

**KUFEI  
JIN**  
THE HUNGRY GHOSTS





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## Mature Content Warning

As with all *World of Darkness* media, *Kuei Jin: The Hungry Ghosts* is about monsters and contains references to violence, murder, religious exploitation, political extremism and many other issues that some may find upsetting or uncomfortable.

Someone at your table is not familiar with this game. Someone at your table has dealt with some of these issues in real life. Someone at your table wants to know that you read this warning and know you will be considerate to them as players, while putting their character through the wringer.

In the Appendix of *Vampire: The Masquerade*, you will find concrete techniques on how to handle difficult subjects in your game in a manner that is respectful to your players and their experiences. Calibrate beforehand which techniques your group wants to use. People have different needs and not every method works for every person.

**BASED ON WHITE WOLF ENTERTAINMENT'S  
VAMPIRE: THE MASQUERADE**

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# AN INTRODUCTION

In Dharmic cultures, there are supernatural beings defined by insatiable hunger or thirst, called 'Preta' in Sanskrit. 'Preta' translates into English as 'Hungry Ghost'. They are both pitied and feared, with many religious and cultural practices focused on alleviating their suffering.

Kindred Of The East (KOTE) used aspects of the Preta to create the Kuei Jin. This book returns them to more traditional concepts, while expanding them into a new playable family of creatures.

## Theme

This book explores what happens when people have a second chance in life with the wisdom that comes from being dead. Hungry Ghosts are human spirits with deep regrets who have returned to the mortal world in flesh and blood with both great disadvantages and great potential. Hungry Ghosts is about redemption, and self-improvement despite the odds. It is a story of wanting to reform, knowing that most of society would reject you at first glance.

## Goals

The primary goal of this project is to adapt the mechanics of KOTE into the V5 system and reform the westernised view into something that better reflects Asian cultures. As such:

- KOTE mechanics are simplified, cut or altered.
- All terms used by KOTE have been translated into English for consistency.
- Players are encouraged to consider the native language and culture being represented in their games, and research how the inhabitants of the game city would view Hungry Ghosts.

## What this is not

This is not a complete game and requires Vampire: The Masquerade 5th Edition for a complete understanding of the mechanics and systems. A knowledge of KOTE and its expansions will help but is not required. Settings and locations are not provided so each Storyteller must research and create their own.

What this book does contain:

- A specialised character sheet.
- Specific disciplines.
- Mechanics for Hungry Ghosts and how they work with Vampire: The Masquerade 5th Edition.
- Suggested lore for Hungry Ghosts in the V5 timeline.

## Kuei-Jin or Hungry Ghost?

The term "Kuei-Jin" unfortunately does not make sense in any language as it's an amalgamation of Chinese and Japanese. Despite the many different Asian cultures, "Kuei-Jin" as a phrase would not be understood anywhere.

However, recognising "Kuei-Jin" as the norm in the *World of Darkness* cannon, both "Hungry Ghost" and "Kuei-Jin" can be used. Keep in mind, it is best to translate "Hungry Ghost" into native languages where possible. For example, 餓鬼 is the translation of "Preta" for Japanese and Chinese with the former calling them "Gaki" and the latter "Er Gui".

## THE HUNGRY GHOST

Hungry Ghosts are spirits that have been physically reborn into the world. They appear human but their

souls are divided into two. One is malicious and self-destructive, while the other is moral and idealistic. These are always in opposition, vying for control of the body. As spirits given flesh, Hungry Ghosts have access to elemental powers, and can travel through different metaphysical Realms.

### **Are Hungry Ghosts Vampires?**

In the *World of Darkness*, Hungry Ghosts are presented as very similar to vampires. While there are similarities, there are many differences as well.

### **Do they drink blood?**

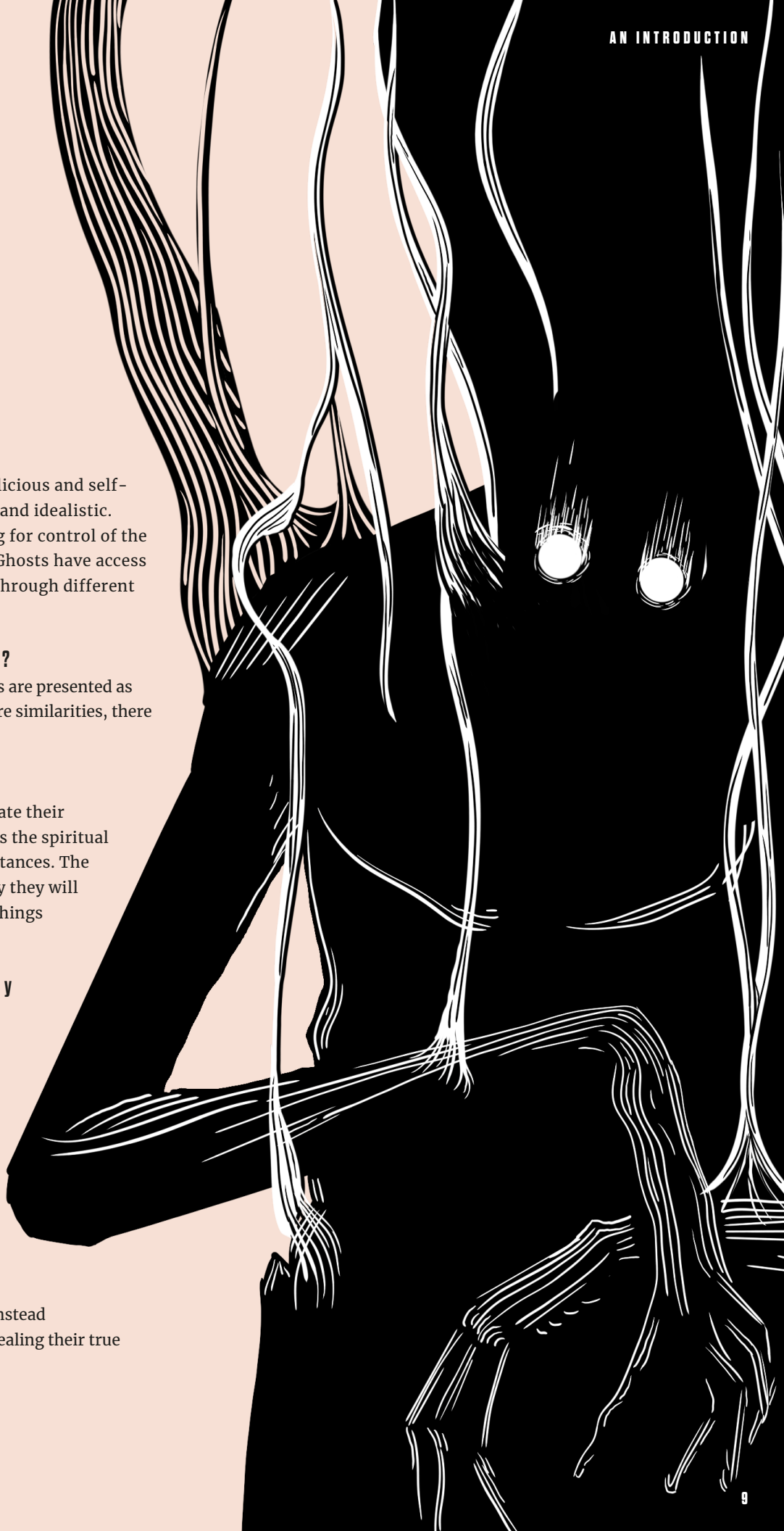
Yes. However, Hungry Ghosts really sate their hunger by absorbing Essence, which is the spiritual energy contained within organic substances. The older the Hungry Ghost, the less likely they will feed on blood, and instead use other things such as breath.

### **Like vampires, does a Hungry Ghost have to kill someone and feed them their blood to make them into a Hungry Ghost too?**

No. A Hungry Ghost is not made by another. They appear on their own and cannot be forced into creation. Blood does not tie them together. As such, there are no Generations, Sires, or Blood Potency.

### **Do they burn in the sun?**

Yes. Like vampires, they fear the sun. Instead of burning, their flesh starts to rot, revealing their true nature as animated corpses.



# GLOSSARY

[...] = NAMES USED IN REAL LIFE, OLD *KOTE* OR OTHER SPLATBOOKS.

## **Ancestor**

A leader of a court or local population of Hungry Ghosts.

## **Asrikpa**

The first Non-Returner who taught others how to become Non-Returners.

## **August Personage**

A supreme divinity of heaven, a god, or an aspect of God.

## **Awakened/Awakening**

An achievement for a Hungry Ghost. They gain a profound understanding of reality and are almost a Non-Returner but choose to remain in the mortal world.

## **Black Essence**

[Yin, Yoni]

Energy denoting passivity, coldness, darkness, femininity.

## **Clique**

[Wu, Coterie]

A band of Hungry Ghosts who work together.

## **Deathsight**

The ability to see dead spirits' auras.

## **Demon Emperor**

The replacement of the August Personage, who will oversee the decline and destruction of the world. No one knows who or what the Demon Emperor will be but most assume it will be a Yama King or Queen.

## **Demon Realm**

[Yomi, Hell]

A place of death and torment, where Hungry Ghosts return from.

## **Demonic Essence**

Energy twisted and warped into pain and anger.

## **Domains**

Subcategories of Realms.

## **Ebon Dragon**

A divine being that represents Black Essence and is supposedly the original source of it. He and his mate, the Scarlet Queen, are said to have created the 10,000 immortals.

## **Essence**

[Prana, Chi]

The fundamental life force permeating through reality.

## **Fire Soul**

[Hunger/normal Frenzy]

When a Hungry Ghost is overcome by rage or hunger and cannot reason.

## **Gateways**

Specific points that go into the spirit worlds or the Underworld. Unlike Rivergates where there is an element of randomness involved, they are concrete.

## **Ley Lines**

[Dragon Lines, Fairy Paths]

Supernatural lines that transfer Essence around like veins of the Earth. Hungry Ghosts with the right abilities can travel using these lines.

## **Lifesight**

The ability to see the auras of the living.

## **False Death**

When a Hungry Ghost's physical form is destroyed, forcing them to remake themselves.

## **Node**

[Dragon's Nest, Caerns]

Where ley lines intersect and create wellsprings of Essence. Nodes have the weakest Wall Ratings.

## **Non-Returner**

A Hungry Ghost that has progressed beyond the spiritual cycle and can manifest whenever they choose to. They no longer feel Hunger or fear the sun.

**Outcast**

[Akuma, Èmó, Agma, Rakshasa, Fiend]  
Hungry Ghosts that are shunned and hunted due to allegiances with the Yama Kings/Queens.

**Path**

[Dharma]  
The teachings that a Hungry Ghost chooses to follow in order to become a Non-Returner.

**Path Rating**

How far a Hungry Ghost has advanced on their Path to becoming a Non-Returner.

**Psyche**

[Higher Soul, Hun]  
The 'good' half of a Hungry Ghost soul.

**Rank**

The level of importance or responsibility afforded to a Hungry Ghost.

**Realm**

Generic term for alternate reality or plane of existence.

**Rivergates**

[Portals, Trods]  
Supernatural portals to other areas of the world. They can also be used to travel to other dimensions. It is said that fae creatures often use them.

**Scarlet Essence**

[Yang, Linga]  
Energy denoting action, warmth, brightness, masculinity.

**Scarlet Screen**

A softer version of the Masquerade, practiced by Hungry Ghosts.

**Scarlet Queen**

A divine being that represents Scarlet Essence and is

supposedly the original source of it. She and her mate, the Ebon Dragon, are said to have created the 10,000 immortals.

**Second Breath**

The start of a Hungry Ghost's new life, their first feeding of Essence.

**Shadow**

[Lower Soul, P'o]  
The 'bad' half of a Hungry Ghost soul.

**The Great Principle**

[Fivefold ways]  
A set of rules set by Asrikpa to govern Hungry Ghost societies.

**The Great Departure**

The historical disappearance of all the Awakened and most of the Hungry Ghosts.

**The Ten Thousand Immortals**

The original Hungry Ghosts before their fall.

**The Wall/Wall Rating**

A spiritual membrane preventing different planes of existence or realities from blending together. Hungry Ghosts can travel through the Wall.

**Wave Soul**

[Fear Frenzy]  
When a Hungry Ghost is overcome by fear and cannot reason.

**Wheel of Ages**

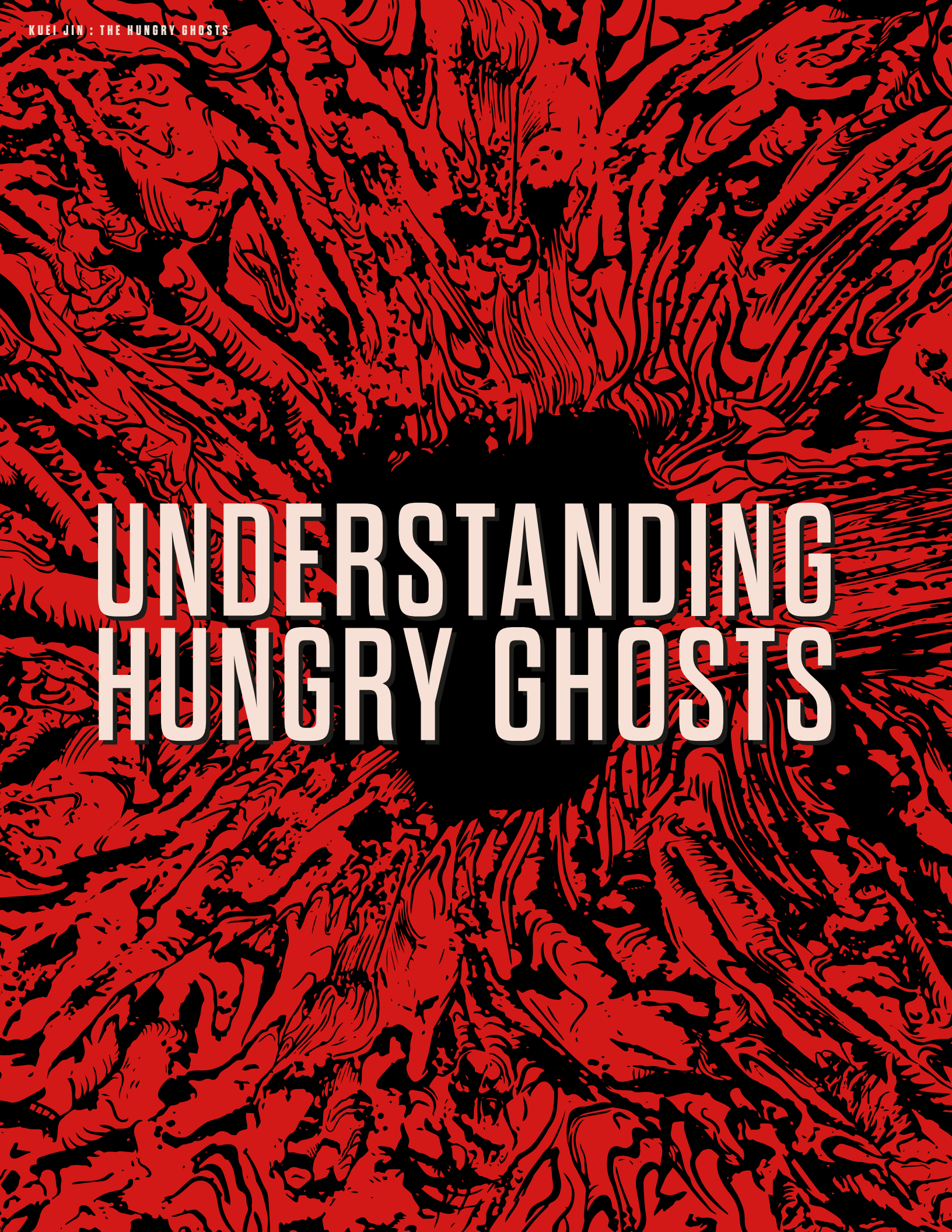
[Great Cycle, Kalachakra]  
A cyclical view of the universe where it is remade and destroyed countless times. It is divided into 12 segments.

**Yama King/Queen**

Powerful beings that have near-absolute control over a Demon Realm.

KUAI JIN : THE HUNGRY GHOSTS

# UNDERSTANDING HUNGRY GHOSTS



To understand a Hungry Ghost, you have to have a basic understanding of what a wraith is.

To be a wraith is to be divided into two. Everyone has at some point felt at odds with themselves, maybe from having to decide between mutually-exclusive goals, or looking back at actions you can't understand anymore. Desire, hope, fear and all our other emotions are what constitute the soul, and it becomes dangerous when the spirit leaves the body with unfinished business.

When someone passes through the Shroud, Oblivion echoes inside their soul, pulling them towards it. The problems arise when something in them wants to remain behind. Wraiths are comprised of two parts, the Psyche and the Shadow. These psychic siblings are locked in conflict with one another: one struggles to endure and transcend while the other seeks to heed Oblivion's call. Life and Death struggle for control.

## THE PSYCHE

Often described as the more 'normal' part of the soul that resembles the person before their death, this is the part that is compelled by emotions with attachments to things in the living world. While it is not necessarily a 'good' part of the soul, they are the more positive aspect and perhaps more 'human'. As such, they appear within the Shadowlands mainly due to unfinished business in the mortal world. Their ties to the human Realm help keep them going, usually with 'Transcendence' as their main goal, meaning to depart from the Shadowlands and ascend to a higher state of being.

## THE SHADOW

The hidden half of a wraith. It is the worst version of a personality, where dark impulses and cruelty reside. Whether the person is kind or cruel, these dark remnants within them are always there. Once dead however, these impulses and urges become something powerful, self-aware, and dangerous. Every wraith has a Shadow and all of them are simultaneously unique but similar in their destructive habits. Every wraith has to fight their own inner Shadow, which uses all its tactics to bring the wraith to destruction, such as pretending to be kind or to have a moral code. While the aim is to drag the Psyche with it into Oblivion, the Shadow desires the journey and experience along the way.

---

## WHAT IS OBLIVION?

*Oblivion is the force of passive destruction in the universe. It is entropy, waiting to devour everything. Those who pass into the Void are gone, removed from existence as we know it.*

*In the Underworld however, it is no longer content to wait. It is Oblivion's touch that turns wraiths into Shadow-ridden Spectres. It also gives voice and power to the Shadow inside every wraith's mind. It is Oblivion that supplies the nightmares of the Labyrinth. It is Oblivion that calls for Maelstroms which scour the Shadowlands and devours the unlucky or weak.*

*Physically, Oblivion manifests as the Void, the ultimate emptiness. The so-called Mouth of the Void, a gateway to entropy itself, rests within the heart of the Labyrinth. If there can be said to be an 'up' and a 'down' in the Underworld, the Mouth of the Void rests at its very lowest point. It is said that it emits a grey light though only creatures like the Yama Kings are able to venture forth and verify its truth.*

*Around the Mouth of the Void is the Labyrinth, an unending maze of passages packed with horrors and home to countless Spectres. It is impossible to gauge the extremities of the Labyrinth, as it is constantly shifting in size and even the few stable landmarks are subject to sudden dislocation. The dregs of reality drift down here, broken relics and abandoned Artefacts and Shadow-Eaten souls who have no more use for the light. Ancient creatures slumber within these walls. Even while asleep, they control Spectres with their dreams. Few wraiths venture here voluntarily, and fewer still return.*

---

This is where a normal wraith and a Hungry Ghost differs. A Hungry Ghost is created when a Yama King reaches into the metaphysical binding of these two halves and tears them apart. It is extremely painful, and while it may be a relief from the constant barrage of the Shadow for the Psyche, the Psyche will always feel incomplete, as its other half is missing now.

The Hungry Ghosts are wraiths which have been split in two and have re-inhabited their dead mortal body, albeit with a few additional steps.

Their Shadow has been tortured and abused within the Demon Realms to the point of near insanity.

1. The Shadow escaped or was released from the Demon Realms.
2. The Psyche has been separated from their Shadow, so they are now unable to control them.
3. Both sides of the wraith have independent memories from their time apart, which meld when they are reunited in the same body once again.
4. The sudden onslaught of memories of pain overwhelms the Psyche, so their first interaction with the mortal world is as an insane, flesh-eating monster that attacks anything it sees.
5. When such a body arises, they are called Ravenous Devils, for their entire body and mind is ruled by their tortured Shadow.

Hungry Ghosts can arise as long as there are still physical remains of their body within the mortal world, such as:

- The majority of their ashes
- Most of their skeleton
- Cadavers
- Mummified bodies

As long as there are physical traces of their mortal body kept together, a Hungry Ghost may arise. Their bodies will look the same as when they were alive, without any fatal wounds or other markers of their death. Hungry Ghosts call the process of this return to the mortal world 'The Second Breath'.

The perspective of a Hungry Ghost that has just risen from the Second Breath is one of utter terror and confusion. Their new eyes are attuned to what the Hungry Ghosts call Death-sight, meaning they see everything in its state of greatest decay. They are starving, as it takes all their energy to return to their body.

This, combined with their new perspective and memories, is their first experience of waking with the Second Breath. Their only focus is on feeding themselves and unfortunately, only human flesh is able to provide them any Essence. Due to this irrationality and indiscriminate feeding, they are called Ravenous Devils.

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*Unlike the Risen in Wraith, Hungry Ghosts are not reanimated by a ritual, nor is there any mutual agreement between the Psyche and the Shadow to return to the mortal world. It is the Shadow's desire to leave the Demon Realm that physically reanimates the body, which in turn attracts the Psyche. Sometimes it may be the reverse, where the Psyche escapes and acts like a beacon for the Shadow. Risen have full control of their bodies and are able to develop their powers fairly quickly due to being fully cognisant. Wraiths' bodies do not rot in direct sunlight while the Hungry Ghosts' do. These are the main differences, though due to the nature of how both wraiths and Hungry Ghosts return to the living world, there is significant overlap in their skills.*

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# PRIVATE COURT SPEECH ON THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE HUNGRY GHOSTS

WITH AADIJAY AGIRA (PRECEPTOR OF THE RAIN COURT IN COIMBATORE) AND ARTHIT SOMSI (ANCESTOR OF HAT YAI)  
LANGUAGE TRANSLATED FROM SANSKRIT - RECORDED IN A REGION OF TAMIL NADU  
TRANSCRIBED FROM CONVERSATION ON 07/10/2005

AA - "GREAT ANCESTOR, IT HAS BEEN A WHILE SINCE THE DISAPPEARANCE OF OUR BRETHREN. IT IS KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE LEARNED SOCIETIES THAT YOU, EXCELLENT IN CHARACTERISTICS OF INSIGHT AS PROCLAIMED BY THE AWAKENED ONE NAMED UMA, WOULD BE ABLE TO DECIPHER THIS GREAT MYSTERY. THIS ONE WOULD LIKE THIS GREAT ELDER'S KNOWLEDGE AFTER THEIR LONG SECLUSION, AND WOULD PROVIDE THIS HOLY COURT A FURTHER UNDERSTANDING."

AS - "...WORTHY PRECEPTOR, YOUR QUESTION HAS BEEN ECHOED THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE WORLD AND THIS ONE HAS PONDERED VERY DEEPLY. THIS ONE SECLUDED THEMSELVES WITHIN THE DEEP FORESTS, AWAY FROM DISTRACTIONS OF THE PROBLEMS OF THE HOLY COURTS TO FIND THE ANSWERS THAT THE WORTHY ONES REQUIRE... THIS ONE, AFTER A YEAR WITHOUT SUSTENANCE OF ESSENCE AND IN DEEP CONTEMPLATION, HAD A SUDDEN UNDERSTANDING. WOULD THE ONES WITHIN THIS ASSEMBLY LIKE TO HEAR WHAT HAD BEEN REALISED?"

**[CHORUS OF MULTIPLE VOICES] "YES, GREAT ONE! WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR WHAT THE GREAT ANCESTOR HAS REALISED IN THEIR GREAT SECLUSION!"**

"GOOD, GOOD. WITHIN THE GREAT CYCLE OF ERAS, SAGES HAVE CALCULATED THAT THIS PRESENT AGE IS THE FIFTH. HOWEVER, THIS ONE IS SURE MANY OF YOUR ELDERS HAVE WARNED MANY WORTHY ONES THAT THE AGE OF SORROW WOULD BE HERE SOON?"

**[CHORUS OF MULTIPLE VOICES] "YES, GREAT ONE. ELDERS HAVE INSTRUCTED US HOW CLOSE WE ARE TO THE SIXTH AGE."**

"WORTHY ONES, IN THE GREAT COMPASSION OF THE AWAKENED ONES AS WELL AS NON-RETURNERS, THEY HAVE WARNED US OF THIS INEVITABILITY OF THE CYCLE. HOWEVER, WORTHY ONES, THEY CANNOT IGNORE OUR PLIGHTS. BE IT HUMAN, THE BEASTS OR OUR STATE OF PREVAILING HUNGER, CAN THEY?"

**[CHORUS OF MULTIPLE VOICES] "NO, THEY CANNOT GREAT ONE!"**

"WORTHY PRECEPTOR, WHAT IS THE WORTHY ONE'S PREDICAMENT?"

"GREAT ANCESTOR, WITHOUT THE GUIDANCE OF THE AWAKENED ONES, THE WORTHY ONES ARE BLIND, DEAF AND WITH HEEDLESS VOICES."

**[A LONG PAUSE.]**

"WORTHY PRECEPTOR, IF FOR A THOUSAND YEARS, A MAN TRAINS TO BE A SCULPTOR UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF GREAT TEACHERS, WOULD THAT MAN BECOME A GREAT TEACHER HIMSELF?"

"THEY WOULD."

"WORTHY PRECEPTOR, IF FOR 500 YEARS, A MAN TRAINS TO BE A SCULPTOR UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF GREAT TEACHERS, WOULD THAT MAN BECOME A GREAT TEACHER HIMSELF?"

"THEY WOULD."

"WORTHY PRECEPTOR, IF FOR 100 YEARS, A MAN TRAINS TO BE A SCULPTOR UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF GREAT TEACHERS, WOULD THAT MAN BECOME A GREAT TEACHER HIMSELF?"

"THEY WOULD."

"WORTHY PRECEPTOR, IF FOR 50 YEARS, A MAN TRAINS TO BE A SCULPTOR UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF GREAT TEACHERS, WOULD THAT MAN BECOME A GREAT TEACHER HIMSELF?"

"THEY WOULD."

"WORTHY PRECEPTOR, IF FOR 25 YEARS, A MAN TRAINS TO BE A SCULPTOR UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF GREAT TEACHERS, WOULD THAT MAN BECOME A GREAT TEACHER HIMSELF?"

"THEY WOULD."

"WORTHY PRECEPTOR, HOW MANY YEARS HAS ONE BEEN GUIDED, EVEN IF SUBTLY, BY THE AWAKENED ONES?"

"THIRTY YEARS, GREAT ANCESTOR."

"THEN UNDER THE LOGIC THAT ONE HAS KINDLY ANSWERED, WOULD ONE BE CONSIDERED A GREAT TEACHER?"

"YES, GREAT ANCESTOR. BUT THIS ONE STILL HARBOURS DOUBTS, STILL ERRORS AND HAS NOT THE FORESIGHT





AS DEEP AS THE AWAKENED ONES. THIS ONE DOES NOT FEEL WORTHY TO BE CONSIDERED A GREAT TEACHER.”

“WORTHY PRECEPTOR, IN THE ROLE THAT THE MANTLE HAS THRUST UPON ONESELF, HOW MANY TIMES HAD AN AWAKENED ONE DIRECTED ONESELF IN DECISIONS?”

“NONE, GREAT ANCESTOR.”

“WORTHY PRECEPTOR, IN TIMES OF TOIL AND POTENTIALLY GREAT CATASTROPHE, HAS AN AWAKENED ONE INTERVENED?”

“YES, GREAT ANCESTOR.”

“HAS ANY AWAKENED ONE EVER CLAIMED THAT THE JOURNEY OF THEIR PATH HAS EVER BEEN SURE, CORRECT AND WITHOUT DOUBTS?”

“NONE, GREAT ANCESTOR.”

“WORTHY PRECEPTOR, ONESELF IS BEING OVERLY HARSH AND CRITICAL TO ONE’S OWN THOUGHTS OR ACTIONS. NONE OF THE AWAKENED ONES, BEFORE THEIR REALISATIONS AND ACTIONS BORE FRUIT, WERE DIFFERENT FROM ONESELF. A GREAT TEACHER DOES NOT MEAN ONE IS WITHOUT ERRORS, BUT THAT ONE UNDERSTANDS AND IS ABLE TO OVERCOME, AND TEACH HOW TO OVERCOME THEIR ADVERSITY.”

**[A PROFOUND SILENCE IN THE ROOM.]**

“WORTHY ONES, THE REASON ONE ASKS THE WORTHY PRECEPTOR WHY THEY FEEL UNWORTHY IS THAT TO THE AWAKENED ONES, ALL THE HUNGRY GHOSTS THAT ARE STILL PRESENT ON THIS EARTH, ARE AS TITLED, WORTHY.”

**[SMALL MUTTERINGS IN THE ROOM.]**

“WOULD THE GREAT ANCESTOR PLEASE EXPLAIN WHAT ONE MEANS?”

“WORTHY ONES, THE AWAKENED ONES WITH THEIR FORESIGHT HAVE SEEN HOW CLOSE THE SIXTH AGE IS. ONE IS HERE TO TELL THAT IN THIS REALM, THE SIXTH AGE, THE AGE OF SORROW, SHOULD HAVE ALREADY COME. YET, THE DEMON KING HAS NOT TAKEN THE MANTLE OF CREATION OR DECLARED ITSELF.”

**[CHORUS OF CROWDS] - “WHY IS THIS SO, GREAT ANCESTOR?”**

“WORTHY ONES, THE AWAKENED ONES IN THEIR GREAT COMPASSION HAVE ALL LEFT, TAKING WITH THEM THE HUNGRY GHOSTS THAT WERE NOT YET READY FOR THE FULL WEIGHT OF RESPONSIBILITY WITHOUT THEIR GUIDANCE. TOGETHER, THEY ARE FIGHTING AND SUCCESSFULLY, DELAYING THE SIXTH AGE.”

**[SOUNDS OF SHOCK AND SURPRISE] - “WHY THEN, GREAT ANCESTOR, WERE WE LEFT OUT OF THIS HONOUR?”**

“WORTHY ONES, ARE THERE STILL NOT THOSE THAT ARRIVE TO TAKE THEIR SECOND BREATH?”

**[CHORUS OF CROWDS] - “NO, THERE ARE STILL FEW THAT ARISE TO TAKE THEIR SECOND BREATH.”**

“WORTHY ONES, AS ONE HAS SAID BEFORE, WE ARE DEEMED WORTHY AND CAPABLE OF GUIDANCE WITHOUT THE INSTRUCTION OF AWAKENED ONES. WE ARE LEFT HERE BECAUSE WE ARE WORTHY, CAPABLE OF BEING TRUSTED. IT IS OUR DUTY TO CONTINUE OUR HERITAGE AND WAY, TO GUIDE THE FUTURE GENERATIONS.”

**[SOUNDS OF FLAMES ERUPTING AND SHOUTING IN EXCLAMATION.]**

“GREAT ANCESTOR, WHAT IS HAPPENING?!”

“CALM, WORTHY ONES, FOR IT HAS BEEN A LONG WHILE THAT ONE HAS FELT THIS POWER.”

“GREAT ANCESTOR, WHAT DOES ONE MEAN?!”

**[CHORUS] - “PLEASE, GREAT ANCESTOR, DO TELL US WHAT ONE MEANS!”**

“WORTHY ONES, WHAT ONE HAS DEMONSTRATED IS WHAT OUR ABILITIES WERE DURING THE FOURTH AGE, WHEN OUR SKILLS WERE STRONGER, WE WERE TIED MORE TO THE ELEMENTS. HAVE ONESELVES NOT FELT A CHANGE?”

“YES, GREAT ANCESTOR, WE HAVE BUT WE DO NOT HAVE THE MASTERY AKIN TO WHAT ONE HAS DEMONSTRATED.”

“WORTHY PRECEPTOR, ONE HAS HAD PRACTICE BEFORE THE BITTER TRANSITION INTO THE FIFTH AGE WHERE ONE EXPERIENCED OUR SKILLS WEAKENING. THIS SKILL IS NOT ABOVE ONE’S REACH BUT A SLIGHT ADJUSTMENT.”

**[SOUND OF FLAMES DISAPPEAR.]**

“THIS, WORTHY ONES, IS THE GIFT AND COMPASSION THAT THE AWAKENED ONES HAVE PROVIDED, NOT SINCE THE FOURTH AGE HAS THIS POWER BEEN IN OUR REACH. THIS IS THE EFFECT OF THE GREAT DEPARTURE.”

“GREAT DEPARTURE?”

“THIS ONE HAS NAMED IT SUCH FROM MY REALISATION. IT IS A NOBLE SACRIFICE AND CAUSE THAT THEY ARE UNDERGOING FOR OUR BENEFIT, WORTHY ONES, THEY HAVE NOT ABANDONED US BUT GONE ON A JOURNEY FOR US THAT CANNOT BE REPAID.”

**[DEEP CONTEMPLATIVE SILENCE.]**

“GREAT ANCESTOR, WE WORTHY ONES HAVE HEARD YOUR MESSAGE AND ACCEPT IT. WE WILL SPREAD YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THIS PHENOMENON TO OTHER WORTHY ONES.”

**END OF TRANSCRIPTION.**



**HUNGRY  
GHOSTS IN THE  
V5 TIMELINE**

## THE 1,000 HELLS

A ghost, or a 'Wraith' as they are known in the *World of Darkness*, begins their un-life as a person who has died with bitter regrets. Where they die is also important, as it will determine in which area of the Underworld they reawaken.

In the Underworld, there are specific regions that mirror the real world – the 'Skinlands'. The entities which stake out their territories and defend them through sheer force of will have earned the title 'Yama Kings'. These powerful beings are partial to cruelty, and find sick pleasure in torturing the unlucky souls who find themselves trapped in their realms. The tyranny of the Yama Kings has resulted in these regions becoming known as The 1,000 Hells.

Should a person be unfortunate enough to die in the Skinlands close to the Hells, they must be careful to evade the Yama Kings' demons, lest their soul be captured, dragged in front of a Yama King or Queen and judged. Ostensibly this judgement is based on the unfortunate soul's moral conduct, good deeds, and spiritual efforts in the mortal realm. There's no wriggling out of a fair trial – the Wraith's 'Shadow' will confess all the deceased's evil doings, even as their 'Psyche' argues for the good they have done. If both Psyche and Shadow are deemed worthy, they will be allowed to go free. If not, the Shadow is ripped from the Psyche and thrown into The 1,000 Hells – and if the Psyche truly fails to impress, they'll be forced to watch their other half suffer for eternity.

The 1,000 Hells are not compatible with either the Shadowlands or the Mortal World. Those denizens of the Shadowlands who venture too close are able to see the dread, cloying mists that separate them from The 1,000 Hells – and in recent years, those mists have grown ever closer.

The realms of the Yama Kings historically span all of Asia. As they conquer new territory, they come closer and closer to the other Wraith Kingdoms – most notably in Eurasia, where Slavic legends tell of Vampiric creatures whose abilities match those of the Hungry Ghosts. In the Modern Nights, Hungry Ghosts may even choose to settle among Asian communities in the west.

Within their own realms, the Yama Kings are like gods. For the most experienced, almost nothing within their territory is unseen or outside of their control, and they exert great effort to ensure that their captive souls remain captive for eternity. However, the Underworld has a mind of its own, and when it stirs it shakes the very earth, creating 'Scars'. These Scars can take the form of earthquakes, storms, and other natural disasters – but they cause reality to shatter like a broken mirror. The 1,000 Hells is a patchwork of suffering, designed to keep souls trapped for eternity. When Scars arrive, they rip apart even the most

careful stitching – and inevitably, a few lucky souls are able to slip through the tears and flee.

## THE YAMA KINGS

The nine original Yama Kings were vassals of the collective will of the 'Divinities'. The term can mean different things to each Hungry Ghost, but all of them understand that these beings were like gods – the Jade Emperor, Brahma, and innumerable deities of other faiths. They were inseparable from their Yama Kings, who were every bit as beautiful and awe-inspiring as them.

The original Yama Kings numbered nine:

1. She-Who-Sings
2. King-Of-Flames
3. Dance-For-Heaven
4. Queen-Of-Memories
5. The-Thousand-Stories
6. Bringer-Of-Grace
7. Righter-Of-Wrongs
8. Purity-Of-Absence
9. Cultivator-Of-Flowers

The Yama Kings were given the important task of educating wayward souls before releasing them into the state of Transcendence. However, more unruly souls arrived, who required harsher punishments, and their anguish coalesced into negative energy known as 'Demonic Essence.' Initially, the Yama Kings found this foul substance repulsive – but in time, it would be their undoing.

The fatal day arrived when She-Who-Sings, The First, decided to taste the Demonic Essence. The power it brought her was so immense that when she sang, the heavens were said to have shook from her passions.

At first she resolved never to touch Demonic Essence again, but the addictive nature of the substance kept drawing her back for more. Surreptitiously, she turned pockets of her realm into torture chambers where she could collect all the Demonic Essence she desired. Though she tried to hide her addiction from the other Yama Kings when they met to discuss their progress, something about She-Who-Sings had clearly changed. While she was as beautiful as ever, her beauty had become tainted by malevolence. Her voice, once crystal clear, was clouded. Her divine eyes, bright as the jewels of heaven, had lost their radiance. When the other Yama Kings asked how and why she had changed, she let them taste the Demonic Essence for themselves. The moment it touched their lips, they too became addicted.

The realms of the Yama Kings swiftly descended into

pandemonium, filled with agony and madness. Unable to contain their hunger for human suffering, they turned their sights on the Skinlands. Where there was harmony, the Yama Kings would sow seeds of discontent. Where there was stability, the Yama Kings would undermine it. Their corruption slowly but surely spread through humanity, funnelling more and more souls into their hungering maw.

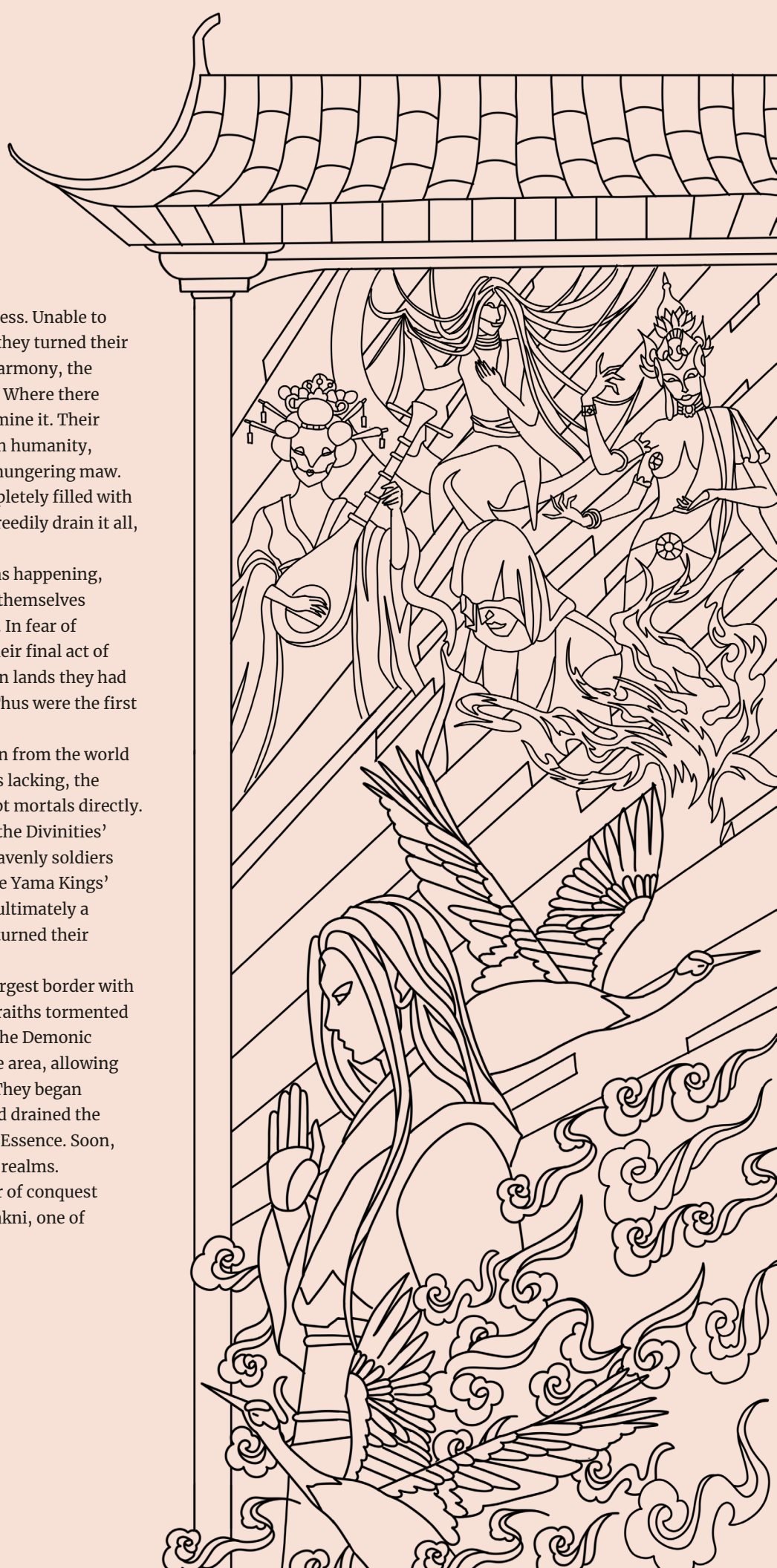
When an area of the world became completely filled with Demonic Essence, the Yama Kings would greedily drain it all, leaving behind a spiritually barren husk.

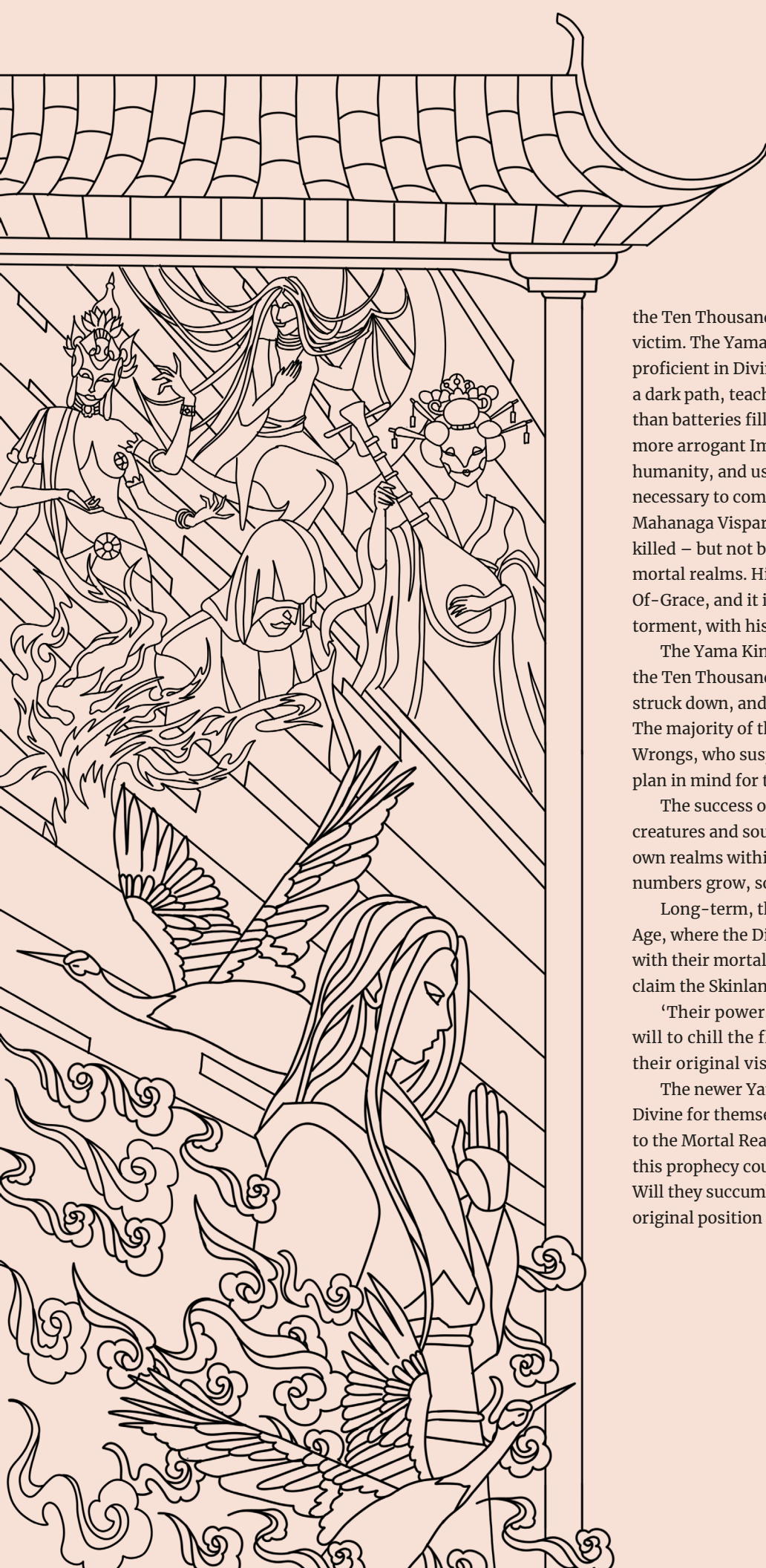
When the Divinities discovered what was happening, they asked the nine Yama Kings to present themselves for judgement and answer for their actions. In fear of annihilation, the Yama Kings committed their final act of betrayal and tore away the spiritually barren lands they had created from the rest of the mortal world. Thus were the first nine of The 1,000 Hells created.

Satisfied with the realms they had stolen from the world and finding their Demonic Essence reserves lacking, the Yama Kings once again attempted to corrupt mortals directly. However, their attempts were thwarted by the Divinities' answer to their betrayal – a regiment of heavenly soldiers known as the Ten Thousand Immortals. The Yama Kings' attempt to influence the mortal world was ultimately a failure. Once their rage had subsided, they turned their attention to the Shadowlands.

The Dark Kingdom of Jade shared the largest border with the Hells, and suffered from an influx of Wraiths tormented by the Yama Kings' war on the Skinlands. The Demonic Essence generated by their pain clouded the area, allowing the Yama Kings to sneak past the borders. They began draining the Dark Kingdom, just as they had drained the mortal world, and left it devoid of Spiritual Essence. Soon, they added the resulting wasteland to their realms.

But the Yama Kings didn't end their war of conquest there. In the Fourth Age, Mahanaga Visparakni, one of





the Ten Thousand Immortals, became their first heavenly victim. The Yama Queen Bringer-Of-Grace, being the most proficient in Divine presence and etiquette, led him down a dark path, teaching him to treat mortals nothing more than batteries filled with Essence. In turn, he taught the more arrogant Immortals that their purpose was to rule over humanity, and use whatever aggressive methods proved necessary to combat the Yama Kings' influence. In time, Mahanaga Visparakni was revealed, branded a 'demon', and killed – but not before he brought immense carnage to the mortal realms. His soul was immediately claimed by Bringer-Of-Grace, and it is in her realm that his Shadow lingers in torment, with his Psyche forced to watch.

The Yama Kings watched with glee as more and more of the Ten Thousand Immortals were revealed to be corrupt, struck down, and brought within their sphere of influence. The majority of their souls were claimed by Righter-Of-Wrongs, who suspected that the Divinities had some greater plan in mind for their fallen soldiers.

The success of the Yama Kings inspired more powerful creatures and souls to use Demonic Essence to carve out their own realms within the domains of the Shadowlands. As their numbers grow, so too does their power.

Long-term, the Yama Kings aim to bring about a Sixth Age, where the Divinities will no longer be able to interact with their mortal subjects, allowing a Demon King to rise and claim the Skinlands as their own:

'Their powers will be unmatched. They will have the will to chill the flames of Avici. Rule in accordance with their original vision.'

The newer Yama Kings, having never experienced the Divine for themselves, are eager to bring unabated suffering to the Mortal Realms. The original nine, however, wonder if this prophecy could represent their chance for redemption. Will they succumb to temptation once more, or reclaim their original position at the Divinities' side?

## THE HUNGRY GHOSTS

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*At the end of the Fifth Age, the August Personage will withdraw the Heavenly Realms. The world will be ruled by a Demon Emperor, and from this world, two paths diverge. First, a Demon King of the Sixth Heaven. Their powers will be unmatched. They will have the will to chill the flames of Avici. Rule in accordance with their original vision. A Demon King of the Star. Their powers will be unmatched. They will have the will to break the world. Rule will be brief, in accordance with their vision.*

- Legend of the 6th Age from the Middle Kingdom

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The Hungry Ghosts began to appear in the Third Age, when the Yama Kings openly revolted against the Divinities. In response, the Divinities bestowed greater power on chosen humans, who became known as the Ten Thousand Immortals. While they were not, in fact, immortals, they lived such long lives that they could have easily been mistaken for one. Their powers extended to the foundations of the earth itself and they had the uncanny ability to detect Yama Kings hiding among the human populace.

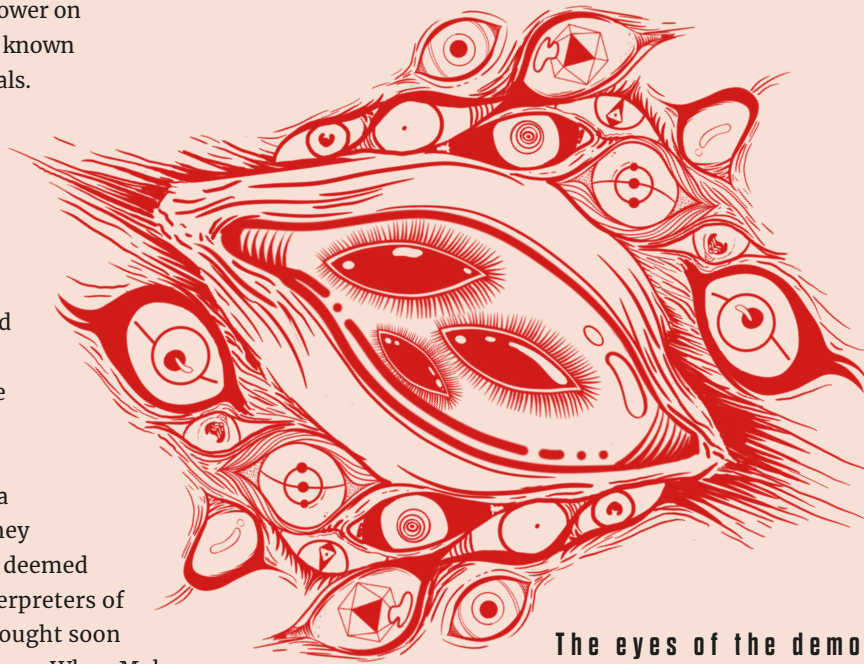
The Ten Thousand Immortals were, for a time, a successful deterrent – but they soon became arrogant. They deemed themselves the only true interpreters of Divinity, and that train of thought soon led to factionalism and civil war. When Mahanaga Visparakni, urged on by the Yama Queen Bringer-Of-Grace, began draining Essence from his fellow mortals, the fall of the Ten Thousand Immortals was set in motion. Eventually, the Divinities had no choice but to strike them down.

The Divinities stripped the wayward Immortals of their long life and all their powers, replacing them with a dreadful, cursed hunger which only Essence could fill. Immediately, age caught up with the former Immortals and their bodies crumbled into dust. While those who were guided by

Mahanaga Visparakni and his ilk were banished to The 1,000 Hells, the others were recaptured by the Divinities, sent to the Underworld, and reconstituted into the forms they have now – the Hungry Ghosts.

What happened to the original Hungry Ghosts is a tale lost to time – but what we do know is that their successors walk the earth to this day. This newer generation of Hungry Ghosts are former humans who were able to take the ‘Second Breath’ – a miracle in itself, which some people believe is evidence that the Divinities themselves are involved. These individuals command no great power, but they are united by their enmity with the Yama Kings. Although their new existence makes them near-immortal, it is fraught with danger. They are driven by desire that is difficult to control, and any powers not controlled by their Demonic Essence must be taught to them by their Elders.

Should a lowly Hungry Ghost seek to become a hero like the Ten Thousand Immortals, they must master their abilities.



The eyes of the demon king

## THE WHEEL OF AGES

Hungry Ghosts view the universe as a cycle – the Wheel of Ages. It is divided into twelve segments, based on eras of world history. From the Age of Renewal to the Age of Darkness, the August Personage rules over the universe and the Celestials have influence over the world. However, Divinity’s influence wanes over time, paving the way for the next six ages, where the Demon King rules over the universe. Eventually, however, the Demon King’s influence also diminishes, and the cycle begins anew.

### FIRST AGE: THE AGE OF HEAVEN

In this Age, all spirits are aligned with the Celestial Order. All are as one. Ideas such as jealousy, or even the concept of a self, are not yet present. There is no physical reality as we know it.

### SECOND AGE: THE AGE OF BEAUTY

This age is defined by the formation of physical reality. Spirits have begun to define themselves, with varying levels of power. Each has chosen their roles in the worlds and decided on the best path to achieve them.

### THIRD AGE: THE AGE OF LEGENDS

An age of mythic proportions, where gods, immortals, and other fantastical creatures walk alongside their mortal subjects. Spirits of the dead are able to freely converse with the living. For the Hungry Ghosts, this age was defined by the Yama Kings’ rebellion against the Divinities and the formation of the Ten Thousand Immortals, the ancestors of the Hungry Ghosts.

### FOURTH AGE: THE AGE OF BEAUTIFUL SADNESS

This age began when the Ten Thousand Immortals were cursed for their hubris, and is defined by the slow destruction of myth and legend. In human history, this age began in approximately 900 BCE and ended around 1350 AD.

### FIFTH AGE: THE AGE OF DARKNESS

The current age, defined by rapid technological development with a declining focus on spirituality. An age of strife, both external and internal. Most Hungry Ghosts fight in this age to delay or attempt to stop the coming of the Sixth Age.

### SIXTH AGE: THE AGE OF SORROW

The beginning of the Demon Emperor’s rule. This age is defined by chaos and is a time of great upheaval.

### SEVENTH AGE: THE AGE OF DESPAIR

This age is defined by short lives, constant fighting and widespread destruction. There is little respite, and few places will go untouched by the ravages of death.

### EIGHTH AGE: THE AGE OF REMORSE

This age is defined as the aftermath of the Age of Despair. The inhabitants of the world realise the effects of the wanton destruction caused by the previous generation, and begin to make small improvements to their lives.

### NINTH AGE: THE AGE OF PARADOX

A strange age, about which little is known. ‘Awakened’ Hungry Ghosts have hinted that this age will largely be defined by perception.

### TENTH AGE: AGE OF DESTRUCTION

This age brings the destruction of the universe and all realities attached to it. When this age ends, only the Demon Emperor’s consciousness will remain.

### ELEVENTH AGE: AGE OF EMPTINESS

This age is defined by its lack of substance. It is entirely devoid of form, and even the Demon Emperor’s consciousness is dormant.

### TWELFTH AGE: THE AGE OF RENEWAL

This age is heralded by the return of the August Personage. When this age ends, the cycle will begin anew.

The transition through the Ages has impacted the Hungry Ghosts’ powers. Great Elders complain that it was far easier to perform Disciplines in Ages past. By far, the worst Age was the Fourth, where their curse manifested and they found themselves unable to stand the sunlight – however, they were still more powerful then than they are now.

By the Fifth Age, Disciplines and other powers have deteriorated as the potency of Essence itself diminishes. Skills that Ancestors once performed with ease became impossible, warped into a lesser form. For example, Godbody of Wood transformed into Godbody of Flesh. So it was until the ‘Great Departure’...

## THE GREAT DEPARTURE

When the Red Star - otherwise known as the Demon Emperor's Eye - shone, Hungry Ghosts across the universe began to see other signs that the Sixth Age would soon arrive. In India, it was reported that an ancient bloodthirsty vampire arose and required three Awakened Elders to subjugate it. Devil Tigers prepared to face a horde of Demons.

The most significant sign occurred in 2004, when courts around the world witnessed a bright flash. When the survivors awakened, they discovered a myriad of changes... and complete decimation of their numbers. Entire Courts had evaporated, leaving nothing but cinders behind.

The Elders immediately sought their Awakened fellows, but their search was fruitless. They too had vanished in an instant.

The remaining Elders banded together and attempted many rites to try and understand the calamity which had befallen them. The answer was silence. Had the Sixth Age arrived?

Answers came when some brave Elders ventured through different Realms in search of the truth. After many months, a theory was presented.

The Ancestor of Hat Yai, Arthit Somsri had received a revelation during a period of meditative isolation. He put forward the theory that perhaps the Awakened Elders had taken their fellow Hungry Ghosts to war against the Yama Kings, thereby delaying the onset of the Sixth Age. Of course, nobody can prove this rather-too-comforting tale, but it is widely accepted within the Courts.

For those Hungry Ghosts left behind, there was a silver lining. The thin, weak Essence they had subsisted on was now vibrant, and they found their Disciplines growing strong once more. Despite their newfound strength, the eldest among them wept bitterly, for they no longer had their Awakened Elders to guide them.

## THE FALSE DEATH

This is an optional rule for Final Death within the world of the Hungry Ghosts. Please see Vampire the Masquerade V5 pg. 223 for the official rules regarding Final Death.

A Hungry Ghost reduced to torpor or even decapitated due to physical damage while they have Scarlet or Black Essence within their body suffers the 'False Death'. As long as their head or bones still exist such as ribs, they

use this rule. Their soul leaves the body and enters into the Mirror realms of the Reflected Domain, where others with the appropriate skills may see and affect them. They retain the Essence they had when 'killed'.

Here, the Spirit can do little except float helplessly near their corpse until spending one point of Essence to restore it. This process takes up to 10 days, minus the character's Path rating.

Once restored, the Hungry Ghost arises with two Health dots and body restored but has no Scarlet or Black Essence. They must make a Shadow roll to determine whether the Psyche or the Shadow controls the body upon rising.

If the Hungry Ghost has no Essence in their body and loses all Health Dots, they experience Final Death. None alive know what happens past this point - the Awakened Elders refused to discuss the issue, and now whatever knowledge they kept hidden is lost.

## THE SCARLET SCREEN

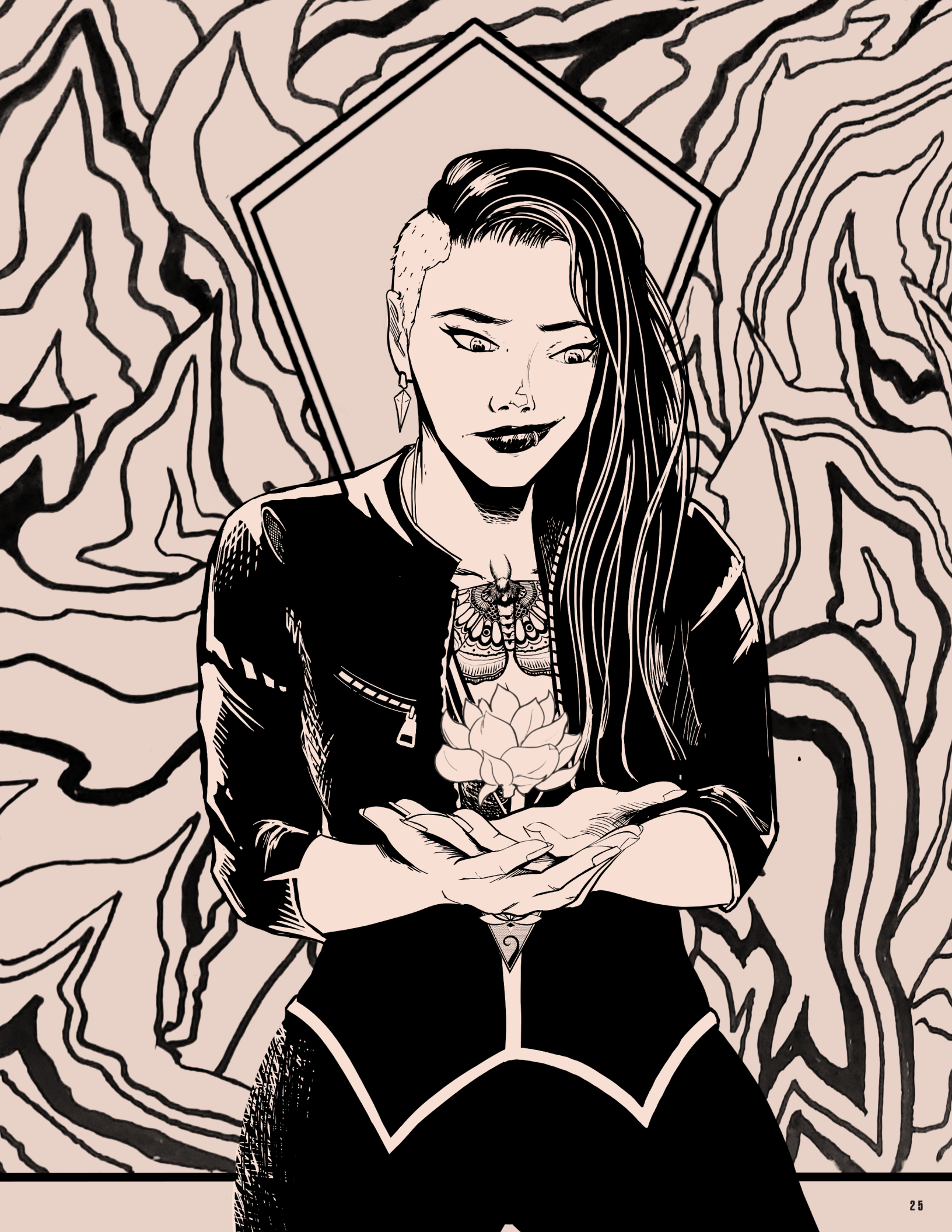
The Scarlet Screen is the face the Hungry Ghost presents to the world. In the past, they used mortal institutions to hide their activities and their true nature. Unlike the Masquerade, however, this was not strictly enforced by the Courts, and how much a Hungry Ghost could get away with was determined by the strictness of their ruling Ancestor.

In fact, it became normal for Courts to target one another's fronts, limiting their ability to hide their presence from mortals.

Before the Modern Nights, the Courts could afford to be lax. Any mortals that thought they witnessed something untoward were easily cowed into silence by threats to themselves or their families. It was not uncommon for a mortal or two in the neighbourhood to know full well that dark creatures stalked their streets, but never dared to speak about it. Hungry Ghosts with the skill to wipe memories were dispatched to deal with persistent threats - but this was rarely necessary.

These days, however, the general attitude towards the Scarlet Screen has shifted. Technology has given even the most pathetic of mortals access to recording software with clear voices and images. With the touch of a button, they can spread knowledge of the Hungry Ghosts across the world.

In response to the rise of technology, a number of Ancestors met in 2012 to agree upon four simple rules, known throughout the land as 'The Red Mandate'.



# BR THE RULES OF HUNG MAN

## SHROUDING

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Disciplines that are clearly outside the bounds of human perception should never be used in the presence of mortals without prior authorisation.

## RESPONSIBILITY

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Wars between Courts cannot target institutions capable of covering up breaches of the Scarlet Screen. Both sides are obliged to cover any incidents that arise.

# RED MANDATE

## EVERY HUNGRY GHOST SOCIETY

### SECURITY

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Technology capable of broadcasting information about the Hungry Ghosts and their activities may only be used if it is untraceable.

### JUSTICE

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Any Hungry Ghost found in breach of the Red Mandate are answerable to any Ancestors they encounter. The penalties for breaking the rules can extend to Final Death.

## THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE COURTS

The Great Departure heralded a momentous shift in Hungry Ghost societies. In one night, all overseas Courts – be they in Chinatowns, Koreatowns, Little Indias or any number of communities – simply vanished, leaving nothing but ashes. Historically, these communities served as centres for Hungry Ghosts to expand their influence and assess their vampiric neighbours. They were set up as a means for Asian Courts to manoeuvre organisations to enrich their homeland and stifle exploitation – but over time, they developed their independence and stopped listening to orders that no longer benefitted them. Influenced by the rich blend of cultures around them, some were even willing to adopt the misnomer Westerners ascribed to them: Kuei-Jin.

Despite these changes, the Courts saw the benefits of having counterparts abroad. When travelling between countries the overseas Courts served as hubs of shelter, information, and aid. Even Vampire societies paid close attention to these developments within their domains, interested in the opportunities these so-called ‘Kindred of the East’ could provide.

While the Anarchs and the Camarilla were wary, there were some Princes and Barons willing to work alongside their Ancestor counterparts – with mixed results.

Most Courts were happy to stay within their own communities. It should be noted, however, that Hungry Ghosts could be territorial – any Kindred found trespassing on their land could expect to swiftly regret their excursion as they found themselves on the receiving end of terrifying, unknown curses, and even Final Death. In exchange for peace, the Hungry Ghosts asked only that the Princes and Barons forbade trespass. They agreed, of course. Kindred leaders have plenty to worry about without making new enemies.

In the Modern Nights, however, these courts have vanished. New generations of Vampires may never even know of the Hungry Ghosts’ existence. Those Kindred that do remember them are still notably hesitant to expand into their old territory, however.

## THE DECLINE

There has been a sharp drop in the population of Hungry Ghosts – some say by up to 80%. With this decline in numbers comes a natural loss of influence over the mortal population. In terms of logistics, the Hungry Ghosts simply don’t have the manpower to maintain control – and that’s without taking the rise in technology into account.

In short, the Ancestors of the remaining Courts faced a difficult decision: fade into obscurity, or allow their ways to suffer a slow and painful death. They chose the former.

In one final attempt to regain their numbers, the Courts banded together, hoping to expand their ranks as they always had. However, generations of mortals had lost their fear of

the dark, and became more curious than ever before. Stories intended to serve as warnings have become nothing more than entertaining fairy tales, and the subtle cultural hold the Hungry Ghosts once had on their mortal prey is quickly fading.

There are no definite answers any more. Ancestors and Preceptors find themselves adrift, bereft of guidance from their lost Awakened Elders. Not since the beginning of the Fourth Age have the Hungry Ghosts found themselves in such a predicament – and worse still, old competition has returned...

## THE TWO DOCTRINES: SUN AND MOON

Prior to The Great Departure and the bittersweet blessings left in its wake, Vampire Disciplines routinely disrupted the flow of Essence. The stronger ones would even taint it for a brief period of time. Back then the popular theory was that Vampires were inherently impure, corrupted monsters sent by the Yama Kings. Hungry Ghosts were disgusted by these creatures with the minds of humans and the hearts of beasts, who slurped blood instead of Essence. What particularly bothered the Elders who encountered them, however, was the relative ease of their Embrace.

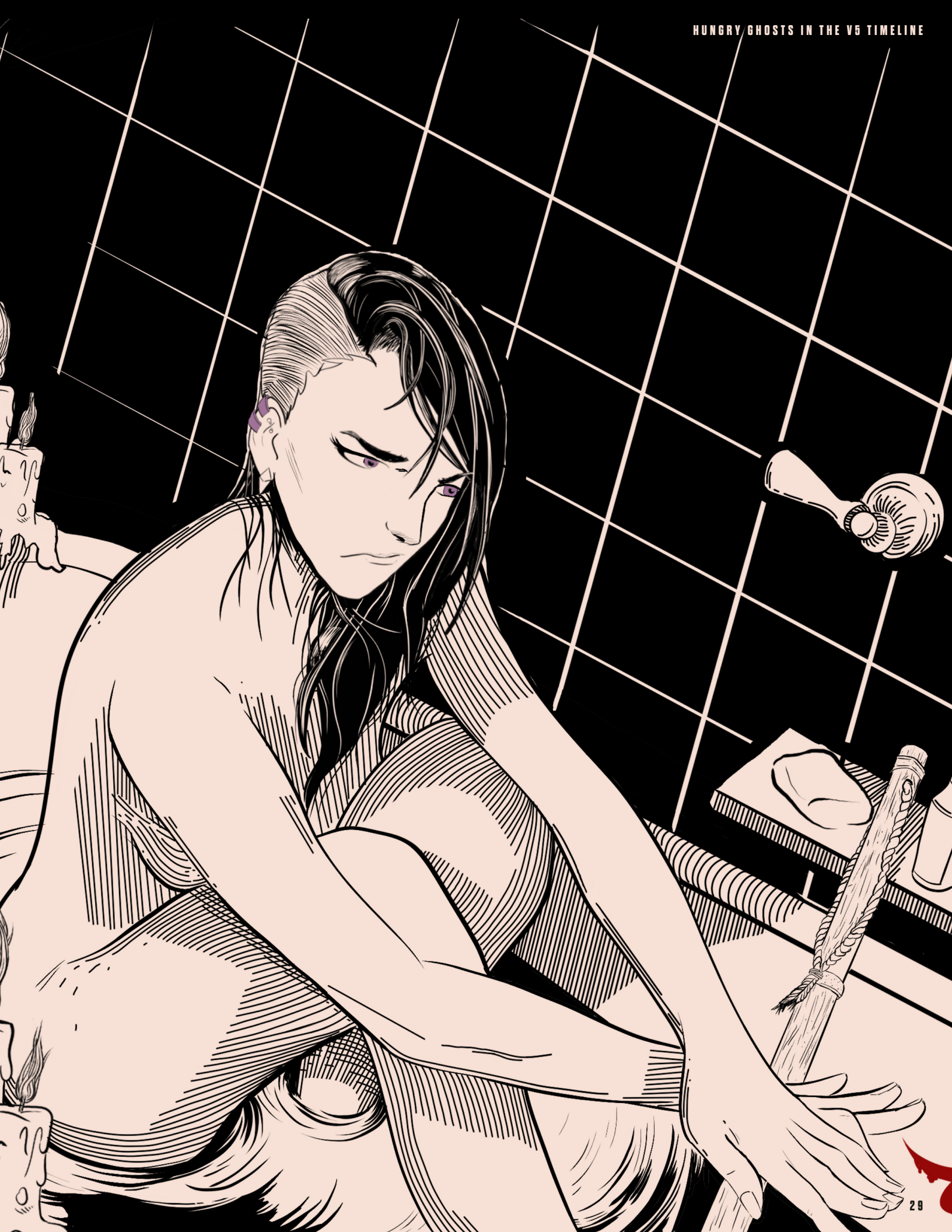
The events of the Modern Nights have made it clear that the Elders’ fears were not unfounded. Kindred have gained a significant foothold in the areas left decimated by The Great Departure. As their numbers grow, so too does their influence over the local mortals, and it is not unfair to say that they now occupy the same cultural niche the Hungry Ghosts once enjoyed.

Historically, most Hungry Ghost Courts decreed that Vampires must be destroyed on sight, lest they begin to multiply and corrupt nearby Essence – with the notable exceptions of Japan and Singapore. These days, facing near-annihilation, the Courts are divided over whether to spare the Kindred, or slay them. These polarising schools of thought are known as the Doctrines of the Sun and Moon.

The Sun Doctrine demands complete destruction of any vampiric presence within the Court’s borders. Although their Disciplines no longer corrupt the surrounding Essence, old habits die hard, and many Hungry Ghosts feel that such drastic action is justified by their own declining numbers.

The Moon Doctrine, on the other hand, hopes to build diplomatic ties with Vampires, or else work towards the complete concealment of the Court. This Doctrine is particularly popular with smaller or younger Courts, who believe it is the most realistic option for the Hungry Ghosts future. These Courts strive to understand Vampire culture, including their habits and weaknesses. To this end, many Moon Doctrine Courts send agents disguised as Caitiff to spy on their Vampire cousins. Those that don’t, send assassins – after all, paranoia can be a very useful tool.

Only an Ancestor of a city can proclaim a universal Doctrine between Courts within a city’s borders.



# HUNGRY GHOST SOCIETY

Societies of Hungry Ghosts vary depending on the region and culture. Though they recognise one another, different practices and cultural beliefs blur what might otherwise be a unified system. However, there are basic commonalities.

First and foremost are the Fivefold Ways/The Great Principle that every court should adhere to.

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## FIVEFOLD WAYS/THE GREAT PRINCIPLE

*Origin – All Hungry Ghosts arise from the 1000 Hells and return to fulfil their purpose to ascend to the divinities.*

*Lineage – Respect those further down the Path than you.*

*Integrity – Be truthful in word and deed. This maintains your honour.*

*Obligation – Do your duty to your brethren and understand your purpose.*

*Propriety – Exercise good manners. Respect is only given to those that are respectful.*

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Due to how Hungry Ghosts return, only the exceedingly rare Ravenous Devils that break free from their wanton terror

and hunger on their own are able to go it alone. The majority of Hungry Ghosts are dragged into the court system out of necessity. The Courts are ideological, spiritual, philosophical, educational, political and martial entities which the majority of Hungry Ghosts belong to. This structure is necessary to provide guidance to young Hungry Ghosts trying to understand their new nature, which in turn prevents breaches of the Scarlet Screen.

Hungry Ghosts foster their younger generations with strict discipline. The older the Hungry Ghost, the likelier they are to be less focused on their mortal objectives, and more on becoming Awakened. Those of higher ranks are more serene than the lower ranks. For this reason, Hungry Ghosts value younger generations, as they will one day be at the same stage, and will need to educate the newer generation while the elders may pass on, away from the Great Cycle.

## RANKS OF HUNGRY GHOSTS

1. Ravenous Devils – (0)
2. Veiled – (1)
3. Disciple – (2-3)
4. Unveiled – (4+)
5. Preceptor – (Minimum Requirement 6+)
6. Ancestor – (Minimum Requirement 7)
7. Awakened – (Minimum Requirement 9+ unplayable)
8. Non-Returner – (10+ unplayable)

# RAVENOUS DEVIL

## PATH RATING 0

These are mostly the newly arisen. Ravenous Devils usually rise where their bodies are located. However, unlucky ones could find themselves waking in their family's home where their ashes were located. When this happens, their families are often killed and consumed.

Due to their frenzied state, if they wake around people who don't understand their condition, they are generally destroyed. For example, vampires would destroy them thinking they are Wights, while werewolves will see them as Wyrms-ridden messes to be eradicated. When other Hungry Ghosts see Ravenous Devils, their duty is to capture them and confine them away from the eyes of mortals. The Scarlet Screen has to be maintained. Once in private, a Ravenous Devil is forced back to their senses by any means necessary. If after a long period of time a Ravenous Devil has still not woken from their nightmare state, then they are destroyed, as they are deemed not strong enough to overcome their Shadow.



# VEILED

## *PATH RATING 1*

These are not considered full Hungry Ghosts yet, but starting on their Path. They have overcome the Shadow that controlled their body when they were Ravenous Devils. They are taught and permitted to feed but are given no rights or responsibilities apart from training to be a part of Hungry Ghost society. Depending on their aptitude, it may take up to 20 years for a Veiled to move up

a rank. They are called Veiled because their body and face are covered in a grey cloth so as to be indistinguishable from one another. This is to prevent elders from becoming attached to them and giving them preferential treatment. They are not allowed to go outside other than to feed, and must be accompanied by a mentor at all times if they do.

Life as a Veiled is like a military school or seminary.



They are taught subjects to help them live as Hungry Ghosts. Elders expect the Veiled to learn their lessons in vigilance and obedience. Veiled must conduct themselves with respect and grace. If a Veiled shows consistent disobedience, stubbornness or incompetence, they are destroyed. For Hungry Ghosts, it shows they will be unable to educate others with the desired values.

Some courts only allow a Veiled to exist for a set time. If they don't learn enough to satisfy their elders within that time, then they are destroyed. This practice is criticised by courts who argue that some of their greatest were those that took time in their education. The counter-argument is that the courts no longer have the luxury of time.



# DISCIPLE

## *PATH RATING 2-3*

This is usually the rank players start at. It is also the largest rank in most courts.

After a long period of training and tests, the Veiled is initiated into a court as a Disciple. This is a big moment as they are given responsibilities and duties on behalf of the court. They are allowed to move freely within the court's territory, and are allowed to interact with the outside world. All of them are accorded the basic rights within their court (though each court varies on what rights a Disciple gets) and are now to be given respect. This is the point at which individuals are allowed to distinguish themselves, and they are allowed to visit or join other courts.

During this period, a Disciple is under the tutelage of an Unveiled. They should have an inkling of which Path (Dharma in KOTE) they would like to undertake, and change their clothes accordingly. Each court has a different system of colours for their Paths. A Disciple is still required to wear their veils within the court to show that their level of spiritual understanding and powers are still basic. If the veil is removed in front of an Unveiled in court, the Disciple is tested on their abilities and understanding in public. If they are unable to meet the challenge, they have to wear the veil again. Humiliation in public is the only barrier stopping a Disciple unveiling themselves.

Elders usually have a small celebration for each initiation and make a point of encouraging Disciples to continue down their Path. It is also when the court usually establishes a Clique of Hungry Ghosts for the Disciple to join.



## UNVEILED

### PATH RATING 4+

When a Disciple has unveiled themselves and passed the challenges set by the Unveiled, they are welcomed into their ranks. This is a great achievement and a giant step in understanding their path. They can now discard their court clothes that were given to them as Disciples and buy or make their own.

An Unveiled is given some Disciples to educate. These are chosen carefully for this relationship usually serves as a Disciple's foundation in their Path.

This rank is the second largest within most courts. It is also the end of the formal ranking system in which rank is determined by Path Rating. Future ranks have to be earned with behaviour. For example, an Unveiled can be Path Rating 7 but not be an Ancestor or Preceptor, and the majority of Awakened live as Unveiled for millennia before progressing.

## PRECEPTOR

### PATH RATING 6+

Within Hungry Ghost societies, there is a class of Unveiled that focus their skills on organisation, education and administration. They are then examined through observation for several years by another two Preceptors. If both Preceptors are satisfied, the Unveiled is invited into their ranks.

Their duties include being ambassadors to other courts, organising within larger political bodies, and performing important rituals. Within their own courts, they are political and spiritual advisors to the Ancestors and it is their duty to test a candidate for their suitability for becoming an Ancestor.

Their role as ambassadors between courts means that Preceptors stand somewhat apart from their own court's culture. Most Preceptors are insular and don't socialise much with their own courts, and learn more about skills that have developed in others. Their reasoning is that knowledge is power. They must know their enemy.

When a new court is created, multiple Preceptors from other courts are invited to advise and teach. It is not uncommon for these Preceptors to stay for many years until a healthy population of Unveiled and new Preceptors is created.

# ANCESTOR

*PATH RATING 7+*

The rank of Ancestor is so called to invoke the original Hungry Ghosts. The individual holding the rank does not have to be anyone's ancestor, instead it is a way of marrying the present with the heritage of the Hungry Ghosts. Depending on the court, they may also be called Grand Patriarch/Matriarch. Titles like these change between courts, but the title of Ancestor is universally recognised.

Ancestors are the head of their respective courts, after

being chosen by their Preceptors, but are not necessary for a court to function. As such, if there are no candidates, the Preceptors are in charge.

While politics and power are part of it, the difficulty of the test to become an Ancestor also gives candidates pause. There is a mostly standardised test to ensure a Hungry Ghost is fit to rule, called 'The Three Dialogues' which lasts for three nights. Failure usually results in Final Death.



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## THE THREE DIALOGUES

### Test of the Mind

The candidate is questioned for the entire night on philosophy and spiritual understanding. While not required, they are expected to use spiritual texts to back up their argument. There is no correct answer, the candidate must win their debates with logic or deep insights that the Preceptors cannot refute.

### Test of the Body

The candidate is to fight five of the most respected warriors in the court. Depending on the court, it may be simultaneously or one at a time. The five warriors are allowed to kill the candidate during the trial while the candidate is only allowed to injure.

### Test of the Soul

The barrier between the Psyche and Shadow is removed by a ritual, allowing the Shadow to take over the body. This forces a deep frenzy state on the Hungry Ghost during which the Psyche must wrestle back control using willpower alone. Candidates who chose a Path without Demon Arts will find that, once they pass this test, they are proficient users of it. This ordeal requires the candidate to be tied up outside. If they are successful, they will become calm and prove their control before the sun rises. If they fail, the frenzied Hungry Ghost is destroyed by the dawn.

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The tests are not designed to be easy, and it is a testament to the determination of Hungry Ghosts to have a worthy leader that they are willing to kill their superiors for it.

While Ancestors usually only rule one court, they can also be nominated to represent multiple courts in matters of foreign affairs. For example, there might be multiple courts within an area, but the city, prefecture, state, county, etc is represented at the national level by a single Ancestor who works on their behalf. This Ancestor is chosen by the courts they will be representing. The affected courts can all put forward candidates, but they must come to unanimous agreement. The chosen Ancestor must be highly capable, so the position usually goes to an Ancestor who has already proven themselves by ruling a court. Sometimes, the position is awarded to a Preceptor or high-ranking Unveiled, so they do not actually have a court of their own to run, but this is not seen as a problem. Any court in the area that loses its Ancestor becomes theirs, so it is also possible that this ambassador Ancestor has more than one court to rule over, though this is viewed with suspicion by others.

It is not uncommon for tensions to rise between Ancestors, as the ambassador Ancestor can enforce their will on courts that are not their own.

# AWAKENED

## PATH RATING 9+

At this stage, characters become mostly unplayable due to the strength and motivations of the Awakened. Storytellers are encouraged to retire player characters if they get to this point.

Awakened produce a natural aura similar to True Faith which most supernatural creatures find painful to be around. Those with a Path Rating lower than 5 can only be around them for 30 minutes at most.

It is rare for Hungry Ghosts to achieve Awakening, as they have to master their hunger, discard their desires, and transcend any corruption.

Becoming Awakened means the Hungry Ghost is near the end of their chosen Path and has deep insight into the Divinities, and all the multitude of beings that exist. They are able to easily walk between the Ethereal Realms without rituals and can converse with any and all beings, even Yama Kings or the highest deities. They can also talk to ancient Hungry Ghosts that attained the rank of Non-Returner.

Most Awakened Hungry Ghosts become wandering ascetics, withdrawn from the politics that dominate the younger generations. Depending on their Path, they display near-perfect behaviour as an example for others. Many of them stay behind on the mortal plane to educate Hungry Ghosts and spirits that want their counsel.

There are occasionally congregations of Hungry Ghosts who travel in pilgrimage to learn from these Awakened Ones. It is an honour for a court to have an Awakened rise in their ranks and each court records who they are and when they Awakened.

The Awakened are revered like gods, though they prefer to live quietly, humbly, and without fuss. However, this is almost impossible for the immense spiritual force in an Awakened makes it painful for a lower rank Hungry Ghost to be in their presence, making them immediately identifiable.

In terms of power scale, they are easily equivalent to Methuselah for vampires. Werewolves do not perceive them as wyrm at all.





## NON-RETURNER

### *PATH RATING 10+*

This stage is unplayable. They have achieved the end goal of all Hungry Ghosts, and completed their Path. They are deathless and have transcended the cycle. They are proof to Hungry Ghosts that their Path is achievable. Only Awakened in deep meditative states are able to contact them. They can choose to manifest within the world but they seldom do. Their powers easily rival an Antediluvian vampire.



# THE FIVE PATHS

The Five Paths originated from the first Non-Returner, Asrikpa, who legends say was the first Hungry Ghost to rise after the fall of the Ten Thousand Immortals. During his long journey as a Hungry Ghost ascetic, he discovered several spiritual Paths that lead to the end of the cycle that begins with the Second Breath. While there were other spiritual Paths that have since been lost, Asrikpa's Five Taught Paths consistently produce the most Awakened. Hungry Ghosts following Paths other than Asrikpa's are branded as Outcasts, even though Asrikpa never discouraged Hungry Ghosts from finding their own road to Awakening.

Over time, different Schools have developed within

# TAUGHT THIS

each Path. Each School is an evolution of the original Path, building on its teachings. Since each School still produces Awakened, they are not seen as heretical, but rather as different routes to the same end. Not all Paths have different Schools.

What is presented below is the ideal for each Path, but as with any group, the practical reality is often different. Hypocrisy is as common among Hungry Ghosts as it is among humans. Following the teachings of a Path may lead to enlightenment, but a Hungry Ghost is just as likely to get there after an epiphany reveals their flaws. It is up to the player and the Storyteller to decide what the real moral good is, and whether they want to pursue it or not.



# THE PATH OF THE DEVIL TIGERS

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According to the ancient texts of the Devil Tigers, when Asrikpa witnessed the destruction caused by the wars between the Titans and the Gods at the base of Mount Sumeru, he felt great sadness for the lives that were lost. The perfection of the Holy Realm had been tarnished by scars of terrible battles. To hold with his ascetic ideals, he lashed himself with nettles. The blood he drew erupted into flames, but Asrikpa let the flames consume him. It was then he became Awakened and understood the transience of the senses.

## WHO ARE THE FOLLOWERS OF THE PATH OF DEVIL TIGERS?

Hungry Ghosts understood one thing during their time in the Demon Realm, and that was pain. Many of them emerge seeking reasons for the suffering they had to endure. Most can only condemn their experience as excessive cruelty. Others think they deserved it for the crimes they committed in life. The Devil Tigers attempt to make sense of it, and use their suffering as a springboard for their spiritual development.

Pain to the Devil Tigers is both a weakness of the

senses and a tool to further their Path. The problem for the Devil Tigers is that, before their Second Breath, they were focused on either running from pain, doing anything to escape it, or indulging in hedonistic pleasures to mask it. They believe that the fear of pain is life's great barrier, and so by devoting themselves to it, they can overcome that fear and become Awakened. Their end goal is to escape, overcome and banish the fear of pain that ties them to the eternal cycle.

For the Devil Tigers, they believe their purpose from the Divinities is to be instruments to purify or cauterise the infection and rot of the world. They will be the frontline troops in the coming Sixth Age, the ones who are not only trained to confront the horrors that the Yama Kings will bring into the world, but who are also vicious enough to win. Both Schools say every Sixth Age is the brightest and strongest era for their Path. Like a flash fire, they will burn away the wicked of the world, including themselves, and a wiser world will be born from the ashes.

To outside observers, the Devil Tigers look like sadomasochists for the cruelty they inflict on others and themselves. However, there are differences in how the two Schools of Devil Tigers conduct themselves.

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### SCHOOL OF THE LIGHTNING BOLT

The School of the Lightning Bolt extols the virtue of the Divinities' original purpose for the Yama Kings, namely guides and punishers of those that do wrong. As such, students of the Lightning Bolt focus on punishing evil-doers in ways that cause them to truly regret their sins. This usually results in the death of the victim, but that release is only granted if they truly repent. Public mortification while teachings are recited by elders is a common practice within this School. They must admit to the sins that have brought them to this state, and train to overcome those weaknesses. This School is considered more palatable as their primary focus is on combating evil.

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### SCHOOL OF THE SEARING WIND

This School is the most feared for their beliefs. To overcome the Shadow, they must become a Devil themselves and bring fear to others. To them, fear is a tool for maintaining proper behaviour. As such, followers of the Searing Wind are known to be indiscriminate to those that need punishing and often decorate their dwellings with their victims. This often attracts unsavoury spirits. Any punishment they inflict on their victims, they ask a fellow student of the Searing Wind to do to them too, apart from Final Death. The reason for this is that they view restraint as the fear of pain. If they want to embrace and welcome pain and therefore fearlessness, they must banish any restraint. They believe agony can bring insight, and insight leads to greater joy and happiness.

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## Training

Most followers of this Path come from violent backgrounds. They are usually former criminals or were otherwise associated with the human underworld. However, those with deep regrets or very violent deaths are also drawn to this Path. Those with deep regrets may see it as penance for their actions, while those with violent deaths see it as training to never be defeated that way again.

When Disciples choose this Path, they are given three days to change their minds. The Disciples are warned by the Unveiled and taken to see older Disciples training. They are encouraged to talk to other Disciples about their training. If they remain adamant about their choice, they will be accepted. Training is brutal, with the basics being the same in both Schools.

1. The first training is focused on physical endurance against pain.
2. The second training is focused on mental fortitude against pain that comes from the mind and emotions.
3. The third training is causing pain. This differs between the Schools, as the Lightning Bolt teaches their students not to revel in the causing of pain but to be emotionless and practical, while the Searing Wind encourages their students to enjoy what they do.
4. The fourth training is focused on insights. The individual is taught abilities that put them in a deep trance. After a session, they are to isolate themselves and meditate on their experience.

## Path Boon

Lightning Bolt – Once per session, the Hungry Ghost can automatically succeed in breaking out of a Wave Soul, and they can devour souls without lowering their Path Rating if it is to punish the soul for wrongdoing.

Searing Wind – When using the Godbody of Demons discipline, they don't need to make a Shadow roll. They can also devour souls without lowering their Path Rating if it is to punish the soul for wrongdoing.

## Path Bane

The Devil Tigers are generally impulsive unless they are in a sanctuary or training area. The brutality of their actions make them seem like base monsters to outsiders. It is usually only when they graduate to Unveiled that their actions start becoming more refined. However, in comparison to other Paths, it seems they have no self-control, especially when it comes to rage.

Mechanic: Subtract Dice equal to the amount of Demonic Essence within the Hungry Ghost when rolling a Fire Soul check. ✘

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## TENETS OF DEVIL TIGERS

- *We are divinely-appointed devils. Embrace this mission with open arms.*
  - *We are the masters of our Shadow. Listen to it and take advantage of its power, but never let it dictate your actions.*
  - *Embrace passion of both flesh and spirit. In those moments of joy we are most honest.*
  - *Pain is the greatest teacher. The lantern of agony reveals our true character. Illuminate yourself and others.*
  - *Even wickedness can be a part of the celestial order, or there would be no devils. Our necessary evils must be elegant and precise to not cheapen our mandate.*
  - *As devils, we are the force of the Divinities' displeasure with the unrighteous. When a creature is unjust, bring about their downfall. When leaders cause their subjects to suffer unjustly, bring about their downfall.*
  - *For all the wrong-doings in the world, only a few devils are appointed by the celestial order. Do not waste yourself correcting petty injustices or engage in acts beneath the dignity of your station.*
  - *Our business is with the wicked. The innocent are not our jurisdiction.*
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# THE PATH OF THE RESPLENDENT CRANES

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It is said in the ancient texts of the Resplendent Cranes that when Asrikpa was deep in the Himalayas, he reflected on the nature of his existence. The Divinities, instead of destroying the unworthy, left them to ponder their curse. Asrikpa reasoned that they must therefore have a purpose or at least potential, and that they must be meant to strive to return to their Divine state. Within the Himalayas, he found a cave in which he took shelter. He meditated within the cave for a thousand nights without sustenance, but in the end, hunger struck him. He wandered deep into the snow, but nothing could be found. Despairing, he collapsed near a frozen lake. From the edge of his vision, he saw a white crane break the surface ice of the lake. Its long beak took a frozen frog from the lake and carefully set it aside. The frog thawed, bowed in obeisance and turned into a butterfly. It was then Asrikpa became Awakened and realised the perfection of the Divinities.

## WHO ARE THE FOLLOWERS OF THE PATH OF THE RESPLENDENT CRANE?

When these Hungry Ghosts arise from their Second Breath, they remember the Yama Kings' laughing at

them. They look at themselves and see what they have become, and feel ashamed. This is what they seek to understand. For the Resplendent Cranes, they attempt to learn from what happened to them by adhering to a strict honour code to perfect their behaviour. Ethics becomes their Path.

Shame is the true driving force behind this Path. The original Ten Thousand Immortals were the agents of the Divinities' will on Earth. However, they allowed corruption into their souls, including pride, and disgraced themselves. To combat this pride, the Resplendent Cranes look at themselves in the mirror using Deathsight, revealing their true decayed state. It is an upsetting experience that keeps them humble. The end goal for their Path is to escape this cycle of existence by perfecting themselves and overcoming the shame they feel.

The Resplendent Cranes believe their purpose from the Divinities is to remind others of virtue, wisdom and patience. By doing so, they may be able to stop or even reverse the coming of the Sixth Age. They are the redeemers, the ones that prevent it from happening at all. They will endure like water, their nature never changing.

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## THE 9 LOTUS STEPS OF PERFECTION

- *There is hope within the world.*
  - *To maintain hope, live a virtuous life.*
  - *Reward those who earn it, and correct those who commit misdeeds.*
  - *Purge wickedness from yourself and the world.*
  - *Encourage instruction from the wise. There is always room for improvement.*
  - *Guide the unwise and the foolish.*
  - *Harmony is the way of the Divinity.*
  - *Divinity is formless and flows like water. What is captured has lost its original form.*
  - *The Divinities are within reach. Unite with the spirits.*
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To outside observers, the Resplendent Cranes seem inflexible and zealous. Well-trained Resplendent Cranes will rarely commit any immoral act. However, there are three Schools of Resplendent Cranes. All of them loosely adhere to the 9 Lotus Steps of Perfection but each School prefers to focus on different steps.

### SCHOOL OF THE EMPTY LAKE

In the face of difficulty, this School believes that virtue and upright behaviour will prevent any problems. They believe that righteous actions are better than specific formulas, and that the rules can be bent to serve their purpose. Even those that seem unteachable can be taught with good enough incentives. The Lotus Steps this School focuses on are one, two and three.

### SCHOOL OF THE RIGID SNOW

This School believes that there must be set rules, guidelines and punishments that every Resplendent Crane must follow. They believe that disorder comes from confusion, and in order to aid the lost and confused, a rigid and concrete Path will help them navigate the complexity of life. Highly inflexible and harsh, stories of truly merciless behaviour emerge from this School. They are likely to be the most martial of this Path. The Lotus Steps this School focuses on are four, five and six.

### SCHOOL OF THE FLOWING RIVER

This School believes that what matters most is the intention behind the action. They have learned, however, that despite the intention, actions have consequences, so now they deliberate carefully before acting. For the Flowing River, the wise are silent when others shout. The Flowing River

focuses more on internal perfection and causing minimal disruption, tending to move around problems rather than exert themselves to fix them with brute force. Punishment is rare within this School. Generally, the shame of failing at a virtue is considered enough of a punishment. The Lotus Steps this School focuses on are seven, eight and nine.

### Training

Most Hungry Ghosts who take this Path are ashamed of the crimes or sins they committed when they were alive. When a Disciple chooses this Path, they must isolate themselves with an Unveiled for three days. If their mannerisms, energy and drive are in line with this Path, they are accepted. Their training is based in ascetism, which varies between courts and regions, but self-mortification is frowned upon. While this Path is considered easier than others due to its relatively low risk, it is not. The war is just fought internally instead.

### Path Boon

Empty Lake – If the Shadow breaks a Conviction while in control, the character does not suffer any stains as long as amends are made.

Rigid Snow – The character can break a Conviction without consequences if it is in service of punishing a target.

Flowing River – Spend one point of Demonic Essence to heal 3 superficial Willpower damage.

### Path Bane

Due to their training and focus, Hungry Ghosts following the Resplendent Crane are inflexible and intolerant of those that do not adhere to the Great Principle. In practice, however, violations are open to interpretation, and they enforce punishments when it suits them.

Mechanic: Suffer a point of superficial Willpower damage when witnessing a Hungry Ghost ignore or break a tenet of the Great Principle. Suffer 2 points of superficial Willpower damage when a Resplendent Crane ignores or breaks a tenet of the Lotus Steps and you do not correct it. ✖

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## TENETS OF RESPLENDENT CRANE

- *The Lotus Steps are before you. Walk them.*
  - *The Fivefold Ways guide you. Heed them.*
  - *When witnessing wrongdoings, right them. When the Shadow commits offence, make amends.*
  - *Give charity to those that deserve it. Defend the helpless. Teach virtue to those ignorant of correct behaviour.*
  - *Reason with the wicked before striking. Great are those that can turn the wicked into a being of perfection.*
  - *When the wicked will not submit to reason, strike as swiftly as an eagle and as ferociously as a tiger. Slay those you cannot correct.*
  - *Protect and uphold the pillar of family and community. All virtues first arise in family. However, let your living family believe you are dead.*
  - *Honour and composure are the hallmarks of a perfect being. Do not let your fallen state injure your dignity.*
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# THE PATH OF THE SHADOW SONGS

It is said in the ancient texts of the Shadow Songs that when Asrikpa contemplated the nature of his existence while wandering the lands of the dead, he encountered a ghost. Struck by her wit and knowledge, they conversed for many moons until they found themselves in love. Asrikpa chose to remain in the dead lands to be with his lover. The Ebon Dragon heard of a great sage dwelling in his realm and sought out Asrikpa, asking why he chose to live amongst the dead. Asrikpa uttered one word, “Love”. The Ebon Dragon breathed onto Asrikpa and he faded into ashes, shredded by the great breath. The mighty Ebon Dragon rumbled “We have no use for love,” and scattered his ashes with his mighty tail and left.

His lover, seeing from afar with her cold dead eyes, travelled great distances to find ways to revive Asrikpa. However, her search was fruitless. Finally, she returned to the place where Asrikpa’s ashes lay. Her heart, dead but not unmoved, felt deep sadness. A single tear slid down her cheek and spattered into the dust. Asrikpa arose fully-formed and embraced her. From this, she fully transcended and when Asrikpa saw this, he became Awakened, understanding equanimity.

## WHO ARE THE FOLLOWERS OF THE PATH OF SHADOW SONGS?

The Hungry Ghosts that remember their death sometimes think of their impact on the world, or the ambitions they held in life. They think of what could

have been. The Yama Kings know this, and recite their unfinished tasks as taunts. The Shadow Songs therefore attempt to make sense of their suffering by giving voice to the unheard, learning all they can, and creating something that will last.

Being unfulfilled is the driving fear for Shadow Songs. There is a deep-seated need within all Shadow Songs to have a purpose. Perhaps while they were alive, they had dreams and ambitions, but were held back by other responsibilities, or got distracted. As such, they view their Second Breath as a second chance. The end game for their Path is to become fully and truly satisfied with their achievements. This is their way to escape from the cycle of existence.

For the Shadow Songs, they believe their purpose from the Divinities is to bind and hold, and remind others of their ultimate goal in this world. To the other Paths, the Shadow Songs are ambassadors, lore-keepers and scholars. They are known to be diplomatic and well-read, if dispassionate and dismissive of the individual. Their preference for Black Essence means some of them look more corpse-like which, combined with their tendency to spend time in the Shadowlands, makes them unable to be around mortals without risking a breach of the Scarlet Screen. Their appearance causes fear and draws too much attention.

In the coming Sixth Age, the Shadow Songs are the strategists. They make use of their vast knowledge and a

## TENETS OF SHADOW SONGS

- *You may walk with the dead but remember you are not one of them.*
- *The court that holds this Path is a foundation of righteousness and must be defended.*
- *Honour the ghosts and living spirits. Provide both with respect and companionship, for their existence is a lonely one.*
- *There is no end to learning. Always seek the truth.*
- *An object without concept is meaningless. A concept without object is fantasy. Neither can stand alone. Unify them and bring them to the world.*
- *Telling is like pouring water over ice. Teaching is like sculpting the ice. Know which is superior.*
- *Share your learning with others, but only with those that understand the value of the gift given.*
- *The parting of the living and the dead is difficult. Console both, but understand the natural order. Guide those that do not understand. Spare no pain to those that cross the Wall without permission.*



myriad of tactics to hold it off.

The difference in the two Schools are minor in practice, but major when it comes to philosophy.

### **SCHOOL OF THE PETAL ASHES**

This school teaches the importance of love. Not lust, but every kind of love. However, attachment is discouraged, lest it become obsessive. This philosophy is what gives the Shadow Songs their good reputation. They gather stories about or items belonging to the living and bring them to the Shadowlands, where wraiths wish for news. The Petal Ashes collect the wraiths memories and bring comfort to the living. Due to their role as mediators for the dead, they tend to be ambassadors for the courts as well, and maintain their appearance as best they can, though they remain deathly pale.

### **SCHOOL OF THE BONE FLOWERS**

This school practices the cold mind, one void of any emotions. To them, in order to learn or create without biases, one has to keep a clear and practical mind. They dissect everything to learn as much as they can. They travel deep into the Shadowlands, sometimes staying there for many months to learn what has been lost to the living. They are curious, and their hunger for knowledge is as strong as their hunger for Essence. They are responsible for many great written works, songs or other lasting and famous monuments.

### **Training**

Most Hungry Ghosts who take this Path were melancholy in life. They might have been artists, or academics with passion projects. They may have suffered from loneliness, neglected their family, or committed suicide. They see this Path as a way of finally completing their purpose.

When a Hungry Ghost chooses this Path, an Unveiled will take them to the Underworld and leave them there for two days. They are then brought back to the mortal world and told to write or otherwise create something based on a moment of inspiration from their stay. If the Unveiled considers the work worthy, they are accepted.

Their basic training is quite hands-off in comparison to other Paths. The Unveiled teach them meditative techniques and how to travel to the Shadowlands, then leave their Disciples to pursue whatever they want. Most Shadow Songs prefer to

be alone with their thoughts or work. When they gather together, it is usually to create grand works of art that stun the community. They flourish during festive periods when they perform for the courts. They incorporate meaning into their arts that few others catch, but they don't mind, they just keep trying.

### **Path Boon**

Petal Ashes – Do not suffer the negative appearance modifiers when in Death Imbalance.

Bone Flowers – When rolling to resist Fire or Wave soul, roll twice and take the roll with the higher success.

### **Path Bane**

Due to their time spent in the Underworld, their voices are reduced to mere whispers. Great effort is required to exert their voices louder than that. They also have an unsettling aura, so mortals subconsciously avoid them. Mechanic: Requires spending a point of Demonic Essence to boost their voice to normal levels. This lasts until the Hungry Ghost next sleeps. -1 die to all social rolls involving mortals even if in Neutral Aspect. ✘



# THE PATH OF THE THOUSAND WHISPERS

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It is said in the ancient texts of the Thousand Whispers that when Asrikpa was tired from his wandering, he slept in a cave. When he awoke, he saw the cave was overrun by a myriad of demons. At first, he attempted to combat them. However, the more he fought, the more the demons seemed at ease. Seeing his efforts wasted, he tried another tactic. He taught the demons what he had learnt, the virtues of following the Paths granted by the Divinities and the truth to escape the great cycle. However, the demons just looked at him, not one leaving. At this point, Asrikpa sighed deeply and looked each demon in the eye. He bowed to them and said “Honourable teachers, I open myself to learn what you have to teach”. At this, all the demons left apart from the fiercest with a giant maw and serrated teeth. Asrikpa then offered himself completely in his mind and placed his body within the mouth of the demon. “Eat me if this is your desire,” he said. The demon spat him out, bowed before Asrikpa and dissolved into the air. From this, Asrikpa became Awakened, understanding the nature of renunciation.

## WHO ARE THE FOLLOWERS OF THE PATH OF THE THOUSAND WHISPERS?

When people are zealous or overly sure of themselves, they close their ears and eyes to anything that challenges their worldview. Often, those who claim others are wrong are at risk of being wrong themselves. Students of the Thousand Whispers were like this in life; stubborn and intractable, dedicated to an unworthy cause or ideal, or one they failed to practice as much as they preached. They were hypocrites, willing to cause deliberate suffering in order to defend their position.

When their soul was bared to the Yama Kings, every truth about themselves and their impact on the world was revealed and tossed back into their face, shattering their certainty. Because of this, the Thousand Whispers try to make amends by living a myriad of lives, all with different personalities, experiencing as many different viewpoints as they can, so that they never repeat their mistake.

The Yama Kings humiliated them, and no follower of this Path will ever forget it. They believe that their time in the Demon Realm was because they were blind

and closed off from other ideas or thoughts. By living and dying so many times, they will have many perspectives and perfect understanding of the truth. By understanding the truth, they will escape this cycle of existence.

The Thousand Whispers believe their purpose from the Divinities is to remind other Hungry Ghosts of impermanence. They don't believe that the Sixth Age will be the complete destruction of the world, but more a ritual cycle of death. The Sixth Age will pass, and the Path of the Thousand Whispers will survive due to its flexibility.

Other Paths struggle to recognise a practitioner of the Path of the Thousand Whispers. It is a rare Path to take, and not many courts have an Unveiled to guide Disciples. Their training is focused on learning the perspective of others, and analysing the whole to figure out the ultimate truth. Someone who others think is a Devil Tiger may suddenly discard that identity and follow the Path of the Resplendent Crane.

What is the point of establishing a society if you are going to abandon it eventually? Only students of the Thousand Whispers can answer that.

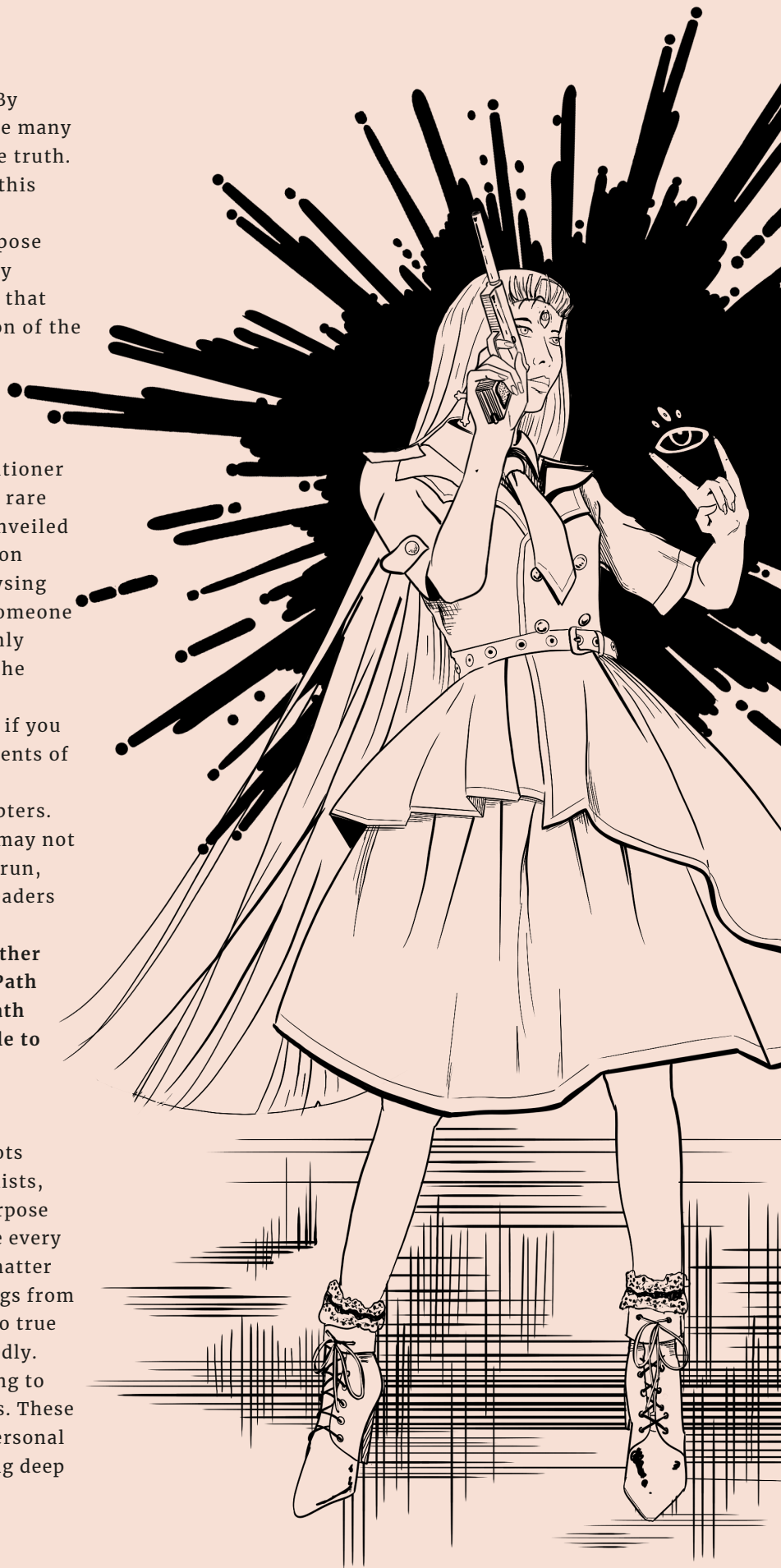
In the coming Sixth Age, they are the Doubters. They are the ones who challenge orders that may not benefit the Hungry Ghosts' cause in the long run, speaking truth to power, and ensuring that leaders have considered all the angles before acting.

**Mechanic: The Thousand Whispers take other Paths' Schools as their own. If they adopt a Path that does not have Schools, then place the Path name in the School section. They are also able to switch Paths without special Rites.**

### Training

Students of the Thousand Whispers were zealots for a cause in life. They may have been extremists, mercenaries, or even cultists. They sought purpose in their lives, thought they found it, and made every effort to convince others to follow it too, no matter the cost. Now they have changed, and see things from many angles. They have many purposes, but no true one that they actually believe in whole-heartedly.

An Unveiled will talk to any Disciple wanting to choose this Path and ask continuous questions. These questions are centred around the Disciples' personal philosophy and why it exists. The questions dig deep





# CULTISTS. EXTREMISTS. ZEALOTS.

---

## TENETS OF THOUSAND WHISPERS

- *The road to becoming Awakened is 10,000 lives long, each different.*
  - *Every life is a learning experience. Failing to learn wastes them.*
  - *The same note 10,000 times does not make a song. It must be dynamic, not static.*
  - *Lives are lessons, not prisons or possessions. Do not cling to the trappings of life for when you leave it, you cannot take them with you.*
  - *Righteousness is excellent, but the truly wise know when to act and when to observe.*
  - *All of life is composed of choices. If you do not understand their choices, question until you have learnt.*
  - *The celestial order has created the world in balance. If something cannot be balanced, destroy it, for such unevenness is bound to distort the world.*
  - *If you lived 10,000 lives but forgot each lesson, those of the singular Paths know more than you for you are blind.*
- 

into the core of the Hungry Ghost and may seem pedantic, belligerent, or insane. If the Disciple can last three days and still be willing to continue, they are accepted. The relationship between student and mentor is closer among the Thousand Whispers than most, as it is the one relationship they are required to keep long-term, over the course of many lives, until the Disciple is ready to be independent. It is a decision not made lightly.

Their basic training is known as the Triple Lives. The masters will devise three different identities for the Disciple to live, in any order. The identities will be very different from one another. The Disciple is expected to live in an identity for a few years and then move on. Funding, guidance and all other resources are provided. Once the Disciple has finished all three, they are on their own, expected to start anew with the skills and understanding they developed.

Every practitioner of this Path must end the lives they live and die in a ritualistic death. Their body is locked and secured while the Hungry Ghost enters a trance and their spirit ventures to the spirit world. Their body is guarded by their mortal friends, their Clique, or other Whispers. Mortal friends are usually killed when the Hungry Ghost returns. Clique members and other Whispers say their formal farewells and renounce any ties to the Hungry Ghost. The Hungry Ghost leaves behind their past life and moves to new courts and establishes themselves within a new Clique. Meeting any former companions should be treated like meeting them for the first time.

### Path Boon

Copy the boons of other Paths you have walked.

### Path Bane

Their biggest problem is the distrust of other court members. An individual who takes this Path may be the best of friends or strongest supporter of a court but, after a ritual death, may become their worst enemy. They are nicknamed the “Path of the Wise Centipede”, implying the Thousand Whispers are also poisonous and carnivorous.

Followers of this Path are usually wanderers to avoid too many attachments. If they do live long lives, sometimes, to continue their Path, they must destroy what they have built, be it relationships, companies, literal buildings, etc.

Mechanic: -2 dice to all social rolls against other Hungry Ghosts if they know you are following this Path. ✘





# THE PATH OF THE THRASHING DRAGONS

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It is said in the ancient texts of the Thrashing Dragons when Asrikpa submerged himself in the river Ganges, he walked under the river bed and into the world of the living spirits. He emerged from a waterfall and was struck by the abundancy of life with light seeming to spring from every leaf or water drop. He sat beside the riverbank, inspired by the beauty of it. He sat there for many days in quiet consideration before being disturbed by heavy rain and thunder. Asrikpa put aside the misery of the rain and relaxed deeply, feeling the rain dripping down his back. Trying to return to his deep meditative state, the rain stopped and the clouds parted. From there, a myriad of rainbows appeared in the sky and great birds of many hues pierced the ocean of colours. It was then Asrikpa laughed deeply and became Awakened, understanding the nature of interconnectedness.

## WHO ARE THE FOLLOWERS OF THE PATH OF THRASHING DRAGONS?

Hungry Ghosts who choose the Path of Thrashing Dragons were often very sheltered in life. They strove to maintain their innocence, for religious or cultural reasons. They held themselves back from experiencing much that life had to offer, believing many pleasures and passions to be immoral. This mindset does not allow for a wide breadth of experience, however, and leads to narrow minds.

During their time in the Demon Realm, the Yama Kings knew this about their victims, and taunted them with their own over-active sense of guilt. These people readily believed their smallest misstep was unforgivable, and the Yama Kings made sure the punishment fit the crime. Physical torture was unnecessary for these souls. Instead, the Yama Kings deployed every psychological weapon they had, and the victims were ready to oblige with their self-flagellating thoughts.

After their Second Breath, these Hungry Ghosts realise their mistake, and dedicate their new lives to living passionately, experiencing everything the world has to offer, no longer refusing anything.

The Thrashing Dragons believe their purpose from the Divinities is to be the rejuvenators of this cycle. They believe that to keep away the Sixth Age, they must strengthen the Fifth. To do that, they discard misery and focus on revelry, with hope and joy as their defences against the forces of Destruction.

They are the entertainers, socialites, and daredevils. Although they are seen as crass, they are the ones to unite a court in comradeship. Their preference for Scarlet Essence makes them the most lifelike in appearance, and brings with it human appetites and lusts that most Hungry Ghosts lose. While Thrashing Dragons start off independent, eventually most join one of the three Schools of this Path.

## SCHOOL OF THOUSAND-FACED CLOUDS

This School focuses on Asrikpa's journey to the spirit world, and believes that to become Awakened, they must learn to appreciate the beauty of the spirits that once dotted the Earth. This School specialises in the affairs of the spirit world, and aims to defend the spirits. Complex rituals, chants and meditation are common practices. As such, this School tends to be less focused on carnal pleasures and more on spiritual fulfilment instead.

## SCHOOL OF LAUGHING RAINBOWS

This School is the oldest, and claims the other Schools are just variants who focus on certain aspects rather than the whole. Their teachings are more about balance, as without balance, one cannot appreciate the pleasure of life. This can be explained by the theory of the Hedonic Treadmill, which states that pleasures have diminishing returns the more you experience them, as you get used to them and they stop being special. They strive to balance both spiritual and physical pleasures.

## SCHOOL OF PASSION BLOODFLOWERS

This School is the most infamous, and is responsible for the traditional image of the Thrashing Dragons as hedonistic creatures who eat people, completely given over to their lusts. Their teaching focuses on consuming every delight possible, regardless of how it taxes others within the court. They practice body modification as self-expression and art more than any other Path or School.

### Training

Before the Second Breath, students of the Thrashing Dragons denied themselves the pleasures of life. When they return, they lose their inhibitions after their ordeal with the Yama Kings. While there are some people who do not fit this model, the majority of Hungry Ghosts in this Path didn't become jovial until their return.

A Disciple picking this Path has three days of festivities to draw the attention of an Unveiled three times without using any of their powers or breaching the Scarlet Screen. The Disciple in this situation needs to show they are the 'life of the party'. If they succeed, the Unveiled will approach them and initiate them into the Path. It depends on the School, but there are rumours of initiations being carnal affairs.

Basic training within Thrashing Dragons is the breaking of inhibitions and shy habits. Unveiled masters will listen to what their Disciples would have liked to try, but feared the repercussions or implications. They will then make their Disciples pursue their desire to show goals are achievable and

not to be feared. When the Disciple eventually questions their own reasons for not pursuing their wants, the masters leave them to their own devices, viewing their task as finished.

### Path Boon

Thousand-Faced Clouds – Gain an extra Essence for every Essence gained when a Spirit willingly allows themselves to be fed upon.

Laughing Rainbows – Black Essence consumed for Hunger only loses 1 Scarlet Essence.

Passion Bloodflowers – Can directly quell Hunger to 0 if eating a target alive without expenditure of Essence.

### Path Bane

Due to their preference for Scarlet Essence, these Hungry Ghosts are likely to consume it in any way they can. It is well documented that the Thrashing Dragons eat dead human flesh, and the Passion Bloodflowers extend this to the living. They only stop short of devouring other Hungry Ghosts. For those in the Thousand-Faced Clouds, they may feed on spirits although that is a riskier business.

**Mechanic: Every Black Essence consumed causes a Thrashing Dragon to lose 2 Scarlet Essence from their pool. If there are no Scarlet Essence in the pool, consuming Black Essence does not help with Hunger. ✘**

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## TENETS OF THRASHING DRAGONS

- *Life is an illusion. If you don't understand the illusion, you cannot pierce it.*
  - *Life's vibrancy in the external world reflects the lessons of existence. Life's vibrancy in the internal world reflects the lessons of passions. Learning one's true self is the path to Awakening.*
  - *Life is your fruit garden. Treat it carefully and the fruit is sweet. Neglect it and the fruit is bitter.*
  - *Foster growth in the healthy living. Cut away the dead or dying. It is greater suffering to prolong their pain.*
  - *Your condition is an abomination but bearable as the will of the celestial order has given you a just cause. Partake of death as little as possible and bathe in life as much as possible.*
  - *Embrace the sun when it rises in the morning and mourn as it sets in the evening.*
  - *There is no greater enemy of darkness than laughter. If laughter is not present, one will weep for life is also filled with sorrows.*
  - *Protect spirits for they are the source of life. Protect them from harm and give them their due reverence. Devour those that are corrupted.*
-





# THE HERETICAL PATHS

Outside of the Hungry Ghost court system, there are communities that do not follow the teachings of the Non-Returner Asrikpa. These are branded as heretical and the followers called 'Demons' by the more traditionalist Hungry Ghosts of the courts. Alternative Paths have been systematically hunted down and erased from history by



# TWO TACTICAL PATHS

those in power, or absorbed into the court-sanctioned Paths. For example, the Path of the Living Earth was absorbed into the Path of Thrashing Dragons, and the Path of Inward Focus was absorbed into the Thousand Whispers. In modern nights, only two Paths survive that remain distinct from Asrikpa's teachings.



# THE PATH OF THE RISING PHOENIXES

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Hungry Ghosts were once human, and most see their return to their bodies as a sign from the Gods that they have a purpose. Most Hungry Ghosts believe that this purpose can only be carried out thanks to their supernatural nature, but Rising Phoenixes don't. They believe their time in the Demon Realm was payment due for their crimes while alive. The Yama Kings ridiculed them for thinking they could escape punishment after death. Rising Phoenixes see the logic in this when they take their Second Breath. They believe their return to the living world is to repay and make amends, and fix the problems they caused so they can live human lives again, or as close as they can get.

The teachings of the Rising Phoenixes have produced Hungry Ghosts as strong as Ancestors, but after they become Awakened, they suddenly disappear from society. They are never seen again and can't be traced by even the most complex of rituals. Rising Phoenixes believe those elders have broken out of the cycle and become Non-Returners. Elders of other Paths remain silent about this phenomenon,

whether they know the truth or not. Rising Phoenixes who claim their Path has produced an Awakened are ridiculed and destroyed by the courts for heresy.

Despite this, in modern nights, this Path is popular among younger Hungry Ghosts. They struggle to accept their new life, and miss their families. The Rising Phoenixes are therefore in a stronger political position than they've ever been before, and pose more of a risk to court orthodoxy. Tensions are rising, with opinions differing on whether the Rising Phoenixes should be destroyed, or assimilated.

Rising Phoenixes see themselves as a bastion of hope and compassion. Many of them return to their families to watch from afar. The more reckless ones pick up their old lives with the help of a small support group while they train in their Path. Unfortunately, controlling their new nature is difficult, and there are countless stories of tragedy befalling Rising Phoenixes who failed to control their hunger. Regardless, the ideal Rising Phoenix is able to feel every emotion including pain, and remain kind.

There are two Schools, both with the goal of connecting to humanity.

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### SCHOOL OF SCENTED SMOKE

This School advocates against returning to their past life due to their new differences. Would it not hurt more to see your loved ones eventually die than to simply live apart from them? Better to watch from the shadows and help those around you. This diverged from the original teaching when elders noticed many students gave up after living through their family's deaths. They changed tactics, becoming unseen benefactors instead.

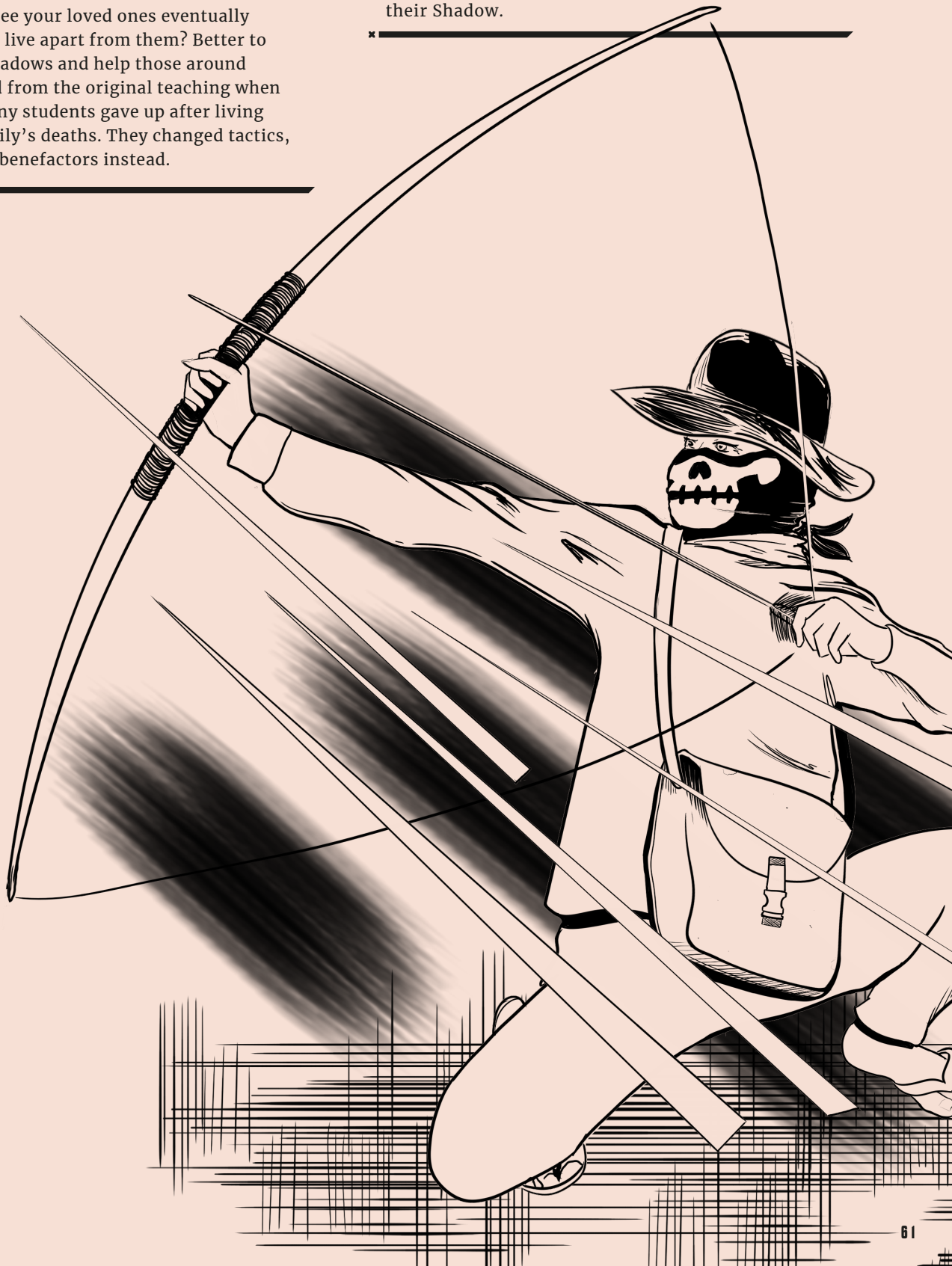
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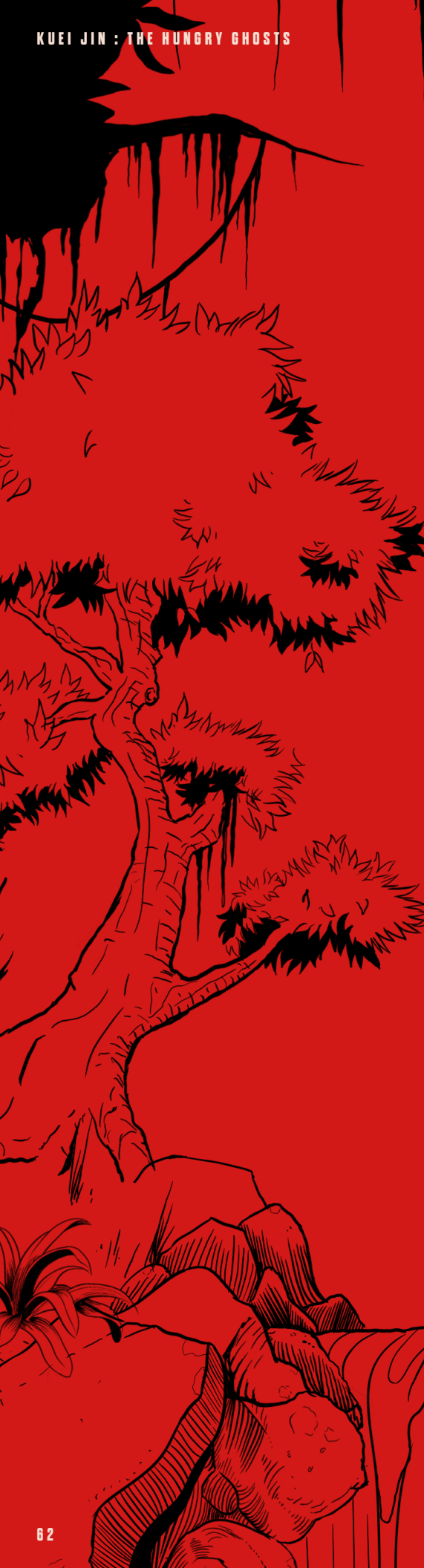
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### SCHOOL OF GOLDEN FLAMES

This School was the original. It advocates full immersion, living as if fully human, with the minor setback of suffering in the sun. Golden Flames must return to their families and solve the problems they caused. This School refuses to use skills that involve their Shadow.

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*Before the light, I was embroiled in shadows,  
sins kept hidden, daggers pointed.*

*Before the dark, all was laid bare,  
daggers within me, sins shown.*

*I was a monster,  
now a woman.*

**Deena Thapa**  
**Rising Phoenix poet,**  
**Equivalent Ancestor of Birgunj (Nepal)**



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## TENETS OF RISING PHOENIXES

- *Return to the world from whence you came. You were returned by the celestial order for a reason.*
  - *Repay the debts you held and sins you committed in life. This is the condition of your return.*
  - *Help others find the value of humanity. Many look down on its weakness without seeing its virtues.*
  - *Fight the Shadow and deny its monstrous nature. It is the adversary you must test yourself against.*
  - *Live well. Life is the best teacher, so do not restrict yourself with the perverse limitations of other Paths.*
  - *Wake the sleeper who shuns life's experiences for they have never lived.*
  - *Never deny the joys and sorrow of life. What is life without its challenges and gifts?*
  - *Return to your mortal ways, and seek your human state. That is the longing, wish, and truth which rings deepest.*
- 

### Training

The training regimen for Rising Phoenixes is unique among the Paths for its diversity. With no Awakened elders guiding them or showing them a proven way forward, every Rising Phoenix Unveiled or Ancestor makes their own suggestions. Most turn to mysticism or other dubious methods to find out what went wrong in their lives and how to fix it. Sometimes Rising Phoenixes use Black Essence to talk to wraiths to get advice from their ancestors, but their focus on Scarlet Essence means they remain lifelike, and can control Scarlett Essence better than even the Thrashing Dragons.

### Path Boon

Scented Smoke – If a touchstone dies of natural causes, it does not cause stains to the Psyche.

Golden Flames – When rolling a Psyche vs Shadow roll, reroll if the Shadow wins. The player has to accept the second roll results.

### Path Bane

Rising Phoenixes are emotional, and struggle with the tragedy of living with a Hungry Ghost body among mortals. Many give up hope when their family and friends die, or their ideals are broken, turning to other Paths for guidance instead.

**Mechanic: Any time something causes a Stain, double the stains usually gained. ✘**



# THE PATH OF THE FACE OF GODS

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While trapped in hell, the mad poet O saw the divine forms of the Yama Kings, and was inspired. He went on to write *The Celestial Nail* about his experiences, claiming to remember being divine himself. Many Hungry Ghosts took this revelation to mean their existence was halfway between man and God, and their role in the cycle is to return to the Divinities as gods again. In this way, they are the opposite of the Rising Phoenixes, who seek to live as humans.

Instead of seeing themselves as tortured souls cleaved into Psyche and Shadow, the Face of Gods see their current state as a divine opportunity, and proof of their intended purpose. Why would the gods give them this second chance if they were not meant for greatness? Their torture within the Demon Realms was just a necessary purge of their human character flaws. To return to their divine form, they believe they must fully master the Black and Scarlet Essence within the world, to use it as the gods do.

This attitude attracts mortal followers, and these

self-anointed 'Godlings' encourage this worship, and deliberately create dhamphyr. These dhamphyr grow up to use their supernatural powers to benefit their Hungry Ghost parent, further reinforcing their human followers' belief in their divinity. Some Godlings find the Essence generated by their followers to be more potent and longer lasting than any other. However, all these trappings are just tools to ascend into the Divine.

When among mortals, they carry an air of mystery and grace. They do not hide their nature if they can get away with it. They believe their role is to command and lead. To them, mortals are lovers, food, and servants. In return for obedience and faith, they provide prestige and power to their loyal cultists, who see a living god that grants blessings and performs miracles.

In modern nights, this Path has shrunk in popularity due to social media and globalisation making cult worship and open violations of the Scarlet Screen difficult.

There are no differing Schools within the Face of Gods.

*Heavenly realms in all directions,  
Kingdoms heralding us,  
Take a seat, o blessed ones.*

**Qing Ming,  
Poet of the Face of God**





# RETURN TO DIVINITY




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## TENETS OF FACE OF GODS

- *Develop your divine nature. The foundation of the world is putty in your hands.*
  - *Expand both the God and Demon within yourself. The divine has both compassion and fury to guide those in its care.*
  - *Accept the veneration of mortals and answer their prayers in return. You are the divine remade into this world.*
  - *Your body is dead for a reason. Harness Essence to show your divinity.*
  - *Follow these tenets and you shall become a sublime being.*
  - *Visit the Heavens to remind yourself of your original state. Remember that loss, and focus on returning to your rightful place.*
  - *Rituals and traditions are tools to harness your Essence. Use them as freely as the sick use medicine.*
  - *Commune with the spirits for they are the messengers of the celestial order.*
- 

## Training

A new Face of God is created when a Godling chooses to take on a student and reveals their teachings to another Hungry Ghost. They are then instructed in philosophical teachings as well as occult knowledge. The student is taught how to travel the Underworld and the Spirit World, as communing with spirits is seen as a must for a god. Court graces and etiquette are also emphasised and refined early on, for a Godling must act the part to attract followers, after all.

It is a lifelong apprenticeship and not taken lightly by the Godling mentor. However, the relationship between them can be the strongest of any Path. Once a master thinks their student is ready, they are given some mortal followers and funds to establish their own cult.

## Path Boon

Has the Merit, Looks (4 pt.) – Stunning (Vampire the Masquerade V5, pg. 179) by default.

## Path Bane

The Face of Gods are undeniably arrogant, and act especially superior when it comes to other Paths. They look down on Hungry Ghosts that consider themselves cursed, and give free reign to both sides of their ‘divine’ nature, so when they are angered or frenzied, they will strike out at friends and foes equally. Because of this, few associate with the Face of Gods, and allies are hard to come by for them.

**Mechanics:** -2 to all mental or social dice rolls if insulted or ignored to their face. This ends with the scene, or when the one who insulted or ignored them is dealt 5 or more superficial damage. ✖



# CHARACTER CREATION

Hungry Ghosts uses Vampire the Masquerade V5 as the template for making characters. However, below is a guide for Hungry Ghost creation which is based on the character sheet at the end of this book.

### CORE CONCEPT

What was your character’s name in life? Who were they and what did they do before their death? What is their name now and where are they?

### PATH, YAMA KING AND MASTER

Pick the Path that your character has chosen to learn. If they have Schools, pick one. Write down both their Advantages and Flaws.

Who was the Yama King of the demonic Realm your character’s soul has escaped from?

Who was your master who guided you down the Path you have chosen?

### SHADOW ARCHETYPES

Pick your Shadow Archetype. The Shadow Archetype has its own personality, and is as intelligent as your Intelligence attribute.

### ATTRIBUTES

Take one attribute at 4; three attributes at 3; four attributes at 2; one attribute at 1.

Health = Stamina + 3; Willpower = Composure + Resolve

### PSYCHE VS SHADOW

Replacing the Humanity system, Psyche is represented by clear boxes while filled-in boxes represent Shadow.

Character’s Psyche = **INITIAL** Resolve + Composure

### DEMONIC ESSENCE

The amount of Demonic Essence a character has is equal to the number of boxes the Shadow has.

### SKILLS

Pick one Skill distribution.

**JACK OF ALL TRADES:** One Skill at 3; eight Skills at 2; ten Skills at 1

**BALANCED:** Three Skills at 3; five Skills at 2; seven skills at 1

**SPECIALIST:** One Skill at 4; three Skills at 3; three Skills at 2; three Skills at 1

Add free specialities to Academics, Craft, Performance, and Science Skills.

Take one free specialty.

### DISCIPLINES

Choose two Disciplines. Put two dots in one and one dot in the other.

### ADVANTAGES AND FLAWS

Take 7 points of Advantages, and take 2 points of Flaws. Add any new supporting cast from Advantages and Flaws such as Allies or Enemies. Hungry Ghosts have the ‘Eat Food’ merit by default.

### CONVICTIONS AND TOUCHSTONES

Select one to three Convictions (Vampire the Masquerade V5 pg. 172)

Create an equal number of Touchstones (Vampire the Masquerade V5 pg. 173).

### SEA OF TIME

Together with the Storyteller and other players, decide what sort of Path Rating and experience you have:

- **Disciple: Had the Second Breath within the last 15 years.**
  - Path Rating 2
  - Rank 2
- **Experienced: Had the Second Breath within last 100 years.**
  - Path Rating 3-4
  - Rank 3
- **Each player gains 28 experience points.**
- **Powerful: Had the Second Breath within last 250 years.**
  - Path Rating 5
  - Rank 4
- **Each player adds 2 points of Advantages**
- **Each player adds 2 points of Flaws**
- **Each player gains 56 experience points.**

<b>EXPERIENCE:</b>	
Trait	Experience Points
Increase Attribute	New Level x 5
Increase Skill	New Level x 3
New Specialty	3
Disciplines	New Level x 7
Rites	New Level x 3
Advantages	3 per dot
Path Rating	New Level x 12
Rank	New Level x 10

# HUNGRY GHOST GAME MECHANICS

## HEALTH AND DAMAGE

Unlike vampires, Hungry Ghosts are not supernaturally resistant to damage unless through Disciplines or 'Death Aspect imbalance'. **Do not halve superficial damage as ruled in Vampire V5.**

## HUNGER AND HUNGER DICE

Same as vampires. Refer to *Vampire: The Masquerade 5th Edition*, p205-207.

Messy Criticals and Bestial Failures are controlled by the Shadow instead of the Beast. On a Bestial Failure, the character acts out their Shadow archetype, exhibiting their worst traits. Compulsions can also be a part of the Shadow, with examples given in *Vampire: The Masquerade 5th Edition*, p208-209.

Hungry Ghosts do not have Clan Compulsions as they are not divided into Clans.

## ROUSING AND SLAKING HUNGER

Hungry Ghosts are cursed with insatiable hunger. Every time a Hungry Ghost rises after sunset or uses their powers, they make a Rouse Check. Refer to the rules for Rouse Checks in *Vampire: The Masquerade 5th Edition*, p211.

A Hungry Ghost must spend Essence to lessen their Hunger. Only Scarlet Essence and Black Essence can appease it. The different types of Essence sate different amounts.

- **Scarlet Essence:** One Scarlet Essence sates 1 Hunger. To reduce Hunger to 0 requires 4 Scarlet Essence for the last point.
- **Black Essence:** One Black Essence sates up to 2 Hunger. To reduce Hunger to 0 requires 3 Black Essence for the last point.

Spending Essence to appease Hunger affects the Hungry Ghost's looks and physiology. '**Aspecting Through Essence**' explains in further detail.

## WHAT IS ESSENCE?

Essence is the raw energy that resides in every creation in the universe. Those who are able to manipulate it can do

many fantastical things. For Hungry Ghosts, it's like doing a puzzle, as they are unlocking and remixing the fundamentals of energy within the world.

However, given that they feed on emotional willpower (until they reach a certain Path Rating), Hungry Ghost can only gain Essence from creatures complex enough to feel deep emotions.

There are four Essence types that most Hungry Ghosts understand, though they can only feed on two at first.

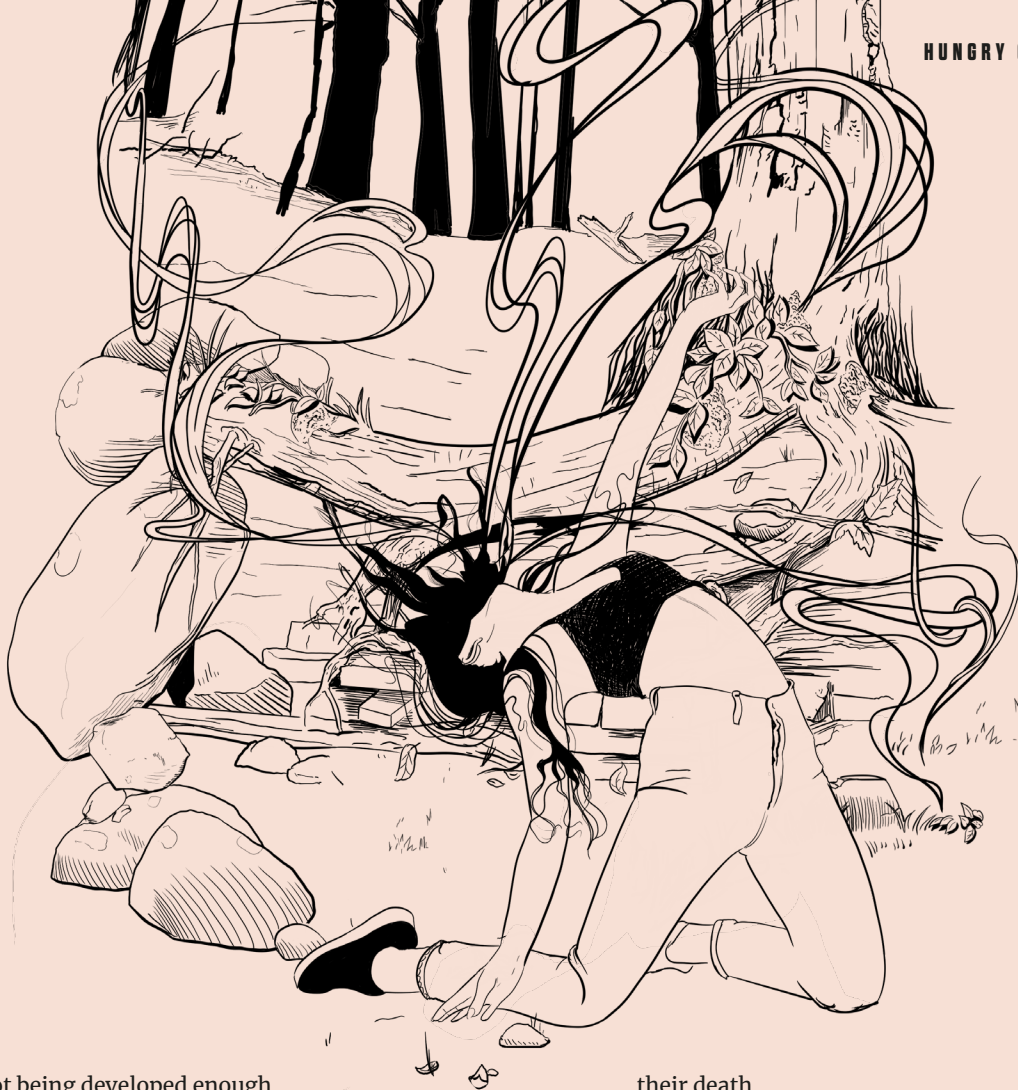
- **Scarlet Essence** – Positive energy. It pulsates through most living beings and is brought out by happy emotions.
- **Black Essence** – Negative energy. It is found in dead beings and is brought out by unhappy emotions.
- **Tainted Essence** – Corrupted energy. This is more prevalent in the nuclear age, as bomb tests and the poisoning of Hiroshima and Chernobyl wrought havoc on the surrounding Essence. Tainted Essence is the mark of Outcasts or Yama Kings and can be used as a weapon against Hungry Ghosts.

Hungry Ghosts cannot feed on Tainted Essence and if they do, they suffer severe illness as well as losing all the Essence they already had. Exposure to Tainted Essence results in:

- The Hungry Ghost suffering -3 superficial Willpower.
- -1 to all attributes while exposed to it.
- Shadow rolls every 10 minutes while exposed to it.
- **Demonic Essence** – Essence generated by the suffering of Hungry Ghosts. It is pure distilled pain and very potent. Hungry Ghosts use it for demonic Disciplines. It is equivalent to a Rouse Check in Vampire.

## FEEDING

There are multiple methods of gaining Essence, decided by the Path Rating of the Hungry Ghost. The higher the Path Rating, the more refined and subtle they can be in withdrawing Essence. Unlike vampires, however, Hungry Ghosts cannot absorb Essence from animals or insects due to



their Essence not being developed enough.

The different feeding methods are:

- Flesh (0+ Path Rating)
- Blood (1+ Path Rating)
- Breath (5+ Path Rating)
- Essence Osmosis (6+ Path Rating)

## FEEDING EXPANDED

### Flesh (0+ Path Rating)

The simplest and easiest way to gain Essence, it is frowned upon by most Hungry Ghosts. It's usually those in the grips of the Fire Soul who eat flesh in a desperate frenzy. It's also the only way for Ravenous Devils to gain Essence.

### System

Biting a mortal. For every point of aggravated damage inflicted, the Hungry Ghost gains one point of Essence if they consume the taken flesh. A whole body provides Essence equal to the victim's total Health when alive.

A freshly dead corpse (within 4 hours of death) provides an equal amount of Scarlet and Black Essence.

- A cold corpse (longer than 4 hours after death) provides only Black Essence.
- A living human provides only Scarlet Essence until

their death.

If a Hungry Ghost feeds on a vampire, they provide only Black Essence.

### Blood (1+ Path Rating)

The second easiest way to gain Essence. This is what makes others see Hungry Ghosts as vampires as they both drink blood and, like vampires, feeding does not cause pain.

However, Hungry Ghosts do not naturally have vampire fangs, they must use Godbody of Demons: The Fangs of Blood Drinkers (pg 85)

The victim's emotions determine what type of Essence a Hungry Ghost receives from their feeding. If the Hungry Ghost wants a particular type of Essence, they must work to ensure the victim genuinely feels that way. Forced emotions only mask what they are really feeling, and doesn't change their Essence.

### System

Each point of blood provides one point of Essence of either type depending on the victim's emotions. Refer to *Vampire: The Masquerade 5th Edition*, p211-213 for more guidance on how feeding works.

Choleric and sanguine emotions provide Scarlet Essence. Melancholy and phlegmatic provide Black Essence. There are

no mechanics related to Resonance and Dyscrasia. Refer to *Vampire: The Masquerade 5th Edition*, p226 for more guidance.

If left alive, the victim will heal their Essence as they heal from the blood loss.

### Breath (5+ Path Rating)

At a Path Rating of 5+, Hungry Ghosts can extract Essence from spiritual vapour. Traditionally, this is through the nose or mouth, which is why it has become known as Breath.

### System

The Hungry Ghost must be in control of themselves, so not in Wave or Fire Soul.

The Hungry Ghost must be within 2 feet of the target before attempting to extract Essence.

The Hungry Ghost rolls Composure + Subterfuge against their victim's Stamina + Insight (if aware and resisting). Victims who are asleep or unconscious cannot resist, and are considered to have rolled 0 successes.

For every success they roll higher than their victim, the Hungry Ghost gains one Essence. The Essence received is the same type of Essence that would be gained from blood.

If the Psyche is in control, every point of Essence drained deals Superficial Willpower damage to the victim and if all Willpower boxes are damaged, they cannot be drained further.

If the Shadow is in control, every point of Essence drained deals aggravated damage to the victim's health.

Health or Willpower drained in this manner returns to the victim at one point per day.

If the Hungry Ghost fails their roll, they can try again. If they fail again, they cannot take the Breath of that individual for the day. However, other methods such as flesh or blood can still be used.

### Essence Osmosis (6+ Path Rating)

Only enlightened Hungry Ghosts can siphon Essence from the world itself. Those that are able to gain Essence with this method are revered within Hungry Ghost society.

### System

The Hungry Ghost must be in control of themselves and spend 3 turns in concentration.

They roll their current **Path Rating versus local Wall Rating** with each success providing a point of Essence. The type of Essence depends on the environment, which the Storyteller will reveal beforehand. Purer places are more likely to provide Scarlet Essence, while places such as cemeteries would provide Black Essence.

Food specifically offered to Hungry Ghosts with prayers can also be consumed for Essence. It gives 5 Essence points total of either type and no rolls are required, but other Hungry Ghosts cannot use that food as a source of Essence.

If the Hungry Ghost desires more Essence or their siphon has failed, the Hungry Ghost can unleash their Shadow to tear the Essence from the world. The Hungry Ghost rolls their Shadow vs local Wall Rating. Any success means the Hungry Ghost can withdraw as much Essence of their choice. This spiritually defiles the area, so that from then on, the area can only provide Demonic Essence, and attempting to feed from it triggers a Shadow roll.

This angers local spirits greatly and other Hungry Ghosts will consider this as grounds to make a Hungry Ghost an Outcast if witnessed.

### HUNGRY GHOST MENDING

#### Mending Superficial Damage

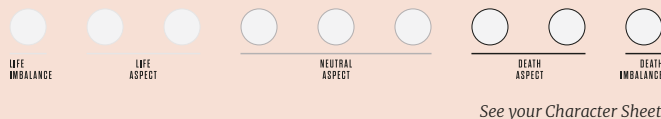
Use *Vampire: The Masquerade 5th Edition*, p218 'Mending Superficial Health Damage' rules.

#### Mending Aggravated Damage

Use *Vampire: The Masquerade 5th Edition*, p218-219 'Mending Aggravated Health Damage' rules.

### ASPECTING THROUGH ESSENCE

The Hungry Ghost is affected by the Essence that they consume. It alters their body as the effect it has on their soul manifests physically.



The type of Essence a Hungry Ghost feeds on changes the Aspect of their body. The more Black Essence they consume, the closer they move to the circles on the right (7-9). The more Scarlet Essence they consume, the closer they move to the boxes on the left (1-3). When slaking Hunger from 1 to 0, even though it takes multiple points of Essence, the aspect still only changes by 1.

*THE RULE: One Hunger slaked = Movement left or right depending on Essence used.*

### Death Aspect and Death Imbalance

At 2-3 (grey boxes), a Hungry Ghost is considered 'Death Aspect'. Their body radiates a cold aura and they have a deathly, corpse-like pallor to their skin. Social rolls involving mortals are increased by 1 difficulty, but social rolls involving

spirits or wraiths are -1. A wooden stake in their heart paralyzes them like a vampire.

At box 1, a Hungry Ghost is considered ‘**Death Imbalance**’ and has several consequences added to their actions.

### Death Imbalance Effects

- Emotions are muted and detached. The difficulty of rolls to avoid entering Fire Soul decreases by 1, making it easier to stay level-headed.
- The flesh does not feel as much pain. Any superficial damage done is halved, providing it is not fire and does not deal aggravated damage naturally. This mechanic is similar to vampires, for whom superficial damage is halved.
- The difficulty for social interaction rolls with wraiths or other dead spirits decreases by 2, as they are more friendly towards you.
- Wooden stakes paralyze the Hungry Ghost.
- 1 Black Essence slakes 1 Hunger in this form. To resolve Hunger to 0 requires 4 Black Essence for that last box.
- Looks decreases each night by 1 until it reaches -2. The Hungry Ghost at -2 Looks resembles a walking corpse. Reaching -2 Looks also decreases Dexterity by 1 as their joints stiffen like a corpse. This is where stories of the Chinese hopping vampire (Jiang Shih) comes from.
- The Hungry Ghost prefers to eat dead flesh or drink melancholic/phlegmatic blood.

### Neutral Aspect

At 4-6 (clear boxes), a Hungry Ghost is considered ‘Neutral Aspect’. Their body has a normal hue but is cold like a corpse. There are no negatives or positives in neutral aspect, other than the Hungry Ghost cannot be paralyzed by staking, with neither wood nor metal.

### Life Aspect and Life Imbalance

At 7-8 (red boxes), a Hungry Ghost is considered ‘Life Aspect’. Their body radiates a lively aura and a normal hue to their skin. The Scarlet Essence pumping through them attracts mortals without them realising. The difficulty of social rolls involving mortals are decreased by 1, but social rolls involving spirits or wraiths are increased by 1. A metal stake in their heart paralyzes them like a vampire.

At box 9, a Hungry Ghost is considered ‘Life Imbalance’ and has several consequences added to their actions.

### Life Imbalance Effects

- The Hungry Ghost is warm and has a very healthy glow, the picture of perfect vitality, and even seems to breathe

naturally. To other supernatural creatures not checking their aura, they appear and smell human.

- The difficulties of social interaction rolls with mortals decrease by 2.
  - Indirect sunlight has no ill-effects for up to 1 hour. Direct sunlight can be withstood for Stamina x 5 minutes per night which is cumulated, but the time does not have to be consecutive, so the Hungry Ghost can pop in and out until the limit is reached.
  - Metal stakes paralyze them.
  - The Hungry Ghost is overwhelmed by passions of the body. Resisting Fire Soul has the difficulty increased by 1. Fire Soul can also be triggered by lust or even hunger for mortal food, at the Storyteller’s discretion.
  - The Hungry Ghost can contract human diseases and become a carrier. If they do, they must spend a point of Scarlet Essence to cure it.
  - Overwhelming hunger consumes them. It takes 2 Scarlet Essence to slake 1 Hunger and Hunger cannot be reduced to 0.
  - In this state, the Hungry Ghost can have children. A pregnant Hungry Ghost must remain in **Life Imbalance** (box 9) without fail for the entire term or they will miscarry. A mortal impregnated by a Hungry Ghost has a normal pregnancy. In both cases, the children will be Dhamphyrs, half-supernatural.

### LIFESIGHT AND DEATHSIGHT

As a reminder that every Hungry Ghost was once dead, they retain the inherent ability of wraiths, which is Lifesight and Deathsight.

*THE RULE – Spend a point of Scarlet Essence to use Lifesight.*

**Lifesight** – This the ability to see auras around creatures or living spirits even behind obstacles. Some may even notice the aura between creatures when they interact. However, this ability on its own does not mean that the Hungry Ghost necessarily understands what they are seeing.

When activating this ability, the Hungry Ghost can see all auras in an open space at a range of 20 feet x Awareness. If attempting to see behind objects such as walls, they must make Wits + Awareness roll at difficulty 3. With a success, they can see living spirits and creatures (this includes Hungry Ghosts and vampires) behind objects up to 20 feet. A fail means they are unable to see anything.

To notice aura flares between creatures, make a Wits + Insight roll at difficulty 5. With a successful roll, the Hungry Ghost notices the flare of auras between

creatures interacting.

Hungry Ghosts with Godbody of Souls can also use Essence Sight, a two-dot ability that allows the user to correctly interpret the auras they see.

*THE RULE – Spend a point of Black Essence to use Death sight.*

**Death sight** – This is the ability to see the aura of dead spirits such as wraiths and others connected to the Underworld. When in use, the Hungry Ghost sees the world as dying and broken as if destroyed by an apocalypse. Humans or other living creatures have a ghastly pallor while dead creatures (such as vampires) are walking rotting corpses. This ability reveals an object’s weak points, as well as the general health of a living being.

When using this ability, the Hungry Ghost can see spectral spirit auras in an open space at a range of 20 feet x Awareness. Unlike Lifesight, this cannot see through walls.

To spot weak points of objects or buildings, the Hungry Ghost must concentrate for 3 turns and roll Intelligence + Craft at difficulty 5. On a successful roll, the Hungry Ghost perceives an additional decay spot in that area and can use that knowledge to destroy the target faster. If the object is provided a Health stat, damage to the weak spot deals additional 4 superficial damage.

To detect illness or damage in a living creature, roll Intelligence + Medicine at difficulty 4. A successful roll means the Hungry Ghost can make a rough diagnosis of sickness or injury. However, the Hungry Ghost needs to make a separate Intelligence + Medicine roll to recognise the precise ailment, though a successful Death sight roll to detect illness adds 3 dice to the diagnosis roll.

Hungry Ghosts with Godbody of Souls can also use Essence Sight, a two-dot ability that allows the user to gain further insight into the wraiths they see and their connection to the living.

## HUMANITY: PSYCHE VS SHADOW

The Hungry Ghost is always torn between the Psyche (which is their ideal moral self) and their Shadow (the self-destructive and impulsive self). Unlike the Beast in Vampire, the Shadow is as intelligent as their Psyche counterpart, and can function ‘like normal’ when in control if it suits them. It is more dangerous than the Beast as other beings usually can’t tell if the Shadow is in control.

To reflect this, the Humanity system from V5 has been altered to suit the battle between the Psyche and the Shadow.

*THE RULE: Character’s Psyche = INITIAL Resolve + Composure*

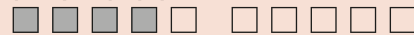
The character always portrays their Psyche at first. Their starting Psyche is the character’s INITIAL Resolve + Composure. Spending XP later to increase Resolve or

Composure does not increase the Psyche. The Shadow is 10 minus the Psyche, i.e., the number of boxes left once the Psyche has been calculated. Fill in the squares which the Shadow controls. The Shadow has dice equal to the amount of squares they control, with a minimum of 1.

*For example: Nihari has arisen from her state of being a Ravenous Devil and is guided as a Veiled within the courts. Her Resolve is 4 whilst Composure is 2. That means her Psyche has 6 dice, and her Shadow has 4 dice. When the Shadow controls every box, the Hungry Ghost reverts to the state of Ravenous Devil and can only be brought back by the rite ‘Restoring the Dharmic Balance’. This is considered very shameful to Hungry Ghosts.*

**Nihari:**

SHADOW VS PSYCHE



*See your Character Sheet*

## DEMONIC ESSENCE

How much Demonic Essence a character has depends on how many points the Shadow has, with a minimum of 1.

*Using Nihari as an example again, she has access to 4 Demonic Essence. Once a point of Demonic Essence is spent, it is gone for the night. The character can regain it on waking with a Shadow roll, with each success giving one point of Demonic Essence up to their max.*

Demonic Essence may be used to boost attributes temporarily, called a Demonic Surge, similar to a vampire’s Blood Surge. The rules are the same as Vampire: The Masquerade 5th Edition, page 218, only a Psyche vs Shadow roll is used instead of a Rouse Check. How much an attribute increases depends on the Path Rating of the Hungry Ghost.

## Fire Soul: Fury Frenzy and Hunger Frenzy

Fire Soul is triggered in the same ways as Fury or Hunger Frenzies in Vampire, and you can find the rules on *Vampire: The Masquerade 5th Edition*, pages 219–220.

However, Hungry Ghosts must roll **Willpower vs Shadow** instead of Willpower vs a difficulty set by the Storyteller.

Success ends the Fire Soul, while failure means it continues until either the object of their fury is dealt with, or their Hunger is sated, or until the roll is won.

## Wave Soul: Terror Frenzy

Wave Soul is triggered in the same ways as Terror Frenzies in Vampire, and you can find the rules on *Vampire: The*

*Masquerade 5th Edition, page 219–220.*

Hungry Ghosts must roll Willpower vs Shadow, the same as for Fire Soul.

Success ends the Wave Soul, while failure means it continues until they believe they are no longer in danger, or until the roll is won.

### Stains, Remorse and Degeneration

Similar to V5, the Psyche box shifts in accordance to stains. This rule is the same as *Vampire: The Masquerade 5th Edition, pages 239–240*. The difference is that only boxes that are clear can be marked, i.e. the Psyche boxes, and if the Hungry Ghost fails their Remorse roll, the Shadow wins and gains another point. In general, any loss of conscience or conviction is a gain to the Shadow.

### Touchstones + Convictions

This rule is the same as *Vampire: The Masquerade 5th Edition, pages 172–173*.

However, a Hungry Ghost's Touchstones can also include personal objects and supernaturals with a high degree of humanity, for example a vampire with Humanity 7.

## SHADOW ARCHETYPES

The Shadow is the dark counterpart of a Hungry Ghost's self, the side they were not proud of in life now made manifest within their body. However, during their torment with the Yama Kings, the Shadow became independent with their own thoughts and ideas.

Unlike the Beast in *Vampire* – which has to be kept under tight control as it is nearly always a negative force – the Shadow can be useful in some situations, depending on the nature of its Archetype. As a result, Hungry Ghosts cultures have developed different attitudes around their Shadow. Some seek to achieve harmony with it, while others rein it in. The Storyteller should note how players treat their Shadow, and how it may impact the players when it takes over.

The character can also willingly allow the Shadow to take over, understanding the risks that come with it. When a character is controlled by their Shadow, they must conform to their archetype. The Storyteller is free to control the character if the player deviates from it too much, or they can give players limited choice in what the character can do while in this state. Bear in mind, the Shadow is intelligent and can deviate from the expected behaviour within reason.

When the Shadow wins control, it takes over for 5 minutes x Shadow points. If the control was willingly given, it can last until the Psyche chooses to regain control.

A Shadow roll is usually triggered by:

- Fire Soul situations
- Wave Soul situations
- Use of Demonic Essence
- Conditions triggering their Shadow archetype

## SHADOW ARCHETYPES

### The Ancient

The Ancient believes past generations were more harmonious and wise. They dislike what is new and untested, and much prefer the tried and true methods of the past.

**Condition for Takeover:** The Ancient may force a Shadow roll whenever an innovation or new technology the Psyche has not grown up with causes them discomfort, pain or confusion. The Ancient forces a Shadow roll if the Hungry Ghost abuses old artefacts.

### The Artist

The Artist seeks to create art that they admired in life but were unable to undertake. Nothing else matters, and the Artist consistently complains if the Psyche does anything not related to their great work. They do not hesitate to sever annoying commitments and even ignore important events in favour of their art.

**Condition for Takeover:** The Artist may force a Shadow roll whenever the Hungry Ghost turns away from their great work or if an opportunity to advance their project presents itself.

### The Bandit

The Bandit resents anything that is orderly or any position that requires following the law, such as being a police officer. Any person or creature that represents or enforces order is their enemy and a focus of the Bandit's rage, regardless of previous relationships.

**Condition for Takeover:** The Bandit forces a Shadow roll whenever anyone orders the Hungry Ghost to do anything or tries to put them in their 'proper place'.

### The Barbarian

The Barbarian rejects their upbringing and sees other cultural traditions as superior. It mocks and shuns anyone practicing the Hungry Ghost's native cultural traditions.

**Condition for Takeover:** The Barbarian forces a Shadow roll whenever the Hungry Ghost performs a traditional practice they were brought up with.

### The Deceiver

The Deceiver loves manipulation and seeks to manipulate

both others and the Psyche. The Deceiver tells lies habitually and uses the truth to deceive. They will only be happy when the Psyche and others are completely reliant on their advice.

**Condition for Takeover:** The Deceiver may force a Shadow roll whenever a lie or truth would serve the Hungry Ghost better. However, the Deceiver picks their time carefully and usually only attempts to take over after the Psyche has tried and failed to handle several similar situations on their own.

### The Demon

The Demon is sociopathic and seeks to devour everything. Anything weaker than them is considered prey and anyone stronger is a target for betrayal. They are devoted only to personal power and pay lip service to concepts such as friends, duty and honour. Other creatures are only useful for amusement and will be destroyed or devoured eventually.

**Condition for Takeover:** The Demon forces a Shadow roll whenever an opportunity to make themselves stronger by destroying another is present. This may involve harming a weaker Hungry Ghost or betraying a more powerful one. It does not matter how as long as they gain advantage over others.

### The Echo

The Echo feels they did not deserve to escape from the Demon Realm compared to the many others trapped there. They have a mind of their own but chooses not to use their own voice when speaking to the Psyche. Instead they use memories of words others said in the Demon Realm. If in control, they focus obsessively about their unearned release from the Demon Realm.

**Condition for Takeover:** The Echo may force a Shadow roll whenever the Hungry Ghost is confronted with loss and death. Graveyards and other places connected to death can bring this on. It is up to the Storyteller and player if seeing and interacting with wraiths may trigger this.

### The Eunuch

The Eunuch believes that anything they create or do is futile. They prefer to oversee other people's projects and enterprises. The Eunuch is very happy to abandon any personal project of their own and seeks to be in a leading position of other people's efforts instead.

**Condition for Takeover:** The Eunuch may force a Shadow roll whenever the Hungry Ghost is asked to lead others, or is aware of others relying on them. The Eunuch may also force a Shadow roll if the Psyche is working on a project of their own.

### The Fool

The Fool begs for explanation for everything, even the

simplest, self-evident action. They are incapable of long term thinking or planning as they do not see any virtue in it. The Fool works incessantly to make the Psyche take the easiest path to avoid any complications.

**Condition for Takeover:** The Fool forces a Shadow roll whenever the Psyche is confused, at a loss for words or indecisive. The Fool is always willing to help, albeit often making the situation worse.

### The Legalist

The Legalist believes everything is structured for a reason and no one can deviate from that structure. Rank is very important. The Legalist becomes angry when the Psyche breaks rules, speaks familiarly to people of higher rank, or when a perceived inferior acts insubordinate and improper towards them.

**Condition for Takeover:** The Legalist forces a Shadow roll when the Hungry Ghost is shown disrespect by their inferior. Who the Legalist perceives as inferior may be different from the Psyche. The Legalist may also attempt to take over if the Hungry Ghost continually acts disrespectfully to perceived superiors, acting in a friendly manner to those of a higher rank or breaking rules or laws.

### The Monkey

The Monkey is easily distracted by different projects or pleasures that interest them and the Psyche. The Monkey is capable of creating elaborate plans but is not concerned with what the Psyche plans to do. The Monkey seeks to divert attention and energy to lesser, transitory things to delay the Psyche's own goals.

**Condition for Takeover:** The Monkey may force a Shadow roll whenever something of interest may distract the Hungry Ghost from their appointed goal. This is only if that something would normally interest the Psyche.

### The Sage

The Sage is an ever-seeking learner of truth, and therefore wary of dogma. The Sage is satisfied when they find information and practices that require dramatic changes of behaviour or is esoteric and difficult to follow (which they then attempt to follow). If in control, they usually temporarily abandon their Path teachings in favour of alternatives.

**Condition for Takeover:** The Sage may force a Shadow roll whenever the Hungry Ghost finds weakness in the teachings of their Path. These weaknesses may be restrictions against the Hungry Ghost's personal desires or goals.

## The Slave

The Slave believes the Hungry Ghost is incapable of good judgement and wants to submit to another. The Slave questions every decision made by the Psyche and often attempts to seize control to submit to someone else instead.

**Condition for Takeover:** The Slave may force a Shadow roll whenever the Hungry Ghost is in the presence of someone who appears stronger or wiser. The Slave may also attempt to take over when the Psyche's decisions go disastrously wrong.

## The Vitalist

The Vitalist wants to return to their mortal life and does not want to engage with anything related to other supernatural creatures. The Vitalist desires what they once had or aspires to something they wanted in mortal life.

**Condition for Takeover:** The Vitalist may force a Shadow roll whenever the Hungry Ghost is confronted with a situation related to their former life, or something reminds them of it, or an opportunity appears to continue a mortal goal.

## The Warrior

The Warrior fought their way out of the Demon Realm and believes everything can be solved by violence. The Warrior will allow nothing to stand in their way and is willing to fight anyone who seems threatening, whether they actually are or not.

**Condition for Takeover:** The Warrior forces a Shadow roll whenever the Hungry Ghost declines an opportunity for violent conflict (if they aren't obviously going to lose) in favour of peaceful means. Cooperating with or submitting to rivals will also trigger the Warrior.



# PATH RATING & RANK

Path Rating is decided by how far a Hungry Ghost has progressed down their chosen Path, and is similar to Blood Potency in Vampire. While there are usually no physical indicators of this change, there are nevertheless benefits for those further down the Path. What separates Hungry Ghosts

from vampires is that those who take their Path seriously become more humane as they get older, as it becomes easier for them to control themselves. The higher the Path Rating, the easier and less costly to perform complex Disciplines as well.

**Hungry Ghosts do not get to reroll their Rouse Checks.**

Path Rating	Demonic Surge	Superficial Damage Mended (per Rouse Check)	Discipline Power Bonus	Maximum Black Essence Stored	Maximum Scarlet Essence Stored	Physical Attribute Maximum Increase	Willpower Boost
0	Add 1 die	1	None	1	1	0	0
1	Add 1 die	1	None	5	5	0	0
2	Add 2 die	1	None	5	5	0	0
3	Add 3 die	2	Add 1 die	5	5	0	0
4	Add 3 die	2	Add 2 die	5	5	0	1
5	Add 4 die	3	Add 2 die	5	5	0	1
6	Add 4 die	3	Add 3 die	5	5	0	2
7	Add 5 die	4	Add 3 die	6	6	1	2
8	Add 5 die	4	Add 4 die	7	7	1	2
9	Add 6 die	5	Add 5 die	9	9	2	4
10	Add 10 die	6	Add 7 die	10	10	3	5

## Physical Attribute Maximum Increase

Rather than being limited to 5 dots, at higher Path Ratings, the character can buy extra dots for physical Attributes up to the Path Rating limit.

## Willpower Boost

Add to your Willpower, even exceeding the ten boxes provided. If the character regresses in their Path, adjust the Willpower bonus accordingly.

## Maximum Essence Stored

Normal Hungry Ghosts can only store up to 5 Essence

of both types. Those at a higher Path Rating can store more.

## Discipline Power Bonus

Same as in Vampire: The Masquerade 5th Edition. Add the additional dice related to Discipline use.

## RANK

This is different from Path Rating, though there is often a correlation. Those of a higher Path Rating often have a higher Rank, although there have been plenty of Hungry Ghosts who have high Path Ratings but a relatively low Rank.

This aspect is socially important. Rank determines who is senior and who is junior within Hungry Ghost societies. It can be the deciding factor in how one behaves to another. In general, the junior treats the senior with respect and obeys them, while the senior guides and treats the junior well in return. However, reality does not often reflect these ideals. You have to earn your Rank, and advancing it usually requires proof you have improved your Path Rating. Different Courts have different ways of proving this, and the Storyteller decides the customs of each Hungry Ghost society.

Ranks	Path Rating associated with it
Rank 1: Ravenous Devil	0
Rank 2: Veiled	1
Rank 3: Disciple	2-3
Rank 4: Unveiled	4+
Rank 5: Preceptor	Minimum 6+
Rank 6: Ancestor	Minimum 7+
Rank 7: Awakened	Minimum 9+
Rank 8: Non-returner	Minimum 10+

### HOW PATH RATING AFFECTS DISCIPLINE LEVELS

Unlike vampire powers, Hungry Ghost Disciplines require fundamental understanding of the base components of Essence. This means the more you understand the nature of reality, the easier and more efficiently you can manipulate Essence to shape reality itself to suit your desires.

However, Hungry Ghosts can progress or struggle depending on their individual spiritual journey. They might remember a high level technique taught to them or even one they used, but if they fall from the Path, they find it much more difficult to use that same higher-level technique until they return to where they were. Instead, the Hungry Ghost can power through, spending more Essence than usual to gain results.

*THE RULE: If a Hungry Ghost uses a dot rating of a Discipline that is higher than their Path, the Hungry Ghost must lose more Essence (of any type) equal to the difference.*

**For Example: If a Hungry Ghost is at Path Rating of 2 and uses a 5 dot Discipline, the Hungry Ghost must spend an additional 3 Essence due to the difference.**

### HOW TO PROGRESS YOUR PATH RATING

There are three suggestions for the storyteller to move Path Ratings.

- Observation with no mechanics
- Mechanics-based
- Mixture of both

Unfortunately, spiritual understanding and attainment is not a straight path even if there are a thousand texts or advisors explaining where the road is. The heart and mind will find many confusions, distractions, or excuses before the spirit is opened. Even then, every advancement is still but a small step towards understanding. This is difficult to convey in words, let alone a mechanical formula.

Before starting the game, it is best to advise the players which method of progression will be used.

#### I. Observation with no mechanics

Difficult, but possibly rewarding for a group that roleplays well. Has the character changed? Has there been a revelation that inspired the character? Was there a person who gave advice, innocuous or profound, that suddenly changed the character’s worldview? All these could be sources for the character to progress further down their Path.

However, spiritual regression is also just as likely. Perhaps the character encountered difficulties that their teaching didn’t prepare them for? Maybe their master committed an act that shook the character’s faith? Or is there no resonance to the divine for a while and they begin to lose hope? All these and more are just as likely to happen to make a character regress.

It is not uncommon for Hungry Ghosts to flit between Path Ratings in stories.

Storytellers that wish to award or regress through observation should think whether the character’s actions and thoughts match the Path they are on or not. Discussion with players should be open and honest about what is being portrayed and why their Path Rating was increased or decreased.

- If the Path Rating was increased, the benefits are:
  - All Willpower is recovered.
  - The character’s Psyche dots revert back to starting levels. If the character has boosted their Composure or Resolve, this becomes their new

starting score.

- All current stains are removed.
- If the Path Rating was decreased, the penalties are:
  - The Shadow gains a dot
  - The Shadow archetype takes over

## 2. Mechanics-based

A very clear and arguably easier method of progression.

However, players may be tempted to speed run if they know the conditions. The Storyteller must be careful to balance this sort of progression well.

### Progressing Path Rating

Suggested occasions (the Storyteller can create their own as well)

- Being taught by a Hungry Ghost who mastered a higher Path Rating level in your Path
- Being taught by a Hungry Ghost who mastered a higher Path Rating level but in a different Path
- Receiving instruction from a powerful spirit
- Receiving advice from a Yama King who resonated with the character
- Journeying into the Spirit worlds or Underworld for the first time
- Realising a Master's words have even more depth than initially
- Long isolated meditative retreat
- Becoming close to death (One level of health before Final Destruction)
- Seeing a sight of beauty or hearing a sound of wonder (can be both at the same time) that overwhelms the mind
- Sensing auspicious signs

When both Storyteller and player think it is appropriate, a character can attempt to progress their Path Rating as a result of any of the above.

#### First roll Psyche vs Shadow.

If the Shadow wins, **gain a point of Hunger** as the Shadow briefly took control and mocks the Hungry Ghost for their brief lapse of concentration. The Hungry Ghost has lost their opportunity.

When the Psyche wins, they must roll their permanent Willpower trait (including any bonus from current Path Rating) vs their next Path Rating number (they cannot spend Willpower for reroll or automatic success).

- If the Hungry Ghost succeeds (a draw doesn't count), they ascend to the next Path Rating. Their mind has a sudden clarity with an almost unshakeable peace.

- Benefits of the success are:
  - All Willpower is recovered.
  - The character's Psyche dots revert back to starting levels. If the character has boosted their Composure or Resolve, this becomes their new starting score.
  - All current stains are removed.

If the roll failed or drew, nothing happens. The character senses for a moment a point of change but is unable to grasp it fully.

### Regressing Path Rating

Suggested occasions (the Storyteller can create their own as well)

- Violating an important tenet of your Path
- Attempting to follow a tenet of your Path but failing with collateral damage
- Becoming extraordinarily egotistical
- Getting lost in mortal concerns and neglecting practice for a long period of time
- Succumbing to the Shadow
- A respected master or teacher betraying your trust
- Encountering and being banished by someone with True Faith
- Suffering the False Death
- Sensing a bad omen
- Breaking your convictions
- Killing an Ancestor or Awakened

When both Storyteller and Player think it is appropriate, a character may regress their Path Rating as a result of any of the above.

#### First roll Psyche vs Shadow.

If the Shadow wins:

- The character regresses down their Path Rating
- The Shadow gains a dot
- The Shadow archetype takes over

When the Psyche wins, they must roll their current Path Rating vs their permanent Willpower trait.

- If the Hungry Ghost succeeds (this time a draw does count), they maintain their Path Rating. The doubt that came or sudden fear dissipates.
- If the roll failed, roll again. This procedure loops until a resolution has been reached. If the loop happens more than 3 times, the Psyche is considered to have won. Time allowed the mind to refocus and pay attention to the reality at hand.

## 3. Mixture of Both

The Storyteller can mix both narrative and mechanical methods. This allows flexibility, but there may be some confusion.





# MERITS & FLAWS

Most Merits and Flaws in V5 transfer well to Hungry Ghosts aside from those specifically related to powers of the Blood. The list below states what is NOT allowed as there is no mechanical cohesion.

*MERIT DEFAULT: Hungry Ghosts have the Eat Food Merit by default.*

### **Merits and Flaws not allowed from V5:**

- Bonding
- Feeding
- Thin blood merits and flaws
- Flaw – diablerist
- Loreshet – anything related to bloodlines, clans.
- Eat food and drink – able to eat and feed by default

### **HUNGRY GHOST EXCLUSIVE MERITS**

**Rite Learner (2 pt.)** – Can learn Rites without requiring the Godbody of Spirits Discipline. Rites are treated as their own Discipline instead, taking a Discipline slot.

**Calm Shadow (3 pt.)** – You are naturally composed and able to quell the Shadow. Reduce difficulty of all rolls relating to Wave or Fire Soul by 2.

**Oracular Training (3 pt.)** – You are able to see and interpret signs and omens naturally. When the Storyteller feels you are in position to see an Omen, make a Wits + Occult roll with difficulty set by how well the Omen is hidden. If successful, make an Intelligence + Occult to interpret the Omen with the Storyteller setting the difficulty.

**Ghost Mentor (4 pt.)** – A wraith has decided to help you and becomes a companion and mentor. You do not know the extent of their power but you know you can trust them.

**Legendary Destiny (5 pt.)** – You took your Second Breath and did not become a Ravenous Devil. After your soul was torn in half in the 1000 Hells, you were released or saved before any further damage was done. As such, the courts expect great things from you as the celestial order has blessed you with a mission. You begin the game with one more Path Rating than usual and can add 3 dice to rolls relating to your destiny. This lasts until the destiny is fulfilled.

### **HUNGRY GHOST EXCLUSIVE FLAWS**

**Outcast (4 pt.)** – You are perceived as being in service to the Yama Kings, so your soul is branded with a bright red demonic mark. Any Court that notices this brand has the right to destroy you.

**Defiled (5pt.)** – You consistently ingested Tainted Essence and have now become tainted yourself. Defiled Hungry Ghosts suffer nightmares and burning pain. Any critical failures involving Scarlet or Black Essence results in the expulsion of all Essence as a black sludge. Health can only be healed with Disciplines.

**Different Body (1 pt.)** – You took your Second Breath in a body that was not yours in life. It sometimes retains memories or displays tics or mannerisms from the previous owner.

**Vengeful Spirit (4 pt.)** – A wraith you knew in life is horrified by your existence as a Hungry Ghost and pesters you relentlessly. They will horribly inconvenience you but will never harm you directly. Performing a ritual to banish the spirit, or exchanging a favour with them for some peace, may last for a while but they will always come back.



# DISCIPLINES

Hungry Ghost Disciplines are known as Godbodies, and allow users to manipulate Essence both within themselves and in their environment. Only Godbody of Demons is innate. Other Godbodies have to be learned from those who already know them, and practitioners have to spend time developing and refining them.

Player characters start the game with one level in Godbody of Demons, and can use experience points to buy more. It is recommended that players begin the game as Unveiled but, at the Storyteller's discretion, they may start at a higher rank, and know more than one Godbody.

#### *THE RULE:*

- *Using these abilities requires a Rouse Check.*
- *Some abilities require additional Essence to be spent. This does not affect Hunger or the Aspect the Hungry Ghost is in.*
- *If a Hungry Ghost uses a Discipline at a higher level than their Path, they must spend Essence (of any type) equal to the difference.*



## GODBODY OF DEMONS (GODE)

Unlike the Godbodies of Nature where Hungry Ghosts dedicate their time to study and practice, Godbody of Demons is an innate skill that requires no real dedication to use effectively. Hungry Ghosts without tutors are forced to develop these skills as their only option.

Unfortunately, it taps into the Shadow of the soul and uses Demonic Essence. Any time Godbody of Demons is used, the player needs to make a Shadow roll to avoid losing control.

The more these skills are used, the more likely it becomes that the Yama Kings notice the Hungry Ghost due to the Demonic Essence being spent.

**RULE:**

- The player must roll *Psyche vs Shadow* before a power is used.
- They cannot use *Godbody of Souls* at the same time.

### LEVEL 1:

#### Black Wind (Balance)

The Hungry Ghost can balance and run with supernatural alertness and reaction time.

**Mechanic:**

*Cost: One Demonic Essence*

*Duration: One scene*

*System: Black Wind works the same as Celerity – Cat’s Grace in VTM V5, pg252.*

#### The Fangs of Blood Drinkers -

The Hungry Ghost develops fangs like a vampire and is able to drink blood to absorb Essence. The bite is pleasurable to their victims, like a vampire’s ‘Kiss’, when using this skill.

**Mechanic:**

*Cost: One Demonic Essence*

*Duration: One scene*

*System: Same as ‘Bite Attacks’ in VTM V5, pg213. Feeding on other Hungry Ghosts this way allows the choice of taking Scarlet or Black Essence. The victim loses Essence equal to what the blood drinker gains.*

### LEVEL 2

#### Demon Form 1

The Hungry Ghost gains the abilities of their inner demon form, bringing forth the violence and terror of the Shadow.

**Mechanic:**

*Cost: One Demonic Essence*

*Duration: One scene*

*System: The player picks one of the physical characteristics from the table below. The first*

*transformation into their demon form decides which trait this skill will provide, and subsequent uses of this skill must feature that same characteristic.*

#### Black Wind (Speed)

The Hungry Ghost uses supernatural speed to move in the blink of an eye. A blur and rush of wind is the only evidence.

**Mechanic**

*Cost: One Demonic Essence*

*Dice Roll: Dexterity + Athletics*

*Duration: One scene*

*System: Same as Celerity – Blink in VTM V5, pg253.*

### LEVEL 3:

#### Black Wind (Journey)

*The Hungry Ghost can run over water and along walls provided they have enough momentum.*

**Mechanic**

*Cost: One Demonic Essence*

*Dice Roll: Dexterity + Athletics (Difficulty 3 for inclined surfaces or up to 6 for vertical)*

*Duration: One turn*

*System: Same as Celerity – Traversal in VTM V5, pg252–253.*

#### Demon Form 2

*The Hungry Ghost gains another ability from their inner demon. If the player has Demon Form 1, that physical trait also manifests without any additional cost if the player wishes.*

**Mechanic**

*Cost: One Demonic Essence*

*Duration: One scene*

*System: The player picks one of the physical characteristics from the table. The first transformation decides which trait*



## GODBODY OF DEMONS (GODE)

*this skill will provide, and subsequent uses of this skill must feature that same characteristic.*

### LEVEL 4

#### **Black Wind (Fury)**

The Hungry Ghost focuses their anger and converts it into speed for physical attacks. Opponents are unable to defend themselves unless they have the same skill.

##### **Mechanic**

*Cost: One Demonic Essence*

*Duration: A single attack*

*System: Same as Celerity – Lightning Strike in VTM V5, pg254.*

#### **Demon Form 3**

The Hungry Ghost gains another ability from their inner demon. If the player has Demon Form 1 and/or 2, those physical traits also manifest without any additional cost if the player wishes.

##### **Mechanic**

*Cost: One Demonic Essence*

*Duration: One scene*

*System: The player picks one of the physical characteristics from the table. The first transformation decides which trait this skill will provide, and subsequent uses of this skill must feature that same characteristic.*

### LEVEL 5

#### **Black Wind (Urgency)**

The Hungry Ghost channels their Shadow to act quickly.

##### **Mechanic**

*Cost: One Demonic Essence*

*Duration: One round*

*System: The Hungry Ghost takes extra actions, to be performed after all other characters have had their turn in the round. The Hungry Ghost burns Willpower to facilitate this, so it can be stacked. For example, if they burn 3 Willpower, they can perform an additional three actions. The maximum number of actions is decided by how many levels of Black Wind they have taken.*

#### **Demon Form 4**

The Hungry Ghost gains a fourth demonic attribute. If the player has Demon Form 1 and/or 2 and/or 3, those physical traits also manifest without any additional cost if the player wishes.

##### **Mechanic**

*Cost: One Demonic Essence*

*Duration: One scene*

*System: The player picks one of the physical characteristics from the table. The first transformation decides which trait this skill will provide, and subsequent uses of this skill must feature that same characteristic.*



## GODBODY OF DEMONS (GODE)

Demon Form Level	Demon Form Characteristics	Effect
1	Maw	The mouth distends and all their teeth grow and sharpen. The character's bite deals 3 aggravated damage. This trait causes fear in most mortals and weaker supernaturals.
1	Claws	Their nails grow and harden with Demonic Essence and deal 2 superficial damage. Damage from the claws does not reduce any other abilities in the victim.
1	Third Eye	A third eye sprouts from the middle of the forehead. This is not a Soul Discipline but a demonic one. The user gains 1 success to all perception rolls.
1	Horns	The character grows horns from their head which the player can design as they wish. Regardless of shape, head-butts and charges deal 4 superficial damage on top of other rolls.
1	Tentacles	These five-foot-long tentacles replace the character's arms, one per arm. At Demon Form 4, this form gains an additional 2 tentacles. The user gains 1 dice per tentacle for grabbing, squeezing or crushing using strength. However, manipulating delicate objects or things with great precision is at -1 dice for any related rolls.
2	The Distorted Form	The user's body becomes like rubber, giving a melted or slug-like appearance. The character soaks 2 points of all non-aggravated physical damage. The character can also squeeze through small spaces, and increase or decrease their size by 12 inches.
2	Tail	The user grows a tail that can wield weapons, latch onto objects and carry the user's weight. When fighting with a melee weapon, they gain an extra dice.
2	Huge Size	The character gains three additional Health boxes in this form and is between 9 and 12 feet tall. They look like demons, whatever that means for the player.
2	Extra Arms	Two extra arms sprout from the character's torso, capable of wielding weapons and functioning the same as normal arms. The character gains 2 extra dice for physical attacks. If the user has 'Tentacles', these also change into tentacles.
3	Eyes of Horror	The character's eyes hold a demonic look that can cause terror or madness to anyone who sees. The player can describe the eyes, but the effect is the same whatever they look like. The first three times a character makes eye contact with the user, they must make a Willpower roll with Difficulty equal to the user's GoDe rating. If they fail, they succumb to the effects of extreme fear. Humans automatically fail and will run, cower or faint.
3	Demon Armour	This armour soaks aggravated damage equal to the character's Path Rating, as their strength of mind becomes physical. The player can design the Demon Armour, but it must look protective.



## GODBODY OF DEMONS (GODE)

Demon Form Level	Demon Form Characteristics	Effect
3	Multiple Heads	The Hungry Ghost grows an additional head and can grow two more per point of Willpower burned (with a limit of 6 heads). Each head grants an additional dice for perception. If paired with Third Eye, all heads contain the third eye. The heads can have multiple simultaneous conversations.
3	Foulness	The character becomes extremely unclean, however the player wants. Any opponents within 5 feet of the character suffers -2 dice penalty to all dice pools unless they have the same ability.
3	Wings	Wings capable of flight erupt from the user's back. Bat wings are traditional, but they can be feathered too. The character can fly at 25 miles per hour. The user is able to carry objects while flying, up to half their Strength. The Storyteller decides if the object is within that limit.
3	Hive Body	Small holes open up within the user to house small animals. Spiders, bees or snakes are common, but other creative suggestions can be supplemented. The Hungry Ghost releases this controlled swarm, which can be treated as a single entity with 5 Health. The swarm deals superficial damage equivalent to its current Health level. No attack roll is needed once the swarm completely envelops an opponent.
4	Demon Weapon	The user manifests a demonic-looking melee weapon which deals aggravated damage. They must be able to wield it, though unconventional approaches such as holding it in their mouth are acceptable.
4	The Host	Fanged demonic faces sprout all over the user's body. These faces automatically inflict 1 aggravated damage on grappled opponents per round. Grappled opponents lose 1 die for escape rolls.
4	Spikes	The body develops sharp objects that can puncture and cause bodily harm on contact. They can be spiked hairs, razors, rough skin, bones, etc. Botched brawl attacks suffer aggravated damage equal to the attacker's strength rating.
4	Poisoned Fangs (Prerequisite: Maw)	The fangs in the user's mouth become sharper and caustic. The Maw now deals 4 aggravated damage, and successful bites inject poison into the target after spending a point of Black Essence. The poison only affects living creatures (other Hungry Ghosts, Vampires, Risen, etc are not affected). The target must make a Stamina + Survival roll at Difficulty 5 to resist the effect of the poison. The poison immediately kills humans and normal animals if they fail the roll, while other living creatures suffer 1 aggravated damage each night for 7 nights and are unable to heal normally without the use of other powers.



## GODBODY OF DEMONS (GODE)

Demon Form Level	Demon Form Characteristics	Effect
4	Poisoned Tail (Prerequisite: Tail)	The Hungry Ghost manifests a stinger capable of injecting poison. The tail deals 1 aggravated damage on sting and the Hungry Ghost spends a point of Black Essence to inject the poison. The effect is not immediate and activates on the victim's first sleep. It induces a coma in others, living or dead, which lasts for 3 nights. The victim cannot be woken. No roll is required.
4	Spurting Tendrils	Fingers, tentacles, etc fire acidic ranged attacks. The acid melts normal metal weapons and inflicts 3 superficial damage on a successful hit. The attack is considered ranged with a maximum of 20 feet. The Storyteller decides the appropriate roll for these ranged attacks.
4	Lamprey Mouths (Prerequisite: Tentacles, the Distorted Form)	The user's arms or other limbs are covered with suckers similar to lampreys' mouths. This aids the character in climbing (with +1 to appropriate dice pools) and when grappling with direct skin-to-skin contact, they are able to leech blood equal to 1 aggravated damage per round. The Hungry Ghost gains one point of Black Essence this way as if feeding with Fangs of Blood Drinkers without the feeling of pleasure for the victim.
4	Suppurating Pustules (Prerequisite: Foulness)	Oozing sores and wounds pour out pus. The pus is acidic and deals 2 superficial damage to anyone or anything it touches. Melee attacks are affected due to splash, but ranged attacks are at the Storyteller's discretion.
4	Wing Spines (Prerequisite: Wings)	The user develops finger-like spurs on their wings that can claw or carry objects no larger than a large bottle. The crude claw attacks deal 1 superficial damage and can be used as a reaction to attack



## GODBODIES OF NATURE

### GODBODY OF WATER (GOWA) / CORRUPTED FORM: BLOOD SHINTAI

Before the Fifth Age, Hungry Ghosts used Godbodies to interact with and manipulate the world's Essence. They lost these abilities, and had to use corrupted forms instead, until The Great Departure, when every Awakened elder disappeared from the world. Since then, Hungry Ghosts are able to use their original Godbodies, though losing the Awakened elders is considered too high a price. Included below are the names of the corrupted forms from *Kindred of the East*. The original Godbodies can be found in *Kindred of the East: Blood and Silk*.

The Godbody of Water embodies change and flexibility. Students learn it by using Essence to break down barriers between themselves and the world.

#### LEVEL 1

##### Flowing Body

The Hungry Ghost manipulates the liquid within their body. They can't make solid matter such as bone into liquid, but they can adjust blood and other fluids within their skin. They can flatten or expand body parts by draining or flooding them. This allows them to squeeze through small spaces and stretch to hard-to-reach areas.

##### Mechanic

*Cost:* Rouse Check + One point of any type of Essence  
*Dice Pools:* To fit through small gaps, Dexterity + GoWa. To change the user's appearance, GoWa + Subterfuge vs Wits + Insight

*Duration:* One Scene

*System:* The Hungry Ghost can flow through any space more than 6 inches wide. The Storyteller sets the Difficulty rating. They can also disguise themselves by manipulating their skin for ten minutes. However, if they want to gain Looks as a Merit, or become Repulsive, it takes an hour of fine work. Recognising the Hungry Ghost afterwards requires a roll of GoWa + Subterfuge vs Wits + Insight. This disguise lasts an entire scene.

##### Ripple Reader

The Hungry Ghost is able to sense the frequencies in a still body of water and hear what has happened around it within a certain time frame.

##### Mechanic

*Cost:* One Rouse Check + One point of any type of Essence  
*Dice Pools:* Manipulation + GoWa to learn how long ago the sounds happened, and Wits + Occult (Difficulty 3) to understand them.  
*Duration:* One turn

*System:* The user spills a drop of their own blood infused with Essence into the water. They roll Manipulation + GoWa, with each

success allowing them to hear one day further in the past. The clarity and interpretation requires a separate roll of Wits + Occult with Difficulty 3 to understand the conversation. The Hungry Ghost can pause and rewind if they want to.

#### LEVEL 2

##### Puppeteer

*Prerequisite:* Flowing Body.

The Hungry Ghost can alter the flow of fluids within others' bodies. This allows them to stimulate healing, or cause traceless deaths or paralysis.

##### Mechanic

*Cost:* Rouse Check + One point of any type of Essence

*Dice Pools:* GoWa + Medicine (vs Stamina + Athletics)

*Duration:* One Scene

*System:* This power only affects living creatures. If the target has an injury, disease, infection, or poison in their system, the Hungry Ghost can prevent it from spreading, aid the healing process, and stop bleeding. This is done with a GoWa + Medicine roll, with the Difficulty set by the Storyteller. The Hungry Ghost does not need to touch the target.

The Hungry Ghost can also cause harm, for example, by disrupting blood flow. The target can combat the effects with a Stamina + Athletics roll against the Hungry Ghost's GoWa + Medicine. If the target fails the roll, they can spend a point of Willpower to hold off the damage for one turn. If the target wins the roll, they are able to resist for a session.

*Possible effects of Puppeteer on others' bodies:*

- *Limb* – Paralysed for a session.
- *Chest or Torso* – The target's heart goes into spasms with +2 to Difficulty for physical rolls for the scene. If the target fails the roll for chest or torso, make a second roll next round, keeping the previous result of the Hungry Ghost's roll. If the second roll fails, the target suffers a heart attack.
- *Face* – This requires the target to be willing or completely immobile. Working on others takes twice as long as a



## GODBODIES OF NATURE GODBODY OF WATER (GOWA) / CORRUPTED FORM: BLOOD SHINTAI

*Hungry Ghost working on themselves. Anyone trying to recognise the disguised person must roll Wits + Insight against the Hungry Ghost's GoWa + Subterfuge. This disguise lasts an entire scene.*

### Water Chains

The Hungry Ghost is capable of affecting the currents in large bodies of water. They can also see the currents beneath the water's calm surface if it's clean enough. This is a particular favourite for causing underwater accidents.

#### Mechanic

*Cost: Rouse Check + One point of any type of Essence*

*Dice Pools: Wits + GoWa vs Strength + Brawl*

*Duration: One Scene*

*The target needs to be immersed in enough liquid to cover the majority of their body. The Hungry Ghost manipulates the currents in a way that traps the victim. The target can make a Strength + Brawl roll vs the user's Wits + GoWa to try to escape.*

### LEVEL 3

#### Liquid Body

The Hungry Ghost is able to turn their body into water. This allows them to meld with other liquids, and become difficult to hit or injure.

#### Mechanic

*Cost: Rouse Check + One point of Scarlet Essence*

*Dice Pools: Dexterity + GoWa*

*Duration: One Scene*

*System: For the duration of this power, the Hungry Ghost adds their GoWa to any rolls to avoid physical hits, such as punches or gunshots, as their body becomes aqueous. The Hungry Ghost may alter their dimensions (though not their weight) to flow through gaps and obstructions, but this takes one turn and a roll of Dexterity + GoWa at Difficulty 3.*

*The Hungry Ghost is also able to merge with any pool large enough to cover their body. The Hungry Ghost becomes part of the liquid, sharing its properties, though they can choose to manifest their appearance if they want to. That is to say, they can rise out of the water and be recognisably themselves, without having to become solid again. While in the liquid, they do not take any physical damage unless the water is boiled away or otherwise removed. However, mental and spiritual attacks are still effective. It takes one turn to merge with or disengage from the liquid.*

### Gloak of Snow

The user can create a freezing aura around themselves. They can walk on water by creating ice floats that melt just as quickly as they appear. This is a popular skill, either inspiring the legends of the Yuki-Onna, or inspired by them.

#### Mechanic

*Cost: Rouse Check + One point of any type of Essence*

*Duration: One Scene*

*The Hungry Ghost becomes deathly cold and creates a freezing aura with a radius of around 20 feet that can freeze water almost instantly. Boiling water immediately turns into fine mist if thrown at the user. They can travel across any body of water as if it was solid ground, no matter the climate, though the speed at which the ice melts afterwards depends on the environment. During blizzards or strong hail, the Hungry Ghost gains 2 dice for any rolls attempting to be stealthy outside. During rain, the Hungry Ghost is a little conspicuous as a sheet of ice builds around them.*

*Living creatures within range of this ability take 2 superficial damage every 2 minutes.*

### LEVEL 4

#### The Water Weapon

A popular technique for assassins in modern nights as there is no evidence left behind other than water. Before modern nights, this was mainly a ceremonial skill, used for duels or if a Hungry Ghost was caught without a weapon.

#### Mechanic

*Cost: Rouse Check + One point of any Essence*

*Duration: As long as needed, though it costs one point of Essence per hour.*

*System: If using Scarlet Essence, the liquid pulses red. If using Black Essence, it glows black. The Hungry Ghost opens a wound and uses their own blood – or touches a body of liquid large enough – to form a lash that is four feet long. This creates a weapon that relies on Melee or Brawl. It deals aggravated damage on a successful hit. It may also be used to ensnare a target.*

#### Traversing the Water Realm

*Prerequisite: Ripple Reader.*

The Hungry Ghost requires enough water to act as a portal they can fit through. Even a spilled glass can be enough, but this is at the Storyteller's discretion. They use it to enter a mirror realm which holds the memory of the water. The user can hear, watch



## GODBODIES OF NATURE

### GODBODY OF WATER (GOWA) / CORRUPTED FORM: BLOOD SHINTAI

and interact with what has happened around the water. This skill is popular with investigators or spies

#### **Mechanic**

*Cost: One Rouse Check + One point of Black Essence*

*Dice Pools: Manipulation + GoWa*

*Duration: One scene*

*System: This requires a large enough body of water to submerge the Hungry Ghost. The user spills a drop of their blood infused with Essence. They roll Manipulation + GoWa, with each success determining how far back they can go, decided by the Storyteller. Within the water realm, the Hungry Ghost can touch the replications around them, but the models do not react, and anything stronger than a firm prod will break them into water. This immediately ends the power early. The Hungry Ghost can pause and rewind if they want to.*

## **LEVEL 5**

### **Stasis**

An ability originally developed to prevent Ravenous Devils hurting themselves or others, it has since been developed into an offensive power especially useful for hunting.

#### **Mechanic**

*Cost: Two Rouse Checks + Two points of either Essence*

*Dice Pools: Dexterity + GoWa vs Intelligence + Occult*

*Duration: One scene*

*System: Hungry Ghosts using this skill on a target must make a Dexterity + GoWa vs Intelligence + Occult roll. On a failure, the target is not affected and resists for one scene.*

*When using Scarlet Essence, the blood of a Hungry Ghost may be used to force a material creature into stasis. The affected creature is only able to breathe and move their eyes. For all intents and purposes, they have become statues and can be fed upon if the player wishes.*

*When using Black Essence, the Hungry Ghost can concentrate their blood into a freezing projectile for spirits. Wraiths or other spirits freeze into ice-like statues which collapse through The Wall and into the Mortal Realm. While in this state, a spirit is helpless. They can be broken, releasing the spirit, or drained of Essence. When draining Essence, a spirit suffers aggravated*

*Willpower damage equal to the amount of Essence taken.*

*This drains the passion of wraiths, and the Storyteller decides the number of passions they have. If fully drained, the wraith becomes an uncontrollable murderous spectre.*

### **Tide of Souls**

This skill epitomises the mental ability of the user to be so flexible or immaterial that their personality and soul change to the point of being unrecognisable. Marks on the soul are removed, and this is a particularly useful skill for those that wish to hide their past.

#### **Mechanic**

*Cost: Two Rouse Checks + Two points of either Essence*

*Dice Pools: Manipulation + GoWa (Difficulty 2)*

*Duration: Permanent*

*System: The player rolls a Manipulation + GoWa with Difficulty 2. For every success after meeting the Difficulty, the player is able to do one of the following:*

- *Change their Shadow archetype.*
- *Change touchstones, ambitions or desires. Players are advised to roleplay any changes to personality.*
- *Move dots within the Social and Mental attributes, though not add or remove them.*
- *Any curses or blessings are removed.*
- *Spirits are unable to recognise your soul. The Flaw 'Vengeful Spirit' can be removed using this ability.*

*If the character changes both their Psyche and Shadow's nature simultaneously, any mark on their soul – such as an Outcast brand or veins to show they have consumed a soul – is removed. For botches, the Shadow takes over and can prevent this power being used to alter their archetype for a number of days set by the Storyteller.*



## GODBODIES OF NATURE

### GODBODY OF FIRE (GoF) / CORRUPTED FORM: GHOST FLAME SHINTAI

The Godbody of Fire is the most destructive of the Disciplines, but its practitioners see it differently. To them, fire is destructive, yes – but also a tool of regeneration, strength and dynamism.

When using Black Essence, the flames appear black, grey, blue, or purple.

When using Scarlet Essence, the flames appear red, orange, yellow, or green.

Hungry Ghosts are subject to the same fear of fire found in most undead, making this a risky but powerful skill, especially when dealing with vampires or other Hungry Ghosts.

**All abilities in GoF apart from Fire's Friend can trigger a frenzy or Wave Soul in the user.**

#### LEVEL 1

##### Fire's Friend

The mandatory basics. This permanently reduces the likelihood of Wave Soul when around fire. No other skills are taught at this level as the innate fear of fire is already difficult to overcome.

##### Mechanic

Cost: Free

Duration: Permanent

System: The Hungry Ghost spends time in the presence of open flames to build up a resistance to the fear. They can then add their GoF rating to their dice rolls for resisting a Wave Soul caused by fire.

#### LEVEL 2

##### Fire Tamer

The Hungry Ghost controls pre-existing flames. This is a popular performance at celebrations as young Hungry Ghosts are easily impressed by it.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + One point of either Essence

Dice Roll: Dexterity + GoF vs Stamina + Awareness

Duration: One scene

System: The Hungry Ghost can control open flames within a distance of yards equal to twice their current Willpower. The flames can be divided, shaped, or controlled in any way as long they are within range. They can be thrown in combat with a Dexterity + GoF roll vs the target's Stamina + Awareness. The Storyteller decides the damage. The user is not immune to the effect of the flames and can suffer aggravated damage if it backfires.

##### Fireball

The Hungry Ghost generates fireballs that can cause temporary blindness and deafness like a flash-bang grenade.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One point of Scarlet Essence

Dice Roll: Dexterity + GoF vs Wits + Insight.

Duration: One action

System: The Hungry Ghost generates an exploding spiritual fire with their hands. This doesn't affect the user. The flash and sound effect has a radius of 30 feet with diminishing effects the further away the victims are. The user rolls a Dexterity + GoF vs the target's Wits + Insight. If the target fails their saving throw within the radius, they are temporarily blinded and deafened, with the Storyteller deciding the penalties. Protections such as ear muffs or coverings for eyes can help defend against this skill.

#### LEVEL 3

##### Body of Fire

A particularly dangerous skill that trains the mind to merge with the force of fire itself. This skill is especially popular with those that are paranoid about fire being used against them. In many courts around the world, the Path of Devil Tigers practice this the most.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + One point of Scarlet Essence

Dice Roll: GoF + Resolve at Difficulty 4

Duration: Until the Hungry Ghost leaves the flame's source.

System: After resisting a Wave Soul, the user can merge with any natural open flame. They retain their normal speed, but their body is now made of flames, so they can jump twice as high and twice as far. They can remain in their flame form outside of sources of fire for a number of minutes equal to their GoF rating, then their body returns to normal and they need to activate this power again. This means The Hungry Ghost can remain in any open flame until they fall asleep. This is effective protection against other undead, but if they find themselves cornered in the fire when their time runs out, it can prove fatal.

In hand-to-hand combat, all damage is fire-based. The Storyteller decides the damage appropriate for the contact but



## GODBODIES OF NATURE

### GODBODY OF FIRE (GOF) / CORRUPTED FORM: GHOST FLAME SHINTAI

for reference, a punch is equivalent to being struck by a torch, and being tackled is equivalent to being caught in an inferno.

#### Burning Brazier

A skill developed to internalise fire. The Hungry Ghost uses their Essence to stoke fire within their body. Creatures that bite or wound them suffer damage as fire spurts out onto them. Users are also able to see in the dark, albeit with a tell-tale glow.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + One point of Scarlet Essence

Duration: One Scene

System: The user is able to see in the dark as their eyes and orifices glow faintly with internal flames. If cut or wounded, flames spill out instead of blood. Hungry Ghosts and other creatures scared of fire must roll to resist a Wave Soul or frenzy. Anything biting the user suffers aggravated damage equal to the damage inflicted on the user. The user may also use this to intimidate a target, who loses one dice from the resist roll for every level of GoF the user has.

#### LEVEL 4

##### Flame Drain

This skill drains fire from the realm the user is currently in and redirects it into another one at random. This varies between users, but some use their own bodies as the portal, while others direct it through the Wall, creating the strange sight of fire vanishing mid-air. This skill can also see into the fire's past, allowing the user to know if the fire was a deliberate attack or an accident.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + One point of either Essence

Dice Roll: Stamina + GoF vs Wall Rating to redirect the fire, Perception + GoF vs Wall Rating for a glimpse of the fire's past.

Duration: 1-10 minutes

System: When a Hungry Ghost is in contact with open flames, they may roll a Stamina + GoF vs current Wall Rating to redirect the flames. The Hungry Ghost must be within 15 feet of the flames to use this skill. Without line of sight, the Difficulty increases by 1. If the roll matches or exceeds the Wall Rating, the fire is extinguished. If not, every success reduces the size of the flames but does not extinguish it. The effect stops if the user's concentration is broken. The flame is absorbed and redirected to either a random spirit world

or the Underworld depending on the Essence used. Scarlet Essence redirects to the spirit world while Black Essence sends it into the Underworld. Flames in the spirit world react accordingly with the realm's environment while flames in the Underworld die out quickly.

The Hungry Ghost can also extract information from fire or ashes. Using Scarlet Essence for fire still burning or embers, or Black Essence for ashes, roll Perception + GoF against the local Wall Rating. Every success above the Wall Rating shows glimpses of the area when the fire was burning. The Difficulty increases depending on how accurate or specific the user is trying to be.

#### Dragon's Breath

Prerequisite: Burning Brazier

The internal flame can now be breathed out like a flamethrower.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + One point of either Essence

Dice Roll: Stamina + GoF vs Stamina + Occult

Duration: One round

System: The Hungry Ghost breathes in oxygen to feed the flames. After a round of concentration, they then spew flames that deal aggravated damage. The user rolls Stamina + GoF vs the target's Stamina + Occult with the margin determining the aggravated damage. The flame comes out in a 20-foot cone.

#### LEVEL 5

##### The Tempered Soul

The user becomes resistant to sunlight. This skill is especially beloved by those wishing to live with a degree of normality, such as the Rising Phoenixes.

##### Mechanic

Cost: Two Rouse Checks + One Scarlet Essence

Duration: 6 hours

System: The Hungry Ghost no longer starts rotting in indirect sunlight and is only affected by direct sunlight. The Storyteller decides the distinction between the two. They can resist the effects of direct sunlight longer than usual with no upper limit, and gain 2 dice for resisting a Wave Soul being triggered by direct sunlight. The Hungry Ghost can spend minutes in direct sunlight equal to their Stamina + GoF. Their Demonic Essence determines how many minutes it takes to reset, so for



## GODBODIES OF NATURE

### GODBODY OF FIRE (GOF) / CORRUPTED FORM: GHOST FLAME SHINTAI

example, 2 Demonic Essence means they have to wait 2 minutes. This means the user can spend time outside, go indoors, and go back out again. They can also spend points of Scarlet Essence to extend the period of safety by two turns per dot.

When the user overdoes it and suffers sun damage, they first lose a point of Health, then a dot in each physical attribute, then a point of Black Essence. That sequence repeats if they continue to stay in the sun. The physical attributes recover after two nights without any sun exposure.

#### The Phoenix Flame

Understanding fire has led to new insights for the user. While fire is definitely a destructive component, it is capable of providing life and healing if directed appropriately. The user can immolate a living body to heal them or turn a recently dead creature into a fire spirit.

#### Mechanic

*Cost: Two Rouse Checks + Two points of either Scarlet or Black Essence*

*Dice Roll: Resolve + Medicine (Scarlet Essence), Charisma + Occult (Black Essence)*

*Duration: One Scene for Scarlet, Indefinite for Black Essence*  
*System: The Hungry Ghost sets the target on fire with a touch.*

*With Scarlet Essence, the flames are hot and border on painful, but lessens the damage suffered by the target by turning aggravated damage into superficial, and healing superficial damage completely. The amount converted depends on the number of successes rolled for Resolve + Medicine. If they roll 5 or more successes, they can heal permanent physical defects such as scars.*

*With Black Essence, the user can burn a corpse that's been dead less than a week, and converse with the soul as it manifests into a spirit of flame. Provided the Hungry Ghost is not the one who killed them, and are friendly towards the user, the Hungry Ghost can persuade the spirit to manifest using Charisma + Occult with a Difficulty of 5. If successful, the spirit acts as a friendly semi-independent fire spirit with the powers Fire Tamer and Dragon's Breath. The fire spirit has health equal to the unspent Willpower of the user, and uses their Health to activate their power. Dragon's Breath deals 1 aggravated damage to the fire spirit, while Fire Tamer deals 1 superficial damage. The fire spirit does not take any damage from heat nor flames. If*

*defeated, the fire spirit is reabsorbed back into the Hungry Ghost, ready to be summoned again. If the fire spirit is summoned to fight against its killer, it has an automatic success for summoning. If the Hungry Ghost resolves their regrets or desires, the spirit departs and the Hungry Ghost regains all Willpower and removes stains. Storytellers may think about triggering a Path increase as well. The Hungry Ghost can only house 3 spirits within their body at a time.*



## GODBODIES OF NATURE

### GODBODY OF AIR (GOA) / CORRUPTED FORM: STORM SHINTAI

The Godbody of Air focuses on sensing subtle changes in air currents. Masters of this art are sensitive to movements in the world around them, and are able to guide them as they please.

#### LEVEL 1

##### Conjure the Wind

The user manipulates the air around them and forces gusts of wind in a direction of their choosing.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + One Scarlet Essence

Dice Roll: Stamina + GoA

Duration: One scene

System: After a round of preparation, the Hungry Ghost can generate winds of 10 miles per hour (mph) for every success rolled, so 3 successes generate 30mph winds.

Any character flying or sailing against these winds is slowed by 1mph for every 5mph of wind the user generates, so a 30mph wind would reduce the speed of the opponent by 6mph. The reverse is also true.

The generated winds can add speed to a character moving with them in the same direction, and can be used to push immobile objects at the same rate. Storytellers are free to add extra effects for extremely strong winds (starting at 70mph). These can range from structural damage to blowing people and objects over.

##### Meteorological Gaze

The user is able to predict the weather.

##### Mechanic

Cost: Free

Dice Roll: Intelligence + GoA

Duration: As long as required

System: The user analyses current winds and temperatures to discern weather patterns within 30 miles without any rolls. They can also tell where and when lightning will strike during a storm. If the user wishes to predict the weather, they must roll Intelligence + GoA, with each success allowing them to see one day into the future.

#### LEVEL 2

##### Lightning Fist

The user is able to generate electricity within their body and deliver it through physical contact.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + One Scarlet Essence

Duration: One Scene

System: The user deals superficial damage to the undead and aggravated damage to the living. When fighting using Brawl, or

weapons able to conduct electricity, the user can add superficial damage to successful hits by spending Scarlet Essence. This power must be used deliberately; accidental touches have no effect. It can also be used on objects that conduct electricity, with the Storyteller deciding its effect on technology.

##### Air Time

See *Vampire: The Masquerade*, Page 270

##### Mechanic

Cost: One point of either Essence

Dice Roll: Wits + Awareness (reaction Difficulty 3)

Duration: As long as required

System: If the Hungry Ghost has time to prepare, no roll is required. If they are using it reactively, they must roll Wits + Awareness against Difficulty 3 to be immune to damage from collisions or falls. Pressure sensors will not trigger when this power is in use, however, the user's Strength is reduced to one dot.

#### LEVEL 3

##### Lightning Throw

Prerequisite: Lightning Fist

Shoot lightning from a distance.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + One Scarlet Essence

Dice Roll: Dexterity + GoA

System: Roll Dexterity + GoA to hit the target. The lightning bolt has a range equal to Stamina + GoA in yards. The damage is the same as Lightning Fist.

##### Air Sense

The Hungry Ghost can sense disturbances in the air around them and react accordingly, allowing them to defend against incoming attacks and sense invisible opponents.

##### Mechanic

Cost: Free

Dice Roll: Wits + GoA vs Dexterity + Stealth

Duration: One round if boosted, otherwise as long as needed.

System: The radius of this skill is 10 feet, which can be boosted by 5 feet per Essence spent, provided the Hungry Ghost takes a round to prepare beforehand. If someone comes within range, they need to beat the user in an opposed roll of Dexterity + Stealth vs Wits + GoA to



# GODBODIES OF NATURE

## GODBODY OF AIR (GOA) / CORRUPTED FORM: STORM SHINTAI

hide from them, or they will be noticed.

### LEVEL 4

#### Cloud Chariot

Create strong localised winds that carry the Hungry Ghost, allowing them to fly. This skill is frowned upon in modern nights due to being obviously supernatural.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + Two points of either Essence + One Willpower

Dice Roll: Dexterity + GoA (Difficulty 2)

Duration: As long as required

System: The Hungry Ghost spends a point of Willpower and rolls for Dexterity + GoA with a Difficulty of 2. The user can fly at a rate of 20mph plus 5mph for every additional success after the Difficulty. This power cannot be used on other people.

#### The Breathless Gasp

Drain the air from a space and create a vacuum. No sound can escape and anything breathing will suffocate.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + One point of either Essence

Dice Roll: Dexterity + GoA (minimum Difficulty 2)

Duration: One Scene

System: The Hungry Ghost rolls Dexterity + GoA with a minimum Difficulty of 2. They then manipulate the air and create a vacuum. The chart below indicates how much the success impacts the area. Within the vacuum, sound does not travel, fire dies, and nothing can breathe. The Storyteller decides the penalties from the suffocation.

Successes	Range of Effect
2 successes	1 square foot
3 successes	2 square feet
4 successes	6 -7 square feet
5 successes	Room size (around 160 square foot)
6+ successes	House size (around 2400 square foot)

### LEVEL 5

#### Storm's Call

Prerequisite: Meteorological Gaze

The Hungry Ghost can control the weather.

##### Mechanic

Cost: Two Rouse Checks + Two points of either Essence + One Willpower

Dice Roll: Resolve + GoA

Duration: Storyteller's decision.

System: This skill must be used at least two days in advance. The user can then control when the effects will manifest. Once they do, they dissipate naturally as decided by the Storyteller.

The user's effect on the weather depends on the number of successes rolled, outlined in the table below.

Successes	Range of Effect	Effect
2 successes	1 mile radius	Trivial changes (raise/lower temperature by 10 degrees, create/disperse a few clouds)
3 successes	2 mile radius	Minor changes (create/disperse rain showers or light snow or heatwave)
4 successes	4 mile radius	Major changes (create/disperse a powerful thunderstorm or minor blizzard)
5 successes	8 mile radius	Extreme changes (Create/disperse a major blizzard or severe heat wave)
6+ successes	16 mile radius	Very extreme change (Monsoon, tornadoes)

#### Ride The Lightning

Redirect a great amount of electrical energy to illuminate a leyline or temporarily create one. The Hungry Ghost and others can then use it much faster than usual.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + Two point of either Essence

Dice Roll: Resolve + GoA (Difficulty 2 if creating own leyline)

Duration: One Scene

System: The Hungry Ghost does not take any damage from the electricity. They can see the closest leyline to them, and redirect lightning strikes or any large quantity of electrical power into it. The user can also generate the required electricity within themselves if necessary.

The Hungry Ghost can use this charged leyline to travel through connected leylines as electricity. Others will see this as a blur of lightning. If the Hungry Ghost is too far from the closest leyline, they may create one that connects to it. The user rolls Resolve + GoA at Difficulty 2. If they succeed, the artificial leyline allows other Hungry Ghosts access to it until it fades.



## GODBODIES OF NATURE

### GODBODY OF EARTH (GOEA) / CORRUPTED FORM: JADE SHINTAI & BEAST SHINTAI

The Godbody of Earth has developed differently between regions, but there is a shared understanding of the stability and mutability of the earth itself. Users tend to have strong stamina and endurance, much like the element they affect.

#### LEVEL 1

##### Rock Solid

The Hungry Ghost embraces the power of Earth's stability and expresses it. Once activated, the user cannot be picked up, thrown or knocked down.

##### Mechanic

Cost: Free

Dice Roll: None

Duration: As long as required

System: The user must stay standing or lying while connected to the ground. This must be on the ground and not above on second storeys or higher. This trumps other abilities, so that the user cannot be picked up, thrown down or knocked back unless the ground beneath them breaks. The effect ends if the user chooses to move. It takes one action to start or stop this power with no roll required.

##### Apex Predator

Inspire dread in an animal with eye contact or sound.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One point of Black Essence

Dice Roll: Intimidation + GoEa vs the animal's Willpower.

Duration: One Scene

System: The Hungry Ghost makes eye contact with the target animal. The player rolls Manipulation + Intimidation, with the Difficulty being the animal's Willpower. Success means it is filled with fear. Usually they will flee, but the animal may attack if there are no escape routes. This also affects animals possessed or bonded to a supernatural, like a vampire's famulus.

#### LEVEL 2

##### Wallwalker

The user can walk on any solid surface, including vertical walls and ceilings, as long as the material is natural and from the earth, so not plastic, refined metals, or ice.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + One point of either Essence

Dice Roll: Composure + Survival (Difficulty 2)

Duration: One Scene

System: The Hungry Ghost spends one action preparing. They are then able to walk or run on walls, provided they are stone, wood,

etc. There are no footprints and little to no sounds. If the user takes damage, they must make a Composure + Survival roll at Difficulty 2 to maintain this ability. If they fail, they fall.

##### Whispers of Beasts

The user can talk to animals. They may be able to persuade animals to help them, but the animals will rarely go against their nature or do anything dangerous. This power can also be used to summon a nearby animal, but this depends on the area as the animal must be present to answer. The summoned animal listens to the summoner but is not compelled to obey.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + One point of either Essence

Dice Roll: Manipulation + GoEa for persuading animals, Charisma + GoEa to summon them.

Duration: One Scene

System: Simple communication does not require a roll. Persuading animals to perform actions or services requires a Manipulation + GoEa roll. The Difficulty is set by the Storyteller. Summoning an animal requires a Charisma + GoEa roll. The Difficulty depends on the location and the scarcity of the animal.

#### LEVEL 3

##### One with the Earth

The user can merge with and travel within soil, stone, clay, wood, etc, though constructed objects are more difficult. Water, Ice, plastic, and metal are impossible.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + One point of either Essence

Dice Roll: Resolve + GoEa (Difficulty 3)

Duration: One day or until disturbed.

System: The Hungry Ghost takes two turns to concentrate and spends a point of either Essence to meld with the earth. This does not work with liquids, or solids that are purely metal, living or aqueous. If the material is earth-based, there are no rolls required. When merging with a material that is manufactured such as concrete, the Hungry Ghost must roll a Manipulation + GoEa roll with a Difficulty of 3. Once merged, the Hungry Ghost can move at normal walking speed within the material, provided it is big enough. If moving on the surface of the material, they are visible to anyone watching,



## GODBODIES OF NATURE

### GODBODY OF EARTH (GOEA) / CORRUPTED FORM: JADE SHINTAI & BEAST SHINTAI

but physical attacks must destroy the surrounding substance before they affect the user. If they want to move to a different type of material, they must spend another point of Essence. Mental and spiritual attacks still affect the Hungry Ghost normally. The user is able to sleep within the ground but must come above ground after sleeping.

#### LEVEL 4

##### Follow The Earth

The user can attune to ley lines and use them to travel. If they have One with the Earth, they can travel underground.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + One point of either Essence

Dice Roll: Dexterity + GoEa, Dexterity + Athletics vs Difficulty 2 for combat

Duration: As long as required

System: The Hungry Ghost rolls Dexterity + GoEa. Each success adds 5mph to the top speed when travelling along the ley lines, so 6 successes means the Hungry Ghost may move up to 30mph. The user hovers off the ground at a height of up to 7 feet, with solid objects counting as the ground, so they can go over buildings, etc, without stopping. They can move through liquid at half speed. If they have the skill One with the Earth, they are able to travel underground. They can shift to different ley lines if they intersect, but this requires a point of Essence.

If used during combat, the user rolls a Dexterity + Athletics with a Difficulty of 2. If the Hungry Ghost fails, they gently land or rise to the surface. If they botch the roll, they fall or are roughly spat out, causing a point of aggravated damage.

##### Wild Spirit Transfer

This power allows the user to possess the mind of an animal and even use them during the day. The Hungry Ghost lies immobile as they transfer their mind to the animal's body.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + One point of either Essence

Dice Roll: Manipulation + GoEa (Difficulty 2)

Duration: Either one scene or indefinitely

System: Roll Manipulation + GoEa with Difficulty 2. On a win, the Hungry Ghost may inhabit the animal body for one scene. On a critical win, the Hungry Ghost may inhabit the animal indefinitely.

If extending the possession to during the day, the Hungry Ghost must make a Wave Soul check to override their fear of the sunlight. If successful, they may continue as usual. The Hungry Ghost is not

damaged by the sun when within the animal body. The user is oblivious to their original body but any damage to it pulls the Hungry Ghost out of possession. They also suffer a point of aggravated Willpower damage if the animal dies during their possession.

If the Hungry Ghost has the Godbody of Spirits ability Cleave the Demon, one soul can be used to possess the animal while the other soul controls their normal body.

#### LEVEL 5

##### Unleash the Beast

Assume a bestial form that is not dissimilar to the war-form of a werewolf by merging with a friendly animal spirit.

##### Mechanic

Cost: Two Rouse Checks + Black Essence + One Willpower

Duration: As long as needed up to one day

System: The user must have a willing animal spirit to use this power. They must spend 3 turns, Black Essence and a point of Willpower. The combined body resembles the powerful war-form of shapeshifters. In this state, the user gains 6 dots to their physical attributes, allowing them to increase them even beyond the normal 5 dot limit. The Storyteller may bestow additional abilities or characteristics related to the animal spirit, for example if it is a shark spirit, the Hungry Ghost might gain shark teeth and gills. They can also spend a point of Willpower to have an extra action while transformed.

##### The Elemental Self

The Hungry Ghost assumes an elemental battle form. This skill was originally based on the Chinese Five Phases, but now includes other elements. Each form has its own pros and cons.

##### Mechanic

Cost: Two Rouse Checks + the Essence indicated for each element

Dice Roll: Intelligence + GoEa (Difficulty 3)

Duration: As long as needed up to one day

System: Spend 4 points of Essence as indicated for each element. If there is not enough of the element present for the Hungry Ghost to touch, the user must make an Intelligence + GoEa at Difficulty 3. If successful, the Hungry Ghost is able to transform. If it fails, they are not. The transformation lasts until the Hungry Ghost chooses to relinquish their form or falls asleep.

**Water (4 Black Essence + Requires GoWa 3)** – The Hungry Ghost becomes dark cold water. Light is completely absorbed, with sounds losing half their volume as the body absorbs the soundwaves. Creatures within arm's reach must make



## GODBODIES OF NATURE

### GODBODY OF EARTH (GOEA) / CORRUPTED FORM: JADE SHINTAI & BEAST SHINTAI

a Stamina + Survival roll at Difficulty 7. If they fail, they temporarily lose one point of Dexterity due to the cold. This remains until the creature leaves the Hungry Ghost's vicinity. Each time the Hungry Ghost strikes them, they must make the same roll again. Any target that reaches zero Dexterity succumbs to the cold and loses consciousness. Metallic objects striking the user in this form suffer a point of aggravated damage and rust or corrode with every hit. The character can dissolve into a pool and reform at will.

When dodging (VTM V5, pg 125), the user can add their GoEa to their dice pools to evade attacks.

#### **Metal (3 Black Essence, 1 Scarlet Essence + Requires GoM 3) –**

The Hungry Ghost becomes dark polished metal. They can effectively stake a Scarlet-balanced Hungry Ghost with their bare hands. They become incredibly strong, able to keep rolling Strength checks every round, adding their successes together until they meet the Difficulty for a task. However, if their roll fails, they lose half of their accumulated successes. On a critical fail, they lose all their successes and must start again. While doing this, the Hungry Ghost can't do anything else that requires fine motor skills or a lot of manual dexterity.

**Earth (2 Black Essence, 2 Scarlet Essence) –** The Hungry Ghost turns into a mixture of rocks and gems. Whenever a physical weapon strikes the Hungry Ghost, each strike deals damage to the weapon equal to the damage inflicted on them. They can clog machinery, etc, by jamming the mechanisms without additional rolls. They can also act as obstructions to block passageways, etc. They can raise clouds of dust in a 10-foot radius of themselves which deal 2 superficial damage per turn to those that breathe it in, though filtered masks and breathing aids negate this. This cloud of dust decreases visibility at the Storyteller's discretion. Additional effects have fires spluttering out and liquids clotting with debris. This cloud is supernatural, and resists being blown away with a Difficulty of 6.

#### **Ether (2 Black Essence, 2 Scarlet Essence + Requires GoEth)**

– The Hungry Ghost turns into a luminous ethereal form that can dimly light a dark room. While in this form, they cannot be physically or spiritually injured, but they cannot harm others physically either. They can phase through any material without resistance. Once in this form, they are unhindered by any mental or physical constraints that bound them previously.

They can force Hungry Ghosts or other creatures into their original form by temporarily occupying the same space as a target, then

making a Resolve + Occult roll vs the target's current Willpower. This takes one action. On a failure, the target remains in their current form. They cannot be forced back into their original form until the next day. On a success, the target is forced back into their original form.

#### **Air (1 Black Essence, 3 Scarlet Essence + Requires GoA 3) –**

The Hungry Ghost transforms their body into storms. In this form, lightning and thunder crackles across their body, illuminating the area. They are unable to use stealth. Due to the electricity, any contact with bare skin or conductive weapons causes a point of aggravated damage per turn to the opponent. The Hungry Ghost is far more agile than usual. When melee or ranged attacks are directed at them, they are able to add their GoA rating to dodge rolls. They can travel through electricity, so power lines and similar become tools for them to manoeuvre.

#### **Wood (1 Black Essence, 3 Scarlet Essence + Requires GoWo 3) –**

The Hungry Ghost turns into an animated mass of organic material. They can make plant-life wither or bloom as they wish. They can change their shape and spread out into a clump or take humanoid form, though this takes an action each time. They can effectively stake a vampire or Death-Imbalanced Hungry Ghost with their bare hands. They can also transmit diseases, fungal infections, or poisons with a Stamina + GoEa vs Stamina + Awareness roll. If the target fails, they suffer the effects and take one point of superficial damage every following day until cured. To heal, they must make a Stamina + Medicine roll with a Difficulty of 8. The disease ends when the target perishes or succeeds the roll. The Storyteller can decide if the disease inflicted on the target is contagious or not.

#### **Fire (4 Scarlet Essence + Requires GoF 3) –**

The Hungry Ghost becomes a flame of varying colours radiating intense heat. They emit light from their body. Ranged attacks are at +2 Difficulty due to the blinding brightness. The Hungry Ghost can emit heat, with the maximum range being twice their Willpower. The user rolls Resolve + Occult. 1 success is enough to make steam rise from a small pond; 3 successes can ignite dry paper and 6 or more successes can ignite a drenched log. The Storyteller decides at what range the heatwaves start causing aggravated damage, and how much aggravated damage is caused by melee or hand-to-hand combat. Hungry Ghosts around the character must make a Wave Soul roll to be near the user due to the flames.



## GODBODIES OF NATURE

### GODBODY OF ETHER (GOET) / CORRUPTED FORM: KIAI & TEMPEST OF INWARD FOCUS

Developed in the Indian subcontinent, the Godbody of Ether makes use of the imperceptible substance of the world. It's only detectable by sound, so students are generally good singers or chanters.

#### LEVEL 1

##### Hungry Soul

Looking inwards, users are able to negotiate with their Shadow about their Hunger, making them able to turn Demonic Essence into an Essence they can consume for Hunger.

##### Mechanic

Cost: Free

Duration: Indefinitely

System: The Hungry Ghost is able to turn a point of Demonic Essence into a point of either Scarlet or Black Essence. This does not mean you can turn a point of Scarlet or Black Essence into Demonic Essence. If the Scarlet or Black Essence is not used for the Hungry Ghost's Hunger, but for Disciplines for example, make a Shadow roll as the Shadow becomes angry that the Essence was not used for its negotiated purpose.

##### Song of Change

By humming, the user can influence others into changing their mind, and pursuing alternative routes to the same goal. For example, if the target is hunting, the user can make them give up on one victim and look for another. If they are planning a trip, they might switch from driving to taking the train. It can be as small as walking to the bus station, or as extreme as pulling a gun trigger, as long as it serves the target's purpose.

##### Mechanic

Cost: Free

Dice Roll: Manipulation + GoEt vs Resolve + Awareness

Duration: One scene

System: The Hungry Ghost needs to be within earshot for the power to work. It does not work on targets that cannot hear. The user hums and makes a contesting roll of Manipulation + GoEt vs the target's Resolve + Awareness. On a successful roll, the target hears the humming and, provided they have other routes to their goal, they change their plans. This is deliberately ambiguous and the Storyteller decides the circumstances and actions the target takes, not the player. If the target has no viable alternatives, the power might frustrate them but will not stop them.

#### LEVEL 2

##### Mediation of Voices

The user hums or sings a song that makes spirits and physical

beings calm down. This is popular with Preceptors during heated diplomatic exchanges.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + Scarlet Essence

Dice Roll: Charisma + GoEt vs Willpower

Duration: One scene

System: The Hungry Ghost needs to be within earshot for the power to work. It does not work for targets that cannot hear. The user hums or sings and must make a contesting roll of Charisma + GoEt vs the target's Willpower. On a successful roll, the target(s) will be inclined to resolve problems with cooler heads rather than fists. Humans will feel their mood change to immediate calm without rolling. Hungry Ghosts in a Fire Soul will also be calmed. This is the same with other creatures in a similar state, such as frenzied vampires or out of control werewolves. A creature mid-fight may stop when hearing the song, but it doesn't make them friendly and they can restart the fight if they want to. However, any attempt to resolve things peacefully gains 2 dice. Should this fail, the target(s) are immune to this power for a scene.

##### Emboldened Soul

The Hungry Ghost strengthens their focus and resolve, making them resistant to fear in battle, regardless of the odds.

##### Mechanic

Cost: Free

Duration: Permanent

System: Add dice equal to your GoEt to rolls resisting anything that can trigger a Wave Soul or Shadow take-over.

#### LEVEL 3

##### Song of Succour

By singing a tune or song, the Hungry Ghost can transfer their Essence to others.

##### Mechanic

Cost: Free

Dice Pool: Resolve + GoEt vs Resolve + Occult if the beneficiary is resisting.

Duration: One scene

System: The Hungry Ghost needs to be within earshot for the power to work. It does not work on targets that cannot hear. The target hears the song and receives the Essence. If the target resists receiving this Essence, they require a Resolve + Occult vs the user's Resolve + GoEt. Humans receiving Scarlet Essence feel elated and active, while Black Essence



## GODBODIES OF NATURE

### GODBODY OF ETHER (GOET) / CORRUPTED FORM: KIAI & TEMPEST OF INWARD FOCUS

makes them feel tired and depressed. Aside from emotional changes, there are no real benefits to humans. Some other supernatural creatures can benefit, as Essence is the same as Glamour, Sekham, Gnosis or Quintessence (Changeling, Mummy, Werewolf, Mages).

#### Machine Conduit

The Hungry Ghost can use their skills over cameras or microphones.

##### Mechanic

Cost: Free

Dice Roll: None

Duration: Permanent

System: The Hungry Ghost can use abilities that require sight or sound through a machine.

#### LEVEL 4

##### Song of Pain

The user can inflict emotional or physical pain with their song.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + Black Essence, with added Scarlet Essence if desired.

Dice Roll: Resolve + Performance (Difficulty 3), Stamina + GoEt vs Composure + Survival if resisted.

Duration: As long as the user can keep singing.

System: The Hungry Ghost needs to be within earshot for the power to work. The Hungry Ghost causes harm to their targets through the vibration of sound waves, so even those that cannot hear are affected.

The user rolls Stamina + GoEt vs the target's Composure + Survival, with the difference being the superficial Willpower damage dealt.

The Hungry Ghost can spend a point of Scarlet Essence to turn the damage into superficial physical damage instead.

The user can perform other actions while maintaining the song after the initial round, provided their other actions do not interfere.

If struck by a weapon or an ability that causes pain or distraction, the user needs to roll Resolve + Performance at Difficulty 3 or higher to keep singing. Other song-based abilities, or any that require concentration, will interrupt this power if activated.

##### Song of Truth

The user sings or hums a song that compels others to be truthful, even if the Hungry Ghost's attention is not on them.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + Black Essence

Dice Roll: Wits + GoEt vs Manipulation + Awareness if resisted.

Duration: One scene

System: The Hungry Ghost needs to be within earshot for the power to work. It does not work on targets that cannot hear. The target hears the song and must make a contesting roll of Manipulation + Awareness vs the user's Wits + GoEt. If the target fails, they cannot lie or withhold truths when asked. If the target successfully resists, they are immune to the power for one scene. Humans have no resistance and speak truthfully with even the faintest echoes of the song.

#### LEVEL 5

##### Shock of the World

Imbuing their voice with power, the Hungry Ghost can shatter reality and cause immense damage to objects within range. Large cracks appear in reality and the vibrations can cause sonic booms.

##### Mechanic

Cost: Two Rouse Checks + 2 points of either Essence

Dice Roll: Stamina + GoEt vs Stamina + Athletics

Duration: One scene

System: The Hungry Ghost screams or shouts. This causes a crack in reality like a shattered mirror. The power has a range of a 25 metre radius. Anyone in the vicinity, friendly or hostile, needs to roll Stamina + Athletics vs the Stamina + GoEt of the user, with the margin of success deciding the aggravated damage inflicted. The Storyteller is free to be creative on the damage inflicted to the surroundings as the vibrations travel. The higher the roll, the more it destroys.

##### The Empty Property

The Hungry Ghost can briefly copy the abilities of others as long as they can be seen, whether they know what they are or not. Abilities that don't cause any external changes can't be copied.

##### Mechanic

Cost: Two Rouse Checks + 1 Scarlet Essence + 1 Black Essence

Dice Roll: Intelligence + GoEt, with the Difficulty decided by the copied ability.

Duration: One scene

System: The user witnesses a physical ability or skill that is not a rite (or equivalent in other supernatural creatures) and rolls Intelligence + GoEt. The user needs to equal or beat the Difficulty to successfully copy it. The Difficulty depends on how many dots are required for the skill plus 1. For example, a level 1 ability has a Difficulty of 2, while a level 4 ability has a Difficulty of 5. The Storyteller decides if the ability can be copied before the player spends anything on trying. Copying takes one round, though the user can do it in reaction by increasing the Difficulty by 2. The Hungry Ghost does not remember how to use the copied ability again as this power only mimics.



## GODBODIES OF NATURE

### GODBODY OF METAL (GOM) / CORRUPTED FORM: BONE SHINTAI

The Godbody of Metal was developed alongside the five elements in Asia. Its focus is on making the body and mind unyielding and rigid. Students of the Godbody of Metal make themselves as hard and sharp as knives.

#### LEVEL 1

##### **Metallicized**

The Hungry Ghost becomes covered in a metallic sheen that offers protection, but is still flexible.

##### **Mechanic**

*Cost: One Rouse Check + One point of Black Essence*

*Duration: One scene*

*System: The user gains an additional Health track for superficial damage, with one box for every level of GoM they have. The effect lasts for one scene. When it ends, half of the damage accrued in the new track transfers to their regular Health track.*

##### **Metal Mind**

The Hungry Ghost becomes resistant to mental manipulation by adding dice equal to their GoM level to resist rolls.

##### **Mechanic**

*Cost: One Rouse Check + One point of Black Essence*

*Duration: One scene*

*System: This can be used in reaction to attempts to affect the user's mind. The user adds their GoM level to mental defence rolls whether the attack is supernatural or mundane. This only applies to the half of the soul in control of the body, so if the Shadow is in control, the Psyche does not benefit, and vice versa.*

#### LEVEL 2

##### **Chainmail**

The user's skin shines as a layer of superfine metal overlays the body. On closer inspection, the skin looks like it's coated in scales which deflect and minimise any damage.

##### **Mechanic**

*Cost: One Rouse Check + One point of Black Essence*

*Duration: One scene*

*System: Subtract the user's Godbody of Metal level from the amount of superficial damage taken. This cannot reduce the damage below one.*

##### **Metal Within**

The Hungry Ghost transmutes their bone into metal, allowing them to graft metal tools or weapons onto their

body. They do not create the items, but stick them on.

##### **Mechanic**

*Cost: Either Black Essence or superficial damage*

*Duration: As long as desired*

*System: The Storyteller decides if this power can be applied to the item in question. There is no cost or roll required, but the objects must be well-made and primarily metal. Every graft takes a whole night, as does removing the object from the body. Every grafted item costs one point of Black Essence for it to function within the body for three days. If the Hungry Ghost does not spend Black Essence for the modification, they instead take one superficial damage each day for each modification. The item is part of the Hungry Ghost's body until it is deliberately removed. This means any subsequent transformations will contain it as well. Items can be hidden from view by absorbing them under the skin, taking a reaction to reveal it again.*

#### LEVEL 3

##### **Wire Frame**

The Hungry Ghost turns their body into a very thin wire-like entity that is difficult to spot. In this form, the Hungry Ghost is able to meld with metallic objects and be resistant to physical damage.

##### **Mechanic**

*Cost: One Rouse Check + One point of Black Essence*

*Dice Roll: Resolve + Subterfuge vs Perception + Awareness*

*Duration: One scene*

*System: The Hungry Ghost transforms into wire. In this form, they are able to move at normal speed and pass through any opening. The wire form is difficult to see in the dark. If the user wishes to hide, they roll Resolve + Subterfuge against the Perception + Awareness of anyone trying to spot them. When in the dark, the user gets a +2 bonus. This wire body can also be used by another character as a whip that deals superficial damage, but only if the user allows it.*

*The Hungry Ghost can merge with any metal object that is larger than them. They are able to move within the metal, and do not take physical damage until the object is broken, though mental and spiritual attacks work as normal. The user cannot retaliate with physical attacks. It takes a full turn to merge with or emerge from the metal.*



## GODBODIES OF NATURE

### GODBODY OF METAL (GOM) / CORRUPTED FORM: BONE SHINTAI

#### Steel Soul

Prerequisite: Metal Mind

A grey metallic aura blankets the Hungry Ghost and blocks attempts to see into their soul. This includes Deathsight and Lifesight.

##### Mechanic

Cost: Free

Dice Roll: Resolve + GoM vs Wits + Occult

System: Hungry Ghosts using Deathsight or Lifesight on the user must make a Wits + Occult vs the user's Resolve + GoM to see the state of their soul or emotions. For powers used by other supernaturals – such as Scry The Soul (VTM V5, Auspex 3) – Steel Soul increases the Difficulty by half the user's GoM. If the rules allow the user to resist powers of this nature, add their full GoM rating.

#### LEVEL 4

#### Blood Needles

The user sends their blood out through their skin as a gas which, when it enters others' bodies, solidifies into needles. A popular and painful assassination technique.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + Two Black Essence + One Scarlet Essence

Dice Roll: Composure + GoM vs Stamina + Survival

Duration: One day

System: The user emits a mist of metal-infused blood covering a 10-foot radius. Everyone within the cloud suffers one dot of superficial damage as they breathe in the fumes. The metal remains dormant in their bodies until the user activates the power by spending a Scarlet Essence. Activation occurs regardless of distance from the user. The blood solidifies into sharp needles, dealing aggravated damage to the margin of Composure + GoM vs Stamina + Survival. Mortals die instantly. If the power is not activated by the end of the day, however, the blood is broken down by the victim's system without further effect.

#### Iron Skin

Prerequisite: Chainmail

Strong metals form under the skin, allowing the user to downgrade aggravated damage into superficial.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + One Black Essence

Dice Roll: Wits + Survival (Difficulty 4)

Duration: One scene

System: Convert a number of aggravated damage equal to the user's GoM into superficial damage. They may not heal that superficial damage for the rest of the scene. If prepared beforehand, this requires no dice rolls. If needed suddenly in response to a surprise attack, the user must make a Wits + Survival roll at Difficulty 4. If the user fails, they fail to activate the power and must still pay for the Rouse Check.

#### LEVEL 5

#### Black Metal Horror

The Hungry Ghost draws upon the material of the Underworld, transforming their body into Black Essence, which is toxic to living beings. They can send creatures into states of fear due to their horrendous appearance.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + One Black Essence

Cost: Two Rouse Checks + Three Black Essence

Dice Roll: Wits + Survival (Difficulty 4)

Duration: One scene

System: The Hungry Ghost's Looks drops to -2 while in this form. They gain 2 dots to both Strength and Stamina, and soak 5 superficial damage before marking any damage on their Health track. The user can also merge with any metallic surfaces, the same as Metal Silhouette. While transformed, the Hungry Ghost can see and attack creatures from the Shadowlands as if they were physically present, and vice versa.

The user can cause derangement and fear on sight. For other Hungry Ghosts, they must roll contesting Willpower rolls. If the user wins, the target must roll a Wave Soul check at Difficulty 5. Other supernatural creatures roll their equivalent. If they don't have one, they are considered to fear the user and have a -2 modifier to all rolls within their vicinity. Humans automatically fail, and most faint. This form is toxic to living creatures, which suffer one point of aggravated damage for every turn after touching the Hungry Ghost even once. If the Hungry Ghost deals damage by Brawling, they add one point of aggravated damage after damage calculations.

#### Night in Shining Armour

The Hungry Ghost becomes living armour for others, allowing them to see and touch spirits. They can also



## GODBODIES OF NATURE

### GODBODY OF METAL (GOM) / CORRUPTED FORM: BONE SHINTAI

cover wraiths, making them corporeal and able to interact with the material world.

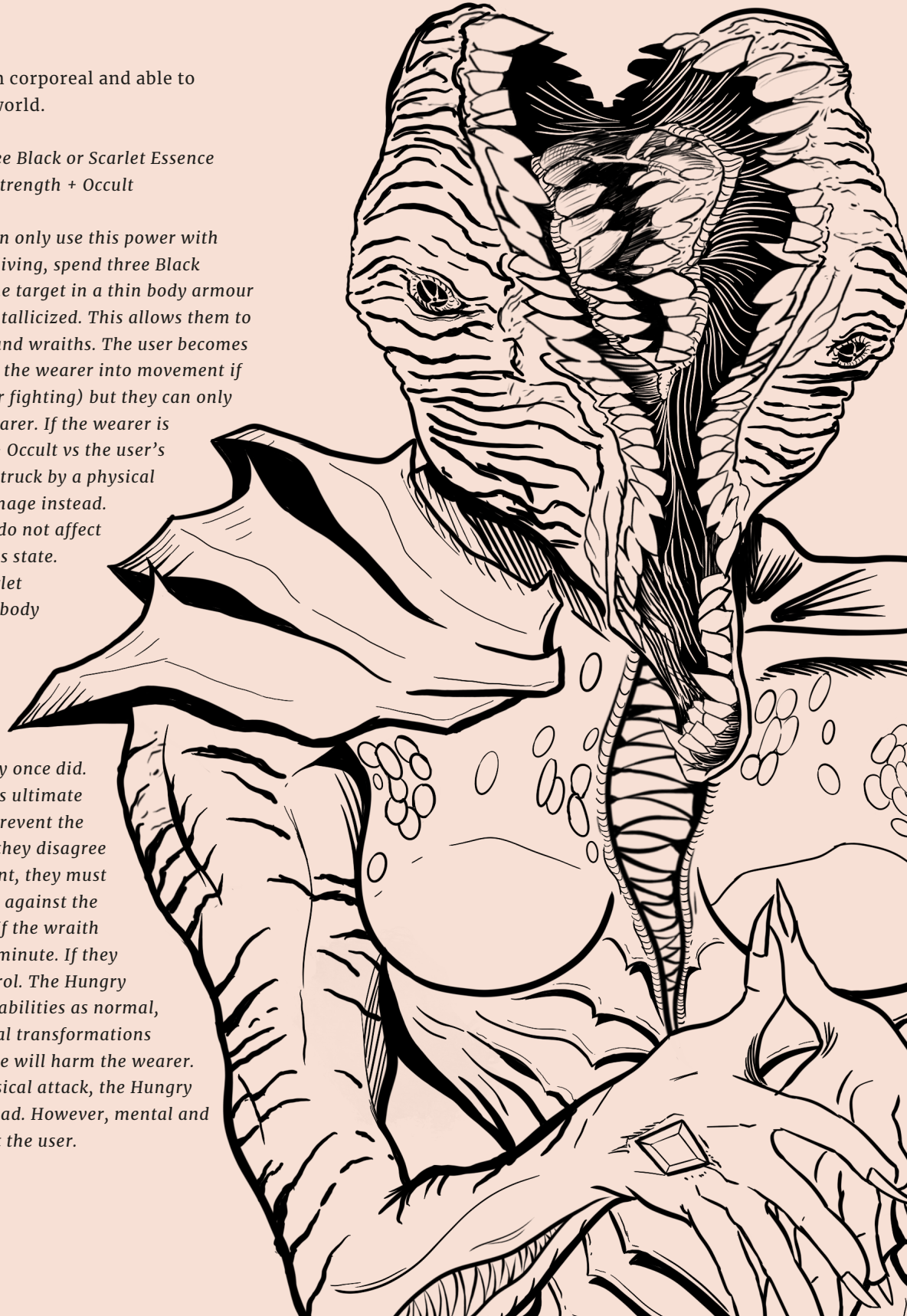
#### **Mechanic**

*Cost: One Rouse Check + Three Black or Scarlet Essence*

*Dice Roll: Resolve + GoM vs Strength + Occult*

*Duration: One day*

*System: The Hungry Ghost can only use this power with willing participants. For the living, spend three Black Essence. The user envelops the target in a thin body armour with a metallic sheen like Metallicized. This allows them to see, interact and feel spirits and wraiths. The user becomes a sentient tool, and can force the wearer into movement if necessary (such as running or fighting) but they can only do so with the stats of the wearer. If the wearer is resisting, they roll Strength + Occult vs the user's Wits + GoM. If the wearer is struck by a physical attack, the user takes the damage instead. Mental and spiritual attacks do not affect the Hungry Ghost at all in this state. For wraiths, spend three Scarlet Essence. The Hungry Ghost's body becomes like liquid metal. A wraith can then inhabit the body, which will take on the features they had when alive. The wraith can interact and touch as they once did. The Hungry Ghost still retains ultimate control of the body and can prevent the wraith from doing anything they disagree with. If the wraith is persistent, they must make a Strength + Occult roll against the Hungry Ghost's Wits + GoM. If the wraith wins, they gain control for 1 minute. If they fail, the wraith loses all control. The Hungry Ghost can use their Godbody abilities as normal, but those that require physical transformations will end this ability, and some will harm the wearer. If the body is struck by a physical attack, the Hungry Ghost takes the damage instead. However, mental and spiritual attacks do not affect the user.*





## GODBODIES OF NATURE

### GODBODY OF WOOD (GOWO) / CORRUPTED FORM: FLESH SHINTAI

The Godbody of Wood focuses on growth, expansion, and opportunity. Practitioners apply this to their own body and are able to push the boundaries of what it is capable of.

#### LEVEL 1

##### Pruning the Self

The Hungry Ghost can discard parts of their body, except for the head, as well as attach plant matter to themselves. They can also regenerate any lost body parts, except for the head.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Roll: None

Duration: Indefinite

System: The Hungry Ghost can detach any body part aside from their head. The discarded body part remains inert, but is considered alive for one hour per dot of unspent Willpower, after which it dies. The Hungry Ghost can reattach the dead limb, but must heal three superficial damage to use it immediately afterwards. Otherwise, they can reattach it and let it heal naturally, which takes one point of Scarlet Essence every night for 10 nights, before they can use it. The user can remove their heart and become immune to staking, but they can't absorb Essence from blood or flesh until it's replaced. The Hungry Ghost can choose to incorporate living plant matter into their body. Living materials stay alive one night for every point of Scarlet Essence put into each graft. A Hungry Ghost with obvious plant grafts looks inhuman and will alarm mortals, meaning it's a struggle to preserve the Scarlet Screen. Possible transplants include wooden stakes, and poisonous or even carnivorous plants. However, the Storyteller decides the benefits and penalties for each.

##### Rubber Limbs

The Hungry Ghost can stretch their limbs to impressive lengths.

##### Mechanic

Cost: Free

Dice Roll: None

Duration: Indefinite

System: The user's neck or limbs can extend five feet per point of Stamina. This allows the Hungry Ghost to bite, strike or grapple at range. The limbs may be attacked anywhere along their length, and decapitation will still kill the Hungry Ghost as normal.

#### LEVEL 2

##### Clay Body

The Hungry Ghost can rearrange their body as they wish.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Scarlet Essence

Dice Roll: None (Takes one round)

Duration: Until sleep

System: The Hungry Ghost can rearrange their head, torso and limbs in any configuration they want. All parts work perfectly.

This change lasts until the Hungry Ghost goes to sleep.

##### Dismember

By infusing a part of their body with Scarlet Essence, the Hungry Ghost can detach a body part, even their head, and control it. If severed, the head will still have the internal organs and spine attached to it, which it uses to crawl and slither around. Some power combinations also allow them to fly. The head can crawl up walls or along ceilings, though it leaves a blood trail. Limbs can be detached, though a leg hopping around on its own would be of little use. This is where the stories of penanggalan come from.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + One Scarlet Essence

Dice Roll: None

Duration: As long as required

System: Below is the table for the suggested health levels and penalties to physical attributes.

Body Part	Health Levels	Physical penalties
Head	4	0
Limbs	3	-1 dots
Hands	2	-2 dots

The head mass keeps the same physical attributes as the body, including the amount of Essence. The heart is still attached, but staking it is harder than usual. It can move at normal speed, and can fit in small



## GODBODIES OF NATURE

### GODBODY OF WOOD (GOWO) / CORRUPTED FORM: FLESH SHINTAI

spaces as long as they are large enough for a skull. The head mass can use its internal organs to constrict or strike targets, which the head can then bite.

Single limbs move at half-speed. They can attack or grasp objects, though the head has to have sight of the target. If not, the limb is considered blind.

The body remains dormant without the head. If the body is destroyed, the head mass remains. The head needs to spend Scarlet Essence every night to animate itself and to stop itself drying out. If it has the ability *Pruning the Self*, it can attach plant matter to itself to build a new body. If the Hungry Ghost has the GoS ability *Cleave the Demon*, the dual souls can be used to animate different parts of the body. For example, the head can be controlled by the *Psyche* while the *Shadow* animates the headless body. As long as the body is within sight of the head, it can act without penalty. If it's out of sight, it is treated as blind.

#### LEVEL 3

##### The World Garden

The Hungry Ghost can submerge themselves in plant matter and travel through it, and accelerate the plant's normal growth.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + One Scarlet Essence

Dice Roll: None

Duration: One scene

System: It takes a round of concentration to merge with or emerge from plant life. The Hungry Ghost becomes plant-like rather than flesh and bone. They maintain their usual proportions but suffer an additional aggravated damage if struck by fire unless merged with a plant. The Hungry Ghost can move at walking speed within all living plant matter including moss and fungi. This changes the proportion of the Hungry Ghost while they move but if enough space is available, they revert back to their human shape at the end. While inhabiting plants, Hungry Ghosts can make them grow at twice their normal rate, and to twice their size, an effect which lasts for a year after their passage.

##### Lotus Breath

Hungry Ghost exhales a cloud that turns living beings dreamy, giggly and generally incoherent.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + One Scarlet Essence

Dice Roll: Targets make a Willpower roll with the Difficulty set

at the user's GoWo.

Duration: One scene

System: The Hungry Ghost exhales a cloud of Scarlet Essence that makes living beings receptive to non-aggressive suggestions. It has no effect on the undead, such as wraiths, vampires, etc. Mortals automatically fail, while other creatures make a Willpower roll with the Difficulty set at the user's GoWo rating. This is a supernatural cloud, so breathing aids or strong winds do not affect it. The target of this power experiences great pleasure and does not take any unprovoked aggressive action. They also have -2 dice to resist manipulation or persuasion. If the target is aggressively attacked, they defend themselves but with -1 to their dice pool.

#### LEVEL 4

##### The Vital Command

The Hungry Ghost can command life energy, channelling it to or from plants. This can kill the source if too much is taken.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + One Scarlet Essence

Dice Roll: Charisma + GoWo

System: The Hungry Ghost rolls Charisma + GoWo to persuade the plants to cooperate. If the user wishes to drain life from something, the plants wrap around it and deal one point of superficial damage per success of the user's roll. Targets killed this way turn into dust, rapidly decomposing as their vital energy is drained. It can also be used on corpses that have been dead for less than 6 months with the same effect. Anything dead longer than that has no life energy at all and this power has no effect. If the plants deal three superficial damage or more, or drain a corpse completely, they become visibly more vibrant and heal any afflictions.

The Hungry Ghost can also use this ability to heal 3 superficial damage in themselves or others, though the plants required is up to the Storyteller. The plants wither and die in the process.

##### Insect Spirit

The Hungry Ghost can construct small insect-like creatures from their flesh or plants and send them out for errands.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + One Scarlet Essence

Dice Roll: None

Duration: One day

System: Constructing the insect spirit using the flesh of the user costs aggravated damage. For every point of Health the insect spirit



## GODBODIES OF NATURE

### GODBODY OF WOOD (GOWO) / CORRUPTED FORM: FLESH SHINTAI

“borrows”, it gains 1 Health and a point of Strength and Stamina. If it is constructed out of plants, it only has 1 Health with a Strength and Stamina of 1. The creature has a Dexterity of 3, Social and Mental Attributes of 1, and can deliver a sharp bite for superficial damage. How it travels depends on the chosen form. The insect spirit can relay messages from the Hungry Ghost in a shrill distorted voice. The insect spirit lasts until dawn at which point it dies.

If the insect spirit is made of plants, the Hungry Ghost can regain the Scarlet Essence used to make it by eating it. If it's destroyed, or fails to come back by dawn, the Scarlet Essence is lost. If the insect spirit is made of the flesh of the user, it can be reabsorbed, and the Hungry Ghost regains the Health and Scarlet Essence. If the insect spirit is killed or fails to return, the user loses the Health and must heal the resulting damage normally.

#### LEVEL 5

#### Spark of Life

Prerequisite: Insect Spirit

The Hungry Ghost can use their Essence to give their constructs life, which are no longer limited to insects. They have sapience and their own will. Hungry Ghosts can use their Godbody abilities through them to an extent.

#### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + Two Scarlet Essence

Dice Roll: Dexterity + Crafts (Difficulty 4)

Duration: Indefinite

System: The Hungry Ghost must spend time perfecting their creation, rolling Dexterity + Crafts against Difficulty 4. If successful, it has similar stats to its creator if it's the same size, or similar to Insect Spirit if smaller.

The creation gains self-awareness and has a personality similar to their creator. They are able to use Pruning the Self to graft plant matter to themselves, and can mimic their creator's appearance and voice without a roll if they are the same size and humanoid in appearance. The creation obeys the Hungry Ghost's orders even at the risk of its own life, but they may develop their own motivations and desires which they act on in their free time. The Hungry Ghost can also possess their construct by spending Black Essence, which leaves their own body vulnerable, but they can fully control their creation and use their Godbodies while possessing it. They can also see its memories, but not its thoughts. These constructs do not have any special abilities, but if they live long enough, they can learn up to three Godbodies to their fullest extent. Unless they are copying their creator's appearance

or using a Godbody ability that transforms them, they retain the physical properties of the material used to build them, for example wood or cloth, etc.

They no longer die at dawn, and can go out in the sun like a human. They sleep and wake when their creator does, no matter the distance.

#### Ten Thousand Forms

The Hungry Ghost can take any animal form equal to or less than their biomass, and make use of that animal's skills and abilities.

#### Mechanic

Cost: One Rouse Check + One Scarlet Essence

Dice Roll: None

Duration: As long as required

System: The Hungry Ghost can transform into any animal, which takes one turn. There is no limit to how many animal forms can be taken, but only one at a time. The Hungry Ghost gains the physical attributes, senses, and skills of the animal, as well as its limitations. While transformed, they are able to do most of their Godbody abilities, at the Storyteller's discretion. They can also walk or run through plant matter as if it wasn't there.



## GODBODIES OF SOULS (GOS)

The Godbody of Souls are quiet arts that manipulate the core of the spirit itself. As a Hungry Ghost is ultimately a spirit forced into a dead body, these skills are considered a higher calling, a literal spiritual path. The practice of the Godbody of Souls is heavily influenced by the practitioner's culture, so this Godbody has many diverse forms.

Teachers of Godbody of Souls are rare and hard to find, and students can only start learning it at Path Rating 3. These skills are taken very seriously within Hungry Ghost society, and any failures give the Shadow a chance to take over.

*RULE: If the user critically fails their roll using these abilities, they must make a Shadow roll.*

### LEVEL 1

#### Rasa

The third eye, known as the spirit's eye, is no longer just a concept, but manifests physically. The user experiences flashes of prophecies or visions, whether they mean to or not. They might also have vivid dreams that detail the possible future, though these are difficult to understand.

##### Mechanic

*Cost: Free, or One Essence if doing it on command.*

*Dice Roll: Resolve + GoS to force a manifestation, Intelligence + Occult*

*Duration: Passive*

*System: Deliberately using this power causes a third eye to appear on the user's forehead until the vision is over. If the Storyteller wants to provide sudden hints or insights, then no roll is needed.*

*These can be metaphorical or literal visions of the future. The user understands that this is a possible future set down by their current path and not unavoidable. There is a suggested limit of one vision per scene for each character, and for them to be personalised if more than one character uses this ability.*

*Every time the user sleeps, there is a chance for a prophetic dream. The character needs to make an Intelligence + Occult roll to understand the general gist of the dream. The more successes, the clearer the message will be. The user can also deliberately activate this ability by spending an Essence and rolling Resolve + GoS. The number of successes determines the level of insight gained on a particular subject chosen by the user.*

#### Prayer Hearing

This allows Hungry Ghosts to listen to the prayers of their worshippers. They can monitor their followers and hear their desires, no matter how quiet they may be uttered. Distance does not matter, nor the circumstances, as long as the prayer is sincere.

##### Mechanic

*Cost: Free*

*Dice Roll: Wits + GoS (Difficulty 2)*

*Duration: Passive*

*System: The Hungry Ghost can hear the worship and prayers of their followers, including their desires and secrets, as long as they are said out-loud. While the Hungry Ghost can hear each voice detailing their prayers, the combination of many can be overwhelming and difficult to parse, though they're able to understand the general atmosphere. To be heard, the prayer must be sincere, with a belief that the Hungry Ghost is worthy of deep respect. This limitation can be used to judge someone's devotion and uncover the unfaithful.*

*If the user wants to hone in on a particular voice and know where the prayer came from, they can make a Wits + GoS roll with a Difficulty of 2.*

#### Sunyata

The Hungry Ghost practices a meditative trance which quietens the Shadow and calms the Psyche, allowing them to regain their mental focus and fortitude faster than others.

##### Mechanic

*Cost: One Essence*

*Dice Roll: Resolve + GoS (Difficulty 3)*

*Duration: One scene*

*System: The user spends a point of Essence in peaceful surroundings as they prepare their mind and body for at least an hour. If the Hungry Ghost is interrupted, this power loses its effect and the Essence will still be spent. The Hungry Ghost rolls Resolve + GoS at Difficulty 3. A successful roll allows the Hungry Ghost to regain a point of superficial Willpower damage. Three or more successes above the Difficulty allows them to either heal an aggravated Willpower damage or regain 2 points of superficial Willpower damage*

### LEVEL 2

#### Cleave the Demon

The user is able to separate their Shadow and Psyche.

## GODBODIES OF SOULS (GOS)

One controls the body, while the other hovers as a spirit. The spirit can scout ahead and visit the nearby spirit worlds to report back.

### **Mechanic**

*Cost: One Essence (Scarlet Essence for a spirit world or Black Essence for the Underworld)*

*Dice Roll: Psyche vs Shadow*

*Duration: One scene*

*System: To activate this skill, the Hungry Ghost spends a point of Essence and concentrates for two turns without disturbance. They must then make a Psyche vs Shadow roll, with the winner controlling the body and the other leaving it to float as a spirit. If the soul in control of the body wins or ties, it remains in control. If the other wins, it gains control instead.*

*The ejected soul can travel up to 500 feet away, as it is psychically tethered to the body. It is its own separate entity and does not have to listen to the commands of the other. Depending on the Essence spent, it may be perceived as a spirit or a wraith.*

*If Scarlet Essence was used, it will be perceived as a spirit; if Black Essence was used, it will be perceived as a wraith.*

*If it is attacked by other spiritual entities, the separated soul has the same Essence and Willpower as the one in the body. If it runs out of either, it returns to the Underworld temporarily, and the body enters torpor immediately until the souls reunite. The displaced soul may take refuge within the body for protection from spiritual attacks. However, the dominant soul can throw them out of the body again if they want to.*

*Both souls retain a telepathic link and awareness of each other at all times. Both have the basic powers of Lifesight and Deathsight but only one soul can use them per turn.*

### **Essence Sight**

*Requirements: Rasa*

*The spirit world reveals itself to the user as their third eye vastly enhances the Hungry Ghost's senses, Lifesight, and Deathsight.*

### **Mechanic**

*Cost: One Scarlet and Black Essence each*

*Dice Roll: Wits + Occult to see spirits, Intelligence + GoS vs Composure + Subterfuge to read auras or use Lifesight or Deathsight.*

*Duration: One scene*

*System: The Hungry Ghost spends a point of Scarlet and Black Essence. The third eye manifests on the forehead and*

*the Hungry Ghost gains enhanced spiritual vision. They can then use Deathsight and Lifesight without spending Essence. They can see every spiritual being in the area and gauge their approximate threat level by rolling Wits + Occult at Difficulty 3. They can also see other things without having to roll, such as Nodes and leylines, and judge the local Wall Rating. They can see any disturbances or changes in the spirit world, and tainted Essence.*

*With enhanced Lifesight, the user can read the aura of the living or undead by rolling Intelligence + GoS vs Composure + Subterfuge. The Storyteller will then answer a number of questions equal to the margin of success, including:*

- *The emotional state of the subject* Their Path Rating
- *How much Essence is in the target*
- *What type of supernatural being they are*
- *If they have devoured a soul or not*
- *If they are under the influence of any type of magic*

*A critical win allows the Storyteller to add something of their choice in addition to the above.*

*With enhanced Deathsight, the user can read the aura of wraiths by rolling an Intelligence + GoS vs Composure + Subterfuge. The Storyteller will then answer a number of questions equal to the margin of success about the target's aura, including:*

- *The Pure Emotions hoarded (Pathos)*
- *Their purpose and emotional connection to it (Passion)*
- *Their connection to the world of living (Fetters)*
- *Their despair, self-destruction and sympathy with Oblivion (Angst)*

*If scanning a crowd, roll Intelligence + GoS vs the Difficulty determined by the size of the crowd and external distractions. For example, finding another Hungry Ghost in a festival celebration will be more difficult than in a small house party.*

### **Rebalance**

*The Hungry Ghost understands the fundamentals of Essence, allowing them to change the type of Essence stored within them before using it.*

### **Mechanic**

*Cost: Free*

*Dice Roll: Intelligence + GoS*

*Duration: Permanent*

*System: The Hungry Ghost takes 10 minutes in concentration without losing focus. They roll Intelligence + GoS, with each*

## GODBODIES OF SOULS (GOS)

success changing one dot of Essence to the other type. This change is permanent.

### LEVEL 3

#### Yoke the Shadow

The Hungry Ghost reaches into their soul and makes their Shadow their subordinate. A subordinated Shadow can be used to intimidate lesser creatures and watch for enemies. The Shadow hates this, and the Hungry Ghost usually suffers when their Shadow next takes over their body.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Essence

Dice Roll: Resolve + Insight (Difficulty 4)

Duration: One scene

System: The Hungry Ghost spends a point of Essence and concentrates for two turns without disturbance. They roll a Resolve + Insight at Difficulty 4 to start the separation. They must then roll Psyche vs Shadow with the victor controlling the body and the other being evicted as a floating spirit. The margin of success for the Resolve + Insight roll adds equal dice to the Psyche's pool. If the Psyche wins or ties, it binds the Shadow. If the Shadow wins, it gains control instead.

A bound Shadow cannot take over the body, but the Hungry Ghost can still suffer a Fire Soul in which the binding immediately breaks. While bound, the Shadow cannot do anything without permission, and the Psyche cannot use Godbody of Demons skills.

The Hungry Ghost uses the Shadow as another pair of eyes. When making perception rolls, they can roll twice and choose the better result. The Shadow can also detect any 'savage creatures' within 50 yards by rolling Intelligence + GoS vs Composure + Subterfuge. 'Savage creatures' refers to:

- Vampires
- Demons
- Spectres
- Shadow-dominated wraiths
- Hungry Ghosts
- Changing Breeds such as werewolves
- Savage spirits
- Other wild souls

This cannot pinpoint magically hidden or invisible creatures but does let the Hungry Ghost know they are in the area. Due to the seething rage of the Shadow being so close to

the surface, the user radiates a menacing aura that means creatures must roll Willpower with a Difficulty equal to the GoS of the user to approach or oppose them.

#### Stepping Stones

At this level, the Hungry Ghost understands the nature of reality so well that they can travel between the many realms without rites and with little trouble.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Scarlet, Black or Demon Essence

Dice Roll: Composure + GoS

Duration: Until they return.

System: The user spends an Essence and rolls Composure + GoS with a Difficulty equal to the Wall Rating. Scarlet Essence allows the Hungry Ghost to travel to the spirit realms, Black Essence to the Underworld, and Demon Essence to the demon realms. This power does not provide any additional protection against the forces and beings that inhabit those worlds. A Hungry Ghost with a Path Rating of 7 or higher with at least 6 successes over the Difficulty may travel into the Heavenly Realms at the Storyteller's discretion.

#### Authority

The 1000 Immortals once held a mandate over mortals and guided them. While this mandate was revoked, the Hungry Ghosts still remember the days of divine glory. With this ability, the Psyche is amplified and overwhelms the target with awe. These souls obey the user as if they are their lord and master.

##### Mechanic

Cost: One Essence

Dice Roll: Resolve + GoS vs Intelligence + Resolve

Duration: One scene

System: The Hungry Ghost spends a point of either Essence and rolls Resolve + GoS vs Intelligence + Resolve. This determines the power's effect against all creatures in the vicinity. This power does not have any effect on Hungry Ghosts that have a higher Path Rating than the user. If the roll succeeds, they are imbued with supernatural authority. Those affected see them as a person of high rank, and obey with little thought as to why.

The user can issue complex commands, which those affected will complete to the best of their ability, provided they understand. Commands that go against the target's nature

## GODBODIES OF SOULS (GOS)

require another roll of *Resolve + GoS vs Intelligence + Resolve*. On a failure, the creature breaks free from their hold.

### LEVEL 4

#### Purification

Requirements: Rasa

This power was used by The 1000 Immortals who cleansed mortals and physical domains of Demonic Essence. The third eye manifests on other body parts or through gestures. When a Hungry Ghost uses this power, their third eye bathes the target in a radiant light which provides mental or physical healing. However, if the Shadow is in control, this power allows them to infect the target with Demonic Essence instead, with detrimental effects.

#### Mechanic

Cost: One Essence

Dice Roll: *Composure + GoS (Difficulty 2)*, *Composure + GoS vs Shadow*, *Resolve + GoS vs Difficulty set by Storyteller*, *Shadow vs Willpower*

Duration: One scene

System: If the Psyche is in control, the user rolls *Composure + GoS* against *Difficulty 2*, and heals a number of superficial *Willpower* damage equal to the margin of success.

Alternatively, the user heals one aggravated *Willpower* damage for every three successes above the *Difficulty*. Use of this power takes a whole turn. If the Hungry Ghost spends an entire scene instead, reduce the *Difficulty* to 0. It can only be used on others.

The user can force a Shadow to cede to the Psyche with a contesting roll of *Composure + GoS vs Shadow*. On a win, the Shadow is forced into quiescence, and the Psyche gains control of the body for the rest of the scene. However, the target cannot use *Godbody of Demons* during this time. A subject can be affected by this power only once a night.

The user may also cleanse an area of Tainted Essence by using their body as a conduit to disperse it into leylines. They roll *Resolve + GoS* with the *Difficulty* set by the Storyteller depending on how much Tainted Essence there is. On a success, the Tainted Essence is removed. On a failure, the Hungry Ghost suffers aggravated damage determined by their margin of failure.

If the user's Shadow is in control, they stare at their target with their third eye. The user rolls their Shadow vs the target's

*Willpower*. If successful, the target willingly serves the user for the scene. Creatures affected succumb to their dark impulses. Other Hungry Ghosts affected by this power have their Shadow take over for the scene.

#### Prayer Eating

Requirements: Prayer Hearing

When around loyal followers who devotedly pray to the user, they can consume their prayers for Essence. At the Storyteller's discretion, the prayers may be converted to a physical form like honey to be stored for later, but other Hungry Ghosts won't gain anything from consuming it as the prayers were not for them.

#### Mechanic

Cost: Free

Dice Roll: *Willpower (Difficulty 3)*

Duration: One round

System: The user must have a minimum of 5 loyal followers present to use this skill. They roll *Willpower* at *Difficulty 3* with each success above the *Difficulty* providing a point of Essence. The type of Essence provided depends on the prayers, with positive prayers providing Scarlet Essence and negative prayers providing Black Essence. The Storyteller can tell the player in advance what type of Essence they will get. This power should only be used once per night. Additional attempts to use this power incur superficial *Willpower* damage from the strain.

#### Thousand Hell Stare

The user replicates the psychic abilities of the Yama Kings to cause humiliation or pain to others.

#### Mechanic

Cost: One Black Essence

Dice Roll: *Manipulation + GoS vs Willpower*

Duration: Until the contest is finished.

System: The Hungry Ghost uses one Black Essence and rolls *Manipulation + GoS* vs the target's *Willpower*. This is an extended contesting roll which continues until either the user stops using this power, the victim accumulates more successes than the user, or the victim is removed from their presence. The target cannot run away while in contest but can do other actions. If the target is a Hungry Ghost, they may deliberately let their Shadow take over to break the initial hold, requiring the user to try again. Vampires may enter frenzy to do the same.

## GODBODIES OF SOULS (GOS)

Werewolves can use *Rage* to ignore one round of the contest. Wraiths can also ignore one round of the contest by increasing their *Angst* level.

Each contest happens at the start of a round. The Hungry Ghost stares at their target. They must gain eye contact to begin, but they do not need to maintain it as long as they are within sight of the target. If the roll is a draw, the psychic struggle continues but with no tangible effect. With a high margin of success, the user may choose to hold back. For example, if they roll 5 successes, they can pick a 3-4 success effect instead.

Successes	Effect
1	The target suffers a point of superficial Willpower damage and has -1 to all dice pools.
2	The target suffers 2 superficial Willpower damage, suffers psychic agony, and loses 2 dice from all pools.
3-4	The target cannot attack the user. They are reduced to cringing and begging by the pain. They will agree to most demands short of self-destruction.
5	The target starts forgetting memories chosen by the user as they are mentally overwhelmed. Afterwards, they will hold a fake memory that falls apart on closer inspection. Using this ability on the same memory again means the target will never recall the lost memory except through supernatural intervention.
6+	The target collapses into deep sleep for the night and may or may not remember the user afterwards. Hungry Ghosts and vampires are considered torpored for the night.

### LEVEL 5

#### Two Become One

The user temporarily merges their Psyche and Shadow.

Neither half can enforce their will, as their motivations and feelings become the same, a balance between what they were previously. The player should roleplay this difference. This power is inspirational to Hungry Ghosts as it is the closest they can get to being human again.

#### Mechanic

Cost: One Scarlet Essence + One Black Essence

Dice Roll: Charisma + GoS vs Shadow Roll

Duration: One scene

System: The user rolls Charisma + GoS vs Shadow. On a success, the character merges their Psyche and Shadow, becoming similar to how they were as a human. They become immune to Fire Soul and Wave Soul and can use GoDe abilities without making Shadow rolls or suffering any other negative effects. They can also use GoS while using GoDe when this power is active. As the user has two minds operating at the same time, any mind-controlling or emotion-controlling powers require two separate checks. If either fails, the power has no effect.

#### Spirit Eating

Requirements: Rasa

The user can remove the soul from a target's body. Hungry Ghosts controlled by their Psyche use this to heal and help spirits. Those controlled by their Shadows use it to devour souls and learn from their memories. The target must be looking at the user's third eye and be within 10 feet. Those using Lifesight, Deathlight, or other skills that reveal spirits, will notice the soul entering the user's third eye.

#### Mechanic

Cost: Two Essence

Dice Roll: Shadow Roll vs Target Willpower if the Shadow is in control, Charisma + GoS vs Willpower if not.

Duration: One scene

System: This power should only be used in a quiet setting without disturbances. If the user's concentration is broken, they need to roll Willpower at Difficulty 5. On a success, the process continues. On a failure, the process stops, the soul or spirit is released, and the Hungry Ghost takes 3 aggravated Willpower damage. These skills can only be performed once per target if successful. When the Psyche is in control, this power can only be used on a willing participant. The user pulls the soul or spirit into their third eye and temporarily merges with the user's soul. The physical body of the participant (if it has one) falls into a coma-like state until their spirit is returned.

## GODBODIES OF SOULS (GOS)

- The user spends a point of Willpower per point of Psyche gained by the target, up to a maximum of 7. Other creatures gain Humanity or the equivalent.
- The user can also spend 4 points of Willpower to break any unnatural loyalties such as Soul Shackles or blood-bonds with a Charisma + GoS vs Willpower roll.

Once the work is done, the spirit is released and, if it has a body, it goes back to it. The participant wakes up after a night of rest. When the Shadow is in control, the user can absorb their target's soul without their consent. Doing so requires a Shadow roll vs the target's Willpower. If they fail, they can't try again for the rest of the night. If they succeed, the soul is wrenched from the body if it has one, which falls into a coma-like state until the spirit is returned.

The user can only do one of the following:

- They can alter the soul or spirit. They can change its touchstones and convictions to something that suits the user. If the victim is a Hungry Ghost, they can also change the Shadow Archetype.
- They can devour the soul or spirit. This lowers the Path Rating of the user by the Path Rating of the victim, to no less than 2. For other creatures, it may be easier to rule that the user lowers their Path Rating by half the target's Willpower. The Shadow also gains a dot. Devil Tigers are exempt from having their Path Rating lowered.

The user gains access to the consumed memories. They also roll a contest of Willpowers, with the margin of success providing 5 XP per success to spend on skills that the victim knows. The user's aura changes to reflect the spirit or soul devoured:

- Hungry Ghost – Fluctuating black and white veins
- Vampires – Black veins
- Humans – Red veins
- Mages – Sparkling veins
- Changing Breeds – Bright pulsating veins
- Faerie – Rainbow veins

With the spirit gone, the body immediately dies.

### Soul Ties

Hungry Ghosts with this skill know how to form bonds between souls that transcend normal boundaries. Ancestors sometimes use this power to cement oaths. This power does not affect Hungry Ghosts that have a higher Path Rating.

#### Mechanic

Cost: Two Essence

Dice Roll: Psyche + Insight vs the target's Willpower (Friendship),

Psyche + Leadership vs the target's Willpower (Loyalty), Psyche vs target's Willpower (Spirit)

Duration: From one night to permanent

System: The user must maintain eye contact with the target. Failure means that they cannot try again for the rest of the scene. The different bonds last for different amounts of time, as shown below.

Margin of Success	Length of Bond
Equal or 1 success	One night
2-3 Successes	One month
4+ Successes	Permanent

### Ties of Friendship

The user concentrates and rolls Psyche + Insight vs the target's Willpower. If successful, the target becomes friendly but not devoted. If it fails, the target is unlikely to notice the attempt.

### Ties of Loyalty

The user concentrates and rolls Psyche + Leadership vs the target's Willpower. The target must already be bound by Ties of Friendship. If successful, the target is exceedingly loyal to the user, with only family and loved ones coming before them. If it fails, Ties of Friendship ends, and the target notices and reacts badly, as determined by the Storyteller unless it is a player character.

### Ties of Spirit

The user concentrates and rolls Psyche vs the target's Willpower. The target must already be bound by Ties of Loyalty and Ties of Friendship. If successful, the target will make the user their top priority, even above their own life. This bond overrides others if they conflict, including other Ties of Spirit. If it fails, Ties of Loyalty and Ties of Friendship end, and the target notices and reacts aggressively, as determined by the Storyteller unless it is a player character.

# ESSENCE RITES

Godbodies require the manipulation of Essence, but some things cannot be achieved with willpower alone. Rites were devised to channel Essence through symbols and artefacts to achieve things that are otherwise impossible.

Hungry Ghosts can learn Rites as long as they have at least one point in Godbody of Souls (GoS).

## RULE

- It takes 5 minutes per level to cast the Rite with a roll of Intelligence + GoS vs (Rite Level + 1)
- Characters may start with one or more Rites without GoS provided they take the merit, Rites Background. They will then level up Essence Rites as if it is a Godbody, which makes it cheaper at only 5xp per dot. Replace any Rites roll requiring GoS with the character's Essence Rites level. Rites are to be placed in a Godbody box.

## LEVEL 1

### Trace the Dragon's Blood

This Rite allows Hungry Ghosts to see leylines by asking dragon spirits for help. Sometimes they can even spot Nodes.

**Ingredients: High-quality incense, gold coins, one Hunger's worth of blood in a metal cup.**

*Process: The Hungry Ghost burns the incense to attract a dragon spirit and offers gold coins to them. Once the dragon spirit accepts out loud, the Hungry Ghost drips the blood onto their eyes and drinks the rest.*

*System: A successful roll allows the user to see leylines. On a critical success, they can also spot Nodes. If a leyline is hidden by Cloak the Dragon's Passage, the Hungry Ghost needs to make a Wits + Occult vs the cloaking roll.*

### Embrace the Spirit's Change

As their personality and temperament change over time, the Hungry Ghost can change their name to reflect this. This severs spiritual contracts, and leaves behind both boons and curses, unless the user wants to keep them by linking their new name to their old one.

**Ingredients: Purified water**

*Process: The caster spends three nights in solitude, then they gather their clique and publically announce their new name five times.*

*The attendees formally address them with the new name at least once. The caster then drinks the purified water, ending the Rite.*

*System: No roll is required, but they have to spend one Black or Scarlet Essence. Spirit contracts, curses, and other spiritual obligations break upon the drinking of the purified water. If they want to transfer these spiritual contracts over, they must spend an additional Black or Scarlet Essence.*

### Spirit Commune

The Hungry Ghost calls the name of a creature or spirit, waking them if they are asleep. If the target accepts, they can

then communicate verbally.

**Ingredients: Paper with the written name of the target, animal bones to summon creatures in the mortal world, or incense of any grade to summon spirits.**

*Process: The caster builds a small fire and burns the paper. Once the paper is completely burnt, they place either the bones or the incense into the fire. They then call aloud the name of the target.*

*System: On a successful roll, the caster is able to communicate long distance with the target, provided they accept. The call lasts as long as the fire burns, or until either side ends it.*

## LEVEL 2

### Behold the Spirits' Doorway

The caster can make the crossing points to spiritual realms visible to Hungry Ghosts. These Gateways are the easiest points to travel through if they have the relevant abilities or tools.

**Ingredients: Any object fashioned to look like a gate, a picture or drawing of a gate, or a logogram word for a gate.**

*Process: The user places the object or picture where they think the Gateway is. A drop of blood from a Hungry Ghost is then spilled on the ingredients. A quiet chant of pleas for the spirits' help is recited while walking around where they think the gate will appear.*

*System: If the Gateway is within 50 feet of the rite, it becomes visible to Hungry Ghosts using Lifesight or Deathsight. Gateways going to spirit realms require Lifesight, while the Underworld requires Deathsight.*

### Behold the Spirits' Doorway

The Hungry Ghost formally breaks with the court without removing themselves from the society as a whole. A spiritual marker is placed on their aura to show others they have not been made an Outcast but rather that it was a personal decision.

**Ingredients: Water, one Hunger's worth of blood from the user, local herbs.**



## ESSENCE RITES

*Process:* The water and herbs are mixed together for a day. The caster then invites their clique and appropriate elders to be witnesses. The caster drips their own blood into the brew and offers it to all participants. Once the ceremony is finished, the elder uses the brew to mark a dot on the forehead of the caster. The caster then shatters the vessel and departs.

*System:* No roll is required. The Hungry Ghost maintains their Path Rating and School. Their aura shows a red dot on their forehead indicating to others what they have done.

### Taking the Other Path

The Hungry Ghost realises the chosen Path they walk does not suit them and embraces a new one instead. Usually elders will be present, but some prefer to do this in private before announcing their change.

**Ingredients:** Purified water, two Hungers' worth of blood, a picture or drawing of the caster.

*Process:* The caster draws or takes a picture of themselves. They set it alight and collect the ashes. They then fast for 3 nights during which they fill a bath with enough purified water to fully submerge themselves. They pour the blood and ash into the water, mixing it well, and immerse themselves for 4 hours.

*System:* No roll is required, but they must spend a point of both Scarlet and Black Essence. They change their Path, and their Path Rating is reduced to 2. They keep all Godbodies and skills they have learnt.

### LEVEL 3

#### Imbuing The Jade

This Rite imbues jade with Essence. Boat-shaped jade pieces allow the caster and others to travel on a leyline. The jade boat sails on leylines at the speed of an average human running, and the creature using it becomes incorporeal. Human-shaped jade allows free crossing through Gateways, using the Essence as currency for Gateway Protectors should they require it. Once the jade is used, the Essence within is spent.

**Ingredients:** Bronze bowl with purified water, bronze knife, night-growing flowers, red or white jade.

*Process:* The caster imbues the bronze bowl with 3 Black and 3 Scarlet Essence. The Hungry Ghost fills the bowl with purified water and the petals of night-growing flowers. They then use a bronze knife to scratch the jade. It must be roughly human or boat-shaped. They place the jade piece into the bowl and set

it outdoors in moonlight for an hour. The jade is infused with Essence and the water can be drunk to regain the Essence.

*System:* On a successful roll, the caster can have up to 12 jade pieces. Red jade means it stores Scarlet Essence while white jade stores Black Essence. Each jade piece stores one dot of Essence.

### Construct the Dragon Bone Prison

This Rite traps a creature in an area until the specified interval expires.

**Ingredients:** Hair from the creature, wax candle, idols

*Process:* The hair from the creature is burnt up by the candle, and the ashes are placed within the wax, which is used to draw the area of containment. The idols are dripped with the wax and act as markers for the perimeter. The wax can then be removed, but not the idols.

*System:* If the roll meets the Difficulty or is 1 success over, the creature is trapped for a night. 2 successes over traps the creature for 24 hours. 3 successes allows the caster to determine the interval, up to 3 days. 4 successes confines the target up to a week. 5 successes and over works for a month.

To break the entrapment and escape for one hour, the creature must pass a Willpower roll at Difficulty 3. They can then spend that hour finding the idols hidden by the caster. This requires Wits + Investigation vs the Difficulty set by the caster's rolls to hide them (usually Intelligence + Stealth). If the target does not find the idols within the allotted time, they must return to the area or suffer aggravated damage for every minute out. The target cannot repeat the attempt for 24 hours.

Skills such as Rasa can detect the magical lines with a contesting roll. With competing Hungry Ghosts, it is Intelligence + GoS vs the caster's Intelligence + GoS. For other creatures, they replace GoS with the relevant skill or power.

### Wall Ward

The Hungry Ghost may weaken or strengthen the area's Wall by manipulating the ambient Essence.

**Ingredients:** Chalk, rice or alcohol, lighter

*Process:* The caster draws two converging dragons on the spot with chalk. To weaken the Wall, they pour the alcohol on the drawing and set it alight with the lighter. To strengthen the Wall, they pour out enough rice to cover the dragons.

*System:* On a successful roll, they either weaken or strengthen the Wall Rating by their margin of success.



## ESSENCE RITES

### Shadows of the Haven

This rite imbues the shadows in the caster's haven with life. When an intruder approaches or gains entry, the shadows come alive and attack the enemy.

**Ingredients:** Coal, skin from the caster's fingertip, one Hunger's worth of blood.

*Process:* The caster cuts the skin off a fingertip and burns it with the coal in a bowl. The burnt remains are pounded into dust and mixed with blood. One Black Essence is then infused into it. The concoction is then smeared onto the darkest areas of the haven. This amount can mark 6 areas.

*System:* On a successful roll, shadow tendrils emerge and attack the intruders. The tendrils collectively have 5 dice for rolling Strength + Brawl against the intruders. These tendrils on a successful hit deal 1 superficial damage and 1 superficial Willpower damage. The shadows are insubstantial enough not to take damage from physical or mental hits. To remove the shadows, clean the blood mix from where it was painted.

### LEVEL 4

#### Cloak the Dragon's Passage

This Rite hides a leyline and its destination, while still maintaining it for the caster to use. If the line is discovered, this Rite needs to be performed again.

**Ingredients:** Ginseng, 2 jade boats infused with Essence, gems

*Process:* The Hungry Ghost crushes all the ingredients into a fine power. While travelling on the leyline, they scatter a handful of the mixture every 10 feet. This can take a long time depending on the length of the leyline hidden.

*System:* On a success, the hidden portion of leyline has a base Difficulty of 3 to be found. Depending on the quality and rarity of the resources used, the Storyteller can increase the Difficulty to find the line to a maximum of 10. Any journey others make on the leyline ends when it reaches the cloaking. Trace the Dragon's Blood is the best way to find it.

#### Rite of Supplication

This Rite allows Hungry Ghosts to open Gateways and cross into the spirit worlds with relative ease.

**Ingredients:** Hand percussion instruments.

*Process:* The Hungry Ghost drips 1 point of Essence-rich blood on their instrument and then uses it. The sound must die away

before the next one is created. This is done 5 times.

*System:* No rolls are required. The Gateway opens, though a Spirit Guardian may appear at the entrance or on the other side. The caster must either best them in a challenge or placate them in another way before using the Gateway. The Guardian will then allow the individual Hungry Ghost unlimited passage for a moon's cycle.

#### Restoring The Dharmic Balance

An important Rite that allows a Hungry Ghost who has regressed to a Ravenous Devil to be returned to normal. However, they have to restart as a student.

**Ingredients:** An object of reverence or a touchstone, high-quality incense, water.

*Process:* The Hungry Ghost binds the target and brings them to a place of purification. Usually the site has significance for the target or the caster, but local sites of reverence are allowed as substitutes. An object of reverence or a touchstone is placed in view of the Ravenous Devil. The high-quality incense is lit and allowed to suffuse the room with its scent. The target is regularly doused with water while the caster chants or sings a hymn.

*System:* The caster rolls GoS + Occult or Expression or Performance. The number of successes rolled is subtracted from 10. The difference is the Difficulty for the target's Willpower roll. The target can only roll once per night so the rite may need to be repeated several times. Once the target succeeds, the rite restores them to the rank of Veiled or Disciple. A Veiled will return at the same rank, while Disciples or higher will return as a Disciple with their Path Rating reduced to the equivalent level.

#### Rite of Supplication

The Hungry Ghost teleports using leylines by riding their Essence. The start and destination must be on leylines. This is often used by Ancestors to communicate and exercise their control.

**Ingredients:** Butterfly wings, dried bamboo, dragon mask.

*Process:* The Hungry Ghost makes a fire using dried bamboo sticks. Once the fire dies down into embers, the butterfly wings are placed onto them. When the butterfly wings singe, they and the ashes are swallowed. The caster then dons a mask of a dragon's face.

*System:* On a successful roll, the user travels 1000 feet within the confines of a leyline. Every success above the Difficulty adds



## ESSENCE RITES

another 1000 feet in how far they can travel. This Rite lasts as long as the dragon mask is worn. If it is taken off at any time, the ritual has to be repeated.

### LEVEL 5

#### Renewing the Rivergates

Rivergates are portals in the mortal world that allow quick and easy transportation to another open portal within the mortal realm. They must be renewed if they are used often, or they close. This Rite creates or renews a Rivergate. The one that renews or creates a Rivergate becomes its protector, and can use it any time without limits. Protectors can vary. Some ignore the Rivergate, allowing others to use it freely, while others charge a toll, or limit the frequency of its use. Some may only allow others to use it if they are bested in a challenge.

**Ingredients: Fine pearls, blood, Essence.**

*Process: The Hungry Ghost crushes the fine pearls into dust and mixes in their blood until it becomes a thin paste. This is used to draw a snake on the surface where the Rivergate is or will be located. One Essence of either type is then infused into the drawing.*

*System: This can only be performed on New Year's Day of either a solar, lunisolar or lunar calendar. On a successful roll, the caster becomes the protector of the Rivergate. Protectors can automatically detect when their gate is used, and by whom. A Rivergate protector status cannot be revoked until a New Year's Day.*

*Etiquette demands that previous protectors are given the right to renew a Rivergate first.*

#### Semblance of the Scarlet Queen

The Hungry Ghost transforms into a being of Scarlet Essence. In effect, they become a Spirit of Nature

**Ingredients: 10 red jade pieces imbued with Scarlet Essence, a pool of clear water large enough to immerse the caster, lotuses.**

*Process: It takes a minimum of 4 hours to complete this Rite. The caster finds a large pool of clear water, natural or manmade, to fully immerse themselves in. They float 9 lotuses around them, with a piece of red jade on each lotus. They then place a piece under their tongue and dive into the pool to meditate for 4 hours. The water and lotuses act as a conduit, allowing all the Scarlet Essence to funnel into the Hungry Ghost.*

*System: On a success, the caster's body turns ethereal, and able to pass easily into the spirit worlds, as if all local Wall Ratings are reduced to 1. The caster is invisible to material beings and incorporeal, but can choose to reveal themselves and be heard if they want to be. Material attacks and barriers do not affect them, but other spirits can, and vice versa.*

*They remain in spirit form until they return to the material world with a roll against the local Wall Rating. They do not need to roll for Hunger or to stay awake, but still use Essence to activate skills and heal their spirit body. Health is equivalent to their unspent Willpower. Mental attacks or abilities that affect spirits can affect them. If the Hungry Ghost loses all Health in this form, they revert back to the material plane, unconscious until a full night passes.*

#### Semblance of the Ebon Dragon

The Hungry Ghost transforms into a being of Black Essence, becoming similar to a ghost or other dead spirit.

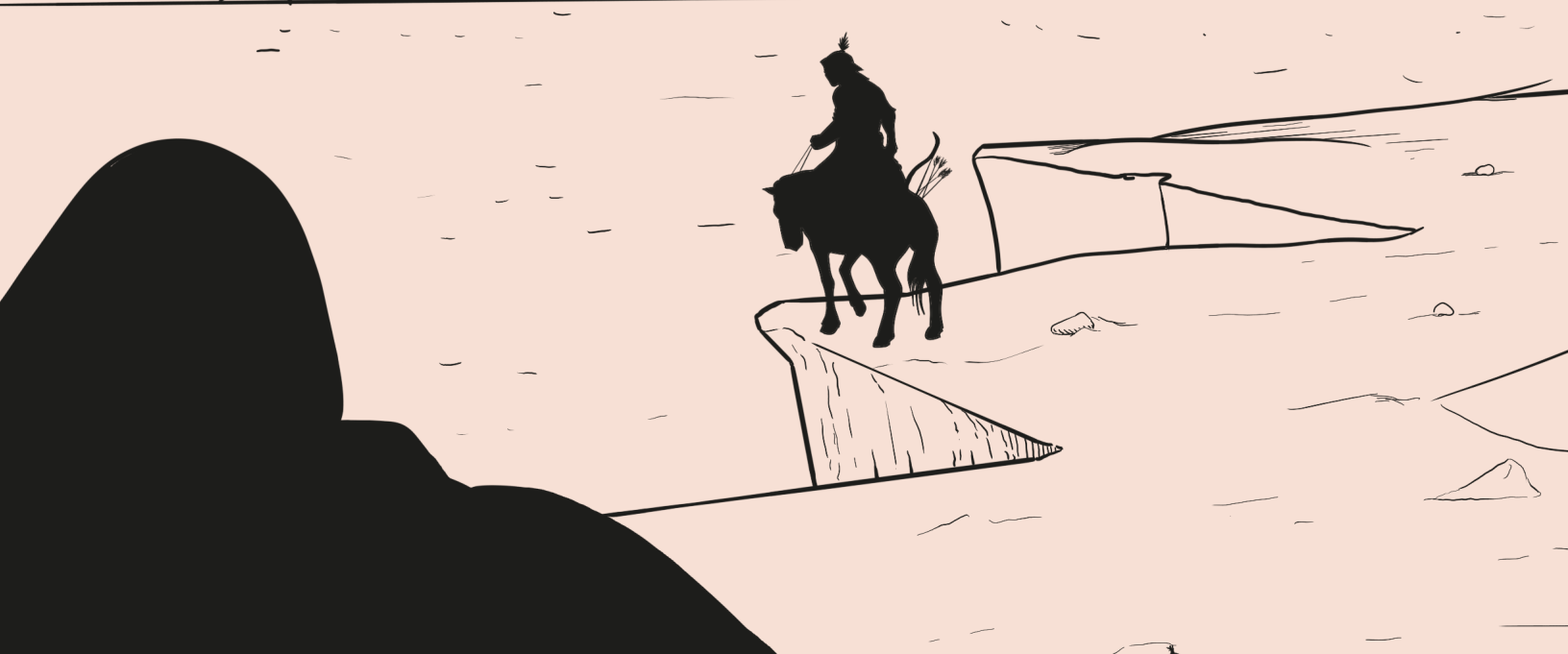
**Ingredients: 10 white jade pieces imbued with Black Essence, a pool of blood half diluted with clean water, lily pads, lilies.**

*Process: The Rite takes a minimum of 4 hours to be completed.*

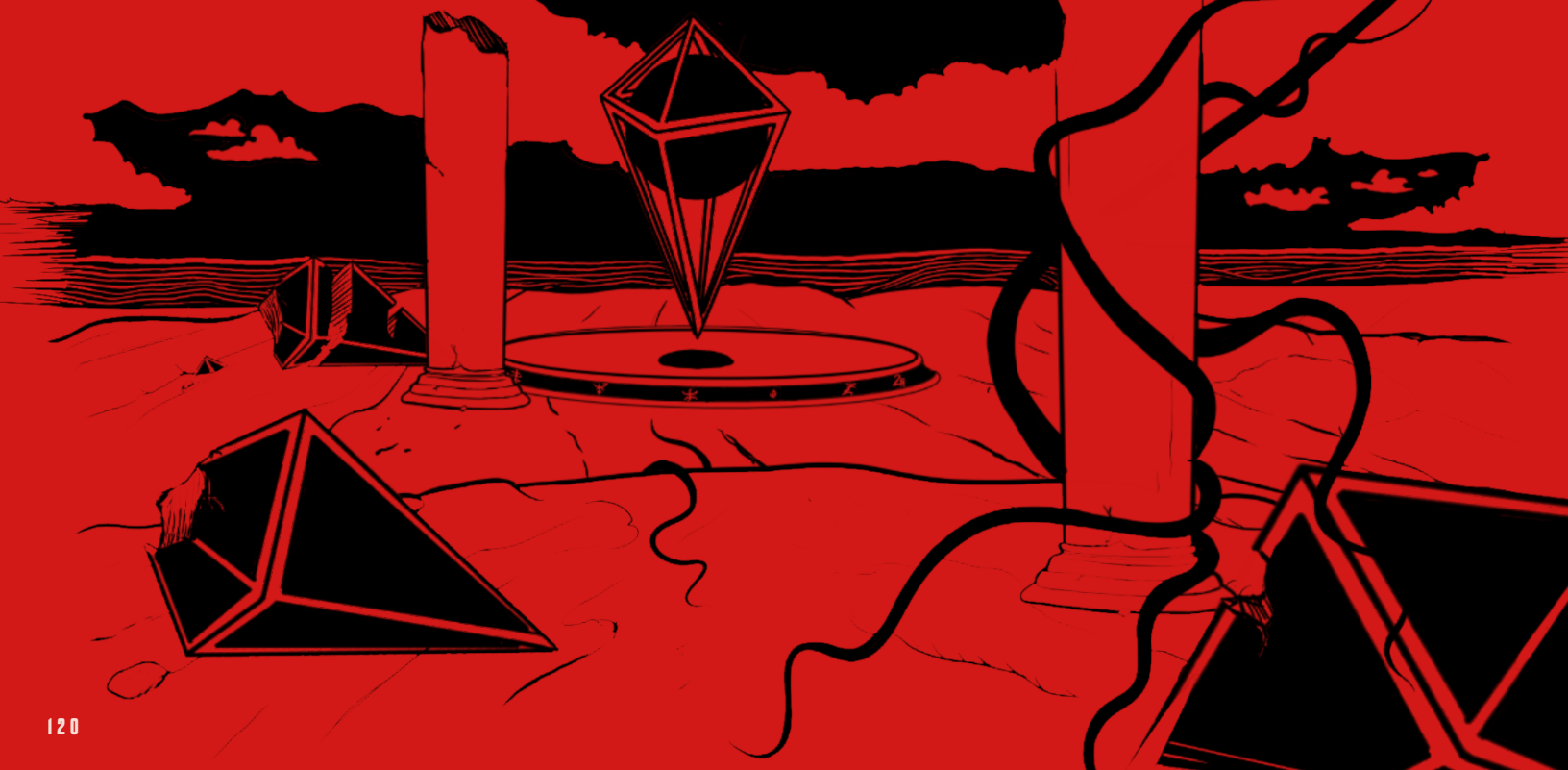
*The caster finds a large pool to fully immerse themselves in, man-made or natural. They fill it halfway with blood of any kind, and top it up with water. The caster floats 4 lily pads around them, each having 3 lilies and 3 white jade pieces on them. They then place a white jade piece under their tongue and dive into the pool to meditate for 4 hours. The water and lilies act as a conduit allowing the Black Essence to funnel into the caster.*

*System: On a success, the caster's body turns into an ethereal being that can pass easily into all realms related to the dead, as if all local Wall Ratings to travel to the Underworld are reduced to 1. This form is invisible to material beings and incorporeal, but can choose to be seen and heard if they wish. Material attacks and barriers do not affect them and vice versa.*

*They remain in ghost form until they recross into the material world with a roll against the local Wall Rating. They do not need to roll for Hunger or to stay awake, but still use Essence to activate skills and heal their ghost body. Other ghosts can affect them in ghost form. Health is equivalent to their unspent Willpower. Mental attacks or specific abilities that can affect ghosts or wraiths can affect them. If they lose all Health in this form, they return to the material plane, unconscious until a full night passes.*



# TRAVELLING IN THE ETHEREAL REALMS



The dual nature of Hungry Ghosts' souls allows them to travel to alternate realities and worlds. This is not innate, and has to be learnt from elder Hungry Ghosts.

There are a myriad of Realms a Hungry Ghost can visit, and they classify them in 5 different ways, in order of pleasantness or energy.

- Heavenly Realms (Requires a Path Rating of 7 or higher)
- Spirit Realms
- Mirror Realms
- Underworld Realms
- Demonic Realms

System: To travel between Realms, use the appropriate skill or Rite. How long it takes to cross through the Wall depends on the number of successes on the required roll vs Wall Rating.

Success	Travel Time
Botch	Bound
0	Failure. Wait an hour before trying again
1	5 minutes
2	1 minute
3+	Instantly

If the roll is a critical fail, the Hungry Ghost is Bound between Realms, suspended in-between but truly in neither. The Hungry Ghost takes 2 superficial Willpower damage as they are haunted by visions of their deepest fears while their body and spirit are trapped in place. The Hungry Ghost cannot be seen by physical entities, but there are stories of evil spirits that are able to wander in-between realities. The Hungry Ghost must wait for an hour to try again or find a traveller that is willing to lead them out. If the second roll also critically fails, then the Hungry Ghost is trapped there until they are rescued.

## THE WALL

Some Realms are close, some are far. Knowing the correct Rites, skills or sites can make travelling between Realms as easy as walking. This is governed by what Hungry Ghosts call the Wall.

The Wall is a spiritual membrane that separates most spirits (and other creatures) from the mortal world and

each other. It was weaker when people believed in stories of ghosts and spirits, but in the modern era, the Wall has grown stronger.

*STORYTELLER'S NOTE: Areas with great scepticism or disbelief in the supernatural have a higher Wall Rating.*

The list below details the suggested difficulty for travelling through the Wall.

Area	Wall Rating
Areas of active disbelief	5
Areas of ambivalence	4
Areas of faith, the wilderness, gravesites	3
Supernatural sites and Drained Nodes	2
Active Nodes and Gateways	1

## NODE

A Node is an intersection of leylines and is imbued with Essence. Unfortunately, they are rare, as many of them are no longer active due to either being tainted, drained beyond repair, or under the control of other supernaturals. Still, even those that have been drained are good points to travel through the Wall. When using Lifesight or Deathstight, a Drained Node appears as a grey orb.

Rules for Drained Nodes:

- Hungry Ghosts are unable to drain Essence except by Essence Osmosis
- Wall Rating is comparatively weak

Active Nodes provide Hungry Ghosts an easy and renewable way to absorb Essence. Just being in their proximity provides 1 Essence point of each type. When using Lifesight or Deathstight, an Active Node looks like a glowing, intangible orb.

Rules for Active Nodes:

- Being within 60 feet of an Active Node provides one Essence of each type.
- Hungry Ghosts can feed on it with the same rules as for a normal human.
- In theory, it carries an unlimited amount of Essence, so the Storyteller sets their own limit.

Tainted Nodes are different, and Outcasts that serve the Yama Kings use them to meet their masters. Tainted Nodes are quick easy portals to the Demonic Realms, and many Hungry Ghosts

avoid them due to the repulsive Tainted Essence they emit.

Rules for Tainted Nodes:

- All Tainted Nodes are direct routes to Demonic Realms.
- They emit Tainted Essence and can only provide Demonic Essence, if the Hungry Ghost is able to stomach it

## THE ETHEREAL REALMS

The Ethereal Realms, which exist outside the mortal world, are countless and varied. There are too many to count, but below are the general descriptions.

To travel between Realms, the rules are the same as above, though generally the Wall Rating is lower than in the mortal world. However, there may be exceptions.

*STORYTELLER NOTE: Each Realm has its own physical rules and unique appearance. This can be due to powerful spirits, or it may be its natural state. The key is consistency whenever characters travel in the Realms you have created.*

### The Heavenly Realms (requires a Path Rating of 7 or higher)

These Realms are collectively known as Heavenly Realms due to the environment and the power of the spirits that reside there. Perfection and clouds are common tropes for them, but you can depict an underwater paradise or a Realm of powerful flower spirits just as easily. Spirits that reside in these Realms would be classified as types of gods (Devas) by mortals.

The Realms of anti-gods or titans (Asuras) are also included in this classification, as they have similar strength to gods but live in Realms that are slightly less beautiful. This difference causes envious anger in the anti-gods and there are constant wars between the two.

Powerful spiritual objects with lots of Essence can be found in the Heavenly Realms. Hungry Ghosts able to travel to these Realms often seek wise counsel or tools from those who live there.

*STORYTELLER NOTE: These spirits should not have stats, as technically they are too powerful to fight against. However, if you need to, the skill set of Non-Returners is a good guideline.*

### The Spirit Realms

These are the most diverse of the Realms, as they vary between the beautiful, terrifying and just strange. The concept of Domains was introduced to further try to categorise these Realms. Feel free to add more Domain types.

#### Aetherial Domains

These visually invoke space and the cosmos. There are layers of clouds that physical creatures can walk on like solid ground.

Despite looking like space, they are able to breath normally. Spirits here are of celestial origin and are representations of star bodies or other space concepts such as constellations, the moon itself, or cosmic dust.

*How to Travel: During a full moon, Hungry Ghosts can travel to the Aetherial Domains from Mirror Realms or even the Mortal Realms by directly facing the moon.*

#### Arcadian Domains

These are the Domains of dreams and fae-like creatures. Dragons, unicorns or other mythical creatures reside here. In rare cases, Hungry Ghosts are able to enter into dreams if they find the right routes. However, it is incredibly easy to get lost in this Domain and once lost, it is nearly impossible to escape without help of a fae. The fae are not spirits but they do behave like them.

*How to Travel: The only way is through Rivergates that go to these Domains.*

#### Flux Domains

These Domains are constantly changing. Nothing here lasts, as everything can change, even composition, geography, colour etc. Everything about these Domains resists control, so any physical or mental bindings are released. This includes addictions, which are temporarily forgotten while in these Domains. There are many different types of ecological spirits here, as the varying ecosystems attract them.

*How to Travel: By haphazardly jumping though different Realms. Hungry Ghosts can't find these Domains, only stumble into them.*

#### Fabled Domains

These are places where tales ranging from Greek classics, to folklore, to popular modern stories. They may become significantly different from the stories they were based on. Even those based on true events may become warped. Time moves faster here and a traveller could be in these Domains for decades while only one day has passed in the Mortal Realm. Spirits here are eternal and cannot be destroyed as they are part of the story, whether they are the hero or just a random soldier. The sun does not affect Hungry Ghosts here but warnings are made to Hungry Ghosts that being killed here is just as real for them as in the mortal world.

*How to Travel: Hungry Ghosts can reach these Domains by travelling through the Wall in relevant sites of reverence or historical significance. It is also possible to stumble into one by accident.*

#### Cyber Domains

These Domains are defined by technology with skyscrapers and

glass. Many spirits emulating technology thrive around these areas. Cyberpunk aesthetics and themes are present, as well as the problems associated with them. Most Hungry Ghosts dislike these Domains as even the spirits here are more superficial and contentious. However, younger generations may be fascinated with the technological possibilities can be found here.

*How to Travel: Successfully cross the Wall in an area of technology within the Mortal Realm or Mirror Realm.*

### **Nature Domains**

Domains that are focused on biomes of nature with no sign of large scale intelligent manipulation of the environment. Animals that may be long extinct in the Mortal Realm may be present here. These Domains are popular for many Hungry Ghosts seeking silence or solace alone.

*How to Travel: From preserved natural landscapes that have not been damaged or overly developed by human hands, in either the Mirror Realms or Mortal Realm.*

## **The Mirror Realms**

These are Realms closely mimicking the Mortal Realm. What happens in the Mirror Realms reflects what happens in the Mortal Realm, but it is not necessarily always the opposite. Again, these are classified under Domains.

### **Reflected Domain**

The closest of all Domains within all Realms. This Domain mimics nearly exactly the mortal world including time and spacing. If a street or building is in the Mortal Realm, it is represented here. Sometimes differences occur, for example if something was in the Mortal Realm for a long time but has recently been destroyed, it will still be in the Reflected Domain. This Domain is eerily quiet aside from wandering spirits and the occasional spiritually-advanced creature.

*How to Travel: As normal. Every Hungry Ghost can travel here easily.*

### **War Domains**

Places where all of the Mortal Realm's conflicts reside. Travellers come here to relive or relearn battles or events, with their conclusions looping over and over. Spirits relating to combat love these Domains. Within these Domains, Hungry Ghosts do not die but get shunted back to the Mortal Realm if they approach death.

*How to Travel: Sites of great battles.*

### **Regretful Domain**

A Domain filled with the Mortal Realm's suffering. Hungry

Ghosts with students who hesitate to kill may send their students here to witness the horror of mankind. This is not a place of glory, but suffering. However, it is there as a reminder to hopefully never repeat these mistakes.

*How to Travel: Sites of deep unpleasantness that has occurred recently or very often.*

### **The Underworld Realm**

A place where wraiths, spectres and other dead creatures reside. Like the Reflected Domain, there are places of close similarity to the Mortal Realm. However, most things are decaying or broken, a shadow of their former selves. Many of the Path of Shadow students travel here to learn from the deceased. Storms constantly blanket the sky, and many travellers feel the pull of Oblivion. There are areas of mists that no wraith or spectre would cross, as the other side is where the territory of the Yama Kings starts.

*STORYTELLER NOTE: For more suggestions and ideas for the Underworld, use either Wraith 20th Anniversary or Vampire the Masquerade V5 – Cult of the Blood Gods.*

### **Demonic Realms**

Also known as the 1000 Hells, this Realm is made up of many Domains, each carved out and ruled over by a Yama King. This is where Hungry Ghosts are made.

*How to Travel: Tainted Nodes or travelling through the Underworld into the Mists.*

# OTHER MECHANICS

## CLOSE RANKING

This is an optional rule to situate those of a Lower Rank but higher Path Rating against others. Hungry Ghost society is fastidious about seniority, so it's important to know who is superior to who. It was good manners in the past, but since the melding of courts, it has become crucial to keeping meetings civil.

Greetings are numerical. For example, someone with Rank 4 and Path Rating 7 introduces themselves with "I am Rank 4, 7". Those of a lower Path Rating treat those of a higher Rank with respect and authority. There may be other conventions depending on the court, so feel free to create your own etiquette as well.

Generally speaking, a Preceptor will treat an Unveiled with a Path Rating of 8 or above as an equal. An Ancestor will be respectful towards a Preceptor with a Path Rating of 8 or above, but it is recognised that the Ancestor is still the superior.

## OTHER CREATURES OF HORROR

For creatures' stats and method of play, please refer to Vampire The Masquerade V5, pg 276-377.

For stats for things like nature spirits, you can use Spectre as a guide for the base stats, or Vampire The Masquerade: Cult of the Blood Gods' alternative rules for wraiths.

### Werewolves

The lupines within Asia hold a tenuous peace with Hungry Ghosts as they both respect spirits and nature. Young lupines may attack Hungry Ghosts, but elders know that peace should be maintained, so they can focus on greater threats. Werewolves in Europe or Africa do not understand Hungry Ghosts, except when they mistake those of a lower Path Rating (3 or lower) for vampires.

### Mages

Wariness defines the relationships between mages and Hungry Ghosts. Since the Great Departure, some mage traditions find Hungry Ghosts' abilities to warp physical reality fascinating. However, Hungry Ghosts tend to decline

long term relationships with them, distrusting their intentions. Elder Hungry Ghosts remember how powerful Mages used to be before they were limited by Paradox.

### Faerie

The Fae are known as 'Little Gods', and they share a complex history with Hungry Ghosts. Some Fae are allies, but they are mainly seen as prey for their exceptional Essence and hallucinogenic blood. In the rest of the world, the Fae have less experience with Hungry Ghosts, so they maintain a polite wariness.

### Wraith/Spectre

Hungry Ghosts can see and communicate with their supernatural cousins. While they are not immediately antagonistic to one another, interests can still clash, especially when a Hungry Ghost regards a Wraith as a tool. Spectres, however, are rarely indulged, and most Hungry Ghosts have few qualms about banishing, destroying or enslaving a Spectre as they see them as the spiritual version of a Ravenous Devil.

## OTHER CREATURES OF HORROR

The default rules can be found in Vampire: The Masquerade, p218.

Hungry Ghosts are similar to vampires when it comes to sleeping during the day. Those in Neutral Aspect, Death Aspect, or Death Imbalance follow the default rules in Vampire: The Masquerade. However, instead of being Humanity-based, waking during the day requires a Shadow roll.

Hungry Ghosts in Life Aspect or Life Imbalance find that they are less bound to day-sleep, and can choose when they sleep. However, they must sleep for at least 6 hours, and Awakening rules still apply to them. ✖

# ADVICE FOR PLAY

## CORRECTIONS

Kindred of the East was conceived with good intentions, but it was created with a Western lens. It was too focused on Chinese and Japanese cultures, with only occasional references to Indian and other South East Asian ideas of vampires, such as the Malaysian pennangan with its ability to detach its head and fly, or the Indian vetala, an evil spirit that possesses corpses. We recognise the potential of KOTE and hope to correct some of its missteps, while providing entertainment to not just to the 'Asian' demographic but to anyone wanting to play. We believe the driving themes of Hungry Ghosts can be applied to anyone and enjoyed by everyone.

The Hungry Ghosts presented in this book are not wholly accurate to the real-world religious and cultural concept. These creatures are not known to manipulate fire, water or other elements, for example. Hungry Ghosts is a reframing of the 'Asian vampires' World Of Darkness created in KOTE. Traditionally, for many Asian cultures, 'vampiric' creatures bear little resemblance to each other besides drinking blood. KOTE merged them together into a new playable creature with vampiric abilities, even though they are not vampires, and called them Kuei-Jin, or Wan Kuei, the Hungry Dead.

What this book does is take the Kuei-Jin and transplant them to the Hungry Ghost, a separate entity that is not a vampire, as many countries with dharmic religious influences understand what a Hungry Ghost is and what they are capable of.

You do not need to be familiar with the concept of a Hungry Ghost to play this game, but a little research might help you understand what type of creature you are playing, and keep you from making any egregious cultural mistakes.

## CULTURE AND ETHNICITY

Whilst culture and ethnicity are usually tied together, they are not the same thing. For many people, the expectations they come with form the basis for ethnic stereotyping. In reality, a person of Asian descent growing up in America is most likely to identify as American and be most familiar with American folklore and mythology. A person of African descent born and raised in Japan may likewise identify as Japanese.

This book has freed the Kuei-Jin from the constraints of 'Asian' race or identity as they are really too broad to define. When playing a Hungry Ghost, any ethnicity, nationality, or other cultural marker can and should be represented.

Anyone can play as anyone in a roleplaying game. That is their main appeal - the ability to be anyone. When playing characters that are very different to yourself, you may be tempted to exaggerate or stereotype. After all, that might be the only way you've seen that type of character represented! It's normal to want to 'mystify' ideas and concepts you have not grown up with, but if it's normal for your character, you should play it as if it's normal for you.

To the people who live with the cultural or religious ideas in question, it is simply part of their life, even if they are not consciously aware of it. In predominantly Christian countries, they never have to explain what Christmas is, or what comes with it. Your character's religious and cultural practices should be treated with the same bland acceptance. Just as a vampire or werewolf might celebrate Christmas, Hungry Ghosts' cultural practices are not what is magical about them.

The best advice for play is just to research who you are representing.

## LORE CHANGES TO V5 FOR HUNGRY GHOSTS

You might assume that Hungry Ghosts has to be set in Asia. This is not the case at all. Slavic Europe has legends of the moroi, a vampiric spirit that drains the energy of living people, and of vampires that can bear children, creating dhampirs. These are similar enough to the Hungry Ghosts presented in this book that you could easily set a campaign there. You can set a campaign anywhere, with Hungry Ghosts masquerading as Caitiff in vampire courts, or as a small expat enclave trying to hold a new territory. As with all campaigns, adapt, adopt or throw out the lore if it does not fit your narrative.

V5 has removed much of the Kuei-Jin from its official lorebooks. In the Camarilla sourcebook, Japan is ruled by a Tzimisce, and there are few to no references to the Kuei-Jin. Much of the modern day lore presented here is built on these leaving the Hungry Ghosts more in the shadow.

Some characters that were in KOTE and its expansions are included here but renamed and updated. The Yama Kings have been changed to a more tragic and personal threat. The themes of transcending trauma are hopefully brought into clearer focus. Hungry Ghosts' primary theme is the inverse of Vampire, in which time will erode your humanity until only the Beast remains; whereas Hungry Ghosts is very much a game about the journey of recovery and the light at the end of the tunnel, whatever the odds. ✖





Name \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL XP SPENT**

Player Name \_\_\_\_\_

Chronicle \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL XP**

**BELIEFS**

Chronicle Tenets

Convictions

Touchstones

**MERITS**

_____	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
_____	○ ○ ○ ○ ○
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**PROFILE**

Mortal Days

Description & Features

**FLAWS**

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Path Boon

Path Bane

**PATH RATING**

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Demonic Surge

Power Bonus

Mend Amount

Birthday \_\_\_\_\_

Apparent Age \_\_\_\_\_

Hair / Eyes \_\_\_\_\_

Gender \_\_\_\_\_

Ethnicity \_\_\_\_\_

Nationality \_\_\_\_\_

Height / Weight \_\_\_\_\_

Concept \_\_\_\_\_

Yama King \_\_\_\_\_

Path \_\_\_\_\_

Path Rating \_\_\_\_\_

Master \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Sect \_\_\_\_\_

Faction \_\_\_\_\_

Rank / Title \_\_\_\_\_



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