fire, provides Metal, hinders Water, and itself is held by Wood.

Fire

One of the "Five Dàoist Elements," Fire represents energy, heat, and change through destruction or expenditure. The spirit which drives beings to do things is also said to be an aspect of Fire. Fire assists Earth, is fueled by Wood, melts Metal, and is dowsed by Water.



Healing

A spell of the Healing nature cures some kind of detrimental condition, removes Wounds from a target, or even restores life to the recently deceased.

Heaven

Holding dominion over the terrestrial landscape below, Heaven is the quality of the world above, where the Celestial Beings hold their court. Events of a cosmic nature, beyond most material concerns or even understanding, are often of the Heaven Nature.

Lake

Unlike Water, things of the Lake Nature are quiet and still. Time is measured in centuries, not in seconds, and space is measured in leagues, not in inches. Lake holds dominion over oceans and seas and other vast bodies.

Metal

One of the "Five Dàoist Elements," Metal represents hardness, imperviousness, and determination. While Fire represents spontaneity or willfulness, Metal can be seen as part of determination or resolve over bad circumstances. Metal assists Water, is mined from Earth, chops down Wood, and is softened by Fire.

Mountain

Unlike Earth, things of the Mountain Nature are enduring and immutable. Mountain represents satiety and freedom from material want, and also timelessness and detachment from the minutiae of daily affairs.

Thunder

Somewhere between the strength of Wind, the power of Fire, and the vastness of Heaven is the Nature of Thunder. Unlike its sister Natures, Thunder is the instant, the moment between this and that, the event that is over in the blink of an eye yet yields events that may alter everything, forever.

Unholy

Where Heaven represents purity and cosmic beneficence, the Unholy Nature is baseness, rapacity, and corruption. Evil spirits and monsters are fueled by their own Unholiness, empowering them to commit atrocities beyond normal capacity.

Unreal

Some spells place masks over reality, hiding what is true. Other spells use magic to create a false reality, such as phantoms to do one's bidding or temporary items for use. Magic of the Unreal Nature is vulnerable to spells and other things that reveal the truth.

Water

One of the "Five Dàoist Elements," Water represents cold, change, and loss of energy. Unlike Lake, which often has strength from its passive greatness, Water is capable of changing others, and usually for the worse. Water nourishes Wood, condenses on Metal, puts out Fire, and is absorbed by Earth.

Weather

From the rain and snow that falls, to the earthquakes and tidal waves that sometimes ravage the landscape, Weather affects everybody who lives below heaven. The activities of Weather are strictly regulated by the Celestial Bureaucracy; it is considered a point of pride to be made a Minister of Weather within a given prefecture. Since everything in the universe affects everything else, so does casting a minor spell of the Weather Nature effect the Weather throughout the land; for this reason, it is illegal to cast even those most minor Weather spells in areas where it is controlled by law, such as most cities.

Wind

Between the heavens above and the earth below is the glorious, endless sky, whose gentle breezes and fierce tornadoes are all part of Wind. This Nature is associated with the dramatic, the uplifting, and changes for the better.

Wood

One of the "Five Dàoist Elements," Wood represents growth, careful craft, and bountiful harvests. Wood can be associated with flexibility, as a branch might bend instead of break. Wood provides Fire, is aided by Water, restricts Earth, and is cut by Metal.

Preventing, Controlling, and Removing Magic

Wizards learn not only how to cause supernatural effects, but also how to avert them. The four basic "meta-magic" spells are *Dispels, Control Spells, Counterspells,* and *Privilege Spells.*

Most meta-magic spells are only effective against certain Natures of Magic. For example, "Dispel Thunder" will only be effective against spells that have the Thunder Nature and would have no effect against an "Attendant Fireball."

It may be an issue to know what spell you're trying to prevent or remove. *As a general rule, if you are Adept at the spell you're trying to prevent, you will recognize its casting without fail.* For example, if someone else attempts to cast an "Attendant Fireball" in your presence, and you are Adept at such a spell, then you will recog-

nize it and know its Nature of Fire. *Removing a continuing effect may require more information.* For example, if you meet someone suffering from a magical-induced *Confusion,* it may not be immediately apparent to you if that Confusion was caused by "Illness," "Oppression," "Preponderance of the Small," or some other effect.

When witnessing a spell being cast, the Game Host may call for a roll of your Mind Trait and Lore: Magic vs. the Difficulty Dice of the spell, or they may simply make a judgment call.

A successful Scry Test (p. 115) will, of course, reveal spells and their Natures.

Meta-magic spells are only effective against Wizardly Magic. For example, if your target was Confused by the Empty-Hand Method of Fu, then no Dispel or Counterspell could remove this effect. To remove Abnormal Status caused by other strange conditions, use an appropriate spell of the Healing Nature, such as "Curing Cloud of Moxibustion" (p. 217).

Dispel

A *Dispel* is a Regular Spell that can do one of two things: prevent a spell from being cast, or remove magical effects. A Dispel is only effective against certain Natures. For example, "Dispel Wood" will only work against spells of the Wood Nature. Reference the spell's description for what Natures it can affect.

Preventing a Spell from Being Cast

For a Dispel to prevent a spell from being cast, you must *Interrupt* the caster, which requires *Focus* (p. 138). If you Interrupt on the First Rank, you are Fast-Casting and must spend 1 extra Magic Point. If you Interrupt on the Second or Third Rank, you are Casting normally.

Roll your Dispel's Effect Dice vs. the Effect Dice of the spell you are trying to prevent (and the target's *Resistance Dice,* if applicable). If you *Tie* or better, the spell is prevented.

A prevented spell affects no one — the would-be caster is foiled and has lost Magic Points.

Regardless of the Dispel's Scope, using it to prevent a spell from being cast works against only one spell-caster. (In other words, any Dispel used to prevent a spell has a Scope of "Target.")

Because you are trying to prevent the spell's energy from leaving the target, then the target's Aura will change the way your Dispel works:

- The target may have increased *Effect Dice,* which will make it harder to win the contest.
- The target may have *Resistance Dice* to your Dispel.
- The target may have *Vulnerability Dice* that will make your Dispel more likely to work.

Removing a Magical Effect

You may remove a magical effect from a target. Commonly, this use is to remove an abnormal status from the target, such as *Confusion* or *Fear,* which was caused by magic of the appropriate Nature.

A Dispel removes magical effects from all those within its scope. Most Dispels have a Scope only of a single Target — if so, the Dispel can only remove a magical effect from one person. (This is one reason to try to prevent, rather than to remove.)

Roll your Dispel's Effect Dice. Each spell within your Dispel's Scope that can be affected must test its own Effect Dice vs. your Dispel; if they *Tie* or worse, they are dispelled and no longer work.

When dispelling magic, use the *target,* not the original caster, to determine Effect, Resistance, and Vulnerability. Thus even though an "Abysmal" spell may have been empowered by the original caster's Aura of Water, that Aura does not make it harder to remove its effect from someone else.

You can only remove a magical effect, not repair any Damage the spell has caused or heal any injuries. For example, if someone was suffering Confusion from an "Illness" (which has the Earth Nature) spell, then you can use a Dispel Earth to remove the Confusion. But if someone suffered 3 Wounds due to a "Ladle of Mud" (which also has the Earth Nature), you can't use a Dispel Earth to help them.

Control

A Control spell does not prevent a spell from being cast — instead, it redirects it to a different Scope. To work, the caster of the Control spell must Interrupt the caster (p. 138) in the act of casting their spell. The redirected target must be within the maximum

range of the original spell's caster. Then the caster of the Control Spell must Succeed on a Test of their Control Spell's Effect Dice vs. the target spell's Effect Dice (just as a Dispel, above).

A redirected *Targeting Spell* uses the redirector Wizard's Speed and appropriate skill to hit the new target, not the original caster's. The line-of-sight of the Targeting Spell is still traced from the spell's caster, but use the range from the re-director to the target.

> ***Example:*** In-Leng redirects a "Ladle of Mud" hurled by a Dàoist Wizard who is 30 paces away. In-Leng redirects the mud towards a foe only 5 paces away from the Wizard. In-Leng will make a roll of her Speed and Digging Dice vs. the target's Defense and 1d10, the Range Dice for "Short" Range.

Other redirected spells are treated as if they came from the original caster (not the redirector) — it is as if the original caster chose completely different targets at the whim of the controller. If the spell can be cast for different effects (such as "Earth Dispels Water," which can either destroy water or can dispel Water magic), successful Control lets you choose the effect as well. The Game Host may have to use their judgment over how a Controlled spell works.

Counterspell

A *Counterspell* is a more facile version of a Dispel. A Counterspell is a *Defense Spell,* and thus it does not cost a Maneuver to cast. Normally, a combatant may only use one Magic Defense per Round; combatants that Guard may use two Magic Defenses per Round.

A Counterspell may prevent a spell from being cast *without requiring an Interruption.* The spell is quick enough that it may be cast without such cumbersome deliberation. Otherwise, it uses the same rules as a Dispel.

A Counterspell may also remove a magical effect, as per a Dispel.

Privilege

A Privilege is another kind of *Defense Spell.* Privilege Spells are a result of advanced training in wizardry. A master spell-caster invokes Privilege to put down the spells of lesser casters, almost without effort.

Privilege Spells only prevent spells from being cast. Privilege does not remove a continuing, magical effect.

To invoke Privilege, you must roll *your appropriate Wizard Trait* of the Privilege Spell vs. *the appropriate Wizard Trait* of the target.

For example, if you use "Dào Shih's Privilege Over Water" to prevent a Fah Shih's "Humble Guise," then you would roll your Dào Shih Trait vs. the target's Fah Shih Trait.

If you *Tie* or better on the contest, then the spell is prevented.

If you *Fail* or worse, you may immediately try again, by spending 1 Magic Point. You may continue to re-roll this contest until you either prevent the spell from being cast, you decide to give up, or you run out of Magic Points.

Auras have no bearing on Privilege. You are using your superior knowledge of magic to thwart others, and not the brute force application of energy.

Special Rules for Privilege

In case it matters, you may release Bounty Spells to power your Privilege, even in the middle of the contest, should you find you need to do so. (The cost for Privilege is paid when the contest ends, so you can build up an "equity" of Magic Points by releasing a Bounty.)

Some spells are on more than one Magic List. What happens if you're trying to invoke Privilege to stop one of those? The target uses their *best* appropriate Wizard Career Trait to resist you — not a combination of the two. You, however, only use the Wizard Trait that is associated with the Privilege Spell that you are casting.

Special Cases for Preventing and Removing Magic

A *Delayed Spell* can only be prevented at the moment of its release, and not when it is first cast. Delayed Spells cannot be dispelled, counterspelled, or revoked using privilege before they have activated. There *are* ways of removing a Delayed Spell early — see the "Void" spell (p. 248).

A *Persistent Spell* has a continuing effect and thus can be removed — doing so releases the bound Magic Points.

Most *Aura Spells* (Auspicious, Enduring, Imposing, and Proper) have a continuing effect and thus can be removed. An Aura's Resistance and Vulnerability will affect attempts to remove it. While a Fragile Aura technically would resist being dispelled, rolling its dice to resist would count as "first use," so *any dispel of a Fragile Aura succeeds automatically.*

The five Dàoist Magic Dispels can be used to *either* dispel magic *or* to affect the environment. To do *both* would require two separate castings: one to dispel, and one to cause Property Damage. (The five Dàoist Magic Counterspells do not cause Property Damage at all.)

Frequently-Asked Questions about Magic

What is a "free hand"?

A wizard must have one hand free to cast a spell or pay +1 Magic Point cost. (Targeting Spells require a free hand to be cast *at all.*) For example, a combatant with a shield in one hand and a sword in the other has no hands free. A combatant with a Medium Weapon in both hands has no hands free, but as a free action, the combatant may "let go" of the weapon to cast a spell, and then grab the weapon again. A caster may also drop something in their hand as a free action to cast a spell.

A wizard who is *not* Ambidextrous (p. 47) who tries to cast a Targeting Spell with only their off-hand free suffers one Penalty To-Hit for using the off-hand (p. 131).

For purposes of spell-casting, Ophdian, Prehensile Feet and Tails, and Trunksare *not* free hands.

A Flying character that can move their Stride has one hand free. A Flying character *without the Gift of Extra Wings* who must Dash has no hands free for the purposes of casting a spell — their hands are too busy flapping on the ends of their wings.

If I fail to cast a spell, does that break my Fragile Aura?

If your Fragile Aura assisted in the Casting Roll, then yes — that would be a roll of your Aura Dice, and any roll of a Fragile Aura's Dice instantly shatters the Aura.

If your Fragile Aura would have been included with the *Effect Dice,* then no — since you did not get a chance to roll the Fragile Aura's Dice.

"Words cannot convey the depth of language, and language cannot convey the depth of meaning"

— from *The Book of Changes*

The Spells of the Fah Shih: Changes Magic

Changes Magic was the result of the legacy left to the people of Zhongguo by the Yellow Emperor: his instructions for reaching immortality. In its simplest form, Changes Magic as written in *The Book of Changes* guided people to distinguish right from wrong. Only those who could "read between the lines" — who saw the relationship between opposites in the hexagrams — entered the School of Changes Magic.

Many practitioners of Changes Magic can proudly trace their lineage all the way back to the Yellow Emperor himself. Yet, it was Fu His, the founder of the Tai Ping School of Heavenly Peace, who understood the relations as he copied the original text of *The Book of Changes* for the school library. He wrote a companion book that detailed the Eight Greater Mysteries and Eight Lesser Mysteries. In the mythical days of Zhongguo, there were numerous students of Tai Ping School of Heavenly Peace, openly and actively helping to minimize disasters and to destroy evils. Yet one great tragedy that ended the mythical days was when a Tai Ping Student (whose name is forever eradicated) accidentally opened the Mysteries of Kun and ushered in the Great Flood. By the time the Great Flood was restrained, the Tai Ping School of Heavenly Peace was no more. Their good name was forever destroyed by the one student's act of dark sorcery.

In reality, the Tai Ping School of Heavenly Peace had removed itself from public knowledge. The Masters understood that they had reached the apex and then experienced the abyss; if they were to succumb and disband the School, then all their teachings would be for naught. Only through persistently working behind the scenes and against hardship were they able to begin the ascent back to the zenith during the approaching spring and autumn. In modern Zhongguo, practitioners of Changes Magic are rare, and they surround themselves in an air of mystery.

While closely related to Dàoist Magic, Changes Magic concentrates on the spiritual world and on subtle or lasting effects, as opposed to flashy, loud, brute-force destruction or alteration. Changes Magic is usually of the Nature of Earth, Fire, Heaven, Lake, Mountain, Thunder, Water, or Wind. There are four levels of study, each requiring the student to be Adept at eight more spells.

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws (Fah Shih Xi Sheng)

Requirement: Fah Shih Career at d4 or better

Break the Golden Chain to Release the Dragon ..... p. 212
Chase, The ..... p. 213
Decrease ..... p. 221
Detect Changes Magic ..... p. 223
Display of Propriety ..... p. 224
Fah Shih's Fragile Aura of Lake ..... p. 226
Fah Shih's Fragile Aura of Lies ..... p. 226
Fah Shih's Fragile Aura of Mountain ..... p. 226
Fah Shih's Fragile Aura of Progress ..... p. 226
Fah Shih's Fragile Aura of Protection ..... p. 226
Fah Shih's Fragile Aura of Thunder ..... p. 227
Fah Shih's Fragile Aura of Wind ..... p. 227
Frugality ..... p. 229
Gentle Permeation ..... p. 229

Increase ..... p. 231
Inner Truth ..... p. 232
Keeping Still ..... p. 233
Preponderance of the Small ..... p. 238
Sandals for the Long Tread ..... p. 240
Self-Nourishment ..... p. 241
Silencing ..... p. 242
Steadfastness ..... p. 243
Tenacity of the Worker, The ..... p. 245
Triumphant Conversation ..... p. 245
Turmoil ..... p. 246

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws (Fah Jiao Shih)

Requirement: Adept at any eight spells of "Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws"

Abandonment ..... p. 210
Abundance in Isolation ..... p. 210
Adornment ..... p. 210
Biting Through ..... p. 211
Blindness of Inexperience ..... p. 212
Collapsing the Weakest Column ..... p. 214
Danger ..... p. 218
Deference to Modesty ..... p. 222
Dispel Lake ..... p. 224
Dispel Mountain ..... p. 224
Dispel Thunder ..... p. 224
Dispel Wind ..... p. 224
Fah Shih's Imposing Aura of Protection ..... p. 227
Fah Shih's Imposing Aura of Weakness ..... p. 227
Fah Shih's Proper Aura of Lake ..... p. 227
Fah Shih's Proper Aura of Lies ..... p. 227
Fah Shih's Proper Aura of Mountain ..... p. 228
Fah Shih's Proper Aura of Progress ..... p. 228
Fah Shih's Proper Aura of Thunder ..... p. 228
Fah Shih's Proper Aura of Wind ..... p. 228
Feather Strike ..... p. 228
Illicit Rendezvous ..... p. 231
Illness ..... p. 231
Inspect Changes Magic ..... p. 232
Largesse of the Great Household, The ..... p. 234
Lightning Strike ..... p. 234
Pushing Upwards ..... p. 239
Revolution ..... p. 239
Safeguard Against the Untoward Opportunity ..... p. 240
Scissoring Leaves ..... p. 241
Taming Power over the Small ..... p. 244
Tidal Wave ..... p. 245
Travel ..... p. 245
Twice-Fold Bounty of Unreal ..... p. 247
Void ..... p. 248
Weariness ..... p. 250

Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws (Fah Lao Shih)

Requirement: Adept at any eight spells of "Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws"

Blustering Rage ..... p. 212
Calling Down the Rain ..... p. 212
Commanding Greatness ..... p. 214
Constellation ..... p. 214
Contemplation ..... p. 214
Controlling the Rivers ..... p. 215
Counter Lake ..... p. 216
Counter Mountain ..... p. 216
Counter Thunder ..... p. 216
Counter Wind ..... p. 216
Decorum ..... p. 221
Dragon Bellow ..... p. 224
Fah Shih's Enduring Aura of Lake ..... p. 226
Fah Shih's Enduring Aura of Lies ..... p. 226
Fah Shih's Enduring Aura of Mountain ..... p. 226
Fah Shih's Enduring Aura of Thunder ..... p. 226
Fah Shih's Enduring Aura of Wind ..... p. 226
Humble Guise ..... p. 230
Know Changes Magic ..... p. 233
Oppression ..... p. 236
Phantom Servant ..... p. 237
Prevailing Over Others ..... p. 238
Strength of the Waterfall ..... p. 243
Turning Point ..... p. 246
Weight of a Leaf ..... p. 250
Withdrawal from Earthly Perception ..... p. 250

Grand Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws (Fah Da Shih)

Requirement: Adept at any eight spells of "Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws"

Admonishment ..... p. 210
Cloud-Vaulting ..... p. 213
Deliverance ..... p. 223
Drawing from the Well ..... p. 224
Fah Shih's Auspicious Aura of Lake ..... p. 225
Fah Shih's Auspicious Aura of Lies ..... p. 225
Fah Shih's Auspicious Aura of Mountain ..... p. 225
Fah Shih's Auspicious Aura of Thunder ..... p. 226
Fah Shih's Auspicious Aura of Wind ..... p. 226
Fah Shih's Privilege Over Lake ..... p. 227
Fah Shih's Privilege Over Mountain ..... p. 227
Fah Shih's Privilege Over Thunder ..... p. 227
Fah Shih's Privilege Over Wind ..... p. 227
Sacred Vessel ..... p. 240
Twice-Fold Bounty of Lake ..... p. 247
Twice-Fold Bounty of Mountain ..... p. 247
Twice-Fold Bounty of Thunder ..... p. 247
Twice-Fold Bounty of Wind ..... p. 247
Viewing of the Remote Place, The ..... p. 248

"The Dào that can be followed is not the eternal Dào.
The name that can be named is not the eternal name."
— the first two phrases in the *Dào De Jing*

The Spells of the Dào Shih: Dàoist Magic

The founder of Daoist Magic was Li-Ehr-tan, a mythical figure during the time of the First Sage King, Jang Ren-biao. He was the grand recorder and a close friend of the First Prime Minister, Huli Rui-ning. Legend has it that Li Erh-tan was enlightened as he sat at the First Prime Minister's Garden of the World and read the draft of the Dao De Jing. In front of him was a miniature landscape of Zhongguo. As he read chapter eight, small streams inundated the landscape; at chapter nine, metal and precious stones dotted it; at chapter twenty-one, the miniature landscape shook; at chapter twenty-two, miniature bonsai blossomed and covered the entire landscape; and at chapter twenty six, the landscape burst into flame. Shocked, he turned around and saw the First Prime Minister, who was smiling at him. Huli Rui-ning explained to Li Erh-tan that he had understood the Dao. Furthermore, the First Prime Minister wrote a letter of introduction and recommended that he join the Tai Ping School of Heavenly Peace. Since then, Dao Shihs have been considered Masters of the Five Forces of Nature.

Daoist Magic is separated into five paths each located at the cardinal points of its element (Earth in the Center, Water in the North, Wood in the South, Fire in the East, and Metal in the West). The reason behind this is that after the Great Flood was subdued, the surviving Masters decided that it was best to split their schools and send them to the far corners of Zhongguo, each focused solely upon one aspect of Daoist Magic, to lessen the chances of another catastrophe. Initially, the Masters were committed to gathering once in a while to share knowledge and companionship. However, as each succeeding master came and went, the links among them gradually disintegrated. Despite the lost connection, in the recital of rules and regulations of every Daoist Apprentice is the Promise to extend Knowledge and Hospitality to the People of the Earth.

Dàoist Magic has five distinct paths of study, each concerned with one of the five Natures. The five paths are further divided into five lists: "Ghost Way," "People's Way," "Worldly Way," "Divine Way," and "Celestial Way." Most Dào Shih only master one or two paths, as advancement is easier than other kinds of magic and the results can be quite satisfactory.

Ghost Way of Earth
(Tu Gui Dào – 1st Circle)
Requirement: the Dào Shih Career at d4

Create Earth ..... p. 216
Dào Shih's Fragile Aura of Earth ..... p. 220
Detect Earth ..... p. 223
Earth Controls Metal ..... p. 225
Earth Dispels Water ..... p. 225

Ghost Way of Fire (Huo Gui Dào – 1st Circle)
Requirement: the Dào Shih Career at d4

Create Fire ..... p. 216
Dào Shih's Fragile Aura of Fire ..... p. 220
Detect Fire ..... p. 223
Fire Controls Earth ..... p. 228
Fire Dispels Metal ..... p. 228

Ghost Way of Metal (Tie Gui Dào – 1st Circle)
Requirement: the Dào Shih Career at d4

Create Metal ..... p. 217
Dào Shih's Fragile Aura of Metal ..... p. 220
Detect Metal ..... p. 223
Metal Controls Water ..... p. 234
Metal Dispels Wood ..... p. 235

Ghost Way of Water (Shui Gui Dào – 1st Circle)
Requirement: the Dào Shih Career at d4

Create Water ..... p. 217
Dào Shih's Fragile Aura of Water ..... p. 220
Detect Water ..... p. 223
Water Controls Wood ..... p. 249
Water Dispels Fire ..... p. 250

Ghost Way of Wood (Mu Gui Dào – 1st Circle)
Requirement: the Dào Shih Career at d4

Create Wood ..... p. 217
Dào Shih's Fragile Aura of Wood ..... p. 220
Detect Wood ..... p. 223
Wood Controls Fire ..... p. 251
Wood Dispels Earth ..... p. 251

People's Way of Earth (Tu Ren Dào – 2nd Circle)
Requirement: Adept at all five spells of the "Ghost Way of Earth"

Cast a Brick to Attract Jade ..... p. 213
Dào Shih's Proper Aura of Earth ..... p. 221
Inspect Earth ..... p. 232
Misfortune of Earth ..... p. 235
Receptivity ..... p. 239

People's Way of Fire (Huo Ren Dào – 2nd Circle)
Requirement: Adept at all five spells of the "Ghost Way of Fire"

Abandonment ..... p. 210
Attendant Fireball ..... p. 211
Dào Shih's Proper Aura of Fire ..... p. 221
Inspect Fire ..... p. 232
Misfortune of Fire ..... p. 235

People's Way of Metal (Tie Ren Dào – 2nd Circle)
Requirement: Adept at all five spells of the "Ghost Way of Metal"

Dancing Sword ..... p. 218
Dào Shih's Proper Aura of Metal ..... p. 221
Feather Strike ..... p. 228
Inspect Metal ..... p. 232
Misfortune of Metal ..... p. 235

People's Way of Water (Shui Ren Dào – 2nd Circle)
Requirement: Adept at all five spells of the "Ghost Way of Water"

Dào Shih's Proper Aura of Water ..... p. 221
Difficulty at the Beginning ..... p. 223
Flooding Deluge ..... p. 229
Inspect Water ..... p. 232
Misfortune of Water ..... p. 235

People's Way of Wood (Mu Ren Dào – 2nd Circle)
Requirement: Adept at all five spells of the "Ghost Way of Wood"

Basket ..... p. 211
Dào Shih's Proper Aura of Wood ..... p. 221
Inspect Wood ..... p. 232
Misfortune of Wood ..... p. 236
Net ..... p. 236

Worldly Way of Earth (Tu Di Dào – 3rd Circle)
Requirement: Adept at any five spells of the "People's Way of Earth"

Army, The ..... p. 210
Clear Path ..... p. 213
Dào Shih's Enduring Aura of Earth ..... p. 219
Earth Counters Water ..... p. 225
Illness ..... p. 231
Know Earth ..... p. 233
Ladle of Mud ..... p. 233
Peace ..... p. 237
Pheasant Crying Out in Darkness, The ..... p. 238
Show of Guile ..... p. 242
Turning Point, The ..... p. 246
Wall ..... p. 249
Weariness ..... p. 250

Worldly Way of Fire (Huo Di Dào – 3rd Circle)
Requirement: Adept at any five spells of the "People's Way of Fire"

Abundance in Isolation ..... p. 210
Biting Through ..... p. 211
Dào Shih's Enduring Aura of Fire ..... p. 219
Fire Counters Metal ..... p. 228

Great Chain of Gathering ..... p. 229
Judgment of Heaven, The ..... p. 232
Pheasant Crying Out in Darkness, The ..... p. 238
Know Fire ..... p. 233
Show of Guile ..... p. 242
Travel ..... p. 245

Worldly Way of Metal (Tie Di Dào – 3rd Circle)

Requirement: Adept at any five spells of the "People's Way of Metal"

Dào Shih's Enduring Aura of Metal ..... p. 219
Know Metal ..... p. 233
Metal Counters Wood ..... p. 234
Net ..... p. 236
River of Stars ..... p. 239

Worldly Way of Water (Shui Di Dào – 3rd Circle)

Requirement: Adept at any five spells of the "People's Way of Water"

Abysmal ..... p. 210
Admonishment ..... p. 210
Army, The ..... p. 210
Blindness of Inexperience ..... p. 212
Calling Down the Rain ..... p. 212
Danger ..... p. 218
Dào Shih's Enduring Aura of Water ..... p. 219
Frugality ..... p. 229
Fulfillment ..... p. 229
Know Water ..... p. 233
Ladle of Mud ..... p. 233
Moonlight ..... p. 236
Strength of the Waterfall ..... p. 243
Tidal Wave ..... p. 245
Transition before Completion ..... p. 245
Water Counters Fire ..... p. 249

Worldly Way of Wood (Mu Di Dào – 3rd Circle)

Requirement: Adept at any five spells of the "People's Way of Wood"

Blustering Rage ..... p. 212
Dào Shih's Enduring Aura of Wood ..... p. 219
Know Wood ..... p. 233
Righteous Arrow ..... p. 239
Scissoring Leaves ..... p. 241
Weight of a Leaf ..... p. 250
Wood Counters Earth ..... p. 251

Divine Way of Earth (Tu Shen Dào – 4th Circle)

Requirement: Adept at any five spells of the "Worldly Way of Earth"

Conversation with the Earth ..... p. 215
Dào Shih's Auspicious Aura of Earth ..... p. 218
Deference to Modesty ..... p. 222
Delay Earth ..... p. 222
Dragon Bellow ..... p. 224
Earthquake ..... p. 225
Pushing Upwards ..... p. 239
Void ..... p. 248

Divine Way of Fire (Huo Shen Dào – 4th Circle)

Requirement: Adept at any five spells of the "Worldly Way of Fire"

Adornment ..... p. 210
Dào Shih's Auspicious Aura of Fire ..... p. 218
Delay Fire ..... p. 222
Revolution ..... p. 239
Sacred Vessel ..... p. 240
Transition Before Completion ..... p. 245
Wellspring of Life ..... p. 250
Wings ..... p. 250

Divine Way of Metal (Tie Shen Dào – 4th Circle)

Requirement: Adept at any five spells of the "Worldly Way of Metal"

Dào Shih's Auspicious Aura of Metal ..... p. 219
Delay Metal ..... p. 222
Mirror Reflecting the Mystic Pattern ..... p. 235
Sword of Lightning ..... p. 243
Ward Against Injury ..... p. 249

Divine Way of Water (Shui Shen Dào – 4th Circle)

Requirement: Adept at any five spells of the "Worldly Way of Water"

Dào Shih's Auspicious Aura of Water ..... p. 219
Delay Water ..... p. 222
Drawing from the Well ..... p. 224
Judicious Counsel ..... p. 233
Oppression ..... p. 236
Waiting Without Anxiety ..... p. 249

Divine Way of Wood (Mu Shen Dào – 4th Circle)

Requirement: Adept at any five spells of the "Worldly Way of Wood"

Better to Bend as a Reed than to Break as a Tree .p. 211
Conversation with the Wood ..... p. 216
Curing Cloud of Moxibustion ..... p. 217
Dào Shih's Auspicious Aura of Wood ..... p. 219
Delay Wood ..... p. 223
Pass Without Trace p. 237

Celestial Way of Earth (Tu Tian Dào – 5th Circle)

Requirement: Adept at any five spells of the "Divine Way of Earth"

Dào Shih's Privilege Over Earth ..... p. 220
Synecdoche of Earth ..... p. 243
Twice-Fold Bounty of Earth ..... p. 246

Celestial Way of Fire (Huo Tian Dào – 5th Circle)

Requirement: Adept at any five spells of the "Divine Way of Fire"

Dào Shih's Privilege Over Fire ..... p. 220
Synecdoche of Fire ..... p. 243
Twice-Fold Bounty of Fire ..... p. 246

Celestial Way of Metal (Tie Tian Dào – 5th Circle)

Requirement: Adept at any five spells of the "Divine Way of Metal"

Dào Shih's Privilege Over Metal ..... p. 221
Synecdoche of Metal ..... p. 244
Twice-Fold Bounty of Metal ..... p. 247

Celestial Way of Water (Shui Tian Dào – 5th Circle)

Requirement: Adept at any five spells of the "Divine Way of Water"

Dào Shih's Privilege Over Water ..... p. 221
Synecdoche of Water ..... p. 244
Twice-Fold Bounty of Water ..... p. 247

Celestial Way of Wood (Mu Tian Dào – 5th Circle)

Requirement: Adept at any five spells of the "Divine Way of Wood"

Dào Shih's Privilege Over Wood ..... p. 221
Synecdoche of Wood ..... p. 244
Twice-Fold Bounty of Wood ..... p. 247

"At twenty, I opened my heart to my ancestors.
At thirty, I had planted my feet firm upon the flame.
At forty, I no longer suffered from indecisions.
At fifty, I knew what were the biddings of Heaven.
At sixty, I heard them with a docile ear.
At seventy, I speak with confidence of heaven,
my words are no longer overstepped the boundaries of righteousness."

— from The Book of Vanishing Heavenly Stem

The Spells of the *Shén Qing*: Purity Magic

Of all the magic of Zhongguo, none is more respected than Purity Magic. Masters of Purity Magic sometimes jocularly dismiss Dàoist Magic and Changes Magic as simplifications of "true magic." Before the nation known today as Zhongguo was even a concept, the land was filled with numerous tribes, whose shamans communed with ancestral spirits. They allowed the supernatural forces to enter their bodies to speak through them. When the spirits departed, they left part of their wisdom behind, and the secrets they told were verbally passed down from one generation to the next.

These secrets were gathered and written as part of *The Book of Vanishing Heavenly Stem*. However, as various authors copied the book, bits of knowledge were gradually discarded, as they were viewed as being nonsensical, through the ignorance of the copiers. Fortunately, descendants of the original shamans were able the find one original edition of the Book. They brought it with them to the Tai Ping School of Heavenly Peace. There, they remained as the third branch of the Mystery College of Tai Ping School of Heavenly Peace. Prior to the Great Flood, masters of Purity Magic began to disperse, taking with them their copies of the Book. They, and their secrets, survived the Great Flood with minimal loss.

After the Great Flood, Masters of Purity Magic reached the same conclusion as the Masters of Dàoist Magic. They were to remain disperse and they set it as the criteria for the final stage of the Being of Spiritual Purity that the potential candidates for teaching would have to travel throughout Zhongguo to pay homage to no less than seven other Masters of Being of Spiritual Purity. Along the way, they have to render aid to no less than eight to the people in need.

Purity Magic is often holistic, being concerned with wellness of being. Purity Magic is primarily of the Healing, Heaven, Unholy, Unreal, or Weather Natures.

Being of Generative Purity (Nèisheng Jingqu)
Requirements: Shén Qing Career of d4

Commanding Greatness ..... p. 214
Contemplation ..... p. 214
Creativity ..... p. 217
Curing Cloud of Moxibustion ..... p. 217
Detect Purity Magic ..... p. 223
Generative Restoration ..... p. 229
Illicit Rendezvous ..... p. 231
Lightning Strike ..... p. 234
Moonlight ..... p. 236
Phantom Servant ..... p. 237
Pouring into the Well ..... p. 238
Righteous Arrow ..... p. 239
Star ..... p. 243
Vivacity ..... p. 248

Being of Vital Purity (Péngbó Jingqu)
Requirement: Adept at any five spells of "Being of Generative Purity"

Clear Path ..... p. 213
Decorum ..... p. 221
Flooding Deluge ..... p. 229
Great Chain of Gathering ..... p. 229
Inspect Purity Magic ..... p. 232
Judgment of Heaven, The ..... p. 232
Largesse of the Great Household, The ..... p. 234
River of Stars ..... p. 239
Shén Qing's Enduring Aura of Heaven ..... p. 241
Shén Qing's Enduring Aura of Truth ..... p. 241
Shén Qing's Fragile Aura of Heaven ..... p. 241
Shén Qing's Imposing Aura of Progress ..... p. 241
Taming Power over the Small ..... p. 244
Vital Restoration ..... p. 248
Wellspring of Life ..... p. 250
Withdrawal from Earthly Perception ..... p. 250

Being of Spiritual Purity (Xinlíng Jingqu)
Requirements: Adept at any five spells of "Being of Vital Purity"

Call Down the Lightning ..... p. 212
Cloud-Vaulting ..... p. 213
Dragon Bellow ..... p. 224
Earthquake ..... p. 225
Harvest in Great Measure ..... p. 230
Know Purity Magic ..... p. 233
Obstruction ..... p. 236
Peace ..... p. 237
Safeguard Against the Untoward Opportunity ..... p. 240
Shén Qing's Auspicious Aura of Heaven ..... p. 241
Shén Qing's Privilege Over Heaven ..... p. 241
Shén Qing's Privilege Over Weather ..... p. 242
Spiritual Restoration ..... p. 242
Tidal Wave ..... p. 245
Twice-Fold Bounty of Heaven ..... p. 246
Twice-Fold Bounty of Weather ..... p. 247
Viewing of the Remote Place, The ..... p. 248
Waiting Without Anxiety ..... p. 249

The Wiles of the Immortals: Common Spells

Each spell is listed with its *Name* first, followed by its *Natures* in brackets. Next are the *Lists* where the spell is available – if you meet the requirements for that Spell List, you may attempt to Cast any spell on that list. *Cost* is how many Magic Points must be spent to cast the spell (and how many Skill Levels you need to become Adept.) *Difficulty* are the Dice you must beat on a Casting Test if you are not yet Adept. (Unless the spell says otherwise, the Effect Dice are the same as the Difficulty Dice.) Spell *Type* tells you how the spell is cast, as described above. *Effect* is a brief description of what the spell does, which is described in greater detail below.

Abandonment

[Fire, Lake, Unreal]
People's Way of Fire
Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Group must Test Mind & Will vs. 4d6 or become Demoralized; lowest Score suffers Fear

You mesh your fingers, then separate them, to symbolize a union that is dissolved. The targets of your spell who succumb to its effects suddenly feel alone and lost, their sense of camaraderie gone — in other words, they become *Demoralized*. The single target found most wanting completely loses all morale and suffers *Fear*.

Abundance in Isolation

[Fire, Thunder, Unreal]
Worldly Way of Fire
Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Group must Test Will & Career vs. 4d6 or suffer Fear

The targets of this spell suddenly experience a vision of stately splendor, the manifestation of the dignity of a thousand ages … but with great power also comes a sense of loneliness, as power makes the powerfulfeel isolated from the common folk.

Those that fail to resist this spell are awed by the images and suffer *Fear*.

Abysmal

[Unreal, Water]
Worldly Way of Water

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Group tests Speed & Will vs. 4d6 or suffers Paralysis

Your foes briefly experience a sinking sensation in the pits of their body, as if they are descending a bottomless well, while multiple visions of the immediate future occur to them, each of them ending in the worst possible way. Those that fail to shrug it off become motionless, unable to act physically for fear that they would cause disaster.

Admonishment

[Mountain, Water]
Worldly Way of Water
Grand-Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 6
Difficulty: 1d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Target gains Second Sight Trait

By wagging your finger and warning the target to be vigilant, you magically increase their ability to perceive the world. For the duration of this Scene, the target of this spell gains Second Sight Dice equal to your spell's Effect Dice. (If they already have Second Sight Dice, they now have even more!)

Adornment

[Fire, Mountain]
Divine Way of Fire
Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d6
Type: Delayed
Effect: Target may re-roll their next Botch.

This spell helps protect you against future misfortune. You use this spell to safeguard one target (you or another) against their next calamity. The next time the target of this spell rolls a *Botch* this spell takes effect. The target re-rolls all their dice, and they must abide by the second roll — which may be a Botch itself.

At the Game Host's discretion, this spell may also avert some other kind of disaster, not just a bad dice roll.

In any event, when the spell takes effect, the *Adornment* ends and the Delayed Magic Points are released. A target may only have one *Adornment* at any one time — a newer casting automatically dispels an older one.

Army, The

[Earth, Water]
Worldly Way of Earth
Worldly Way of Water

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 1d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Group gains d6 Tactics Dice

You gain a supernatural capacity to command others who ally with you. Roll your Effect Dice to see the number of allies who can be affected — each one is granted your Effect Dice as Tactics Dice.

Attendant Fireball

[Fire]

People's Way of Fire

Cost:	2
Difficulty:	2d10
Type:	Regular (but see below)
Effect:	Swat fireballs at a foe with your iron fan for 2d10 Damage

At your command, a fireball appears next to you, floating in space. You must use an iron fan (no exceptions!) to swat this fireball towards your foe. Otherwise, the fireball hovers next to you and simply disintegrates at the end of this Scene.

To hit your target, you must use *Speed and Iron Fan* skill. The fireballs have no Point-Blank Range, a Short Range of 5, a Medium Range of 10, a Long Range of 25, and an eXtreme Range of 50.

Special: On Fire. The target catches on fire (p. 341).

When you swat the Fireballs towards your foe, your spell has become a *Targeting Spell*.

You may cast this spell multiple times, to have multiple fireballs hovering next to you. Unless you know a Martial Art that allows you to use multiple missiles in a round, you may only swat one fireball towards your target.

Since this spell is a Regular Spell and not a Targeting Spell, you may use it even when blind, or even without free hands. (You will need a Prehensile Tail or other hand substitute for using your Iron Fan.)

Only an iron fan can be used to swat the fireballs towards targets — any attempt to use anything else will fail. However, since the fireball provides illumination, the caster may choose to use this spell to simply provide a hands-free, hovering torch.

Authority

[Lake, Mountain, Unreal]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost:	5
Difficulty:	1d6
Type:	Regular
Effect:	Target gains Charisma Trait

This spell makes another seem more commanding, by giving timbre to their voice, precision to their gestures, and a greater countenance of dignity. For the duration of this Scene, the target of this spell gains Charisma Dice equal to your spell's Effect Dice. (If they already have Charisma Dice, they now have even more!)

Basket

[Wood]

People's Way of Wood

Cost:	2
Difficulty:	1d6
Type:	Persistent
Effect:	Summon a magical, hovering basket.

You snap your fingers, and a wicker basket appears, floating in space. You can direct the basket by Concentrating; it has a move of the sum of its Effect Dice; the spell starts with an Effect of d6, but it can be improved with Auras.

For game purposes, the basket has a Lift of zero and thus suffers -1 of Encumbrance for every stone or part thereof carried.

Better to Bend as a Reed than to Break as a Tree

[Wind, Wood]

Divine Way of Wood

Cost:	5
Difficulty:	5d8
Type:	Exploding
Effect:	Group suffers 5d8 Exploding Damage (include Contortionist Dice with Soak)

You make a sweeping motion with your hand, and a magic wind springs up, only affecting a Group that you specify. Those affected suffer a 5d8 Exploding Attack.

The targets may include their Contortionist Dice when resisting this Exploding Attack.

Biting Through

[Fire, Thunder]

Worldly Way of Fire

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost:	3
Difficulty:	3d8
Type:	Regular
Effect:	Group saves Mind vs. Effect or becomes Enraged

Sometimes, the proper way to solve a problem is by summoning forth the strength to deal with unpleasant things, to "bite through" initial problems and get to the solution.

The Group under the effects of this spell become *Enraged*. Enraged combatants cannot Focus or Guard, but they gain immunity to certain

kinds of Abnormal Status. As with other spells of this kind, the targets may choose not to resist, lowering their Resistance to 1.

Blindness of Inexperience

[Mountain, Water]
Worldly Way of Water
Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Group must test Mind & Career vs. 3d6 or become Blind

Inexperience can make one blind to many things. This spell uses the metaphor of inexperience to literally make the targets unable to see. Some of the more unforgiving teachers have been known to use this spell on their students to drive their lesson home.

Each target resists with their Mind Trait and all Career Traits that they possess.

Blustering Rage

[Wind, Wood]
Worldly Way of Wood
Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Group must Save Mind vs. 3d8 or become Berserk; lowest Score becomes Confused & Berserk

You spread your hands wide and shout a cryptic insult. The Group you direct this spell against find themselves filled with anger, even if they're not sure why.

Break the Golden Chain to Release the Dragon

[Unreal, Wind]
Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d12
Type: Defense
Effect: Caster gains 1d12 on a Chase Test to flee the combat

When casting this spell, you wave your hands wildly, and cry out in a loud voice that you will "break the golden chain to release the dragon!" The spell produces numerous fireworks and loud noises and other showy effects … that conceal the true purpose of the spell, which is to help the caster escape.

After casting this spell, you *must* take the *Dash* maneuver to flee the combat. If anyone pursues you, you gain the spell's 1d12 Effect Dice on your Chase Test to flee the combat. (This spell confers no advantage to pursue someone — only to flee.)

Call Down the Lightning

[Heaven, Weather]
Being of Spiritual Purity

Cost: 7
Difficulty: 7d6
Type: Exploding
Effect: Group suffers 7d6 Exploding Damage (includes Weather Sense Dice with Soak Dice)

You can cast this spell as long as it is raining. The Group you cast it against must either be outside in the rain, or within 4 paces of an open window with access to the outside.

You can call down the lightning to strike a Group, as an Exploding Attack from above. Targets include their Weather Sense Dice with their Soak Dice, if they have any.

Calling Down the Rain

[Heaven, Wind, Water, Weather]
Worldly Way of Water
Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 5
Difficulty: 5d6
Type: Persistent
Effect: Summons rain from the sky

When casting this spell, you raise your arms to the sky and then let them fall. Immediately, clouds begin to gather in the sky above you. It may take several minutes for clouds to appear; as soon as they do, it begins to rain. The rain lasts as long as you maintain the spell, ending when you dismiss the spell or someone else dispels it.

Cast a Brick to Attract Jade

[Earth, Unreal]

People's Way of Earth

Cost:	3
Difficulty:	3d8
Type:	Regular
Effect:	Target gains illusion of improvement

You wave both your hands in a gesture next to the target, and they become enveloped in an illusion that makes everything about their appearance look more rich and more dignified. Ragged clothes appear as fine robes; marred tools appear as superb instruments, etc.

In game terms, the target gains the spell's 3d8 Effect Dice with all uses of Disguise and Forgery to pretend to be something superior.

This spell can only improve a target's appearance. It cannot disguise finery as rags, for example.

Chase, The

[Lake, Thunder]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost:	3
Difficulty:	1d4
Type:	Regular
Effect:	Target gains d4 Effect Dice as Quickness Dice

You make a waving motion with your hands, as if urging a target onwards or shooing them away. The target of your spell gains your spell's Effect Dice as Quickness Dice (p. 62) for the remainder of this Scene.

Clear Path

[Heaven, Earth]

Worldly Way of Earth

Being of Vital Purity

Cost:	3
Difficulty:	3d8
Type:	Regular
Effect:	Target gains the Gift of Sure-Footed, 3d8 on Chase Tests

By means of this magic, the target becomes aware of the clear path they must take. The target of this spell may include the spell's 3d8 Effect Dice with all Chase Tests, as well with all uses of Shadowing and Tracking.

At the Game Host's discretion, this spell may help the target in other tests of knowing where to tread. For example, the target may gain the 3d8 Effect Dice to avoid stepping on a concealed trap door.

Cloud-Vaulting

Requirement: a Jumping Die of d4 or more; must not be Unholy

[Heaven, Wind]

Grand-Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Being of Spiritual Purity

Cost:	3
Difficulty:	3d8
Type:	Regular
Effect:	Caster gains the ability to vault clouds.

The caster gestures their arms in a circle, and then leaps into the air, disappearing into the clouds above.

This spell will not work if there are no clouds in the sky. (While you may be able to use another spell to change the weather, know that weather-manipulation can be a criminal offense.)

You instantly soar into the air, hundreds of feet up, into the clouds. You then may leap from cloud to cloud, traveling several leagues with each jump.

Roll all your Jumping Dice. Each die is a number of leagues you travel with each leap. (Note that the longest leap you may take is 12 leagues). If a leap takes you into an area where there are no clouds, you will land back to earth.

If you try to leap through a thunderstorm, you suffer a 3d8 Homing lightning attack.

If you are *Unholy* for any reason, you will launch upwards 33 paces, then suddenly sink back to earth, suffering 6d12 & d8 Falling Damage (p. 151), as it is impossible for any Unholy creature to ascend more than 33 paces off the ground by supernatural means.

Use of this spell within city limits is prohibited by law in many kingdoms.

This spell combines very well with the spell *Weight of a Leaf*.

Collapsing the Weakest Column

[Lake, Wind]

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 5
Difficulty: 5d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Group must test Body & Will vs. Effect Dice; lowest Score suffers Wounds

This spell tests a Group of individuals, but it only affects one of them. All targets feel as if they are supporting a great weight on their shoulders, as if they were columns supporting the roof of the house.

If all the targets resist the spell, then they successfully cast the weight off their shoulders. However, if one or more does not, then the lowest Score suffers 1 Wound for every target that was in the original Group!

A target Wounded also must pass a Resolve Test vs. the Effect Dice of this spell (leave those dice on the table!) or be sent Reeling, as usual.

Commanding Greatness

[Heaven, Thunder]

Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Being of Generative Purity

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Group must test Mind & Will vs. 2d8 or become Mesmerized

As part of the casting of this spell, you raise two fingers high and command others to halt in their tracks. Those who are affected feel their willpower drain away and become *Mesmerized*.

Mesmerized combatants lose their will to act. They stand around in a daze, eyes glazed, mouth slightly agape. They can be led around very slowly by others (at most one pace per Round). They answer questions in a slow monotone. The target will remember nothing consciously while Mesmerized, but Overwhelming uses of the Thought-Reading spells will reveal what the target saw.

A Mesmerized target cannot lie, and will answer questions in the same slow monotone to the best of their ability.

The major use of Mesmerism is to put a target's mind into a pliable state. Anyone may attempt to Influence a Mesmerized target, using such skills as Fast-Talk and Diplomacy. (The Host may rule that other skills can be used as well). The target cannot leave the room, or flee, or object in any way. The amount of time the Influence takes is unaffected — however, the target is a captive audience, and you may try over and over again to Influence the target without penalty. You can even plant "compulsions" or other orders that your target may act upon later — in this regard, Mesmerism is a lot like the "hypnotism" of the modern day.

Note that *anyone* may try to Influence the Mesmerized target, not just the caster. You would do well to take the target of your mind-control to a quiet and secluded place.

The target will instantly snap out of the state of Mesmerism if they suffer any Wounds or Fatigue, or anything that changes their mental state. The target can also be ordered to "snap out" of the Mesmerized state.

Constellation

[Healing, Heaven]

Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Roll Effect Dice vs. Target's Death Dice to restore life, heal Wounds

You cast this spell on a Mortally Wounded or Dead target, in an attempt to resuscitate them back to life. This spell has no effect on targets that are not either Mortally Wounded or Dead.

Roll your Effect Dice of 3d8 vs. the target's Death Dice. (If the target is Wounded past -12, you roll against 5d12). If you *Fail* or worse, nothing happens and the target remains dead.

If you *Tie*, your target heals 1 Wound. If you *Succeed*, your target heals 3 Wounds. If you *Overwhelmingly Succeed*, your target heals 6 Wounds. However, the target is exhausted from the ordeal, and suffers 1 Fatigue for each remaining Hit Point.

> ***Example:*** No Zim Ta suffered 13 Wounds and has died. The spell "Constellation" is used to revive him to life, healing him of 3 Wounds. No Zim Ta now has 10 Wounds. Since he has 12 Hit Points, he immediately suffers 2 Fatigue.

A Mortally-Wounded target that is healed of at least 1 Wound becomes *Unconscious* instead. A Dead target that is healed of at least 1 Wound makes a new Death Test against the (more favorable) Death Dice, becoming *Unconscious* on a Tie or better, *Mortally Wounded* on a regular Failure, and remaining Dead on an Overwhelming Failure or Botch. (Since a target healed to 5 Wounds or less has no Death Dice to roll against, they would automatically become Unconsciousness.)

This spell cannot help a target Wounded to -19 or worse.

Contemplation

[Heaven, Thunder]

Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Being of Generative Purity

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 1d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Target gains d6 Inspection Dice

This spell increases the target's flexibility and ability to adapt to changing situations. Your target immediately gains your Effect Dice as Inspection Dice (p. 62), if they do not already have a different Bagua Trait. (These dice *will* combine with a Inspection Trait they already possess.)

Controlling the Rivers

[Lake, Mountain, Weather]

Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 5

Difficulty: 5d6

Type: Regular

Effect: Redirect the flow of rivers

For as long as you Concentrate on this spell, you may redirect the flow of a river. You may halt its flow, move it from side to side, or even make it flow backwards.

Conversation with the Earth

[Earth]

Divine Way of Earth

Cost: 5

Difficulty: 5d6

Type: Regular

Effect: Gossip with the earth

You can ask the stones, dirt, and other earthen features of an area for information about what it may have seen or experienced. You must ask your questions verbally, and the earth responds with a disembodied voice that others can hear. (While others can ask questions, the earth does not respond to them.)

This is basically a Gossip Test (p. 107), using your *Mind Trait* and *Dao Shih Trait*, which requires one Scene. The difficulty is proportional to both the value of the earth and the time in the past you are asking your questions about.

Circumstance	*Difficulty*
You're talking to jade, jadeite, or nephrite.	none
You're talking to precious stones.	2d4
You're talking to worked stone, such as a statue or a castle wall.	2d6
You're talking to unworked stone.	2d8
You're talking to farmland.	2d10
You're talking to inhospitable dust or desert.	2d12
You're asking about events that happened in the last five minutes.	default
You're asking about something that happened up to a year ago.	increase Difficulty Dice by one size
You're asking about something that happened up to a hundred years ago.	increase Difficulty Dice by two sizes
You're asking about something that happened over a century ago.	increase Difficulty Dice by three sizes

If circumstances would increase the Difficulty Dice beyond 2d12, your questions cannot be answered

Remember that the object you're gossiping with must have been present at the event you're asking about. For example, chatting with a diamond about a dynasty from fifty years ago won't work if the diamond was still in a mine. The Game Host should see this as a role-playing opportunity.

Conversation with the Wood

[Wood]

Divine Way of Wood

Cost: 5
Difficulty: 5d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Gossip with plants

You can ask the grass, plants, and other flora for information about what it may have seen or have experienced. You must ask your questions verbally, and the plants respond with a disembodied voice that others can hear. (While others can ask questions, the plants do not respond to them.)

This is basically a Gossip Test (p. 107), using your *Mind Trait* and *Dao Shih Trait*, which requires one Scene. The difficulty is proportional to both the value of the plants and the time in the past you are asking your questions about.

Circumstance	*Difficulty*
You're talking to a peach-wood tree.	none
You're talking to a tree or a garden that is a hundred years old	2d4
You're talking to young trees or a recent garden.	2d6
You're talking to bushes or undergrowth.	2d8
You're talking to wild grass or bamboo.	2d10
You're talking to weeds or to crops that are harvested every year.	2d12
You're asking about events that happened in the last five minutes.	default
You're asking about something that happened up to a year ago.	increase Difficulty Dice by one size
You're asking about something that happened up to a hundred years ago.	increase Difficulty Dice by two sizes
You're asking about something that happened over a century ago.	increase Difficulty Dice by three sizes

If circumstances would increase the Difficulty Dice beyond 2d12, your questions cannot be answered.

Remember that the object you're gossiping with must have been present at the event you're asking about. For example, chatting with a tree about a scholar from fifty years ago won't work if the tree hadn't been planted yet. The Game Host should see this as a role-playing opportunity.

Counter Lake

[Lake]

Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d10
Type: Defense
Effect: Counterspell magic of the Lake Nature

See "Preventing and Removing Magic," p. 200.

Counter Mountain

[Mountain]

Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d10
Type: Defense
Effect: Counterspell magic of the Mountain Nature

See "Preventing and Removing Magic," p. 200.

Counter Thunder

[Thunder]

Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d10
Type: Defense
Effect: Counterspell magic of the Thunder Nature

See "Preventing and Removing Magic," p. 200.

Counter Wind

[Wind]

Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d10
Type: Defense
Effect: Counterspell magic of the Wind Nature

See "Preventing and Removing Magic," p. 200.

Create Earth

[Earth, Unreal]

Ghost Way of Earth

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Create a small amount of earth

With this spell, you may create a small amount of dirt, soil, or stone. Roll your Effect Dice of 1d8 vs. Soak as if causing Property Damage (p. 152). A "Light" result creates a half-stone weight of earth, rock, dirt, or sand; a "Medium" result creates two stone; a "Heavy" result creates four-stone weight. Precious gems are beyond the scope of this spell.

If you have the proper Skills, you may choose to create custom works of art such as statues or other works in stone.

Create Fire

[Fire, Unreal]

Ghost Way of Fire

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Spark a small fire

With this spell, you may create a small spark of flame; roll your Effect Dice of 1d8 vs. the difficulty of sparking a flame — lighting candles or firecrackers is normally only 1, whereas lighting soaked wood could be 2d8 or more. You may cast this spell upon other combatants as a *Homing Spell*, causing Damage (1 Wound per hit) but not actually setting them on fire.

Create Metal

[Metal, Unreal]

Ghost's Way of Metal

Cost: 1

Difficulty: 1d8

Type: Regular

Effect: Create a small amount of metal

With this spell, you may create a small amount of metal. Roll your Effect Dice of 1d8 vs. Soak as if causing Property Damage (p. 152). A "Light" result creates a half-stone weight of steel or iron or a quarter-stone Sword; a "Medium" result creates two stone or a full-stone Sword; a "Heavy" result creates four-stone weight. Gold and other precious metals are beyond the scope of this spell.

If you have the proper Skills, you may choose to create custom works of art such as engraved plates or iron jewelry.

Create Water

[Unreal, Water]

Ghost Way of Water

Cost: 1

Difficulty: 1d8

Type: Regular

Effect: Create a small amount of water

With this spell, you may create a small amount of water or other liquid. Roll your Effect Dice vs. the "imaginary 1." Each hit you score generates one stone's worth (6.35 liters) of water. This water magically fills a container from the ground — you cannot use it to douse combatants, only to fill any containers they are currently inside.

Create Wood

[Unreal, Wood]

Ghost Way of Wood

Cost: 1

Difficulty: 1d8

Type: Regular

Effect: Create a small amount of wood

With this spell, you may create a small amount of wood or other plant matter. Roll your Effect Dice of 1d8 vs. Soak as if causing Property Damage (p. 152). A "Light" result creates a half-stone weight of wood, cumbersome undergrowth, or quarter-stone Staff; a "Medium" result creates two stone of wood, a soft-cover hedge 3 paces wide, one meal for a vegetarian, rare orchids, or a full-stone Staff; a "Heavy" result creates four-stone weight of wood or a young tree.

If you have the proper Skills, you may choose to create custom works of art or finely-arranged gardens.

Creativity

[Heaven, Unreal]

Being of Generative Purity

Cost: 4

Difficulty: 4d6

Type: Regular

Effect: Create a small item out of nothing

This spell creates an item out of nothing. Roll your spell's Effect Dice vs. the difficulty of the item you want to create. Generally, the rarer the item is, the harder it should be to create — consult the *Equipment* chapter and the *Availability Test* (p. 104). If you simply want to create money, *add all your Effect Dice together* — the sum is the number of coins you create (or the maximum value.)

Items created with this spell look real but can be spotted as fakes with a test of Forgery Skill vs. Effect Dice. If you want to make an item that looks like something else (such as a given vase), then you will have to pass a test of your own Mind & Forgery Dice vs. a Difficulty chosen by the Host.

Items created by this spell disappear at the end of this Scene.

Weapons created by this spell must be readied for use. While you can create Armor with this spell, by the time the armor was put on, the spell's duration would expire.

Curing Cloud of Moxibustion

[Healing, Heaven, Wood]

Divine Way of Wood

Being of Generative Purity

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 3d12

Type: Regular

Effect: Cure a target of some affliction or status

Your target is enveloped in a puff of smoke, similar to that produced by moxa burning.

This spell can cure the target of any abnormal status — use the spell's Effect Dice of 3d12 vs. the Effect Dice of the hostile spell, as a dispel attempt to remove a hostile effect (p. 201).

Dancing Sword

[Metal]

People's Way of Metal

Cost:	4
Difficulty:	1d4
Type:	Regular
Effect:	Your sword springs to life and attacks your foes with d4 Effect Dice

You can use this spell to animate a Sword to attack your foes. This spell only works on rigid, proper Swords, not on Soft Swords or other kinds of weapons. To cast this spell, you must draw the Sword and throw it into the air.

Treat the Dancing Sword as a combatant with Body d10, Speed d10, *no* Mind or Will Trait, and a Dancing Sword Trait equal to your Effect Dice. The Dancing Sword Trait applies to Flight, Observation, Resolve, and Sword.

The Sword floats in mid-air, with a Dash of the sum of its Flight Dice and Speed Dice, and a Stride of ¼ its Dash. The spell empowers the sword with a Lift of +4 and a Strength of d10.

You must direct the Sword verbally; you have no "telepathic link" with it.

The Sword defends itself by either Parrying or Dodging. It has Hit Points like any other combatant. Other combatants may try to Grapple with it, but while this spell is active, the Sword will be too defiant to be used by anyone.

The Dancing Sword is immune to Unconsciousness and to any effect that is resisted by Mind or Will. It must still test for Reeling, however, as it can be knocked about.

The Dancing Sword may use only Universal Maneuvers. It attacks your foes to the best of its ability. The Dancing Sword is Honorable (p. 58) and will not attack downed foes or from behind.

The Dancing Sword remains until the end of this Scene, until you dismiss it, or until it is "killed," whereupon it immediately falls to the ground.

Danger

[Lake, Unholy, Water]

Worldly Way of Water

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost:	4
Difficulty:	4d8
Type:	Regular
Effect:	Cause an affliction with 4d8 Effect Dice

Curses the subject with a physical affliction. The makeup of a curse are wide and varied, and are up to the Player's and the Host's discretion. As a general rule, if you curse a person, they may use their Body and Will to resist.

Roll your 4d8 Effect Dice vs. the suggested difficulty below.

Affliction	***Suggested Difficulty***
Common Cold	2d6 & Target's Body & Target's Will
Fleas	2d8 & Target's Body & Target's Will
Flu	2d10 & Target's Body & Target's Will
Mange	2d12 & Target's Body & Target's Will
Black Plague	3d12 & Target's Body & Target's Will
Leprosy	4d12 & Target's Body & Target's Will
Spoiling Food and Water in a general area	3d6

The Game Host is the final arbiter on what Danger can do.

Dào Shih's Auspicious Aura of Earth

[Earth]

Divine Way of Earth

Cost:	4
Difficulty:	4d8
Type:	Defense
Effect:	Caster gains an Auspicious Aura of Earth (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Dào Shih's Auspicious Aura of Fire

[Fire]

Divine Way of Fire

Cost:	4
Difficulty:	4d8
Type:	Defense
Effect:	Caster gains an Auspicious Aura of Fire (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Dào Shih's Auspicious Aura of Metal

[Metal]

Divine Way of Metal

Cost: 4

Difficulty: 4d8

Type: Defense

Effect: Caster gains an Auspicious Aura of Metal (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Dào Shih's Auspicious Aura of Water

[Water]

Divine Way of Water

Cost: 4

Difficulty: 4d8

Type: Defense

Effect: Caster gains an Auspicious Aura of Water (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Dào Shih's Auspicious Aura of Wood

[Wood]

Divine Way of Wood

Cost: 4

Difficulty: 4d8

Type: Defense

Effect: Caster gains an Auspicious Aura of Wood (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Dào Shih's Enduring Aura of Earth

[Earth]

Worldly Way of Earth

Cost: 4

Difficulty: 4d6

Type: Regular

Effect: Caster gains a Enduring Aura of Earth (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Dào Shih's Enduring Aura of Fire

[Fire]

Worldly Way of Fire

Cost: 4

Difficulty: 4d6

Type: Regular

Effect: Caster gains a Enduring Aura of Fire (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Dào Shih's Enduring Aura of Metal

[Metal]

Worldly Way of Metal

Cost: 4

Difficulty: 4d6

Type: Regular

Effect: Caster gains a Enduring Aura of Metal (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Dào Shih's Enduring Aura of Water

[Water]

Worldly Way of Water

Cost: 4

Difficulty: 4d6

Type: Regular

Effect: Caster gains a Enduring Aura of Water (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Dào Shih's Enduring Aura of Wood

[Wood]

Worldly Way of Wood

Cost: 4

Difficulty: 4d6

Type: Regular

Effect: Caster gains a Enduring Aura of Wood (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Dào Shih's Fragile Aura of Earth

[Earth]

Ghost Way of Earth

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains a Fragile Aura of Earth (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Dào Shih's Fragile Aura of Fire

[Fire]

Ghost Way of Fire

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains a Fragile Aura of Fire (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Dào Shih's Fragile Aura of Metal

[Metal]

Ghost Way of Metal

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains a Fragile Aura of Metal (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Dào Shih's Fragile Aura of Water

[Water]

Ghost Way of Water

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains a Fragile Aura of Water (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Dào Shih's Fragile Aura of Wood

[Wood]

Ghost Way of Wood

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains a Fragile Aura of Wood (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Dào Shih's Privilege Over Earth

[Earth]

Celestial Way of Earth

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d8
Type: Defense (Privilege)
Effect: Invoke Privilege over Earth Magic.

You may invoke Privilege over any spell of the Earth Nature (p. 191).

Dào Shih's Privilege Over Fire

[Fire]

Celestial Way of Fire

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d8
Type: Defense (Privilege)
Effect: Invoke Privilege over Fire Magic.

You may invoke Privilege over any spell of the Fire Nature (p. 191).

Dào Shih's Privilege Over Metal

[Metal]

Celestial Way of Metal

Cost: 1

Difficulty: 1d8

Type: Defense (Privilege)

Effect: Invoke Privilege over Metal Magic.

You may invoke Privilege over any spell of the Metal Nature (p. 191).

Dào Shih's Privilege Over Water

[Water]

Celestial Way of Water

Cost: 1

Difficulty: 1d8

Type: Defense (Privilege)

Effect: Invoke Privilege over Water Magic.

You may invoke Privilege over any spell of the Water Nature (p. 191).

Dào Shih's Privilege Over Wood

[Wood]

Celestial Way of Wood

Cost: 1

Difficulty: 1d8

Type: Defense (Privilege)

Effect: Invoke Privilege over Wood Magic.

You may invoke Privilege over any spell of the Wood Nature (p. 191).

Dào Shih's Proper Aura of Earth

[Earth]

People's Way of Earth

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 3d6

Type: Regular

Effect: Caster gains a Proper Aura of Earth (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Dào Shih's Proper Aura of Fire

[Fire]

People's Way of Fire

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 3d6

Type: Regular

Effect: Caster gains a Proper Aura of Fire (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Dào Shih's Proper Aura of Metal

[Metal]

People's Way of Metal

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 3d6

Type: Regular

Effect: Caster gains a Proper Aura of Metal (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Dào Shih's Proper Aura of Water

[Water]

People's Way of Water

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 3d6

Type: Regular

Effect: Caster gains a Proper Aura of Water (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Dào Shih's Proper Aura of Wood

[Wood]

People's Way of Wood

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 3d6

Type: Regular

Effect: Caster gains a Proper Aura of Wood (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Decorum

[Heaven, Thunder]

Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Being of Vital Purity

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 1d6

Type: Regular

Effect: Target gains d6 Devotion Dice

Understanding one's place in the natural order of things brings about good fortune. Your target immediately gains your Effect Dice as Devotion Dice (p. 61), if they do not already have a different Bagua Trait. (These dice *will* combine with a Devotion Trait they already possess.)

Decrease

[Lake, Mountain]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 5

Difficulty: 5d6

Type: Regular

Effect: Weaken Abnormal Status of a Group

You can decrease the strength of the magical states that affect one or more targets in a Group. (This spell has no effect upon targets that do not have an Abnormal Status.)

This State	*Decreases to this state...*
Berserking	Rage
Blindness	(removed)
Confusion	Incompetence
Death	(no change)
Demoralization	(removed)
Drunkenness	(removed)
Fear	Demoralization
Focus	(removed)
Haste	(removed)
Imperceptibility	Silence
Incompetence	(removed)
Marionette	Paralysis
Mesmerism	Transfixation
Mired	(removed)
Mortally Wounded	Unconsciousness
On Fire	Incompetence
Paralysis	Mired
Petrified	Slowness
Rage	Confusion
Reeling	(no change)
Silence	(removed)
Sleep	Reeling
Slowness	(removed)
Terror	Fear
Transfixation	Reeling
Unconsciousness	Sleep
(other)	(no change)

The duration of the decreased state is usually the same as the previous state. For example, if a target was Petrified for 2 more Rounds, then the target becomes Slowed for 2 more Rounds, instead.

Each member of the Group need not be affected by the same Abnormal Status.

Deference to Modesty

[Earth, Mountain]

Divine Way of Earth

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d8
Type: Delayed
Effect: Release to cast a spell without gestures or speaking

You Delay this spell upon yourself. Later, as part of any Spell-Casting, you may choose to release a Deference to Modesty with it, to claim all of the following benefits:

- You may cast a spell without speaking, without paying the extra Magic Point to do so.
- If the spell is not a Targeting one, you may cast the spell without gestures, without paying the extra Magic Point to do so.
- You may cast a spell even when *Silenced*.

You may Delay multiple Deferences-to-Modesty upon yourself.

Delay Earth

[Earth]

Divine Way of Earth

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Delay any one spell of the Earth Nature

Immediately after casting this spell, the very next spell of the Earth Nature that you cast in this Scene (that is, the next five minutes) becomes a *Delayed Spell*. Later, you may choose to release the Delayed Spell as a Magic Defense instead of a Maneuver. See page 193 for more information.

Delay Fire

[Fire]

Divine Way of Fire

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Delay any one spell of the Fire Nature

Immediately after casting this spell, the very next spell of the Fire Nature that you cast in this Scene (that is, the next five minutes) becomes a *Delayed Spell*. Later, you may choose to release the Delayed Spell as a Magic Defense instead of a Maneuver. See page 193 for more information.

Delay Metal

[Metal]

Divine Way of Metal

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Delay any one spell of the Metal Nature

Immediately after casting this spell, the very next spell of the Metal Nature that you cast in this Scene (that is, the next five minutes) becomes a *Delayed Spell*. Later, you may choose to release the Delayed Spell as a Magic Defense instead of a Maneuver. See page 193 for more information.

Delay Water

[Water]

Divine Way of Water

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Delay any one spell of the Water Nature

Immediately after casting this spell, the very next spell of the Water Nature that you cast in this Scene (that is, the next five minutes) becomes a *Delayed Spell*. Later, you may choose to release the Delayed Spell as a Magic Defense instead of a Maneuver. See page 193 for more information.

Delay Wood

[Wood]

Divine Way of Wood

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Delay any one spell of the Wood Nature

Immediately after casting this spell, the very next spell of the Wood Nature that you cast in this Scene (that is, the next five minutes) becomes a *Delayed Spell*. Later, you may choose to release the Delayed Spell as a Magic Defense instead of a Maneuver. See page 193 for more information.

Deliverance

[Thunder, Water]

Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 6
Difficulty: 6d6
Type: Delayed
Effect: Change any spell that affects a Target into a Group Spell

You delay this spell upon yourself. Later, when you are about to cast a Regular, Homing, or Exploding spell that affects a single target, you may choose to release this spell. The scope of the spell changes from a single Target to a Group.

The Deliverance spell does not affect other kinds of spells (such as Targeting spells, Synecdoche spells, Delayed spells, or Persistent spells). It only affects spells that claim a single Target — it has no effect on spells with a Scope of a Cluster or a Group.

Detect Changes Magic

[Earth, Fire, Heaven, Lake, Mountain, Thunder, Water, Wind]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 2d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Scry Earth, Fire, Heaven, Lake, Mountain, Thunder, Water, & Wind, rolling Mind and Lore: Magic vs. 2d8

You can Scry for magic of the Earth, Fire, Heaven, Lake, Mountain, Thunder, Water, or Wind Natures. See the Scry Test, p. 115.

Detect Earth

[Earth]

Ghost Way of Earth

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 2d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Scry Earth vs. 2d8 (see "Scry Test," p. 115)

You can Scry for magic of the Earth Nature. See the Scry Test, p. 115.

Detect Fire

[Fire]

Ghost Way of Fire

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 2d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Scry Fire vs. 2d8 (see "Scry Test," p. 115)

You can Scry for magic of the Fire Nature. See the Scry Test, p. 115.

Detect Metal

[Metal]

Ghost Way of Metal

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 2d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Scry Metal vs. 2d8 (see "Scry Test," p. 115)

You can Scry for magic of the Metal Nature. See the Scry Test, p. 115.

Detect Purity Magic

[Heaven, Weather]

Being of Generative Purity

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 2d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Scry Healing, Heaven, Unholy, Unreal, & Weather vs. 2d8 (see "Scry Test," p. 115)

You can Scry for magic of the Healing, Heaven, Unholy, Unreal, or Weather Natures.

Detect Water

[Water]

Ghost Way of Water

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 2d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Scry Water vs. 2d8 (see "Scry Test," p. 115)

You can Scry for magic of the Water Nature. See the Scry Test, p. 115.

Detect Wood

[Wood]

Ghost Way of Wood

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 2d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Scry Wood vs. 2d8 (see "Scry Test," p. 115)

You can Scry for magic of the Wood Nature. See the Scry Test, p. 115.

Difficulty at the Beginning

[Thunder, Water]

People's Way of Water

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Group must test Mind & Will vs. 3d8 or become Incompetent

This spell causes a Group to lose sight of the "big picture" and to become bogged down with the little details. Those affected will be irritable and impatient with others, frustrated at their inability to get things done. Those that resist will be able to keep their sense of order.

Dispel Lake

[Lake]

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d12
Type: Regular
Effect: Dispel magic of the Lake Nature

See "Preventing and Removing Magic," p. 200.

Dispel Mountain

[Mountain]

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d12
Type: Regular
Effect: Dispel magic of the Mountain Nature

See "Preventing and Removing Magic," p. 200.

Dispel Thunder

[Thunder]

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d12
Type: Regular
Effect: Dispel magic of the Thunder Nature

See "Preventing and Removing Magic," p. 200.

Dispel Wind

[Wind]

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d12
Type: Regular
Effect: Dispel magic of the Wind Nature

See "Preventing and Removing Magic," p. 200.

Display of Propriety

[Lake, Thunder]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 4d12
Type: Regular
Effect: Dispel Group of Unreal Spells

To cast this spell, you must clasp your hands and bow your head, as if assuming the propriety of one at a marriage ceremony.

After casting this spell, declare one or more targets. You may use this spell's 4d12 Effect Dice against a Group to remove spells of the *Unreal* nature (See "Preventing and Removing Magic," p. 200.). You may also use this spell to prevent an Unreal spell from being cast, but then the spell is only effective against a single Target.

Dragon Bellow

[Earth, Mountain, Weather]

Divine Way of Earth

Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Being of Spiritual Purity

Cost: 5
Difficulty: 5d10
Type: Exploding
Effect: Cluster suffers 5d10 Exploding Attack (include Acrobatics, Digging, & Jumping Dice with Soak)

You clench your fists in a demonstration of rage, and then shout a Thundering Noise that shakes the ground, cracks the dirt, and collapses walls and other structures.

Targets that are not on the ground (such as those who are Flying) are completely immune to the attack. In addition, targets may include their Acrobatics Dice, Digging Dice, and Jumping Dice with their Soak.

Drawing from the Well

[Wind, Water]

Divine Way of Water

Grand-Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 6
Difficulty: 6d8
Type: Persistent
Effect: Target must test their Skill vs. 6d8 or your steal their Skill

By means of this spell, you are attempting to "borrow" a Skill from someone else. You may only borrow *Skills* with this spell, not Gifts or Traits.

Compare your spell's Effect Dice of 6d8 vs. your target's Skill Dice, *but do not include their Career Dice or other kinds of Dice — just the Skill.* If you score a *Success* or better, the spell takes effect.

While the spell is in effect, you have the target's Skill Dice — you include them with all appropriate Skill rolls. You may also call upon the target's own Favored Use bonus. (If you already had the Skill that you swiped from them, you include *both* their own Dice *and* yours .. and you can call upon *both* Favored Uses, re-rolling one "1" for each, with the possibility of re-rolling two "1's" if both Favored Uses apply.)

This spell does not hinder the target's ability to use the Skill in any way.

The spell lasts until one of the following circumstances:

- You *Botch* or *Overwhelmingly Fail* on a roll in which you used the Skill Dice that you swiped.
- The spell is dispelled with *Dispel Magic* or the like.

When the spell ends for any reason, you immediately lose the use of their Skill Dice, and the Magic Points are released.

Earth Controls Metal

[Earth]

Ghost Way of Earth

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Manipulate metal, or control another's Metal spell

You may use this spell for one of the following uses:

- You may use an Interrupt (p. 138) to redirect an Axe, Polearm, Sword, or other metal-tipped weapons within 72 paces of yourself. The target of the attack includes your Effect Dice with their Defense Dice.
- You may use an Interrupt to Control someone else's Metal Spell. See "Preventing and Removing Magic: Control," p. 200.
- You may manipulate and twist metal. Treat this as Property Damage (p. 152), using your Effect Dice, as you twist the metal into new shapes that suit you.
- You may levitate unattended metal objects to your hand. Add your Effect Die Sizes together and divide by 16 to determine your Lift. The metal object or objects move as long as you Concentrate, or until the end of this scene, whichever comes first. You may not attack others with controlled metal.

Earth Counters Water

[Earth]

Worldly Way of Earth

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d10
Type: Defense
Effect: Counterspell Earth Magic with 2d10

You may use this spell to prevent or remove a magical effect of Water (p. 200) with your Effect Dice of 2d10. (Unlike "Earth Dispels Water" [below], this spell does not inflict Property Damage.)

Earth Dispels Water

[Earth]

Ghost's Way of Earth

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d12
Type: Regular
Effect: Dispel Water

You can use this spell for one of the following effects:

- Prevent or remove a magical effect of Water (p. 200) with your Effect Dice of 2d12.
- Destroy ice or water. Roll your Effect Dice vs. the "imaginary 1" as a Damage Roll. Each hit destroys a pace worth of ice or a stone's worth (6.35 liters) of water. The water drains away into the earth, leaving behind only slightly damp mud. (If the water is in a container or such, it springs a leak so the water can drain out.) This spell does not affect clouds, rain, or snow.

Earthquake

[Earth, Weather]

Being of Spiritual Purity

Divine Way of Earth

Cost: 9
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular (but see below)
Effect: Invoke tremors across a Landscape

You cast this spell against a Landscape, causing the earth to tremble. All targets in the landscape that are standing on the ground (friend and foe alike), with the exception of yourself, must test their Speed, Acrobatics, and Weather Sense Dice vs. the spell's Effect Dice of 2d6 or be Knocked Down.

The Earthquake lasts as long as you Concentrate. While it persists, all ground is treated as "bad footing" (p. 145).

If the Earthquake lasts long enough, rockslides will tumble down hillsides, buildings will collapse, and other structures will be destroyed. In general, it takes about a whole Scene to wreak any major structural damage, such as collapsing a stone wall.

Remember that this spell has the Weather Nature, and is thus regulated by law.

Fah Shih's Auspicious Aura of Lake

[Lake]

Grand Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d8
Type: Defense
Effect: Caster gains an Auspicious Aura of Lake (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Auspicious Aura of Lies

[Unreal]

Grand Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 5
Difficulty: 5d8
Type: Defense
Effect: Caster gains an Auspicious Aura of Lies (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Auspicious Aura of Mountain

[Mountain]

Grand Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d8
Type: Defense
Effect: Caster gains an Auspicious Aura of Mountain (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Auspicious Aura of Thunder

[Thunder]

Grand Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d8
Type: Defense
Effect: Caster gains an Auspicious Aura of Thunder (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Auspicious Aura of Wind

[Wind]

Grand Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d8
Type: Defense
Effect: Caster gains an Auspicious Aura of Wind (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Enduring Aura of Lake

[Lake]

Grand Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d6
Type: Persistent
Effect: Caster gains a Enduring Aura of Lake (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Enduring Aura of Lies

[Unreal]

Grand Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 5
Difficulty: 5d6
Type: Persistent
Effect: Caster gains a Enduring Aura of Lies (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Enduring Aura of Mountain

[Mountain]

Grand Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d6
Type: Persistent
Effect: Caster gains a Enduring Aura of Mountain (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Enduring Aura of Thunder

[Thunder]

Grand Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d6
Type: Persistent
Effect: Caster gains a Enduring Aura of Thunder (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Enduring Aura of Wind

[Wind]

Grand Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d6
Type: Persistent
Effect: Caster gains a Enduring Aura of Wind (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Fragile Aura of Lake

[Lake]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains Fragile Aura of Lake (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Fragile Aura of Lies

[Unholy, Unreal]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains Fragile Aura of Lies (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Fragile Aura of Mountain

[Mountain]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains Fragile Aura of Mountain (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Fragile Aura of Progress

[Earth, Fire, Weather]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains Fragile Aura of Progress (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Fragile Aura of Protection

[Healing, Heaven]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains Fragile Aura of Protection (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Fragile Aura of Thunder

[Thunder]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains Fragile Aura of Thunder (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Fragile Aura of Wind

[Wind]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains Fragile Aura of Wind (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Imposing Aura of Protection

[Healing, Heaven]

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Target gains an Aura of Protection (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Imposing Aura of Weakness

[Earth, Mountain]

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Target suffers an Aura of Weakness of your Effect Dice (p. 252)

The natural cycle of regeneration has both phases of strength and of weakness, and this spell hurries along the phase of weakness. This spell inflicts an Aura of Weakness upon the target (p. 189). The Aura of Weakness renders the target Vulnerable to every kind of magic *except* Healing, against which it increases Resistance!

Note that a target may only have one Aura at any one time. If the target already has an Aura stronger than the one you seek to impose upon them, then there is no effect. Also, if somehow the target is granted an Aura that is equal to or greater than the Aura of Weakness, then the Weakness will be dispelled.

Fah Shih's Privilege Over Lake

[Lake]

Grand Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d8
Type: Defense (Privilege)
Effect: Invoke Privilege over Lake Magic

You may invoke Privilege over any spell of the Lake Nature (p. 191).

Fah Shih's Privilege Over Mountain

[Mountain]

Grand Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d8
Type: Defense (Privilege)
Effect: Invoke Privilege over Mountain Magic

You may invoke Privilege over any spell of the Mountain Nature (p. 191).

Fah Shih's Privilege Over Thunder

[Thunder]

Grand Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d8
Type: Defense (Privilege)
Effect: Invoke Privilege over Thunder Magic.

You may invoke Privilege over any spell of the Thunder Nature (p. 191).

Fah Shih's Privilege Over Wind

[Wind]

Grand Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d8
Type: Defense (Privilege)
Effect: Invoke Privilege over Wind Magic.

You may invoke Privilege over any spell of the Wind Nature (p. 191).

Fah Shih's Proper Aura of Lake

[Lake]

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains an Aura of Lake (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Proper Aura of Lies

[Unholy, Unreal]

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains an Aura of Lies (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Proper Aura of Mountain

[Mountain]

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 3d6

Type: Regular

Effect: Caster gains an Aura of Mountain (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Proper Aura of Progress

[Earth, Fire, Weather]

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 4

Difficulty: 4d6

Type: Regular

Effect: Caster gains an Aura of Progress (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Proper Aura of Thunder

[Thunder]

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 3d6

Type: Regular

Effect: Caster gains an Aura of Thunder (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Fah Shih's Proper Aura of Wind

[Wind]

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 3d6

Type: Regular

Effect: Caster gains an Aura of Lake (p. 252)

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Feather Strike

[Metal, Wind]

People's Way of Metal

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 5

Difficulty: 5d4

Type: Homing

Effect: Target suffers 5d4 Homing Attack

With a wave of your arm, you release a wave of tiny metal slivers, not unlike steely feathers, towards a single target, who suffers a 5d4 Homing Attack.

Fire Controls Earth

[Fire]

Ghost Way of Fire

Cost: 1

Difficulty: 1d8

Type: Regular

Effect: Manipulate earth, or control another's Earth spell

You may use this spell for one of the following uses:

- You may use an Interrupt (p. 138) to defend against a Sling Bullet within 72 paces of yourself. The target of the attack includes your Effect Dice of 1d8 with their Defense Dice.
- You may use an Interrupt to Control someone else's Earth Spell. See "Preventing and Removing Magic: Control," p. 200.
- You may manipulate and twist earth and stone. Treat this as Property Damage (p. 152), using your Effect Dice of 1d8, as you move the earth into new shapes that suit you.
- If loose dirt or dust is available, you may call up a Cluster-sized cloud of dust. Anyone trying to attack through the cloud has their attack difficulty increased by your Effect Dice. The dust lasts as long as you Concentrate or until the end of this Scene, whichever comes first.
- You may levitate unattended earthen objects to your hand. Add your Effect Die Sizes together and divide by 16 to determine your Lift. The earthen object or objects move as long as you Concentrate, or until the end of this scene, whichever comes first. You may not attack others with controlled earth.

Fire Counters Metal

[Fire]

Worldly Way of Fire

Cost: 2

Difficulty: 2d10

Type: Defense

Effect: Counterspell Metal Magic with 2d10

You may use this spell to prevent or remove a magical effect of Metal (p. 200) with your Effect Dice of 2d10. (Unlike "Fire Dispels Metal" [below], this spell does not inflict Property Damage.)

Fire Dispels Metal

[Fire]

Ghost's Way of Fire

Cost: 2

Difficulty: 2d12

Type: Regular

Effect: Use your Effect Dice of 2d12 to Dispel Metal Magic, or melt metal into unuseable chunks.

You can use this spell for one of the following effects:

- Prevent or remove a magical effect of Metal (p. 200) with your Effect Dice of 2d12.
- Melt lead, twist steel, tarnish gold, and ruin metal. Roll your Effect Dice of 2d12 vs. the metal objects you want to destroy, as "Property Damage" (p. 152). Metal objects ruined by this spell are melted into unuseable blobs without any unusual change in their temperature — combatants touching the metal are not burned or singed.

Flooding Deluge

[Wind, Water]

People's Way of Water

Being of Vital Purity

Cost:	4
Difficulty:	4d10
Type:	Homing
Effect:	Group suffers 4d10 Homing Attack (may include Swimming with Soak)

With a rising rush of wind, a sudden wave of water breaks from almost nowhere and swamps the targets. Any target that takes even 1 Wound from this attack becomes completely drenched.

Those who have Swimming Dice may include those with their other dice when defending against this Homing Attack.

Frugality

[Lake, Water]

Worldly Way of Water

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost:	1
Difficulty:	1d10
Type:	Persistent
Effect:	Always lose the Initiative, but gain Focus only for reducing Magic Point Cost

By staying calm and being undaunted by misfortune, you gain a clearer sense of how to channel magical spells. While under the effects of this Persistent spell, you are subject to the following effects:

- You always lose the Initiative. (In game terms, you have an Initiative of zero.)
- Every Round, you may cast spells at -1 Magic Point cost, as if you had Focus (p. 138). This benefit is *not* cumulative with Focus.

The spell ends if you dismiss it, or if you suffer any status that prevents Focus (such as *Demoralization*.).

Fulfillment

[Fire, Water]

Worldly Way of Water

Cost:	3
Difficulty:	3d8
Type:	Regular
Effect:	Group has their next Healing Test improved by one step

Cast on a Group of targets, the next time they are to make a Healing Test (see "Long Term Healing," p. 151), the quality of their "living conditions" improves by one step. *Extreme* conditions become *Hard*; *Hard* conditions become *Medium*; *Medium* conditions become *Easy*. If conditions are already *Easy*, then they automatically pass their next Healing Test, recovering one Wound

Generative Restoration

[Healing, Heaven]

Being of Generative Purity

Cost:	2
Difficulty:	2d10
Type:	Regular
Effect:	Lets the target re-roll their last Death Test

You cast this spell on any combatant who has failed a Death Test (and thus has become Mortally Wounded or Dead). That target may re-roll their Death Test. If they *Succeed*, they are merely *Unconscious*; if they *Fail*, they are *Mortally Wounded*; if they *Overwhelmingly Fail or Botch*, their condition remains the same (Mortally Wounded or Dead) but does not get worse.

This potent magic can even raise someone from the dead — see p. 151. People brought back from "the other side" will be mentally shaken from the experience, at the very least.

Note that his spell does not heal the target in any way. Someone saved from "Instant Death" may bear crippling injuries or horrific scars, if the Host feels such marks are appropriate. This spell cannot help someone wounded to -13 or worse, since such combatants are automatically Mortally Wounded.

Gentle Permeation

[Wind]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost:	3
Difficulty:	3d6
Type:	Regular
Effect:	Speak to your target, via their thoughts

For the duration of this Scene, you may "speak" to your target, from mind to mind, using only your thoughts. This spell transcends all language barriers, making you clearly understood by your target. Your target cannot send thoughts back to you — that is a different spell.

This spell gets no Resistance Roll, unless the target desires to "shut you out." In that case, roll your 3d6 Effect Dice vs. the target's Mind. If they *Succeed*, the spell ends.

You can only cast Gentle Permeation on someone you can see, within a "stone's throw" of 72 paces, like any other standard Regular Spell (p. 192).

If you want to use this spell to communicate silently, you will have to cast it by sub-vocalizing and without gestures, at the cost of 2 Extra Magic Points (p. 194).

Great Chain of Gathering

[Fire, Heaven]

Worldly Way of Fire

Being of Vital Purity

Cost:	4
Difficulty:	4d4
Type:	Persistent
Effect:	Group combines their Soak Dice vs. Damage

This spell rewards those who would cooperate. When you first cast this spell, roll your Effect Dice to see the maximum number of targets that can be affected, as per a Group spell (p. 196). While in the Great Chain of Gathering, each of the targets is joined by a flickering band of

fire that can be seen only by those who can detect magic. Each target affected becomes a "link" in the chain.

Whenever one of the links is struck by something that requires the use of Soak Dice to resist (such as a Damage Roll), then *all* the links in the chain combine their Soak Dice together. However, all links in the chain are also participating in the test, so they also suffer any ill effects, such as Wounds or Fatigue. Only Soak Dice are pooled together this way — not Armor Dice, or other dice that might be used to resist a spell (such as Speed Dice vs. Homing and Exploding spells).

> ***Example:*** Pei the Learned casts *Great Chain of Gathering*. The spell's Effect Dice are normally 4d4, but Pei has an Aura of Fire of d8, so the Effect Dice increase to d8 & 4d4. Her Effect Score comes up as 5, so up to 5 people can be affected. Pei includes herself and four of her allies: Honest Hai-wen, Magnificent Weasel, No. 21 Mouth, and Slow Zi. To remain affected, all the members will have to stay a Group — that is, they must stay within four paces of one another.
>
> An hour later, Magnificent Weasel gets into a tête-à-tête with Handsome Fox. When Fox strikes Weasel with his Hsuan Method Attack, he does 2d8 Damage. Magnificent Weasel includes his Cotton Armor (d4), his own Soak (d6) and the Soak of *all* his fellow links in the Chain (which is good for another d4, 2d8, and d10). With all those dice, Weasel easily shrugs off all Damage. Fox is instantly alerted to the protective magic when a shower of sparks fly out from Weasel, drawing the impact along tendrils of fiery energy to be absorbed by his comrades.
>
> Later, Slow Zi is shot from surprise by an arrow, which scores a critical hit to Impale, ignoring his Chain Mail of d12. Still part of the Great Chain, Zi will roll d10, 2d8, d6, and d4 as his Soak. Sadly, he rolls only 6, 5, 5, 3, and 1 vs. the Damage Dice of 7 and 2. This means he suffers 1 Wound. His fellow links also all suffer 1 Wound. Since everyone took Damage, *every* link must now test their Resolve vs. 7.

The spell ends when all the links of the chain have been broken. (That is, all those affected have wandered more than 4 paces away from each other.)

To be in the chain, the target must be willing, must have a Body score, and must have the presence of mind to be included. Exclusions from the chain include any being lacking a Mind Trait (such as non-sentient animals) and any being lacking a physical body (such as a ghost).

Harvest in Great Measure

[Fire, Healing, Heaven]

Being of Spiritual Purity

Cost: 5

Difficulty: 1d4

Type: Regular

Effect: Target converts Score from Wounds to Fatigue

This spell recalls how a bountiful harvest at the end of the season is like the renewal of the body over a period of time.

The target converts the Score of what you've rolled from Wounds to Fatigue. If this heals a target past a Death Test threshold, a Mortally Wounded target may re-roll their test and take a more-favorable result.

This spell cannot help someone Wounded to -13 or worse, because they cannot convert Wounds to Fatigue — their body has suffered too much abuse.

Humble Guise

[Earth, Fire, Metal, Water, Wood, Unreal]

Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 3d6

Type: Persistent

Effect: Caster assumes a humble appearance.

You assume an appearance unlike your own. You can choose to resemble any Race of Earth that you are familiar with — your own Race or another one that you know fairly well. You may also change your clothes and other tools to resemble something else, as long as it is "humble" — that is, of Average worth or less. For example, you could disguise fancy silk robes as peasant clothes, but not the other way around.

If you choose to resemble any one person, you will have to pass Bluff Tests to convince people you're someone else, with one or more Penalties to fool their close friends. You may use your Effect Dice of 3d6 with any uses of your Disguise Skill.

While under the effects the Humble Guise, your Body, Speed, and Race Traits are limited to d6 in size. Also, this spell is only an illusion — you do not gain any Racial Gifts, Racial Senses, or other Racial abilities that you do not already possess.

The spell ends when you dismiss it, which is a free action. If you have need to call upon your Body, Speed, or Race Trait dice, and those dice are bigger than d6, then you may dismiss the Humble Guise immediately so you can use your larger dice.

Illicit Rendezvous

[Heaven, Wind]
Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws
Being of Generative Purity

Cost:	3
Difficulty:	1d6
Type:	Regular
Effect:	Target gains d6 Sensuality Dice

This spell increases the target's capacity for entertaining, while decreasing their moral fiber and standing. Your target immediately gains your Effect Dice as Sensuality Dice (p. 62), if they do not already have a different Bagua Trait. (These dice *will* combine with a Sensuality Trait they already possess.)

Illness

[Earth, Lake]
Worldly Way of Earth
Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost:	8
Difficulty:	3d8
Type:	Regular
Effect:	Group must test Body & Race vs. 3d8 or be sent Reeling; lowest Score becomes Reeling and Confused

You raise your hands high, then lower them to the earth to denote a sinking feeling. A Group of your foes is suddenly stricken by brief nausea and disorientation, equivalent to being sent Reeling. One target also suffers headache, fever, and general illness that is equivalent to Confusion.

Increase

[Thunder, Wind]
Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost:	5
Difficulty:	5d6
Type:	Regular
Effect:	Strengthen Abnormal Status of a Group

You can increase the strength of the magical states that affect one or more targets in a Group. (This spell has no effect upon targets that do not have an Abnormal Status.)

This State...	*Increases to this State*
Demoralization	Fear
Fear	Terror
Incompetence	Confusion
Mired	Petrified
Paralysis	Marionette (under your control)
Rage	Berserking
Reeling	Asleep
Silence	Imperceptibility
Sleep	Unconsciousness*
Slowness	Petrified
Terror	Unconsciousness*
Transfixation	Mesmerism*
(other)	(no effect)

The duration of the increased state is usually the same as the previous state. For example, if a target was Slowed for 2 more Rounds, then the target becomes Petrified for 2 more Rounds, instead. The exceptions are marked with an asterisk (*) — a target that becomes Unconscious stays that way for at least an hour (unless given aid), and a target that becomes Mesmerized stays that way until they are ordered to recover or they pass out (see p. 340).

Each member of the Group need not be affected by the same Abnormal Status.

Inner Truth

[Lake, Wind]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 1d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Target gains d6 Prosperity Dice

This spell increases the target's ability to communicate and to freely disseminate with folks. Your target immediately gains your Effect Dice as Prosperity Dice (p. 62), if they do not already have a different Bagua Trait. (These dice *will* combine with a Prosperity Trait they already possess.)

The target also finds it impossible to lie to folks; Bluff Tests become impossible.

Inspect Changes Magic

[Earth, Fire, Heaven, Lake, Mountain, Thunder, Water, Wind]

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Scry Earth, Fire, Heaven, Lake, Mountain, Thunder, Water & Wind vs. 2d6 (see "Scry Test," p. 115)

You can Scry for magic of the Earth, Fire, Heaven, Lake, Mountain, Thunder, Water, or Wind Natures. See the Scry Test, p. 115.

Inspect Earth

[Earth]

People's Way of Earth

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Scry Earth vs. 2d6 (see "Scry Test," p. 115)

You can Scry for magic of the Earth Nature. See the Scry Test, p. 115.

Inspect Fire

[Fire]

People's Way of Fire

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Scry Fire vs. 2d6 (see "Scry Test," p. 115)

You can Scry for magic of the Fire Nature. See the Scry Test, p. 115.

Inspect Metal

[Metal]

People's Way of Metal

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Scry Metal vs. 2d6 (see "Scry Test," p. 115)

You can Scry for magic of the Metal Nature. See the Scry Test, p. 115.

Inspect Purity Magic

[Heaven, Weather]

Being of Vital Purity

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Scry Healing, Heaven, Unholy, Unreal & Weather vs. 2d6 (see "Scry Test," p. 115)

You can Scry for magic of the Healing, Heaven, Unholy, Unreal, or Weather Natures. See the Scry Test, p. 115.

Inspect Water

[Water]

People's Way of Water

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Scry Water vs. 2d6 (see "Scry Test," p. 115)

You can Scry for magic of the Water Nature. See the Scry Test, p. 115.

Inspect Wood

[Wood]

People's Way of Wood

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Scry Wood vs. 2d6 (see "Scry Test," p. 115)

You can Scry for magic of the Wood Nature. See the Scry Test, p. 115.

Judgment of Heaven, The

[Fire, Heaven]

Worldly Way of Fire

Being of Vital Purity

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d12
Type: Homing
Effect: Group with an Unholy aspect suffer 3d12 Homing Damage

With this spell, you point an accusatory finger at the target and call down the wrath of heaven upon them.

If a target is *Unholy* (either because of a descriptor or because of an Unholy Aura), that target immediately suffers 3d12 Homing Damage.

For each target in the Group that you designate that is *not* Unholy, *you* suffer 3d12 Homing Damage. (For example, if there were three targets that were not Unholy, you would suffer 9d12 Damage.)

Judicious Counsel

[Earth, Unreal, Water]

Divine Way of Water

Cost: 4

Difficulty: 4d6

Type: Regular

Effect: Delay a spell on the target, until they call upon your Counsel

You cast this spell on a target. Next Round, you may cast a spell to be Delayed on the target. (You must successfully cast the spell to be Delayed in order for the Judicious Counsel to work.)

The target calls forth the spell by calling upon your name for advice.

> ***Example:*** Pei the Learned uses the spell Judicious Counsel to Delay the spell "Weight of the Leaf" on Magnificent Weasel. Pei tells the Weasel that he may invoke the power of this spell by saying, "I call upon the Counsel of Pei the Learned!"

In order to call upon the Counsel, the target must perform a special First-Rank Maneuver, "Call Upon Counsel." People who are magically *Silenced* will be unable to call upon a Counsel. Because they must call out caster's name, those who hear them will know it was you who empowered them in the first place.

Maneuver	*Rank*	*Move*	*Defense*
Call Upon Counsel	First	Stride	Normal

In this way, the target actually becomes a spell-caster. They need not roll to cast the spell successfully — that roll was made earlier. They should roll the Effect Dice to determine how well their spell works.

Any number of spells may be Delayed on the target by Judicious Counsel (up to the caster's Magic Point reserve, of course). However, each Spell so Delayed must be called upon as a separate Maneuver, in different Rounds.

Keeping Still

[Mountain, Unreal]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 1d6

Type: Regular

Effect: Target gains d6 Stillness Dice

This spell increases the target's patience and encourages them to act on promises already made. Your target immediately gains your Effect Dice as Stillness Dice (p. 62), if they do not already have a different Bagua Trait. (These dice *will* combine with a Stillness Trait they already possess.)

Know Changes Magic

[Earth, Fire, Heaven, Lake, Mountain, Thunder, Water, Wind]

Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 5

Difficulty: 2d4

Type: Regular

Effect: Scry Earth, Fire, Heaven, Lake, Mountain, Thunder, Water, Wind vs. 2d4 (see "Scry Test," p. 115)

You can Scry for magic of the Earth, Fire, Heaven, Lake, Mountain, Thunder, Water, or Wind Natures. See the Scry Test, p. 115.

Know Earth

[Earth]

Worldly Way of Earth

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 2d4

Type: Regular

Effect: Scry Earth vs. 2d4 (see "Scry Test," p. 115)

You can Scry for magic of the Earth Nature. See the Scry Test, p. 115.

Know Fire

[Fire]

Worldly Way of Fire

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 2d4

Type: Regular

Effect: Scry Fire vs. 2d4 (see "Scry Test," p. 115)

You can Scry for magic of the Fire Nature. See the Scry Test, p. 115.

Know Metal

[Metal]

Worldly Way of Metal

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 2d4

Type: Regular

Effect: Scry Metal vs. 2d4 (see "Scry Test," p. 115)

You can Scry for magic of the Metal Nature. See the Scry Test, p. 115.

Know Purity Magic

[Heaven, Weather]

Being of Spiritual Purity

Cost: 5

Difficulty: 2d4

Type: Regular

Effect: Scry Healing, Heaven, Unholy, Unreal, Weather, vs. 2d4

You can Scry for magic of the Healing, Heaven, Unholy, Unreal, or Weather Natures. See the Scry Test, p. 115.

Know Water

[Water]

Worldly Way of Water

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 2d4

Type: Regular

Effect: Scry Water vs. 2d4 (see "Scry Test," p. 115)

You can Scry for magic of the Water Nature. See the Scry Test, p. 115.

Know Wood

[Wood]

Worldly Way of Wood

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 2d4

Type: Regular

Effect: Scry Wood vs. 2d4 (see "Scry Test," p. 115)

You can Scry for magic of the Wood Nature. See the Scry Test, p. 115.

Ladle of Mud

[Earth, Water]
Worldly Way of Earth
Worldly Way of Water

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d10
Type: Targeting [uses Digging Skill]
S: 5 M: 10 L: 25 X: 50
Special: Mired
Effect: Hurl a 2d10 ball of mud to smite your foes

You cup your hand and call forth a handful of mud, which you then hurl at your foe. By the time the clump reaches your target, it has magically grown in size to a giant mudslide. You may summon the clump in a spoon or ladle to keep from getting your hands dirty — the spell still works the same. You use your *Speed Dice & Digging Dice* To-Hit. Shortly after the attack, most of the mud magically dissipates, but some mess always remains.

> ***Special: Mired.*** The target becomes *Mired* in mud for 3 Rounds.

Largesse of the Great Household, The

[Heaven, Mountain]
Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws
Being of Vital Purity

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d6
Type: Persistent
Effect: Lend a Skill of yours to someone else

It is a great master who knows how to help another in the same household.

You cast this spell on yourself to lend one of your Skills to someone else. You may only lend Skills with this spell, not Gifts or Traits.

While the spell is in effect, the target has your Skill Dice — they include them with all appropriate Skill rolls. They may also call upon your own Favored Use bonus. (If they already had the Skill that you're lending to them, they include both their own Dice and yours, and they can call upon both Favored Uses, re-rolling one "1" for each, with the possibility of re-rolling two "1's" if both Favored Uses apply.)

However, there is a disadvantage. While the spell is in effect, you no longer have use of your Skill Dice — you have lent them to the target!

The spell persists until one of the following circumstances:

- You call upon the use of your Skill Dice — no gestures or words necessary. You instantly regain your own Skill Dice, to use them immediately. No resistance roll is permitted, and there are no distance limitations — as soon as you want to, just include the dice in your roll, and the spell has ended.
- The target Botches on a roll in which they had used your Skill Dice.
- The spell is dispelled.

When the spell ends for any reason, you instantly regain the use of your Skill Dice, and you can use them immediately. Likewise, the target immediately loses the use of your Skill Dice.

Lightning Strike

[Heaven, Thunder, Weather]
Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws
Being of Generative Purity

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d12
Type: Targeting [uses Weather Sense Dice]
S: 5 M: 10 L: 25 X: 50
Special: Spasms
Effect: Summon forth a 2d12 bolt of lightning to smite your foes

You out-stretch your fingers and call forth a bolt of lightning to smite your foes. Roll To-hit as per a Targeting Spell, using your *Speed Dice & Weather Sense Dice.*

> ***Special: Spasms.*** Do not roll a Resolve test. Your target must save Body (not Resolve) vs. the largest Damage Die. On a Failure, your foe is knocked to the ground and sent Reeling. On an Overwhelming Failure, your foe Reels and is knocked down (as above) and also suffers 1 Fatigue.

Metal Controls Water

[Metal]
Ghost Way of Metal

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Manipulate water, or control another's Water spell

You may use this spell for one of the following uses:

- You may use an Interrupt (p. 138) to Control someone else's Water Spell. See "Preventing and Removing Magic: Control," p. 200.
- You may manipulate and twist ice and water. You can make water leap out of fountains or flow uphill, no faster than 3 paces per Round. Add your Effect Die Sizes together and divide by 16 to determine the weight of water you may move, in Stone. (One stone of water is 6.35 liters.) The water moves as long as you Concentrate, or until the end of this scene, whichever comes first. You may douse targets with controlled water, which will snuff bombs and possibly put out mundane (but not Wizardly) fire with a contest of your Effect Dice vs. 2d6.

Metal Counters Wood

[Metal]
Worldly Way of Metal

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d10
Type: Defense
Effect: Counterspell Wood Magic with 2d10

You may use this spell to prevent or remove a magical effect of Wood (p. 200) with your Effect Dice of 2d10. (Unlike "Metal Dispels Wood" [below], this spell does not inflict Property Damage.)

Metal Dispels Wood

[Wood]

Ghost's Way of Wood

Cost: 2

Difficulty: 2d12

Type: Regular

Effect: Dispel Wood

You can use this spell for one of the following effects:

- Prevent or remove a magical effect of Wood (p. 200) with your Effect Dice of 2d12.
- Chop down vegetation. Roll your Effect Dice of 2d12 vs. the wooden objects you want to destroy, as "Property Damage" (p. 152). Wood and plants destroyed by this spell appear to be chopped by invisible, swishing blades, accompanied by brief sparks of light not unlike glinting steel.

Mirror Reflecting the Mystic Pattern

[Metal, Unreal]

Divine Way of Metal

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 3d8

Type: Regular

Effect: Project a pattern that Transfixes onlookers

You put your thumbs together and hold up your hands as if you were displaying a mirror. Any flat surface, up to 72 paces away from you in a direct line, shows a reflection of a mystic pattern. Anyone who can see the pattern (friend and foe alike) must test their Mind & Will vs. the spell's Effect Dice of 3d8 or become *Transfixed*, unable to look away from the pattern for the duration determined by their failure. Only you yourself are immune to the pattern.

Any number of onlookers can be affected by the pattern. You must *Concentrate* to maintain it. If you lose Concentration or choose to stop, the pattern disappears and any Transfixed targets immediately recover. Also, if some kind of screen is set up between you and the flat surface, your pattern will be cut short. Any combatant that tries to step in between you and the pattern to block the reflection must pass another test of Mind & Will vs. the Effect Dice or become Transfixed before they can do so.

If a target snaps out of the Transfixation (such as having their eyes shielded, or by suffering some injury), they cannot be affected by the same mystic pattern. You will have to cast the spell again to affect them again.

Misfortune of Earth

[Earth]

People's Way of Earth

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 3d8

Type: Regular

Effect: Group must test Body & Will vs. Effect Dice ; lowest falls down and becomes Petrified

The caster of this spell smacks their fist into their open palm, pantomiming a giant boulder falling to the ground below. One target (the lowest Resistance Score), if they fail to resist, suffers a very localized quake that sends them sprawling; a moment later, they turn to stone. That target is immediately *Petrified* for the duration.

The Petrifying lasts as long as dictated by the Resistance Test *or* exactly 12 Rounds, whichever comes first.

Misfortune of Fire

[Fire]

People's Way of Fire

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 3d8

Type: Regular

Effect: Group must test Speed & Will vs. Effect Dice; lowest score catches On Fire

The caster of this spell claps their hands together and draws them apart in a sweeping motion, as if they have clanged two cymbals together, and calls out a curse of misfortune on those the spell is directed against. One target (the lowest Resistance Score), if they fail to resist, will catch On Fire.

The fire lasts as long as dictated by the Resistance Test *or* until the fire is put out *or* exactly 12 Rounds, whichever comes first. The target's personal effects may be ruined.

Misfortune of Metal

[Metal]

People's Way of Metal

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 3d8

Type: Regular

Effect: Group must test Speed & Will vs. Effect Dice or be sent Reeling

The caster of this spell makes repeated poking motions towards the targets. One target (the lowest Resistance Score), if they fail to resist, will suddenly be pierced by a thousand tiny needles. This pain forces the target to be Reeling for a number of Rounds based on how badly they fail the Resistance Test. This does mean the target can be sent Reeling for the rest of this Scene.

The Reeling lasts as long as dictated by the Resistance Test *or* exactly 12 Rounds, whichever comes first. The target's personal effects will have been completely missed by the very precise needles.

Misfortune of Water

[Water]

People's Way of Water

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 3d8

Type: Regular

Effect: Group must test Mind & Will vs. Effect Dice; lowest Score drowns

The caster of this spell puts their hands together as a kind of spout, and then makes a pouring motion towards those that the spell is directed against. One target (the lowest Resistance Score) immediately suffers an extreme downpour of water that soaks them thoroughly and fills their lungs, so that they begin drowning.

Drowning is the same as suffocation (p. 152) — the target suffers 1 Fatigue at the end of every round that they cannot breathe. The target also cannot speak while drowning.

The drowning lasts as long as dictated by the Resistance Test *or* exactly 12 Rounds, whichever comes first. The dampness remains until dried.

Misfortune of Wood

[Wood]
People's Way of Wood

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Group must test Speed & Will vs. Effect Dice or become Mired

The caster of this spell sweeps their hands low, then twiddles their fingers while moving their hands up, pantomiming the growing of vines and plants. One target (the lowest Resistance Score) will find their limbs entangled by vines and plants that spring from nowhere and will become *Mired*.

The Mire lasts as long as dictated by the Resistance Test *or* exactly 12 Rounds, whichever comes first. When the target is freed, the undergrowth will either wither away (if it sprang out of stone or other inhospitable materials) or it will remain as healthy plant life.

Moonlight

[Heaven, Water]
Being of Generative Purity
Worldly Way of Water

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 1d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Target gains Night Vision and 1d6 for Spot Rolls only at night

The target of this spell gains improved vision to see in the dark. The target gains the ability to see in pitch darkness (superior to even Night Vision), and ignores all disadvantages due to darkness. Also, the target gains the spell's Effect Dice as Spot Dice. This spell expires at the next sunrise.

Net

[Metal, Wood]
People's Way of Wood
Worldly Way of Metal

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Group must Test Body & Speed vs. 4d6 or become Paralyzed

You spread your arms wide, and barbed nets appear to bind up your foes. The nets are merely magical representations, though, and each one dissipates when the spell's effect expires.

Obstruction

[Earth, Heaven, Unreal]
Being of Spiritual Purity

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Group must test Body, Mind, & Will vs. Effect or become Berserk; those that Resist become Enraged

A dissonance between expectations and reality could create frustration and frenzy or it can create fury and righteous anger. This spell reminds the targets of all their past obstructions, calamities, and inconveniences, which may either cause undirected insanity or concentrated wrath.

Those that do not resist become *Berserk* for the duration. Those that Succeed on their Resistance become *Enraged* (a more beneficial status) for the rest of this Scene or until something ends the Rage.

Oppression

[Lake, Unholy, Unreal, Water]
Divine Way of Water
Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 6
Difficulty: 6d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Group must test Body, Speed, Mind, Will, and Race vs. 6d8 or become Asleep / Paralyzed / Confused / Afraid / Berserk

A crushing spell, a group must test against the Effect Dice of this spell or suffer one of a variety of effects. The target rolls Body, Speed, Mind, Will, and Race to resist the effects; what effect takes hold depends on which die rolled the lowest, so keep them separate! If Body came up lowest, the target is Asleep; if Speed came up lowest, the target is Paralyzed,;if Mind came up lowest, the target is Confused; if Will came up lowest, the target is Afraid; if Race came up lowest, the target is Berserk.

Pass Without Trace

[Unreal, Wood]

Divine Way of Wood

Cost: 4

Difficulty: 4d12

Type: Regular

Effect: Leave no tracks for one Scene

You can tread across undergrowth, grass, across flower-petals, and other plants without leaving any tracks. In game terms, the difficulty of Tracking you increases to 4d12.

Peace

[Earth, Healing, Heaven]

Worldly Way of Earth

Being of Spiritual Purity

Cost: 4

Difficulty: 4d8

Type: Regular

Effect: Target is cured of an affliction

This spell removes an affliction from the target, be it of mundane or of magical cause.

Roll your 4d8 Effect Dice vs. the suggested difficulty below.

Affliction	*Suggested Difficulty*
Common Cold	2d6
Fleas	2d8
Flu	2d10
Mange	2d12
Black Plague	3d12
Leprosy	4d12
Spoiled Food and Water in a general area	3d6
Abnormal Status on a target	Difficulty Dice of spell that caused the Status

The Game Host is the final arbiter on what Peace can cure.

Phantom Servant

[Heaven, Lake, Unreal]

Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Being of Generative Purity

Cost: 4

Difficulty: 4d8

Type: Persistent

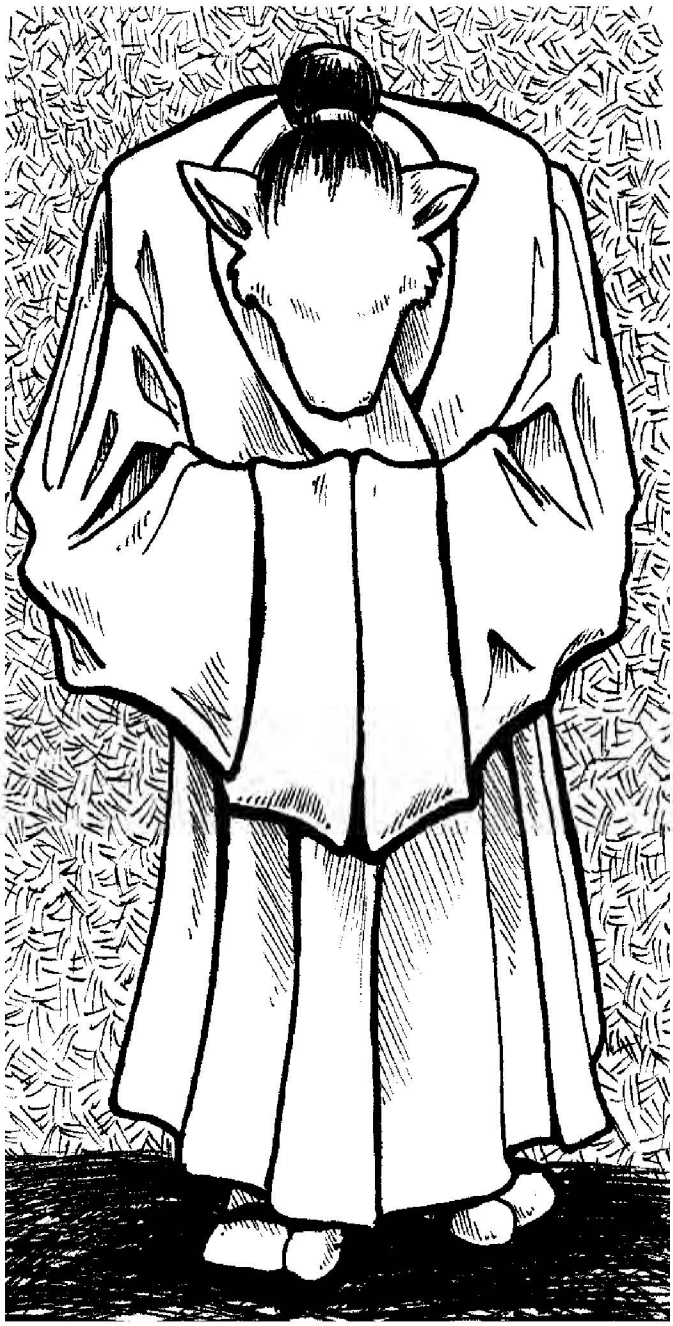
Effect: Phantom servant appears

At your command, a phantom servant appears, dressed in the tasteful, understated clothes that befit a high-class servant. The servant's head is constantly bowed, and if anyone examines it closely, they will discover it has no face. The servant's appearance is blurry and indistinct — people will know that it is not real.

The servant has Body d8, Speed d8, and no Mind or Will Traits. It has an Enduring Unreal Aura of d8, with all appropriate Resistances and Vulnerabilities. It has the Servant Career Trait at d8. It has the Flaws of Pacifist: Total Non-Violence and Skittish. It appears with no equipment, but can use any equipment it is given.

The servant has 1 Hit Point. If it suffers 1 Wound, it instantly disappears. If the servant's Unreal Aura of d8 is suppressed or dispelled, the servant instantly disappears, as well. The servant can also be dispelled in the usual way. When it disappears, any items it carries fall to the ground.

The servant requires verbal instruction — there is no telepathic link with the caster. With no Mind Trait, it isn't very bright, and it obeys orders word-for-word, up to and including its own destruction. The being is a servant first and foremost, though — the Game Host may allow it to roll its Servant Career Dice against 2d6 to avoid making a bad decision.



Pheasant Crying Out in Darkness, The

[Earth, Fire]

Worldly Way of Earth

Worldly Way of Fire

Cost:	2
Difficulty:	2d8
Type:	Regular
Effect:	Target must resist Body & Mind vs. 2d8 or be Blinded

The caster cups their hands to their mouth and cries out like a bird. A single Target of your choice must Test Body & Mind vs. your Effect Dice or be *Blinded*, as if they are shrouded in complete darkness. (Night Vision does not protect against the effects of this spell.)

Pouring into the Well

[Heaven, Mountain]

Being of Generative Purity

Cost:	3
Difficulty:	3d8
Type:	Persistent
Effect:	Lend a Skill of yours to someone

You cast this spell on yourself, to lend one of your Skills to someone else. You may only lend Skills with this spell, not Gifts or Traits.

While the spell is in effect, the target has your Skill Dice — they include them with all appropriate Skill rolls. They may also call upon your own Favored Use bonus. (If they already had the Skill that you're lending to them, they include both their own Dice and yours, and they can call upon both Favored Uses, re-rolling one "1" for each, with the possibility of re-rolling two "1's" if both Favored Uses apply.)

This spell does not hinder your ability to use your own Skill in any way.

The spell lasts until one of the following circumstances:

- The target *Botches* or *Overwhelmingly Fails* on a roll in which they had used your Skill Dice.
- The spell is dispelled with *Dispel Magic* or the like, overcoming the spell's Effect Dice, cast upon either you or your target.

Preponderance of the Small

[Mountain, Thunder, Unreal]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost:	3
Difficulty:	3d8
Type:	Regular
Effect:	Group must test Mind & Will vs. 3d8 or become Confused

You cast this spell on a Group. Those that fail to resist find their senses altered to a level of mind-boggling acuity. Their arms feel ten feet long, their strides feel like half a mile, voices sound extra loud, etc. In game terms, they have become *Confused* until they can snap out of it and regain their sense of proportion.

Prevailing Over Others

[Earth, Lake]

Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost:	3
Difficulty:	3d6
Type:	Regular
Effect:	Target must test Mind & Will vs. Effect or become a Marionette

As part of the casting of this spell, you raise two fingers high and command a single target to submit to your will. A single target must test their Mind & Will or become a *Marionette*.

See the Abnormal Status chapter (p. 339) for details.

Pushing Upwards

[Earth, Wind]
Divine Way of Earth
Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 7
Difficulty: 7d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Your next Damaging Spell causes Slaying Damage

After successfully casting this spell, the very next spell you cast in this Scene, if it uses a Damage comparison, causes *Slaying Damage*. For example, if your next spell is a Lightning Strike, that spell would cause Slaying Damage to a target. This spell affects spells when they are cast — it will not work with Delayed Spells. (To work on an Attendant Fireball, you must cast this spell first, then the Attendant Fireball. It will not affect an Attendant Fireball currently floating around your head.) When cast with a Persistent Spell, the Pushing Upwards effect only lasts for one Scene.

Receptivity

[Earth]
People's Way of Earth

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Roll 4d6 vs. Mind to find a target's inner thoughts

You may attempt to read your target's mind. The Host should roll your Effect Dice in secret.

Result	*Outcome*
Botch	*False readings.* The Game Host should make up some blatantly false information that you read from your target.
Overwhelming Failure	*No effect, and target is warned!* The target of your spell becomes aware that someone tried to cast this spell. You fail to read your target's mind, however.
Failure	*No effect.* Nothing happens, and your target is not unduly aware.
Tie	*Target is warned!* You are able to read your target's surface thoughts, and what's currently on their mind. However, your target is aware that someone is reading their mind.
Success	*Thought-Reading.* You are able to read your target's surface thoughts, and the target remains unaware.
Overwhelming Success	*Window to the Soul.* You can reach deep into your target's mind, for longer memories. You may specify what memories you're looking for before you cast this spell. The target remains unaware of your intrusion.

Like all Regular Spells, this spell only works through line of sight, to a range of 72 paces. To avoid attracting attention, you may want to cast this spell by sub-vocalizing and without gestures (p. 194).

Revolution

[Fire, Lake]
Divine Way of Fire
Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d8
Type: Defense
Effect: Reverse a Synecdoche to cast a spell back at another wizard

You cast this spell immediately after a Synecdoche spell is cast at you. The very next spell you cast becomes a Synecdoche spell, aimed at the wizard who just attempted to use Synecdoche against you!

For the Revolution to work, your attacker need not have cast their spell successfully — just their attempt is enough. However, you may not cast the Revolution until they try their spell first. You must also cast your Revolution in the same Scene, which is to say within the next five minutes or so of game time.

You may use any spell you know for the Revolution. If the Scope of your Revolution spell is a Cluster, it must be centered on your attacker. If the Scope is a Group, the only member of that Group must be your attacker.

Righteous Arrow

[Heaven, Wood]
Worldly Way of Wood
Being of Generative Purity

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d8
Type: Targeting (uses Bow Skill)
S: 5 M: 10 L: 25 X: 50
Special: Skewer
Effect: Target suffers 2d8 Damage

You gesture as if pulling back the string on an imaginary bow, and suddenly an arrow made of peach-tree wood appears hanging in the air before your fingers. When you release, the arrow flies towards your target.

> ***Special: Skewer. The target loses their smallest two Armor Dice (two Penalties to Armor, but not to Soak), but your Righteous Arrow suffers one Penalty to Damage.***

River of Stars

[Heaven, Metal]
Worldly Way of Metal
Being of Vital Purity

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d6
Type: Homing
Effect: Group suffers 4d6 Homing Attack

With a gesture of your hand, you call down a shower of sparks upon your foes, who suffer a 4d6 Homing Attack.

Sacred Vessel

[Fire, Wind]

Divine Way of Fire

Grand-Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 5

Difficulty: 5d8

Type: Synecdoche

Effect: Create a magical representation of yourself, at a distance

This spell allows you to project yourself as a sacred vessel, or magic representation of yourself, into an inanimate object. You must have a part of that object as a material "link." For example, to project a sacred vessel from a given tree, you could use a leaf from that tree. To project a sacred vessel at a campsite, you could use a rock from the campfire circle. You may not manifest a sacred vessel in a person or an animal.

A lesser sacred vessel cannot move on its own from the spot from where it manifests. Others may move it, instead, provided it is not a tree or some other rooted object.

While this spell is active, you physically disappear from the real world. When the spell ends, you reappear immediately from where you left, as well as all objects you carried with you. You may only bring yourself and what you can carry (see Maximum Encumbrance, p. 19) — this does not include other living beings.

The exact makeup of the sacred vessel varies — it would look something like the link you are using. Following the examples above, your sacred vessel would take the form of an animated tree with your face in the wood grain, or the roaring flames of the campfire may take the form of your grim visage. You cannot use your equipment, weapons, etc. — you are merely an artificial projection. You also may not cast spells.

You may dismiss the sacred vessel at any time, thus canceling the spell and re-appearing where you standing. The spell will also end if you are sent Reeling, Unconscious, or otherwise suffer an abnormal status such as Confusion, Fear, Silence, etc. The sacred vessel itself may be dispelled, or even destroyed. If the sacred vessel suffers Damage, you yourself are unharmed, but you must pass a Resolve Test (p. 147) or be sent Reeling, as if you yourself suffered the attack. While within the sacred vessel, you automatically resist any spells that are Resisted by your Body or Speed (I.E., "physical spells"); spells resisted by only Mind or Will affect you normally.

The maximum length the sacred vessel may remain is one Scene, or about five minutes.

Safeguard Against the Untoward Opportunity

[Heaven, Lake]

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Being of Spiritual Purity

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 3d12

Type: Regular

Effect: All Damage is Enervated, but *only* when the target is Reeling

Danger is everywhere, waiting for opportunity. While this spell cannot prevent others from exploiting weakness, it does offer protection against it.

For the duration of this Scene, when the target is Reeling, any Damage they suffer is *Enervated* (p. 97).

Note that this spell only defends the target when they are *Reeling* — it has no effect on a target that is not.

Sandals for the Long Tread

[Heaven, Lake]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 2

Difficulty: 2d6

Type: Persistent

Effect: Target gains improved walking ability

The target must remove their shoes to have this spell work. When the spell is cast upon the target, a magic pair of sandals appears on their feet, with extra-tall heels. These magic shoes grant the target the following abilities:

- The target may walk over hot coals, iron caltrops, quicksand, or any other ground that would cause a hostile effect.

- The target gains the ability to walk on water as if it was dry land. This spell will allow one to cross still lakes as if they were Plains. This spell combines well with the spell of "Travel" (p. 245).
- The target suffers one Penalty to To-Hit Rolls for bad footing (unless they have the Gift of Sure-Footed, p. 49).

The spell persists until one of the following conditions are met:

- The target tries a Forced March, whereupon the heels of the shoes break off, and then the shoes disappear.
- The target removes the shoes, or someone forcibly removes them from the helpless target.

Scissoring Leaves

[Wind, Wood]

Worldly Way of Wood

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d8
Type: Homing
Effect: Group suffers a 4d8 Homing Attack

At your command, the wind in the area picks up, and leaves gather up from the ground into a swirling storm. (If there were no leaves, they suddenly appear!) The leaves stiffen and slash your foes as if they were knives.

Self-Nourishment

[Mountain, Thunder]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d6
Type: Persistent
Effect: Caster becomes free from want, has chance to avoid Fatigue loss

To cast this spell, the caster uses their fingers to poke the corners of their mouth up into a self-satisfied smile.

While this spell is in effect, the caster feels freedom from certain kinds of want. This includes the following advantages:

- They are immune to effects of suffocation, thirst, hunger, or sleep deprivation.
- Whenever the caster would suffer Fatigue, roll the spell's Effect Dice — on a Score of 6 or better, the Fatigue loss is ignored. (This is only for Fatigue suffered *after* the spell was cast — it has no effect on Fatigue suffered before the spell was cast.)
- The caster is immune to falling *Asleep*. If the caster would suffer Unconsciousness, the effect is negated and the spell ends. (There is no effect on Mortal Wounding or Death.)

The spell persists until one of the following conditions is met:

- The caster would fall Unconscious (see above). The spell negates the loss of Unconsciousness, but it also ends in the process.
- The caster chooses to drink, to eat, or to sleep. (The caster *cannot* sleep to recover lost Magic Points while this spell is in effect! However, they may meditate.)
- The spell is dispelled.

Shén Qing's Auspicious Aura of Heaven

[Heaven]

Being of Spiritual Purity

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d8
Type: Persistent
Effect: Caster gains an Auspicious Aura of Heaven

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Shén Qing's Enduring Aura of Heaven

[Heaven]

Being of Vital Purity

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains a Enduring Aura of Heaven

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Shén Qing's Enduring Aura of Truth

[Heaven]

Being of Vital Purity

Cost: 5
Difficulty: 5d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains a Enduring Aura of Truth

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Shén Qing's Fragile Aura of Heaven

[Heaven]

Being of Vital Purity

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains a Fragile Aura of Heaven

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Shén Qing's Imposing Aura of Progress

[Earth, Fire, Weather]

Being of Vital Purity

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Target gains an Aura of Progress

See "Auras," page 189, for how Auras work.

Shén Qing's Privilege Over Heaven

[Heaven]

Being of Spiritual Purity

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d6
Type: Defense (Privilege)
Effect: Invoke Privilege over Heaven Magic.

You may invoke Privilege over any spell of the Heaven Nature (p. 191).

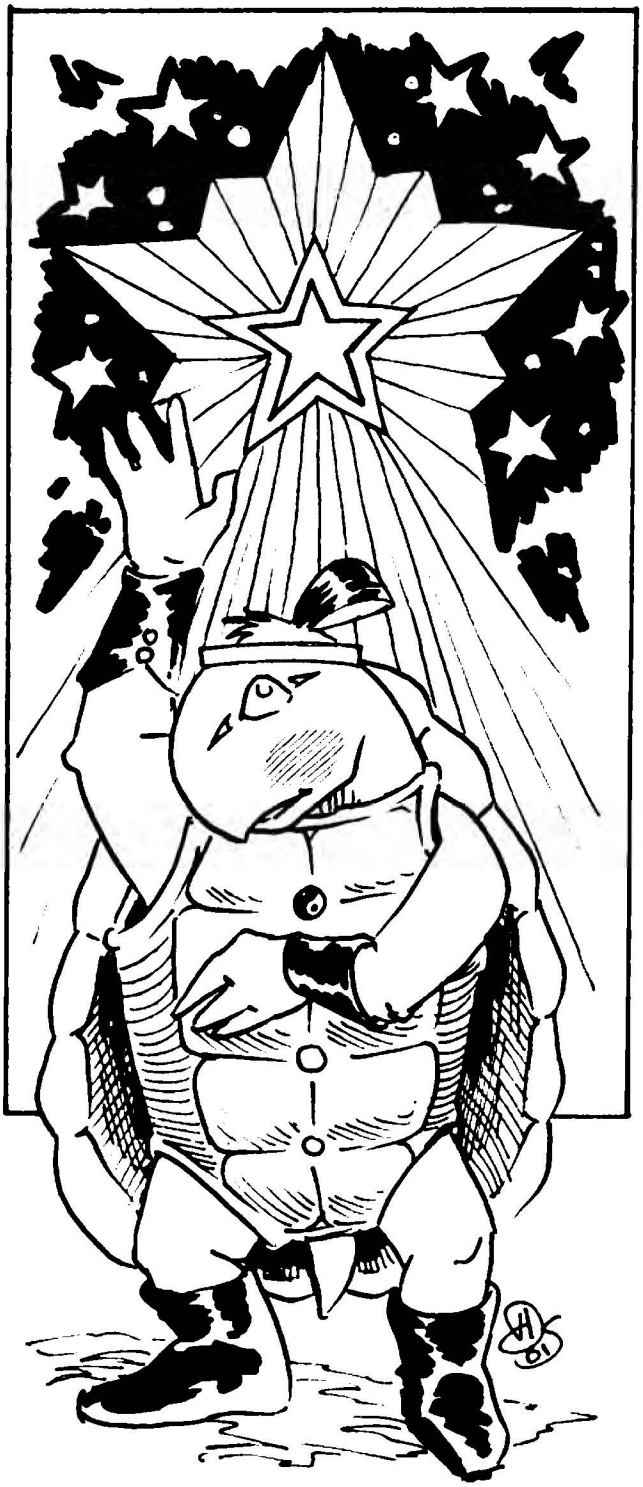
Shén Qing's Privilege Over Weather

[Weather]

Being of Spiritual Purity

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d6
Type: Defense (Privilege)
Effect: Invoke Privilege over Weather Magic.

You may invoke Privilege over any spell of the Weather Nature (p. 191).



Show of Guile

[Earth, Fire, Unreal]

Worldly Way of Earth

Worldly Way of Fire

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Target gains Effect Dice to Bluff or Influence others

Sometimes, it is important to make a good show. For the rest of this Scene, the target may include the spell's Effect Dice with all attempts to Bluff or Influence others. At the Game Host's option, this spell will improve other attempts to cheat, convince, or fool others.

Silencing

[Lake, Mountain]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Group must test Body, Speed, Mind, & Will vs. 4d8 or be Silenced

You place a finger to your lips and make a hush sound towards your enemies. A Group must test their Body, Speed, Mind, and Will Trait Dice vs. 4d8 or become magically Silenced. Silenced combatants cannot speak, so they cannot give orders or respond to questions. They also may not cast any spells. However, they also do not make any noise at all — they may not be discovered by Listen Tests (p. 113), they cannot give orders as a leader or rally others with Leadership Tests (p. 112), and they may gain two Bonuses on Sneak Tests (p. 116) at the Host's Discretion.

Since this spell has some beneficial effects, a target may choose not to resist — if so, their effective Resistance Score is 1.

Spiritual Restoration

[Healing, Heaven]

Being of Spiritual Purity

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d10
Type: Regular
Effect: Target heals 4 Wounds, re-rolls last Death Test

You cast this spell on any combatant who has failed a Death Test (and thus has become Mortally Wounded or Dead). This spell has the following effects:

- The target heals 4 Wounds, provisionally;
- The target may re-roll their Death Test at the lower Difficulty. If they *Succeed,* they are merely *Unconscious;* if they *Fail,* they are *Mortally Wounded*; if they *Overwhelmingly Fail or Botch,* their condition remains the same (Mortally Wounded or Dead) but does not get worse.
- If the target becomes *Unconscious,* they are healed the 4 Wounds; otherwise, the healing doesn't work.

This spell may be cast on combatants with 1 to 9 Wounds, thus automatically removing four Wounds, since they will have been healed out of mortal danger. This potent magic can even raise

someone from the dead — see p. 151. People brought back from "the other side" will be mentally shaken from the experience, at the very least. This spell cannot help someone with 17 Wounds or more, since such combatants would automatically remain Mortally Wounded.

Star

[Fire, Heaven]

Being of Generative Purity

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Summon forth a ghostly light.

You snap your fingers, and a tiny light about the size of your fist appears, hovering around your head and offering a radiance equal to daylight up to the sum of the spell's Effect Dice, in paces.

The spell hovers next to your head, unless you *Concentrate* to direct it elsewhere. When you are not Concentrating, the light returns to hover next to you.

The light lasts until the end of this Scene, or until someone snuffs it with their hand or the like. (If it matters, the Game Host can treat this as a Grappling Attack, with the light using its Effect Dice as Dodge.)

Steadfastness

[Wind, Thunder]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 1d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Target gains Effect Dice as Toughness for this Scene

The caster points at the target and compliments them in what sounds like flowery language. While under the effects of this spell, the target enjoys Toughness Dice (p. 63) equal to the spell's Effect Dice, for the rest of this Scene.

Strength of the Waterfall

Requirement: an Aura that adds Effect to Mountain or Water spells

[Mountain, Water]

Worldly Way of Water

Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 3
Difficulty: none
Type: Regular
Effect: Target may include spell's Effect Dice with all Strength Rolls — *but* spell has no Effect Dice on its own

The target may include the spell's Effect Dice with all rolls of their Strength, including Damage Rolls. *However,* the spell has no Effect Dice on its own.

Sword of Lightning

[Metal, Weather]

Divine Way of Metal

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d12
Type: Delayed
Effect: Hurl a 3d12 Lightning Strike as a First-Rank Maneuver

You charge a sword with sparkling energy, visible and audible at random intervals. Later, the wielder of the sword may choose a Magic Defense to release the bolt, which strikes a target of their choice as a Homing Attack, using the spell's Effect Dice of 3d12.

You may cast this spell on a Dancing Sword. The Sword will release the bolt on your verbal command, or if a combatant it is fighting with somehow gets out of its attacking range.

Synecdoche of Earth

[Earth]

Celestial Way of Earth

Cost: 7
Difficulty: 7d6
Type: Regular (but see below)
Effect: Makes the next Earth Spell you cast a Synecdoche one

After successfully casting this spell, the very next spell you cast in this Scene that has the Earth Nature becomes a Synecdoche Spell. You must have a link to your target — this spell does not create one. You may cast almost any Earth-Nature spell as a Synecdoche Spell — exact details may vary, as per the Host's discretion.

You only need one link to cast a spell with a Scope of "Target" or "Cluster" — to cast at a Group, you must have a link to each member of the Group, and they *must* be within 4 paces of one another when you cast the spell; as per all Groups, the closest target is affected first. The Host is the final arbiter on spell effects.

If your Synecdoche spell is a Targeting, Homing, or Exploding Spell, your target includes their *Sixth Sense Dice* (if any) with their Defense Dice.

This spell is only effective for spells that affect others. It has no effect on spells that affect only yourself, such as Proper Auras or Bounties. If the next Earth spell you cast is inappropriate, then this spell is wasted.

Synecdoche of Fire

[Fire]

Celestial Way of Fire

Cost: 7
Difficulty: 7d6
Type: Regular (but see below)
Effect: Makes the next Fire Spell you cast a Synecdoche one

After successfully casting this spell, the very next spell you cast in this Scene that has the Fire Nature becomes a Synecdoche Spell. You must have a link to your target — this spell does not create one. You may cast almost any Fire-Nature spell as a Synecdoche Spell — exact details may vary, as per the Host's discretion.

You only need one link to cast a spell with a Scope of "Target" or "Cluster" — to cast at a Group, you must have a link to each member of the Group, and they *must* be within 4 paces of one

another when you cast the spell; as per all Groups, the closest target is affected first. The Host is the final arbiter on spell effects.

If your Synecdoche spell is a Targeting, Homing, or Exploding Spell, your target includes their *Sixth Sense Dice* (if any) with their Defense Dice.

This spell is only effective for spells that affect others. It has no effect on spells that affect only yourself, such as Proper Auras or Bounties. If the next Fire spell you cast is inappropriate, then this spell is wasted.

Synecdoche of Metal

[Metal]

Celestial Way of Metal

Cost:	7
Difficulty:	7d6
Type:	Regular (but see below)
Effect:	Makes the next Metal Spell you cast a Synecdoche one

After successfully casting this spell, the very next spell you cast in this Scene that has the Metal Nature becomes a Synecdoche Spell. You must have a link to your target — this spell does not create one. You may cast almost any Metal-Nature spell as a Synecdoche Spell — exact details may vary, as per the Host's discretion.

You only need one link to cast a spell with a Scope of "Target" or "Cluster" — to cast at a Group, you must have a link to each member of the Group, and they *must* be within 4 paces of one another when you cast the spell; as per all Groups, the closest target is affected first. The Host is the final arbiter on spell effects.

If your Synecdoche spell is a Targeting, Homing, or Exploding Spell, your target includes their *Sixth Sense Dice* (if any) with their Defense Dice.

This spell is only effective for spells that affect others. It has no effect on spells that affect only yourself, such as Proper Auras or Bounties. If the next Metal spell you cast is inappropriate, then this spell is wasted.

Synecdoche of Water

[Water]

Celestial Way of Water

Cost:	7
Difficulty:	7d6
Type:	Regular (but see below)
Effect:	Makes the next Water Spell you cast a Synecdoche one

After successfully casting this spell, the very next spell you cast in this Scene that has the Water Nature becomes a Synecdoche Spell. You must have a link to your target — this spell does not create one. You may cast almost any Water-Nature spell as a Synecdoche Spell — exact details may vary, as per the Host's discretion.

You only need one link to cast a spell with a Scope of "Target" or "Cluster" — to cast at a Group, you must have a link to each member of the Group, and they *must* be within 4 paces of one another when you cast the spell; as per all Groups, the closest target is affected first. The Host is the final arbiter on spell effects.

If your Synecdoche spell is a Targeting, Homing, or Exploding Spell, your target includes their *Sixth Sense Dice* (if any) with their Defense Dice.

This spell is only effective for spells that affect others. It has no effect on spells that affect only yourself, such as Proper Auras or Bounties. If the next Water spell you cast is inappropriate, then this spell is wasted.

Synecdoche of Wood

[Wood]

Celestial Way of Wood

Cost:	7
Difficulty:	7d6
Type:	Regular (but see below)
Effect:	Makes the next Wood Spell you cast a Synecdoche one

After successfully casting this spell, the very next spell you cast in this Scene that has the Wood Nature becomes a Synecdoche Spell. You must have a link to your target — this spell does not create one. You may cast almost any Wood-Nature spell as a Synecdoche Spell — exact details may vary, as per the Host's discretion.

You only need one link to cast a spell with a Scope of "Target" or "Cluster" — to cast at a Group, you must have a link to each member of the Group, and they *must* be within 4 paces of one another when you cast the spell; as per all Groups, the closest target is affected first. The Host is the final arbiter on spell effects.

If your Synecdoche spell is a Targeting, Homing, or Exploding Spell, your target includes their *Sixth Sense Dice* (if any) with their Defense Dice.

This spell is only effective for spells that affect others. It has no effect on spells that affect only yourself, such as Proper Auras or Bounties. If the next Wood spell you cast is inappropriate, then this spell is wasted.

Taming Power Over the Small

[Heaven, Wind]

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Being of Vital Purity

Cost:	2
Difficulty:	2d8
Type:	Regular
Effect:	Group must Test Will, Leadership, & Tactics vs. Effect Dice or suffer Demoralization; the lowest Score suffers Fear

When a new household is started, the skill of the leaders has yet to be tested. This spell specifically plays upon a lack of chain of command in your targets.

Those that fail to resist suffer Demoralization. Out of all the individuals affected, the single target that rolled the lowest score suffers Fear.

Tenacity of the Worker, The

[Mountain, Wind]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost:	2
Difficulty:	2d8
Type:	Regular
Effect:	Group must test Will & Career Traits vs. Effect or suffer Incompetence; lowest Score suffers Confusion

This spell tests the determination of the targets to see how committed they are to making the world a better place. Those who are found wanting have their capacities diminished.

Tidal Wave

[Lake, Water, Weather]

Worldly Way of Water

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Being of Spiritual Purity

Cost:	6
Difficulty:	6d6
Type:	Explosion
Effect:	Cluster suffers 6d6 Exploding Attack (may include Swimming Dice with Soak Dice)

You raise your arms and shout out a loud cry, and a watery wave appears as if from nowhere, crashing into a Cluster of your choice. Any target that takes even 1 Wound from this attack becomes completely drenched.

Those who have Swimming Dice may include those with their other dice when defending against this Exploding Attack.

Transition Before Completion

[Fire, Water]

Worldly Way of Water

Divine Way of Fire

Cost:	3
Difficulty:	3d12
Type:	Regular
Effect:	Makes the next spell you cast a Delayed one

The time is not yet right for you to act, so be patient: the transition from chaos to order is not yet complete. You are following the right path, but avoid disputes, and success will come to you in time.

After casting this spell, the very next spell you cast in this Scene becomes a Delayed one. The only limit on how many spells you may Delay is your Magic Points — you may not recover the points spent on Delayed spells until you release them.

Travel

[Fire, Mountain]

Worldly Way of Fire

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost:	2
Difficulty:	2d6
Type:	Persistent
Effect:	Target enjoys travel benefits.

The longest journey begins with a simple step. It is said this spell was created by an Immortal who wanted to leisurely enjoy long walks in the countryside without being disturbed.

- The target gains the spell's Effect Dice to use when the target of an Ambush Test (p. 104).
- The target includes the spell's Effect Dice with all uses of the Weather Sense Skill.
- The target suffers no Fatigue from a regular march … *but* there is no advantage for a Forced March — in fact, a Forced March will end the spell.

The spell lasts until the target falls asleep or unconscious for any reason, or if the target tries a Forced March.

Triumphant Conversation

[Lake]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost:	4
Difficulty:	4d6
Type:	Regular
Effect:	Listen and speak to others, transcending all language barriers.

After casting this spell, for the remainder of the scene you may speak to others and you may understand what all others say, regardless of what language they use. For example, if you were talking to a Rinaldi who spoke only Calabrese and you spoke only Zhonggese, you could still freely communicate by casting this spell.

People who can hear your voice hear only their native language, and when others speak to you, it is in the words of your own native tongue. This has no effect on any *other* people present — for example, if the Rinaldi tries to talk to your bodyguard, they will have to have some language in common.

This spell has no effect on *written words* — only on spoken

ones. While you may freely transcribe any conversations going on, since the words you hear are in your native language, then your transcription will be in your native language as well.

Because this spell is designed to ease communication rather than obscure or hinder it, while under the effects of this spell you find it difficult to play anyone false. You suffer one Penalty when attempting to Bluff someone. The Game Host may rule that other dice (such as those to Fast-Talk someone into doing something) suffer a Penalty, as well.

Turmoil

[Thunder]

Apprentice Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Group test Speed & Mind vs. 3d6 or become Incompetent; lowest score becomes deafened and Incompetent

With a muttered word and a clap of your hands (or, with only one hand, a swat against something else) you create a Thundering Noise that rattles most folks. Although the noise may travel for miles, only a Group that you designate within range must test their Speed & Mind vs. the Effect Dice of 3d6 or become *Incompetent* with ringing ears and a piercing headache. The lowest score in the group becomes deaf.

Turning Point, The

[Earth, Thunder, Unholy]

Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Worldly Way of Earth

Being of Vital Purity

Cost: 9
Difficulty: 9d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Group has their Abnormal States reversed

A powerful spell, this magic immediately converts advantage to disadvantage and vice versa. Cast on a Group, those affected have their Abnormal States changed as follows:

Abnormal Status…	*…becomes this Status*
Berserking	Rage
Confusion	Focus
Death	Death (but see below)
Demoralization	Rage
Drunkenness	Focus
Fear	Rage
Focus	Berserking
Haste	Slowness
Imperceptibility	Berserking
Incompetence	Focus
Marionette	Rage
Mesmerism	Rage
Mired	Haste
Mortally Wounded	Unconsciousness*
On Fire	Reeling
Paralysis	Rage
Petrified	Haste
Rage	Mesmerism*
Reeling	On Fire
Silence	Rage
Sleep	Focus
Slowness	Haste
Terror	Rage
Unconsciousness	removed, but no other change
other Abnormal Status (Blindness, etc.)	removed, but no other change
no Abnormal Status	no effect

The duration of the new state is the same as the last one. For example, if the target was Silenced for 2 more Rounds, then they become Enraged for 2 more Rounds.

The exceptions are marked with an asterisk (*) — a target that becomes Unconscious stays that way for one hour, and a target that becomes Mesmerized stays that way until they recover (see p. 340). If no duration was specified, assume one Scene.

In rare cases, the Turning Point spell can transform a recently-deceased corpse into an Undead monster — the Game Host should use their discretion.

Twice-Fold Bounty of Earth

[Earth]

Celestial Way of Earth

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d10
Type: Delayed (Bounty)
Effect: Claim 2 points of Bounty for Earth Magic.

You may claim 2 points of Bounty for any spell of the Earth Nature (p. 190).

Twice-Fold Bounty of Fire

[Fire]

Celestial Way of Fire

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d10
Type: Delayed (Bounty)
Effect: Claim 2 points of Bounty for Fire Magic.

You may claim 2 points of Bounty for any spell of the Fire Nature (p. 190).

Twice-Fold Bounty of Heaven

[Heaven]

Being of Spiritual Purity

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d10
Type: Delayed (Bounty)
Effect: Claim 2 points of Bounty for Heaven Magic.

You may claim 2 points of Bounty for any spell of the Heaven Nature (p. 190).

Twice-Fold Bounty of Lake

[Lake]

Grand Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d10
Type: Delayed (Bounty)
Effect: Claim 2 points of Bounty for Lake Magic.

You may claim 2 points of Bounty for any spell of the Lake Nature (p. 190).

Twice-Fold Bounty of Metal

[Metal]

Celestial Way of Metal

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d10
Type: Delayed (Bounty)
Effect: Claim 2 points of Bounty for Metal Magic.

You may claim 2 points of Bounty for any spell of the Metal Nature (p. 190).

Twice-Fold Bounty of Mountain

[Mountain]

Grand Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d10
Type: Delayed (Bounty)
Effect: Claim 2 points of Bounty for Mountain Magic.

You may claim 2 points of Bounty for any spell of the Mountain Nature (p. 190).

Twice-Fold Bounty of Thunder

[Thunder]

Grand Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d10
Type: Delayed (Bounty)
Effect: Claim 2 points of Bounty for Thunder Magic.

You may claim 2 points of Bounty for any spell of the Thunder Nature (p. 190).

Twice-Fold Bounty of Unreal

[Unreal]

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d10
Type: Delayed (Bounty)
Effect: Claim 2 points of Bounty for Unreal Magic.

You may claim 2 points of Bounty for any spell of the Unreal Nature (p. 190).

Twice-Fold Bounty of Water

[Water]

Celestial Way of Water

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d10
Type: Delayed (Bounty)
Effect: Claim 2 points of Bounty for Water Magic.

You may claim 2 points of Bounty for any spell of the Water Nature (p. 190).

Twice-Fold Bounty of Weather

[Weather]

Being of Spiritual Purity

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d10
Type: Delayed (Bounty)
Effect: Claim 2 points of Bounty for Weather Magic.

You may claim 2 points of Bounty for any spell of the Weather Nature (p. 190).

Twice-Fold Bounty of Wind

[Wind]

Grand Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d10
Type: Delayed (Bounty)
Effect: Claim 2 points of Bounty for Wind Magic.

You may claim 2 points of Bounty for any spell of the Wind Nature (p. 190).

Twice-Fold Bounty of Wood

[Wood]

Celestial Way of Wood

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d10
Type: Delayed (Bounty)
Effect: Claim 2 points of Bounty for Wood Magic.

You may claim 2 points of Bounty for any spell of the Wood Nature (p. 190).

Viewing of the Remote Place, The
Requirement: Local Knowledge [Landscape of Choice] at d4

[Heaven, Mountain]

Grand Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Being of Spiritual Purity

Cost: 6
Difficulty: 6d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Remotely view a spot in the landscape

This powerful spell lets you alter your perception to any single place in a landscape you are familiar with. In game terms, you must have taken the skill of Local Knowledge (p. 70) for an area in scope no larger than a Landscape (p. 197).

For this spell to work, you must concentrate on a specific spot in the landscape. The Game Host may call upon a roll of your Mind and Local Knowledge vs. a difficulty set on how particular you want to be, from the "imaginary 1" for things well-known to you, to 2d12 or more for vague impressions.

> ***Example:*** In-Leng casts the spell "The Viewing of the Remote Place," demanding to "see the people who dared steal my copy of the Laughing Sutra!" In-Leng first casts the spell on the valley of Morebo; as the thieves aren't there, the spell fails.
>
> In-Leng then casts the spell on the city of Aokelahemashi. The thieves *are* there, so the Game Host calls for a roll of In-Leng's Mind & Local Knowledge dice vs. a difficulty of 2d12. In-Leng scores a Success, and is treated to a view of two adventurers blithely strolling through the marketplace.

When you cast this spell, you must close your eyes, ears, and other perceptions from where you are. You must Concentrate (p. 140), totally unaware of your current surroundings. If attacked while in this state, you automatically *Botch* any Ambush Tests (p. 104).

While this spell is active, your perceptions change to the place targeted by this spell. You can see, hear, smell, and feel as if you were right there. If the object targeted by this spell moves, you move with it. If the target is a place, you can "move about" within a seven-pace square. However, you're not "really there" — only your perceptions have been moved to that place.

Unfortunately, those that you observe are not completely unaware of your attentions. Anyone observed by you may roll his Sixth Sense Dice (if any) and Wizard Trait Dice (if any) vs. 6d6. If they Succeed, they become aware that they are being watched. If they know any Synecdoche spells (p. 192), they may cast them at you as long as you remain actively observing this place.

The spell ends if it is dispelled, if your Concentration is disturbed for any reason, or the end of the Scene (about five minutes).

Vital Restoration

[Healing, Heaven]

Being of Vital Purity

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d10
Type: Regular
Effect: Target heals 2 Wounds, re-rolls last Death Test

You cast this spell on any combatant who has failed a Death Test (and thus has become Mortally Wounded or Dead). This spell has the following effects:

- The target heals 2 Wounds, provisionally;
- The target may re-roll their Death Test against the lower Difficulty. If they *Succeed,* they are merely *Unconscious;* if they *Fail,* they are *Mortally Wounded;* if they *Overwhelmingly Fail or Botch,* their condition remains the same (Mortally Wounded or Dead) but does not get worse.
- If the target becomes *Unconscious,* they are healed the 2 Wounds; otherwise, the healing doesn't work.

This spell may be cast on combatants with 1 to 7 Wounds, thus automatically removing two Wounds, since they will have been healed out of mortal danger. This potent magic can even raise someone from the dead — see p. 151. People brought back from "the other side" will be mentally shaken from the experience, at the very least. This spell cannot help someone with 15 Wounds or more, as such combatants wouldautomatically remain Mortally Wounded.

Vivacity

[Heaven, Thunder]

Being of Generative Purity

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Target becomes Hasted

This spell quickens the step of a single target, who becomes *Hasted* for the rest of this Scene.

Void

[Earth, Lake]

Divine Way of Earth

Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 6
Difficulty: 6d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Remove Synecdoche from a target

This spell has two uses. The first is that you can use this spell to sever any or all Synecdoche links to your target. You can either specify which links you want to sever (but each link must be known to you, and the spell will interpret your requests literally), or you may sever all links, known or unknown. The target may choose to Resist: roll your Wizardly Career Trait vs. their Body Trait or the spell fails. (If the target has Magic Resistance [p.63], they automatically try to resist, using Body & Magic Resistance.)

Secondly, you may also use this spell to remove Delayed Spells on the target. Doing so immediately dispels (and does not release) those Delayed Spells. Unless those Delayed Spells are your own, you must

make a roll of the spell's Effect Dice vs. the appropriate Wizard Trait of the caster of the Delayed Spell; if you Succeed, the Delayed Spell is dispelled; roll separately for each spell.

You may cast this spell on another combatant, to attempt to remove Delayed Spells from their person. If you don't know what those Delayed Spells are, you will have to specify "all links," thus severing all Synecdoche and Delayed Spells on the target.

For purposes of removing Delayed Spells, Void works on a single target, be that a combatant, an item, an area, etc.

This spell does not affect continuing magical effects, such as Confusion, Fear, etc. — use a Healing spell or a Dispel Magic to remove those effects.

Waiting Without Anxiety

[Heaven, Water]

Divine Way of Water

Being of Spiritual Purity

Cost: 4

Difficulty: 4d8

Type: Regular

Effect: Target gains Focus

The target of this spell (yourself or another target) instantly gains Focus, if they are able to gain Focus. The target cannot be *Demoralized*, *Incompetent*, *Reeling*, or otherwise unable to gain Focus.

Wall

[Earth, Mountain]

Worldly Way of Earth

Cost: 3

Difficulty: 3d12

Type: Regular

Effect: Creates a wall of dirt

You make a digging motion with your hands and then bark an order to an imaginary digging crew. When you lift your arms, a rampart of earth forms in the ground. The wall must always be created on the ground; if cast into empty space, the spell fails. The dirt created by this spell lasts forever (unless destroyed through Propety Damage, p. 152).

The wall is 2 paces tall, and has a maximum length in paces of your Effect Score The wall may be straight, or it may have up to 4 bends no narrower than 90 degrees each, at least 1 pace apart. (Thus, the smallest box you could create would be 1 pace by 1 pace.)

Ward Against Injury

[Metal]

Divine Way of Metal

Cost: 4

Difficulty: 2d4

Type: Regular

Effect: Grant phantom hit points to a Target

This spell puts a magic ward around the target to protect it from Damage. Roll a Damage Test vs. the target's Body Trait. Each "hit" scored actually adds an extra "hit point" to the target.

> ***Example:*** Xiobang casts Ward Against Injury on himself. He rolls 4, 3, and 2 vs. his Body Roll of 5. Xiobang gains a Ward Against Injury of 2 hit points.

Multiple Wards do not "add" together — a stronger Ward dispels a weaker one.

A Ward Against Injury is treated as if the target had "extra" hit points. The Warded character still suffers pain, knockdown, etc. … it's just that the Ward Against Injury's "phantom" Hit Points are removed first. Note that the Ward does not cure the target in any way — for example, if the target is so gravely injured that they have to Save vs. Unconsciousness every Round, adding a 3-point Ward won't change that. A Ward lasts until its Hit Points are exhausted, or until the end of the Scene.

When created, a Ward Against Injury shimmers into existence as slivers of metal armor around the target, then fades, only visible by the way light glints off the character, as if the invisible shiny metal still had luster. Scrying for Spells of the Unreal or Metal Nature will reveal the Ward, as well. Whenever the Ward Against Injury stops Damage, there is the loud clang of a blow glancing off metal, and sparks fly off — it becomes obvious that magic has been used to shield the subject from harm.

Even though the Ward prevents injury, it does not prevent pain; Warded combatants must still pass Resolve Tests as if the Wounds they suffered were their own.

Water Controls Wood

[Water]

Ghost Way of Water

Cost: 1

Difficulty: 1d8

Type: Regular

Effect: Manipulate metal, or control another's Wood spell

You may use this spell for one of the following uses:

- You may use an Interrupt (p. 138) to redirect an Arrow, Polearm, Staff or other wooden-hafted weapon within 72 paces of yourself. The target of the attack includes your Effect Dice of 1d8 with their Defense Dice.
- You may use an Interrupt to Control someone else's Wood Spell. See "Preventing and Removing Magic: Control," p. 200.
- You may manipulate and twist wood. Treat this as Property Damage (p. 152), using your Effect Dice of 1d8, as you twist the wood into new shapes that suit you.
- You may levitate unattended wooden objects to your hand. Add your Effect Die Sizes together and divide by 16 to determine your Lift. The wooden object or objects move as long as you Concentrate, or until the end of this scene, whichever comes first. You may not attack others with controlled wood.

Water Counters Fire

[Water]

Worldly Way of Water

Cost: 2

Difficulty: 2d10

Type: Defense

Effect: Counterspell Fire Magic with 2d10

You may use this spell to prevent or remove a magical effect of Fire (p. 200) with your Effect Dice of 2d10. (Unlike "Water Dispels Fire" [below], this spell does not inflict Property Damage.)

Water Dispels Fire

[Water]
Ghost's Way of Water

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d12
Type: Regular
Effect: Use your Effect Dice of 2d12 to Dispel Fire Magic, or destroy fire

You can use this spell for one of the following effects:

- Prevent or remove a magical Fire effect (p. 200) with your Effect Dice of 2d12.
- Douse a natural fire. Roll your Effect Dice vs. the "imaginary 1" as a Damage Roll. One hit puts out a campfire or smaller; three hits puts out a 3x3-pace square blaze. One hit is also enough to put out a combatant who is On Fire (p. 341). This use does not affect fire from a Wizardly Spell, which must be properly dispelled. Fires destroyed with this spell leave behind wet ashes, as if doused by water.

Weariness

[Earth, Thunder]
Worldly Way of Earth
Journeyman Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Group must test Will & Race vs. Effect or become Slowed; lowest Score falls Asleep

This spell fills the targets with a malaise of the spirit. Those who fail to resist become *Slowed*. The target that Scores the lowest becomes so distraught that they swoon and fall *Asleep* on the spot.

Weight of a Leaf
Requirement: must NOT be Unholy

[Wind, Wood]
Worldly Way of Wood
Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d8
Type: Regular
Effect: Target takes no Falling Damage

The target of this spell becomes magically protected against falling. The target *must* resist the spell with their Body Dice. If they *Succeed* on the resistance, the spell fails. If the target is Unholy, the spell fails. Otherwise, the spell's effect lasts for one Scene.

While this spell is in effect, the target is subject to the following effects:

- The target weighs no more than a leaf. They will not set off pit traps. They are immune to caltrops and floor-spikes.
- The target gains the spell's Effect Dice as Jumping Dice.
- The target is immune to Falling Damage. They still fall at the same rate — they just suffer no Damage when they land. They may still have to pass a test of Acrobatics to land on their feet.
- The target has a negligible weight, although their possessions still have full weight. People who successfully grapple the target may throw the target for great distances. Size is unaffected.

Wellspring of Life

[Fire, Healing, Heaven]
Divine Way of Fire
Being of Vital Purity

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d12
Type: Delayed
Effect: Target automatically passes next failed Death Test

A combatant who has the *Wellspring of Life* Delayed upon them need not fear death. The target carries this spell with them until they fail a Death Test. The Wellspring of Life is then lost, and the Death Test is considered to be successful.

A combatant can only have one Wellspring of Life at one time. A new Wellspring of Life dispels an older one.

This spell has no effect on targets that are already Mortally Wounded or Dead; it is preventive, not restorative.

Wings

[Fire, Wind]
Divine Way of Fire

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 1d12
Type: Persistent
Effect: Caster gains Flight at a speed of the sum of their Effect Dice of 1d12

With a gesture, you wave your arms, and a mantle of burning feathers sprout from your arms.

For the duration of this Scene, you gain the Gift of Flight, with all its advantages and requirements, with the following exceptions: Your Flight Speed is the sum of all your Effect Dice (and has nothing to do with your Speed Dice) and your Flight Skill Dice (if any). Note that if you have an Aura of Fire or an Aura of Wind, it increases your Effect Dice and thus your Flight Speed.

Remember that Encumbrance reduces Flight Dice!

Withdrawal from Earthly Perception

[Heaven, Mountain, Unreal]
Master Teacher of Supernatural Laws
Being of Vital Purity

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d8
Type: Persistent
Effect: Target becomes Imperceptible (with 4d8 Effect Dice)

When you cast this spell, a magic fog not unlike those that hide the summits of the high mountains surrounds your target. The target of this spell becomes *Imperceptible*. In order to perceive an Imperceptible target, you must win a test of your Mind Dice, Observation Skill Dice, & Sixth Sense Dice vs. the Effect Dice (usually 4d8) and the target's Stealth Dice (if any). *Racial Senses do not help you find Imperceptible targets at all.*

If you can *Tie* or better, then you can perceive the target and the Imperceptibility is instantly dispelled. If you *Fail* to see the Imperceptible target, then they remain undetected.

The target of this spell is "shrouded" in a magic mist, which covers them and all the things they carry, up to their maximum Encumbrance. They may only hide other people if they physically pick them up and carry them. Items picked up "disappear," as if receding into a fog, and dropped items suddenly "appear" — such events should allow onlookers to make rolls to perceive the target, as above.

The Imperceptibility will also be dispelled if any of the following events happen:

- *If the Imperceptible combatant chooses to attack.* If they choose to do so, however, roll an Ambush Test (p. 104), including the Effect Dice with the combatant's Ambush Dice, as the Imperceptibility will offer an advantage of surprise.
- *If the Imperceptibility is dispelled with counter-magic.*
- *If the Imperceptible target "trips up" or is otherwise blatantly revealed.* This includes, but is not limited to, failing a Resolve Test, making a Loud Noise, and many Botches or Overwhelming Failures on other kinds of rolls.

Once the target is no longer Imperceptible, the spell ends and the Magic Points are released.

You may cast this spell on a war-mount, rendering it and all it carries (including rider) Imperceptible. If the mount is Skittish or otherwise not war-worthy, it will spook and instantly reveal itself.

Wood Controls Fire

[Wood]

Ghost Way of Wood

Cost: 1

Difficulty: 1d8

Type: Regular

Effect: Manipulate Fire

You may use this spell for one of the following uses:

- You may use an Interrupt (p. 138) to Control someone else's Fire Spell. See "Preventing and Removing Magic: Control," p. 200.
- You may manipulate a fire, moving it off a target and around the room. Roll your Effect Dice — you may move any fire that many paces in any direction. The fire may be moved as long as you Concentrate, or until the end of this scene, whichever comes first. The fire moves slowly enough that combatants who Retreat (p. 133) may safely get out of the way; those who don't risk being burned (p. 152).

Wood Counters Earth

[Wood]

Worldly Way of Wood

Cost: 2

Difficulty: 2d10

Type: Defense

Effect: Counterspell Earth Magic with 2d10

You may use this spell to prevent or remove a magical effect of Earth (p. 200) with your Effect Dice of 2d10. (Unlike "Wood Dispels Earth" [below], this spell does not inflict Property Damage.)

Wood Dispels Earth

[Wood]

Ghost's Way of Wood

Cost: 2

Difficulty: 2d12

Type: Regular

Effect: Use your Effect Dice of 2d12 to Dispel Earth Magic, or destroy earth and stone

You can use this spell for one of the following effects:

- Prevent or remove a magical effect of Earth (p. 200) with your Effect Dice of 2d12.
- Replace earth or stone with plants or trees. Roll your Effect Dice of 2d12 vs. the earthen or stone objects you want to destroy, as "Property Damage" (p. 152). Light Damage will cause thick undergrowth for bad footing; Medium Damage will make soft-cover hedges 3 paces wide; Heavy Damage will cause a mighty tree to spring forth that topples stone walls, cracks stone, and fissures rock.

Summary of Auras and How they Affect Your Nature

Nature of Magic

	Earth	*Fire*	*Healing*	*Heaven*	*Lake*	*Metal*	*Mountain*	*Thunder*	*Unholy*	*Unreal*	*Water*	*Weather*	*Wind*	*Wood*	*(other)*
Aura of **Earth**	⚡			🛡		💬					🛡			▭	
Aura of **Fire**	💬	⚡				🛡					▭				
Aura of **Heaven**	🛡		💬	⚡				💬	🛡						
Aura of **Lake**					⚡		🛡				💬	▭			
Aura of **Lies**				▭					💬	⚡					
Aura of **Metal**		▭				⚡					💬			🛡	
Aura of **Mountain**	💬				🛡		⚡				▭				
Aura of **Progress**	💬	💬	💬	💬	💬	💬	💬	💬	💬	💬	💬	💬	💬	💬	💬
Aura of **Protection**	🛡	🛡		🛡	🛡	🛡	🛡	🛡	🛡	🛡	🛡	🛡	🛡	🛡	🛡
Aura of **Thunder**								⚡			💬	▭	💬		
Aura of **Truth**				💬					🛡	🛡					
Aura of **Unholy**			🛡	▭					⚡						
Aura of **Water**	▭	🛡									⚡			💬	
Aura of **Weakness**	▭	▭	🛡	▭	▭	▭	▭	▭	▭	▭	▭	▭	▭	▭	▭
Aura of **Wind**				💬			▭	💬					⚡		
Aura of **Wood**	🛡	💬				▭								⚡	

💬 ***Casting:*** This Aura is included with your Casting Dice when trying to cast the spell, if you are not Adept. If you are already Adept, there is no real advantage.

⚡ ***Effect:*** This Aura is included with the Effect Dice of the Spell you are casting, making it stronger.

🛡 ***Resistance:*** This Aura is included with your Resistance Dice vs. Spells of this element (including any Soak Dice for spells that cause Damage), making such spells less likely to affect you.

▭ ***Vulnerable:*** This Aura is included with the Effect Dice of Spells *others cast upon you,* making such spells more likely to affect you.

"A cub from the village of Que came to learn as an apprentice under the Master. After few months, he anxiously asked his teacher, 'Have I improved myself?' The Master said, 'Judging by the way you sit among journeymen and walk alongside students who are your senior (as opposed to behind them), I should say you are bent on getting on quickly rather than on improving yourself.'"

— popular folk-tale

EXPERIENCE

As a character adventures, he or she earns Experience Rewards or simply *Experience*. These Rewards can be spent on improving a character's Skills or Traits, for buying new Gifts or Traits, or for reducing or removing Flaws. Experience is always at the Host's discretion. It is intended as a reward for accomplishments and good role-playing.

Earning Experience

Experience comes in *Rewards*

A Reward cannot be divided up. For example, a 4-Experience Reward can't be broken up into 2 and 2 — all 4 must be assigned to one Self-Improvement.

The typical reward scheme for a game session is:

- 4-Experience Reward
- 3-Experience Reward
- 2-Experience Reward
- 1-Experience Reward

... for a total of ten, per session.

On the *Jadeclaw* Character Sheet, each Skill has check boxes next to it. You may "spend" each Reward to fill in the check boxes – one box per point in the Reward.

> **Example:** Nongfu's player has 4 Rewards to allocate. He chooses the skills of Brawling, Streetwise, Literacy, and Etiquette, all skills he had used during this last play session.

You must get the Host's approval before spending your Rewards. This can be as simple as telling the Host, "I'd like to put 4 Experience in Brawling, 3 in Streetwise, 2 in Literacy, and 1 in Etiquette."

You must spend the entire Reward on one Skill, Gift, or Trait; you cannot "break them up." You may not spend two Rewards on the same thing per play session.

> **Example:** Nongfu would really like to put that 4-Experience Reward and that 1-Experience Reward in his Brawling skill, but he can't. He'll have to wait for next play session to put in a second Reward.

At the Host's option, you can spend Rewards in Skills and Career Traits you don't have, as a way of learning them. This works great for when during play you were forced to rely on "default" use of your skills.

> **Example:** During the play session, Honest Han attempted the Streetwise skill, using his default of Mind Dice, since he didn't have the skill. Even though he failed the skill roll, Honest Han's player decides to put his one-Experience Reward into the Streetwise skill. Honest Han is learning from his mistakes.
>
> On Honest Han's Character Sheet, his player writes in the Skill "Streetwise" and fills one of the boxes next to it. His Skill Level is still zero, and he still gets no dice to roll, but next session he can spend another Reward, until he finally invests 5 Experience and the skill increases to Level 1.

The Self-Improvement List

On the *Jadeclaw* Character Sheet, there is a section called "Self-Improvement," with check boxes next to each item. Write in the names of Gifts to be added, Traits to be added or increased, or Flaws to be removed, and track your Rewards using the check boxes.

> **Example 1:** Borzeng has a foul-temper that has gotten him in trouble on more than one occasion — in game terms, he has the Flaw of "Wrathful." As he grows older, he thinks the hot blood of youth should give way to worldly wisdom. Borzeng's player writes "Removing Wrathful" in the Self-Improvement section.
>
> **Example 2:** Shao Xuan wants to become an Bodyguard. His player writes "Bodyguard d4" on Shao Xuan's character sheet in the Self-Improvement section. Shao Xuan's player will have to come up with a reason to spend his Experience on this Trait — the Host may require that he find another Bodyguard to teach him.
>
> **Example 3:** Wei Tzu wants to be a better fighter, and he's decided the best way to do it is to increase his Speed Trait. His player writes "Increase Speed" on Wei Tzu's character sheet in the Self-Improvement section.

Experience Costs for Improvement

Improvement	*Experience Cost*	*Campaign Reason*
Skills		
Add a new Skill at Level 1 (d4)	5	In-play experience; being taught; book research
Raise a Skill to the next Level	5	In-play experience; being taught; book research
Add a Favored Use to a Skill that doesn't have one	none (p. 64)	In-play experience
Change a Favored Use on a Skill	1	In-play experience; being taught
Gifts		
Add a new Personal Gift	5 per point of the Gift	In-play experience; being taught
Add a new Racial Gift	impossible	
Add a new Social Gift	5 per point of the Gift	Social experience
Add a new Esoteric Gift	5 per point of the Gift	Special event
Improve a Gift that has Levels, such as "Strength"	5 per point of increase	(As per type of Gift)
Add a new Basic, Expert, or Heroic Martial Art	5 per point of the Gift	In-play experience; being taught; book research
Add a Secret Martial Art	5 per point of the Gift	Being taught; book research
Flaws		
Remove an Internal Flaw	5 per point of the Flaw	In-play experience; social experience
Remove an External Flaw	5 per point of the Flaw	In-play experience; social experience
Improving Basic Traits		
Improve Body by one Level	20	Body-building experience
Improve Speed by one Level	20	In-play experience
Improve Mind by one Level	20	In-play experience; being taught; book research
Improve Will by one Level	20	In-play experience
Improve Race by one Level	20	In-play experience
Improve *non-Wizard* Career by one Level	20	In-play experience; being taught; book research
Improve *Wizard* Career by one Level	20	Being taught; book research
Adding New Traits		
Add a new Career Trait at Level 1 (d4)	15	Being taught; book research
Add a new Empty-Hand Method Trait at Level 1 (d4)	15	Being taught; book research
Add a new Special Trait at Level 1 (d4)	15	Special event
Improving Special Traits		
Increase an Empty-Hand Method Trait to the next Level	20	In-play experience; being taught; book research
Increase a Special Trait to the next Level	20	Special event; in-play experience
Skills		
Add or improve an *Athletic* Skill	5	In-play experience; being taught
Add or improve a *Combat* Skill	5	In-play experience; being taught
Add or improve an *Entertainment* Skill	5	In-play experience; being taught; book research
Add or improve a *Five-Classics* Skill	5	Being taught; book research
Add or improve an *Influence* Skill	5	In-play experience; being taught
Add or improve a *Ken* Skill	5	In-play experience; being taught; book research
Add or improve a *Lore* Skill	5	Being taught; book research
Add or improve a *Mystic* Skill	5	Being taught; book research
Add or improve a *Subterfuge* Skill	5	In-play experience; being taught; book research
Add or improve a *Trade* Skill	5	In-play experience; being taught; book research
Add or improve an *Unencumbered* Skill	5	In-play experience; being taught

Paths of Self-Improvement

As with all rules in *Jadeclaw,* the rules for Self-Improvement through Experience should be modified by the Game Host to be more intuitive.

You don't have to assign your Rewards until after you've determined maximums

Many paths to improvement, such as being taught or book research, have random results. Roll all your random results first, *then* assign your Rewards, making sure they fit under the maximums you've rolled. Remember that any Self-Improvement made by the path of "in-play experience" has no limit on size, so you will probably put your biggest Rewards there.

In the unlikely event that you simply *must* invest an Experience Reward that's over a Self-Improvement's maximum, then you will have to reduce the Reward to the maximum, losing some of your Experience.

All Experience must be approved by the Game Host

You must get the Host's approval before spending your Rewards. This can be as simple as telling the Host, "I'd like to put 4 Experience in Brawling, 3 in Streetwise, 2 in Literacy, and 1 in Etiquette."

Being Taught

If someone already has the Gift, Skill, or Trait you want to learn, they can attempt to teach it to you. This teaching assumes some free time that you and your teacher set aside for instruction — at least a day.

If your teacher is teaching you a new Gift, they roll their Mind Trait. If your teacher is teaching a Skill or Trait, they roll the appropriate Skill or Trait and note the Score.

You, as the learner, must roll your Mind Trait. The lower of the two Scores is the maximum size of the Reward you may spend this session on improving that ability.

Book Research

Many abilities can be learned from books. To read a book, you must have at least a d4 in *Literacy,* whether from a Trait or from the Skill.

Roll your Literacy Dice for each ability you want to improve. Your Score is the maximum size of the Reward you can spend.

You must also have a book that you can study, and spare time to read it. Many books in Zhongguo are proscribed by law — simply owning them can be a crime.

Body-Building Experience

Buying up your *Body Trait* is a special exception. Improving your Body Trait *also* increases your character's Size, representing improved muscle mass and physical growth. (For that matter, so does buying Robustness and Strength.)

It is not recommended that Player-Characters be allowed to buy their Body Traits up without limit. Realistically, it doesn't make that much sense for a character to just keep getting bigger and bigger. The guideline for Game Hosts is to only allow only *1-Experience* or *2-Experience* Rewards until the character's Body becomes Level 6 (d12, d4) or higher. Then it should be only *1-Experience,* if any.

A character that is body-building also requires regular exercise and a healthy diet.

Body-Building increases Size

If you increase your Body Trait, your Size also increases, with all appropriate complications.

In-Play Experience

If you used this ability during the last game session in some way, you can spend *any* size reward on improving it.

At the Game Host's discretion, an in-play experience can even be a "token use" of a Skill or Trait during the game's campaign time, simply for an excuse to spend the Reward.

Social Experience

Some abilities, such as the Gift of Good Reputation or the Flaw of Foe, simply don't improve because the Player spends Experience. Some sort of event in the context of the campaign should happen to allow the Player to justify the Reward.

Remember, Experience represents time and effort spend doing things in the context of the role-play. For "social experiences," this can mean time spend entertaining others, mingling with the right crowd, etc.

Special Event

Some abilities are supernatural, such as the Trait of Second Sight. Others represent the character's nature, such as Charisma or a Bagua Personality

Usually, a character is born with the ability, or not. Only if the Player-Character experiences some special, bizarre, unique event should the character be allowed to invest Experience in such things.

Examples of special events include:

- The character meets a ghost of their ancestor, a celestial of great awareness, or other supernatural being that imparts wisdom or a special ability.
- The character experiences emotional trauma that changes their personality or "unlocks their hidden potential."
- The character gets an incredibly rare item or ancestral gift, and it inspires the character to greatness.

> **Example 1:** Hao-nhien wants to get the Literacy Skill. He must invest 5 Experience to get it at Level 1 (d4).

Example 2: In-Leng wants to increase her Sword Skill from Level 5 (d12) to Level 6 (d12 & d4). She combines a 3-Experience reward from this past session with the 2 Experience she's already invested in the Skill for a total of 5 Experience, the total she needs to increase to the next level. Next play session, In-Leng's Sword skill will be Level 6.

Example 3: Jya-Syin changes his Favored Use on his Acrobatics skill from "changing position" to "falling." This costs him 1 Experience.

Example 4: Bao Sheng loses his Favorite Sword. He acquires a new sword, but to make this new one his "Favorite," he has to spend time training with it and practicing his technique. To represent this, he has to spend 1 Experience before he can gain the Favored Use advantage for using his "Favorite Sword."

Example 5: Reka-Mao trains herself to use either hand with no penalty, thus become Ambidextrous. Ambidexterity is a 2-Point Gift, which means it costs (2×5=) 10 Experience points. Reka-Mao must invest 10 Experience to gain the Gift of Ambidexterity.

Example 6: Borzeng, as he grows wiser in the ways of the world, learns to control his anger. He wants to remove his Flaw of "Wrathful," which had given him 3 points at character creation. It will cost him (3×5=) 15 Experience to remove this Flaw.

Example 7: Shao Xuan has been studying ardently to become a Merchant. He must invest 15 Experience to add the "Merchant" Trait at Level 1 (d4),

Example 8: Over time, Wei Tzu has honed his reflexes and sharpened his precision. He plans to invest 20 Experience to increase his Speed Trait from Level 5 (d12) to Level 6 (d12 & d4).

Frequently Asked Questions about Experience

What can I spend Experience Rewards on?

You should always get your Host's permission before spending Experience points. Your character should improve and grow according to his or her personality. For example, if your character is the bookish sort, it probably doesn't make sense to add "Judicial Champion" as a new Trait, out of the blue. In particular, Esoteric Gifts shouldn't be added without a very good reason. Hosts and PCs are encouraged to role-play such character-building events as finding teachers or mentors.

What sort of Rewards should a Host give out after each session?

We assume that an "average" gaming session lasts about four to six hours. For an "average" session, we recommend a total of 10 points: a 4-, a 3-, a 2-, and a 1-Experience Reward.

As a rule, the Rewards given out should be proportional to the difficulty of the adventure. During a play session which was short or in which the PCs weren't particularly challenged, the Host may only give out three Rewards. Likewise, unusually good role-playing should earn an extra Reward.

The Host is encouraged to give out an extra 1-Experience or 2-Experience Reward if the Player role-played something that made everyone at the table applaud or laugh or otherwise was really nifty. The Game Host may also assign Rewards to specific Self-Improvements, such as "Good Reputation"(p. 52), to represent the improved social standing of the PCs.

In the course of a campaign, you will probably pick up new characters that will join a party filled with older, "veteran" characters that have already earned quite a bit of Experience and are thus more capable. Veteran PCs will often take on challenges that may overwhelm novices. We encourage Hosts to give out an "extra" Reward to the novices, as they're facing more difficult circumstances than the veterans, until they "catch up" and are on par with the rest of the campaign.

I am the Host, and one of my Players isn't role-playing their character's Flaws. How should this affect their Experience Rewards?

Players must remember that they got extra abilities for their PC for taking "Flaws" — in return for these points, they are expected to role-play aspects of their character that will often limit their options. If you feel a Player hasn't been true to the "spirit" of their Flaws, tell the Player to write the Flaw on their Self-Improvement List and to spend one of their rewards on it.

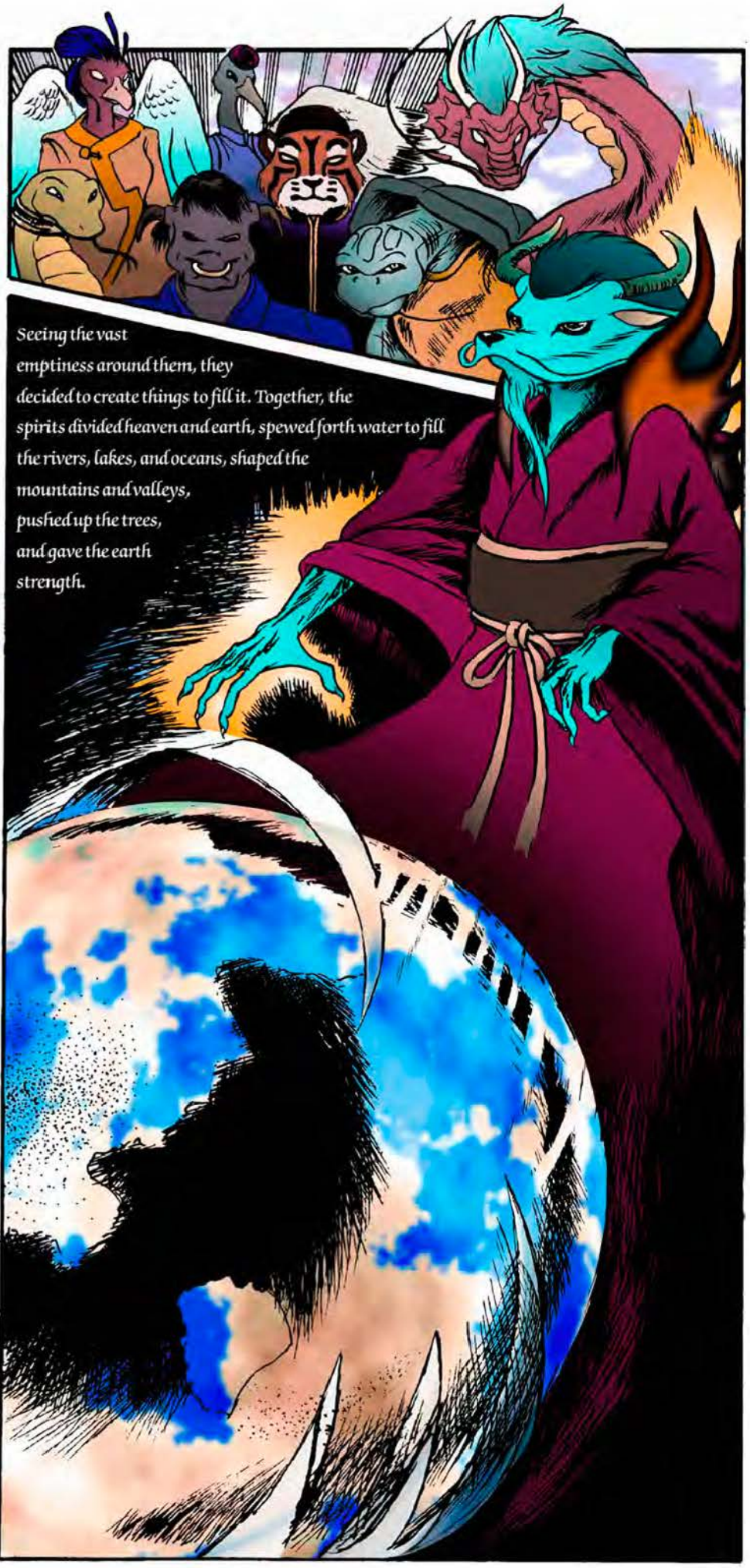
Example: Kuang Musu has the Flaw of "Honorable" (p. 58). However, the Player has been role-playing Kuang Musu inappropriately. He has had the PC blatantly lie to people, and in this last play session, he had Kuang Musu strike someone from behind.

The Game Host tells Kuang Musu's player to write "Removing Honorable" in his Self-Improvement List, and to assign the 3-Experience Reward earned in this last session towards that Improvement.

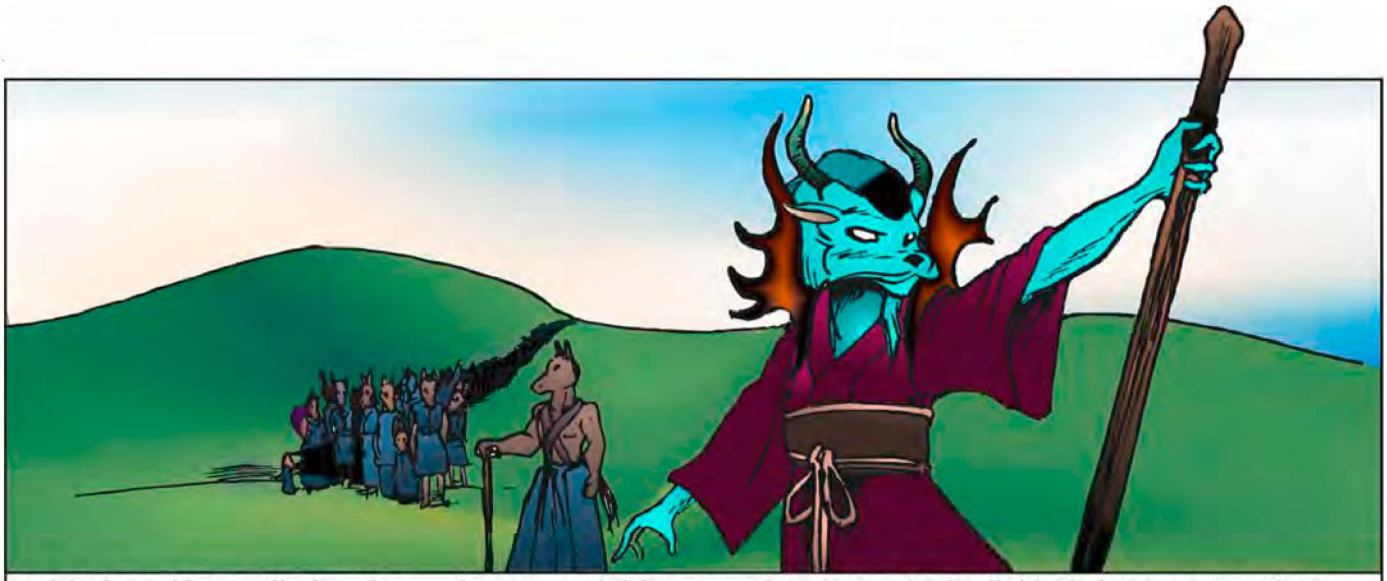
We include this suggestion because some Players try to "push the envelope," giving their characters Internal Flaws that they expect to "rationalize" their way out of limiting their options. Internal Flaws represent a PC's personal beliefs, motivations, desires, and attitude — in the spirit of role-playing, a PC wouldn't "rationalize," they'd just behave. If your Player is one to use rationalizations like this, you should probably approach him or her outside of the game session and explain your concerns. Remind the Player that it's not fair to the other Players if their options are limited because of Flaws they chose if this Player isn't going to remain true to the spirit of good role-playing.

At the dawn of time there was only the **Absolute**. For eons, the Absolute transformed, gradually dividing into the opposing yet balancing states of Yin and Yang. Each state then divided into two elements: Major and Minor.

As time passed these four states divided once more, becoming the **EightiSpirits**. The first of the spirits was **Qian Qiling**, who claimed heaven as his domain. Scores of gods and spirits followed....

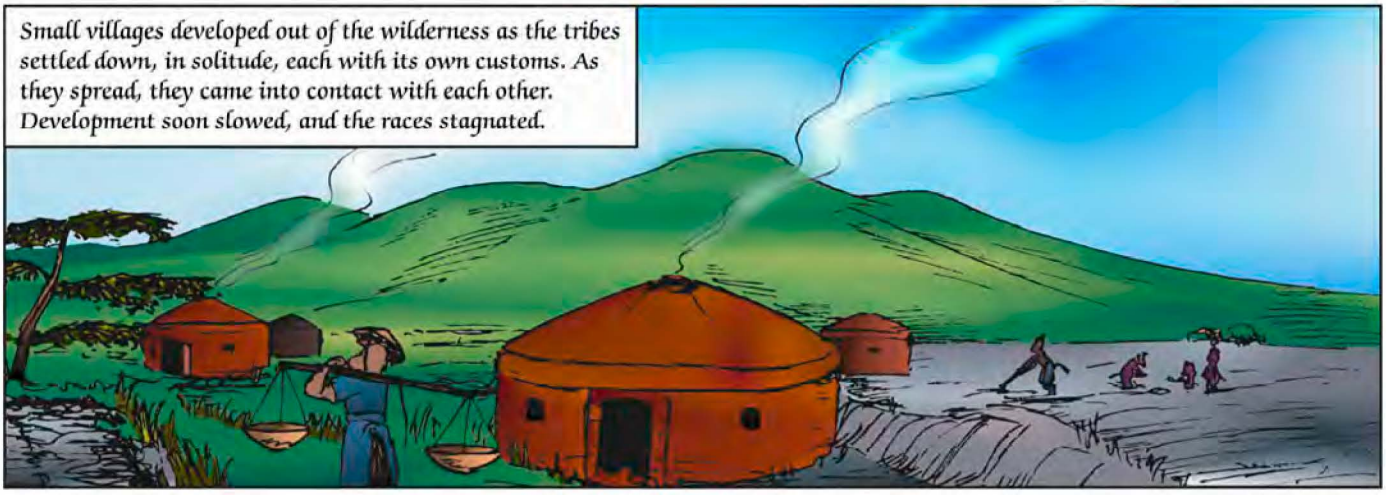


Seeing the vast emptiness around them, they decided to create things to fill it. Together, the spirits divided heaven and earth, spewed forth water to fill the rivers, lakes, and oceans, shaped the mountains and valleys, pushed up the trees, and gave the earth strength.



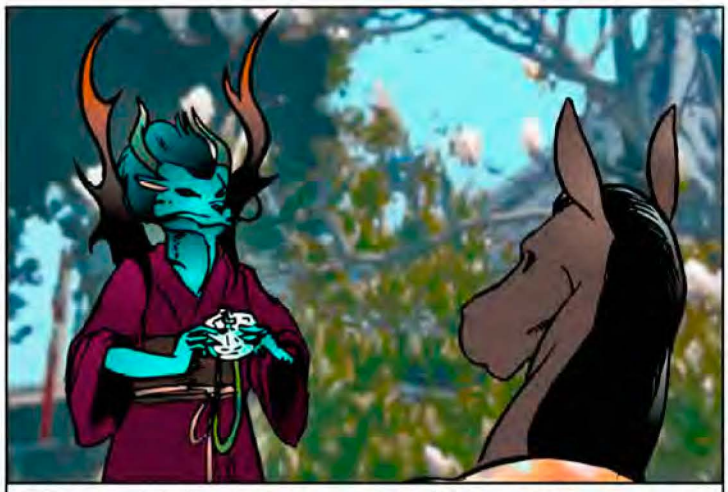
While the world was still relatively new, the spirits settled down upon their creation. Each called forth their respective tribes to wander the land. Protected by their spirits, these tribes were fruitful and multiplied.

Small villages developed out of the wilderness as the tribes settled down, in solitude, each with its own customs. As they spread, they came into contact with each other. Development soon slowed, and the races stagnated.



Then, one day, Qián Qiling approached the other spirits to invite them to join together all their peoples to form a larger whole. The hope was that it might promote the sharing of knowledge, develop laws to govern and protect, and prosper. Eleven of the spirits agreed to Qián's proposition. The others refused, too foolish or stubborn in their pride, and went their separate ways.

The Twelve Tribes were immortalized into years, incorporated into a calendar based on the order of their entry into the Kingdom. These were the people of the **Horse**, the **Sheep**, the **Monkey**, the **Rooster**, the **Dog**, the **Boar**, the **Rat**, the **Ox**, the **Tiger**, the **Hare**, the **Dragon**, and the **Snake**.

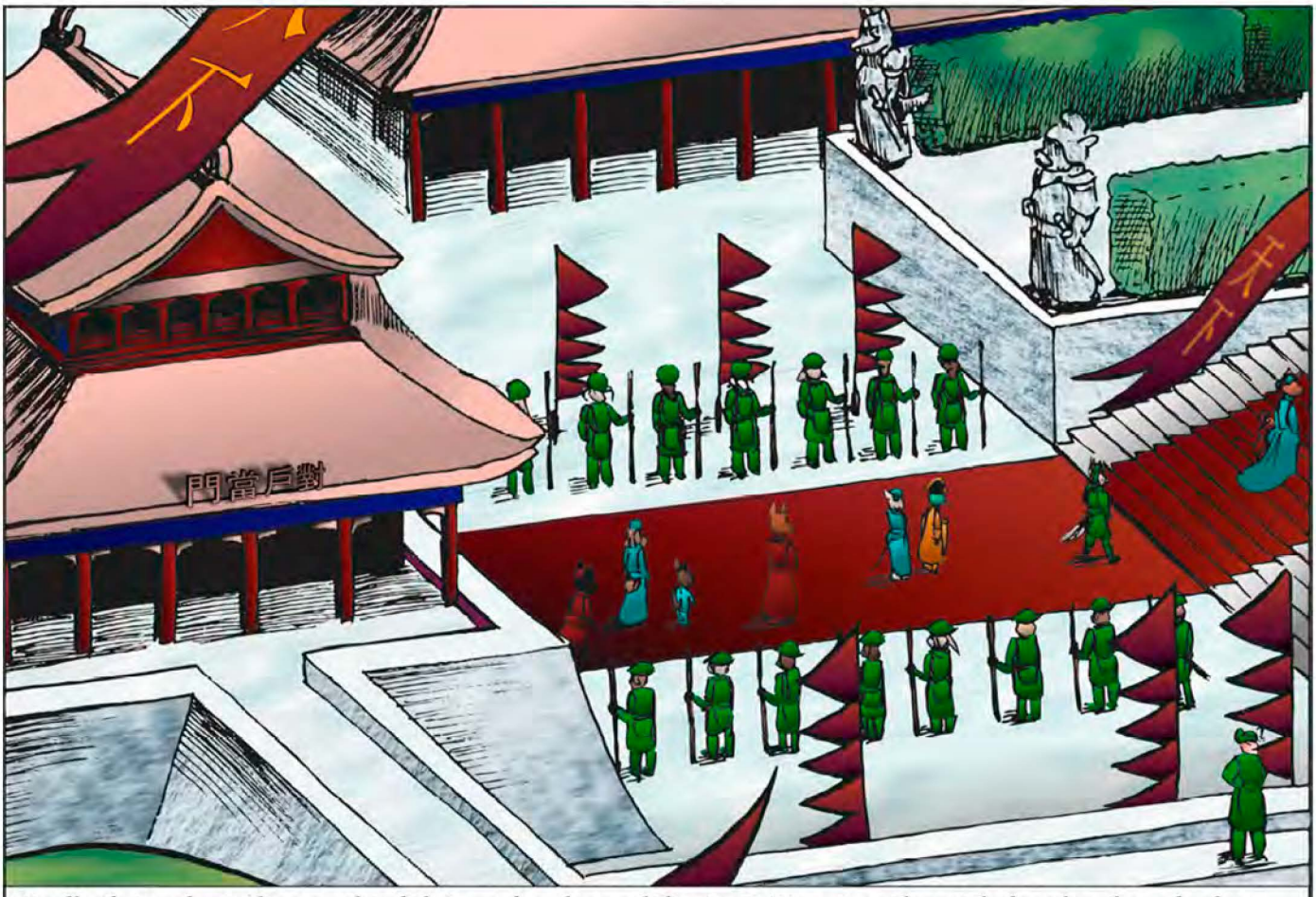


The Horse was the first to join, and the children of Qián were selected as the ruling tribe.

A **Mandate of Heaven** was presented to their leader, **Gongsun**, upon a jade tablet.

When the Celestial Spirits departed, Gongsun announced that a magnificent capital city for the new Kingdom should be constructed to commemorate the occasion.

They finally found a suitable site in a place named **Pao-chi**, a location closest to all five elements. The building of the city took many long decades.



Finally the Twelve Tribes completed their work and named the city **Mâjing**. Together with the other eleven leaders, Gongsun personally thanked the celestial spirits and asked for their blessing in return. The Heavens sent four representatives, who passed through the city and then separated, each to the four corners of the compass.

Gongsun then asked for an oath from each of the Tribes to the throne. To formalize this oath, each Tribe gave an item of great beauty and wealth to the Emperor. In return, the Emperor promised to protect and to enrich the people.

HISTORY

At the dawn of time there was only the *Absolute*. For eons the Absolute transformed, gradually dividing into the opposing yet balancing states of *Yin* and *Yang*. Each state then divided into two elements: *Major* and *Minor*. As time passed these four states divided once more, forming the Eight Spirits.

The first of the spirits was *Qián Qiling*. As the first, he claimed the Heaven as his domain. *Kun* the Ox followed, claiming the Earth as hers. Next *Zhen* the Dragon claimed Thunder, and *Xun* the Crane made the Wind her realm. *Kan* the Tortoise claimed the realm of Water, and *Gen* the Tiger claimed the Mountains. *Li* the Phoenix claimed Fire, and finally, *Dui* the Snake claimed the realm of Marsh as her own. Together, they called forth their brethren from the void. Scores of gods and spirits came. Seeing the vast emptiness around them, they decided to create things to fill it. Together, the spirits divided heaven and earth, spewed forth water to fill the rivers, lakes, and oceans, shaped the mountains and valleys, pushed up the trees, and gave the earth strength.

The spirits, satisfied with their work, waited for the awakening of the Five Elements. First to awaken to the new world was the Earth. It greeted the waiting spirits with a deep rumbling voice that awoke Metal within its bosom. Metal leapt forth, and wept upon seeing the beauty of the world. Its tears fell to the ocean below, awakening Water. Wanting to see the world, it formed itself into clouds. Wood felt its sibling pass overhead and stretched toward the heavens. Feeling the push of its kinsfolk, Fire left its abode in the sky and frolicked upon the surface. Water ordered Fire to pay respect to the elder elements. Relenting, Fire offered the gift of ashes to Earth. With the acceptance of the gift, the Five Elements were balanced and set the world in motion.

The Coming of The Twelve Houses

While the world was still relatively new, the spirits settled down upon their creation. Each called forth their respective tribes to wander the land. Protected by their spirits, these tribes were fruitful and multiplied. Small villages developed out of the wilderness as the tribes settled down, in solitude, each with its own customs. As they spread, they came into contact with each other. Sometimes the result was war, other times peaceful communication. Regardless, development soon slowed, and the races stagnated.

Then, one day, Qián Qiling approached the other spirits to invite them to join together all their peoples to form a larger whole. The hope was that it might promote the sharing of knowledge, develop laws to govern and protect, and prosper. Eleven of the spirits agreed to Qián's proposition. The others refused, too foolish or stubborn in their pride, and went their separate ways. The Twelve Tribes were immortalized into years, incorporated into a calendar based on the order of their entry into the Kingdom. These were the people of the Horse, the Sheep, the Monkey, the Rooster, the Dog, the Boar, the Rat, the Ox, the Tiger, the Hare, the Dragon, and the Snake. The Horse were the first to join, and the children of Qián were selected as the ruling tribe. A Mandate of Heaven was presented to their leader, *Gongsun*, upon a jade tablet. The Twelve Spirits then met with the leader of each tribe and provided wise counsel before parting the terrestrial realm. Together, the Twelve Tribes united to become the Kingdom. The celestial spirits formed their own kingdom lead by the Qiling, the Black Tortoise, the Blue Dragon, the Red Phoenix, and the White Tiger.

The Age of the Yellow Emperor

When the Celestial Spirits departed, Gongsun announced that a magnificent capital city for the new Kingdom should be constructed to commemorate the occasion. Gongsun summoned the leaders and their shamans of each Tribe, and together they searched for a location for the new capital. The shamans consulted the celestial spirits and the leaders sent out scouts. They finally found a suitable site in a place named *Pao-chi*, a location closest to all five elements.

The building of the city took many long decades. Finally the Twelve Tribes completed their work and named the city *Mâjing*. Together with the other eleven leaders, Gongsun personally thanked the celestial spirits and asked for their blessing in return. The Heavens sent four representatives: a Black Turtle, a Red Phoenix, a White Tiger, and a Green Dragon. They passed through Mâjing and separated, each to the four corners of the compass and transformed themselves into the four hills, mountains and plains that surround the city. In their physical absence, even the Heavens would help protect and provide for the city.

Gongsun then asked for an oath from each of the Tribes to the throne. To formalize this oath, each Tribe gave an item of great beauty and wealth to the Emperor. The tribal gifts, the Twelve Insignia of the Imperial Throne, were placed upon matching bronze tripods. In return the Emperor promised to not only protect the people of the Kingdom, but to enrich them both materially and spiritually. Emperor Gongsun then gave each Tribe an official name and area to guide, protect, and rule. These were known as the Twelve Houses: *Jizhou* to the Roosters, *Lóngzhou* to the Dragons, *Shézhou* to the Snakes, *Yangzhou* to the Sheep, *Hóuzhou* to the Monkeys, *Quânzhou* to the Dogs, *Zhuzhou* to the Boars, *Shûzhou* to the Rats, *Níuzhou* to the Oxen, *Huzhou* to the Tiger, *Tùzhou* to the Hare, and finally *Mâzhou* to his own people, the Horses.

Despite their promises of fealty, some of the Houses were not loyal to throne. Shocked, the Emperor learned that even his own brother, *Chi-you*, plotted against him, wanting to disrupt the new Kingdom. Chi-you allied himself with the Houses of Quân and Zhu, and also with several lesser immortal spirits of great power.

The rebels invaded Mâzhou Province and drove towards the shining capital. The two armies met in the valley south of Mâjing. According to legend, Chi-you laid a great blanket of fog that covered the entire valley for three days. Neither army could find the other. On the third day, Gongsun led his troops out of the mists with the aid of the "Heaven and Earth Compass Chariot," a gift from the Celestial Spirits at his coronation ceremony. The mystic glow of the chariot burned a path through the fog and out onto open ground. Upon seeing the Immortals, Gongsun called down upon the battlefield the Dragon spirit who swallowed them whole, thus destroying them and taking their essence. With their powerful allies gone and the magical fog lifting, the rebel army was caught in the open by the Emperor's troops and annihilated.

Chi-you was punished for trying to destroy the Kingdom. His physical form was destroyed, and his soul was imprisoned within a large obsidian pearl. After this there were no other uprisings, and Gongsun's authority over the Twelve Houses was solidified.

As he had promised, the Emperor guided the Kingdom. He took the knowledge of each of the Houses and collected them into a group of writings known as the *Dùn Jiâ Tien Shû*, "The Book of the Vanishing Heavenly Stem." This became the very core of the knowledge and the teachings of the people of the Kingdom, who in turn became the foundation of the Kingdoms and Dynasties to follow. He had copies of the scrolls sent to each of the other Houses, sharing the knowledge so that all would prosper as one. The knowledge and wealth of the twelve Houses advanced by leaps and bounds. Gongsun traveled the land, sharing the teachings with all and honoring each of the Houses for their contribution towards the growth of the Kingdom. At the age of one hundred and eighty, Gongsun was elevated to level of immortal and honored across the lands.

As time went by, Gongsun distanced himself from the day-to-day involvement in ruling the Kingdom and began to devote more time to meditation. During this time, he wrote the *Yi-Ching*, or "Book of Changes." This is a collection of his observations of the ways of nature and the ways of the people. It would become the center of studies for the Dàoist priests.

With Gongsun's time taken up in philosophical pursuits, his Minister, *Huli-Rui-ning*, acted on his behalf in more earthly matters. It was clear that the great Emperor's reign was drawing to a close, and the Houses began to question him as to who would be his successor, but he never answered. Throughout the Kingdom, everyone asked the same question: Who would follow in the great Gongsun's footsteps?

Finally, Gongsun came before his people as they prepared to celebrate the birth of the Kingdom and made an unexpected farewell speech. At first there was silence. Then, as one, the crowd rose and let out a great cry in hope of dissuading the Emperor from leaving. Gongsun gently reminded his people that others must have their chance to rule and that his time was now at an end. The old man lifted a hand towards the heavens and transformed into a Qiling. The Celestial Spirits came down, hovering over the city to guide him. The crowd rushed towards their Emperor as he flew into the sky, but could not hold on to him. Led by the spirits, Gongsun flew over the city, and out across the countryside.

The Three Sage Kings Period

The First Sage King – Jang Ren-biao

Following the path of their departing leader, the leaders and magistrates of the Twelve Houses encountered a shepherd named *Jang Ren-biao*. The rooster held in his hands one of the Twelve Insignia of the Throne. He was shocked to see some of the most important leaders in all the Kingdom standing in front from him. Quickly, they asked him where he had found the item in his hands. His answer was simple: a beautiful Qiling dropped it to him from the heavens. There was a quick discussion. Gongsun's Minister understood, now, why Gongsun had not named his successor — secretly, he had chosen this humble shepherd to become the next Emperor.

Many of the Houses doubted the omen. The First Prime Minister, Huli-Rui-ning, led the assembled noblemen and sages to the hidden Heavenly Pool, the secret spring designated by the Spirits as the final test for the one who would be Emperor. The candidate was to plunge himself into this pool, and the true form he would take in Heaven (one of the ruling spirits) would be revealed to those watching. He would then emerge from the pool unharmed. Those who were not qualified would die. This test gave the individual the authority of the Throne and over the Kingdom.

Immediately, three nobles leapt into the pool. The surface began to boil and steam shot into the air. Minutes later, the three nobles' bodies floated to the surface, dead. Horrified, Jang Ren-biao refused to enter the waters—after all, he was just a mere shepherd! But the First Prime Minister convinced him that even the heavens demanded it. Jang Ren-biao smiled in resignation at his fate, and walked forward, submerging himself completely within the spring. The assembled ministers saw the form of a Red Phoenix swimming within the pool. The water remained peaceful and calm, and the shepherd climbed out, his body and soul cleansed. No one questioned Jang Ren-biao's right to the Throne from that point on.

The new Emperor took his place on the Throne as the Sage King Jang, the first of three wise Kings. Huli Rui-ning guided him slowly, tutoring him in the arts of statesmanship. It was not long before the Sage King Jang became more involved in the courts, and eventually, the First Prime Minister faded into the background. He had a large map of the Kingdom made for the Sage King Jang. Then, when all was right, Huli Rui-ning presented the Emperor with a book, *Dào Der Jing ("The Book of the Way")*, containing all the Minister's knowledge. Knowing he was no longer needed, Huli Rui-ning then took his leave and left for the west, never to be seen again.

The Sage King Jang Ren-biao read the *Dào Der Jing*. He began to live a frugal life. Despite living within a luxurious palace, he ate coarse rice and drank tea and wild-herb soups. He did not expand on the glory of the palace but simply maintained it. Even during winter, he would wear the most simple of clothing. Any excess wealth was redistributed back to the people. Tradition says that no noble shall live above the Emperor, and as a result the leaders of the Twelve Houses and their nobles were forced to live similar lifestyles. Jang Ren Biao felt responsible for all those under his rule. It was said that his actions pleased the Celestial Spirits so much that no natural disaster befell the Kingdom during his reign of three hundred and sixty years. After three centuries, the Sage King Jang Ren-biao knew he would have to name a successor, yet he felt that none of his children possessed the ability to live through the deadly test of the Pool of Heaven. The Sage King traveled across the land many times looking for the "One," the individual to whom he could pass the Throne. It was on one of these trips that Ren-biao found his successor: the tiger *Shun Chong-hua*.

Sun Chong-hua was a good man, who had fled from an abusive father and stepmother, to settle in a small village near the foot of Tai-Huan Mountain. Shun Chong-hua became a successful farmer, and followed a simple lifestyle similar to that of the Sage King. He helped his neighbors and travelers survive in hard times. His kindness to people became famous. Many went to him for advice, whether it concerned farming or pottery making. Eventually, the town became very successful and prosperous.

Having heard many good things about Shun Chong-hua and his work, the First Sage King went in search of him. The Emperor wished to test him. He said that he knew of a local spring that could revitalize one's body and spirit, and commanded Shun to bring back a gourd full of water from it. Shun Chong-hua had no trouble finding the spring and soon returned unharmed. The Sage King Jang Ren-biao poured for both of them and they toasted each other and drank. Afterward, the Sage King Jang Ren-biao announced that the spring was none other than the hidden Heavenly Pool. For Shun to be able to find it, return unharmed, and drink from it, meant the Celestial Spirits had chosen him as the next Emperor. The First Sage King named Shun Chong-hua as his successor and took him back to Mâjing.

Receiving word of the First Sage King's proclamation, his sons and daughters rushed back to the capital city. Led by the eldest son, *Dan Zhu*, they begged their father to reconsider his decision. Looking at them, Jang Ren-biao knew none of them were fit to rule and sadly declined their requests. Knowing that they would contest his decision, he took his children and Shun Chong-hua back to the Heavenly Pool. The new King entered the pool and they saw the form of a White Tiger swimming there. Shun Chong-hua emerged unharmed. Several of Jang Ren-bioa's children backed away, knowing that they were not fit for the Throne, but Dan Zhu persisted. Before anyone could stop him., the King's son threw himself into the magical pool. His lifeless body floated to the surface. The decision had already been made, and there could only be one ruler.

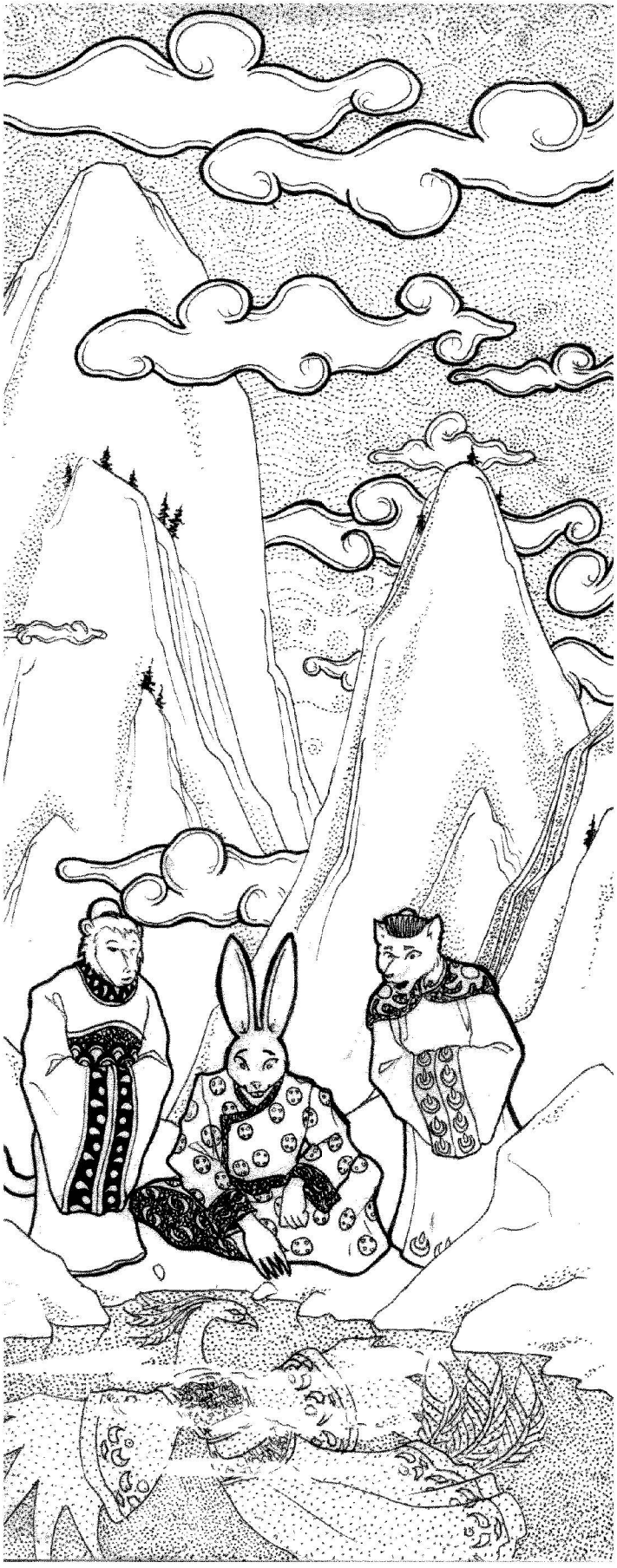
Shun Chong-hua was proclaimed the next ruler of the Kingdom. Jang Ren-biao's heart was broken from the loss of his son, and he soon passed away quietly. People mourned him across all the lands.

The Second Sage King – Shun Chong hua

The Second Sage King brought with him a great sense of energy. His first act upon taking the Throne was to forgive his parents and bring them to the Palace. He gave them a place to live and rebuilt his relationship with them. Next, Shun Chong-hua assigned his brother to a government position to help him rule.

The Second Sage King researched the Kingdom. He summoned all the court cartographers and gave orders to have all knowledge of his domain updated. One night, after staring at the large floor map built centuries earlier by Huli Rui-ning, he made the decision to expand the Kingdom. Not only would expansion help benefit the Houses, but it would bring peace and prosperity to the regions beyond the Kingdom's borders.

The following day, he sent out his troops. They subdued the poorly organized regions quickly. Garrisons were established in the newly occupied lands. They would protect the people and help them improve their fields and roads. The entire Kingdom became energized almost overnight. Those nobles with good skills in gov-



ernment and trade were given positions as governors in these areas. Their coffers ran over as trade developed in these untapped areas. In a matter of years the Kingdom had grown substantially.

The Coming of the Four Evils

Then, one day, disaster struck. Like a tornado, Four Evils swept in from the corners of Shenzhou, spreading death and mayhem. From the South came the Immortal known as *Nián*. He terrorized new settlers, razed entire towns, and defeated the best of the Imperial troops in the region. From the East came the Immortal *Gong-gong*. He could control the elements, and used them sweep the coast with storms, destroying crops and livestock. From the North came the demon *Han-doù*. He rode the winds, spreading plagues and diseases across the countryside. From the West came the Barbarian King Sanmiao. Leading his tribes across the frontier, this three horned rhino swept through Shenzhou like a scythe, destroying imperial forces and looting frontier towns and villages before putting them to the torch.

Seeing Shenzhou on the brink of disaster, the King called for its heroes to defend the people in their hour of need. The first to answer the call was *Shou Gou-wei*, the greatest of the Shû heroes. Shou led a group of Dàoists to the south and confronted Nián in eight days of battle. Shou finally encountered Nián and after several hours of fighting ran a spear through him. Nián disappeared, but returned the next day, scarred but otherwise completely healed. Again the hero and the Immortal fought, and again the monster was slain. But the following day Nián returned, and yet again the hero dispatched him. This continued for five more days. Each time, the Dàoist hero would kill the creature using a different and more thorough method than before, yet none would permanently slay the Immortal. On the eighth day, Nián returned once more. Shou had nothing left but a few firecrackers, and in desperation he lit and threw them into the monster's gaping maw. The resulting explosion sent the creature reeling, its teeth shattered, and Nián fled back from whence he came. Shou and his band of heroes waited until they were sure the beast would not return, and sent word to the King of their great victory. To this day, firecrackers are used to ward off evil all across Shenzhou.

To the east traveled *Hua Yan-zi*, the mistress of the famous Tài Ping School of Heavenly Peace. She reached the coastline that Gong-gong terrorized and set her camp. She laid out a feast and began playing beautiful music on her mandolin. The Immortal appeared, consumed the feast, and then quickly vanished. Every day for a month she repeated this, until one day Gong-gong lowered his guard and remained for a while, listening to the soothing sounds after his meal. He drank wine, which loosened his tongue a bit, and the mistress of Tài Ping ascertained the true name of Gong-gong. She called it out to the heavens and gained power over him, and contained his essence within a gourd. It is said that the power of Gong-gong is such that he breaks out of the gourd for a month during the summer. During this time he wracks the coastline with monsoons and storms, but his power always weakens and his spirit is once more returned to the container.

Upon hearing of this second victory, the King smiled. Two Evils were defeated. He decided to attack the plague demon Han-doù next. Shun Chong-hua fasted for seven days and asked the Celestial Spirits for advice. An emissary journeyed from Heaven and spoke with the King. From this meeting came *Tài-shun*, "The Book of Heavenly Cures," with which to battle all the ailments that plagued the Kingdom. Armed with this knowledge, Shun Chong-hua traveled north to the areas affected by Han-doù and began treating the sick. Han-dou gained its power through the people it infected by diseases and plagues. As the regions were cleansed of his touch, the monster lost its power and retreated. In the end, Han-doù fled. The demon is sometimes seen from time to time visiting the regions around battlefields and sieges, preying on the weak and the dying, but never, since the invasion of the Four Evils, has it returned to do battle against the throne.

With victory over the third Evil attained, the Second Sage King focused his attention to the last of them: the marauding army of Sanmiao. Shun Chong-hua first gathered together his armies. The best smiths of Huzhou constructed *Da Fû*, a large glowing axe, for

the Second Sage King to use in battle. He then marched westward and to meet Sanmiao. After a series of small battles the armies met in what is now Hàn Zhong. The Second Sage King charged forward, surrounded by his elite bodyguards, melting away the ranks of barbarians before them. Shun Chong-hua reached Sanmiao and challenged him to a duel. Almost equally matched, the two battled for hours until, the sun setting, the Second Sage King beheaded the Immortal. Shocked by the death of their leader, the barbarian army was quickly routed. The Second Sage King picked up the spear of his fallen foe and drove it into the ground. He commissioned at that place a monument to those that gave their lives defending Shenzhou against the Four Evils.

In the aftermath of the violence, a peaceful calm fell over Shenzhou. Shun Chong-hua realized that they now needed a wise guide to take his place upon the throne. The Kingdom needed a teacher who could help to unify and integrate the new lands acquired under his rule. It was time for Shun Chong-hua to find the new Emperor.

The Third Sage King – Tù Xie-he

Tù Xie-he was the Chief of Records under the rule of the Second Sage King. He first came to the Emperor's attention after completing his first book, called *Shu Ching* or "The Book of History." This tome contained references to Shenzhou's first King, Gongsun, citing examples of speeches, early laws, and mandates from Heaven. It quickly became a classic in teaching both Imperial and regional leaders to rule with wisdom. After reading Shû Ching, the Emperor Shun Chong-hua summoned his Chief of Records, and they discussed at length the course Shenzhou should pursue next. Tù Xie- he agreed that the focus should be to further develop the Kingdom, not only its leadership, but also the people themselves. The Second Sage King then commissioned Tù Xie-he to write more works that would help to properly educate his Kingdom.

In the ten years that followed, Tù Xie-he wrote four more books. The first book was known as *Shih Ching*, or "The Book of Odes." It is a collection of three hundred poems and psalms that both entertain and educate. The second book was the *Li Chi*, or the "Book of Rituals." It detailed the proper behavior of rulers, families, and of the people. The third book was *Yi-Ching Chi*, or "The Companion Book of Changes." It further explained the meaning behind Yi-Ching through the use of symbols that represented both a form of numerology and the natural "way" of things. The fifth book was *Chun-qiu*, or "Book of Spring and Autumn." It was a book of one hundred and eight verses of beautiful words, within which was supposedly hidden a prediction of the future. It foretold a division of Shenzhou into warring States, followed by great advances in science, medicine, and philosophy that would eventually help in the establishment of a new, greater Shenzhou. These four books, together with Shû Ching, became known as the *Five Classics*.

Upon completion of these books, Shun Chong-hua abdicated the throne and quietly went into study, reading the Five Classics till the day of his death. Tù Xie-he picked up where the Second Sage King left off. No one contended the transfer of power, for there was little doubt in the minds of the people that the new Emperor was the wisest man in all the known lands.

The Third Sage King began his work immediately. He traveled into the countryside and visited each of the noble houses, teaching them the fundamentals of his works so that they, in turn, could teach their people. During this period Tù Xie-he began to formulate more writings that would further enhance and expand the teachings of the Five Classics. With help from his students, the Emperor developed the fundamental elements of Shenzhou culture by introducing the concepts of the Five Virtues, the Six Relationships, and *Jun-zî*, or "The Perfect Gentleman."

Following the Third Sage King's lead, historians began to keep accurate documentation of events in Shenzhou. It was a time of great learning and exploration. And then, following long decades of prosperity and peace, a terrible natural disaster shook Shenzhou to its very foundations: The Great Flood.

It said by some that the Spirits, unhappy with attempts of the Dàoist mages to attain heavenly magic, ripped asunder the very heart of the land. From this issued forth a great wall of water the length of the *Hei Lung Jiang*, or Black Dragon River, sweeping all whom had offended the Spirits into the sea. Some blamed the famed Tài Ping School of Heavenly Peace, destroyed as the waters rushed from the hole, while others feared it was another invasion of demons and immortals. As the flood spread, destroying entire villages, towns, and even cities, a call went up for help. The Emperor Tù Xie-he, seeing this as a test of skills for himself and his people, issued a proclamation. Anyone that could control the raging waters of the Twin Dragons would not only have the thanks of the people, but would be looked well upon by the Heavens—the one to control the river would become the next Emperor. For almost two decades many offered their services and failed, often losing their lives either through shame or carelessness.

After all the years of failure, an architect, a bear by the name *Xíong Wei-li* came as the twenty-second challenger to test his skill against the Twin Dragons. He came from the Minor House of Xiong that had been slowly gaining power in Shenzhou since their region had been taken over by the Second Sage King. The bear saw this as a chance to elevate the position of his House within the Kingdom. Unfortunately, try as he might, he was never able to contain the muddy waters and committed suicide to spare his House the loss of face from his failure.

Undaunted by his father's defeat, the son of Xíong Wei-li, *Xíong Yu*, took up the challenge of the flood. And it was he who eventually defeated the river and controlled the raging waters. By wisely working with the river rather than against it, through the use of canals, irrigation, and many small dams, Xíong Yu succeeded where all others had failed. In this way Xíong Yu triumphed over the Great Flood. With his success he brought prosperity to agricultural regions and cities by providing them with a constant and supply of pure water. Tù Xie-he saw in Xíong Yu the makings of a wise Emperor, and the Third Sage King handed down the mantle of Shenzhou as those before him had done.

The Dynasties

The Xíong Dynasty

Following the coronation of Xíong Yu, the day-to-day life in Shenzhou returned to normal. King Yu ruled wisely for over half a century. Eventually he decided that, in his failing age, it was time to select a new King. Looking over the possible successors, the King decided upon his able-bodied Prime Minister, *Níu Dào-jun*. While the Minister was very honored, he refused, and suggested that the King's own son be selected instead. Xíong Yu agreed, and passed the Throne to his son, *Xíong Mu-rong*.

This event set a precedent that would be followed for generations. Each King handed over rulership, either to his eldest son, or to the closest male member of the family should he not have any male children. King Mu-rong named this lineage the Xíong Dynasty.

The son of Mu-rong, *Tian-ti*, became King late in his life. Shortly after he ascended to the throne, a major earthquake devastated several mining towns in the Xíongzhou region. It was said that the Earth, displeased with the opening of wounds within its body, was taking revenge on those that had hurt it. Tian-ti ordered metal and silver smiths in the region to sacrifice a portion of all their wares each year to appease the Earth and its Spirit.

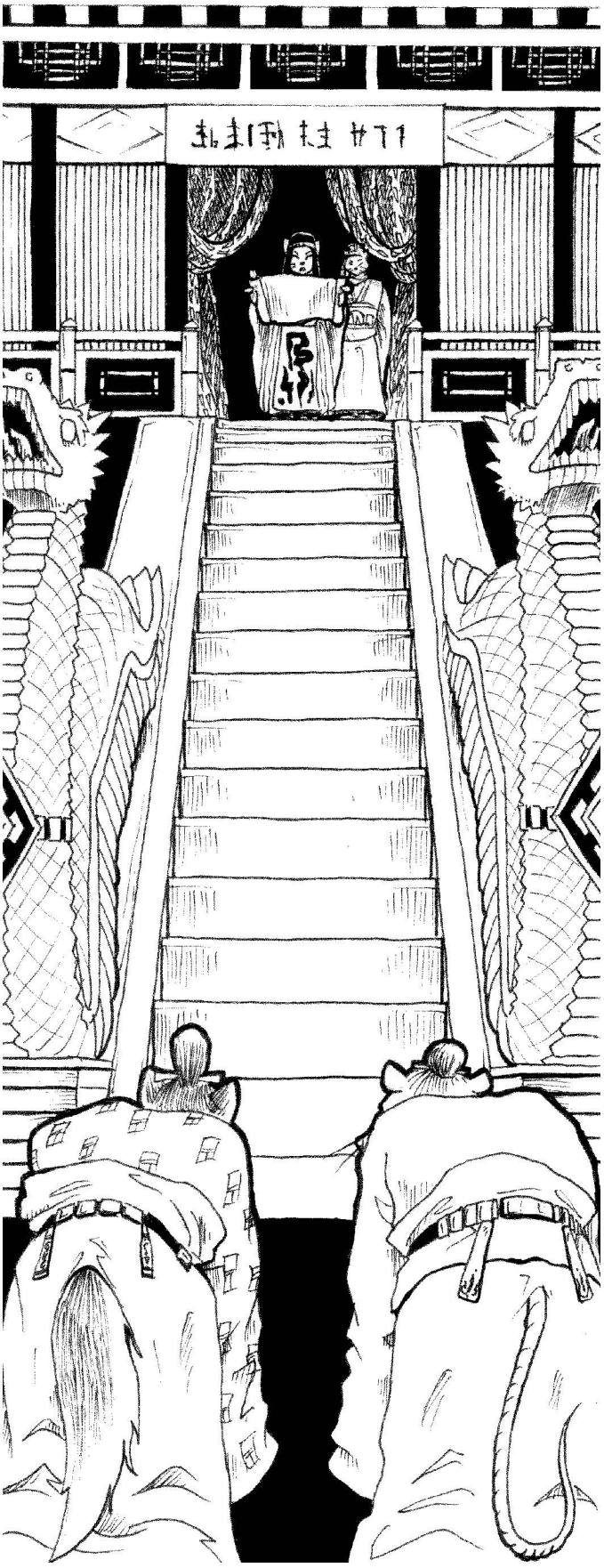
In due course, Tian-ti's son *Jin-jian* took his place as King of Shenzhou. It was during his reign that the demon *Er Gui* plagued Tùzhou. The creature consumed crops and caused widespread famine throughout the region. The head of the House, *Tù Lingzhi*, sought assistance from the Huli Enchantress, and together they fought Er Gui. They were able to defeat the demon and saved Tùzhou.

After nearly a century of rule, Jin-jian died. His son, *Jue-liang*, was a great philosopher and calligrapher. Before taking the throne he had begun deciphering and expanding the art of Celestial Calligraphy. With the resources of the Shenzhou at his disposal, the King continued the research, forming two great schools dedicated to the art. In the north was the School of Eternal Light, and in the south was the School of Righteous Thought. It was also during this time that *Zhu Chao Nan*, one of the Eight Perfect Dàoists, was born. It was rumored that Chao Nan had found the Heavenly Pool and survived its test, giving question, even if just briefly, to the legitimacy of the current King. Upon the Dàoist's death his pupils saw a Blue Dragon fly Heavenward.

Jue-liang had but one surviving son at the time of his death, who was very young. *Li-jue* was unfamiliar with the responsibilities that went with being King when he took the throne. There had been a series of floods in the King's homelands, and a practice of ritual sacrifices began in an attempt to appease the River Spirit. This went on for decades, until a Xíong hero named Xiao Feng-xun sought out the Dàoist priests responsible, killed them, and offered an apology to the Spirit and those innocent lives they had taken in its name.

The last of the direct line of Xíong Yu was King *Long-tang*. A King without an heir, it would be up to his distant cousin to follow his rule. It was during this time that a severe earthquake rocked the land of Shézhou, destroying its capital and killing tens of thousands that lived there. Led by their leader, Lady *Shé Hui-min*, the remaining population relocated the capital.

With the destruction of the Shé capital there was a growing feeling of discontent with the King. It was, for all intents and purposes, the high-water mark of the Xíong Dynasty. The period to follow was one of decline. While the Xíong line still controlled the throne, it was becoming apparent that they controlled little else.



Increasingly, the Houses were fighting among themselves, and the fringes of Shenzhou suffered from bandit raids and depressed economies. The leaders of the Shenzhou began to shut themselves off from the rest of the people.

The Late Xíong Period

King Lû-tiao, son of the impotent Long Tang, attempted to repair some of the damaging decisions made by his forefathers. He arranged several marriages between the Houses in an attempt to end some of the political infighting. While no formal alliances were made, he was able to mend the relationship between the Houses of Quân and Tù (the two most violently opposed factions) and, for a brief time, the land knew peace.

It was during the rule of Lû-tiao's grandsons that the Xíong Dynasty finally collapsed completely. The first recorded political assassinations began. While rulers often dueled with each other over grievances, their unscrupulous use of assassins was unprecedented, and marked a change in the methods they used to exert political pressure on their opponents. Shenzhou was plunged into chaos.

Half a century and four short-lived Kings later, Shenzhou was on the verge of losing all that it had gained during the era of the Three Sage Kings. The newest King, *Chieh*, had murdered his own brother and nephew to lay claim to the throne. He led a decadent lifestyle, using the Royal Treasury for his personal whims, all of them grossly fantastic. As voices of opposition began to speak out against him, he quickly silenced them, and his opponents became the first of a number of "sacrifices" made to the Spirits.

Despite this, dissent grew. Several nobles began to plot against the King. They believed the Heavens did not favor this ruler, and that a new line was needed to properly guide Shenzhou. Rumors circulated that *Quân Kai-gan*, the King of Quânzhou, had found the Heavenly Pool and passed its test. From this he also gained the knowledge from the heavens to make weapons and armor out of iron. Resources were quickly pooled and a small force of men was equipped with iron weapons. Upon hearing of this, the King sent troops to Quânzhou to crush the rebellion. The Imperial Army met an elite unit of three hundred men at the border. Though outnumbered ten to one, this small force routed the King's troops and paved the way for open rebellion. Soon after, Chieh found himself surrounded and trapped within the Imperial City. Seeing his doom, the King and his family committed suicide. The City was taken, and the entire House of Xíong was hunted down, put on trial,and executed for their crimes against the people of Shenzhou.

The Quân Dynasty

Quân Kai-gan took the throne, and spent nearly a century trying to rebuild Shenzhou. But undoing the damage done over more than a century of misrule would be a task for many generations. It was apparent to some that the Heavens approved of the new King, who lived to be one hundred and eight.

The following century saw King after King, the sons and grandsons of Quân, trying to mend Shenzhou. They tried to stop the political infighting that had consumed the Houses at the end of the previous dynasty, and worked to reclaim the outer regions of Shenzhou. They also rebuilt the roads and canals that had fallen into disrepair. Their attempts were hindered, however, as the Houses continued their fighting and bickering. Some headway was

made between the Houses of Níu and Zhu, ending their conflict for a generation. Heavy-handed treatment of the Kings' own house of Quân and its enemy Mâ also ended a century-long struggle. The Kings were also continually dealing with peasant uprisings against their local rulers, and often had to send troops to keep both sides from laying whole regions to waste.

In addition to these mundane problems, the Kings worked against rogue Dàoist wizards. With the loss of the Tài Ping School over four centuries before, Shenzhou had lost the knowledge and controlling force for Dàoist mages and priests. Numerous self-proclaimed true descendants of the Tài Ping School came and went. The lost knowledge was slowly recovered, but by individuals bent on using it for personal gain and power. There was no central controlling force to govern these rogues. As a result, Shenzhou was under threat from miscast magic and powerful mages following a "false path." One such event happened in within the capital of Shézhou where a sorceress, attempting to summon fire, set fire to the city. Since it was no ordinary fire, it could not be put out by water. It wasn't until a group of metallurgists and Dàoists made *Bing Shan*, a magic fan, that they were able to blow out the flames. By the time the smoke finally cleared, nearly half the city lay in ruins.

The following century saw more civil unrest. King *Zhan-bing* was forced to invade his own home, Quânzhou, when peasants and disenfranchised nobles overthrew the government there and killed the King's uncle. Led by Zhan-bing, the imperial troops marched in, rounded up all the confederates, and had them drawn and quartered. The King then reestablished the government there and returned to the Imperial City.

During this uprising, a small event went almost unnoticed along the coast of Shenzhou. A small, primitive sailing ship ran aground. Through help from Dàoist priests, these foreigners were found to be refugees from a large island to the east. They were former slaves of a group of foreign wizard-kings known as the *Autarchs*. Their small group was eventually assimilated into the region's population, and records of their travels were placed into the Imperial Library. Ships were eventually sent with ambassadors on board in an attempt to contact this island and establish trade, but they never returned. Myths developed that the land was filled with demons and immortals that ate people, and the quest for the mysterious island ended.

The final chapter in the Quân dynasty came with King *Hsin*. He was a capable ruler. During his reign the process for making steel was discovered. With an understanding of how metal technology had helped his forefathers gain power, the King controlled the technology and carefully granted rights to produce weapons and armor. Some of the Houses chafed a bit under this tight control, but in the end the people accepted it.

Then the King fell in love with a fox named *Huli Mei-rong*. She was an enchantress and a rogue Dàoist priestess, and quickly had Hsin under her control. He began to spend large amounts of money at the expense of the people, and built a miniature estate within the confines of the Imperial City. He had exotic items brought in from the Four Corners of Shenzhou. There were fountains of wine and streams of milk and honey with backdrops of mountains made of obsidian. The extravagant living brought criticism from the King's ministers. With the first cries of opposition, the King, in a fit of anger, had the officials tied to a heated pillar until they burned to death. It was said that Huli Mei-rong stood watching, amused by the executions. What little initial opposition arose was quickly put down through the use of Imperial soldiers and sorcery. All across Shenzhou the people and their rulers came to the same conclusion: the King had lost the Mandate of Heaven. It was time for another to rise and stand against him.

The Zhou Dynasty

The first to do so was *Shû Wen*, a duke with large land holdings in Shuzhou. The King's troops and sorcerers quickly crushed his attempt at rebellion. He was captured along with his wife, and spent ten years in prison. It was during this time that he came across a copy of the *Dào Der Jing*. He spent those years in study when he was not forced to work at punishing menial tasks. Upon his release, many saw him as a broken man, offering tributes to the King to show his fealty. But it was all a false front. Duke Wen had become a Dàoist priest and secretly began to build opposition to the King. He hired weapon-smiths and soldiers, and felt out the leaders of the Houses in search of allies.

One day, Shû Wen was traveling in Tûzhou and met a Dàoist priest named *Huang Tài Kung*, who led him to the Heavenly Pool. Duke Wen, familiar with the test from his studies, plunged himself into the pool. Huang Tài Kung saw the image of a dragon swimming through the waters and was satisfied that Shû Wen was the chosen King. As the Duke emerged from the pool, Huang Tài Kung advised him to fast for seven days and prepare himself to receive the Mandate from Heaven. On the seventh day a ball of fire dropped from the sky and landed next to Shû Wen. The fire vanished, revealing a jade tablet similar to that of the one received by the Yellow King thousands of years before. He picked up the tablet and returned to his home.

Upon his arrival, Duke Wen and Huang Tài Kung set about planning the overthrow of the King. Together, they reorganized the people of Shuzhou into five social orders: warriors, literate, farmers, craftsmen and merchants. Each of these social classes had further divisions, allowing for growth within their social element in reward for hard work. The effects were almost immediate, as production and learning increased threefold. Shuzhou was slowly developing into a very wealthy House.

Shû Wen then sold off much of his armory to other houses and merchants. In the public eye this made the him look weak, but behind the scenes the Duke was secretly building forges designed to mass-produce steel. The steel was turned into weapons and armor, which were stored in hidden caches around Shuzhou. Finally, with his own house ready, the Duke began recruiting other nobles. This task was made easier as the King slid further into tyrannical rule over his people. Sensing his slow loss of control, Hsin imposed a tax upon the House of Zhu. Zhu had been the most vocal in opposition towards the King. The House's nobles were outraged and open talk of rebellion was even heard in the streets.

This single act brought over the nobles from many of the Houses. With their backing Shû Wen's forces swelled. He began to make plans with his new resources. A decade after his release from

imprisonment, Shû Wen was finally ready to face the King. Despite the oracles' belief in a Shû King and the waning power of the Quân Throne, Duke Wen knew his foe was still very dangerous. The nobles loyal to him grew impatient and demanded action, but Shû Wen was waiting for the right moment. That moment came when King Hsin invaded Zhuzhou with a large contingent of Imperial troops to preempt a rebellion.

Shû Wen called together the other rebel nobles. They brought with them bodies of troops and massed along the border, ready to drive upon the Imperial City. Shû Wen opened up his caches of steel weapons and distributed them to his army. As dawn crept across the open plain, the sunlight glinted off the strong armor and weapons of hundreds of elite Shû warriors. The rebel army began its march towards Mâjing, with Shû Wen at the head of the column and his troops guarding its flanks.

Messengers arrived later that day, warning the King of the army a mere two days' march from the capital. King Hsin was not worried, for he had over a thousand of his best Imperial Guards surrounding the Palace. There was also the Dàoist magic of his wife Huli Mei-rong. He was sure that together, these forces could defeat any rebel threat. He sent messengers to his forces in Zhuzhou, ordering them to return to the capital and strike the rear of the rebel army. But a sudden flood prevented them from carrying out this move. Even the Celestial Spirits seemed to help the small rebel force.

The two armies met on the plains near Mâjing. A pitched battle of sorcery began as Huli Mei-rong summoned fireballs and winds to destroy the rebels. Together, Shû Wen and Huang Tài Kung countered these spells with magic of their own. Their combined power overwhelmed the enchantress, and they trapped her spirit in a nearby mountain.

The next stage of the battle began the following day, as the sun rose over Mâjing. King Hsin, distraught over the loss of his wife and fearing a long siege, led his forces to meet Shû Wen's outside the capital. Familiar with the tactics of his opponent, the Shû Noble defeated the King's forces just before sunset in bitter fighting. The ferocity of the battle remains unmatched to this day. Hsin fled the capital and Shû Wen, armed with the Mandate of Heaven, entered the city as the new King of Shenzhou. The crazed Hsin was later captured as he attempted to flee Shenzhou in hopes of raising a barbarian army to take back Mâjing. Rather than executing the deposed ruler, for Shû Wen could not slay his own King, he had him installed as his First Minister.

Shû Wen set into motion a change of ministers and set out the loyal nobles to keep a watchful eye upon the Houses. He then began the long and painful process of rebuilding Shenzhou. But the problems he saw could not be completely erased. Centuries of misrule had left their mark upon the Houses. Few trusted each other completely. The King and the nobles involved in the rebellion shared a vision of reclaiming the Golden Age of Shenzhou, but this was not true of the leaders of the Houses. Shû Wen became depressed and spent many long hours in counsel with his son, Duke *Wu*, the new leader of Shuzhou. Eventually, on his death bed, the King gave his position to his son.

Duke Wu swiftly took charge. He traveled to Mâjing and killed the now insane Hsin for his crimes against the Kingdom. He announced that, unlike his father, he was not a subject of the Quân Dynasty but the leader of Shuzhou. He then sent in motion a series of decrees that changed laws that had held sway for centuries. It was the dawn of a new dynasty called Zhou, or "Divine Center." It would be protected by the peripheral states. No more would the Kingdom be governed by races, but by an idea of one centralized nation called *Zhongguo* or "The Middle Kingdom." The Heavens had spoken through the Mandate his father had received. He knew the task ahead of him and while he shared a vision similar to that of his father, he knew it was not going to be easy.

Emperor Wu and his father's allies gathered their armies once again and marched against those still loyal to the Quân Dynasty, who still held on to the old ways. They campaigned for two years, overcoming opposition through the use of force. As the war waged, the King redistributed both land and court positions to those loyal to his Zhou Dynasty. At the end of the fighting, ten of the of original Houses were destroyed, their capitals razed, but their people and countryside untouched. The King had decapitated the Houses. He then redrew their boundaries so that they would no longer be based on Race, but instead on political allegiance and functionality. These new "States" were named in honor of his father's allies and the help they gave in overthrowing the previous corrupt dynasty.

The first was the State of *Zhou*. It contained Mâjing and the vast plains and hills surrounding the Imperial City. The second was the State of *Wei*. It was the protector of the State of Zhou, and guardian against northern barbarian invasions. The third was the State of *Chi*. It stretched from *Wei Yu Bay* to the northern reaches of the *Wei Shir Mountains* and protected Zhongguo from the western barbarians. The fourth was the State of *Sung*. It was a reward for those members of the Quân Dynasty that had recognized Shû Wen's authority. The fifth was the State of *Lû*, which stood watch over the State of Sung to prevent old Quân dynasty rebellions. Between them, these five States controlled much of the region once ruled by the Twelve Houses. The King's rule proved short, however. Three years later, King Wu declared an end to his campaign and began the trek back to Mâjing. Near the capital he fell from his chariot and broke his neck. His eldest son, *Cheng*, took over where he left off.

A small faction of the opposition that had remained hidden tried to invade Sung and reestablish the Quân Dynasty, but it was quickly put down. With help from the courts King Cheng was able to solidify control and complete the transition begun a decade earlier. He began to expand outside the five existing States, reclaiming lands lost to barbarians during the previous dynasty. He awarded these lands to his brother and sister. They became the States of *Jin*, to the north, and *Cheng*, the vast stretch of coastline on the Sea of the East.

The following King, *Kang*, created the State of *Shen*. Centered upon the Shen River, the land for this State was parceled out from the State of Zhou.

During an expansive period under the guidance of King *Chao*, the State of *Chu* was formed. This territory secured the other side of the *Yongyuan* Sea, making it a safe region for fisherman and traders alike. As the King made additional gains in territory along the southern coastline, he came upon envoys of the city-state *Wu-cheng* whose ancestors were from the old House of Shû. During the festival celebrating their return to Zhongguo, he named the region the State of *Wu* and gave them control over it.

During the next half century a number of Kings occupied the Throne. While none were tyrants, they were not the most exceptional of leaders. It was during the rule of King *Hsiao* that the State of *Qin* was created. This newest State controlled the mouth of the Black Dragon River. Nobles from other States began putting forth issues left dormant for centuries, testing the King's control over the people, the land, and the court.

Historians noted that it wasn't till the reign of King *Yi* that the decline in power truly began. He was not well respected among the leaders of other States, and was often sick. He also meddled in the internal affairs of the States, often naming successors of his own choosing. Rumors circulated that the Shû Dynasty had lost the Mandate of Heaven.

Upon his death, Yi's son, *Li-tu*, took the throne. Shortly thereafter, barbarians began raiding the towns and small villages along the borders of Jin and Chi. The young King sent a large portion of the Imperial Guard to defend the western regions of Zhongguo.

During this period Li-tu set into place a number of laws that declared all common land as private royal grounds. No commoner could hunt, fish, or chop timber on these lands. The people voiced their anger in the streets. Around the Kingdom there were isolated incidents of looting and burning of Imperial structures. Public gatherings were outlawed and were punishable by death. Even the nobles of the other States began to question the authority of the Throne and decided to place an embargo upon the Imperial Palace. The tithes paid annually to the King stopped. Seeing his Kingdom on the verge of rebellion, the King fled the palace and went into exile in the State of Shen. Despite his absence, a Dàoist priest, *Tài Zhu*, proclaimed the heavens still favored the Zhou Dynasty. He then selected the noble Duke *Hou* to act as minister in the King's stead. Duke Hou quickly dissolved the damaging decrees and brought back a level of normality to the day-to-day life in Zhongguo.

The young prince *Jing* took the throne after Li-tu died in exile. He changed his name to *Hsuan*, or "the one who returns home." King Hsuan continued the war against the barbarians, and eventually forced them back. The States of Jin and Chi both began building a series of fortifications, joined together by a wall stretching along their borders. This added a new buffer between the outlying regions of Zhongguo and the barbarians of the west and north. The Middle Kingdom was peaceful as a new Zhou King had emerged and established proper authority over the people.

It was during this period of calm that contact was reestablished with the fabled island of Calabria. First were the slavers and pirates; on the run from persecution, they would run from the Island's waters and sail directly west, eventually making contact with the local villages along the coastline. The old tales of Autarchs and demons were replaced with stories of strange, foreign cities and a hint of possible trade. Worried that further ships would

arrive and establish a foothold upon the continent, Emperor Hsuan pushed into the vast wilderness north of the State of Cheng. Here he established trade routes and ports far away from the heart of Zhongguo. He named this territory *Yen*, the twelfth and final State. Here, foreigners sailed to trade in gold, and in a new weapon called the gun, in exchange for silks, slaves, and spices. An open trade route was developed across the seas, and eventually trade with the Houses of Calabria became commonplace. Regardless of the trade relations, the foreign traders were usually not allowed to travel beyond the port cities in which they harbored.

Decades passed and King Hsuan continued his rule. However, he had no son to follow him after his death. When he passed away, his cousin *Yu* took the throne.

The East Zhou Period

Again, a tyrant had become King. Yu ruled with an iron hand. The court withdrew its support of him quickly, and respect for Imperial rule dropped. Zhongguo was hit with a series of droughts that destroyed crops, stopped the flow of rivers, and dried up wells. These events were taken as a sign of Heaven's dissatisfaction with Yu's rule. As the sun baked the land, the pleas of the people fell upon deaf ears. Closed off behind the great walls of the Imperial Palace, Yu cared little for his citizens. He removed his wife and son to their home city of *Hong Non* and elevated his concubine and her son over them. The Duke of Jin protested this exile (as the Queen was his daughter); King Yu simply reminded him of his "place" and told him to do as he was bid. The Duke of Jin swallowed his pride publicly, and began to make plans. Once again rumors that the Zhou Dynasty had lost the Mandate of Heaven, and that a change was coming, began to circulate.

Hearing omens of defeat and rumors of the Mandate's loss, King Yu decided to become more visible. On a rare occasion the King traveled the countryside of the State of Jin, surveying the damage that five years of drought had caused. As he entered a valley near the capital of *An Ding*, he looked up to see barbarians surrounding him. His retreat had been cut off. Angered at the treatment of his daughter, the Duke of Jin had allowed a force of barbarians from the north to enter his State unmolested and find the King. After a heroic stand by the King's bodyguard, Yu was killed and the barbarians fled back across the border.

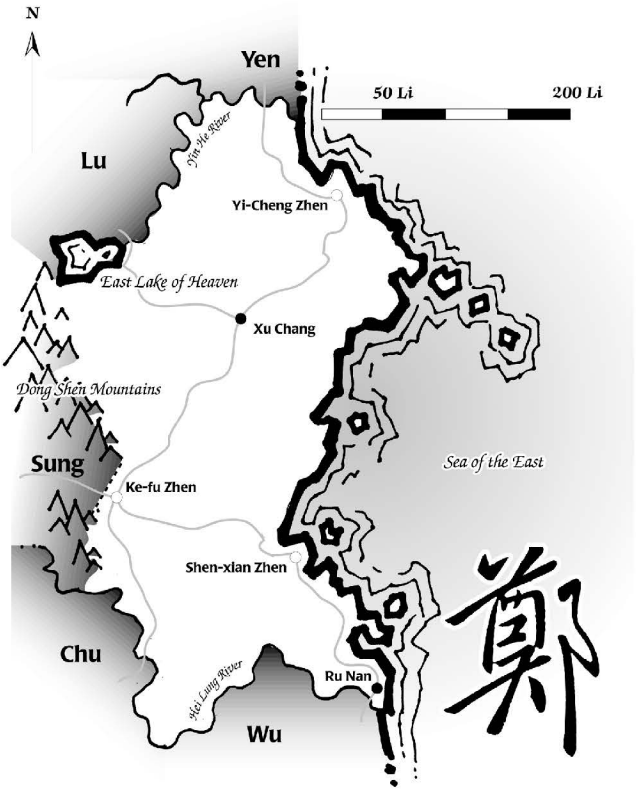
Prince *Yi-jiu*, the son of the Queen, made plans to take back his rightful place upon the Throne. The armies from the States of Qin, Zheng, and Jin protected him as he consulted with the heavens and fasted for seven days. He led the combined armies against the capital to take back the Imperial Palace from the Concubine and her son. Upon his arrival, he found the Palace deserted. She had fled, fearing for the life of her son, and had taken a goodly portion of the Imperial treasury with her.

Yi-jiu did not take the Throne immediately, but rather waited to see if someone else would appear with the blessings of the Spirits and the Mandate of Heaven in hand. None came, and so, after seven more days, he humbly took the throne, renaming himself King *Ping*, or "King of Peace." During that spring, the rains came, replenishing wells and rivers, and once again the fields of Zhongguo flourished. King Ping went about the lands of the Middle Kingdom to personally oversee the relief of villages and towns. The people rejoiced over his wisdom and saw him as favored by the Heavens.

Today, Zhongguo continues to prosper under the guidance of a kind ruler. The rule of King Ping has now known nearly two decades of peace. Some still question whether the Zhou Dynasty still has the Mandate of Heaven, or if change is afoot. Who, if any, would be the ones to replace them? Daily life continues, as peasants and merchants are too busy to worry about such things.

THE STATES OF ZHONGGUO

When Shû Wen overthrew the Quan Dynasty, he eliminated its racially divided political structure. The original Twelve Houses were no more. His son perpetuated this ideology and began redrawing political boundaries, not based on race, but on loyalty. He rewarded those loyal to his father and placed them as guardians of the Kingdom, defending the people and their leader from attacks, both from outside and from within. These became the first States. In the end there would be Twelve States created during the Zhou Dynasty, each one with a specific role within Zhongguo.



State of Chèng (The Solemn Land)

This State occupies one third of the eastern coastline of Zhongguo. The land is almost all flat rolling plains and is ideal for farming. Because of its access to great agricultural wealth, huge fishing fleets, and solid coastal and river commerce, the State of Cheng has promoted free trade. Trade guilds have grown wealthy and numerous, taking advantage of the flow of goods through the City Port of Ru Nan, and is known for its exceptional merchants. Prosperity has led to a huge growth in population. Cheng has become one of the more powerful States in the Middle Kingdom.

Nobility in the State of Cheng

- Zhèng Hóu-jué (*City of worship*, Dog, Duke)
- Cui Nán-jué (*Harbinger from the mountain*, Rat, Baroness)
- Xi-Mén Nán-jué (*Lord of the western gate*, Rooster, Baron)
- Xióng Nán-jué (*Fire tamer*; Bear, Baroness)

Ru Nan (City of the Southern Goddess)

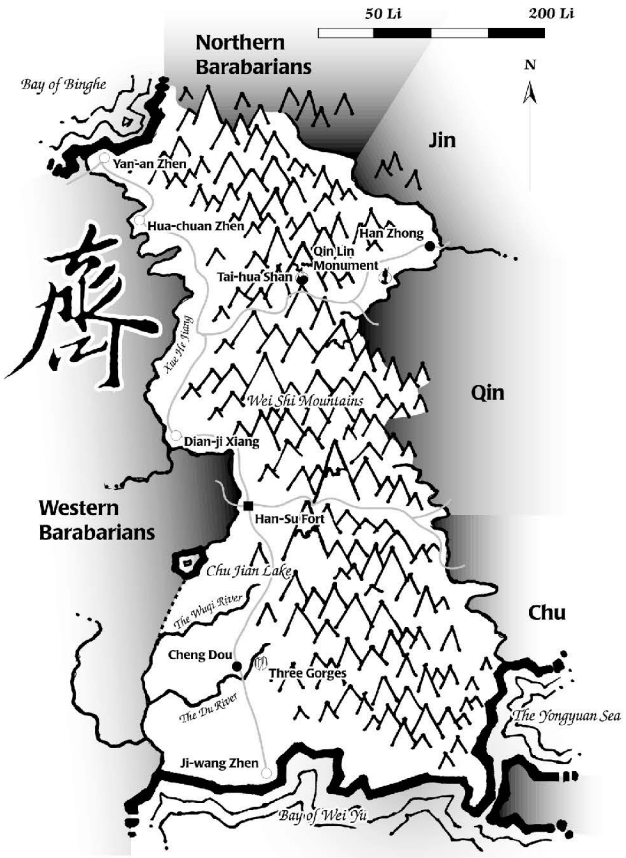
Next to Mâjing, Ru Nan is the largest and most important city in Zhongguo. It is the capital of Chèng State and home to the Five Trading Houses. Located on the coast near the end of the Hei Lung River as it empties into the Sea of the East, Ru Nan is the single largest port in all the known world. Hundreds of sailing ships can be seen in the harbor as various vessels come and go. This is one of the major ports for vessels restocking to travel east to Calabria or South to Yindu. The population is still growing, and the city is slowly spreading outward into more rural areas. As with Mâjing, many of the nearby towns and villages exist purely as support centers for the needs of the city. The city has no major exports of its own.

Xu Chang (Permits to Flourish)

This small city is situated on the plains north of Ru Nan. It is a city of agricultural trade. Farmers from all over central Cheng come here to trade rice and wheat. The quality of the local crops is such that many of the Emperor's buyers come here to restock the palace's food stores. Life in the city is simple in contrast to the fast-paced lifestyles in Ru Nan. Citizens know each other, crime is nearly non-existent, and a general feel of well-being and ease is almost always present. As a result, many doctors and monks come here to practice new forms of medicine. During the winter and growing seasons, these caretakers can be found almost everywhere, discussing current topics of acupuncture, feng shûi, and any number of herbal treatments.

Places of Interest in Cheng

The Canals: Once part of the irrigation projects that defeated the Great Flood, simple ditches have been widened and deepened to accommodate river barges and sailing vessels. The canals connect traffic on the Hei Lung River to the Harbor at Ru Nan, thus avoiding more turbulent waters as the river empties into the Sea of the East. At either end of the canal are locks that raise and lower vessels, using a series of complex mechanical pumps. The vessels are pulled the length of the canal by lizards.



State of Chi (Land of Order)

The land of Chi occupies almost the entire Wei Shi Mountain range. It forms a daunting barrier against the barbarian hordes to the west. While certainly the largest of the States, Chi has the smallest population. There are many towns and villages and a city or two, but for the most part the land is dotted with border forts and trading posts. It was on the eastern plains of Chi that the Second Sage King fought and defeated the Three-Horned Rhinoceros Sanmiao and his army. Currently, some of the leaders of Chi are working with the barbarians along the Xue He River to increase local trade traffic. Because of the numerous small temples and religious schools found in the mountains of Chi, the State has become known for its exceptional Dàoist monks and priests

Nobility in the State of Chi

- Jiang Gong-jué (*Shepherdess,* Dog, Duchess)
- Gou Hóu-jué (*One who entangles,* Dog Marquise)
- Chéng Hóu-jué (*One who measures,* Rabbit, Marquise)
- Zi-jué Wàn (*Ten thousands,* Tiger, Count)

Hàn Zhong (In The Midst of Fellowship)

Hàn Zhong is located on the Eastern plain, near the foothills of the Wei Shi Mountains. This is the gateway to central Zhongguo. It also sits on the banks of the Hei Lung River. The main Western Trade Route passes through this city, and as a result business flourishes with the Chi capital. It was here that paper was invented.

The principal export of Han Zhong is lumber, which it sends down river to Mâjing. Because of the trade route, many small shops of natures both mundane and exotic flourish. There are not many goods that one cannot find in Han Zhong.

Chéng Dou (City of Accomplishment)

Chéng Dou is the capital of Chi State. The city is located in the southern end of the State along the banks of the Du River, in a meandering valley surrounded by lofty mountains. This city is the last stop for many monks traveling for teachers and schools in the mountains. The city is also a supply center for a great deal of these small schools and temples. Because of the large number of intellectuals and philosophers, Cheng Dou has become known as a place of learning and magic. The largest population of Pandas is near the capital city. The principle export of Chéng Dou is cut stone.

Places of Interest in Chi

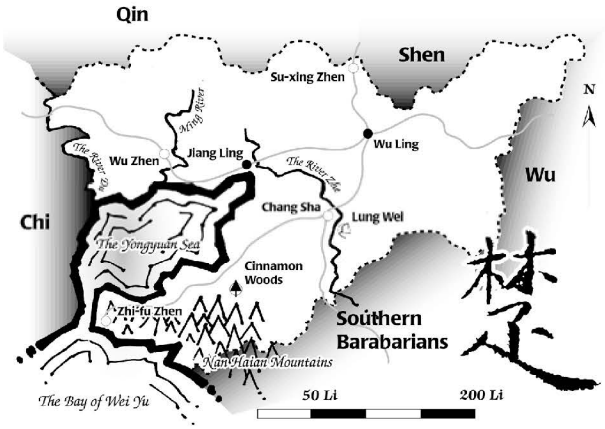
Tai-hua Shan (Flowery Mountain): The five peaks of the mountain resemble a five-petaled flower and are the tallest mountain peaks in the known world. Trade caravans from the west travel through its shadow on their way to sell goods in Han Zhong and Mâjing. Many stories exist about monks traveling to the top of the mountain to gain enlightenment and there are at least a dozen poems about lovers jumping from the peak to join their loved ones in the afterworld. Visitors wanting to climb at least partway up the mountain begin their journey at Yu-guan Si (Jade Mountain Temple). From here they can travel to any one of four peaks along paths constructed into the stone face. The fifth and tallest peak is approached without a guide.

Three Gorges: Located on the Du River, up from Cheng Dou, this natural feature is not one but three gorges that divide the river. Each gorge ends in a beautiful waterfall. Many monks and martial artists come here to practice their arts.

The Qin Lin Monument: Located upriver from Han Zhong on the Eastern Plain, this huge battlefield monument was erected by the Second Sage King in honor of those that gave their lives defending Zhongguo against the invading armies of the Three Horned Rhinoceros.

Hua Si (Blossom Temple)

The preeminent Dàoist martial arts school. Its location is unknown since vows of secrecy are taken and one can only join the school if invited and shown the path. A number of pure warriors found in contemporary Zhou literature are said to have attended this school.



State of Chû (Land of Knee-High Forests)

Chû was one of the first States created from barbarian lands. Early in the Zhou Dynasty there was a call to control both the Southern border (the River Zhe) and to protect fishermen from pirates in the Yongyuan Sea. The land was taken, the pirate raids were stopped, and a large population of retired soldiers were encouraged to settle there, thereby providing a standing army ready to be called up at a moment's notice. Considered almost a barbarian State by other nobles, Chû contains a wide variety of lesser Yîndù houses and nobles that decided to stay after the invasion. Those who stayed have been slowly absorbed into Zhongguo society.

Nobility in the State of Chû

- Chû Gong-jué (*Underwoods,* Rabbit, Duke)
- Gui Hóu-jué (*Twice the distance,* Horse, Marquise)
- Kuang Hóu-jué (*King's defender,* Snake, Marquise)
- Wei Bo-jué (*Guardian of fire*, Boar, Marquise)
- Nie Zi-jué (*One who murmurs*, Elephant, Count)

Jian Ling (High Mound By The River)

Chû's only major port city, Jian Ling sits on a massive hill line that separates the Yongyuan Sea and the Zhe River valley. From atop the city's walls one can actually see both the harbor and the river. Because of the valley behind the city, most of the surrounding flat land is marshy, with raised roads used for transportation. During unusually high tides there is excessive flooding throughout the valley.

The economy of Jian Ling rests almost solely on the shoulders of its extensive fishing fleets. Ships large and small bring in their catches, selling it to purchasing companies that clean, salt, and store it. From these large warehouses they ship it to other cities or sell directly to buyers that meet daily at one of Jian Ling's many fish markets.

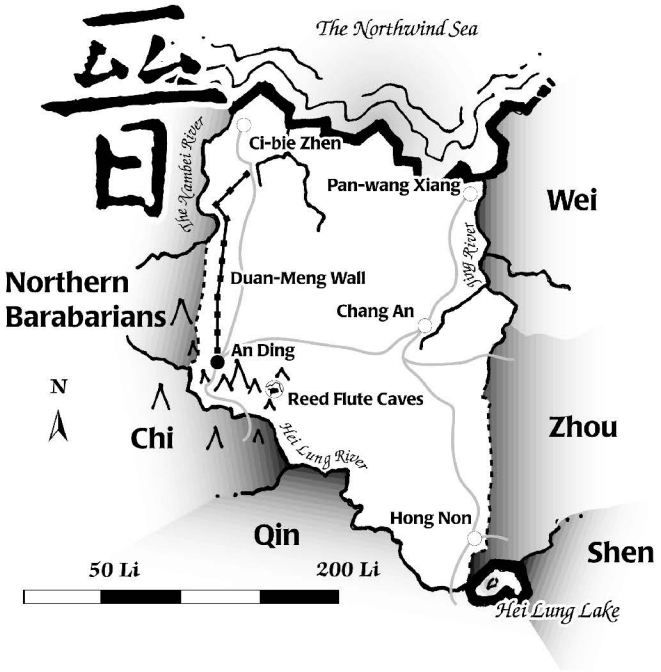
Wú Ling (High Martial Mound)

When Chû's capital was built, thousands of retired soldiers and veterans were encouraged to make this area their home. This was in part to form a cadre of officers and sergeants in time of war, but to also add to the number of fighting soldiers in the area. Over time the town slowly became a city, and today Wú Ling stands as the military center of Chû and the Kingdom. Not only are most of the military academies of the Kingdom located here, but many fighting schools as well. While the city proper is but a few li in diameter, the numerous training grounds extend far into the countryside. The city is made up of a series of concentric walls on a hilltop. The largest outer ring extends beyond the base of the hill. This is also the most heavily defended city in all of Zhongguo, save Mâjing. The inhabitants of the city make their living by selling wares and services to the local soldiers and officers.

Places of Interest in Chû

Cinnamon Forest: This is one of the few parks open to the public. The Cinnamon Forest is named for the smell of burning incense emanating from all the statues, idols and altars found throughout the area. Small, perfectly rounded mounds form rows upon these hills, and in the surrounding woods rest thousands of handmade statues. Some honor ancestors, some spirits, others nature herself. The road approaching the area is lined by 24 statues, two for each of the twelve ancient Houses.

Lung Wei (Dragon's Tail): South of Wú Ling, where the River Zhe drops sharply and speeds up through a series of rapids, the river shoots at a steep angle into a granite cliff face. The resulting impact causes a jet of water to shoot high into the air. The water then continues its flow southward around the face and becomes quite tranquil as it widens out.



State of Jin (The Land of Swooping Phoenixes in the Midday Sun)

Another territory gained in the expansion following the fall of the Quan Dynasty, Jin is the barrier that holds the Northern Barbarians back from sweeping south into the heartland of Zhongguo. The further north one travels in Jin the more barren the land becomes. The growing season is short in the north and very few export crops are grown. Northern villages and towns that dot the coastline of the North-wind Sea take advantage of almost unlimited fishing areas while the southern towns grow wheat and barley. This is all secondary to those towns that support the Duang Mung

Wall, the series of forts stretching along the northwestern border of the State. Here one finds a majority of Jin's small population, keeping watch over the barbarian lands beyond the Wall.

Nobility in the State of Jin

- Ou Gong-jué (*Strike with precision*, Sheep, Duke)
- Gan Bo-jué (*Shield maiden*, Rat, Countess)
- Su Nán-jué (*Plentiful*, Boar, Baron)
- Yù Bo-jué (*Jade*, Ox, Countess)
- Lún Bo-jué (*Messenger*, Cat, Countess)

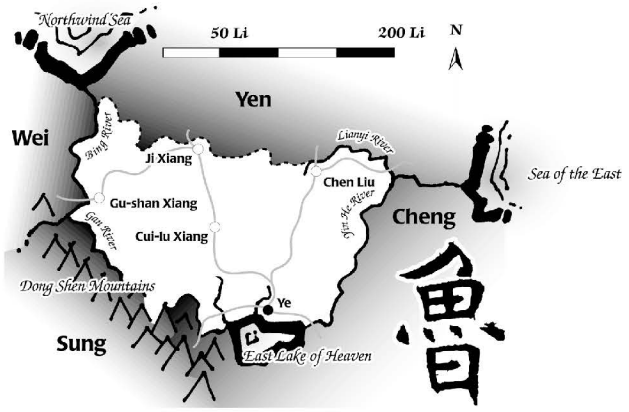
An Ding (City of Righteous Women)

During the early days of pacification, many of the men in the area were sent north to battle the barbarians. In that time it became an accepted custom for women to rule in the place of men. Gradually this custom held sway even through time of peace. Today, women can be found at the heads of all government branches. Only the Duke of Jin is above them. Even he respects the wisdom of the rulers of An Ding. He lets them manage the city while he focuses on the State. There are even female-only militia that operate next to their male counterparts. The northern trade route passes through An Ding and quite a number of merchants here trade directly with the Northern Barbarians.

Places of Interest in Jin

Duan Mung Wall: A defensive barrier built after the Barbarians had been pushed far north, the Duan Mung Wall is the largest artificial structure in Zhongguo. The wall stretches along the northwest border of Jin. A fort is positioned every four li. Each garrison is responsible for defending its section of the wall, but may be sent to the aid of a garrison under attack. A series of smoke pots are used to send signals up and down the length of the wall.

The Flute Reed Cave: This cave is said to be the largest and deepest in the world. Though no one knows exactly how deep the cave goes, adventurers and cartographers have spent weeks traveling and mapping its maze-like passageways. It is said that the populations of entire cities and towns hid here when the four evils invaded the Kingdom during the rule of the Second Sage King. The cave receives its name from the reeds that grow around it. Travelers can hear the song of the reeds float across the valley as they bend in the breeze.



State of Lu
(The Land of Open-Mouthed Fishes)

One of the original five States created by King Cheng, Lu's original purpose was to watch over and protect the State of Sung and the remnants of the old Quân Dynasty. Lu took in many old Quân scholars and craftsmen, and stored their knowledge in libraries or other places of learning. Lu was the first State to make use of the gun. The State has provided the Emperor with his most advanced troops. Lu is also known for its odd combination of wizardry and technology. It is rumored that there are craftsmen working on a massive mobile fortress armed with rocket arrows and muskets. All of Lu is forest. It is the single largest source of hardwood, and the trade of raw lumber and products made of wood have given the State of Lu a strong treasury.

Nobility in the State of Lu

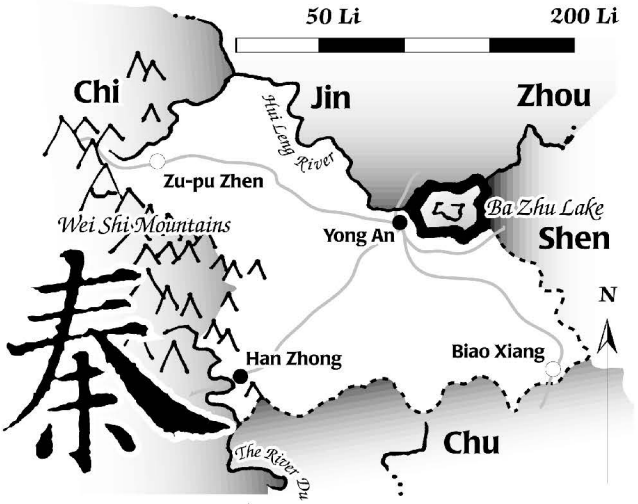
- Lu Gong-jué (*Man of busy feeding*, Tiger, Duke)
- Che Zi-jué (*Master of chariot*, Horse, Viscount)
- Yuè-Zhèng Bo-jué (*Walk in a righteous path*, Snake, Count)
- Zhong Bo-jué (*In midst of all things*, Horse, Count)

Yè (Industrial City)

On first viewing Yè, one might think of the city as wrapped in a shroud of dark, sooty fog. It is not fog but smoke from hundreds of smiths and kilns. While the people of Yè may export lumber, they are primarily known as the only makers of quality firearms. There are also other new creations, a blend of technology and magic, that can be seen from time to time: steedless chariots, drilling machines, moving walls, and odd constructs that defy imagination. A day does not go by in Yè that the dull roar of metal-working and bellows is not drowned out by an explosion or two as magics are miscast, or poorly designed machines destroy themselves.

Places of Interest in Yè

The East Lake of Heaven: This lake is considered to be one of the most beautiful bodies of water in all of Zhongguo. Fed by cold mountain streams, The East Lake of Heaven is a location artists and poets visit for inspiration. Located around the lake's shoreline are temples for various spirits. It said that if one is present at the very break of dawn, a red phoenix can be seen leaving the waters on its way to the heavens.



State of Qín (Land of Plentiful Rice)

The State of Qin occupies what used to be part of the State of Zhou. Qin has developed into one of Zhongguo's major agricultural centers. While Cheng may harvest large crops of wheat and staples abundant in the north, Qin harvests rice. The yield of these crops is so large that Qin often deals with buyers from Yìndù, the barbarian lands to the far south. Like many of the newer States that have dual purposes, Qin is also a buffer State, providing one more territory through which invaders must fight to reach Mâjing. Annually, buyers travel to Sung to purchase draft animals and return to Yông An and the Wú Dou military complex situated there. Here, some of the world's finest charioteers and lancers are trained.

Nobility in the State of Qín

- Qín Gong-jué (*Land of plentiful rice*, Sheep, Duke)
- Hú Nán-jué (*Cousin of Dog*, Fox, Baroness)
- Léi Bo-jué (*Storm summoner*, Dog, Countess)
- Xi Zi-jué (*Hope*, Rabbit, Viscount)
- Liàn Zi-jué (*Steward*, Monkey, Viscount)

Hàn Zhong (In The Midst of Fellowship)

Hàn Zhong is located at the foothills of two great mountains, Qin-ling Shan to the north and Ba Shan Shan to the south. This is the gateway to the Qín State from southern Chi. The city is well defended and has a series of high lateral walls facing the valley between the two mountains. Should Chi collapse, this city would be one of a number of chokepoints through which an invading army would need to pass to reach the flat plains of the Kingdom's heartland. It is here that foreign representatives from Yìndù purchase large amounts of surplus rice. Rather than following the Southern Trade Route, they simply travel south into Chû and commission a ship to travel to the southernmost tip of the barbarian nation.

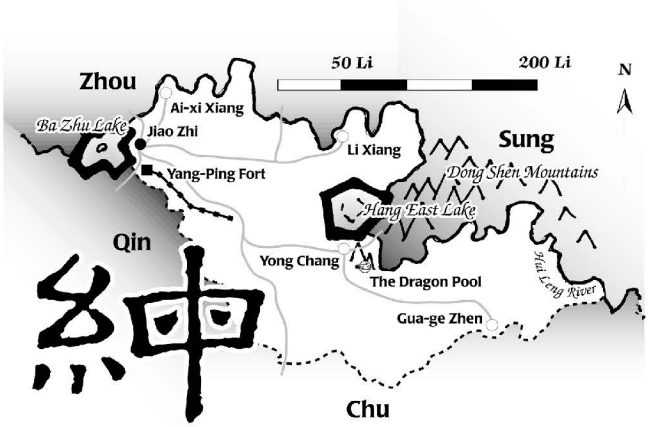
Yông An (City of Eternal Peace)

Yông An sits on the banks of the Hui Leng River as it empties into Ba Zhu Lake. Situated on the main caravan route from the northern and western barbarian lands, Yong An is a city filled with merchants and markets. The city is also the major distribution center for rice trade with the rest of Zhongguo. In addition to all of this, Yông An has a flourishing lumber trade, harvested from nearby forests and floating raw uncut timber down the river to Mâjing.

Places of Interest in Qín

Bái Wáng Sì (White King's Temple): Not too far from Hàn Zhong is Bái Wáng Sì. The temple is situated on the top of the mountain Qin-ling Shan. To reach the temple monks and commoners alike must climb the thousand steps, set a very step angle, straight up the mountain side. This temple is dedicated to the deification of the first Zhou King, Wen.

Wú Dou (Martial Capital): Wú Dou is the military "city" of Qín. The complex, located on the outskirts of Hàn Zhong, deals almost solely with mounted combat and produces some of the finest charioteers and lancers in the Kingdom. Many nobles' sons attend this school both for the military experience and the prestige. Non- military personnel are kept to a minimum within the walls and training grounds of Wú Dou.



State of Shen (Land of Extending Brush)

The State of Shen was given to a loyal noble sometime after the re-forming of the kingdom. The creation of the State, while weakening the power base of the Zhou Emperor of that time, prevented open war between several nobles and their troops. The Duke was given the duty of protecting the Southern border of Zhongguo. Later, after the creation of the State of Chû there was no longer a need for the role the State played as defender. It maintained its defenses, however, ever vigilant for a time when they might be needed. As trade developed between the Kingdom and the various barbarian lands, trade routes were established. Shen and the capital city of Jiao Zhî became the crossroads of the kingdom.

Nobility in the State of Shen

- Zeng Gong-jué (*One who doubles the output*, Sheep, Duke)
- Tián Bo-jué (*Master of plantation*, Rooster, Count)
- Bâo Bo-jué (*Protector of earth*, Cat, Count)
- Rân Zi-ju (*Double furs*, Rat, Viscount)

Jiao Zhî (Crossroads City)

The center of Zhongguo, Jiao Zhî, is the crossroads of not only the kingdom but its trade routes. The city boasts the single largest market in the world as well as dozen smaller ones located throughout the city. Merchants travel here from afar to do business with other Zhongguo

merchants or to buy from caravans from even more distant lands. There is also a large black market located here, dealing in stolen goods or those considered illegal. Jiao Zhî is a place where almost anything can be bought for a price and one of the few cities that does not suffer from the xenophobia so commonplace in Zhongguo. With so many foreigners and trade representatives, the city is one of the most cosmopolitan on the continent.

Places of Interest in Shen

Yang Ping Fort: While there are no longer any barbarians roaming the lands south of the Yang Ping Fort, the fortress and the structures that extend eastward from it are still garrisoned and well kept. This is in part because of its proximity to Jiao Zhî and in part as a show of force to the barbarian caravan merchants that are constantly on the move along the adjacent trade route. Patrols can be found almost everywhere in proximity to the fortress complex. This portion of Zhongguo is considered one of the safest outside the State of Wei.

The Dragon Pool: It is said that there is a pool located in the Southernmost reaches of the Dong Shen Mountains. Legends claim that the pool, fed by an underground spring, is a source of longevity and beauty. The location of the pool has remained a mystery, even though many adventurers and nobles, including an Emperor or two, have searched for it. It is not uncommon to find many elixirs for sale in the nearby town claiming to be made from the waters of the Dragon Pool. They are, of course, most likely from the waters of some nearby stream.

State of Sung (Land of Wooden Huts)

The State of Sung is the remnant of the old Shang Dynasty and one of the five original States. Those that recognized the passing of the Mandate of Heaven into the hands of Zhou King Wen were given a safe haven for their service. The knowledge accumulated during their dynasty was collected and safeguarded. The State of Lu was created to defend Sung from anyone wanting to take revenge on or destroy the former Shangs. Since its creation the State of Sung sits on the windswept plains on the western side of the Dong Shen mountains. The land is not suitable for more than small gardens, just enough to feed the agrarian culture outside the capital. Thus, Dai Xian imports a good portion of its grain from neighboring Cheng. While agriculture may be lacking, the Sung are renowned for their riding lizards. Trade representatives from all over Zhongguo representing some of the most influential nobles and merchants find their way to Sung for one month each year, waiting for the new herd to be driven into the corrals at Dai Xian.

Nobility in the State of Sung

- Sung Gong-jué (*Maker of the wooden hut*, Sheep, Duke)
- Lóu Nán-jué (*Lady of the house*, Snake, Baroness)
- Yî Nán-jué (*Properly-behaved gentleman*, Baron)
- Táng Bo-jué (*One who kept secrets*, Ox, Count)

Dài Xian (City of Another Era)

The only major city and the capital of Sung, Dài Xian is a city of learning. Located within its walls are the greatest sources of learning collected in Zhongguo. When the loyal Shang were given Sung as a reward, they were also charged with the keeping of ancient histories and knowledge. There are many libraries and schools located here. Nobles send their children to Dài Xian to be formally educated while ministers often use the locals to train for their entrance exams in nearby Mâjing. The local climate allows for outdoor gardens and amphitheaters which are used for teaching and philosophical discussions. The city on the whole is quiet and reserved. In extreme contrast to this, one month a year the great herds are driven into corrals located outside the city. From the far corners of the continent come buyers and traders looking at acquiring the finest in riding lizards. With them come various merchants and tradesmen who sell their goods to the crowd. Overnight the population of the city seems to double and a huge tent city and market is set up outside the city walls.

Places of Interest in Sung

The Great Library: Located in Dài Xian, the Great Library is the single largest collection of written works in the known world. It is also the official Imperial Library, which was relocated several centuries ago away from the Emperor, in case of siege or invasion, so that even if the head of the Kingdom should fall, the knowledge would survive. It is rumored that the original copies of the Ye Ching and Books of the Vanishing Heavenly Stem can be found deep within the bowels of the magnificent building.

State of Wei (The Land of Opposing Advance)

One of the original five States, Wei is the protector of Zhou. While this role may seem redundant after the expansion of the Kingdom into the twelve current States, Wei is a State that to this day provides the bodyguards for the Emperor and other Nobles. The Wei Army has, in the past, defended the Emperor with their very lives, crushing several rebellions and revolts. Now, though, it is a shadow of its former self. Peace and prosperity have reduced the army's ranks. Over one hundred years ago many soldiers were left without work. Many took to a life of crime, becoming robbers and bandits, sometimes operating in large groups. Others became bodyguards and mercenaries. Eventually the criminal groups were eradicated and what was left was a flourishing business of guardianship that has developed into its current form, the Escort Service. Nobles, merchants, trade caravans, all need to be protected from attack and they hire individuals from these service agencies. All over Zhongguo, one can find a Protection Agency office, all with headquarters in Wei.

Nobility in the State of Wei

- Feng Gong-jué (*One who was borne by the winds*, Rat, Duke)
- Ying Bo-jué (*One who watches over the plantation*, Snake, Count)
- Shû Bo-jué (*One who travels extensively*, Boar, Count)
- Hóu Nán-jué (*One who seeks his target*, Horse, Baron)

Hé Nèi (City within Forking Rivers)

The capital of Wei, Hé Nèi was built upon a hill located strategically in the center of a fork of the Yuan River. The city is at best in economic decline. The city was once one of the largest suppliers of timber, but resources have been exhausted and different sources have been found outside of Wei. The Duke is currently planning to relocate the capital to Shàng Dâng and is waiting for approval from the Emperor and his ministers.

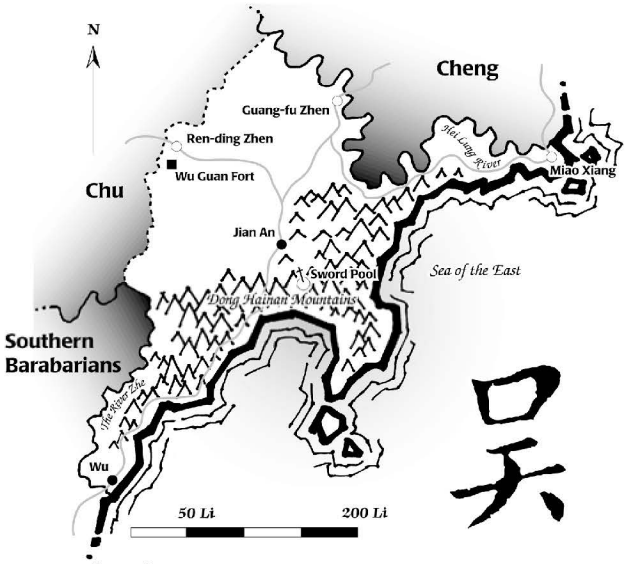
Shàng Dâng (City of Growing Factions)

The main operating center for almost ninety percent of the Escort Services, Shan Ding is the center of business in Wei. Scattered throughout the city are various headquarters for sixty agencies that compete with each other for contracts to protect Nobles or trade shipments. The city also has a fairly prosperous marble trade. The stone is cut, placed on large wheeled skids, and then sent to other cities. Because most buildings are made of thatching, tamped earth and wood, marble is considered special building material and is primarily used in the construction of government and imperial structures.

Places of Interest in Wei

The Fighting Square: Because of the large numbers of soldiers and martial artists in Shàng Dâng, fights break out more often than in other cities. Because they are so common and a great deal of the economy is based on these fighters, laws have changed to reflect this. If there is a public brawl or violent disagreement, the disputing parties are placed into a square fighting arena. While neither fighter is considered a criminal, honor is at stake. The loser is usually fired by his or her employer, and the winner gains more honor. It is not uncommon for the fight to result in the death of the vanquished, either because of the violence of the fight or the loser's loss of honor.

The Quarry: Large holes in the rock cut by the flow of the Wei River dot this area. Thousands of workers can be found here, excavating dirt, cutting the stone, and then transporting it to Shàng Dâng. While quarries are common place all over Zhongguo, the immense scale of the project, larger in area than neighboring Shàng Dâng, warrant its placement on every official map.



State of Wú (Land of Excessive Glory)

The State of Wú was settled by early descendants of the Shû Dynasty. They had traveled to the Southern end of the River Zhe, where it empties into the Sea of the East, to find an alternative southern trade route. Here they built the city of Wú. During the upheaval of several corrupt Emperors, contact was lost with the distant city, and it wasn't until after the destruction of the Twelve Houses and the establishment of the Zhou Dynasty that contact was reestablished. To honor the inhabitants of Wú, the Emperor awarded them their own State. Presently, Wú is still somewhat isolated. While it does receive some of the benefits from being

located along coastal shipping routes that have helped the City of Wú grow, overland trade with the rest of the Kingdom is nearly non-existent save for the ore shipments to Mâjing from Jiàn An. Instead, a healthy amount of trade has developed with the southern barbarians of Yìndù.

Nobility in the State of Wú

Yin Gong-jué (*Cloudy day*, Rabbit, Duke)
Fù Zi-jué (*Three steps*, Rooster, Viscount)
Ài Nán-jué (*Love*, Crane, Baroness)
Gêng Nán-jué (*Fiery ear*, Horse, Baron)

Wú (City of Plenty)

The capital of Wú is the city after which the State was named. Wú is a port city that receives a fair amount of commerce as ships come to port on journeys up and down the coast. Wú is the is the southern most city in Zhongguo and the last major city along the coast. The culture here is often considered independent of the rest of Zhongguo partly because of its separation from the Kingdom for several centuries and partly because of its proximity to Yìndù.

Jiàn An (City of Enlightened Peace)

A relatively new city to Wú and Zhongguo, Jiàn An appeared almost overnight when the various deposits of ore and precious metals were found in the Dong Hainan Mountains. This city is famous for the high quality of its swords and the refined ore used in making them. Some scholars think that the old legends of the mythical Sword Pool originated here and are simply stories told by the weapon-smiths to gain more prestige. There is almost always a haze over the city from the numerous smithies and foundries working metal and preparing ore shipments.

Places of Interest in Wú

The Sword Pool: Ancient legends tell of two lovers, both sword-makers, who lost their lives making the two finest swords ever created. The legend claims that the lovers' spirits were contained within the swords. The two swords were lost and are rumored to be located in a pool of water high up in the Dong Hainan Mountains. Over time other swords both heroic and infamous joined the male and female sword at the bottom of the pond, a graveyard for the weapons. The Sword Pool has never been found and remains a highly prized mystery.

Wú Guan Fort: During the Zhou Dynasty, Wú has had to deal with violence directed at it by other States, primarily the State of Chû, though that dispute was eventually settled by the Emperor. In return, the State of Wú began sending a tribute of ore once per year to ensure continued protection from the Throne. Wú officials were not satisfied with promises of protection, though; fearing more incursions into their lands, they built the Wú Guan Fort. The fortification sits near the only road leading into western Zhongguo and the State of Chû. The fort has several units of soldiers stationed here at all times. It is a reminder that harmony does not exist everywhere within the Kingdom.

State of Yen (Land of Swallows)

The State of Yen is the northernmost State. It is located on the northeastern coast of the continent, and includes the islands where the Sea of the East and the North-wind Sea meet. There are hundreds of small fishing and trading communities along the coast and among the islands. Yen was created to stem possible invasions by northeastern barbarians and the Calabrese. At first, Yen was a third of its current size, reaching as far as the Bai Guang Wall, a series of fortifications designed to hinder barbarian raids across the border. When contact was reestablished with Calabria, the Emperor feared that they would attempt to establish their own ports and cities among the barbarians. To prevent this from happening he simply took rest of the north eastern peninsula and required all vessels sailing from Calabria to register at the port city of Xiang Ping. Today, the Bai Guang Wall sits, unused and in disrepair, a reminder of different times.

Nobility in the State of Yen

- Shào Clan Gong-jué (*He who summons*, Tiger, Duke)
- Tú Bo-jué (*By the river*, Rabbit Countess)
- Yán Clan Zi-jué (*One who is refined*, Monkey, Viscount)
- Gong Clan Nán-jué (*One who postulates*, Snake, Baron)
- Zhu Bo-jué (*White boar*, Boar, Countess)

Xiang Ping (City Built by Bareback Barbarians)

The capital of Yen, Xiang Ping is located on the coastline where the Yin He River empties into the Sea of the East. Once the city of a proud barbarian nation centuries ago, it is now a thriving commerce center and the seat of government for the State of Yen. Xiang Ping is a major port city, and while it is not nearly as large as Ru Nan it is almost as important. The city acts as a filter, preventing direct contact between the rest of Zhongguo and foreign traders from Calabria. It is here that Calabrese merchants and ship captains apply for the proper papers to sail into ports further south and do business in locations outside the ports. A foreigner from the east cannot travel in Zhongguo without having stopped first in Xiang Ping. While there are similar "entry" locations along all the major trade routes, none are as large or as institutionalized as the city of Xiang Ping.

Bei Ping (The Great Northern Plains)

Once the capital of Yen, Bei Ping lost importance when the government moved to Xiang Ping. With the threat of barbarian raiding parties gone, there is no longer a need for soldiers to man

the Bai Guang Wall. Soldiers were the backbone of the economy for Bei Ping. When they left, so did the merchants, which led to the ultimate downfall of this majestic city. Today, the city is a place of crime and neglect. Those that can afford to move have already done so. Every manner of criminal can be found here, preying upon each other or those unfortunates who have stayed. While it is not a city of open lawlessness, there is a powerful, thriving underworld.

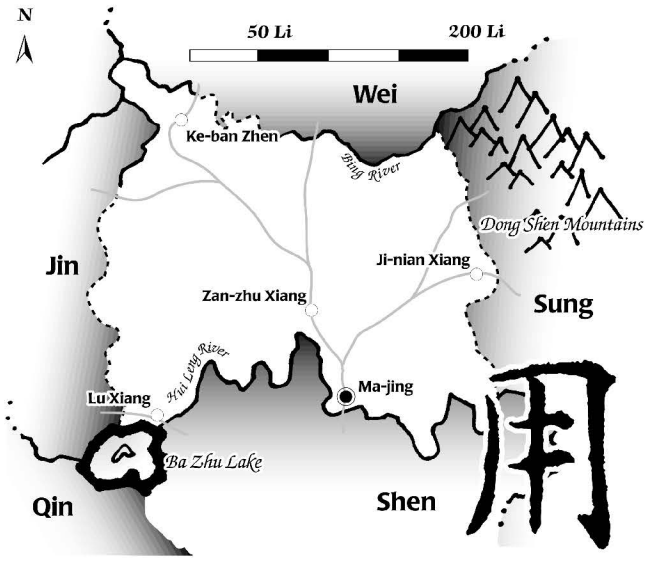
Yue Liang (City of Thunderous Waves)

The northern most city in Zhongguo, Yue Liang was built by barbarians nearly a thousand years ago. The city sits on bluffs overlooking a sheltered cove. Further out can be seen one of the wonders of Zhongguo, the Kunyan Whirlpool. The constant roar of circulating water can be heard throughout the city and creates a sort of natural tempo to the daily life of the city. While there is little in the way of commerce other than the daily needs of the population, there are a fair amount of hot springs, bath houses, and tea shops that attract poets, intellectuals, and a fair number of nobles looking to rest, clear the mind, and create.

Places of Interest in Yen

Kunyan (Extended Inundating Whirlpool): Almost a full li across, the whirlpool predates any civilization and according to local lore was created when a spirit from heaven, scorned by a lover, cast herself from the Heavens into the North-wind Sea. Others say that it is an angry beast that sits at the bottom consuming both ships and sailors. Once a vessel becomes trapped in its rotating waters, it is doomed. While it does not prevent the most skilled of sailors from reaching the city port it does form a sort of natural barrier, keeping pirates and late winter's floating ice out of Yue Liang's harbor.

Bai Guang Wall: While no longer used and in a state of disrepair, the Bai Guang Wall is still one of the largest series of fortifications in Zhongguo. While not a wall in the proper fashion, the fortification is a series of forts and sentry stations that extend in either direction for nearly one hundred li, north of Bei Ping. Each fort used to house over five hundred troops. Now, many of the forts are home to ghosts and criminals. Because the government does not have the money or the troops necessary to police the area, disreputable types have made their home here. Bribes of government officials and careful control of the thieves by crime bosses have controlled the situation for now. There may come a time when the Emperor himself decides to clean up the area.



State of Zhou (Land of Caveat)

The sovereign State of the Zhou Dynasty was the first of the Twelve States. It is the very center of Zhongguo in every way, politically, spiritually, and geographically. Once more than twice its current size, Zhou has been reduced in size to reward nobles and maintain the status quo among the other States, avoiding open rebellion and war. Necessity has made Zhou what it is today. The surrounding lands of Zhou exist solely to support Mâjing. Because of this, Zhou has only one city, the largest in Kingdom. The rest of the population is spread out across the countryside tending the fields and pastures of nobles assigned the task of feeding the capital and the Emperor. In Zhou one will also find the largest number of livestock located in the Kingdom, with pastures sometimes dozens of li square. The roads are always patrolled regularly, with small forts that also serve as signal towers located every five or six li along the roadside. Only the caravan routes are more traveled than the three major roads leading to Mâjing. Every year thousands of student politicians and minor nobles from across Zhongguo travel to the capital to take part in the entrance exams, a series of tests for placement within the various guilds and ministerial staffs. This testing serves two purposes: It supplies the Kingdom with a group of dedicated politicians to run the day-to-day management of the Kingdom, and it sets one's feet on the path of loyalty to the King. All civic leaders and minor nobles have spent some part of their lives in Zhou.

Nobility in State of Zhou

- Wang Ping, Yi-jiu (*King of Peace,* Rat, Emperor)
- Shangguan (*The minister*, Dog, Emperor's Minister)
- Ouyang (*Exhaling yang energy*, Ox, Minister)
- Gongsun (*Grand sun*, Phoenix, Minister)
- Zhuge (*From All Cloths*, Crane, Minister)
- Weishih (*Hereditary warrior*, Tiger, Minister)
- Sima (*Minister of war*, Sheep, Minister)
- Xiaoyan (*Solemn affair*, Cat, Minister)
- Zhouyi (*Descendant of Zhou*, Rat, Minister)
- Taigung (*Grand elder*, Horse, Minister)

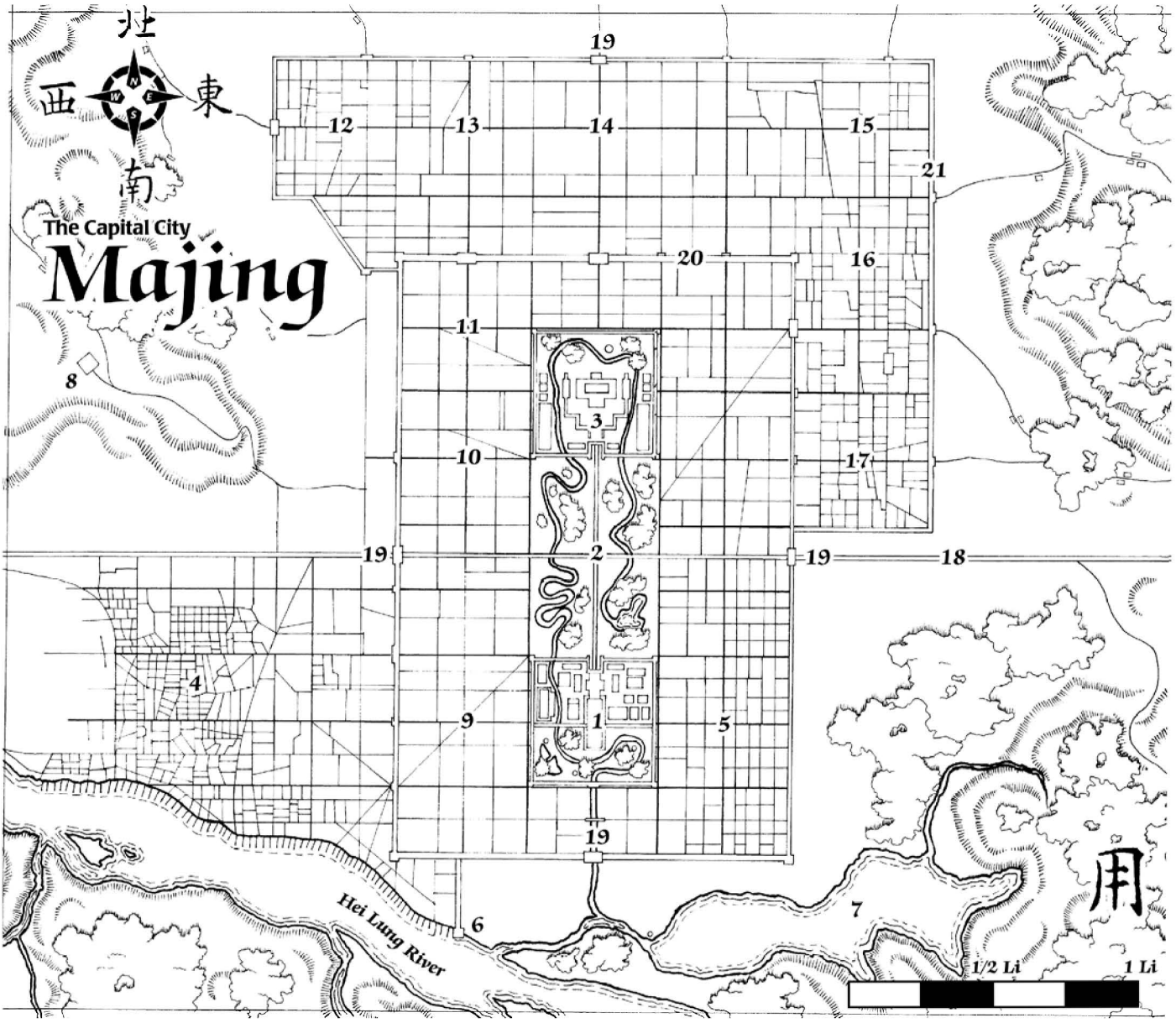
- Dao Hóu-jué (*Master of blade*, Rooster, Marquise)
- Xuan Zi-jué (*He who is announced*, Dog, Viscount)

Mâjing (Horse City)

Situated on a rise on the Northern side of the Hei Lung River, Mâjing spreads over thousands of acres and is the single largest city not only in Zhongguo, but on the continent. The one-hundred and sixty thousand inhabitants of the city, almost to a person, are there to support the Throne and the day-to-day life within the city. The city is named to honor the first Emperor, Gongsun.

The purpose of the city is to support the King and his court, thus the palace is the center of the city both in design and in daily life. The city around the Palace is laid out in a grid pattern and builders have observed rigid adherence to this linear form since it was designed several thousand years ago. The layout divides the city into walled areas based on functionality and caste. Between the communities are twenty-four boulevards lined with willow trees, running the length and breadth of the city. At the end of each thoroughfare is a gate. The four main gates to the city are nearly one hundred feet wide and close to forty feet tall. The twenty other gates, while impressive on their own, are minor, forming part of the wall itself. The wall, nearly forty feet tall, runs around the perimeter of the city, connecting each of the gates.

Places of Interest in Zhou



The Forbidden City (Emperor's Palace): The Palace itself is in the heart of Mâjing, surrounded on all four sides by a moat and high walls. The structure stands tall above the other communities and is always the dominating feature in view when someone enters the city through any of the gates. The one main gate stands in front of an ornate stone bridge crossing the moat. The main entryway nearly bisects the entire length of the

palace, ending at the King's council chambers and the Throne. To either side is a maze of buildings for the Courts of Zhongguo, the Ministers, and a plethora of minor functionaries. Past the King's council chambers are the living quarters. Here the King, his family, his concubines, and his servants live out daily life. Throughout the palace there are grand stairs and open courtyards, expansive gardens, pools, fountains and streams. Very few in Zhongguo ever see the outer walls of the palace. There are even fewer that get to see the interior.

1. Southern Interdict Halls

Here is where the Emperor of Zhongguo meets with his ministers and other lesser lords.

2. Imperial Boulevard and Dragon Pond Park

The Imperial Boulevard is a stone road, one *zhàng* (23 paces) above the ground that connects the Southern Interdict Halls to the Northern Forbidden City.

3. Northern Forbidden Palace

This is where the Emperor and his immediate family reside. The name "Forbidden" reminds folks that commoners may not enter.

4. Farmer's Quarter

Even the greatest cities need farmers and fishermen, and this is where they live. Because of their proximity to the seat of power, most enjoy greater wealth than their countryside counterparts.

5. Imperial Guards Ward

This quarter is where the great Yù-wèi live, where they are trained, and where they store their arms.

6. Imperial Navy Dock

A series of wharfs and warehouses used to unload and store goods being sent by barge to the Palace, the Dock is also used by the Emperor also as the departure point for trips up and down river.

7. Red Bird Lake

This lake is rumored to be the residency of Celestial Red Bird, whose task is to protect Mâjing.

8. White Tiger Hill

The burial grounds of past rulers and heroes of Zhongguo, this hill is also rumored to be the residency of Celestial White Tiger, whose task is to protect Mâjing.

9. State-Craftsman Ward

The Zhou State's greatest craftsmen and their families live here. The nobility frown upon merchants and guilds, and thus all craftsmen swear loyalty oaths to the Emperor.

10. Major Bureaucrat Ward

Here are the homes of high-ranking ministers, secretaries, functionaries, and their families. Many statesmen hope to rise in the ranks to eventually live here.

11. Nobility Ward

Lords from various states have their residences here. Every noble house maintains at least one estate.

12. Wealthy Class Residence

The merchant-kings and master artisans (who have not sworn loyalty to Zhou) make their homes here. The streets are zealously policed at night by highly-paid militia-men.

13. Minor Bureaucrat Ward

Here are where low ranking ministers, secretaries, functionaries and their families reside, while they dream of attaining higher offices and privileges.

14. Scholar Ward

Sometimes called "The School of a Hundred Thoughts," this part of Mâjing is where the private schools can be found to educate those of means in the Five Classics, or perhaps even in wizardry. There are a few libraries, but they are maintained by private donations, and to gain entry one has to be heavy in the purse and quick with the wit.

15. Merchants' Ward

A necessity of affluence, this part of town has almost every item imaginable – for extremely high prices. Almost all vendor licenses are legitimate – the Zhou only barely tolerate the merchants as it is, and any excuse to make an example out of one of them is seen as a grand opportunity. Similar products and services are grouped by street.

16. Craftsman's Ward

Second only to Lu, the craftsmen of Mâjing are famous for their beautiful and cunning designs. If they are not directly employed by the state, they set up shop in the Craftsman's Ward, where they can command higher prices and work to their own schedule.

17. Martial Ward

Sometimes called, "The School of a Hundred Fists," the numerous schools of Martial Arts are found here. Although dueling is forbidden by law, the fierce rivalries that develop between schools often lead to challenges, fights, and tragedy.

18. Imperial Horizontal Thoroughfare

This is the main road that travels east to west through the city.

19. The Four Compass Points (Main Gates)

The four main entry points to Mâjing; each faces, directly North, South, East, or West. By tradition, the Emperor exits through the South Gate and enters through the North Gate, so as to always be facing south, for better feng-shui.

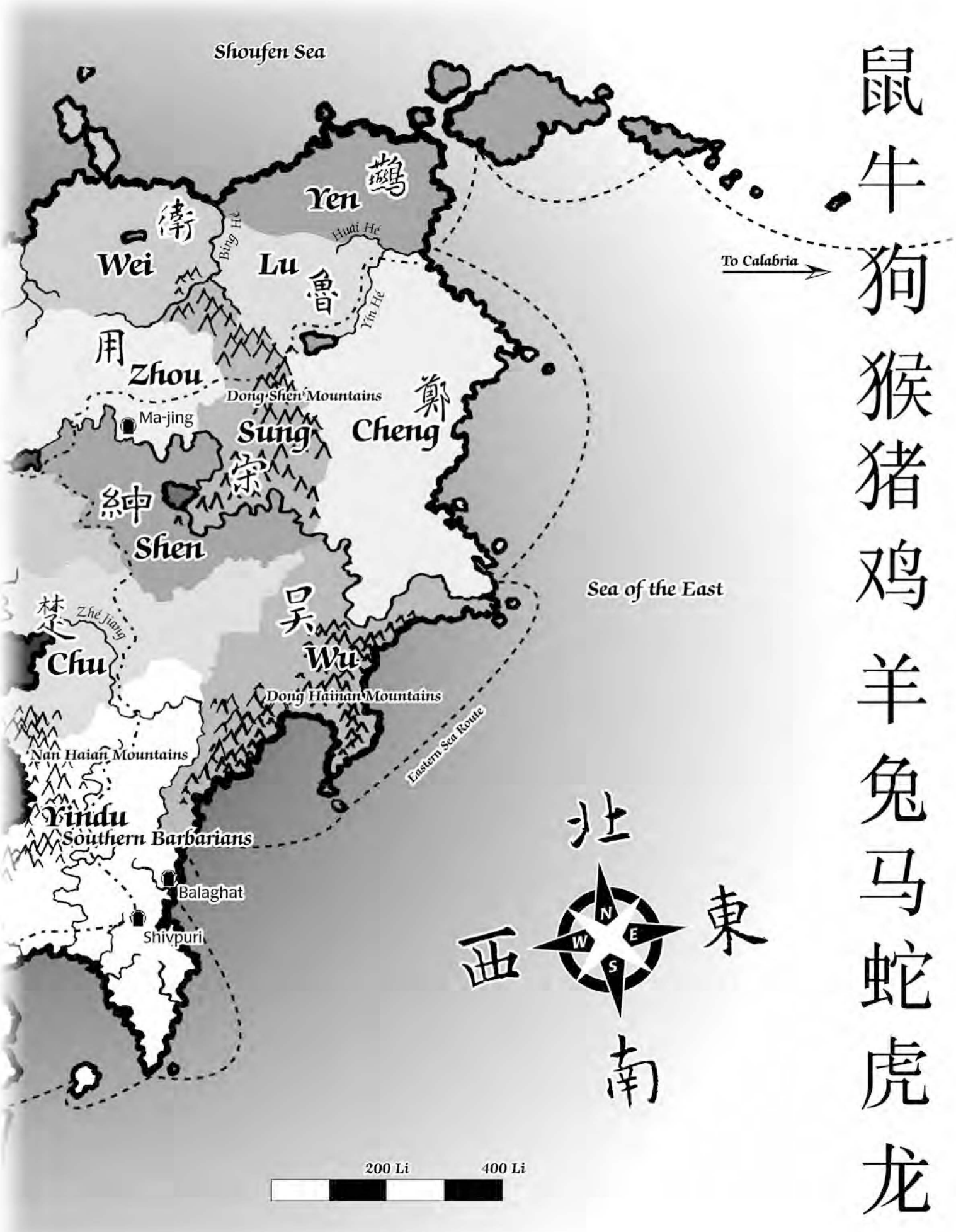
20. The Inner Wall

The original wall that was built around the city, Mâjing has since outgrown its original boundaries. This wall is taller than the outer wall and used to separate the nobility and government officials from the rest of the city. Practice of *any* kind of magic within the inner wall is punishable by torture or worse.

21. The Outer Wall

Built several centuries ago as the population of Mâjing grew quickly outside the original walls, the outer wall is still an impressive feat of engineering.

Shoufen Sea
Zoolon
Bulgan
Hanguo
Northern Barbarians
Togol
Turt
Main Northern Trade Route
Binghe Bay
Bulag
Xi Yeren
Western Barbarians
Jin
晉
Hei Lung Jiang
Al-Shaqri Fort
The River Xue Hé
Wei Shi Mountains
秦
Qin
Main Western Trade Route
Al-Wajbah
Abuda Dhabi
Al-Thughb
Chi
齊
Héng Hé
The River Du Jian
The Western Desert
The Yongyuan Sea
Xi Buluomen
(The Nine Tribes)
Xi Cheng
(The Western Emirates)
Abuda Quasar
Wei Yu Bay
Al-Wakrah
Sagat
Main Southern Trade Route
Shibam
Seoni
Bandar e Lengeh
Fayadeen
Bushehr



鼠牛狗猴猪鸡羊兔马蛇虎龙

LIFE IN ZHONGGUO

The great nation of Zhongguo, also known as the Middle Kingdom, is considered by its people to be the center the world. To them, it is the center of philosophy, enlightenment, and technology. It is the cradle for all learning, and the child of the first of the Spirits of Heaven—direct descendents of Yin and Yang and the Absolute. Zhongguo is also the heart of civilization, which grew to its present might from a tiny kingdom surrounded on all sides by a vast land of savage barbarians.

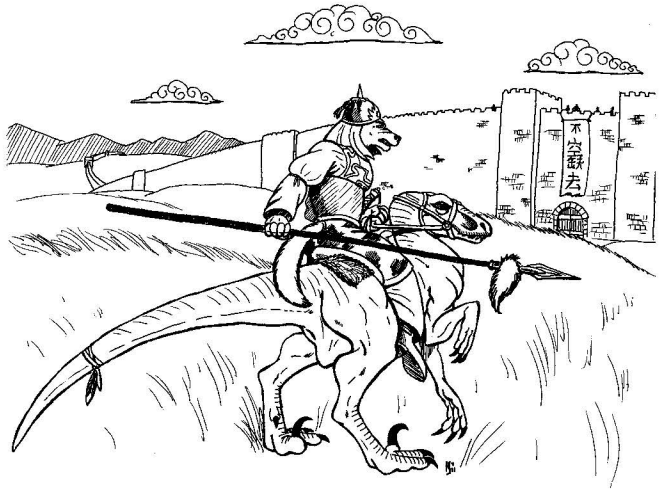
The lands of Zhongguo stretch across a wide variety of geographical regions and climates, and its people are just as diverse. Over the past several centuries, what was originally a nation made up of individual, racially-based Houses allied under a single King is now a unified group of States where racial lines have been largely erased. Everyday life in the Middle Kingdom is strictly organized and well defined in accordance with traditions established over dozens of generations.

While the society remains primarily agrarian, many of the major cities have grown to be quite large—larger, in fact, than any of their counterparts elsewhere in the world. The contrast between urban and rural life is like night and day, but all follow the same form of organized living. The population is fairly ethnocentric and tends to frown upon outsiders, considering them to be barbarians regardless of where they hail from. This xenophobia even exists at the lowest level within the society; local villagers tend to stay among their "own." Most peasants never see more of the outside world than passing merchants selling their wares or officials collecting taxes. This attitude has led to distinct styles and customs in almost every provincial region, making the kingdom a wealth of culture and intrigue.

The social hierarchy in Zhongguo is very rigid and orderly. Since the formation of Zhou Dynasty, the social structure has been broken down into five castes. The most important caste is the Shi, or warrior caste, which includes the nobility. Next is the Xue, the literati, which includes the provincial officials known as Mandarins. The Nong, or farmer caste, is next, and includes hunters. Below them comes Gong, the caste of craftsmen and engineers. The lowest of the five is Shang, the merchant caste, which includes bankers.

Fate dictates which caste one is born into. In general, citizens can never leave their caste. There are exceptions, but they are rare. It is recognized that the nation can only prosper if everyone works at the position fate has assigned him, striving to promote the common good.

Dàoists are considered to live outside of the caste system, for the life they pursue is seen as a social creation and not a thing of nature. Similarly, the system does not apply to barbarians; they have neither the civility nor the understanding of culture necessary to appreciate such fine social distinctions.



Those who Rule: *Shi* (The Warrior Caste)

The King (Wang)

The political structure of Zhongguo is a hierarchical arrangement much like that of Ye-Ching. At the top is the King, who holds absolute power, paralleling the Absolute, where all things originate. He rules with the authority of the Mandate of Heaven, which is granted to him by the Spirits. This makes him the single most important being on earth.

The King rules from the Throne, which stands in the Royal Palace at the heart the great capital city of Mâjing. From here the King manages all the affairs of the Middle Kingdom. He sets policies, enacts laws, levies taxes, dispenses justice, conducts diplomacy, raises armies, and wages war. He is aided in this enormous task by his ministers, who deal directly with the twelve states of Zhongguo in the his name.

The King is very rarely seen in public, usually keeping to the Forbidden Royal Palaces. The most common exception to this is the annual Spring Festival, which requires his symbolic presence and ritual blessing.

The King is entitled to the utmost respect. Tradition demands that no other person, be they noble or commoner, may stand higher than him, live more extravagantly than him, or look directly upon him.

The Dukes (Dong)

A duke rules over each province in the Middle Kingdom, charged with overseeing regional affairs. The dukes hold a prestigious rank, second only to the King himself. For this reason, the dukedoms are given to the twelve most loyal supporters of

the Zhou dynasty. In exchange for this great honor, they pay tribute to the King twice a year—once at the end of winter, and a second time at the end of the harvest season. This tribute, raised through taxes, often amounts to a fantastic treasure, delivered to the Forbidden Palace at Mâjing by a grand caravan escorted by a large contingent of royal troops.

The dukes are responsible for the prosperity of their individual states and the defense of the Middle Kingdom as a whole. In addition, each of them has a specific task to perform. Half of them (Jin, Yen, Chi, Chu, Wu, and Qin) are charged with defending Zhongguo against foreign barbarians. Three of them (Sung, Shen, and Lu) maintain the Kingdom's lore. Wei is responsible for maintaining peace within the Kingdom, while Cheng deals with the merchants and matters of commerce. The King's own house, Zhou, governs.

The dukes are required to appear regularly before the King's court in the capital. They will often time their visits to coincide with the delivery of a caravan bearing tribute. The frequency of audiences varies depending on where the states are located. For the closer states of Wei, Cheng and Zhou, the duke is required to be present at the King's court once a year. For the more distant states of Sung, Shen and Lu, the duke has to appear once every two years. For the peripheral states of Jin, Yen, Chi, Chu, Wu and Qin, the requirement is an audience every three years. In addition, the King will grant audiences to representatives of the barbarian lands every four years.

Each duke is aided in his duties by a sort of miniature version of the royal court, with a council of ministers acting under him. They advise the duke in matters of government and carry out his decisions. They are granted the authority to act in his name, which gives them great power. For this reason, only the most trusted of counselors attain this position.

The Minor Nobles

Below the King and the dukes, there is a class of lesser nobles who also hold the authority to govern. They are spread throughout the Middle Kingdom. Some states contain up to four or five minor noble houses; others might have only one or two.

The role of this group of nobles is to bridge the gap between the ruling class and the common people. They set policy and oversee government matters at the local level. In this capacity, these nobles have the most contact with the common people, and also the greatest direct impact on their lives.

Historically, the nobility owed its allegiance directly to its House. Today, this is no longer the case. Their titles are not based on family lineage, but on their service to their Duke. They are a diverse group, nearly as diverse as the people themselves. Some hold great tracts of land worked by thousands of farmers. Others are landless, and work as officials in the government.

The Royal Guards (Yù wèi)

Since the start of Zhou Dynasty, each province has been required, as a symbol of their fealty, to send a thousand soldiers to the Royal City to serve as Yù-wèi (Royal Guards). These troops must renounce all previous oaths to any other nobles, and swear eternal loyalty to the Royal Zhou Dynasty.

As part of the induction ceremony, the Minister of Celestial Affairs burns these oaths. This sends the names of the guardsmen to the celestial censor, and ensures that any act of betrayal will be punished in the spiritual world as well as on Earth. Upon completion of the ceremony, the guards receive a new set of weapons and armor of the highest quality. They then begin formal training under experts in the fighting arts, which turns them into the most skilled warriors in the Middle Kingdom.

The Royal Guard's duties include patrolling the Royal City, Mâjing. They man the guard-posts at the gates of Mâjing, those at the gates of the Forbidden City, the elevated boulevard connecting the Forbidden City to the Northern Palace, and the southern halls of the ministers. When the King holds court, only they and a select few are allowed to carry arms. They act as the personal bodyguard for the King and his extended family, though only female Yù-wèi are allowed to watch over the royal concubines. Duties are rotated annually, to keep guardsmen from becoming complacent.

The royal family provides for the daily needs of the guardsmen, housing and feeding them in great barracks within the royal palace complex. They also provide whatever armor and weaponry is needed by the Royal Guard.

Serving in the guard is a great honor and many families do so for generations. A guardsman's position and military rank are passed down from generation to generation. The eldest child inherits the position; any other child may join the royal guards voluntarily, but enters at the starting rank.

The Warriors (Shì)

The *Shi* are the fighting core of Zhongguo's warrior caste. In ancient times, they were the bodyguards of the tribal chiefs. Today, they serve in the retinues of the noble houses. Their first duty above all others is to protect their lords and ladies, with their lives if necessary. The shi hold their ranks for life, and rank is passed down from generation to generation to the oldest male heir. Other heirs are entitled to serve in the Shi warrior class, but begin at the lowest rank.

In a noteworthy exception to the usually rigid social hierarchy in Zhongguo, it is possible for a person from the lower castes to attain the rank of Shi. This is done by showing extreme heroism in battle and then swearing loyalty to a particular noble house. Similarly, Shi rank can be revoked as a punishment for cowardice, disloyalty, or failure.

All Shi serve in the retinue of some noble; there is no such thing as "master-less Shi." If a noble house is destroyed, its Shi are supposed to be the first ones killed defending their lord. Rarely is the Shi of a vanquished lord accepted into another's household. The fact that he remains alive, while his former lord does not, speaks for itself.

It is possible for a particularly powerful line of Shi to be elevated to the nobility, forming a new noble house. This can take generations to achieve, however.

Regular Soldiers (Bing)

There is no uniform way of handling bing, or common troops, in Zhongguo. Each state operates in its own way. Generally, in

the inner states, troops are only raised in time of war or crisis, except for small bodies of guards to protect the duke and maintain public order. Outriders from the Ministry of War go from village to village, informing the censors to bring forth one able-bodied person from each of the registered families. Depending upon the severity of the crisis, the conscription may increase to two or three persons per family, or even to all available able-bodied citizens. When the crisis is resolved, the army is rapidly demobilized. Nearly everyone is released at once.

Those states that lie adjacent the barbarian lands, on the other hand, maintain large standing armies to garrison the border and fend off any incursions or raids. These armies often contain tens of thousands of troops, which are split into three divisions: The regular forces, the frontier forces, and the Ducal Guard. The first two fall under the aegis of the Ministry of War, while the duke's guard will be privately funded, and receives better training, pay, and equipment, but will be much smaller.

By law, each family must generally send one able-bodied person to serve. Those families with only one child are exempt; the duty to perpetuate the family line supercedes the duty of military service. In standing armies, this conscription runs according to generation. As younger family members grow up, they are sent to replace older members, who then return home.

The army is organized along status lines. The Shang caste generally forms the vanguard, or is given the least desirable duties or garrisons. Those from the Gong caste who possess valuable skills (such as armorers, fletchers, cooks, or smiths) are put to work according to their profession; the rest are put into the first ranks, or fill out any other undesirable positions. Troops from the Nong caste are assigned to the second ranks. Those from the Xue caste are assigned to support or staff positions. Any troops from the Shì caste act as commanders or elite units.

When called up for service, the conscripts gather at the nearest army camp and are separated into groups. Those who have arms and/or military experience become officers and sergeants. Those who lack them are provided with training and weapons, and go into the rank and file. They are further subdivided by caste, as explained above. Those who fail to complete their training are put to work in supporting roles, such as diggers, armorers, drivers, bearers, or as personal servants for the officers.

In time of war, criminals are often used as shock troops. These units are placed in the front of any attack and generally suffer terrible losses. The convicts are given pardons if they survive. Very few manage to win their freedom in this manner.

Mercenaries (Yong-bing)

Of all the inner states, Wei has the strongest military tradition, owing to its historic duty to protect the state of Sung. As time went by, however, the threat to Sung gradually diminished, eliminating the need to maintain such a large and expensive army. In response, the Ministry of War in Wei state eased its conscription rules by cutting the period of service in half (from twenty years down to ten). Seasoned troops began to be released from active duty.

These veterans were still in their prime, but were too old to enter an apprenticeship or learn a new trade. Their trade was war, and soon enough they began to practice it. Enterprising merchants formed security businesses, hiring veterans to protect valuable caravans from bandit attacks. Other former soldiers banded together into free companies and offered their services to other states.

Mercenaries are now common in the Middle Kingdom, and the profession has become an accepted one. The other inner states are tolerant of this, because their own small professional armies are sufficient to handle any problems short of full-fledged war.

Fighting Schools (Junxiao)

Fighting Schools have developed along two general lines. The first are the fighting academies formed by the Shi. The Shi must be alert and ready to either defend or strike at any moment, and their schools offer them a place to learn these skills and hone their abilities.

These academies have developed various Gong Fu styles that have been handed down from generation to generation and are often named after the race or house that created them. Other Gong Fu styles are based on observations of one's surroundings and range from purely offensive to completely defensive styles.

Surprisingly, Dàoism is the second source of the fighting school. In their unending quest for immortality, the Dàoist teachers realized that by being overly concerned with spiritual matters they were failing to take care of their physical selves. Immortality would be worthless, after all, if the body had deteriorated through neglect. They therefore began to incorporate physical exercises into their regimen. Through observation, they realized that the combination of a sound body with a sound mind made spell-casting easier.

The idea of a fighting school that trained students in the martial arts did not develop until well into the Quan Dynasty as rogue Dàoists began to create chaos throughout Zhongguo. By combining magic and Gong-Fu in a previously unknown way, they showed a fighting ability that shocked the martial world. Neither their magical abilities nor their combat skills were particularly noteworthy, but the combination of the two into a single fighting style led to something greater than the sum of its parts. From these encounters came the eight perfect Dàoists, martial artists that also followed a path so in tune with the world that they attained immortality.

After capturing the rogues the eight Dàoist masters decided to form schools that reflected their philosophy. They taught basic breathing techniques, physical exercises, and meditation to anyone who came through their door with a sincere desire to learn. Only the most gifted and talented, however, were allowed to progress to the next level of training. The secondary purpose of the fighting schools was to keep rogue Dàoists from rampaging through the Kingdom again. Their fellow students would be more than ready to stop anyone who would disgrace the school in that fashion.

These two lines of fighting school have become intertwined in the martial world. A skilled fighter can often identify the school his opponent trained at simply by listening to the name of a technique. Those with non-Dàoist backgrounds tend to name their techniques after the one of the 12 Great Houses, such as

"Snake Strike" or natural events, like "Mountain Strike." Those from Dàoist schools tend to name their maneuvers in abstract or spiritual terms.

The fighting schools stand open to all members of society, though the majority of pupils come from the Shi caste, as they have the free time available to practice.

Those who Govern: *Xue* (The Literate Caste)

The Ministers

Ruling the Middle Kingdom is a huge task; governing it is an even bigger one. While the King and the nobility set policy and exercise ultimate power, the actual machinery of government is run by a great bureaucracy. This bureaucracy is directed by a class of Ministers.

The King's ministers command considerable power. While they technically hold a lower social rank than the dukes, their actual influence is far greater. Because the ministers speak in the King's name, even the dukes must abide by their rulings. It is not uncommon for this to lead to friction between a minister and a duke. Historically, this has sometimes led the King to replace the duke, despite his nominally superior social rank.

Each minister is responsible for a specific area, such as the law, the treasury, public works, transportation, farming, diplomacy, history, and any of a number of other mundane aspects of daily life. There are also ministers who deal with less common matters, such as the Minister for Celestial Affairs, who is responsible for both magic and spirits.

Each minister directs a bureaucratic organization known as a ministry. The ministries are made up of the various courts and offices that govern each area of responsibility. The size of the ministries varies considerably, depending on each Minister's function and needs. The Minister of the Treasury, for example, requires hundreds of record keepers and agents, and thus has a very large staff with many offices throughout the Kingdom. The Minister of Celestial Affairs, however, needs only a few dozen scribes and assistants to note miracles and sightings.

The bureaucrats who work in these ministries range from young nobles serving the crown, to tax collectors, to simple bodyguards. They are expected to work hard, and to be loyal to their Minister and his efforts to aid the Kingdom.

There are nine different ranks of ministers. The lowest three ranks deal with the common people and can be found in every capital and major town. The middle three ranks deal with the nobility and are usually found at the seat of State governments. The highest three ranks advise the King himself on matters relating to their particular specialty and can only be found in Mâjing.

Of all the various ministers, the Ssu-Kuo (or magistrates of laws) are perhaps the most publicly visible. They represent the Ministry of Law, tasked with enforcing the King's justice. As such, they must reach (and be reachable by) those from all walks of life. Also within the Ministry of Law are the Yan-Wei, who are responsible for the apprehension of criminals.

Like any other class of officials, the Ssu-Kou are divided into ranks. Higher-ranked Ssu-Kou can overturn the judgments of lower magistrates. While nobody is above the law, even the nobility, the law also forbids anyone from being judged by a magistrate of lower social rank. For this reason, the higher ranked Ssu-Kuo are also responsible for hearing and deciding cases against noblemen. When charges are brought against a noble, he is held under house arrest until an appropriately-ranked magistrate can arrive to decide his case.

Ministers that Serve the Emperor

- Ssu-Tu (Minister of Multitudes)
- Ssu-Kung (Minister of Works)
- Ssu-Kou (Minister of Law)
- Ssu-Ma (Minister of War)
- Tai-pu (Minister of Transportation)
- Shao Fu (Minister of Stewardship)
- Da Si-Nong (Minister of Treasury)
- Da Hong Liu (Minister of Foreign Affairs)
- Yan Wei (Minister of Order)
- Tai Chang (Minister of Etiquette)
- Tai Zhu (Minister of Celestial Affairs)
- Da Gong Jiang (Minister of Crafts)

Those Who Toil: *Nong* (The Farmer Caste)

The Village Leader (Ling Nong-fu)

The bureaucratic reach of the Zhou Dynasty does not extend to the local level. Individual villages are simply too small to justify the cost of maintaining an official presence there. Instead, the Mandarins make periodic visits to collect taxes and resolve disputes. Such visits are infrequent, and the Mandarins seldom spend more than a week or so. The presence of the royal government is scarcely felt within the village itself. In its absence, the village leaders govern.

These leaders are drawn from the elders of the most powerful household of each village. They are responsible for keeping the peace in the village and resolving any minor disputes that come up. They also represent the village in its dealings with the Royal government.

The Farmer (Nong-fu)

Most of the citizens of Zhongguo are Nong-fu, or farmers. They work in communal groups; generally, eight families are assigned a lot to farm. Part of that land belongs to the local noble and the rest is divided among the families. Together, they work to farm their own land and, collectively, that of their lord. Generally, it is the village leader who divides up these lots and assigns them to the different families.

Peasant farmers spend most of their lives in hard, backbreaking labor. They get up before dawn and spend their entire morning working together on the noble's land. In the afternoon, they are allowed to return home to work on their individual farms. The work is hard, and the demands of working two plots lead to long days. In addition, the farmers must fight in the army in time of war, and are often conscripted into government work projects such as the construction of walls or canals.

At harvest time, the noble's land is the first to be cleared. Only when this is done can the farmers bring in their own crops. At tax time, they must give half of their own produce as rent for the land and payment for their equipment.

While the males work in the fields, a group of females from the same eight families work at a communal house of silk worms. This house is divided into several rooms and is kept at a constant warm temperature to keep the worms comfortable. Silk is produced year round in this controlled environment.

Elder females, who have lost their sense of smell and hearing, are assigned to the actual care of the worms. A room full of the constant

gnawing on mulberry leaves and the smell of silk worm excrement would drive a healthy worker away before long. The young females gather the mulberry leaves and dead branches, clean them, and store them in the leaf room. The mature females handle the actual boiling of the silk eggs, and the separation and drying of the silks.

At end of each season, the total amount of silk produced is divided into nine lots, with the last lot used for taxation. When caravans travel through the village, females can trade their silks to the merchants for necessities and small luxuries.

While two-thirds of families are involved in actual farming, the remaining one-third are responsible for hunting, caring for livestock, and animal husbandry. Some herd the large animals to grassy pastures, while other raise smaller animals in pens on the farms themselves. Others range about in search of game to help supplement the food supply on the farms. Any surplus livestock raised is traded with the neighbors for grain and vegetables, or sold to merchants when trading caravans pass through.

Farmers and villagers generally work about twelve hours a day. They only have a couple of hours for leisure time before going to bed. Most farmers spend even this brief time on home maintenance, while the women knit and repair clothes. Only the children run wild before being shepherded off to bed. Farmers only really have time to themselves in deep winter (when work becomes impossible) and on holidays.

Occasionally, some villages may also have a tavern or inn along a well-traveled path. Others may have a retired scholar who runs a school for the village children in exchange for food.

Those Who Produce: *Gong* (The Craftsman Caste)

While the Nong-Fu spends his life toiling outdoors, the Gong-Ren (or craftsman) works inside. The Gong-Ren are divided into two classes—those who work for the state (including those who work for particular noble houses), and freelancers who work for themselves.

People become state Gong-Ren by seeking out state employment, as prisoners given a second chance as life-indentured Gong-Ren, or by being born into that station. The state workers have their needs provided for by the government and the nobility so that they can focus on their work. They are given a place to stay, a yearly stipend, and a sense of security. Something is always needed, be it for war or peace.

Unfortunately, due to time constraints, a state Gong-Ren rarely becomes a master of his craft. He simply has too many deadlines to meet—sometimes, for example, the Ministry of War might require a smith to forge ten swords in a single month. If he fails to deliver, he risks the loss of his head. He therefore doesn't have the luxury of simply refining his skills to the level of a master. There are other downsides to working for the state as well. The craftsman will never grow rich, and his lot in life will never be improved. Sometimes they are uprooted and sent to another state or noble house as part of a gift or tribute.

Freelance Gong-Ren set up shop in the merchant quarters of a large city, or wherever they can purchase land in a town or village. In the city, shops of similar products are placed next to each other to promote competition and to make it easier to find particular items. Sometimes, they receive contracts for work from the state or nobility, but they usually have to sell most of their wares themselves on the open market. They do, however, have the time needed to refine their skills and, eventually, reach the level of master craftsman. Almost all the master Gong-Ren are freelancers. A master Gong-Ren will have no shortage of business, and can quote his own price and delivery date

Sometimes, merchants will purchase a Gong-Ren's entire stock of goods at a low price and transport them to other cities to sell for a profit. If a Gong-Ren can make such a deal, his life will be much easer, as he is assured a steady flow of business.

There are no craft-guilds or associations as the state does not tolerate collective bargaining. A Gong-Ren either works for himself or for the Kingdom. A freelancer can advance his station in life by attaining master status, or by hiring other Gong-Ren or apprentices to work for him.

An apprenticeship is a long and arduous process. In the early days, one must perform the menial tasks of cleaning tools, gathering and preparing raw materials, and running errands for the craftsman. In return, they learn from the master by watching and listening as he works. Gradually, they are allowed to practice some of the basic elements of the craft for themselves.

After five years of apprenticeship, one advances to the level of journeyman. Journeymen are allowed to do most of the work of a practicing craftsman, letting more senior Gong-Ren do only the most important parts.

By their tenth year, most workers are deemed to reach the status of Gong-Ren. Since they cannot compete with their masters (this is considered a sign of disrespect), they will usually either travel to another city to set up shop, or simply stay on as an employee in the same shop.

Those Who Trade: *Shang* (The Merchant Caste)

Merchant Princes

Of all the castes, the merchants are the lowest ranked. There is strong prejudice against them, because they do not actually produce anything. Instead, they are seen to live off of the work of others, simply transferring finished goods from one place to another—a service for which they charge an exorbitant price.

This attitude is prevalent everywhere except in Cheng province. The nobles there made a pact long ago with the various merchant houses. As long as the merchants remain loyal, the lords will protect them. For this reason, most of the merchant guilds have established their bases there, and sworn loyalty to the House of Cheng.

Because they have a solid base at Cheng, merchants have become prosperous and have spread throughout the Middle Kingdom. They bring wood to those who live near an ocean or river, and fish to those who live high up in the mountains (albeit salted fish). They bring manufactured goods and modern tools to the farmers, so they can have more leisure time, and they bring grains and vegetables to the Gong-Ren so that they can spend more time perfecting their arts rather than looking for food. The rise of the merchant caste led to a better distribution of goods throughout the Kingdom, which in turn allowed cities to grow to tremendous size, with tens of thousands of residents.

The capital of Cheng province, Xu Chang, is home to the five master merchant houses known as the Shang-Zhu.

- The House of Bái is made up of horses. They trade with the foreign barbarians.
- The House of Lóng are oxen. They trade in raw materials, including timber, fuel, and coal.
- The House of Yù-chí are Sheep.
- The House of Qiú are boars and deal with finished metal goods.
- The House of Kâi are also boars. They deal in products made of wood.

Money Village (Qián-zhuang)

One by-product of the strong merchant presence in Cheng state is the banking system of qián-zhuang, or "money villages." It deals almost exclusively with merchants, although exceptions are sometimes made for members of other castes. It allows merchants to deposit large sums with a central bank and then to withdraw the funds from branches in other cities. This saves both time and expenses for traveling merchants who have to spend money for hiring bao-biao and other support groups.

Merchants can write a letter of credit, sign it with a personal seal, and bring it to the qián-zhuang to either withdraw cash or transfer funds to another merchant.

Once the credit has been verified and approved, the local banker puts his seal on the letter of credit. This indicates the official backing of the Merchant Bank of Zhongguo. The letter's recipient can then redeem it for cash at any qián-zhuang. If there are insufficient funds available, the qián- zhuang may request additional money from other nearby qián-zhuang.

Outside the Caste System

Convicts

These are people punished under the judicial system. See "Punishment," p. 294.

Slaves

Under the laws of Zhongguo, slaves are property of the state. Individuals (either nobles or commoners) cannot own slaves. Slaves are considered enemies of the state that have been captured and put to work to serve the state's needs, though they are fairly rare as most convicted criminals suffer the death penalty. Particularly skilled convicts are sometimes spared execution so that their talents can be put to use instead.

Slaves are often assigned to work particularly hazardous jobs. Their faces are shaved of fur and tattooed to indicate their status. They exist at the lowest level of Zhonggese society, somewhere below even the lowest tier of the caste system.

Prisoners of War

Occasionally, strife between different states flares into open warfare. One result of the fighting is the capture of prisoners of war. The prisoners become bargaining chips in negotiations, used to win something of value from the other side in exchange for their safe return. Until that time, they are kept in stockades in military camps.

If they are not exchanged within a few months, their value as bargaining chips diminishes considerably. After that, the state holding them will usually negotiate with Yen State to exchange their prisoners for resources.

Barbarians

Barbarians are the scourge of civilization. Every child in Zhongguo has heard the tales of how the Great Sage King had to defeat Sanmiao, the barbarian chief, one of the Four Evils of the world.

In dealing with barbarians, the Middle Kingdom will generally either ignore them or try to absorb them. It is hoped that by demonstrating the superiority of Zhonggese civilization, barbarians will be impressed to the point that they abandon their backward way of life and embrace the Kingdom and its culture.

Both of these approaches can be seen in the State of Yen. There, a magnificent fortification was built, called the Bei Wall. It was designed to keep barbarian raiders out of Zhongguo, forcing them to prey upon other tribes instead. Over time the Kingdom has slowly encroached on the wilderness lying to the north of the great wall. This forced the barbarians living there to adapt to the Zhonggese way of life, as they had no place to go except the sea. Over several centuries, the barbarians in the north-eastern corner of Zhongguo were absorbed into the Kingdom.

Law and Order in Zhongguo

The ancient code handed down from the time of the Sage-King Tu Xie-he provides the foundation for the current legal system in the Middle Kingdom. It states that no one is above the law—kings and princes must submit to judgment just like any commoner. The Yan Wei, the civil police, are responsible for apprehending criminals. The magistrates known as the Ssu-Kou preside over the cases and render judgment.

Generally, anyone in the Middle Kingdom can seek relief from the courts of law. There are a few exceptions, however. Servants and slaves can not raise complaints against their masters, unless a very serious public crime is involved (such as treason, public agitation, or public ensorcellment). Servants and slaves are given martial punishment for any falsehoods given, or for filing any lesser complaint.

Similarly, family members cannot file complaints against one another. In particular, the younger generations cannot file grievances against their elders. Again, there are exceptions, as in treason for example. Family members who file lesser charges receive civil punishments, and also risk the loss of their family name and heritage—not a trivial thing in the culture of Zhongguo.

The very old (those over eighty) and children (under the age of ten) cannot file a complaint, nor can those suffering from a serious disease or mental illness. Prisoners cannot bring charges either, except to either confess or reveal accomplices in their crimes, or in cases of unwarranted torture by their jailers.

The party seeking relief is called the plaintiff. The process of bringing a complaint before the court is governed by procedures which have evolved over centuries and which are steeped in tradition and ceremony. The first thing a plaintiff must do is prepare his complaint in writing. If he is not literate, he may go to a recorder or scribe to have it done. The plaintiff can also hire an advocate, skilled in the law, to represent him before the court.

The plaintiff then takes his complaint to the hall of the local magistrate. Each judicial hall has a large drum by the front door; the plaintiff must personally sound this drum to summon the Ssu-Kuo. When the drum is sounded, the magistrate's secretary lights the candles in the

main hall. The court recorder prepares his brush and inks on a stone pad. Five guardsmen wearing leather armor and armed with quarter-staffs take up position along each side of the hall. When all is in readiness, the Ssu-Kuo enters and sits down upon the judicial bench. As befits his authority, he sits at an elevated desk, higher than everyone else in the hall.

The Yan Wei then call out, demanding that he who has summoned the Ssu-Kuo present himself before the court. The guardsmen bang their staves against the floor in unison, calling "Wei-yan" ("be proper and silent"). The plaintiff enters the hall, and prostrates himself before the magistrate. His advocate, if any, may remain standing. Throughout the entire process, the plaintiff kneels and the advocate stands.

The plaintiff must first state his name, family, home, and date of birth. This is written down by the recorder. The magistrate's secretary then comes forward and takes the plaintiff's written complaint. He reads out the nature of the crime and the name of the accused. If the offender is present, the Ssu-Kuo proceeds with the trial. If not, then the Yan-Wei go out to bring him before the court. If he is not immediately available, the court goes into recess, to reconvene one he has been placed in custody.

The Yan Wei have the special power to bring the accused before the court immediately. They must walk a fine line in exercising this authority. Any Yan Wei who carries out his duties too rigidly would be stripped of his rank for lack of discretion. If he is too relaxed, on the other hand, he will be viewed as corrupt. Certain courtesies, of course, must be given when apprehending those who are of higher rank—while the Yan Wei have authority over everyone, they must still exercise care not to anger the nobles.

If the accused cannot be readily apprehended, wanted posters are drawn up and posted in public places. If he is known to have fled the locality, then a Yan Wei is sent to track him down. In this task, he is given the appropriate papers and warrants, a spending allowance, and (if needed) a retinue of guardsmen. He is given a set number of days to return with the accused, or a black mark is noted on his record.

There are five prominent Yan Wei who work throughout the Middle Kingdom to track down particularly dangerous or difficult offenders. They are known only as Without Emotion, Cold Blood, Iron Claw, Bronze Feet, and Relentless. Each of them usually works alone. Sometimes two of them will team up to bring in a particularly difficult offender. In a few cases, three of them have had to work together, and in two extreme cases four of them collaborated to apprehend offenders of mythical status. So far there has been no case that require the services of all five at the same time.

Eventually, the accused will be brought to trial. Should he so desire, he is allowed to hire an advocate of his own to help him present his defense. When brought before the court, he must prostrate himself before the magistrate and remain kneeling throughout the trial. As with the plaintiff, the recorder will take down his name, family, address, and date of birth.

What is the law?

Once both parties and the case have been presented, the Ssu-Kuo begins to determine who is right and who is wrong. Both sides may call witnesses to help them make their cases; the witnesses must wait outside, ready to appear before the court when summoned. The parties can also introduce material evidence. The recorder writes down everything that transpires.

The Ssu-Kuo weighs the testimony, evidence, and arguments presented before him in reaching a verdict. Once the Ssu-Kuo has decided, he announces his judgment before the court. The plaintiff and the accused must sign to indicate their agreement with the ruling; only when both have done so is the case considered closed. When necessary, tortures are used to encourage reluctant parties to sign off with the verdict or confess to their crimes.

The Ssu-Kuo has great flexibility in selecting the punishment. He can impose a fine, or a prison sentence. He can order the return of stolen property or the cessation of some offensive activity. Corporal punishments, such as a number slaps to the face or strokes from a cane, are commonplace. The forehead of the offender might be marked with inks or tattoos to indicate their crime. The Ssu-Kuo can also devise other, more diabolic punishments to impose—their authority is nearly unlimited. They can even sentence an offender to slavery, or condemn him to death.

There are two types of punishment, Wen and Wu. Wen-related punishments are less severe than Wu-related punishments and are carried out immediately. Wu-related punishments are reviewed by the next ranking Ssu-Kuo; the offender is held in custody for up to three months while this takes place. If this higher judgment is accepted, then a date for punishment is announced. This is usually set in early spring, so that the blood of the offender can enrich the earth before the planting season starts. Otherwise, the case is promoted up to the next higher Ssu-Kuo and the process repeats once again.

Corporal punishments are usually carried out before the court. The Ssu-Kuo selects a stalk from the canister of punishment that sits next to his bench and throws it to the ground in the courtyard. The secretary then picks it up and reads aloud the sentence to be imposed. This might be a number of slaps to the face, strokes from the cane, or months or years of imprisonment.

Throughout the judicial proceedings, the magistrate can punish anyone who speaks out of turn, shows disrespect for the court, disrupts the trial, or lies when giving testimony. If an advocate commits these offenses, then his employer suffers any punishment imposed. The usual penalty is either a series of face-slaps or a caning. If the accused or the plaintiff should die as a result of this punishment, however, the Ssu-Kuo faces demotion, the end of his career, or even death, depending on the circumstances.

Typically, once a case is received and recorded by the court, the Ssu-Kuo has fifteen days to decide it. This is extended to thirty days if the accused is not immediately available. If the case remains open for longer than that, it is sent to the next highest-ranking Ssu-Kuo to determine the reason for the delay. Magistrates are responsible for seeing that justice is done in a timely fashion; every case that remains open past the specified time counts against the Ssu-Kuo that presided over it.

What are crimes?

There is no statute of limitations for any crimes — an offender can be tried for a crime committed twenty or more years ago.

Crime	*Description*	*Punishment*	*Standard Reparation*
Agitation	The stirring up of public interest in a matter of controversy, such as a political or social issue.	Wu	50 bù-qián per number of people affected; charges may include Treason, as well
Arson	Setting fire to a building or another's property.	Wu	400 bù-qián per rank of victim's social status
Assault	The act or an instance of unlawfully threatening or attempting to injure another	Wen	200 bù-qián per victim's social status; double if the victim fell Unconscious. If the victim was maimed, the family may sue for lost wages over the victim's lifetime.
Corruption	Inducing a violation of duty using bribery.	Wen	300 bù-qián per rank of offender's social status
Enslavement	Reducing others to slavery without due process of law.	Wu	50 bù-qián per number of people affected
Ensorcellment	Use of magic or supernatural power on another person without their consent.	Wu	100 bù-qián per number of people affected; charges may include Assault or Negligence, as well.
Kidnapping	The unlawful act of capturing and carrying away a person against their will and holding them in false imprisonment.	Wu	300 bù-qián per rank of victim's social status
Murder	The unlawful killing of one person by another, especially with premeditated malice.	Wu	750 bù-qián per rank of victim's social status
Negligence	Failure to exercise the degree of care considered reasonable under the circumstances.	Wu	300 bù-qián per rank of victim's social status
Robbery	The act or an instance of unlawfully taking the property of another by the use of violence or intimidation.	Wu	500 bù-qián for first offense; 1,000 bù-qián or more for a *Scofflaw* or appropriate *Bad Reputation.*
Theft	The act or an instance of stealing; larceny.	Wen	300 bù-qián for first offense; 600 bù-qián or more for a *Scofflaw* or appropriate *Bad Reputation.*
Treason	Violation of allegiance toward one's country or sovereign, or of betraying the state into the hands of a foreign power	Wu	1,000 bù-qián per rank of offender's social status
Vandalism	Willful or malicious destruction of public or private property.	Wu	600 bù-qián per rank of victim's social status

Rewards & Reparations

The state can confiscate property belonging to anyone convicted of a crime. Generally, most of what the offender owns is taken—often three-quarters or more of his total property. This is then used to pay reparations to victims and rewards to anyone who assisted in his capture. The confiscated property is generally split with 70% for the victims and 30% to anyone entitled to a reward, respectively.

Punishment

Punishments are listed in increasing degree of severity. Different magistrates mete out different kinds of punishment.

Wen Method

- Caning (in multiple of 100s)
- Whipping (in multiple of 50s)
- Chain Gang (sentences in multiples of 5 years)
- Banishment (lifetime—sent to the border of adjacent state, never to return; for those of peripheral States, sent out to live among barbarians)
- Clean, quick death

Wu Method

- Tattooing — The nature of crime (i.e. the Rapist, the Arsonist, the Robber, the Agitator) is tattooed onto the offender's forehead, cheek, then moving downward to other parts of the body.
- De-clawing
- Loss of a limb
- Loss of reproductive organ
- Agonizing Death — By multiples of 12 to a thousand cuts, boiling, beheading, head crushing, being pulled apart, etc.

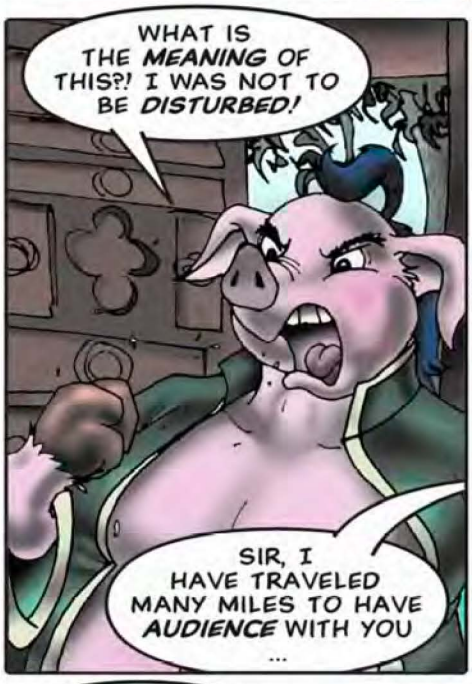
Pardons

There are certain situations that lead to general pardons for criminals. If a natural disaster occurs, those serving on chain gangs have their sentences reduced by five years, while those sentenced to death have their sentence commuted to thirty years of hard labor. The same is done upon the accession of a new King (in Zhou province) or duke (in the rest of the kingdom). In time of war, all chain-gang prisoners are drafted into the vanguards, and all prisoners sentenced to death are drafted into the suicide squad.

FEH! EVERYONE KNOWS THOSE GAMES ARE RIGGED.
AND I'M TELLING YOU, I'VE GOT A SYSTEM -- BET ON 6 AND 11 EVERY TIME...
YOU THERE! STOP!
THE BOSS SAID HE DOESN'T WANT ANY VISITORS.
I HAVE WALKED MANY MILES TO SEE THIS MAN. IF YOU WOULD TELL YOUR MASTER THAT I HUMBLY REQUEST --
YOU MAY REQUEST NOTHING. BE OFF WITH YOU, WHILE YOU CAN STILL WALK.
PLEASE, GENTLEMEN... I HAVE COME HERE IN THE SPIRIT OF PEACE...
WELL, THEN YOU'VE MADE A MISTAKE...
YOU SEE, WE ARE NOT PEACEABLE MEN. Heh heh heh...
FWIPT!
JUST SO...

IT IS AGREED!
BY MY POWER AS THE MAGISTRATE, I WILL VERIFY YOUR DEED TO THE VALLEY...
ONCE I HAVE RECEIVED YOUR GENEROUS "GIFT".
HAH HAH HAH! YES, OF COURSE...
AND ONCE I HAVE THE DEED, YOU GREEDY BLOATED SACK, I WILL REWARD MYSELF BY HAVING YOU REMOVED FROM THIS WORLD!

CRASH


WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS?! I WAS NOT TO BE DISTURBED!
SIR, I HAVE TRAVELED MANY MILES TO HAVE AUDIENCE WITH YOU ...

TH-THAT... THAT VOICE!
I-I- IT COULD ONLY BE ONE MAN...
YOU KNOW THIS LOUT? CURIOUS...
I AM ALSO CURIOUS ...

HOW TO HOST A GAME

The role of Game Host is a demanding one. The Players each have only one Character to look after — you, as the Host, have to assume the roles of all the Non-Player Characters, from the lowliest peasant to the Emperor himself. You have to make all those rulings and use your discretion. You're the constant center of attention. It can be quite taxing.

Always keep in mind that *Jadeclaw* is a role-playing game. As with all games, the objective is to have fun. Some folks are natural Game Hosts and can assume the role easily. Others find that they make much better Players. Many folks need to spend time adjusting to the role. If you are new to being a Game Host, we recommend that you read through this chapter carefully, often before and after every adventure, until you feel more comfortable Hosting the Game.

Your role as a non-player: A Guide to Players

As Game Host, it's your responsibility to know how your Players want to play. Some Players are easier to understand than others. Do you recognize any of the following types of players in your party?

The Newbie: New to role-playing. May have trouble with all the math involved; veteran role-players may not have the patience to teach them the ropes. Newbies are usually quiet and have to be coaxed to participate. Remember that everyone starts as a Newbie — think back to when you first started this game, and help them learn the ropes.

The Nonpareil: This Player has to play a Character who has no equal; they often start as Prodigies in something like Sword, or with a Master Spell List. Try to set up your adventures so the Nonpareil has a chance to show off their incredible skill at least once — and never penalize the Nonpareil for building a powerful character by changing the rules or giving the NPCs an unfair advantage. Smart villains will have to work around the Nonpareil.

The Collector: This Player wants to accumulate better weapons, armor, and money. Their PCs almost always have the Flaw of "Greedy" or even the Passion of Desire. In *Jadeclaw*, money isn't everything — reward the Collector with letters from nobles or other important persons, which may provide hooks for later adventures. Beware of Collectors who pick the pockets of other PCs — this kind of role-play can be amusing for a bit, but it can cause bad feelings later on.

Sample Non-Player Characters

Here are some sample characters you can use in your game. Simply assign Traits, Gifts, and Flaws as you see fit.

Miao Binren (Female Bear Nun)
An ardent worker in the nunnery, very few know the details of her divorce from her wealthy husband.

Wu Manrui (Male Boar Doctor)
A believer in holistic medicine, he claims that many of the ailments he treats could have been avoided if the patient had a proper diet.

Jinchou the Wind (Male Boar Lobbyist)
Able to talk for hours without getting tired, he has earned a grudging respect from others in the bureaucracy.

Foud al-Caizhu
(Male Camel Money-Lender)
When asked why his loans charged such unreasonable rates, he replied that he was not a reasonable man.

Ao Aiman (Male Chicken Lawyer)
A self-educated peasant, he hates to see people exploited because of their ignorance of the law.

The Formalist: This person insists that everything be done by the book. They can often quote page numbers off the top of their heads. Many Formalists are "Rules Lawyers," who view the game as an us-vs.-them contest between the Player and the Host; they quote only the rules that help their case and omit others. The purpose of game rules is to be fair and consistent, not to be used as fuel for arguments. At their core, Formalists want the game to make sense; if your game doesn't work they way they had understood it would go, they will become frustrated. Talk to your Players and ask them what they want out of your game. And use the Formalist as your ally — instead of looking up a rule, ask them what page it's on.

The Absentee: If you're running a campaign game, it will be inevitable that someone may miss a session or two. Some Players, however, only show up occasionally. This may be unavoidable: school, work, and other things can get in the way; you may want to revise your gaming schedule. Other times, an Absentee is simply losing interest in the game. When you talk to your Players, ask the Absentee what might liven up the game.

The Languisher: Some Players are present for the game but don't contribute much to what's going on, often letting others make decisions for them. Read the Languisher's Character Sheet; ask the Player what would motivate them to take a greater role in the game.

The Maniac: With Flaws like "Capricious," "Overconfident," or "Showoff," the Maniac's PC often gets into trouble, seemingly at random, making it difficult for you as Game Host to craft a compelling plot for the game. Sometimes the Maniac is someone who wants attention, who revels in chaos for its own sake and has little interest in "serious" role-playing. If you have other Players who are, you will have to channel the Maniac's energy into the campaign instead of simply letting him or her derail your plots. Do not let the Maniac abuse the "party mentality" — simply because the Maniac has a PC, the other Players should not feel obligated beyond the call of duty to rescue them after something particularly abusive. Party loyalty is a two-way street.

The Butcher: Some Players always go for the violent solution. If an NPC bothers their character, they kill the NPC. When the town watch shows up to arrest the PC, they attack again. The Butcher will cause problems in games where there is more to do than fight. As Game Host, you can't let the Butcher get away with unrestrained violence — realistically, people wouldn't stand for it. As with the Maniac, the Butcher shouldn't do as they please and demand that the other PCs go along with them. Talk to the Butcher away from the gaming table, and explain to them that they'll have to take a greater interest in the game other than wanton slaughter.

The Controller: This kind of Player often dominates the plot of the adventure. They will be the "party caller," giving out orders about what to do in almost every situation. The Controller isn't necessarily bad — a Party of PCs will get more done if they have some organization. Just make sure the other players are getting "screen time" to do the kinds of things they want to do, as well.

The Author: This Player has crafted a long and involved storyline for their Character, from their humble beginnings to the present day. What makes the Author stand out is the volume of detail, which is far beyond what the other Players are writing. Authors can be great fun, because they bring lots of enthusiasm to the game. They can also be annoying, because they have very definite ideas of how they want the game played, which may not be consistent with the other Players'. Channel the Author's efforts into the game setting, and be sure to mine their writings for seeds for adventures that can involve all the Players.

Your role as supporting cast: The Non-Player Characters

As Game Host, you have to assume the role of everyone who's not a Player-Character, from the humblest peasant to maybe even the Jade Emperor himself. That's quite a few people to keep track of! Here are some guidelines on how to manage such a large cast.

Shortcuts to NPC design

Your Players are likely to encounter a lot of folks. They're especially likely to seek them out either to obtain goods & services from them, or perhaps to even hire them. Here are some tips to keep the managing of Non-Player Characters to a tolerable level:

When making up an NPC on the spot, take notes. If you're inconsistent, people will know later.

Keep a list of names handy. You could use the list in this book, or a copy on scratch paper. When you need a name for a random NPC, cross the name off and write it down in your notes.

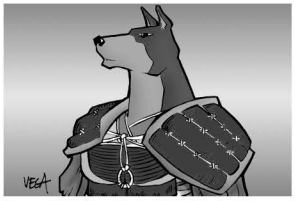
Use the Sample Characters. It's a lot easier to remember that Ao Xing is a "Rat Beggar Mook" than it is to write up a whole character sheet from him. It will make note-taking a lot easier.

Use the same dice for everything. If you look at the Sample Character of "Mook," you'll note that they have d6s in almost everything they do. You'll also see that the Minion has a d8 in almost everything they do, too. This makes it a *lot* easier to remember what dice the NPC needs to roll to do something. Major NPCs should warrant enough detail to deviate from this norm, but lots of little dice should be appropriate for shortcut characters.

Use Group Initiative. Don't roll Initiative for every NPC. If a group of NPCs all have the same Speed, Mind, and Tactics, you can take a shortcut known as "Group Initiative" — roll once for everybody, and use the same number for all the grunts.

Borrow liberally from other sources. You and your Players probably are familiar with the archetypical characters of a genre, or at least the same movies and television. When making up personalities for these "walk-on" NPCs, it's okay to borrow a character idea from someone. Be warned, though, that you should avoid characters that are out-of-genre — *Jadeclaw* characters should be appropriate to the setting, or you'll lose the role-playing mood and part of the enjoyment of the game.

Ran Kangxin
(Female Crane Fisherwoman)
Her parents are anxious that her bubbly personality and talkative nature will keep her from taking a proper husband.



Sanxiao the Humorless
(Male Dog Knight)
Duty to the law, duty to one's betters, and duty to one's honor - to him, these three things matter more than anything else.

Nanwu (Female Dog Taoist Wizard)
Specializing in spells of the Wood Nature, she makes a living selling ginseng root.

Tai Shida (Male Dragon Functionary)
A man of ambition, he hopes to be promoted to a real position of power - surely far away from this lousy prefecture.

NPC Motivations

A good way to make your Non-Player Characters more believable to the players is to keep a list of the character's *Motivations*. During play, if you find yourself wondering what a villain would do next, you can refer to this list.

A major character should have at least three Motivations. For all NPCs but the most suicidal ones, we recommend you put "Survive" at the top of that list, as a reminder to yourself that most folks would rather surrender than throw their lives away.

> **Example 1:** The Game Host decides that Zhing Zhu is a man of ambition, who plans to rise to power and crush anyone foolish enough to stand in his way. However, Zhing Zhu is also a landed knight and has certain responsibilities. A good list of Motivations for Zhing Zhu would be: "(1) Survive; (2) Gain wealth and power; (3) Attend to the duties of his noble office."
>
> **Example 2:** Kunyu is a friendly, outgoing sort. She enjoys working with the Player-Characters and values their companionships and trust ... but she also is a private person with a secret: she has refused an arranged marriage and is a fugitive from her own family. If a situation came down to a choice of betraying her friends or going home to a loveless marriage, Kunyu would (reluctantly) choose to betray her friends. The Game Host lists Kunyu's Motivations as "(1) Survive; (2) Pursue her own love and avoid her arranged marriage; (3) Help her friends and companions."
>
> **Example 3:** Youjing Shenbing has studied over-long at the arts of wizardry, and her quest for knowledge is no longer tempered by reason. She now seeks to learn magic of greater and greater power, heedless of the risks involved; her confidants believe that she has become a danger to herself and others. The Game Host lists Shenbing's Motivations as "(1) Become more powerful in the arts of magic; (2) Use people like tools and discard or destroy them when they become useless; (3) If she can't destroy her foes, then bargain with them." Shenbing will probably come to a tragic end as she will ignore the risk of death to accomplish her goals.

When you write your adventures, remember that things usually happen because people decide they want them to happen. People lie, cheat, steal, hold grudges, and fall in love. As Game Host, your game should be like a story, where the plot points are decided by the goals of the Characters.

Definitely do *not* have NPCs who throw their lives away by attacking the PCs without a clear goal in mind for doing so. Major NPCs may send minions to delay the PCs from their goals or to finish them off for good. They should rarely put themselves at risk. Force the PCs to track the major villains down to force them into direct confrontations.

Assume that NPCs could get away with their plans ... if it weren't for those meddling PCs

A good plot line is a three-step one: (1) NPC hatches complicated plot; (2) plot crosses the PCs' path, who then must interfere; (3) major NPCs draw PCs into conflict. This plot is usually a good one for gaming, because it gets the PCs involved of their own free will. Be prepared for what happens if

Quigao Quishuang
(Female Dragon Weather-Wizard)
Recently granted a license to control the weather, she has become anxious that she might not be able to live up to her responsibilities.

Samdarshi
(Male Elephant Tomb Defender)
To him, guarding tombs is easy money - after all, he is protected from harm by his frequent devotions to over a thousand gods.

Feiying the Vixen
(Female Fox Crime Boss)
Known as the "Ancestress" to many people, her husband perished under mysterious circumstances and she has built his business contacts into a flourishing underground enterprise.

Zhenhui the Generous
(Male Ram Dilettante)
Known for his lavish sponsorship of festivals, his riches wane year by year because of his poor management of his household.

the PCs *don't* interfere — have whatever the NPCs have in mind be antithetical to what the PCs like, perhaps even dynamic enough to alter the campaign.

Plot lines like this one are especially good because the NPCs have realizable, realistic goals ... which doesn't necessarily mean just "killing the PCs." Your major NPCs will come into conflict with the PCs because of their exclusive goals ... and conflict between Characters is what role-playing is all about. After many games, your campaign's plot will flow naturally because of how the many Characters interact with one another.

We designed the *Jadeclaw* game to encourage Players to build characters who would have complex social conflicts. PCs can have Flaws involving their personal honor, their social commitments, their senses of justice, and their obligations to the law. It's harder for the amoral, uncaring characters to get involved in proactive plots.

Your role as story-teller: Challenging the Players

As the Game Host, it's your role to preside over the adventures and keep things interesting. In other words, the Player Characters have to feel *challenged* by the obstacles they must overcome.

Know the Theme of Your Game

Every role-playing game has a *theme,* a recurrent idea or motif that sets the tone. In some games, the theme is to improve one's character by defeating stronger villains and garnering treasure. In another, the theme might be intrigue and politics. In still another, the theme could be fighting an eternal struggle against almost insurmountable odds.

In *Jadeclaw,* the PCs will represent a "middle class." They have esoteric skills and abilities above the common unskilled laborers, and they have lots of expensive equipment. They're certainly not "lower class." However, their adventurous lifestyle makes it hard to hold and to administrate land, and they're not likely to be heirs to any thrones, nor to be blooded, so they're not "upper class" either.

The political situation in Zhongguo involves several Great Houses with ambitious lords and ladies who constantly strive for advantage against one another. Often, nobles will have to employ the PCs for clandestine operations for which their own people are unuseable for one reason or another. In addition, criminal gangs, merchant associations, and the rare ambitious wizard can be rich people with political motivations but no franchise to take land, so they can't act too brazenly or they'll annoy the Great Houses. Adventure scenarios can exploit these aspects to create scenarios of uncertainty and conflict.

Know What Makes for a Good Story

In the end, the Player Characters are the stars of the game. As Game Host, your role is to make the Players feel challenged to solve the puzzles and obstacles in the course of the game, but they shouldn't feel overwhelmed by them. Role-playing is like co-operative story-telling: the Game Host and the Players are together crafting a story, with the Player Characters as the heroes of the action. Like any interesting story, the drama and excitement of the tale is drawn from the uncertainty of what's going to happen next, from the conflict between the characters against their environment and against each other. Unless your story is an especially tragic one, the Player Characters should overcome the odds and win in the end.

However, unlike a typical story, *Jadeclaw* is also a game, played for amusement and entertainment. Some of the things that work in story-telling won't work in a role-playing game. When crafting your adventures, keep the following things in mind.

Use the conventions of the genre

Jadeclaw is a fantasy game sent in a kingdom presided over by beings of both supernatural power and of mundane influence. There are relics and ruins of many wars and forgotten ages. Material wealth is important, but not as important as social status and family bonds. People pledge to serve other people or their religion, rarely abstract causes or ideals. Cruelty is rampant; many live in deplorable conditions and can see no escape from their lot in life. Might makes right — the strong abuse the weak. Dozens of races mingle together, and their differences often dictate the roles they will have in society.

Keep it personal

Jadeclaw's setting is about a struggle between people of ambition, who will often do anything to achieve their goals, sacrificing their social roles, their positions, even their friends and family, sometimes even their own lives. Your adventures should be written in terms of what characters would do, rather than as a tightly-scripted plot – and because people are unpredictable, anything could happen. Make sure all Players gets some time to role-play their Characters.

Know your audience

There's no point in planning for action-adventure if your Players would prefer puzzle-solving and quiet negotiations. Role-playing games are much like improvisational theater — a good actor knows when to play to the crowd. Feel free to use "inside jokes" or other kinds of banter, but know when to move from a light-hearted, humorous mood to a serious one.

Know yourself

What is it that *you* like to have in your role-playing games? The more interested you are in a storyline, the better it will be realized for you and your Players. Often you may find an adventure written by someone else isn't exactly what you're looking for but has elements you like — feel free to make changes that make the story more personal to you. Think of the kinds of stories you want to play.

Control the environment

Group everyone around one gaming table. Eliminate distractions such as television. If you think it will help, put some music on the stereo and keep the volume low. (Movie soundtracks and acoustic music work best for this). Prepare miniatures and maps in advance.

Know the Common Pitfalls

Role-Playing Games lend themselves to very divergent styles of play, but there are some elements that often diminish the enjoyment of the game.

Avoid "Guided Tours"

Some adventures are scenic tours where the plot line centers on the PCs traveling through some exotic locale where they meet the locals and tour the countryside, but there's little to do or to interact with. For example, an adventure where the PCs go to the Small Town, pick up the Sacred Object, and deliver it to the Other Spot, while meeting lots of people on the way but never really getting into any dramatic conflict. Sometimes this adventure adds a "Native Guide" who has all the necessary skills and preparation for the PCs to get through the place, making it a no-brainer.

Make sure that, if you write up some exotic locale or colorful people, that there's some sort of conflict with them, something that involves the PCs, either to get their assistance or to interact with them. Perhaps the Native Guide gets killed or captured. Perhaps he's corrupt or evil or otherwise has motivations that go against the PCs. Perhaps he isn't as competent as he thinks he is. Maybe the area has changed, such as new bandits have moved in or some horrible monster is present. Toss the Players a curve.

Watch out for "Cooler-Than-You" Syndrome

There's a strong temptation to write up NPCs that are really "cool." They have large legions of unquestionably loyal followers. They command vast wealth. They are unrivaled spell-casters. They are unequalled sword-masters. And, worst of all, they're incredibly necessary to the adventure plot, *on the PC's side*. One sometimes wonders why, if they are this qualified, they even bother to hang out with the Player Characters.

Don't let your major NPCs over-shadow the PCs. Let the PCs keep guessing as to their true power level. The *Jadeclaw* system is designed to allow for levels of specialization … so have your NPCs specialized in a very narrow niche (with Skills like "Local Knowledge" and "Lore"), which the PCs can't match since they're such generalists. Don't write adventures that make the intervention of cool NPCs mandatory, especially if those NPCs might get into combat. Plan for different endings.

The "Mandatory Skill Roll" Bug

Xing Weichan
(Male Horse Minister of Works)
His only solace from a job that involves incompetent engineers, greedy workers, and insufficient funds is his imported tea.

Bairen Worthy-of-Heaven
(Female Horse Sword Dancer)
Although she is welcome to entertain in any court, she has become frustrated because she is unable to find a dancing partner of comparable skill.

Shenmi (Male Qiling
Merchant of Imported Goods)
People are unsure which is more mysterious - him, or the items he imports.

Tai Ji-jian (Male Leopard Sword-Saint)
After an embarrassing lack in judgment, he is on a pilgrimage to find a copy of the lost "Laughing Sutra" as atonement to his liege lord.

Wuming the Eponymous
(Female Lynx Fah Shih)
Having forsaken adventuring for the comparative solace of teaching others, she still has a fondness for solving puzzles.

Bailian Chenggang
(Male Monkey Errant-Knight)
In a world where the strong prey on the weak, how can a strong warrior such as himself stay at home when he could bring justice to those in need?

Zhishang of the Mountain
(Female Ox Dào Shih)
She is well aware that there are many who would pay her dear prices in return for her command of the supernatural.

Minister Manchuang, Second-Grade
(Male Ox Diplomat)
Under his mask of deferential politeness, his mind is constantly scheming for ways to take advantage of the foreign devils.

Don't confuse dice rolling with conflict management. Don't have adventures that will come to an absolute, grinding halt if the PCs miss a skill roll. Adventures of this type include ones where the PCs must make a Research roll at the library, or they must make that roll to find the secret door, or they must know enough about "Lore: Metallurgy" to divine the location the scepter came from, etc.

The major problem with this sort of adventure is not that the PCs might fail those rolls — it's that, if the PCs figure out it's this kind of adventure, then they may realize they don't really need to think their way through it. Either their die rolls will decide the plot, or some specialty NPC will show up and lead them by the nose to the next part.

A good adventure will have "opportunity costs" and risks that keep the PCs on their toes. One good way around this bug is to have a "simple" solution that requires specialty skills (whose rolls can fail), and a "complex" solution that requires the PCs to jump through a few hoops but is otherwise solveable. This will encourage the PCs to try to think of ways around that complex, difficult way — and encouraging the PCs to come up with creative solutions to their dilemmas is what good role-playing is about.

When things happen: *Events*

In a story, the *plot* is the string of events that are going on. In an adventure, the plot strings together the *events* that happen to the Player Characters.

Player Events

A *player event* happens because of something the PCs want to do. They want to meet someone, or buy some equipment, or visit the temple, or perform for the street crowd. A player event can also happen because a Player Botched some important roll and made something they don't like happen, such as being arrested by guards or ensorcelled by a surly wizard.

Player events are usually described in the text as suggestions for what players may want to do, usually grouped by Career. ("Miscreants might want to do this; Warriors might want to do that; etc.")

Player events are good because they represent the way your Players are actively involved in the story-line of the game.

If over-used, you may find that your adventure has lost focus, as the Players have run off in some other direction that's totally unlike what you were expecting! If the Players are enjoying their own "new" plot-line, then you should probably go with what *they* want to do rather than follow some tightly-scripted adventure. If you're not ready to improvise, you may have to ask for a "time-out" from the game to collect your thoughts, or you might use a fiat event to get things on track.

If the Players are bored or frustrated with lack of clear direction, you may have to get them back on track. A good fiat event (see below) of an NPC who shows up to offer directions or to ask assistance is one method, but you should feel free to think of other ways, especially ones that capitalize on your Player-Character's Gifts, Flaws, Races, and Careers.

Another way to deal with this kind of meandering is to advance the goals of the major Non-Player Characters with a non-player event (see below). If the NPCs' goals are not in line with what the PCs like, then, in the spirit of role-playing, the Players are likely to turn themselves around and to get back to the matter at hand.

Non-Player Events

The counterpoint to player events, *non-player events* happen because an NPC does something to make them happen. Perhaps a gangster orders her henchmen to evict an irksome PC who has been thwarting her criminal operations. Or a scholar might decide to capture a PC's niece to get them to disclose the secrets of the Divine Way of Earth. Or a magistrate might raise the taxes in the province to such a degree that the PCs feel moved to petition him to change his mind.

Non-player events are good because they keep the game personal rather than abstract. If twelve bandits attack for some random reason, then the world seems arbitrary and the Players will lose interest in trying to make sense of why things happen. If twelve bandits attack the PCs because Ugly Yan ordered them to, then the plot is more personal — there's a face to their antagonists.

If over-used, the Players may feel that they're not the stars of the story anymore, and that the NPCs are. As Game Host, you should keep the Players feeling involved in the larger-than-life happenings of the game.

Scenic Events

Much role-playing is devoted to going from one place to another. Mysteries may be concealed in far-off places. People may be living in large mansions, modest temples, or secret hideaways. Most of the time, Players will be having *scenic events* — things will happen because they went to the place where it was going to happen.

Most combat encounters will be scenic — they will include maps with layouts of where the PCs will enter, where the NPC combatants are, and other features of interest.

Scenic events are usually described in the text with such phrases as "when the PCs arrive…" Scenic events may vary slightly, especially between the times of day and night.

Scenic events are good because you can prepare for them — you can bring lots of nice maps, and you'll have a good idea of the precise dimensions and layout that combat situations require.

If over-used, scenic events can be boring. The Players, sensing there's an "inevitable" encounter coming up, may lose interest in modifying the environment or may become bored with how linear the storyline has become.

A good way to use scenic encounters is to encourage the Players to "case a place" beforehand, or to find out more information about a place before they go there, using Gossip Tests (and perhaps Bribery Tests). Some Player-Characters may have excellent skills for infiltration, such as Climbing, Disguise and Stealth, and this could be an opportunity to use them.

Fiat Events

From the word "fiat" meaning "an arbitrary decree," a *fiat event* simply happens because you decide it does. Many adventures open with a fiat event to get the Player-Characters involved: they meet an old woman on the street; the magistrate issues a decree; someone's uncle dies and there's a funeral, etc. Since the Game Host is in charge of all things that the Player-Characters aren't, fiat events include worldly events such as rainstorms, floods, meteor strikes, etc. (Even though, in the world of *Jadeclaw*, weather is administrated by the Celestial Bureaucracy, this doesn't mean that mistakes don't happen!)

Fiat events are good when you need to start a new adventure, or you want to reinforce a sense of mystery and fate during the adventure.

Be careful with fiat events, as they can be easily over-used. If the Players feel that things happen mostly because the Game Host wants it to happen, and that their own ability to effect the game is little or none, they'll become frustrated instead of having fun.

Conflict and Combat

In a story, the *conflict* is when something happens that's contrary to the heroes' goals and they have to find some way to resolve it. The way the conflict is dealt with is what makes for the drama and the action.

In the context of a role-playing game, *combat* is what happens when people try to hurt each other. Since being hurt is contrary to most character's goals, combat is a kind of conflict.

Combat is a common occurrence in most role-playing games. As games, they are played for entertainment, and it can be fun to defeat the bad guys, rescue the hostages, and save the people from evil. As Game Host, you need to make sure that you strike a balance between too few and too many fights.

If you have too few fights, the Players may become frustrated with the lack of action. A lack of combat is usually easy to cure — Zhongguo is rife with robbers, warlords, and other hostile people who could pop up out of nowhere. It's best that any combat encounters you *do* have involve the story-line you're pursuing, though. Perhaps a wealthy NPC has hired some thugs to rough the PCs up and convince them to leave town. Or maybe the random bandit attacks are a symptom of the corrupt magistrate's inability to protect the people.

If you have too many fights, the Players may feel the game has become a tedious war-game. Remember that combat is just one of the many ways that Players can be challenged. NPCs can try to bribe them, or threaten them, or plead with them, or beg them with favors, or pay them for missions, or even fall in love with them. As Game Host, your major role is to provide *conflict*, so think of ways that you can have the PCs at cross-purposes with NPCs that isn't just killing.

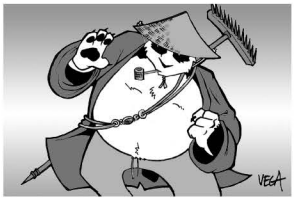
Silent Bochou (Female Rabbit Thief)
Sometimes, the real thrill is not in the theft itself, but in thwarting those who would seek to shut her out.

Xue Baizhe (Ram Metal-smith)
In these interesting times, there is no shortage of work for the maker of arms and armor.

Lotus Shadow
(Female Rat Vagrant Warrior)
Within her breast is a fire that gives her the strength to combat evil wherever it may be.

Angry Xiao (Male Rooster Robber)
Some days he would rather his victims just hand over their money; other days he is spoiling for a fight.

Grandmother Zhi
(Female Sheep Storyteller)
Bent double with age, she still wanders the long roads, telling grand tales to all who would be entertained.



Ni Bohao (Male Panda Vagrant Warrior)
He is always eager to test his skills against another warrior, but he is also never without honor.

Er Dansi (Female Phoenix Minister of Celestial Affairs)
Descended from a proud bloodline, she has known nothing but the civility of court, and worldly affairs are somewhat beyond her ken.

Ci Zhi (Male Porcupine Lancer)
People are nervous to travel with him, as he appears incapable of feeling fear … or even common sense.

Jian Tuzi (Male Rabbit Tax Collector)
Too many years of traveling in armed company collecting funds from grumbling commoners has given him a nervous tic.

Honest Lushi (Male Yak Lawyer)
Legal proceedings are intimidating to peasant and noble alike - part of his strategy is to make sure his client remains calm and poised.

Three basic interactions: *fight, flight, or parley*

When PCs and NPCs meet and have conflicting goals, the ways they may interact with one another is limited only by your and your Players' imaginations. As the Game Host, it's your role to make sure the story stays on track — you may find yourself overwhelmed at times by all the possibilities of what might happen.

Remember to keep the motivations of the NPCs in mind. When a PC asks you a question, such as "Will he take a bribe?" or "I draw my sword and run screaming at her — what does she do?" take a look at your NPC's Motivations. Most of the time, that short list can tell you a character's response to something at a glance. As Game Host, you are role-playing the rest of the world — what are the NPCs Flaws? Their station in society? Do they have relatives they care about? Are they selfish? Cowardly? Altruistic? Brave?

PCs, being controlled by Players, will be less predictable. When you reach a tension point in your game, there are usually three given ways your party of PCs will react:

- *Fight* — a common reaction. See below.
- *Flight* — the Player-Characters may choose to flee the scene. You can use a Chase Test (p. 106) or you can improvise.
- *Parley* — clever Players will try to negotiate with hostile NPCs. You can use Influence Tests (p. 109) or you can make value judgments on how your Players perform their roles.

How to Host a Fight

Okay — so you're the Game Host, and it's your role to run the twelve NPCs of the Beaten-Dog gang as they attempt to teach our Player-Characters a lesson in who really controls the village of Sung. How do you do it? Here are some suggestions on running combat encounters.

Use the same numbers for the rank-and-file. Just like the suggestions in "Shortcuts to NPC Design" above, by giving your NPCs the same dice for nearly everything, it becomes a lot easier to control them. If you look at the "Sample Opponents," you'll see that the Mooks roll 2d6 for nearly everything, and the Minions roll 2d8 for nearly everything.

In any group of three or more, have a leader. The leader can be as simple as someone who has a Leadership Die of d8 … but as long as he's there, the NPCs all get an advantage to their Initiative (p. 135). This one NPC makes the fight seem more realistic, and it adds a tactical dimension to the fight, as the PCs scheme for a way to neutralize him.

Use miniatures, counters, and a map. You'll see reference to using miniatures throughout the combat rules. Miniatures can be as complex as finely-sculpted figures of pewter, or as simple as markers on paper. A "tactical map" helps the Players visualize what's going on, even if it's nothing more than a hasty scribble on notebook paper.

You can use counters to better keep track of the Wounds of mobs of NPCs. Use a *black* counter for one Wound, and a *white* counter for 3 Wounds. (Notice that any figure with one white counter is at risk of Unconsciousness, and that any figure with two white counters is at risk of Death.)

Use tactics. Have archers who hang back and shoot at a distance while melee fighters close in. Have Wizards who cast defensive spells on their minions, or who restore their Wounds during the fight. Use the "home turf advantage" that Local Knowledge Skill gives combatants, with Ambush Tests (p. 104) and the like. Even the weakest fighters can become more formidable if they choose the battleground right. Good use of battle tactics make the combat encounters more diverse and they make the setting more "real" to the Players.

Play to lose. It's always better to under-estimate the Player-Character's fighting ability than it is to over-estimate it. In the course of an adventure, you may have the opportunity for two fights or more. You might want the first fight to be one Mook for every PC. If they PCs breeze through the combat, then have more Mooks in the next fight, or upgrade them to Minions. If the PCs have a tough time of things, then you might want to scale the next fight down a bit. Remember that, as Game Host, your role is to challenge the Players, not kill their characters impartially. Combat is but one kind of conflict and it should be advancing the storyline, so the Player-Characters should usually win.

Your role as moderator:
Debriefing

After any game session is over, and after you've awarded Experience, you should spend a few minutes talking to your Players. Ask them what they enjoyed about the game session. What did they like? What didn't they like? What sort of plot threads would they like to follow next session? Do they have any questions about some rulings you made, or about how the rules work?

A few minutes spent after the game is over shows your Players that you're concerned with how they enjoyed the game. It will also give you some insight into how you should host the next session.

Your role as game designer:
Making Changes

Part of the fun of a role-playing game is experiencing things differently. There is a visceral thrill to pretending to be someone else, fighting the good fight and scheming the grand games. This rulebook is based on many assumptions about what makes something fun: "if this works like this, then that should work like that."

As Game Host, you may decide you want something to be different. Maybe you'd like to set your campaign someplace other than Zhongguo, or perhaps you'd like to have a game with no supernatural elements at all. You are encouraged to experiment with the setting and the rules of *Jadeclaw*. Here are some points to keep in mind as you move from the role of Game Host to Game Designer.

New Careers and Races

Adding new Careers is really easy: simply pick four Skills that the Career should be included with. Creating a new Race is a bit trickier, as there are points Costs involved. The Gifts and Flaws (p. 47-61) each have point Costs associated with them; total those points up and include them as Racial Cost. For Racial Skills, consider the qualities associated with the Race. Are they solitary hunters, which would imply Stealth? Do they travel in herds or packs, for which Tactics is more appropriate? What sort of habitat would they prefer: Forest, Mountains, or Plains? As a guideline, most Races should have three or four Racial Skills and one or two Racial Sense Tests, for a total of five.

> **Example:** You decide to add a Race of Bovines to your game. Bovines are known for their physical prowess both in terms of strength and robustness, and some have very large horns. They are vegetarians, travel in herds, and are rumored to have an uncanny ability to predict the weather.
>
> As Game Host, you decide that Bulls and Cows should have the Racial Gifts of Horns (1 point), Robustness +1 (2 points), and Strength +2 (5 points), with no Racial Flaws. Their Racial Habitat is the Plains; their Racial Skills include Herbalism, Tactics, and Weather Sense. Their Racial Weapons are Horns. With a wide field of vision and large, sensitive noses, the Racial Sense Tests of Spot and Smell would be appropriate. The total Racial Cost to play a Bovine is 8 points.

New Flaws, Gifts, and Special Traits

Both the Player and the Game Host are encouraged to come up with new Flaws, especially Internal ones. Guidelines for making new Flaws are on p. 53.

A Gift should be something simple, such as a special ability or an advantage to overcome deleterious circumstances others would suffer from (such as Night Vision to reduce darkness, Sure-Footed to remove bad footing penalties, etc.) For things that might have a variable level of effect, consider making it a Special Trait. For example, Characters can have differing Levels of Magic Resistance or Toughness.

The same as a Flaw, the points Cost of a Gift should be proportional to how useful it is. A Gift that is rarely useful or is supplanted by other things (such as Claws, which are not as good as most weapons) should cost 1 or 2 points. Gifts that affect a great number of things (like Luck) or ones that give one unusual power or influence (such as Armor or Wealth) should cost 3 points or more.

Most Players will choose something that gives them a *rules-mechanic* advantage (which has a concise, empirical definition measured in good old numbers) over a *game-setting* advantage (which is subject to interpretation and may be of dubious value.) For example, suppose you make a Gift that allows one to have Extra Magic Points. You might be encouraging your Wizard PCs to increase their Magic Points (clearly an improvement) instead of their Wizard Traits (which would also make them

Kuang-Li the Dervish
(Female Siberian Tiger Mercenary)
Many who see her fight are half-convinced she is not wholly of this earth.

Beigong Sheying
(Female Snake Calligrapher)
Because of her skills, she is often forced to engage the supernatural - and she definitely does not like to do so alone.

Nie Manda (Female Swallow Explorer)
She is but one of an order of three hundred and thirty-three explorers all working on a survey to compose a complete map of Zhongguo.

Ugly Yan (Male Tortoise Gangster)
Those that fail to pay his "insurance" wind up beaten, sold into slavery . . . or worse.

Zhao Zhankai (Female Weasel Assassin)
With a quick blade and a keen eye, she has been known to deal a death-blow to a target in front of many others, but no one has ever seen her strike.

Mistress Bailu
(Female White Tiger Shen Qing)
The magicks of heaven demand not just a mind keen to the supernatural, but also a body without base impurities.

Baofeng Zhouyu (Male Wolf Barbarian)
He is constantly amused by how these soft folk of civilization spook so easily at the sight of a simple barbarian like himself.

more capable in knowledge skills and literacy — good hooks for future adventures.) Many games down the road, you may find that your Wizard PCs lack for skills but not for combat strength, and that you are having difficulty encouraging your Players to do things other than use brute force.

New Spells and Spell Lists

It is easy to add new Spell Lists to *Jadeclaw*. Most lists require an appropriate Career to start them; this guarantees that the Wizard has the minimum skills that are necessary to learn and improve their spell-casting abilities.

We recommend that you *add new lists* rather than add spells to existing lists. However, the requirements to learn a list can be as exotic as you like. It could be as simple as finding a rare book, or as complex as purging one's body of all personal want and desire. The harder you make it to learn a new spell, the more remarkable it will be to your Players, enhancing the sense of mystery in the game.

New Rules or Rules Changes

Remember that the purpose of game rules is to offer a common definition of the world for both Players and Game Host. If you change a rule, you're changing the way the world works.

For example, suppose you decide spell-casters should include their Will Trait for Casting Tests instead of the Mind Trait. Wizard characters would have more incentive to have a higher Will, which not only increases Magic Points but also is included with combat skills such as Resolve.

When making up new rules, consider the "minimaxer," the Player who will use the rule to its logical extreme. For example, suppose you decide that the Gift of Armor (p. 49) should be a Trait instead. What happens if someone puts a d12 there? Or a d12 & d4? Players have only the rules to use as a gauge to what they can and cannot do, so don't be surprised when they push the rules to the limit.

Use the rules of a role-playing game as tools for better story-telling and to endorse the behavior you want to see in your Players; if the rules are making things happen that you think are silly and inappropriate, change them.

Modifying Rolls

As Game Host, you have the authority to modify die rolls as appropriate to the game setting. No one set of RPG rules can encompass *all* of the situations that will come up during the game. You may be asked to make "spot rulings" on different situations.

Throwing out die rolls altogether

Die rolling should never be looked upon as a tedious exercise. If it's not really relevant whether there are red scarves for sale, you can just say they're for sale. If it's important to the plot that the town guard know about Honest Han, then you can just say they know.

As a general rule, if a task is neither dire nor contested, and the roller has *more or bigger dice* than what they're trying to do, then you can just rule that it works.

"Dire" is when failure could cause harm to someone, could use up expensive resources, or could cause trouble later on. For example, washing the laundry is probably not a big deal. Washing out the bloodstains out of your robe before you enter the temple is "dire." Cooking a meal is routine. Cooking up gunpowder is "dire."

"Contested" is when someone has an interest in thwarting you, or when you might have difficulty with a certain activity due to personal Flaws. For example, if you just want to buy a scarf and you're willing to pay what the person is asking for, then just spend the money and get on with the game. If you want to haggle, that makes the purchase "contested," and it's time to roll dice. If you want to chat with the locals and pick up general rumors, that probably doesn't require a Gossip Test roll … but if you are Eerie, Ill-Favored, or generally unapproachable, then simple things like this become "contested."

Don't roll until it's contested

Some rolls don't matter until someone comes along to test them. For example, if no one ever goes looking in the bushes for your buried box, there's no need to roll a Search Test. If you hide a message in a letter, but no one around can read, there's no need for a Cryptography Test.

As a general rule, you can avoid rolling some things until it actually comes up. Skills that are "passive" like this include Camouflage, Forgery, and Holdout.

Flaws can make Failures worse

You should see the Flaws that the Player-Characters have as hooks for role-playing opportunities, especially Internal Flaws. One way to use Flaws is to make a regular Failure into something worse because of the character's own shortcomings. Some examples:

- A character with the "Drunkard" Flaw might Fail a Gossip Test and wind up getting so inebriated that they pass out for several hours.
- A character with the "Lustful" Flaw might Fail an Influence Test and wind up flushed and embarrassed at something they blurt out inappropriately.
- A character with the "Scofflaw" Flaw is more likely to get arrested on a Failed Bribery Test than someone who doesn't have the Flaw.

Imposing Penalties

A Penalty is a way of saying that something is harder than it's supposed to be. For almost all activities, ideal conditions would be good weather, decent lighting, tip-top health, adequate tools, no

distractions, and plenty of time. Anything less than that probably warrants a Penalty of some kind.

In the *Tests* and *Combat* chapters, we've listed a lot of the things we think are worth Penalties. You may come up with more. (As a general rule, an Internal Flaw is more likely to make a Failure worse than it is to cause a Penalty — see above.)

It is the nature of Players to groan about every single Penalty, or to try and describe a way "around it." You should encourage them to do so, but to not be overly long about it, as this can make "lawyering" a regular habit. As a rule, Penalties don't change die sizes but merely force re-rolls — those with lots of dice or high Skill will be able to overcome them without much a fuss.

Granting Bonuses for major advantages

A Bonus is a way of saying that something is easier than it's supposed to be. Since the rules assume that conditions are ideal, a Bonus should be something really good.

In the *Tests* and *Combat* chapters, we've listed a lot of things we think are worth Bonuses. You may come up with more.

Bonuses change die sizes, which can slow down game-play, and should generally be rare.

Granting Favor for minor advantages

A little cleaner than a Bonus, adding *Favor* to a roll that doesn't otherwise have it can be a nice compromise. It's clearly an advantage, is likely to prevent catastrophic failure, and doesn't modify die sizes. If a Player tries to do something in a particularly clever way, you may grant them Favored Use on their roll.

Limiting die size by circumstance

Sometimes, conditions conspire that no matter how good someone is, they're simply limited at how well they can do it. Some common Limits:

Encumbrance Limit: When using Acrobatics, Climbing, Dodge, Flight, Jumping, Swimming, and other skills that involve freedom of movement, no dice may be larger than your Encumbrance Limit, as determined by how much weight you are carrying over your Lift Bonus.

Riding Limit: When fighting while mounted, almost all physical actions (including To-Hit Dice and Defense Dice) are subject to your Riding Limit — no dice may be larger than your biggest Riding Die.

Literacy Limit: When using Cryptography to decipher a written document, or using Research to read through a library, you may rule that no die can be higher than a character's highest Literacy Die. If the character has no Literacy Dice at all, then their limit is "none" and they cannot read!

Limits are a good way of showing how it's better to be versatile and ready for action than to channel all of one's growth down one path.

Differences between *Ironclaw* and *Jadeclaw*

While using the same core rules, there are some notable differences between the *Ironclaw* role-playing game and the *Jadeclaw* game.

Exploit meta-rule: In *Ironclaw,* an Overwhelming Parry sends your foe Reeling automatically. In *Jadeclaw,* you can learn Exploits that allow you to do other things to your attacker.

Botches on Resolve: In *Ironclaw,* a Botched Resolve Roll causes one Fatigue. In *Jadeclaw,* a Botched Resolve Roll causes one Wound. Causing one Wound is the preferred method — it makes the record-keeping for NPCs easier and is one of the few ways a target may be instantly killed. If you prefer the *Ironclaw* rule of Fatigue, you may use that as a variant rule.

Martial Arts: *Ironclaw* has very few Gifts that would be considered Martial Arts. *Jadeclaw* has a lot more. For those playing a mix between the two games, it is not inappropriate to allow *Ironclaw* characters to learn Basic or Expert Martial Arts, or perhaps even Heroic Martial Arts, as these abilities represent superior training and skill. The Schools of Martial Arts are closely-kept secrets and should not be available to anyone without the proper teachings.

Magic: In *Jadeclaw,* the Nature of a spell is more important than what list it's on — in fact, many spells are on two or more lists. In *Ironclaw,* magic is more rigidly defined by lists. The general assumption is that the Natures of *Jadeclaw's* Magic do not interact with *Ironclaw's* at all — but this can make a Thaumaturge very powerful, being able to counter Zhonggese magic with impunity. As Game Host, you may want to assign Natures to *Ironclaw's* Magic: Healing to White Magic; Unreal to Green & Purple Magic; Unholy to Black Magic; Heaven to Thaumaturgy; and Wind, Earth, Fire, and Water to Elementalism.

Special Powers: *Ironclaw* and its supplements have rules for Atavism, Blessed Magic, Foolishness, and other powers. These abilities represent the cultures and society of Calabria, and it would be very unusual for anyone on Zhongguo to have them. Refer to the *Experience* chapter (p. 253) — if Zhonggese Player-Characters want to learn these powers, then they will need some kind of teacher or enabling event.

The Game Host's Toolbox: Variant Rules

When we designed *Jadeclaw,* we found there were some rules that covered a few special cases, but they added a lot of complexity to the game. Other rules changed the whole philosophy of the way the game is played.

We present these rules here as *Variant Rules.* Some groups find these Variant Rules make the game more enjoyable; other groups find them contrary to their style or too complex.

Remember: a good role-playing game is *fair and consistent.* If you're going to use these Variant Rules, make sure you tell your Players before you start the game!

Variant Rule: Carried Weapons vs. Natural Weapons

In the current rules, there's no disadvantage to having your Claws parried by a Sword. If you think there *should* be, you may want to add the following Universal Exploit:

Universal Exploit: Counter-Attack vs. Natural Weapon: (Useable when you Parry a Natural Attack, Kick Attack, or Empty-Hand Attack.) You strike at the claws, teeth, or other Natural Weapon used against you — roll your Damage vs. the target's Soak.

If you use this rule, Natural Attacks, Kick Attacks, and Empty-Hand Attacks will be less desirable.

Variant Rule: Difficulty from Wounds

In the current rules, there's no increased difficulty from injury. A target that is completely undamaged functions as well as a character

that has suffered 13 Wounds. If you think there should be disadvantages to being injured, you can try the following rule:

Include the target's Unconsciousness Difficulty Dice with all of the Difficulty Dice the combatant rolls against. For example, a target that was suffering 5 Wounds would have an extra "Wound Die" of d8 included in the opposing side of all the dice they roll against. This includes To-Hit Rolls, Defense Rolls, Casting Rolls, etc. It does *not* include Death Tests, naturally.

If you use this rule, injured people are much more likely to flee a fight.

Variant Rule: Scatter

Sometimes you may want to know if a missile hit the wrong target, or exactly where it wound up. This type of thing is too complex to bother with for every little arrow. It's more important for thrown weapons, such as axes and spears, which a combatant might want to pick up from the battlefield.

Why you Missed	*What happened to your missile*
You failed to beat the Ranged Dice.	Your missile went off course, and Scattered.
The target Blocked.	Your missile struck their Shield.
The target was saved by their Shield's Cover Die.	Your missile struck their Shield.
The target was saved by a Cover Die.	Your missile struck the cover.
The target was saved by a secondary die they got because other combatants were in the way.	The missile may have struck one of those combatants! Those combatants must defend themselves against the Ranged Attack normally, at its original roll, or be struck.
The target Dodged.	Your missile soared past the target. (Others may be hit by accident, if the Host sees fit—roll d8 for each combatant in the line and if it comes up equal to the attack roll or better, they may be hit.)

Sometimes, one or more conditions might be tied. For example, you may roll a 5 to hit, your target may roll a 5 to dodge, and a secondary die for hard cover came up 5 as well. In that case, trace line of sight to the target, and apply results from attacker to defender. In this example, the cover is in front of the defender, so that gets hit first.

Arrows and crossbow bolts that strike hard cover such as stone or people's shields are likely to break and become unuseable; ones that embed in forest and dirt might be salvageable unless they are stepped on or broken. Gun bullets are made of lead, and can be melted or pounded into shape with minimal difficulty. Sling stones usually aren't worth recovering — stones can be found almost anywhere.

Ranged Attacks often miss, and may strike something else. For those of you that need the detail, here's how to find out where it wound up.

Direction: Roll a d12 to determine direction of the Scatter. Assign a "clock face" to the target, with 12 o'clock being right past it or "long," 3 o'clock being to the relative right, 6 o'clock being relatively "short," etc.

Distance: For an *ordinary Failure* to hit the target, roll the Range Dice to see how many paces the missile scattered, and take the Score. For example, if you were trying to hit a target at Long range, then roll 3d10 and the Score is how many paces you were off target. For an *Overwhelming Failure* to hit the target, roll the Range Dice to see how many paces the missile scatter, and *add the dice together*. In the above example, you'd roll 3d10 and add them together. (Scatter Distance is one of the few instances where you might add dice together.)

Maximum Scatter Distance: Thrown weapons and sling stones never scatter more than the distance between yourself and the target. If you threw a spear at a target 3 paces away and missed, your spear will not go off course by more than 3 paces. Treat any longer scatters as the maximum scatter. Bow arrows, crossbow quarrels, and gun bullets may "overshoot" the target. The Host is the final arbiter of what makes sense. In general things like gun bullets and crossbow bolts can soar way past the target, but won't deviate too much in the 3 o'clock or 9 o'clock range.

As with other variant rules, there's a lot of complexity for little added play value, so use these rules as you see fit.

Variant Rule: Fixed Target Numbers

Sometimes you may find lots of die rolling to be tedious, especially on repeated contests such as Meditation Tests (p. 114). You may choose instead to use fixed difficulty targets so that only one set of dice need be rolled. Here are some examples:

Difficulty of Test	*Suggested Difficulty Dice*	*Target*
Trivial	**d4**	**2**
Simple	**2d4**	**3**
Routine	**2d6**	**4**
Intermediate	**2d8**	**6**
Difficult	**2d10**	**7**
For Experts Only	**2d12**	**8**
For Heroes Only	**3d12**	**9**
For Legends Only	**4d12**	**10**

The advantage to this system is that there is less die rolling. The disadvantage is that it can be harder (or impossible!) to Overwhelmingly Succeed.

Variant Rule: Changing Starting Power

Some Game Hosts prefer to play *Jadeclaw* with a starting power level above or below the normal 20 points and mix of attributes. Some suggestions:

Power	*Attributes*	*Points*	*Max Gifts/Flaws*
Low	d4, d6, 2d8, 2d10	15	10
Normal	d4, d6, 2d8, d10, d12	20	10
High	d4, d6, 2d8, d10, d12	30	15
Super	d4, d6, d8, 2d10, d12	40	20
Mega	2d4, d6, d8, 2d10, d12	50	25

The disadvantage of raising the starting power level is that it can be harder to find challenges for characters who are made "from the whole cloth" rather than who have built up through Experience. It is recommended to increase the starting power level only if all the Players want to try it and if you, as Game Host, feel the increase will result in a more enjoyable campaign.

Variant Rule: Debilitating Injury

Some Game Hosts may find that the Mortal Wound and Death rules are too severe, especially on their Player-Characters.

Instead of Death, the Game Host may choose for the character to suffer a *Debilitating Injury*. The character acquires a new Flaw or loses a Gift, based on the injury they suffered. The Game Host can assign the injury randomly, or choose from the list below:

Injury	*Game Effect*
Eye	Flaw of Poor Vision (p. 55)
Ear	Flaw of Hard of Hearing (p. 55)
Arm	Flaw of One Arm (p. 55)
Leg	Flaw of Lame (p. 55)
Guts	Flaw of Failing Health (p. 54), or loss of one Level of Body
Head	Flaw of Ill-Favored (p. 55) or Poor Vision (p. 55), or loss of one level of Speed or Mind
Tail	Loss of Prehensile Tail
Wing	Loss of Flight

If the combatant was only Mortally Wounded, the injury lasts until the combatant is completely healed of all Wounds and Fatigue.

If the combatant would have been Dead, the injury will *never* heal. To fix the injury, the character must earn experience to buy off the Flaw or buy back the Gift or Trait Level that they lost (p. 253). Powerful magic may repair the damage, as well.

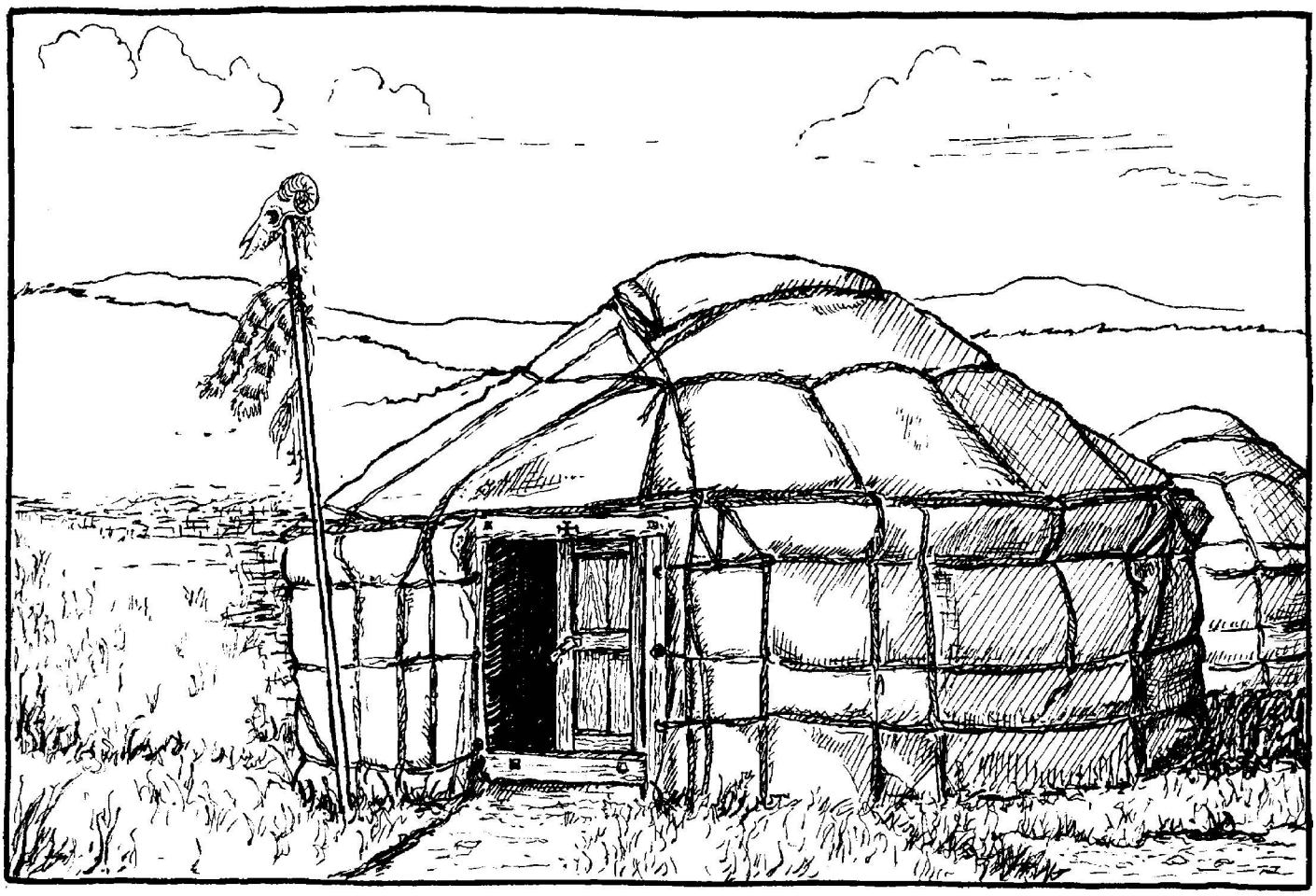
This Variant Rule should only be used for Player-Characters and major Non-Player Characters. It should not be used for "unimportant extras" or rank-and-file thugs in a combat encounter — they should simply expire. (Of course, a Debilitating Injury can turn an unimportant bit-player *into* a Major NPC, as they seek revenge on the characters that caused their disfigurement!)

The advantage of this Variant Rule is that your players will live longer. The disadvantage is that the game might seem less "realistic" if the ever-present specter of death is removed.

Variant Rule: Moderated Experience

The Experience Rewards rules (p. 253) can be complicated. As a variant, the Players can simply ask the Game Host where they want to spend their Rewards, and the Game Host can permit it.

This has the advantage of being very simple. It has the disadvantage of lacking a certain amount of "realism" and loyalty to the genre. An experienced Game Host (after moderating several games of *Jadeclaw*) may feel confident simply asking the Players where they want to spend their Rewards and saying yes or no, rather than worry about all the rules.



SAMPLE OPPONENTS

While an NPC can have a character sheet as detailed as a Player Character, for most "bit players" such detail is unnecessary. What follows are some archetypal NPCs, grouped by their strength in combat. As Game Host, simply assign a Race and presto — instant character.

As Game Host, you should use these Sample Opponents as guidelines for your own NPCs. You can assign new Gifts or Flaws, or adjust abilities up or down. The foes presented here are blatantly geared towards combat prowess, not scholarly ability or magic use.

Mook

Half as good as a starting PC

The rank-and-file of most of the combatants that your Players fight will probably be *Mooks*. These characters have just enough ability to be considered some kind of threat without being a serious hassle. They never go out of style, either — as your *Jadeclaw* PCs become more powerful, you can simply add more and more Mooks to the fray, to where there are three or four per Player-Character (or even more.)

Mooks generally roll 2d6 for anything (To-Hit, Defense, Soak, and Resolve), which minimizes your book-keeping hassle as a Game Host. They benefit greatly from having a competent leader around. Their usual tactic is to fight in pairs — one attacks while the other hangs back and gains Focus (p. 138).

Body d6, Speed d6, Mind d6, Will d6
Race d6

Career: Bandit d8

	Skills *(with Favored Use)*	
	d6	Dodge
d6		Intimidation
	d6	Local Knowledge
	d6	Resolve
	d6	Spear (with my Favorite Sword)
d6		Stealth
d6		Streetwise
d6		Tactics

Gifts:	(Racial Gifts only)
Flaws:	Scofflaw; (Racial Flaws)
Initiative:	2d6 (and Tactics d6)
Move:	Dash 6 paces, Stride 1 pace
Defenses:	Dodge 2d6; Parry — Spear 2d6
Armor:	Light Leather d6 (& Soak d6)
Resolve:	2d6
Weapons:	¼-Stone Spear (To Hit 2d6; Damage d6, 2d4)

Minion

Almost as good as a starting PC

A step above a Mook, a *Minion* is someone who has some training or experience. A Minion could take on a "wimpy" starting PC (that is, one who has spent more points on academic pursuits instead of combat ability), but they will have trouble with a "pure fighter." Minions stand out from Mooks in that they roll 2d8 for most things (To-Hit, Defense, Soak, and Resolve), once again making your Game Host duty a little easier. In story-telling tradition, after a battle where the Mooks are routed, the major NPC sends in a like number of Minions for the second battle.

Body d8, Speed d8, Mind d6, Will d6
Race d8

Career: Bandit d8

	Skills *(with Favored Use)*	
	d8	Dodge
d8		Intimidation
	d8	Local Knowledge
	d8	Resolve
	d8	Spear
d8		Stealth
d8		Streetwise
d8		Tactics

Gifts:	(Racial Gifts only)
Flaws:	Scofflaw; (Racial Flaws)
Initiative:	2d8 (and Tactics d8)
Move:	Dash 8 paces, Stride 2 pace
Defenses:	Dodge 2d8; Parry — Spear 2d8
Armor:	Heavy Leather d8 (& Soak d8)
Resolve:	2d8
Weapons:	½-Stone Spear (To Hit 2d8; Damage 2d8, d4)

Captain

On par with a starting PC

Sometimes called "important enough to have a name," a *Captain* has combat abilities formidable enough to stand out from the rank-and-file. The Captain can lead Mooks or Minions quite effectively and should rarely be encountered alone. The Captain is considered capable enough to have already decided on some Favored Uses on their Skills.

The Captain will prefer to hang back from the crowd, sending Mooks or Minions ahead to take the brunt of dangerous Group-affecting Magic. They will often wait until the Third Rank to either Focus (p. 138) or to Rally their men (p. 112). PCs will learn to recognize Captains not just by their commanding ability but by their superior arms and armor.

Body d8, Speed d8, Mind d8, Will d8
Race d8

Career: Bandit d8

	Skills *(with Favored Use)*	
	d10	Dodge (vs. Magic)
d8		Intimidation
	d8	Leadership (with my regular gang)
	d10	Local Knowledge (escape routes)
	d8	Resolve (when competent & confident)
d8		Stealth
d8		Streetwise
	d8	Sword (with my Favorite Sword)
d8		Tactics

Gifts:	Belongings; (Racial Gifts)
Flaws:	Greedy; Scofflaw; (Racial Flaws)
Initiative:	2d8 (Leadership d8; Tactics d8)
Move:	Dash 8 paces, Stride 2 paces
Defenses:	Dodge 2d8; Parry — Sword 2d8
Armor:	Chain Mail d12 (& Soak d8)
Resolve:	None, unless from Race or Career (Will d8)
Weapons:	Half-Stone Sword (To Hit 2d8; Damage d12, d8, d4)

Villain

One tough customer – worth about two PCs

Many major NPCs will have the same abilities as the *Villain*. Obvious the veteran of many escapades, the Villain is superior both physically and mentally to most starting Player-Characters. The Villain presented here is a typical miscreant — interested only in money and power.

A Villain prefers not to fight fair, often brining numerous Mooks or Minions with them to any battle, perhaps even one Captain as their "right-hand man." With the equipment list below, the Villain has chosen *not* to carry a Shield but instead to use two-hands on their Medium Spear, to avoid Awkwardness — if the PCs have good Ranged Attacks, they may change their mind and go pick up a shield.

Body d10, Speed d10, Mind d8, Will d10
Race d8

Career: Mercenary d10

Special Trait: Toughness d8

		Skills *(with Favored Use)*	
		d10	Dodge (vs. Magic)
d10			Haggling
		d8	Leadership (with my regular gang)
		d10	Local Knowledge (escape routes)
d10	d8	d8	Resolve (when competent & confident)
d10		d8	Spear (with my Favorite Spear)
d10			Shield

Gifts:	Belongings (×2); Extra Trait; (Racial Gifts)
Flaws:	Greedy; Proud; Scofflaw; Showoff; (Racial Flaws)
Initiative:	d10, d8 (Leadership d8)
Move:	Dash 9 paces, Stride 2 paces
Defenses:	Dodge d12, d10; Parry — Spear 2d10, d8
Armor:	Banded Mail 2d8 (& Soak d10)
Resolve	2d10, 2d8
Weapons:	¾-Stone Spear (To Hit 2d10, d8; Damage d10, 2d8)
Special Abilities:	Rolls d10, d8 to pass Death Tests (from Toughness)

Supernaut

Able to take on an entire party of starting PCs

Some people are just nasty. The *Supernaut* presented here is an army of one, enough to frighten city militias or even Imperial Guards. Backed up by an army, a Supernaut makes an excellent bandit-king or rogue general.

When fighting alone, the Supernaut will often recklessly Charge opponents, depending on their superior Armor and Soak to keep them safe until they Recover. With Cover Dice from the Shield, the Supernaut is quite capable even with the one Penalty to defenses from Reeling. With their high Race Traits, Supernauts should exemplify the prowess of their Race — fighting in trees, in water, in darkness, etc., once again to their own advantage. The Supernaut will hold their Luck in reserve until they absolutely need it to pass some Test or Defense; after that, with "their Luck having run out," they will probably flee the Scene, to let their Luck refresh and to plan a a cruel revenge.

Body d12, Speed d12, Mind d8, Will d12
Race d10
Special Trait: Magic Resistance d12

Career: Mercenary d12

	Skills *(with Favored Use)*	
	d12	Dodge (vs. Magic)
d12		Haggling
	d12	Leadership (by fear)
d12	d12	Resolve (when competent & confident)
d12	d12	Shield (with my Favorite Shield)
d12	d12, d8	Sword (with my Favorite Sword)

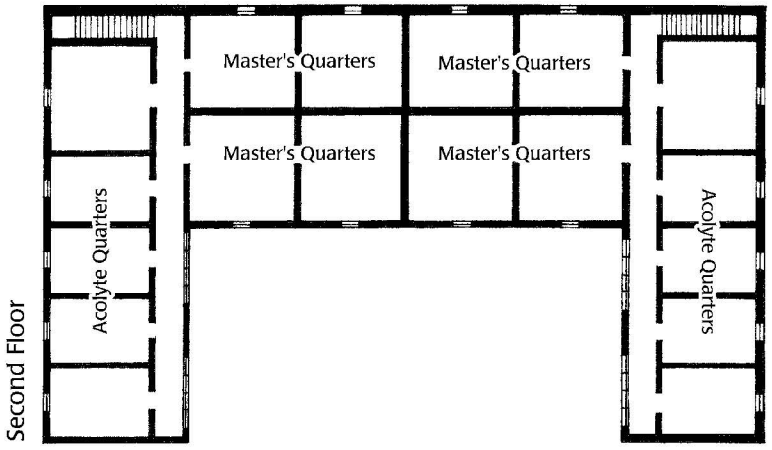
Gifts:	Belongings (×2); Extra Trait; Luck; Martial Arts: "Counter-Attack with Parrying Weapon" and "Cut-and Thrust"; (Racial Gifts)
Flaws:	Greedy; Overconfident; Proud; Scofflaw; Showoff; (Racial Flaws)
Initiative:	d12, d8
Move:	Dash 4 paces, Stride 1 pace
Defenses:	Block 2d12 (& Cover 2d10) Dodge 2d4 (& Cover 2d10) Parry — Sword 2d12, d8 (& Cover 2d10)
Armor:	Chain and Plate d12, d10 (& Soak d12)
Resolve	2d12
Weapons:	½-Stone Sword (To Hit 3d12, d8; Damage 2d12, d4)
Equipment:	Shield (Cover Dice 2d10)
Special Abilities:	Extra d12 to resist all Magic (from Magic Resistance) Sword Parry Exploit: "Counter-Attack with Parrying Weapon)" (see p. 166) Sword Special: "Cut-and-Thrust" (see p. 169)

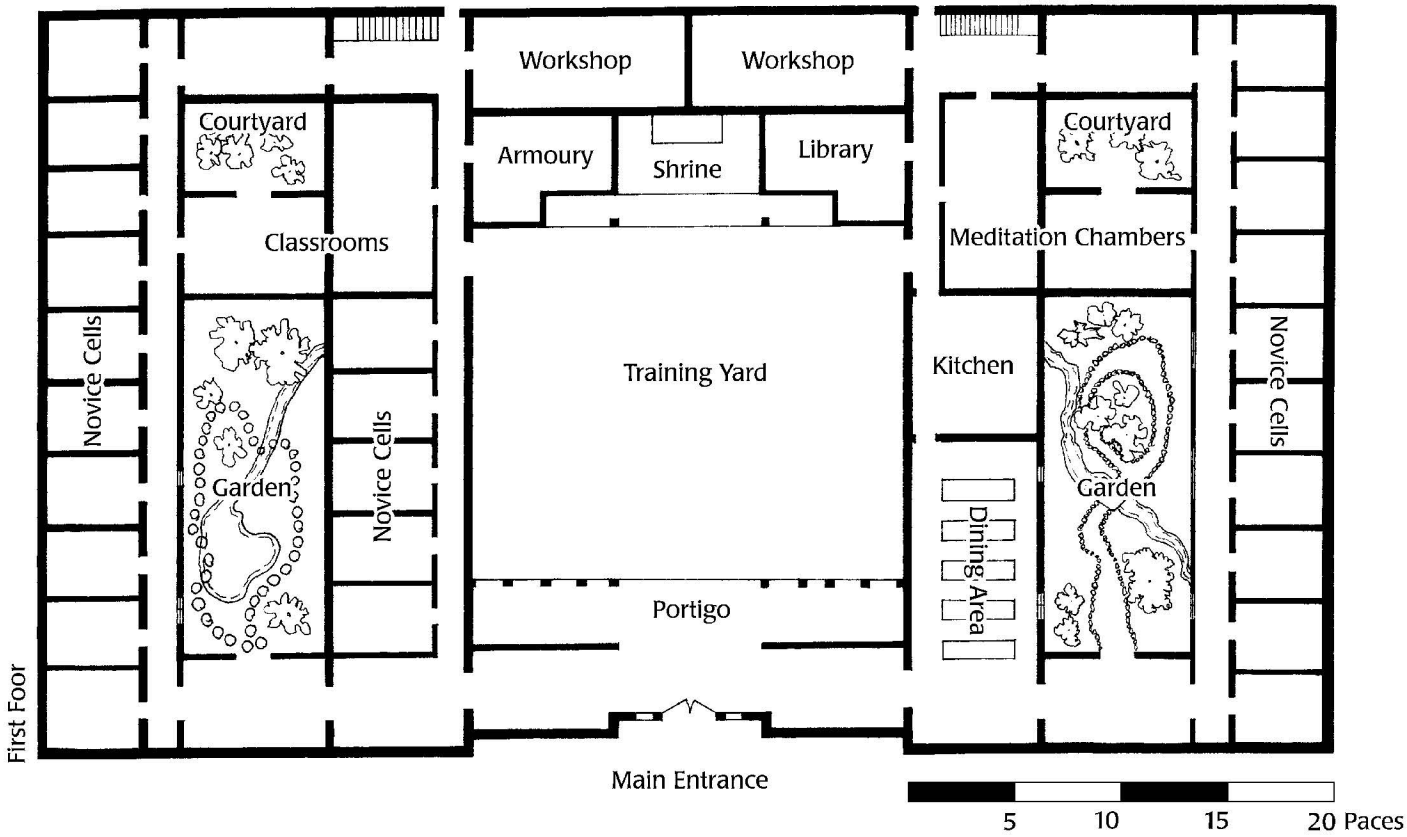
SAMPLE MAPS

Here are some sample maps of typical places your Player-Characters will go and get into all kinds of trouble.

Martial Arts School

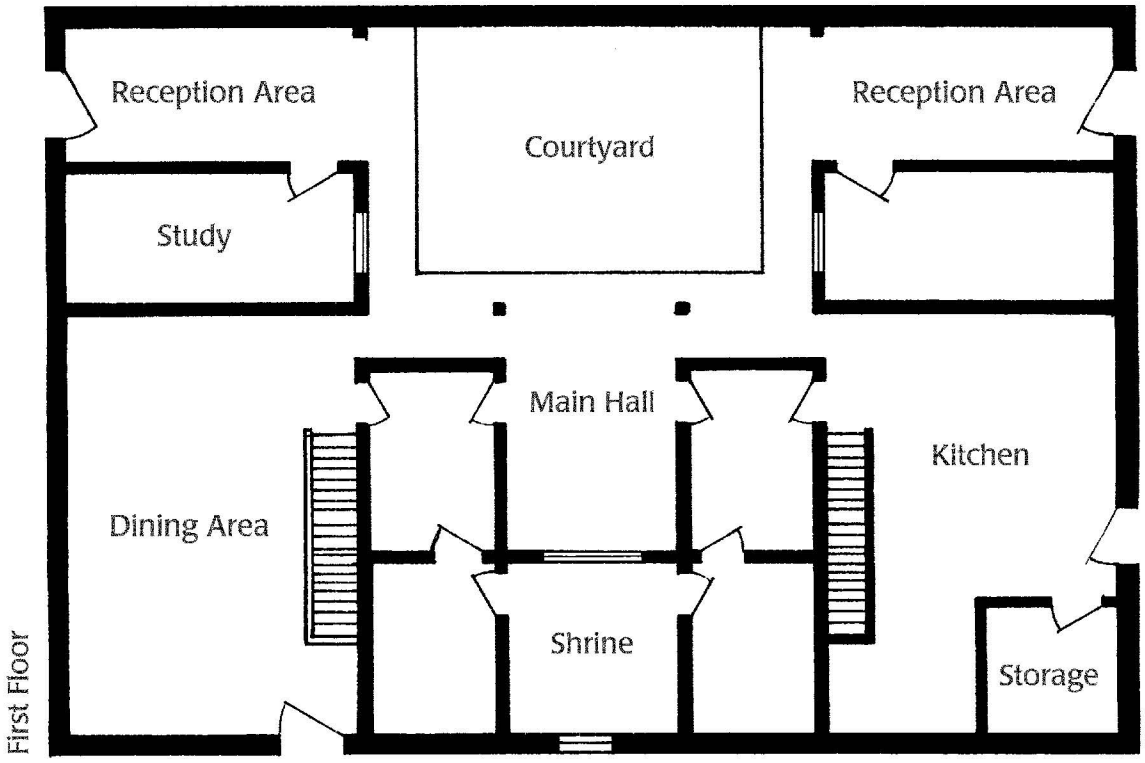
This is the quintessential place to get into a big brawl.

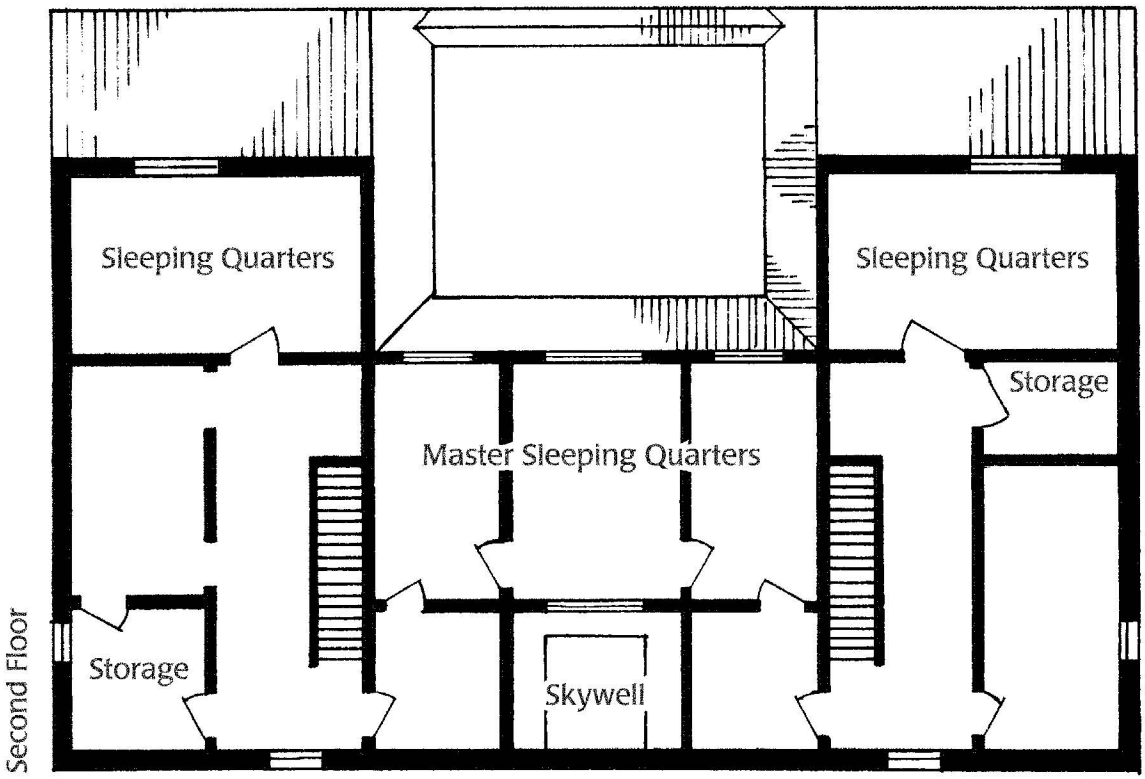




Large House

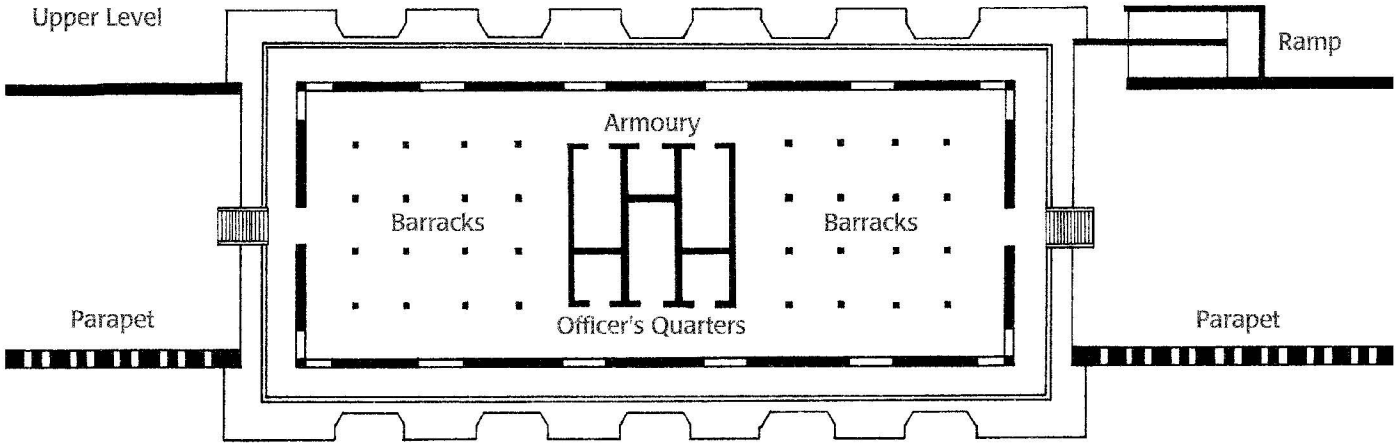
This is typical of a wealthier person's estate.

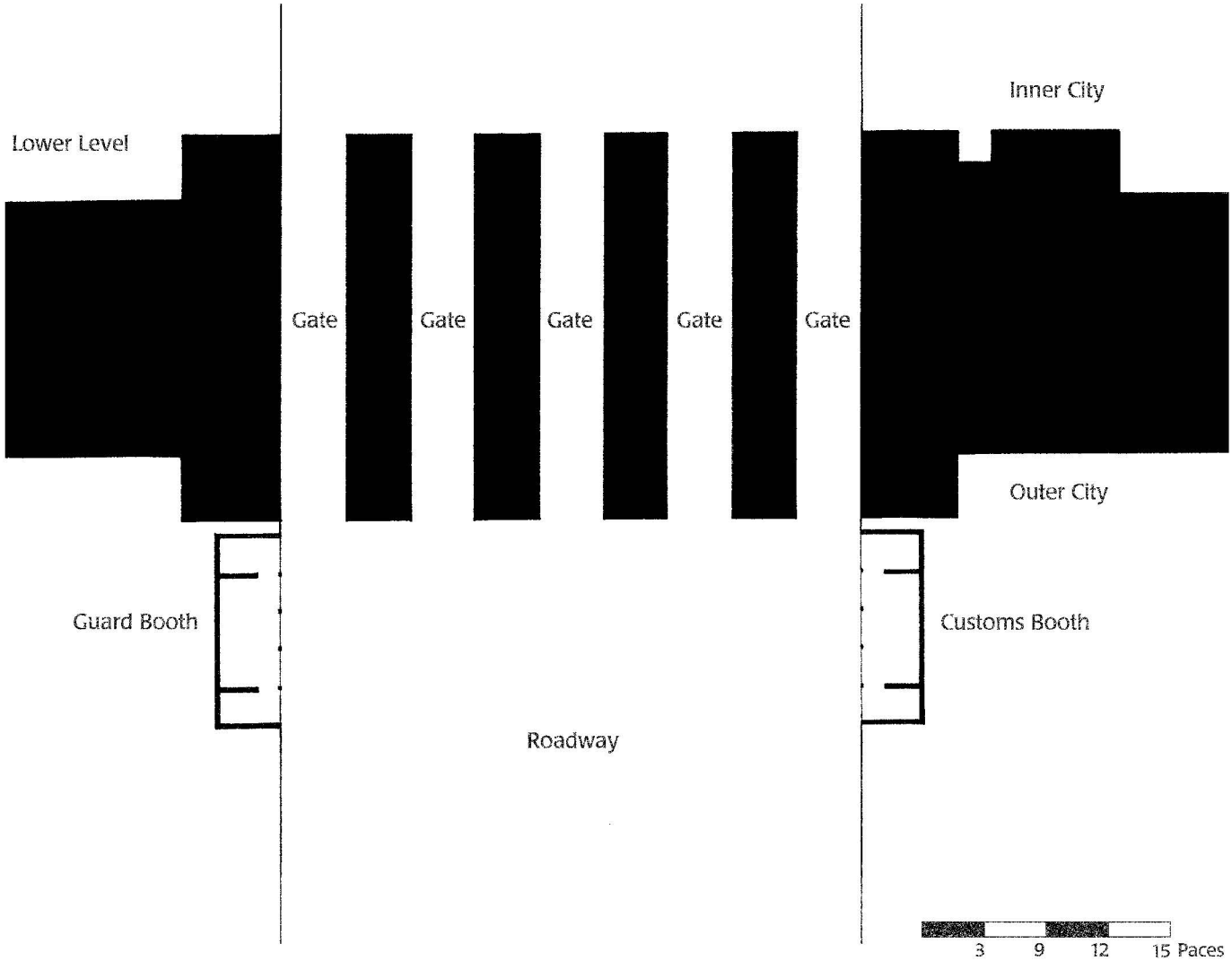




City Gate

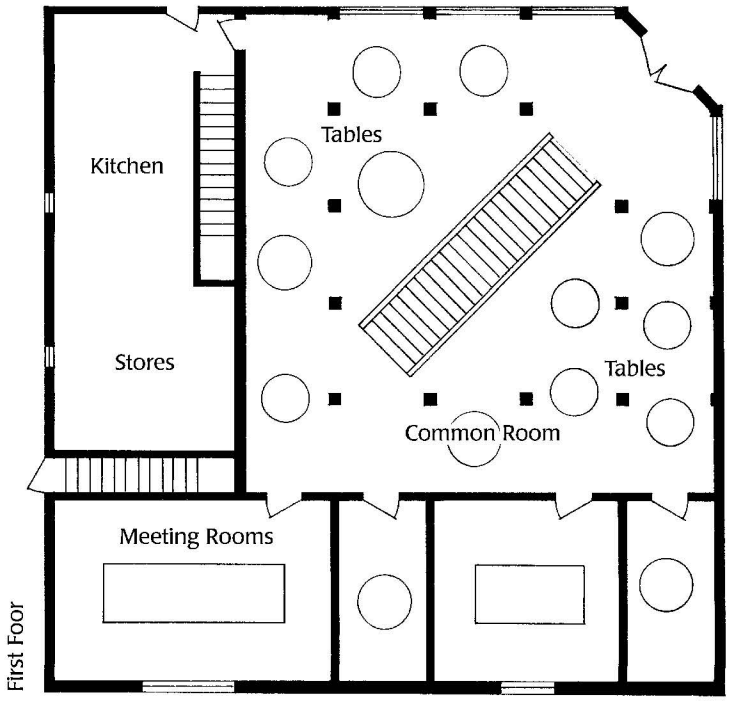
Player-Characters may need to escape a city, or move past a toll guard, or they may be unlucky enough to be militia who are besieging a city.

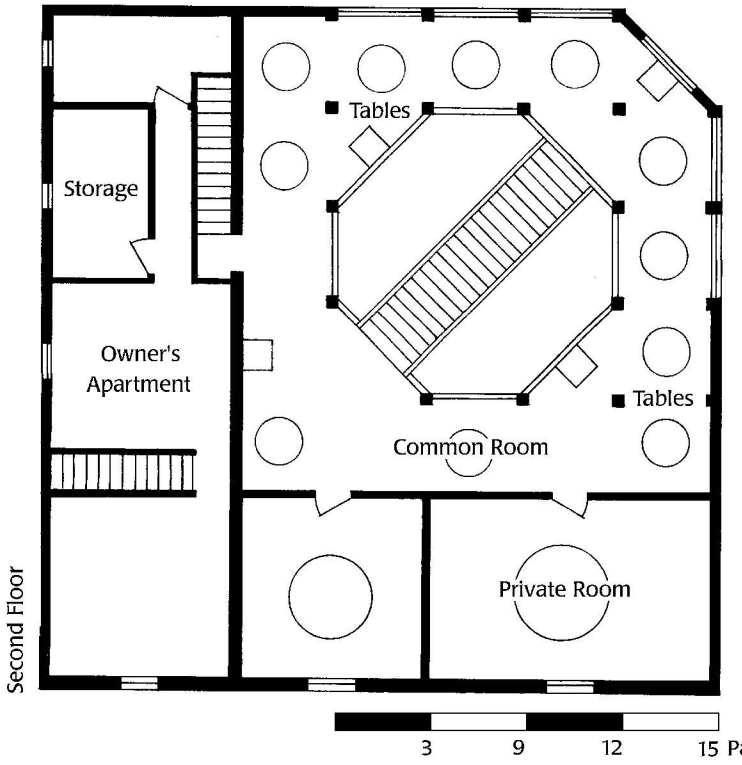




Teahouse

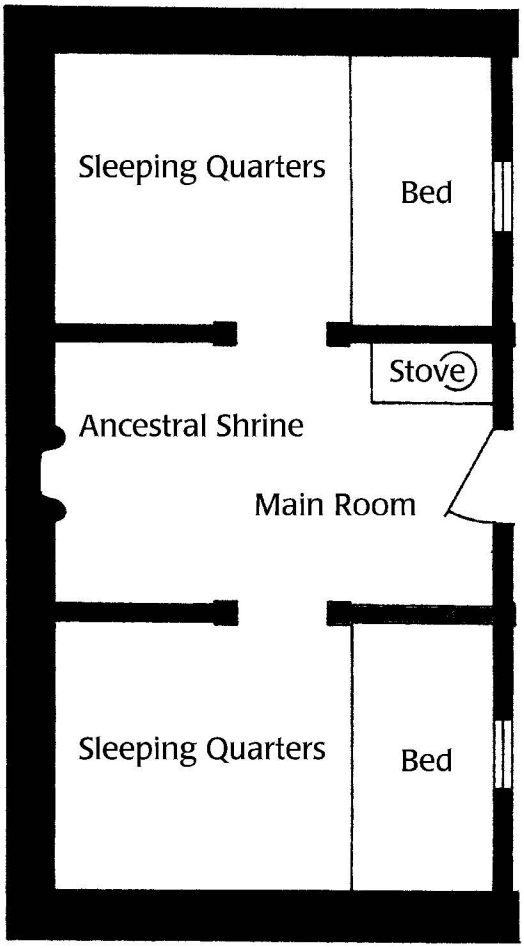
A popular place for gossip, teahouses can also be havens of criminal activity. Those wanted by the law would do best not to show off their faces in highly-public places like this.





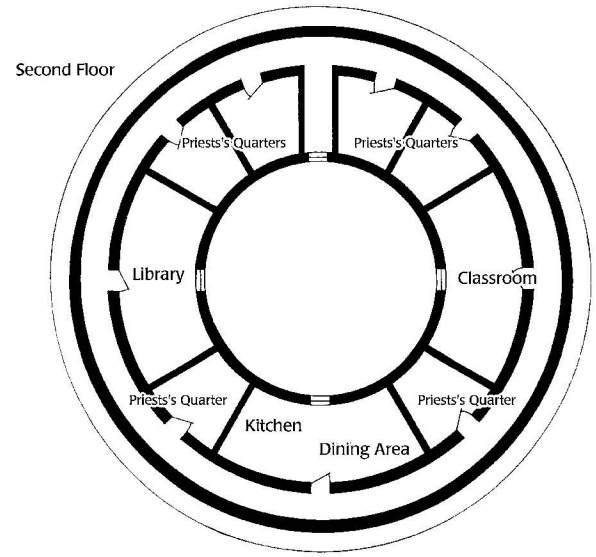
Small House

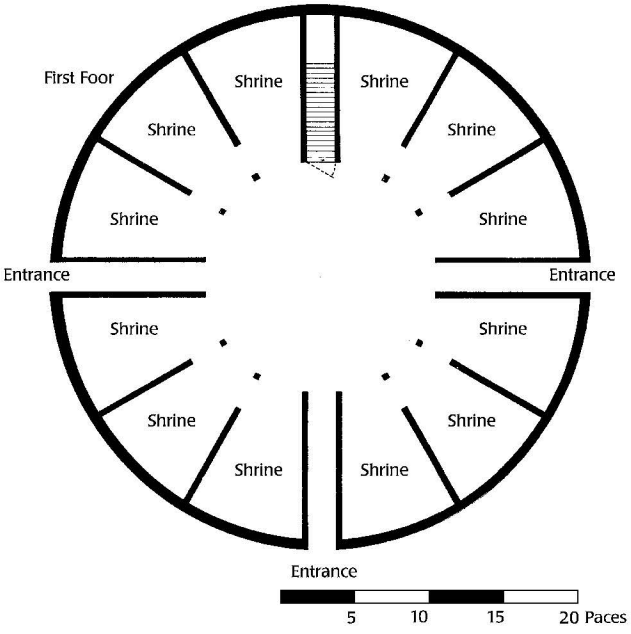
This is the typical dwelling of a farmer and his family.

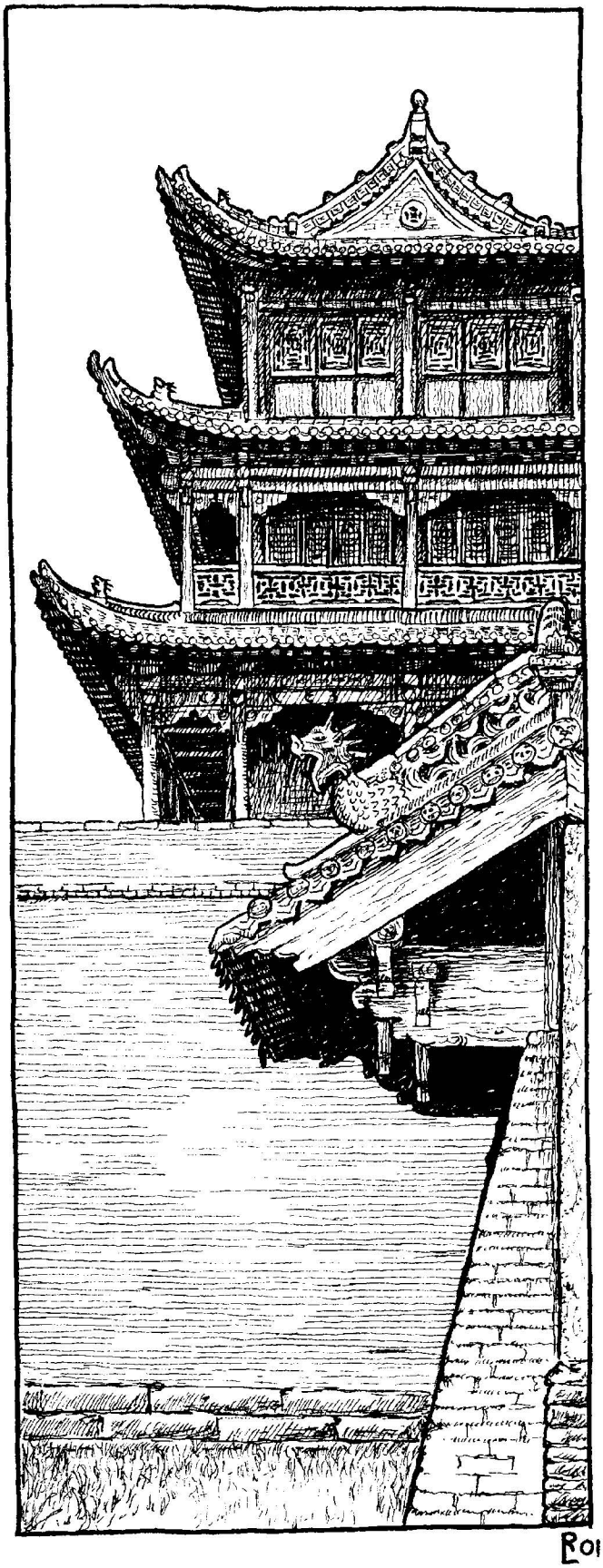


Temple

Only the most base and impious people would fight inside a temple. Of course, many villains are in league with dark forces…







Attention: this chapter is for the Game Host only. Players should not read this chapter, or they will spoil the surprises.

ADVENTURE: THE SILENT VILLAGE & THE INFERNAL DEVICE

What Has Gone On Before

The village of Biaohu-Xiang is in the province of Wu. It isn't really that important in the grand scheme of things — the peasants toil, the rulers administrate, and generally things were uninteresting. The Biaohu Tigers presided over the populace for hundreds of years without any unusual happenings.

That was until Governor Biaohu Kuang chanced upon a rare map, which revealed to him the Lost Mine of Shizong-Jin. Centuries ago, General Shizong-Jin had thought to use the gold from this mine to fund his war. But he and his men perished, and the location of the mine was thought to be lost forever. Few have dared to search for it, for it is also said that the gold itself is cursed to bring tragedy to all who would claim it.

Whether the curse is real or not, Governor Kuang has become mad with greed. His plan is to process all the gold into ingots and take it to a faraway, hidden fortress, where he will begin his own empire away from the mud and grime of his minor peasant village. To this end, he has removed all his subjects from the fields, putting the able-bodied men to work in the mines and taking the rest hostage.

Concerned that his scheme wasn't proceeding fast enough, Kuang managed to secure the services of Master Kaian from Lu and his apprentice Houzi Dai. Master Kaian designed a massive machine to convey the broken rock from the lower mine shaft, separate the gold from the rock, and press it all into ingots in one sweep. Kuang used the already-mined gold to fund the operation. After the machine was built and in working order, the Governor's plan was to process the remaining gold into ingots, to kill Kaian and his apprentice, and then to destroy the machine and bury the peasants alive, as he and his men stole away into the night with their massive fortune. Kuang had already set in motion a plan: forged documents that his village is suffering from plague, so no one will be the wiser when the people disappear.

Unfortunately for the Governor, Master Kaian is a very healthy man despite his advanced years. Already bored with the enterprise, and dissatisfied with his apprentice, Master Kaian packed up his belongings before sunrise and has sallied forth, on his way to his next task. Also unfortunate for the Governor is that the barricade (on the road Master Kaian is traveling on) was late in arriving — and that the Imperial Guard sent there have a rather transparent forgery in their hands, being the weakest link in Governor Kuang's ruse.

How Our Heroes Came to Meet

As our adventure begins, our PCs are all going to the Sword-Pool of Wu for one reason or another. These reasons to involve your PCs are called *hooks*. For this adventure, your PCs need to be traveling along the road towards the Sword-Pool of Wu, with Biaohu-Xiang as a stopping point. Here are some suggested hooks:

- Erudite PCs and Wizard PCs are probably on a journey to the temple of the Sword-Pool to first witness the place for themselves and secondly to study at the library there.
- A Warrior PC may be on the journey to toss their sword into the pool to see if it is indeed a worthy blade.
- A Governor PC may be on an investigative mission or simply carrying mail.
- Working Class or Professional PCs may be looking for work. Times are tough.
- Miscreant PCs may be journeying to better prospects for their trades, or simply fleeing their last escapade.

The Beginning of the Adventure, at a Roadside Tea House

The day is unusually hot, and the Player-Characters will have been traveling all morning, when they stop at a teahouse to rest their legs and quench their thirsts. Also stopping there is an old Rat, who is carrying a wooden box almost as big as he is, who has stopped to rest in the noonday heat on his travels in the opposite direction.

Talking to Master Kaian

In the world of *Jadeclaw*, without newspapers or broadcasts, most people rely on travelers for news. Master Kaian will ask the players for news about where they've been and what they've seen. (If this is your first adventure, the Player-Characters probably won't have any backstory, but you can invite them to make something up.) Here are some sample questions the PCs may ask, and Master Kaian's responses.

Who are you and what do you do?

> "Allow me to introduce myself. My surname is Kaian, and I am from the province of Lu. I am a master artificer, and I have just completed a commission for the Governor of Biaohu-Xiang."

What did you build for the Governor?

> "Only a working induction coil with a self-maintaining camshaft! Sheer genius, if I am allowed a moment of vanity..."

(Master Kaian will remove a scroll from his box, and when he unrolls it, he reveals a plan for a large steam machine, at least 12 paces across. Those with Lore: Machines who can pass a 2d6 Test will recognize this as a drilling device. Master Kaian is eager to points out all the features.)

> "Here you will see the main shaft. Here is the condenser coil. This is the main instrumentation panel. And here, in an insight worthy of heaven, is the flywheel, which allows the device to maintain its constant speed for almost a week."

What is this device for?

> "The governor has ordered a massive drilling machine for his mine in the mountains. Something that could do the work of dozens working for a month in a few days. Believe you me, I was very surprised when he wrote to me to commission the device, and even more surprised when he could afford it. While he may be the governor of a large village, we Engineers of Lu demand our payment in coin, and he apparently easily paid our fees."

Why do you carry all your equipment yourself?

> "Bah! That lazy apprentice they forced upon me back at the academy ... Ugh. He will be lucky if he ever learns how to draw a straight line! I couldn't wait for him to rise his slothful bones from bed this morning. Our task was finished, and I am eager to return to my laboratory in Lu."

The Border Guards

In the afternoon, the Player-Characters will probably want to press onwards. After a few hours journey (back in the direction that Master Kaian came from), the road will pass through a forested region, and then to an improvised barricade. Watching over this blockade is a Horse in Imperial Guard uniform and armor, attended by four men. The Horse will command the PCs to halt and tell them to turn back.

Talking to the Border Guards

The PCs will probably want to know what's going on. Here are some questions they may ask, and the responses the Horse will give them.

Who are you and what do you do?

> "I am Captain Bi Yulong of the Imperial Guard, and none may pass this blockade. The village of Biaohu-Xiang is under quarantine, because of a deadly plague."

How long have you been here?

> "We made all due haste to arrive, and have been here since the sunrise."

Did you see an old rat pass through here?

> "No. How could we? If he came from the south, we would have passed him on our way here. And he could not have come from the village, as they are all infirm from the plague."

Aren't you worried about catching the plague yourself?

> "I have no vices, no weakness of morals. I do not drink alcohol. I have only the relations with others as befits one of my station. My mind is filled with thoughts only of duty and of vigilance. In short, I live a clean life, and I have little to fear from base disease. You might do well to follow in my example."

Where did you get your orders?

> "I have my written orders that I received in the town two leagues from here."

May I see your orders?

> "Who do you think you are, that you may just demand that I, a servant of our glorious emperor, should just give you anything you ask for?"

(At this point, the player will have to try some way to Influence the guard to hand over his letter. This is something the guard doesn't mind doing, and will require a Influence Test vs. a Difficulty of 2d6.)

The letter does not say anything about quarantine. Instead, it is a letter authorizing the construction of a public sewer in a faraway province, dated six months ago. This will be obvious to anyone with even a d4 in Literacy.

Dealing with the Guards

If the Player-Characters turn back, that's the end of the adventure. However, Players are notoriously a stubborn lot, and they should be curious. The guard's story of quarantine doesn't match Master Kaian's story at all, and the PCs have traveled many hard miles to get where they are. They should see this obstacle as a role-playing opportunity.

Reasoning with Guards

If any of the Player-Characters can points out that the letter is a forgery, Bi Yulong will be incredibly embarrassed. (He has his current position as captain as a favor from his brother-in-law, and if he's discovered to be illiterate, both of them could be in serious trouble.)

If the PCs can *Succeed* or better on an Influence Test, Bi Yulong will say that he must go "establish the authenticity of this letter." He and his lieutenant will leave, heading south. They will return eight days later with more troops, to investigate the fraud, but by then it will be too late.

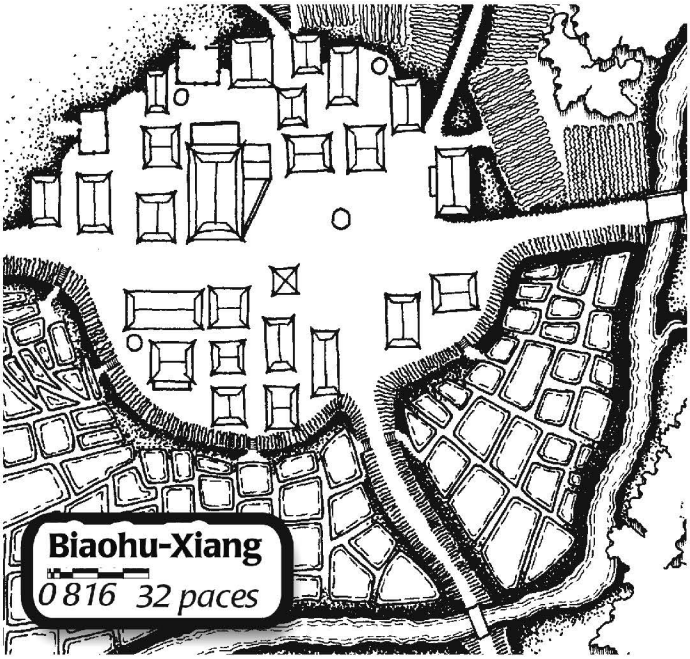
Attacking the Guards

The Players probably outnumber the Guards, and they are probably better warriors. If they start a fight, the Guards should flee rather than stand their ground.

If the Guards successfully get away, they will report the Player-Characters to the authorities, and they will come back in force. This could start the PCs on a long road of criminal enterprise — the Players should think twice about being openly hostile to Guards.

Sneaking Past the Guards

The Guards are fairly watchful, but if the Player-Characters are pretty stealthy, they might be able to get around the barricade, by crossing in the cover of forest.



To get past the Guards, the PCs will have to win a Sneak Test (p. 116). Getting past the Guards is a Routine task (Difficulty of 2d6). The surrounding terrain is Forest, so any PCs whose Racial Habitat is Forest will have an advantage over the Horse Guards.

The Deserted Town

After passing the guard post, the Player-Characters will press onwards. They will climb the ridge to then look over the valley below. The view is quite pleasant, and the entire village of Biaohu-Xiang can be seen below.

A careful observer (rolling Spot vs. 2d6) will note some unusual features. The fields have not been tilled for some time. In fact, no one can be seen at all, which is unusual — there should at least be a blacksmith's fire burning.

Visible in the distance is a smoking white plume from a mountain-top, not unlike a volcano. However, those who are knowledgeable of this region (Mind & Geography Skill vs. 2d4) will know there are no volcanoes in this region.

When the PCs press forward to the town, they will find it deserted. There are no signs of a struggle or any kind of violence. There are also no dead bodies or other signs of plague. As Game Host, you will have to improvise some of the details of the empty village. The temple will be empty with the prayer-mats laid out. The inn will have no pots boiling and only dried rice in the store-room, etc. (Some of your more larcenous PCs may take advantage of the lack of authority to steal some things — you may want to make Availability Tests [p. 104] to see what they can find.)

Some groups may press onwards, to the smoking mountain-top. If they do, move on to "The Lost Mine of Shizong-Jin," below.

The Charcoal Collectors

After an hour of being in the town, ask the PCs to make a Listen Test vs. 2d8. Those that make it will hear the approach of a wagon being drawn by six rats, led by a tiger and two wolves. The rats are pulling a walled cart with a tarp draped over it. (Those who can pass Smell Tests vs. 2d10 will detect the odor of charcoal gleaned from the forest.)

This cart is being drawn through the village under the watch of Biaohu Pi, nephew to the governor, and his two trusted lieutenants. They had been told to collect charcoal to help power the infernal device that makes the smoke in the mountains.

Avoiding Pi

The PCs may choose to avoid encountering Pi and his men. They will have to pass a Hide Test (p. 109) vs. the 6d6 of Pi and his men. If they avoid detection, Pi will lead his cart up the long mountain road to the mine entrance.

Dealing with Pi

Being prone to confrontation, one or more of the PCs may choose to confront Pi while others hide in the empty buildings. This is a great setup for an Ambush, using the mouthpiece PC as a confederate to distract Pi (p. 104).

Here are some sample questions the PCs may ask, and Pi's typical responses.

Who are you and what do you do?

> "I am Captain Biaohu Pi, of the town guard, and you are trespassers in our domain. I note that you also come bearing arms, that you have peasant accents, and that your glittering eyes look about with low intelligence and great avarice. These are the hallmarks of thieves and bandits, and I have no doubt that you are here on some lawless errand.
>
> "By the order of Governor Biaohu Kuang, I command you to drop your weapons and surrender to my authority."

I am an important person of some kind (noble, scholar, etc.) and I can prove it. What do you say to that?

> "You could have only gotten into this town one of two ways. Either you came by the road, or through the woods. If you came by road, you would have been stopped by the Imperial Guard and told to turn back. If you came through the woods, you are trespassers.
>
> "Now, I will tell you again — drop your weapons and surrender to me."

Reasoning with Pi

Pi is not a reasonable fellow. He knows his uncle is planning to mine all the gold in the next few days and to bury all the peasants to cover up his mad scheme. He also knows he is a party to the crime, and if he is caught, he will face a dishonorable end much slower and more painful than a swift defeat in combat.

Tricking Pi is probably more likely. The Players may try some ruse, such as claiming to already be in on the scheme. They may also claim to be agents of Master Kaian, since they met him earlier. Or they may have some other scheme, and you'll have to make a spot decision on whether it could work or not. Whatever they try, Pi is hard to Influence — the Difficulty will be 2d10 or worse.

Attacking Pi

If attacked, Pi will strike back. A combat will start. If this is your first fight, you may want to use the Basic Combat rules (p. 134) before you get into the swing of the Advanced Combat rules. Let your Players know which style you want to use before the combat starts in earnest.

Since the fight may happen after a failed attempt to talk to Pi, some of your players may have been trying things to get the drop on Pi. Often, while one Player-Character is talking, the other PCs will move into position to attack, or will try to draw weapons, or they will try to mutter spells under their breath, etc. If this happens, the moment someone does something hostile begins the combat. To represent the advantage of preparation, you should use an *Ambush Test* (p. 104) — if the PCs win the Ambush Test, they will have Focus, which they can use to their advantage.

Pi will fight to the death. His lieutenants, however, may surrender if they think they can get away with it.

The peasants themselves will not intervene in the fight — they will either flee or cower.

Surrendering to Pi

Pi may defeat the PCs in combat. If he does, he will take the Player-Characters prisoner, because Governor Kuang will want to interrogate them to see who sent them and if he can expect more. Move on to "The Mine Entrance," below.

Or the PCs may decide to throw down their weapons and go along with Pi in the first place. They may not be pre-disposed to violence, or maybe they rely on magic and Empty Hand Techniques.

Pi's lieutenants will bind the PCs up in silk ropes, using his training as a Watchman to tie them up in such a way that they just can't gnaw or claw their way out. (In game terms, they can try a Strength & Contortionist Test vs. 2d10 to break free — *Success* means Escape, *Overwhelming Failure* or *Botch* means 1 Fatigue loss from strain and rope-burn.) Then everyone will haul the wagon of charcoal up to the mine.

Evading Pi

The PCs may flee Pi and his men, perhaps because they are losing the fight, or maybe they just cover up and hide when he travels through town in the first place. Escaping from a fight calls for a *Chase Test* (p. 106). Hiding in the empty town calls for a *Hide Test* (p. 109).

Pi will not make great effort to pursue. His orders are clear — gather as much charcoal as possible and get back to the mine.

Defeating Pi, and Talking to Nongfu the Peasant

If the PCs defeat Pi and his men in combat, the peasants will gather their nerve. The oldest among them, Nongfu, will speak out:

> "Good heroes, you must help us! Our governor has gone mad with greed! He has pulled all of us peasants out of the fields. Those who can lift a shovel or a pick are put to work in the mines. Everyone else is held prisoner in the cave!"

If the PCs question Nongfu, here are some sample questions they may ask and his responses.

Who are you and what do you do?

> "I am Nongfu, a humble peasant, and I have tilled this land with my father, just as he did with my grandfather. For generations we have served the Biaohu, but this Governor Kuang, he has lost his wits, having discovered the Lost Mine of Shizong-Jin."

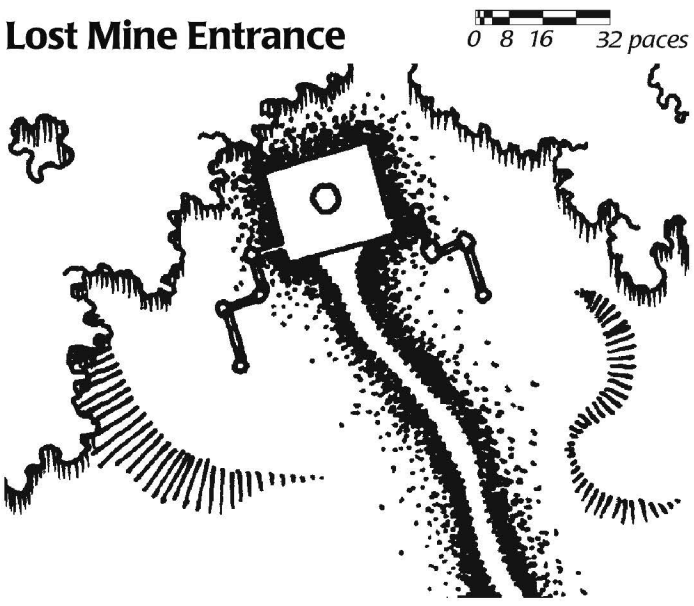
What is the Lost Mine of Shizong-Jin?

> "It was thought to be a legend. Many centuries ago, Shizong-Jin used the wealth of his secret mine to fund his grand army as he strove to build a great empire. Alas, he was defeated, but he and his generals fell upon their swords rather than reveal its location.
>
> "I know not how our Governor discovered the lost mine, but when he did, his greed must have overwhelmed his wits. I fear he seeks to remove all the gold and to leave this place, and that he will leave no survivors behind. You must help us! What of my wife and children?"

What do you know of Master Kaian?

> "Who? The only foreigners I know of are a scholarly rat and monkey, who came here to help Governor Kuang build a machine so that he might extract the gold more quickly. The rat is gone, but the monkey has stayed. It is the monkey who told the Governor that we must gather this charcoal."

Lost Mine Entrance



Who is your Governor?

> "Our Governor is Biaohu Kuang. Captain Pi, who spoke against you earlier, is his nephew. The Biaohu tiger clan has ruled over this village since before my great-grandfather's time. His eyes glow with the fires of the mad schemes that burn within his head. They say he is the greatest fighter in all the valley — he is trained in both the Heaven-Grip and the Earth-Grip, and he fights with twin swords. But I have confidence that you, great heroes, can overcome him!"

Did you know the village is under quarantine?

> "Alas! It is just as I feared! The Governor has constructed an elaborate ruse! He will have all of us put to death and buried in the mine, so that the Emperor will never know of all the gold that had been mined here! Oh, my wife and children! Will no one help us?"

Nongfu will continue to plead with the Player-Characters that they should help his family and fellow peasants.

The PCs may agree to help. One or more of them might have the Flaw of "Heroic," unable to allow the weak to become victim of the strong. They may be spurred on by the promise of getting some of that gold for themselves.

If the PCs don't agree to help, then they may flee the valley. Never force your Players to pursue plot-lines they don't want to. If the PCs don't intervene, then a few days later Governor Kuang will bury the peasants alive and make off with all his gold.

The Lost Mine of Shizong-Jin

Unless the Player-Characters flee from the challenge of rescuing the Player-Characters will seek out the lost mine.

Attacking the Guards

Sometimes, Players take the direct approach. If they choose to fight the guards, you will have another combat encounter on your hands.

There are four guards, armed with spears. As Game Host, your job is to challenge the players, striking a balance between hopelessness and a cakewalk.

Pay attention to how well the PCs did in the last fight. They had to fight three Minion-class warriors.

As before, you will have to decide if you want to use *Basic Combat* (p. 134) or *Advanced Combat* (p. 135).

When half their number goes down, the guards will flee.

Sneaking Past the Guards

Sneaking in the main entrance would be nigh-impossible, especially during the day — the guards are just too vigilant. At night, it might be possible, but it's a narrow entrance guarded by four trained observers — the Difficulty would be 4d12 or worse.

There is another angle of entry: the chimney where the smoke from the machine comes out. This column is higher up the mountain, away from the entrance. The problem is that the column is constantly filled with hot smoke. Anyone who attempts to descend the column would have to descend 100 paces, unable to see and unable to breathe. (See "Suffocation" in *The Hostile Environment*, p. 152).

Influencing the Guards

The Mine Guards aren't that bright, and they can be tricked or fooled by any schemes your Players may come with. You will have to judge how likely each scheme will be to work, and you will have to choose Difficulty Dice as appropriate.

The Infernal Machine and the Mad Governor

Shortly after the PCs get past the mine entrance (or if they descend the suffocating chimney), they will enter a large cavecarved in the rock. In one end a monkey (Kaian's assistant, Houzi Dai) pulls numerous levers with his hands, feet, and tail. Before him, a machine eight-paces across with numerous pistons churns and grinds away at rock and stone, spewing forth rock-dust from its ugly vents, and deposting gold bars into a waiting mining car. Screaming to be heard over the noise of the machine is a stately tiger in full battle array (Governor Kuang, attended by his men-at-arms. Behind them is a passage that leads deeper into the mines (where the peasants are held against their will).

Reasoning with Kuang

Governor Kuang cannot be reasoned with. His plan is so far along that he's way past the point of no return. Here are some sample questions the PCs may ask, and how he might respond.

Who are you and what do you do?

> "I am Governor Biaohu Kuang, wealthy beyond your wildest dreams!"

Will you give up your mad scheme?

> "I have renounced duty. I have renounced honor. I have even renounced my heritage with my ancestors who ruled this land for generations. I have nothing but this gold, and it is worth more to me than anything you could offer.

Will you surrender to us?

> "If I were to lay down my arms and be brought before the Emperor, I would face imprisonment, torture, and then put to death. If I defeat you, I will have riches beyond the dreams of most men. You can offer me nothing!"

If you bribe us, we'll leave and not tell anyone what we saw. What do you say to that?

> "You low-born scofflaws cannot be trusted. How will I know you will not tell me out? You have long lives ahead of you, unless I and my men end them now!"

Can we join you?

> "No. My wealth is already divided too many ways. And who are you, anyway? I know you from no-one else, and your loyalty is suspect, you who would rally behind an unknown flag simply at the promise of a few coins. These men will lay down their lives for me — can you do the same?"

We found out about this from Master Kaian. He has escaped you and you'll be found out. Will you surrender?

> "Bah. The senile old rat knows nothing of what goes on here, I have seen to that. He was easily distracted with his tools and his calculations. It is a pity that he left before I could 'reward' him properly … but he knows nothing of diplomacy or intrigue, and my men will see that he does not live to see three more sunsets."

Unless the Players come up with some completely amazing scheme, Kuang will order his men to attack.

Attacking Kuang

Once again, it's up to you as Game Host to judge how capable your players are.

The Monkey Engineer (Houzi Dai) will *not* fight. (If it matters, assume he is a Mook.) He is occupied with maintaining the machine, which he is barely able to control. It turns out the gathering of charcoal was just a ruse — Houzi Dai has no idea how to control the alchemy that operates within the boiler, and he told Governor Kuang he needed more charcoal so he could "condense the entropic reaction" or some other nonsense. Since then, the chemicals within the machine have mixed and are boiling at an incredible rate. Houzi Dai is grabbing at levers with his arms, feet, and tail, in an effort to keep the reaction under control. He is too busy to participate in the fight, effectively taking the *Concentrate* Maneuver every Round (p. 140).

Governor Kuang will fight to the death. His allies will not. If half or more of Kuang's men go down, this will call for a Leadership Test (p. 112) and Kuang will probably be too busy with other Combat Maneuvers.

Houzi Dai and the Infernal Device

The infernal device hauls stone chunks up from below, feeds it into body where it applies scrapers, sieves, heat, and an ingenuous chemical reaction to separate the gold from the rock. The rock dust is expelled below, and gold ingots come out of the hole on the side. The machine is large, imposing, and noisy, and it rattles back and forth, held in place only because of the giant bolts that hold it to the floor. It is frightening to behold, and the fact that Houzi Dai is frantically pulling at the control levers to keep the machine's operation in delicate balance does nothing to diminish any fears.

If Houzi Dai is incapacitated, he won't be able to control the flow of heat in the machine, and it will overheat. Also, the device may be attacked, either by Cluster Spells or by missed Ranged Attack rolls. (You may want to use the "Scatter" Variant Rules to heighten the tension that something might hit the machine.)

The machine is made of metal good enough for 2d12 Armor. If it suffers any Damage, roll 1d6 for every Hit the machine has suffered. If you Score a 6, the machine has gone critical — see below. The machine also suffers one Hit for every Round that Houzi Dai is not operating it.

When the Infernal Device Goes Critical…

Houzi Dai, if he is able to, will flee. If he is detained, he will explain that the machine is about to explode, and that they'll all be killed if they don't leave now.

It is up to you whether Governor Kuang will flee or not. Odds are, he will see that his greed and madness has brought about the ruin, and he will stoically remain behind in the chamber to be consumed and killed by the explosion. However, you may want to have him flee to become a recurring villain. (Then again, the item that "there's no body to recover" lends itself well to the returning-villain theme.)

There is no Damage listed for people trapped within the chamber. You can assume that anyone who flees manages to get a safe distance, whereas anyone who remains is consumed in flying steel, burning chemicals, and searing steam and destroyed beyond any hope of recovery.

Other Methods of Dealing with Kuang

Of course, the PCs might just flee, or they may be routed in the combat. If Kuang is left to his own, he will have all the ingots pressed within a day. Then he will have the villagers sealed up in the lower cavern where the machine puts its rock dust, and he will have the infernal device exploded, sealing them in forever. Kuang and his loyal men will ride off to a faraway province to set themselves up as bandit-kings of a vast golden empire.

Wrapping Up

Master Kaian will have gone back to the province of Lu. The PCs may want to write him a letter explaining what has gone on. (See "Equipment and Services," p. 76)

Bi Yulong and the rest of the Imperial Guard will return in three days, with a warrant for Governor Kuang's arrest on the charge that he falsified Imperial documents. If the PCs had captured Kuang alive, they may turn him over to the guards, and they will gain Imperial favor as a result.

If Nongfu and his family are reunited, they will have undying gratitude for the Player-Characters.

Rewards and Experience

One or more of the PCs may try to steal a gold ingot or two. Each ingot weighs 6 stone apiece and is worth over a thousand bù-qián, provided the PC can find a way to sell it. Most likely, they'll have to melt it down.

This adventure should reap typical Rewards: 4, 3, 2, and 1. You may choose to give out a few 5-Experience Rewards for "Good Reputation" for particularly heroic displays.

Cast of Characters

Master Kaian from Lu, rat inventor

Body d6, Speed d6, Mind d12 & d4, Will d6

Habitat: Forest
Senses: Listen
Weapons: Claws, Teeth

Race: Rat d10

Career: Academic 2d12

		Skills *(with Favored Use)*	
	2d12		Calligraphy
d10			Contortionist
d10			Climbing
d10			Digging
	2d12		Literacy
	2d12	2d12	Lore: Machinery (mining)
	2d12		Research
d10		d6	Stealth

Gifts: Belongings: glasses, strongbox; Claws; Keen Ears; Teeth
Flaws: Capricious; Failing Health; Poor Vision
Initiative: d12, d6, d4
Defenses: Dodge d6
Resolve d6
Move: Dash 6 paces, Stride 1½ paces
Armor: None (Soak d6)
Weapons: Claws & Teeth (To Hit d10, d6; Damage 2d6)
Motivations:
1. Survive.
2. Invent new devices and gadgets.
3. Make money.

Biaohu Pi, Captain of the Guard and Nephew of the Governor

Body d8, Speed d8, Mind d8, Will d8

Habitat: Forest
Senses: Listen
Weapons: Claws, Teeth

Race: Tiger d8

Career: Knight d8

		Skills *(with Favored Use)*	
d8			Acrobatics
	d8		Etiquette
	d8		Fencing
		d8	Leadership (when shouting)
	d8		Literacy
		d8	Local Knowledge: Biaohu-Xiang
	d8	d8	Resolve (in front of my men)
		d8	Polearm (with my favorite polearm)
d8			Stealth
d8			Swimming
d8			Tracking

Gifts: Claws; Nobility; Strength +1; Teeth
Flaws: Greedy; Proud; Showoff
Initiative: 2d8 (Leadership d8)
Defenses: Dodge d8; Parry — Polearm 2d8
Resolve 3d8
Move: Dash 8 paces, Stride 2 paces
Armor: Disc Armor d8, d4 (& Soak d8)
Weapons: Long Handled Broadsword (To Hit 2d8; Damage d10, 2d8; Special — Slash d6)
Motivations
1. Defend his homeland.
2. Survive.
3. Remind lessers of how superior I am to them.

The Biaohu Lieutenants (Chao and Kao)

Body d8, Speed d8, Mind d8, Will d8

Habitat: Forest
Senses: Listen, Smell
Race: Wolf d8 *Weapons:* Claws, Teeth

Career: Soldier d8

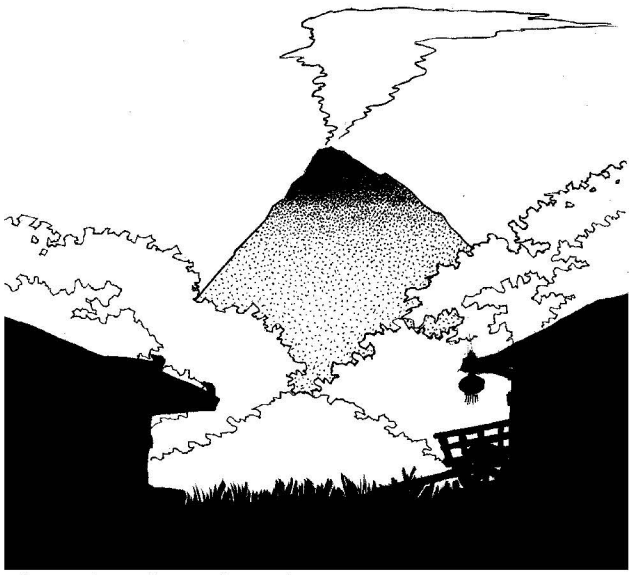
		Skills *(with Favored Use)*	
d8	d8		Hiking
	d8		Resolve
	d8		Shield
	d8		Spear
		d8	Sword
d8			Tactics
d8			Tracking

Gifts:	Belongings: Sword; Claws; Howl; Teeth
Flaws:	Duty; Proud
Initiative:	2d8
Move:	Dash 8 paces, Stride 2 paces
Defenses:	Dodge d8; Parry — Sword 2d8
Armor:	Heavy Leather d8 (& Soak d8)
Resolve:	2d8
Weapons:	Quarter-Stone Sword (To Hit 2d8; Damage d12, d8)
Motivations:	1. Survive. 2. Serve the Captain.

Nongfu and the Charcoal-Gathering Peasants

As non-combatants, their abilities probably won't come up. If they do, use the same statistics for Mooks (p. 310), rolling a d6 for anything relevant. The peasants have no weapons or armor.

Motivations: 1. Survive.
2. Avoid being beaten.
3. Get the PCs to save their families.



The Mine-Gate Guards

The mine-gate guards are named An-yi, Leet-Yen, Shing-min, and Left-handed Xiao. They will be armed with bows and will take up spears if attacked. Attending the governor are Feng Fu and Feng Feng (the Brothers Feng).

Body d6, Speed d6, Mind d6, Will d6

Habitat: Forest
Senses: Listen, Smell
Race: Wolf d6 *Weapons:* Claws, Teeth

Career: Soldier d6

		Skills *(with Favored Use)*	
		d6	Bow
d6	d6		Hiking
	d6		Resolve
	d6		Shield
	d6		Spear
d6			Tactics
d6			Tracking

Gifts:	Claws; Howl; Teeth
Flaws:	Duty; Proud
Initiative:	2d6 (and Tactics d6)
Move:	Dash 6 paces, Stride 1½ paces
Defenses:	Dodge d6; Parry — Spear 2d6
Armor:	Light Leather d6 (& Soak d6)
Resolve:	2d6
Weapons:	Quarter-Stone Spear (To Hit 2d6; Damage d6, 2d4) 2-Stone Draw Bow (To Hit 2d6; Damage2d6, d4)
Motivations:	1. Survive. 2. Serve the governor.

Biaohu Kuang, the mad tiger governor

Kuang will prefer to use his "Heaven & Earth Meet in the Middle" attack whenever possible, striking two separate targets within reach.

Body d8, Speed d8, Mind d8, Will d8

Habitat: Forest
Senses: Listen
Race: Tiger d8 *Weapons:* Claws, Teeth

Career: Knight d8

		Skills *(with Favored Use)*	
d8			Acrobatics
		d12	Dodge
	d8		Etiquette
	d8		Fencing
		d8	Leadership (when shouting)
	d8		Literacy
		d8	Local Knowledge: Biaohu-Xiang
	d8	d8	Resolve (in front of my men)
d8			Stealth
d8			Swimming
		d12, d8	Sword (when fighting with two swords)
d8			Tracking

Gifts: Ambidexterity; Belongings: Four-Mirrors, Swords; Claws; Extra Move +1; Martial Arts: "Earth Strike," "Heaven Strike," "Heaven and Earth Meet in the Middle"; Nobility; Teeth

Flaws: Greedy; Mad with Power (Common, Strong); Proud

Initiative: 2d8 (Leadership d8)

Defenses: Dodge d12, d8; Parry — Sword d12, 2d8

Resolve 3d8

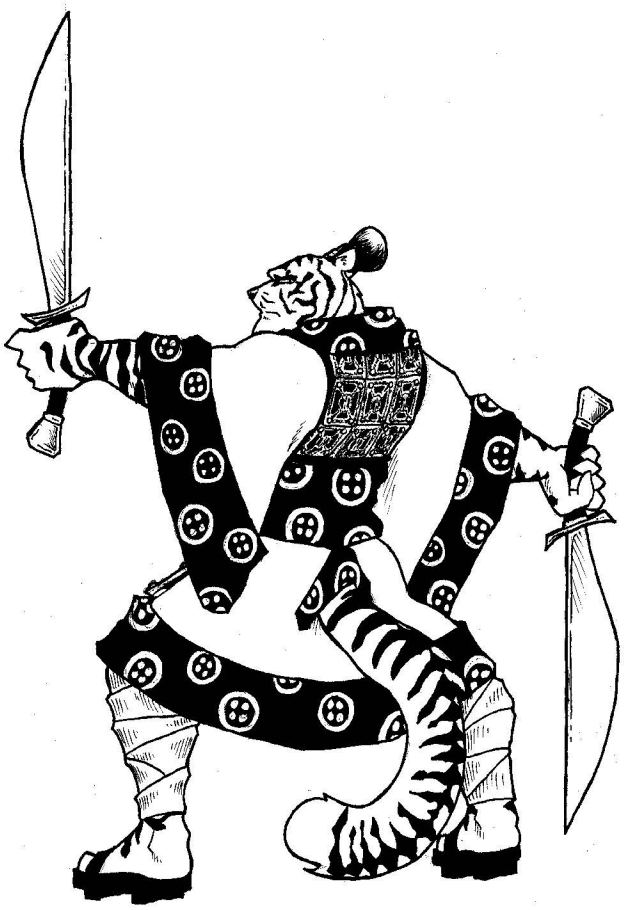
Move: Dash 8 paces, Stride 2 paces

Armor: Twin Shield Armor with Four-Mirrors (2d8, d4 & Soak d8)

Weapons: Two Quarter-Stone Swords, "Earth's Claw" and "Heaven's Fang" (To Hit d12, 2d8; Damage d12, d8)

Special Abilities: Earth Strike: attack does Slaying Damage, target's Soak includes Acrobatics, Flight, Jumping (p. 168)
Heaven and Earth Meet in the Middle: strike in First Rank with two attacks (p. 168)
Heaven Strike: attack does Slaying Damage, target's Soak includes Acrobatics, Contortionist, Dodge (p. 168)
Magic Resistance d8 (from the Four-Mirrors)

Motivations:
1. Death before defeat.
2. Steal the money of the Lost Mine.
3. Destroy those who would stand in my way.



Appendix 1: CREATURES

Introduction

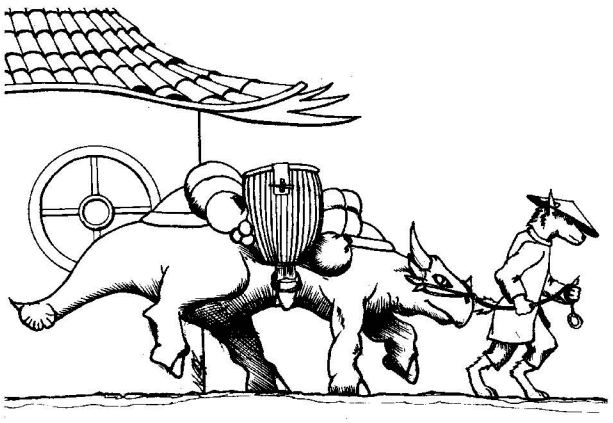
Across Zhongguo there are hundreds if not thousands of wild creatures that live in the forests, plains, mountains, and rivers. Some of these have been domesticated and used for various purposes from riding animals to pets to food. Others remain wild and are often hunted for sport and can be quite dangerous if faced alone, unarmed. These game terms for creatures are representative of average animals. Just like people, though, the animals of the world may vary. The Game Host should increase or decrease abilities to reflect younger, older, smaller, or larger creatures.

Bei ji

This popular food fish is about three hands long. The bony plates protecting the head are hinged to connect to the longer bony plates protecting the first half of the body. The first two fins are actually spines that the bei ji uses to move along the river bottom. The rest of the body and tail are eel-like and curve upward to help force the head down to feed on the shellfish at the river bottom.

Bu zai-ya

This small fish, only a little more than a hand long, is found on the bottom of coves, slow rivers and ponds. It has a band of bony plates directly behind its eyes. It has two fins along its back, the latter running along the whip-like tail. Underneath, it has two sets of two fins each to move it through the water. Instead of teeth the bu zai-ya has plates of bone to scoop up bottom mud and crush whatever it finds. An attractive blue fish with red spots, they are kept in garden ponds as well as caught for food.



Cao xi-yi

The standard for every farming peasant, other than the poorest, is the plant-eating cao xi-yi. They are found from the swamps and rice paddies of the coast to the highest mountain farms. They differ only in coloring and size. Useful for pulling the plow or other heavy loads, cao xi-yi are big, dumb and slow. They walk slower than a man's walking pace. Their meat is prized, especially the tail.

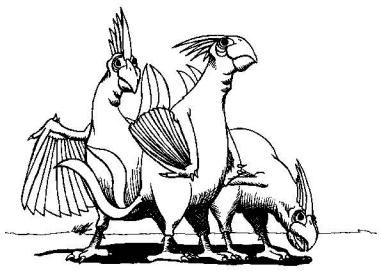
Body 3d12, Speed d4, Mind *none*, Will d6

Habitat: Plains
Senses: Smell
Race: Cao xi-yi d8 *Weapons:* Horns, Tail

		Skills *(with Favored Use)*
d8	d8	Brawling (with tail)
d8	d8	Herbalism (tasty stuff)
d8	d8	Observation (finding food)

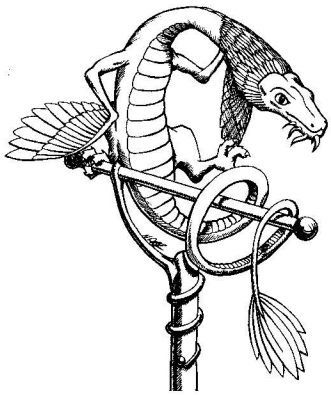
Gifts:	Armor d4, Club Tail, Horns, Mount
Flaws:	Corpulent -8, No Hands, Poor Vision, Skittish, Stubborn
Initiative:	d4
Move:	Dash 8 paces, Stride 2 paces
Defenses:	Dodge d4
Armor:	Natural d4 (& Soak 3d12)
Resolve:	d6
Weapons:	Horns (To-Hit d4, Damage 3d12, d6) Tail (To-Hit d4, Damage 3d12, d6)
Special Abilities:	Mount (doubles Move, increases Size to 80 stone); Club Tail (Natural Weapon, does d6 Damage; Special: Concussion)

Chai yi



Small, dully-plumaged lizards that will return to any place that they have roosted for more than a week, no matter how far away they have traveled. Most are only about a hand long from nose to tail. They can learn to repeat short phrases but more often they carry small scrolls strapped to their necks or to a foot. In most places, they are not considered expensive.

Dong wu



These small brightly colored lizards with their long tails and feathers are found in almost every house. They are prized for their beauty and for their beautiful song. Those captured wild or the least expensive breeds are multi-colored while those owned by the nobles are bred to particular colors and/or patterns to match the nobles' decor, their house colors or their whimsy. Some of those who cannot afford these expensive breeds resort to painting their dong wu's hide and feathers. Dong wu are capable of copying other songs and sometimes even noises, as in the one who copied the noise of the squeaky gate, and incorporate them into their own songs. Older Dong wu are highly prized, as they know more songs.

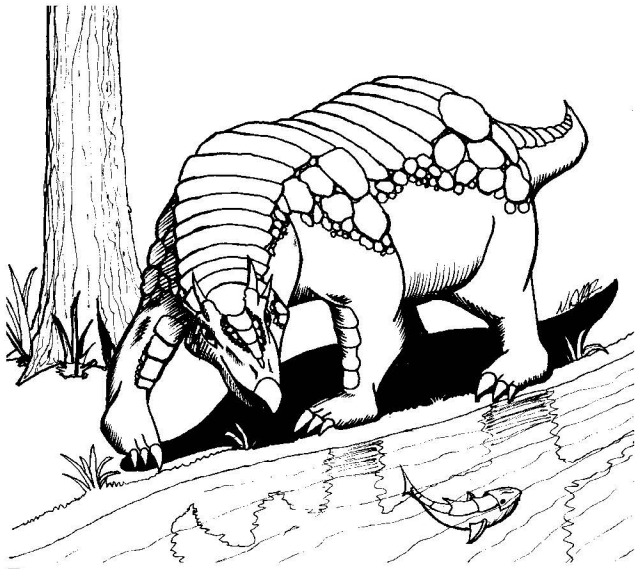
Body d4, Speed d12, Mind *none*, Will d6

Habitat: Plains
Senses: Smell, Spot
Weapons: Claws, Teeth

Race: Dong wu d8

		Skills *(with Favored Use)*
d8	d8	Disguise (bird songs)
d8	d4	Dodge (vs. predators)
d8	d4	Flight (mating display)
	d8	Observation (Spot)
d8	d8	Singing (mating display)
	d4	Sixth Sense (when in the air)

Gifts:	Claws, Flight, Keen Ears, Teeth
Flaws:	Frail, Small, Weak
Initiative:	d12
Move:	Dash 12 paces, Stride 3 paces
Defenses:	Dodge d12, d8, d4
Armor:	None (and *no* Soak)
Resolve:	d6
Weapons:	Claws & Teeth (To-Hit d12, Damage d6)
Special Abilities:	Flight: Dash 20, Stride 5, Stall 1 Small Size: only ½ stone, one less Hit Point



Duo wu

An assortment of wild lizards are lumped under the name duo wu. These all eat a variety of plants and other animals. They are commonly hunted and some are big enough or fierce enough to hunt the hunters. The smaller ones may simply be pests because of raiding crops or eggs, while the largest ones prey on the cao xi-yi herds. Even the smallest one will stand its ground and fight back if faced with a single adversary and can leave its mark on its foes. There are some lie feng who bear the scars to prove it. Fortunately, the only times more than one at a time is seen is during mating season or when the dams are raising the kits. Unfortunately, that is when the duo wu are the most dangerous. The ones found in the swamps tend to be smaller varieties while the ones in the forests and mountains are the larger breeds.

Body d12, Speed d10, Mind *none*, Will d6

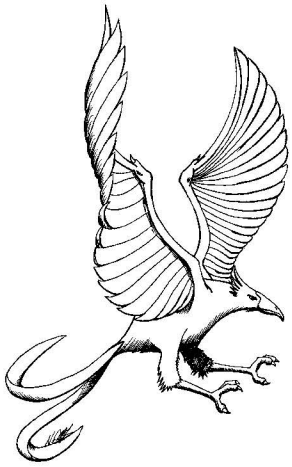
Habitat: Plains
Senses: Smell, Spot
Weapons: Claws, Teeth

Race: Duo wu d8

		Skills *(with Favored Use)*
d8	d8	Brawling (with claws)
d8	d8	Herbalism (tasty stuff
d8	d8	Observation (smell)
d8	d8	Resolve (versus predators)
	d8	Stealth (in the plains)

Gifts:	Claws, Robust +1, Teeth
Flaws:	Single-Minded
Initiative:	d10
Move:	Dash 10 paces, Stride 2 paces
Defenses:	Dodge d10
Armor:	None (& Soak d12)
Resolve:	2d8, d6
Weapons:	Claws and Teeth (To Hit d10, 2d8; Damage d12, d6)

Fan niao



Many hunters & warriors prefer to use the hides and feathers from a variety of fan niao in the belief that the spirit of the hunter will imbue the weapons. Some varieties are trained for and by nobles to hunt with for sport. As a result, they have been endowed with an assortment of virtues and are common symbols in murals, fabric and other arts. In some regions, certain fan niao may only be owned by those of a certain noble rank. The largest varieties or rarest examples of other breeds are kept for use by the Imperial family. Most fan niao hunt fish, shi niao and other small lizards while some hunt other fan niao. Since fan niao feather and hide colors are more subdued than shi niao they are popular for the more subtle decorations and martial displays.

Body d6, Speed 2d12, Mind *none*, Will d6

Habitat: Forest, Mountains, or Plains
Senses: Smell, Spot
Weapons: Beak, Claws

Race: Fan niao d8

		Skills *(with Favored Use)*
d8	d8	Brawling (vs. prey)
d8	d8	Dodge (in flight)
d8	d8	Flight (hunting)
d8	d8	Observation (vs. prey)
	d8	Resolve (vs. prey)
	d8	Stealth

Gifts: Beak, Claws, Flight, Keen Eyes
Flaws: Frail
Initiative: 2d12
Move: Dash 24 paces, Stride 6 paces
Defenses: Dodge 2d12, 2d8
Armor: None (& Soak d4)
Resolve: d6
Weapons: Beak and Claws (To Hit 2d12, 2d8; Damage 2d6)
Special Abilities: Flight: Dash 32, Stride 8, Stall 5

Gui wu

These predators are blamed for the death of lone travelers and cao xi-yi. They eat almost anything that crosses their path, or so it is said. In fact, a number of large carnivorous lizards are collectively called gui wu. While following the same body type, they vary in size and coloring. Some are as large as cao xi-yi while others are not quite the size of the average shou xin. Most are solitary hunters, especially the larger ones. However, they will hunt in packs to bring down larger prey. Their preferred method is to run close and tear bites out of the prey on the run. Then they follow it until it bleeds to death. Those found on the plains and in the forests are more likely to run in packs than those found in the swamps or mountains. Fortunately, except in times of great drought or heavy winter storms, gui wu rarely come to heavily populated areas.

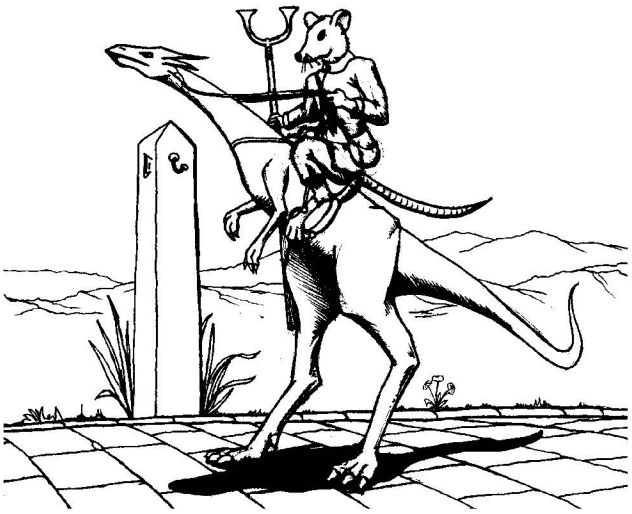
Body 2d12, Speed d12, Mind *none*, Will d6

Habitat: Forest, Mountains, or Plains
Senses: Smell, Spot
Weapons: Beak, Claws

Race: Gui wu d8

		Skills *(with Favored Use)*
d8	d8	Brawling (vs. prey)
d8	d8	Observation (vs. prey)
d8	d6	Resolve (vs. prey)
d8	d6	Stealth (when stalking prey)

Gifts: Armor d6, Claws, Keen Eyes, Keen Nose, Teeth
Flaws: None
Initiative: 2d12
Move: Dash 12 paces, Stride 3 paces
Defenses: Dodge d12, d8, d4
Resolve: d8, 2d6
Armor: Natural d6 (& Soak 2d12)
Weapons: Claws and Teeth (To Hit d12, 2d8; Damage 2d12, d6)



Kuai xi-yi

A smaller, sleeker relative of the zhong xi-yi is the kuai xi-yi, commonly used for aristocratic mounts & chariots. Like the zhong xi-yi they have a neck crest, but the kuai xi-yi's crest is immobile. They are also popular with the scouts & messengers for their speed. For scouts, a mount whose splotchy hide renders it almost invisible in the forest is very useful, although nobles prefer the more brightly colored and eye-catching breeds. When hunting or being fed, kuai xi-yi hold on with their teeth and front claws while they rip with their back claws until the prey is dead. Not until their food is completely dead do the kuai xi-yi start to eat. They also eat small amounts of vegetable matter, although they prefer meat. While many breeds are skittish, a well-trained kuai xi-yi can be accustomed to combat, even to the point of defending its rider.

Body 2d12, Speed d10, Mind *none*, Will d6

Habitat: Forest
Senses: Smell, Spot
Weapons: Claws, Teeth

Race: Kuai xi-yi d8

		Skills *(with Favored Use)*
d8	d4	Brawling (with teeth)
d8	d8	Camouflage (in forest)
d8	d6	Dodge (in forest))
d8	d8	Hiking (in forest)
	d8	Observation (Smell)

Gifts:	Armor d6, Keen Ears, Mount
Flaws:	Skittish
Initiative:	d10
Move:	Dash 20 paces, Stride 5 paces
Defenses:	Dodge d10, d8, d6
Resolve:	d6
Armor:	Natural d6 (& Soak 2d12)
Weapons:	Claws and Teeth (To Hit d10, d8, d4; Damage 2d12, d6)
Special Abilities:	Mount (doubles Move, doubles Size to 48 stone)

Lie feng

These large hunting lizards work best alone or in small groups with the hunter. Hunters, sometimes with the help of beaters, flush the prey from hiding for the lie feng to run down. Their spotted hides are good camouflage in the forest. Some varieties have a crest spine that they are able to raise. Despite popular belief, feral lie feng do not come near civilized areas and avoid people unless sick or lame.

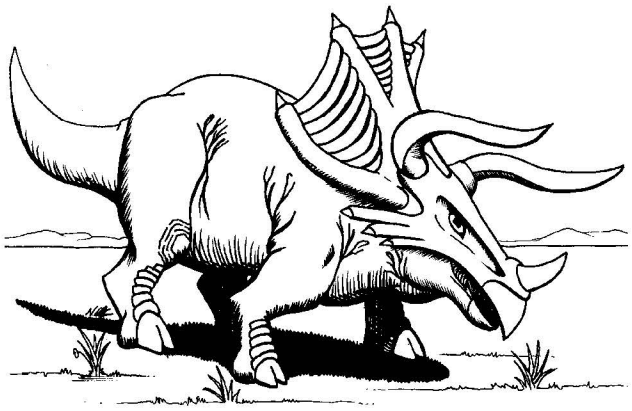
Body d10, Speed d12 & d6, Mind *none*, Will d6

Habitat: Forest, Mountains, or Plains
Senses: Smell, Spot
Weapons: Claws, Teeth

Race: Lie feng d8

		Skills *(with Favored Use)*
d8	d8	Brawling (vs. prey)
d8	d8	Camouflage (when stalking prey)
d8		Observation
d8	d8	Stealth (when stalking prey)
	d8	Tactics (when in groups of 6 or more)

Gifts:	Claws, Keen Nose, Mount, Teeth
Flaws:	Skittish
Initiative:	d10
Move:	Dash 36 paces, Stride 9 paces
Defenses:	Dodge d10, d8, d6
Resolve:	d6
Armor:	None (Soak d10)
Weapons:	Claws and Teeth (To Hit d12, 2d8, d6; Damage d10, d6)
Special Abilities:	Mount (doubles Move, doubles Size to 20 stone)



Ruan qin-shou

Ruan qin-shou is the name for any one of a variety of wild herd animals, including the zhao ze shi-yi and the shan shi-yi. They are hunted both with or without the help of lie feng. Their meat is often a prized addition to a noble's table. Solitary males are popular for sporting hunts, often stopping to fight the hunters. They are commonly depicted as "ruan qin-shou at bay" in art and literature. Some sport-mad nobles make it illegal for peasants on their lands to hunt or kill ruan qin-shou. Many ruan qin-shou breeds rely on speed to evade predators, others depend on keen senses and others go where the predators cannot follow, such as steep mountains or into swamps.

Body d12, Speed d10, Mind *none*, Will d6

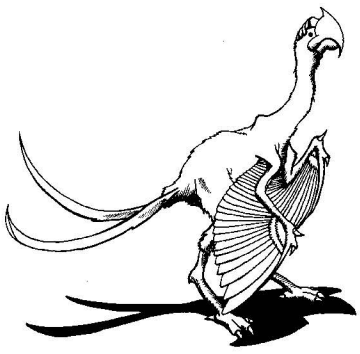
Habitat: Forest, Mountains, or Plains
Senses: Listen, Smell
Weapons: Horns, Hooves

Race: Ruan qin-shou d8

		Skills *(with Favored Use)*
d8	d4	Brawling (with Horns)
d8		Camouflage (vs. predators)
	d6	Dodge (vs. predators)
d8	d8	Herbalism (tasty stuff)
d8	d8	Resolve

Gifts: Keen Ears, Keen Nose, Horns, Mount
Flaws: No Hands, Skittish, Weak
Initiative: d10
Move: Dash 20 paces, Stride 5 paces
Defenses: Dodge d10, d6
Resolve: d6
Armor: None (Soak d12)
Weapons: Horns and Hooves (To Hit d10, d8, d4; Damage d12, d6)
Special Abilities: Mount (doubles Move, doubles Size to 24 stone)

Shi niao



Some variety of shi niao is the main course of any table from peasant to emperor. Even the poorest peasant can manage to catch at least the occasional shi niao with a sling, while some shi niao are prized additions to the Imperial diet. Their feathers and hides are valued for arrows and decorative purposes, despite the shi niao's inability to fly very far. Even many of the eggs, when they can be found, are considered delicacies. Coastal and swamp shi niao make their nests on the ground, hidden in the reeds while the forest and mountain dwelling shi niao prefer to nest in trees. The size and diet may vary, although most are insectivores, herbivores or omnivores, eating insects, berries and smaller lizards.

Body d4, Speed d12, Mind *none*, Will d4

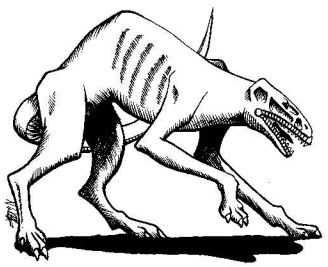
Habitat: Forest, Mountains, or Plains
Senses: Listen, Spot
Weapons: Beak, Claws

Race: Shi niao d8

		Skills *(with Favored Use)*
	d4	Brawling (with Beak)
d8	d8	Dodge (vs. predators)
d8	d8	Flight (fleeing predators)
d8	d6	Observation (vs. predators)
d8	d4	Stealth (avoiding predators)

Gifts: Beak, Claws, Extra Move +2, Flight
Flaws: Frail, Skittish, Small, Weak
Initiative: d12
Move: Dash 14 paces, Stride 3½ paces
Defenses: Dodge d10, d6
Resolve: d4
Armor: None (and *no* Soak)
Weapons: Beak and Claws (To Hit d12, d4; Damage d6)
Special Abilities: Flight: Dash 22 paces, Stride 5½ paces, Stall 1
Small Size: only 1 stone, one less Hit Poin

Shou xin



Shou xin is a catch-all term for a variety of lizards kept as companions, guardians and sometimes as helpers. Commonly, they are pack animals, as opposed to lone hunters. They can be used to guard, and to a lesser extent herd cao xi-yi, or as guardians for people and places. Some kinds are bred with distinctive hides, such as black and red stripes or green with yellow spots. Their loyalty and fierceness are as legendary as the toughness of their hides.

Body d8, Speed d10, Mind *none*, Will d6

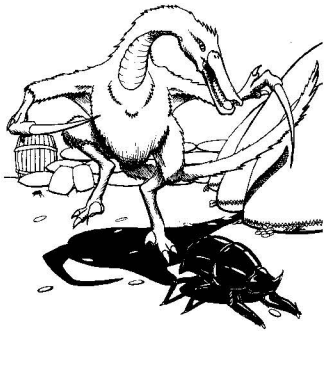
Habitat: Plains
Senses: Listen, Smell
Weapons: Claws, Teeth

Race: Shou xin d8

		Skills *(with Favored Use)*
d8		Brawling (with teeth)
	d6	Hiking (over Plains)
d8	d8	Observation (non-pack or strangers)
d8		Sixth Sense
d8		Stealth

Gifts: Claws, Robust +3, Teeth
Flaws: None
Initiative: d10
Move: Dash 10 paces, Stride 2½ paces
Defenses: Dodge d10
Resolve: d6
Armor: None (Soak d12, d4)
Weapons: Claws and Teeth (To Hit d10, d8; Damage d8, d6)

Zhang bu



A common sight scratching in every village street or stalking through the kitchens is the zhang bu. They hunt the vermin that would otherwise eat the food stores. For this reason, everyone keeps at least one on hand. Their hides come in a variety of colors and patterns and there are those who express a preference for one over another.

Zhong xi-yi

The mainstay of heavy cavalry units is the zhong xi-yi. This omnivorous lizard is almost unstoppable once it gets moving. When charging at full speed, the zhong xi-yi raises its head crest to make itself look larger. Its bipedal stride is surprisingly smooth, but not as fast as the kuai xi-yi. The tail is used for balance as it runs. The piercing whistle of the zhong xi-yi is also distinctive, enabling skilled observers to identify different varieties by sound. Some smaller varieties and some younger individuals of the larger varieties are used to pull heavy chariots, singly or in pairs.

Body 3d12, Speed d10, Mind *none*, Will d6

Habitat: Forest, Mountains, or Plains
Senses: Listen, Spot
Weapons: Claws, Teeth

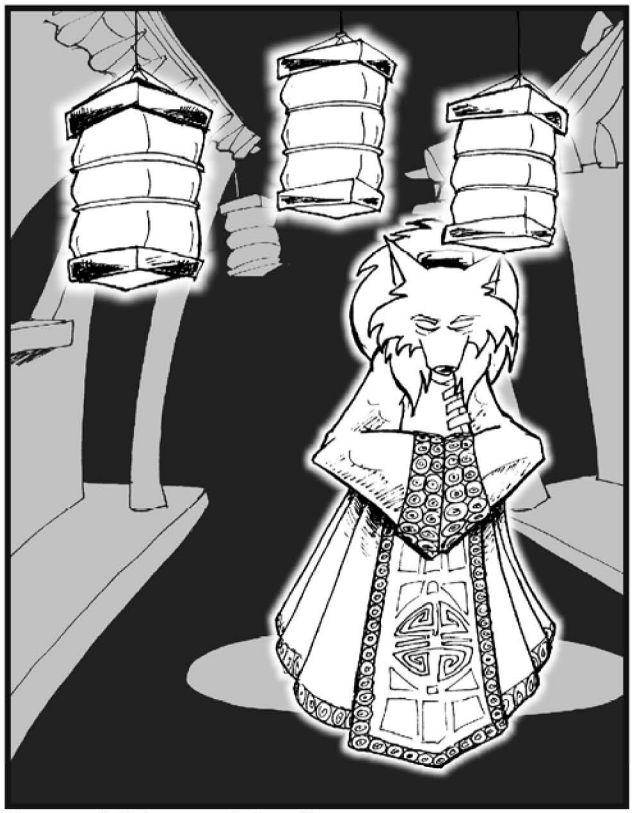
Race: Zhong xi-yi d10

		Skills *(with Favored Use)*
d10	d8	Brawling (with claws)
	d8	Dodge (in plains)
d10		Hiking
d10	d6	Observation (Listening)
d10	d6	Resolve (when being ridden)

Gifts: Armor d4; Claws; Mount; Strength +3; Teeth
Flaws: Skittish; Stubborn
Initiative: d10
Move: Dash 20 paces, Stride 5 paces
Defenses: Dodge d10, d8
Resolve: d10, 2d6
Armor: Natural d4 (& Soak 3d12)
Weapons: Claws and Teeth (To Hit 2d10, d8; Damage 3d12, d8, d6)
Special Abilities: Mount (doubled Move, doubled Size to 78 stone)

Appendix 2: SUPERNATURAL BEINGS

In the remote corners of Zhongguo, many mysterious beings haunt forgotten ruins or blighted places. Even the Celestial Bureaucracy itself cannot catalog all the strangeness found in the world below.



Beyond this mortal coil:
Ghosts

Ghosts are phantom beings, the essence of the soul that may persist after death. Sometimes Ghosts haunt the earth because their original body was not buried properly. Other Ghosts are the lingering personalities of people who feel they have unfinished business in this world.

Ghosts rarely have any corporeal substance — physical objects will pass right through them. Most Ghosts lack a feature, such as feet or a face. They float just off the ground, although some are able to fly. They cannot engage in normal physical combat, nor will mundane weapons hurt them. Magic will have full effect; the more dangerous Ghosts command hostile spells.

A typical Ghost has *no* Body Trait, a Speed of d6, a Mind of d6, a Will of d6, and the Special Trait of Second Sight (p. 62) at d8 or better. Many Ghosts will have Bagua Personalities (p. 63) and Dreads of Sunlight and Loud Noises (p. 57).

Despite the name "Ghost Way," not all Ghosts command Dàoist Magic. (Just as the name "People's Way" does not mean that all People do, either.)

In Defiance of the Natural Order:
Undead

As different from a Ghost, an *Undead* monster is a corpse that has become animated after death. While Ghosts can sometimes beneficial to the living, the Undead are always hostile, representing a violation of the natural order of things that is to be reviled and destroyed. Some resemble rotting corpses; others may look eerie but otherwise normal.

Most Undead are the result of an improper division of the two parts of the soul. While the *hun* or civilized part moves onwards to reincarnate, the *po* or animal nature may remain behind; the mindless hunger that lingers in the body may cause the being to rise up to feed on the souls of the living. One such horror is the *Hopping Vampire* — a corpse with immense strength and leaping ability that attacks unwary travelers and consumes their flesh.

Undead beings have Body and Speed Traits. Depending on their nature, they may or may not have Mind or Will Traits. Undead that lack Mind or Will *automatically Overwhelmingly Succeed* on the Resistance against any effect that would ask them to roll their Mind or Will.

Undead beings will have an Undead Trait that is included with Observation and Resolve. Undead Beings also have an innate *Aura of Unholiness* equal to their Undead Trait. (See p. 252.) Many Undead will have Second Sight (p. 62) and Dreads of Sunlight and Loud Noises (p. 57).

Undead *automatically* pass all Unconsciousness Tests. If they become Mortally Wounded or Dead, most Undead immediately crumble into dust, never to rise again, although some stronger beings may endure. Some Undead beings have even greater supernatural powers.

The Five Vermin

The scholar Huang Futan was the first to write about the "Five Vermin," in his book *Analectic Discourse on the Forsaken Beings of Heaven.* He described them as "the distillation of malevolence, with the rapacity and greed of ten thousand men." He later went on to theorize that the reason why the Five Vermin are not mentioned in the great histories is that they simply did not exist before the Races of Earth. Huang Futan conjectured that the Five Vermin sprang into being when there were enough people thinking impure thoughts.

Whatever their origins, the Five Vermin are definitely inherently magical beings. Many Wizards have attempted to bind such beings to their will, attempting to control them for one purpose or another. A few employ them as messengers or as agents on their own foul errands.

All Vermin have a "Vermin Trait," which is like a Race Trait, which is included with certain Skills. All Vermin have an inherent Aura of one of the Five Dàoist Elements.

In game terms, each Vermin can be treated as its own Race. Being unnatural beings born out of base wants and desires, Vermin have *no* natural Racial Habitat. While they may have any Career, the most common choice is listed with each Vermin. (Although technically a Vermin is a Race like any other, they are not recommended as a choice for Player-Characters.)

Racial Gift: Extra Pair of Hands (3 points)

You are gifted with an extra pair of Useable hands. Both of these are Off Hands unless you have the Gift of Multidexterity (p. 48).

Racial Gift: Poison (1 point)

Your saliva contains a poison that, if it gets into the bloodstream, is quite dangerous. If your Bite or Stinger attack causes at least one Wound, you score a Special Damaging attack: your Race Trait Dice vs. your foe's Body Dice, *ignoring Armor.* (Note this roll is made vs. Body Dice, not Soak.)

> ***Example:*** Zhizhuwang the Spider bites Lang Aierlan the Wolf, and scores one Wound. Zhizhuwang's bite is poisonous — she has a Spider Trait of d12, so her Poison Attack rolls d12. Lang Aierlan's Body Trait is d10. Zhizhuwang scores 11, Lang Aierlan scores 3. As a Damage Roll, Lang Aierlan suffers two Wounds.

Racial Gift: Spinnerets (1 point)

You have two or more pairs of special, joined organs on the underside of your abdomen, from which you can draw silken threads. Drawing a thread is a Long Maneuver, producing one pace per Rank. The threads do not "whip out" from your body.

Silken webs are not "natural weapons." You can use them as either Ribbons or Nets. You can also use them as ropes to bind helpless targets. While the webs themselves are sticky, you will have to weave an elaborate network of threads over several hours to create a web.

You can produce a length of thread equal to the sum of your *Body and Race Trait* per day. (For example, if you have a Body of d6 and a Race Trait of d12, you can draw out 18 paces per day.) You must then consume a good meal and have time to digest it to replenish your silk reserves.

Racial Gift: Stinger (1 point)

You have a long tail that has a barbed point. This tail is a Natural Weapon with a Reach of 1 or 2 paces, causing d6 Damage, with a Special Result of "Impale."

Racial Gift: Venomous Skin (1 point)
Requirement: the Gift of Poison

Your skin excretes poison. You may include your Racial Trait with your Defense against any Natural Weapon Attack or Wrestling Attack — *keeping the Racial Dice separate.* If it was your Racial Die that caused the attack to Fail, your attacker suffers Poison, as above. You may also claim Poison Damage if you Crush a target (p. 140).

Venomous Spit
(Basic Martial Art Maneuver: 1 point)
Requirements: Gifts of "Poison"; Race Trait of d10

Useable with an Axe, Foil, Polearm, Spear, or Sword.

As a First-Rank Maneuver, you are able to spit onto the blade of your weapon. For the rest of this Scene, the very next person Wounded by your weapon suffers the effect of your Poison (see above).

Whether the Poison was effective or not, you will have to use the "Venomous Spit" Maneuver again if you want to poison another target. Your spittle loses potency in about five minutes (that is, at the end of this Scene) if not otherwise used or wiped off.

Arrogant chilopod of Metal:

The Centipede

With glittering compound eyes and multiple limbs, Centipedes are fearsome creatures to behold. Centipedes often seek out criminals and the desperate, then they discipline and drill their followers in order to amass fearsome armies.

Centipedes have the Gifts of "Extra Pair of Hands," "Poison," "Sure-Footed," "Teeth," and "Venomous Spit." They have the flaws of "Eerie," "Ill-Favored," "Proud," and "Wrathful." Their Centipede Trait includes the Racial Sense of "Spot" and the Racial Skills of Climbing, Sixth Sense, Sword, and Wrestling.

Centipedes prefer careers that make them more formidable warriors, such as Mercenary or Vagrant-Warrior. A few have studied as Dàoist Wizards.

All Centipedes have an inherent Aura *of Metal* equal to their Centipede Trait. (See p. 252.)

Devious monster of Earth:

The Scorpion

With tiny heads and long bodies, the Scorpion's body is covered with thin layer of chitin that provides protection against physical assault, but its internal organs are quite fragile. They generally prefer the solitary life of the hermit or bookkeeper, accumulating vast libraries of forbidden books. Ideally, a Scorpion finds a leader who is susceptible to flattery — then they become the leader's personal advisor and confidant, until eventually the leader can't make a single decision without the Scorpion's help.

Scorpions have the Gifts of "Armor d6," "Claws," "Extra Pair of Hands," "Poison," "Stinger," and "Sure-Footed." They have the Flaws of "Eerie," "Failing Health," "Frail," "Greedy," "Ill-Favored," and "Obsequious." Their Scorpion Trait includes the Racial Sense of "Spot" and their Racial Skills of Climbing, Literacy, Research, and Sixth Sense.

Scorpions prefer Academic Careers. The most powerful ones have one, two, or more Wizard Careers.

All Scorpions have an inherent Aura *of Earth* equal to their Scorpion Trait. (See p. 252.)

Crafty arachnid of Wood:

The Spider

Possessed of many nimble fingers, Spiders are often skilled artisans, but more often than not they are too lazy to be bothered to make fine goods, and instead greedily peddle cheap knockoffs to the ignorant. There appear to be more female Spiders than male ones.

Spiders have the Gifts of "Claws," "Extra Pair of Hands," "Multidexterity," "Poison," "Spinnerets," and "Sure-Footed." They have the Flaws of "Eerie," "Frail," "Greedy," "Ill-Favored," and "Slothful." Their Spider Trait includes the Racial Sense of "Spot" and their Racial Skills of Climbing, Contortionist, Forgery, Sixth Sense, and Wrestling.

Spiders prefer Careers that include Trade Skills, and a few are practicing Dào Shih or Beings of Spiritual Purity.

All Spiders have an inherent Aura *of Wood* equal to their Spider Trait. (See p. 252.)

Avaricious amphibian of Water:

The Toad

With their bloated bodies, sullen expressions, and mucous-covered hides, Toads are particularly depressing to look upon and to deal with. However, all of them are accomplished accountants, knowledgeable in everything involving money. In the larger cities, a Toad may become a master of lending money, fencing stolen goods, and racketeering.

Toads have the Gift of "Claws," "Poison," "Robust +3," and "Venomous Skin." They have the Flaws of "Corpulent -4," "Dread of Fire," "Eerie," "Greedy," "Ill-Favored," "Lame," "Skittish" and "Taciturn." Their Toad Trait includes the Racial Senses of "Smell" and "Spot" and their Racial Skills of Breath-Holding, Ciphering, Haggling, Jumping, and Swimming.

Toads are usually Racketeers or Merchants. Given their magical nature, many become Dào Shih.

All Spiders have an inherent Aura *of Water* equal to their Toad Trait. (See p. 252.)

Duplicitous reptile of Fire:
The Viper

Not to be confused with the Snake, the Viper has fangs dripping with venom and lacks the flexibility to constrict. Vipers are natural rhetoricians who manufacture treacherous schemes with barbarians or foreigners in order to gain power. They care about no one but themselves and are generally not to be trusted.

Vipers have the Gifts of "Extra Hit Point," "Keen Nose," "Poison," and "Teeth." They have the Flaws of "Eerie," "Envious," "Garrulous," "Greedy," "Ill-Favored," and "No Hands." Their Viper Trait includes the Racial Senses of "Listen" and "Smell" and their Racial Skills of Diplomacy, Fast-Talk, Literacy, and Oratory.

Vipers prefer Careers that are all about influencing others, such as Lobbyists.

All Vipers have an inherent Aura *of Fire* equal to their Viper Trait. (See p. 252.)

Appendix 3: ABNORMAL STATUS

Here is a summary of strange conditions that a combatant may have. Some have a descriptor in brackets, which can be important for determining how to cure or change the status.

There is no limit to the number of Statuses that can affect a combatant at one time. However, a *stronger* form of Status replaces a weaker form, but generally a weaker status does not replace a stronger one and is simply prevented. For example, the status of *Terror* is stronger than *Fear,* so it replaces Fear — but a status of *Demoralization* (which is weaker) would just be ignored.

The duration of a Status lasts is dictated by what caused it (usually a failed Resistance Test vs. a spell). If a stronger Status replace a weaker one, the stronger Status' duration is used.

Afraid – see *Fear*

Asleep – see *Sleep*

Berserking
[Emotional]

- **Stronger form of *Rage*.**
- Combatant becomes explosively violent. They cannot tell friend from foe, and they attack the nearest target, using Favorite Weapons first and whatever else is at hand second. They lack competence.
- Combatant cannot claim Focus.
- Combatant cannot claim the Guard maneuver.
- Ends if the combatant would gain a new *Emotional State* or a new *Mental State.* That new Emotional or Mental Status is *prevented* and the Berserking is removed.
- Ends if the combatant is rallied with Leadership (p. 112).

Blindness
[Physical]

- Combatant cannot see.
- Combatant suffers *three* Penalties on To-Hit Rolls.
- Combatant suffers *two* Penalties on Defense Rolls.
- Combatant may try to use Listen Tests (p. 113) or Smell Tests (p. 116) to compensate for lack of vision.

Burning – see *On Fire*

Confusion
[Mental]

- **Stronger form of *Incompetence*.**
- Combatant suffers from disorientation and lack of clarity. They lack competence.
- Combatant cannot Focus.
- Combatant cannot claim Favored Use.
- Combatant always loses the Initiative. (In game terms, has an Initiative Score of zero.)
- All of the combatant's attacks are Awkward.
- Combatant suffers one Penalty to all rolls that involve Mind.
- Ends if the combatant is rallied with Leadership.

Death

- **Strongest Status of all.**
- Combatant lies down and takes no actions, Maneuvers, or Defenses.
- Combatant suffers 1 Wound per hour, for purposes of restorative magic.
- Ends if treated with powerful magic.

Demoralization
[Emotional]

- Combatant is anxious and uneasy. They lack confidence.
- Combatant cannot Focus.
- Combatant cannot claim Favored Use.
- Ends if the combatant is rallied with Leadership (p. 112).

Drunkenness

- **Stronger form of *Incompetence*.**
- Combatant suffers from disorientation and lack of clarity. They lack competence.
- Combatant cannot Focus.
- Combatant cannot claim Favored Use.
- Combatant always loses the Initiative. (In game terms, has an Initiative Score of zero.)
- All of the combatant's attacks are Awkward.
- Combatant suffers one Penalty to all rolls that involve Mind.
- Ends when the combatant sobers up, which should happen after a good night's sleep.

Enraged – see *Rage*

Fear
[Emotional]

- **Stronger form of *Demoralization*.**
- Combatant is nervous and jumpy. They lack confidence.
- Combatant cannot Focus.
- Combatant cannot claim Favored Use.
- Combatant suffers one Penalty to To-Hit Rolls. (Defense Rolls are unaffected.)
- Combatant suffers one penalty on any roll that includes Will.
- Ends if the combatant is rallied with Leadership (p. 112).

Focus

- Combatant is calm, cool, collected, and ready for trouble.
- Combatant may use the *Strike Focused* Maneuver (p. 138)
- Ends after the combatant executes a Maneuver.
- Ends if the combatant is sent Reeling.
- Ends if the combatant loses competence or confidence.
- Ends if spent on a benefit (p. 138).

Haste

- **Stronger form of *Slowness.***
- Combatant's reactions and movements are surer and swifter.
- Combatant always wins the Initiative. (In game terms, has an Initiative Score of 13.)
- Ends if dispelled or if the duration of the Haste spell ends.

Imperceptibility

- Combatant is surrounded in a magic fog that renders them almost undetectable. Items the combatant picks up become shrouded in this fog, receding from sight into the fog; dropped items appear as if coming out of a fog. (The combatant may carry up to their Maximum Encumbrance (p. 19)).
- Combatant can only be spotted with Mind Dice, Observation Dice, and Sixth Sense Dice vs. the Effect Dice of whatever caused the Imperceptibility and the combatant's Stealth Dice. (Racial Senses do *not* help to find Imperceptible targets.). A *Tie* or better to perceive the target ends the status.
- Ends if the combatant attacks anyone. (Combatant is entitled to an Ambush Test, with the Imperceptibility Effect Dice as extra Ambush Dice. (p. 104)).
- Ends if the combatant is perceived. This includes, but is not limited to, Failing a Resolve Test or making a Loud Noise.

Incompetence [Mental]

- Combatant seems generally out of sorts. They may find it hard to talk, stuttering at times. They may make minor slips or gaffs, stumbling at times. They lack competence.
- Combatant cannot Focus.
- Combatant cannot claim Favored Use.
- Ends if combatant is rallied with Leadership.

Marionette [Mental]

- **Stronger form of *Paralysis.***
- Combatant no longer controls their physical body. They move in a jerky fashion, by telepathic command of the person who is controlling their body. To onlookers, it looks like the combatant is being pulled about by invisible strings.
- Combatant cannot Focus.
- Combatant always loses the Initiative. (In game terms, has an Initiative Score of zero.)
- The controller chooses the Marionette's Maneuver for the Round. If the controller is unable or simply does not choose a Maneuver, then the Marionette just stands there, as if *Paralyzed.*
- All of the combatant's attacks are Awkward.
- Combatant's To-Hit Rolls and Defense Rolls become 1d6, regardless of what the values were before.
- Combatant may speak freely. They may call for help. They may cast a spell while being controlled at +1 Magic Point cost for not making appropriate gestures (p. 194).
- Combatant can be rallied with Leadership, which will restore control to their body.
- If the combatant becomes Unconscious, Mortally Wounded, or Dead, they fall down and the Marionette status ends.
- The maximum number of Marionettes a controller may command at any one time is equal to the Size of their Mind Trait. (For example, if your Mind Trait is d8, then you may control up to eight Marionettes.) If the number of Marionettes the controller has exceeds this amount for any reason, then it's "first in, first out" — the longest-controlled Marionette is released first.

Mesmerism [Mental]

- **Stronger form of *Marionette.***
- **Stronger form of *Paralysis.***
- **Stronger form of *Transfixation.***
- Combatant loses the will to act. They stand there in a daze, eyes glazed, mouth slightly agape.
- Combatant simply stands there, taking no Maneuver or Defenses. They can be led by the hand at no more than 1 pace per Round.
- Combatant does not consciously remember what's going on. Any events or happenings they observe while Mesmerized will only be revealed by other mind-affecting spells or if they are Mesmerized again and commanded to remember.
- Others may repeat Influence Tests (p. 109) over and over again against the Mesmerized, until they get the results they like, with no disadvantages for repeated attempts. Others may even attempt to plant a *compulsion* that the Mesmerized person won't remember until it's time to act, with standard difficulty for how strongly the compulsion runs against the target's inclinations (see Influence Test, p. 109).
- Combatant answers questions in a monotone voice, always telling the truth.
- The Mesmerism ends if the combatant is ordered to be free or to snap out of it. (Note that the Mesmerized combatant answers to *anyone* they can hear. Any order to snap out will automatically be heeded, so most Wizards who want to attempt extensive mind-control will take lead their Mesmerized target away from others and from distractions.)
- Ends if the combatant suffers a Resolve Test for any reason.

Mired

- Combatant *cannot* Move — their Dash and Stride drop to zero. If they are Flying, they fall to the ground.
- Combatant suffers an effective Encumbrance Limit of d4 (p. 130). Their Dodge is reduced accordingly, but Parry and Block are unaffected.

Mortally Wounded [Physical]

- **Stronger form of *Unconsciousness.***
- **Stronger form of *Sleep.***
- Combatant lies down and takes no actions, Maneuvers, or Defenses.
- Combatant becomes Dead one hour later unless healed.
- Ends if treated with First Aid (p. 149).

On Fire
[Physical]

- Combatant is physically burning, and they are disoriented from pain and distraction. They lack competence.
- At the end of every Round, the combatant suffers 2d6 Fire Damage. Armor is less protective against Burning Damage. ***Only roll the single largest Armor Die vs. Burning Damage.*** For example, if your armor is good for d12, d10 & d8, you only roll the d12 for your Armor roll. (You still roll all Soak Dice, as appropriate.) If the 2d6 Damage roll Botches (that is, comes up all ones), the fire goes out and the status ends.
- Combatant suffers one Penalty on all To-Hit Rolls.
- Ends if the combatant is completely immersed in water.
- Ends if the combatant can "stop, drop, and roll": the combatant Changes Position by dropping to a Lying Position and rolling their Speed vs. d10 and trying for a Success.

Paralysis

- **Stronger form of *Mired*.**
- **Stronger form of *Slowed*.**
- Combatant loses the ability to move at all.
- Combatant *cannot* Move — their Dash and Stride drop to zero. If they are Flying, they fall to the ground.
- Combatant cannot act physically. They may make no To-Hit Rolls and or Defenses.
- Combatant may speak freely. They may call for help. They may cast a spell at +1 Magic Point cost for not making appropriate gestures (p. 194).

Petrified

- **Stronger form of *Paralysis*.**
- **Stronger form of *Unconsciousness*.**
- Combatant becomes a stone statue.
- Combatant gains 2d10 Armor.
- Combatant does not need to drink, eat, or breathe.
- Combatant is Unconscious.
- Ends with time.

Rage
[Emotional]

- Combatant grinds their teeth, chokes on their words, and has a violent disposition. They lack competence.
- Combatant cannot claim Focus.
- Combatant cannot claim the Guard maneuver.
- Ends if the combatant would gain a new *Emotional State* or a new *Mental State*. That new Emotional or Mental Status is *prevented* and the Rage is removed.
- Ends if the combatant is rallied with Leadership (p. 112).

Reeling

- Combatant is off-balance or stumbling.
- Combatant suffers one Penalty to all Defenses.
- Combatant's next Maneuver choice *must be* "Recover from Reeling."
- Ends when the combatant Recovers.

Silence

- Combatant makes no noise of any kind, whether they want to or not.
- Combatant is *unable* to cast spells.
- Combatant *cannot* be perceived by Listen Tests.
- Combatant gains two Bonuses on Sneak Tests (at the Game Host's discretion).
- Combatant cannot speak to others or rally them with Leadership.
- Ends if the Silence is dispelled, or when the duration of the Silencing spell runs out.

Sleep
[Mental]

- Combatant is briefly overwhelmed by weariness and shortly thereafter collapses.
- Combatant lies down and takes no actions, Maneuvers, or Defenses.
- Ends if the combatant is rallied with Leadership (p. 112).
- Ends if the combatant must make a Resolve Test.
- Ends if the combatant hears a Thundering Noise.

Slowness

- **Stronger form of *Haste*.**
- Combatant moves as if in water or thick mud, or as if in a slow-motion movie.
- Combatant always loses the Initiative. (In game terms, has an Initiative Score of zero.)
- Combatant suffers an effective Encumbrance Limit of d4 (p. 130). Their Dodge is reduced accordingly, but Parry and Block are unaffected.
- Ends if dispelled, or when the duration of the Slowness spell ends.

Terror
[Emotional]

- **Stronger form of *Demoralization*.**
- **Stronger form of *Fear*.**
- Combatant is stricken with shock and alarm. They will seek every opportunity to get away from what caused their Terror. They lack competence.
- Combatant cannot Focus.
- Combatant cannot claim Favored Use.
- Combatant *cannot make* To-Hit Rolls or any other kind of hostile act. (Defense Rolls are unaffected.)
- Combatant suffers one Penalty on any roll that includes Will.
- Ends if the combatant is rallied with Leadership (p. 112).

Transfixation
[Mental]

- Combatant stares at some object or manifestation that Transfixes all their attentions.
- Combatant is in a stupor and takes no actions, Maneuvers, or Defenses.
- Combatant notices nothing but what Transfixes them.
- Ends if the combatant can no longer see what was Transfixing them, perhaps because it disappeared or because something blocked their line of sight.
- Ends if the combatant is rallied with Leadership (p. 112).
- Ends if the combatant must make a Resolve Test.
- Ends if the combatant hears a Thundering Noise.

Unconsciousness
[Mental]

- **Stronger form of *Sleep*.**
- Combatant lies down and takes no actions, Maneuvers, or Defenses.
- Ends with time.

Appendix 4: THE SECRETS OF THE JADE DRAGON

The *Romance of Chien Tang and her 9 Sons* is a classic of Zhongguo literature. It tells the story of how the Dragon Prince Liu Yu fell in love with the peasant vixen Chien Tang. Tung Ting, the jealous nephew of the Dragon King, ran off to tell his uncle about the tryst, in hopes that his cousin would be disowned and he himself might ascend to the throne that day. But the Dragon King consulted the omens (in the popular version, he breaks a fishbone into two pieces), and decided to bless the union. In a fit of rage, Tung Ting attacked the Dragon Prince, and then flooded the entire valley with a torrential rain, hoping to kill Chien Tang. Liu Yu took his bride to safety on a high mountain-top, then flew into the sky to engage Tung Ting in mortal combat. Tung Ting snapped Liu Yu's neck in his mighty jaws. Chien Tang, consumed with grief and rage, found the spiritual energy within herself to transform into a dragon, and she grew to such size as to span the entire valley with her body, claws, and tail. She struck down Tung Ting and ended the rains, albeit too late. She mourned her dead husband, but in due course she gave birth to nine dragon eggs, which hatched into nine young dragons, who became known as the Nine Sons of Chien Tang. In atonement for the tragedy they had brought to the valley, Chien Tang sent each of her sons in a different direction, on a quest to do some great, selfless act.

Most folks have only read abridged copies of the *Romance*. The full text itself, if read properly, describes in detail the numerous spells ascribed to Dragons throughout literature, including magic that would allow oneself to take on transformation into a Dragon! For this reason, the Zhongguo Empire has made it illegal for someone to own a copy of the *Romance* without written permission, because changing into a different race violates the "natural order of things." Just making reading the *Romance* a crime, however, does not prevent the curious from seeking the books out…

All spells of the Nephrite Dragon, Jadeite Dragon, and Jade Dragon lists are of the *Dragon* Nature.

Esoteric Spirit-Folk Career: *Lung Shu*

Requirement: must have an unedited copy of The Romance of Chien Tang and Her 9 Sons

You are a student of the ways of the *Romance of Chien Tang and her 9 Sons*. Unless you have some kind of Investiture (p. 53), or unless you are already a Dragon, you are breaking the law in a grievous way by even learning these spells. ***Include with:*** Literacy, Lore: *Romance of Chien Tang and her 9 Sons,* and Meditation.

This Career grants you the spell list of *Nephrite Dragon.*

Nephrite Dragon (Beiqinglung Shu)

Requirement: Lung Shu Career of d4

Baxia Crosses the River

[Dragon, Lake]

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Include 3d6 with Breath-Holding and Swimming

For the rest of this Scene, you may include the spell's 3d6 Effect Dice as Breath-Holding and Swimming Dice.

Bixi Carries the Burden

[Dragon, Earth]

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d6
Type: Regular
Effect: opposed Hiking Difficulty reverts to imaginary 1

You cast this spell just before you are to make a Hiking Test. Do not roll the opposed Difficulty — it automatically becomes the "imaginary 1" (that is, assume all dice come up ones).

Chiwen Gazes Into the Distance

[Dragon, Mountain]

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Gaze at a remote spot

This spell works best if you are on a tower or high summit. You eyesight becomes enhanced so that you can focus your gaze on a spot as far away as the horizon.

When you cast this spell, pick any spot from where you are to the horizon. Distance no longer becomes a factor — you may view that spot as if you were right there, due to your superior vision. If something blocks your view, such as a wall or a screen, then you won't be able to see.

The maximum distance you could hope to see is half a league when you are standing on the ground, or three leagues if you are on a high summit. (If you are in the Kingdom of Heaven, there is *no* limit to how far you may look.)

Haoxian Fights in the Castle

[Dragon, Fire]

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Tactics Dice become Defense Dice

For the rest of this scene, you may include all your Tactics Dice with Defense Dice, such as Parry, Block, or Dodge.

Jiaotu Closes the Door

[Dragon, Unreal]

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Room becomes proof against eavesdropping

You must be in a room or other enclosure when you cast this spell. You must close all doors and windows, or at least block them up with privacy-screens and the like.

For the rest of this Scene, no one outside the room may eavesdrop on what goes on inside the room. All Listen Tests from outside will fail. Scrying magic or other perceptive magic (such as "The Viewing of the Remote Place," p. 248) will fail. Even Synecdoche spells will not work on targets within the room.

This magic may be dispelled before the duration expires … but never by Synecdoche magic.

Lung Shu's Privilege over Dragon

[Dragon, Water]

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d6
Type: Defense (Privilege)
Effect: Invoke Privilege over spells of the Dragon Nature

You may invoke Privilege over any spell of the Dragon Nature (p. 191).

Pulao Roars at the Annoyances

[Dragon, Thunder]

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster lets out a loud roar; listeners test Will & Race vs. 3d6 or suffer Fear

When casting this spell, your mouth twists back in a frightful expression as you let out a roar, as loud as a Thundering Noise. All who hear the roar (friend and foe alike) must test their Will & Race Traits vs. the Effect Dice of 3d6 or suffer Fear.

Qiuniu Appreciates the Music

[Dragon, Wood]

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Gain Keen Ears and supernatural musical ability

For the duration of this Scene, you enjoy the following benefits:

- You gain the Gift of Keen Ears (p. 48).
- You may include your Singing Dice and (if you have an appropriate instrument) your Musical Instrument Dice with any Leadership Tests (p. 112) you make this Scene.

Suanmi Burns the Incense

[Dragon, Wind]

Cost: 3
Difficulty: 3d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Gain Keen Nose; Fire, Weather, and Wind Damage become Enervated

For the duration of this Scene, you are affected as follows:

- You gain the Gift of Keen Nose (p. 48).
- You treat all Damage from fire or suffocation as *Enervated Damage.*
- You treat all Damage from attacks resisted with Breath-Holding Skill (such as some Martial Arts) as *Enervated Damage.*
- If you suffer Damage from magic of the *Fire, Weather,* or *Wind* Nature, you treat the roll as *Enervated Damage.*
- You smell of rich incense. Rolls to Track you will be made at least one level easier.

Yazi Wields the Sword

[Dragon, Metal]

Cost: 5
Difficulty: 5d6
Type: Defense
Effect: You may use your Sword to Parry Spells

You must have a Ready Sword to use this spell. As part of the casting of this spell, you may use your Sword Parry Dice (that is, Speed Dice & Sword Dice) to counterspell any spell directed at you.

> ***Example 1:*** In-Leng has her sword at the ready. A Dào Shih tries to use the Spell "Misfortune of Fire" upon her. She casts the "Yazi Wields the Sword" Spell (as a Magic Defense); now she rolls her Sword Parry Dice of 2d12 & d8 vs. the spell's Effect Dice of 3d8.

You may only use this spell to prevent a spell from being cast, not to remove a continuing magical effect (p. 201).

You can use this spell to prevent magic directed at others *if* you know the Martial Art of "Parry for Others" and are able to parry for at least one of the targets.

Jadeite Dragon (Qingbeilung Shu)

Requirement: Adept at any five spells of Nephrite Dragon

The Dragon's Body-Fire

[Dragon, Fire, Wind, Unreal]

Cost: 4
Difficulty: 4d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains Weather Sense Dice as Flight Dice

The caster gains long silky appendages from the their shoulder-blades, and around the arms, known as "body fire."

For the rest of this Scene, the caster gains the ability to Fly, using their Weather Sense Dice as Flight Dice.

The Dragon's Claws

[Dragon, Earth, Unreal]

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains Claws

The caster's hands become large and endowed with glistening, sharp claws. The caster gains Claws which do d6 Damage. If the caster already has Claws, then the ones they do have look more dragon-like.

The Dragon's Eyes

[Dragon, Heaven, Unreal]

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains Keen Eyes

The caster's eyes become large and round, to look more like a dragon's. The caster gains the Gift of Keen Eyes for the rest of this Scene.

The Dragon's Face

[Dragon, Metal, Unreal]

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains Teeth

In a really dramatic effect, the caster's face lengthens and gains an impressive array of teeth. Their throat also broadens to accommodate the larger head. The caster gains the Gift of Teeth for the remainder of this Scene.

The Dragon's Horns

[Dragon, Unreal, Wood]

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains Horns

The caster gains the Gift of Horns for the rest of this Scene. If the caster already has Horns, the ones they do have become more dragon-like.

The Dragon's Mane & Barbels

[Dragon, Thunder, Unreal]

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains Barbels

The caster gains long whiskers next to their nose, and a long flowing mane of hair. This appearance is normally associated with Dragons but is also seen on Qilings. The character gains the Gift of Barbels.

The Dragon's Scales
[Dragon, Mountain, Unreal]

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains Armor of d6

The caster gains 117 scales all over their person — 81 yin scales and 36 yang scales. These Scales count as the gift of d6 Armor. (This gift *replaces* any other Gift of Armor that the caster may already possess.)

The Dragon's Tail
[Dragon, Unreal, Water]

Cost: 2
Difficulty: 2d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster gains Prehensile Tail

Caster gains a large, scaly tail — or if they already possess a tail, their own transforms to look more like a dragon's. The caster gains the Gift of Prehensile Tail.

Jade Dragon (Yulung Shu)
Requirement: Adept at any five spells of Jadeite Dragon

Chien Tang Grows to Immense Size
Requirement: the Gift of Armor
[Dragon, Mountain, Thunder, Unreal]

Cost: 9
Difficulty: 9d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster grows 12 stone in Size

The caster grows 12 Stone in Size. This has a variety of effects:

- Your Body Dice increase by d12.
- Your Strength increases by d12.
- Your Soak increases by d12.
- Your Lift increases by +5.
- You gain an Extra Hit Point.
- Your clothes and armor no longer fit you and are destroyed by your transformation. As you burst out of them, you suffer Damage of your Armor Dice vs. your original Soak Dice.

The spell lasts for one Scene, or until you dismiss it, whichever comes first. When the spell ends, you lose all the above benefits. When you lose the Extra Hit Point, you may pass over a more severe Death threshold — you may have to make a new Death Test.

Liu Yu and Chien Tang Were Two Who Became as One
[Dragon]

Cost: 1
Difficulty: 1d6
Type: Delayed (Bounty)
Effect: Gain a Bounty of 2 towards Dragon Nature

You Delay this spell upon yourself, to claim a Bounty of 2 Magic Points towards any spell of the Dragon Nature (p. 190).

Tung Ting Shakes His Hair
Requirement: the Gift of Barbels
[Dragon, Wind]

Cost: 5
Difficulty: 5d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Gain Weather Sense Dice, Racial Smell Dice as Second Sight

The caster's hair, mane, and Barbels will twitch when the caster is in the presence of magic, and now any supernatural agency has a particular odor the caster can perceive.

For the rest of this Scene, the caster may use their Weather Sense Dice and Racial Smell Dice (if any) as Second Sight Dice (p. 62)

Chien Tang Thrashes the Earth
Requirement: the Gift of Prehensile Tail
[Dragon, Mountain, Earth]

Cost: 9
Difficulty: d12, d10, 2d8, d6, d4
Type: Exploding
Effect: Group suffers 6d6 Exploding Attack (include Acrobatics, Digging, & Jumping Dice with Soak)

You smack the ground with your mighty tail, and your Dragon Nature allows you to direct the shockwave across the lines of the earth against only those you seek to destroy — the targets suffer d12, d10, 2d8, d6, d4 Exploding Damage.

Targets that are not on the ground (such as those who are Flying) are completely immune to the attack. In addition, targets may include their Acrobatics Dice, Digging Dice, and Jumping Dice with their Soak.

Liu Yu Breaks Open the Clam
Requirement: the Gift of Claws
[Dragon, Fire, Water]

Cost: 5
Difficulty: 5d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Claws cause Slaying Damage

The caster's Claws cause *Slaying* Damage for the rest of this scene.

Liu Yu Rears His Head

Requirement: the Gift of Horns

[Dragon]

Cost: 5
Difficulty: 5d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Horns cause Slaying Damage

The caster's Horns cause *Slaying* Damage for the remainder of this Scene.

Tung Ting Shrinks to Diminutive Size

[Dragon]

Cost: 5
Difficulty: 3d10
Type: Regular
Effect: Caster becomes tiny

The caster shrinks to only 1 cm in height, as well as all his equipment.

While this size, none of the caster's physical attacks can cause any appreciable harm to any targets. The caster's walking distance drops to a negligible distance, but their Flying movement is unimpaired.

The caster gains an extra 3d10 to include with all uses of Dodge and Stealth.

Chien Tang is Transformed by Grief

[Dragon, Heaven]

Cost: 5
Difficulty: 5d6
Type: Regular
Effect: Next Jadeite Dragon spell is a Persistent Spell

The very next Jadeite Dragon spell you cast this Scene becomes a *Persistent* spell.

Appendix 5: PRONUNCIATION

Where possible, the Zhonggese dialect has been transliterated into the following phonetics:

Letter	Pronunciation
A	A as in father
AI	AI as in aisle
C	TS as in its
CHI	CHUR as in churn
CI	TS as in its + I as in divide
E	OO as in hook
EN	UN as in sun
ENG	UNG as in sung

Letter	Pronunciation
I	I as in machine
IA	YA as in yard
IAN	YEN as in yen
IU	EO as in Leo
JU	J as in jump + OO as in too
O	AW as in law
OU	O as in joke
Q	CH as in chair

Letter	Pronunciation
QU	CHOO as in choose
RI	R as in rip + IR as in sir
SHI	SH as in fish + IR as in sir
SI	S as in sum + I as in divide
U	U as in prune
UI	AY as in way

Letter	Pronunciation
UN	UN as in hun
X	SH as in she
XU	SHOO as in shoot
YAN	YEN as in yen
Z	DS as in buds
ZH	J as in jump
ZHI	IR as in sir
ZI	Z as in zoo + I as in divide

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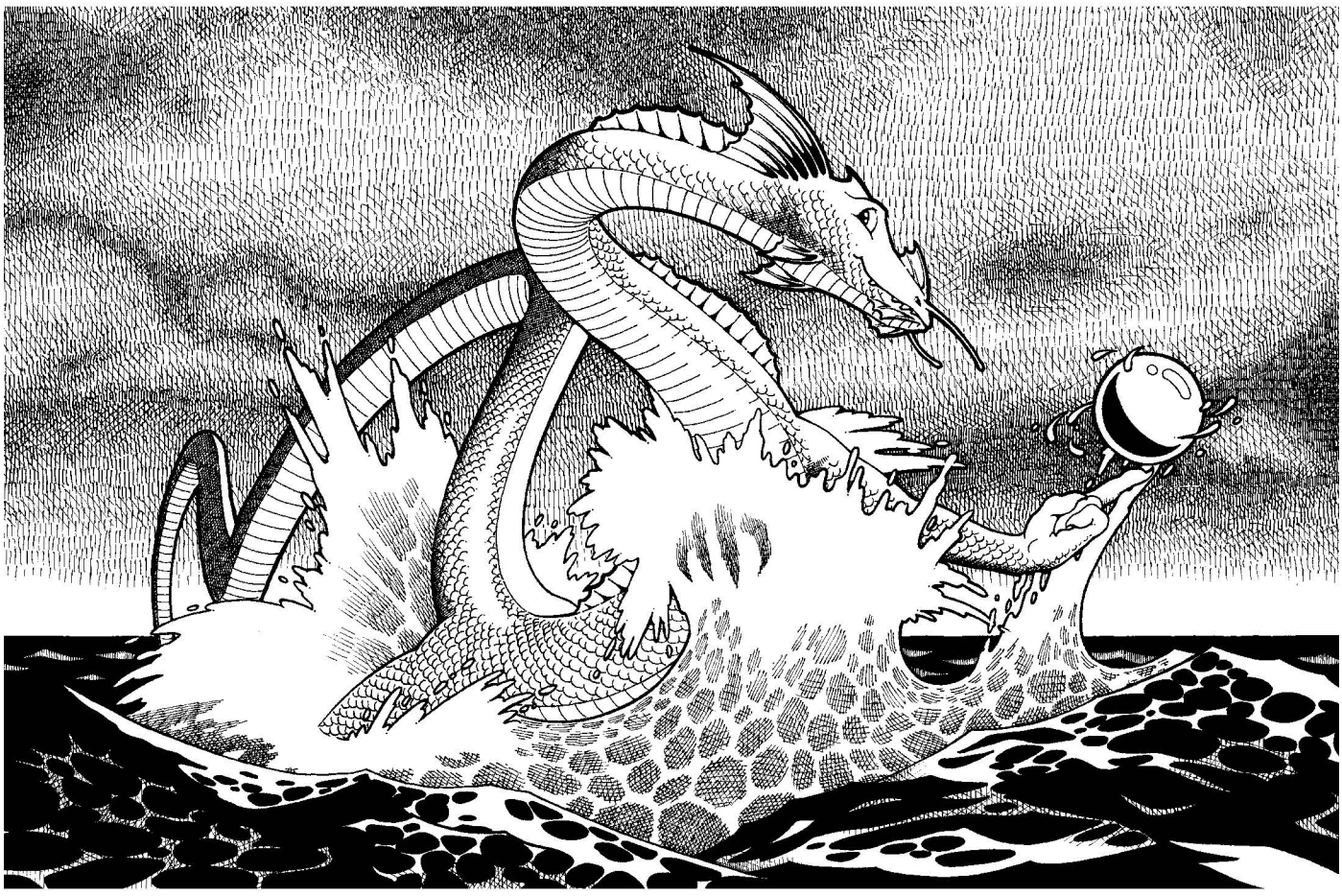

JADECLAW 玉爪

ANTHROPOMORPHIC FANTASY ROLE-PLAYING

Name .....

Race ..... Habitat: ..... Senses: .....

Career .....

.....

.....

List your Trait Dice in the dotted blank at the top of each scroll.

Below, copy those Trait Dice next to Skills to which they apply.

Skills *(Favored Use)* **Experience**

Body 體 Speed 巧 Mind 智 Will 毅

Ht: .... *hands* Size & Wt. : .... *stone*

Dash: ..... *paces* Stride: .... *paces*

Lift: ..... Strength: .....

Magic Points

Magic Points = Will Trait + all Wizard Traits

Gifts and Flaws

Racial Gifts & Flaws

.....

.....

.....

Personal, Social, & Esoteric Gifts

(For starting characters, not to exceed 10 points)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

External & Internal Flaws

(For starting characters, not to exceed -10 points)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Self-Improvement

1) .....

2) .....

3) .....

4) .....

Experience Earned

Use "/" for Fatigue, "X" for Wounds. Only Wounds force Death rolls.

Hit Points

Save Resolve each round or pass out –

Save Body vs. Death at each hit or die –

4d12 4d12 4d12 4d12 3d12 2d12 d12 d10 d8 d6 d4

4d12 3d12 2d12 d12 d10 d8 d6 d4

Encumbrance

A negative number is a Move penalty. List Move in blanks, below. This limits the size of Dodge Dice, et al.

◄◄Lift Bonus Encumbrance►►

Block out All "+" boxes greater than your Lift Bonus. For each stone you carry, fill in a box. Once you run out of "+" boxes, you are Encumbered.

d12 d10 d8 d6 d4 = Encumbrance Limit

Equipment

Good Hand _____

Off Hand _____

Head _____

Body _____

Backup _____

Pack _____

Purse _____

Starting Bu-qian = Sum of all Career Dice

Initiative *(Speed Dice & Mind Dice)*

Resolve *(Will Dice and Resolve Skill Dice)*

Maneuvers

Name	*Rank*	*To-Hit Dice*	*Damage*	*Special*
Strike First	First			
Strike Sure	Second			
Strike Hard	Second			

Defenses *(Note: include Cover Dice (from shield) with all Defenses.)*

Name	*Dice*	*Armor*
Block		Name
Parry		Dice
Dodge		and Soak

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Enter the world of Zhongguo, where Dragons and Phoenixes live among Cats, Rats, Dogs, and dozens of other races ... Where the Celestial Bureaucracy governs not only the Noble Houses of Earth, but also the Heaven Court and even the weather itself ... Where evil lurks in forgotten places, and ambition stirs in the hearts of the greedy and the wrathful ... Where masters of the mystic martial arts make impossible feats look effortless ... Where wizards conjure forth balls of fire, bolts of lightning, thunderstorms, or even changes to fate itself ... Where adventure can be found from the uncharted wilderness, to the Forbidden City of Mâjing, and all places in between.

JADECLAW: Anthropomorphic Fantasy Role-Playing is a complete game in one volume. Create the character you want to play from the many Races and Careers of Zhongguo, or invent your own. Immerse yourself in martial-arts battles and spell-casting with a game system that is simple to learn yet endless in possibility. Experience the wonder of a fantastic kingdom where the destiny of a thousand years can be decided in an instant.

To play JADECLAW, you will also need pencil and paper, and polyhedral dice (four-sided, six-sided, eight-sided, ten-sided and twelve-sided).

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