

VAMPIRE

THE MASQUERADE

Kuei-Jin & Equipoise Discipline
Beta Rules



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As seen and featured on the
Twitch multi-chronicle setting
of

*A Crusade
of
THORNS*

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THE KUEI-JIN IN 1943 L.A.

While most Kindred are descendants of Cain, the Kuei-Jin are unlike other Kindred, reanimated vessels full of regret and bound by ancient oaths. Half-living, half-dead, they feed on the spiritual energy of their victims - called chi. The most common extraction method requires the extraction of blood from their victims. Unlike the Children of Cain, a Kuei-Jin is solitary and alone, never able to share the burden with others.

Any Kuei-Jin in Los Angeles will consist of the early Chinese American immigrants during the early mining labor of the Trans-Pacific Railway, only to be caged within the confines of their new home due to the lack of citizenship rights, racism, and ultimately immigration exclusion with the act in 1882. The act was created shortly after the Chinatown Massacre, leaving a distrustful and resentful rift within the Chinese populace. By the turn of the 19th century, the residents would be forced to vacate the area in favor of city planner's erecting the new Union Square station. The displaced Chinese populace would divide into three major areas, with a new Chinatown (dubbed New Chinatown Market) established south of LA's downtown district. With the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943, along with granting citizenship rights for preexisting Chinese residence, the communities near the Chinese neighborhoods will witness the rise of influence from the Kuei-Jin to better their countrymen and countrywomen.

Ming Xiao is the self-proclaimed Baron of Chinatown, a title very few Kindred were willing to contest with her. As part of her cooperation with the Camarilla, Ming was allowed free reign within her domain so long as she retained the tenants of the Masquerade and the Camarilla's authority. Ming complied with the request but over the years became vengeful of the local LA populace and its Kindred since the massacre in 1871. Ming is perceived as a powerful matron and entrepreneur for many Asian Americans and the growing Chinese immigrants arriving to the country. Her primary concerns are the safety of her kind and the security of Chinatown.

Her displeasure with the Camarilla has prompted her to support the Anarch Movement from time to time, though she would rather keep to her own dominion for she has no interest in the Cainites' struggles, philosophies, or practices. She is known to be a calculating and intelligent creature though she remains often aloof, plotting behind a cordial and diplomatic demeanor. Ming has deep appreciation to those who show her respect, and can prove to be a useful information broker if one is willing to curry favors and boons in exchange.





The Demon Clan Cathayans Enlightened Wan Xian Ketsuki Chi Sorcerers The Hungry Dead



Kuei-Jin

The Kindred of the East, or Kuei-Jin, unlike Cainites use an internal source called chi to regulate and control the Beast while achieving feats that surpass many contemporary vampires almost to sorcerous results. Kuei-Jin utilize their understanding of chi stored within their vampiric forms to travel a path of spiritual and philosophical enlightenment.

Many perceive the Kuei-jin as spiritualists, mediums, oracles, and even shamans. Recluses or exiles either by choice or society, the Kuei-jin are also regarded as the Hungry Dead. Most Kuei-jin believe that, either by fate or bad luck, they rise from shadows of death. Once risen, the damned souls crave the spiritual energy of all beings and seek it out to fuel their unlives. Chi represents the spiritual essence found in all beings, pathways linked through a network all across the body, with many intersecting to form into clusters known as chakra points.

The Kuei-jin are spiritualists but also philosophers and healers. The clan's spiritual mediums focus on mastering external chi and manipulating the world through it; while the clan's philosophers tend to emphasize control and mastery of the self. Kuei-jin spiritualists, also known as Sorcerers, believe in releasing the Beast to ravage the material and spiritual planes.

Ming Xiao closed her eyes and began to breathe in a calm and relaxed pace. She knew it was a futile gesture, an artifact from her mortal life, but it helped set the rhythm as she felt the blood in her veins flourish and flow along her body. She imagined clusters of thread-like energy filling like a cup before spilling over into another one, and then another. One by one until the entire circuit within an arm was covered, then her legs, the torso, and finally the head. Like a series of cascading ponds, filled by the one preceding it.

As she continued, she felt the shadowy stir of a familiar presence, since the day of her Second Breath, it was always there beside her. The Demon Within, the all-consuming rage hidden behind the threads of her soul, or what was left of it. She always felt incomplete, as if only half of her returned when she returned to the material plane.

Her body began to trace the movements of a long forgotten dance, centuries older than her, passed down from the wisdom of the ancestors. With each gesture and step, the amassed chi shifted and changed, mixing the energies from her soul and the Demon Within. A delicate balance that must be preserved, lest she succumb to its spiteful temptations. The energies were mixed until they were one, the Demon and her.

Her eyes opened and fixed their sights on a man restrained to a large wooden post. Bound and gagged, his back was exposed, the shirt torn and ripped by her soldiers. Her fingers traced along the man's spine, following the flow of chi within him. He suffered a minor injury to his left shoulder blade and his kidneys were not well. But his heart remained vibrant and almost defiant. She traced along the man's lower back and used her thumb to apply pressure to a spot on the right side from the second lumbar. The man screeched in pain, muffled by the cloth gag in his mouth. Ming Xiao could see the flow of chi, the blockage was gone now. The man gave a sigh of relief. She pitied him, aware of his one and true fate ahead.



DISCIPLINES

Celerity: The Kuei-Jin are masters of their bodies, performing deadly strikes at superhuman speeds. While not physically strong, a Kuei-Jin may turn the momentum of an enemy's attack against them, or employ their vast knowledge of pressure points and chakra points to land devastating blows with the softest touch.

Equipoise: The Kuei-Jin mastered the art of manipulating chi (a spiritual lifeforce) that can not only satiate their immortal hunger but awaken their potential. Chi sorcerers or practitioners employ their deadly knowledge of the body's network of pressure points to invoke searing pain or encourage the body to create their own internal medicine. Some practitioners even know the forbidden art known simply as "the Touch of Death."

Obfuscate: Kuei-Jin master the powers of Obfuscate to remain hidden amongst mortals undetected. Kuei-Jin of great age utilize this discipline to stalk and drain the chi of their victims without their knowledge or awareness. There are stories of ancient Kuei-Jin who possess the power to draw chi from the ambient life flow around them through meditation and close proximity.

BANE

Instead of being dessicated like Western Vampires, Kuei-jin look otherworldly or ethereal, unless they make a rouse check they suffer a -2 dice penalty to all Social interactions with mortals. All Kuei-jin suffer from a dissociative persona called the Demon. The Demon is believed to be the spiritual manifestation of the Beast bound to the soul of the Kuei-jin after they enter their Second Breath.

Depending on their history and their state of mind at death, their Demon possesses

anger that fuels its drive to slice through the veil between worlds. The Kuei-jin may feel phantom pain from their previous mortal life if they died painfully or given improper funeral rites (an insult to many cultures in the East).

A Kuei-jin must satiate their Hunger by absorbing and devour chi. Chi flows from the Spirit Realm to the material plane, but living beings serve as excellent repositories along with supernaturally significant sites (such as ley lines). A Kuei-jin may make an Intelligence + Occult test (Difficulty 4 or more) to determine a location where the veil between the material and spirit realm is weak to tap into the subtle flows around them. Often times, mortals prove to be the primary source to obtain chi, but there are varying methods of extraction. The four methods include: Flesh (organovore), Blood (life water), Breath, and Osmosis. Blood is the most common method of extraction. Flesh requires the consuming of raw human flesh and organs. Only Kuei-jin of considerable Depravity (Blood Potency) learn to consume through Breath or Osmosis (requiring a Kuei-jin with minimum Blood Potency 5 and 7 respectively). If the latter methods are used, a victim suffers one point of Superficial Willpower damage equal for each Hunger slaked. A human victim rolls Stamina + Resolve against a Difficulty equal to Hunger slaked to avoid lethargy and Impairment.

Kuei-Jin prefer to drain the chi from vibrant souls, with a Wits + Occult test (Difficulty 4 or more) it can sense if a mortal possesses at least Willpower 5 or more. Humans with a willpower of 5 or more slake an additional hunger, but it still requires the death of a victim to reach hunger zero.

COMPULSIONS: *SPITEFUL DEMON*

The Demon is the manifestation of the Kuei-jin's anger and despair. The vampire lashes out and unleashes their rage against the living and the dead (spirits). Due to their jealousy of the rightful dead (those who received proper funeral rites), the vampire grows spiteful and turns its mind to exacting revenge against someone who wronged the vampire recently. This complication can sometimes be directed at an enemy or even an ally. The vampire is fixated on causing harm to the target of their spite by any means. They receive a two-dice penalty to rolls to resist fury frenzy for one scene.



Equipoise

Nicknames: Spiritualism, Bodhisattva, Chi Sorcery

The Kuei-Jin seek balance and serenity in all things; from their spirituality and philosophical enlightenment to their management of the earthly forces including the quelling of the Beast. In some instances, an individual using Equipoise has the ability to calm the Beast for a short period of time, but a user can learn to expand their chi's utility. Many instances of Equipoise requires a Kindred/Cainite to reach a mental space of serenity, often a space of nothingness. While the Beast may growl and prowl within a user's psyche, the techniques employed by the Kindred's training allows them to channel the energies from the Beast (Yin) and their image of Self (Yang).

Characteristics

At character creation, a player can choose one Level 1 Chi Rite if they have at least one dot in Equipoise. Characters can buy new Rites at the cost of the art's level x 3 experience points. Learning new Rites during play requires both experience and time. Expect a Rite to take at least the square of its rating in weeks to learn.

Exertion of Willpower: In the rules below, some Kuei-jin discipline powers and chi rites describe Exertion of Willpower or Exerting Willpower or Exertion of Will. When coming across these terms, the user rolls a d10. On a 5 or less, the user marks one Superficial damage on the Willpower tracker. On a roll of 1, the user suffers one Aggravated damage on the Willpower tracker.

Rules Reminder: A character with no Willpower points left (through either type of damage or a combination) is Impaired, receiving a -2 dice penalty to Social and Mental tests. They still get to roll one die if required to roll their poll, as per the usual rules.

■ **Type:** Sorcery

■ **Masquerade Threat:** Low-High. The individual application and display of chi powers vary in effect.

■ **Blood Resonance:** Phlegmatic. Although not in the blood itself, Equipoise requires patience, an inner calm, and remaining mentally grounded against the Beast.

Level 1

MASTER FLOW

Using this power, the user can control the flow of chi within their body.

■ **Cost:** Rouse check

■ **System:** The user closes their eyes and concentrates for the duration of the scene. They suffer one Superficial Willpower damage and rolls a Resolve + Medicine test (Difficulty equals Blood Potency + 2). On a win, the user can reduce their Hunger rating by one. On a critical win, the user can reduce their Hunger by two.

■ **Duration:** One scene

CHI SENSES

The vampire can feel the flow of chi and blood, granting them unnatural insight.

■ **Cost:** Free

■ **Dice Pools:** Wits + Medicine or Resolve + Medicine

■ **System:** Make a Wits + Medicine test (Difficulty 2). On a win, the vampire can determine the following information for each successes from the margin: the status and condition of a mortal or supernatural being such as their current health track, whether the subject is a vampire, werewolf, ghoul, or any other supernatural being, their dots in hunger, and whether or not the subject is under the influence of any mental or physical adjustments or tampering. If the vampire actively searches for a supernatural entity, they roll Resolve + Medicine similarly.

■ **Duration:** Passive

Level 2

CAUSTIC CHI

Using this power, the user can influence and manipulate another's chi by touch to cause imbalances in their body.

- **Cost:** Rouse check
- **Dice Pools:** Wits + Equipoise vs Resolve + Composure
- **System:** No roll is required against an unprepared mortal victim. Manipulating the resisting victim or vampire requires a contest of Wits + Equipoise vs Resolve + Composure. The victim loses all motivation or desire, becomes lethargic to completing their tasks, and suffers a -2 dice penalty to all dice rolls for the duration of the scene. On a critical win, the penalty lasts until the victim has had a full night's rest. The victim must spend two Willpower to re-roll dice against this power.
- **Duration:** One scene

BIORHYTHM

The chi masters from Asia mastered the knowledge of balancing spiritual energies and vitae.

- **Cost:** Rouse check
- **Dice Pools:** Intelligence + Equipoise
- **System:** You touch the victim, passing through clothing, applying pressure to specific points on their body. The user can mend a number of Superficial Health damage on the victim up to their rating in Equipoise. A mortal affected by this power is cured of normal ailments and infections (though debilitating and terminal illnesses are beyond the scope of this power). A kindred affected by this power find it easier to resist frenzy (reduce difficulty by 1) for the remainder of the night.
- **Duration:** N/A

Level 3

EBON DRAGON DANCE

You perform a series of steps, leaps, katas, and postures to unlock a baleful form of chi. The Ebon Dragon is summoned and drains the will and chi.

- **Cost:** One or more Rouse checks
- **Dice Pools:** Stamina + Equipoise vs. Stamina + Occult or Fortitude
- **System:** The user concentrates for a turn and focuses the energies for the dance. Each Rouse check is worth a turn of performance. Striking a victim at various pressure points involves a Charisma + Brawl attack roll. On a success, the user rolls a contest of Stamina + Equipoise vs Stamina + Occult. (Vampires with Fortitude may resist with Stamina + Fortitude). If the user wins, the dance inflicts the margin in Aggravated Willpower damage to mortals and in non-halved Superficial Willpower damage to vampires. A mortal who takes even one point of damage collapses unconscious.
- **Duration:** One scene

SCARLET CRANE DANCE

You perform a series of steps, leaps, gestures, and postures to expand their chi to their extremities to perform physical feats.

- **Cost:** One Rouse check and Exertion of Will
- **System:** When performed you can make Melee and Brawl strikes at a range of 5 feet per Equipoise rating.
- **Duration:** One turn

Level 4

DISRUPTION

You learn to manipulate chi by targeting specific energy points on the body to cause painful spasms.

- **Cost:** One Rouse check
- **Dice Pools:** Dexterity + Equipoise vs Stamina + 3 or Stamina + Fortitude
- **System:** The user imposes their own malevolent chi to twist the energy flow of the victim. The user rolls a contest of Dexterity + Equipoise vs Stamina + 3 (Vampires with Fortitude may resist with Stamina + Fortitude) A win causes the victim to be wracked with painful spasm. The victim suffers a -1 penalty to Dice Pools for the duration. If the user scored a critical success, the victim suffers a -2 penalty to Dice Pools for the duration. Mortals take Aggravated Health damage from the difference in addition to the above effects. Mortal victims with Stamina ratings of 2 or less typically die from heart failure upon being hit with this power.
- **Duration:** One scene and every hour after until the victim wins a Stamina + Resolve test (Difficulty equal to the user's Equipoise rating)



ENLIGHTENED STATE

You channel chi to reach equilibrium with your physical and spiritual energies, elevating yourself into a higher plane of awareness. Ancient wisdom quoted this power as “to assume the form of the dragon.”

- **Cost:** One Rouse check and Exertion of Will (Roll 1d10, on a 5 or less the user suffers one Superficial Willpower damage. A roll of 1 does one Aggravated Willpower damage to the user.)
- **System:** No roll required. The user enters a state of spiritual enlightenment, becoming the persona of the dragon and gains the benefits of being in a frenzy except the user has full control of their character without exerting further Willpower points and is not limited to what Disciplines they can use for the duration. In addition, the user may add 3 dice to all perception based tests, and has the ability to sense unseen presences such as Obfuscate or spirits lingering nearby, etc. It requires a Resolve + Equipoise roll vs. Wits + rating of the stealth power used to see through any supernatural form of stealth such as Obfuscate.

The user may extend the duration of this power by making another Rouse check and Exertion of Will check at the beginning of the next scene.

- **Duration:** One scene

Level 5

CHI MASTERY

You master Equipoise gaining dominion over the flow of your own chi and that which resides in the body of others. With a touch, the vampire can drain chi from a victim, corrupt their chi flow, and even stop the overall flow of chi. Legends remark of a dread technique with a series of strikes on critical pressure points that can possibly kill their victims called the "Touch of Death" or "Dim Mak."

■ **Cost:** One or more Rouse checks
■ **System:** No skill roll is needed to activate this power. When employing this power, the user can avail themselves of several methods of its use and applications as detailed below:

Drain Chi. The user can disperse and drain the chi from its victim. The user must touch the victim (making a Dexterity + Equipoise attack roll). A victim with Equipoise may attempt to resist by rolling Stamina + Equipoise as a contest. For each margin of success, the target feels their chi being dispersed into the atmosphere and subsequently consumed by the user. The user is considered to have fed during the scene. Mortals affected by this power suffer one aggravated health damage per success, though if the margin is 5 or greater, the mortal instantly dies. If this power is used against a Kindred, the victim gains one Hunger for the night on a win; a critical win increases it by two. A Kindred that reaches Hunger 5 or higher enters torpor.

Chi Devastation. The user can abruptly stunt or cease the flow of chi on a victim, which is absolutely lethal for mortals and Kindred alike. Roll a Charisma + Equipoise vs Willpower. If the user wins, the victim suffers the margin in Aggravated Willower damage. A Kindred affected by this power does not gain the benefits of their Blood Potency for the night; a critical win lasts indefinitely. A mortal affected by this power falls unconscious into a spiritual coma.

■ **Duration:** One scene or one night





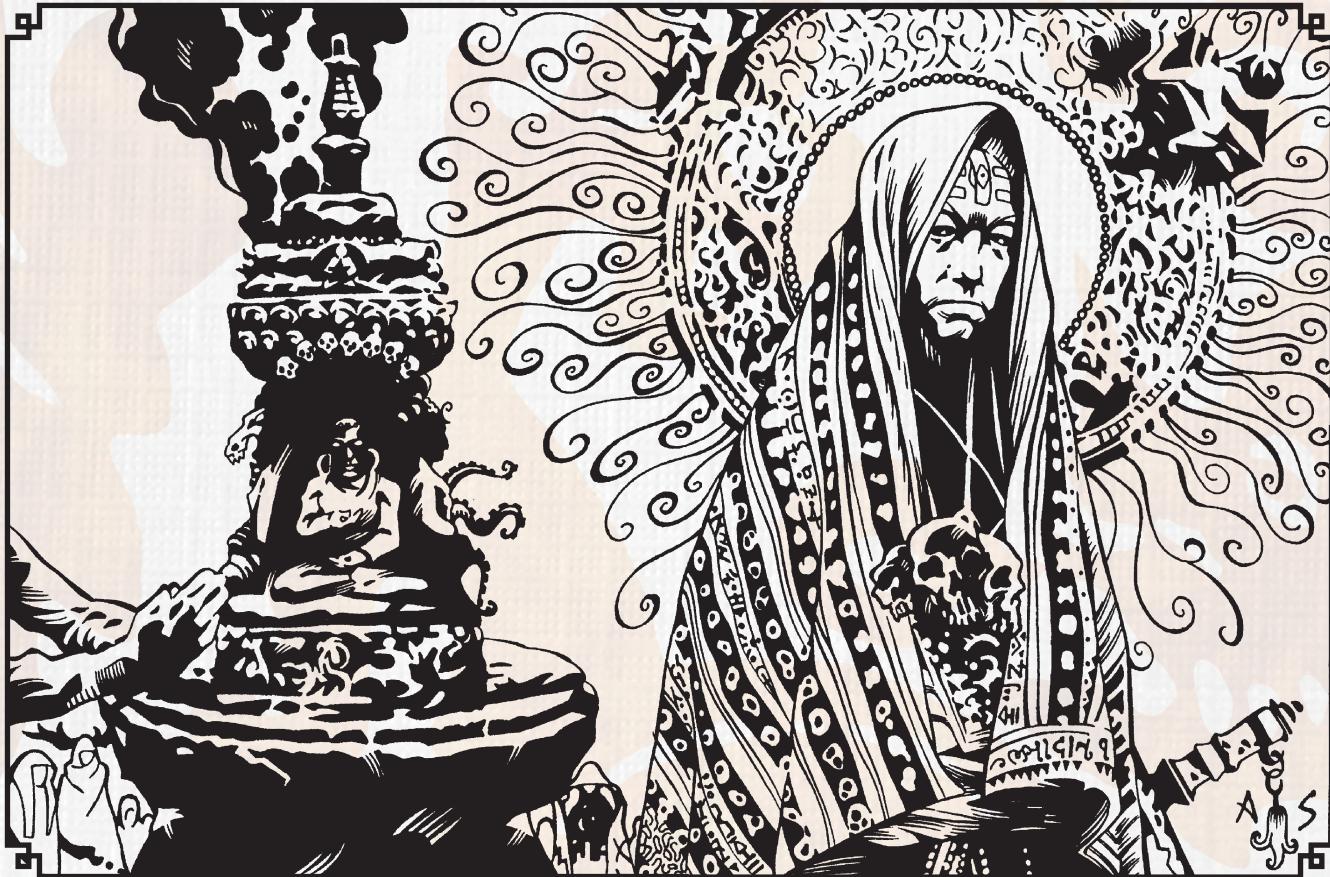
AKUMA RISING

There is an ancient Kuei-jin saying, “the devil is ten feet tall, and virtue is one foot tall.” It refers to those who succumbed to their inner demons either by choice or failure in character. In either case, such beings surrender their remaining souls and embrace the Beast as its vessel. Invoking this power causes the vampire to undergo a monstrous transformation, such forms are often called rakshasa.

■ **Cost:** One Rouse check
■ **System:** No rolls are required to activate this power. The transformation takes one turn, during which the user may take no other actions. Typical features include horns, elongated maws, feral claws, muscles or wirey appendages, and other animalistic qualities. Upon transformation, the vampire gains three extra dice to their Physical rolls, immunity to all Superficial damage sustained, acute senses (equivalent to Heightened Senses), and becomes an avatar of terror. Whenever victim sees and/or hears the user while transformed, the defender rolls a contest of Composure + Resolve vs the user’s Manipulation + Equipoise. If the user wins, the victim must make a terror frenzy test at Difficulty 3. Mortals automatically panic at the sight of the akumatized Kuei-jin.

In addition, at the start of each turn, the Kuei-jin’s demonic essence heals their wounds as it draws the native chi from the environment. The user mends one Superficial Health damage without needing to make a Rouse check. If their Blood Potency allows for them to mend one or more Superficial damage, the user must still roll a Rouse check. The user may take three Superficial Willpower damage to mend one Aggravated Health damage during their turn.

■ **Duration:** One scene unless the user voluntarily ends it by Exerting Willpower.



CHI RITES

Unless otherwise noted, performing a Chi Rite requires a Rouse check and winning an Intelligence + Equipoise test with a difficulty equal to the level of the Rite plus 1. Rites usually require touching the targets and pressing on particular pressure points, there might be ingredients or talismans to act as totems, some may need uninterrupted concentration from the user, and often involve the mingling of techniques and philosophies from Eastern magic or martial arts. Unless otherwise stated, the practitioner can only perform beneficial rites on themselves and their effects last a single scene.

Chi Wards

The Kuei-jin also employ a unique system of Wards basing them on a blend of spiritual and gnostic talismans and charms. Most of these systems involve paper talismans with shamanic

mantras and writings rather than occult symbols (Asian characters can be employed as symbols but not in the sense of sigils). Such wards are often arranged as a means of protection from supernatural forces that often repel them.

Shiki

Kuei-jin practitioners may imbue an object with their chi, acting as anchors for spiritual beings to power their wards. There is generally some form of talisman or etched Asian writing to signify the ward's purpose. When touched, the Shiki alerts the practitioner of the object's disturbance, it may invoke a powerful shock or bestow a baleful curse, and the entity is considered the "violator" in these rules.

The Shiki covers a space roughly 5 feet across. The practitioner pours their chi into the object to be warded, placing markers or paper talismans on it while reciting an incantation. If the object is picked up and in

a violator's possession, they may roll a test of Wits + Investigation to find the mark of the practitioner. Once this mark (a paper talisman or inscribed character) is found, the violator may attempt to disrupt the spiritual connection by spending a point of Willpower.

The practitioner makes the Rites roll the first time a violator touches the Shiki, triggering the following effects described below. The practitioner may spend a point of Willpower and win a Rites roll to gain the benefits of Share the Sense (Auspex 3) for the duration of the scene or until the mark of the practitioner is destroyed. If the practitioner wins the Rites roll, the victim suffers one point of Aggravated Health damage. On a critical win, the damage for this Shiki is three points of Aggravated Health damage. Alternatively, the practitioner may have the victim suffer Aggravated Willpower damage instead so long as the Shiki still has its Share the Senses power activated. The practitioner does not need to make the Rites roll for each violator, only the first. Anyone affected that wants to touch the Shiki again must spend a point of Willpower and then win a Stamina + Resolve test (Difficulty 4, or 7 for a critical success Shiki) to make the attempt.

Sense the Unseen (Auspex 1) can detect a Ward with a contest of Intelligence + Auspex with a difficulty equal to the number of successes scored when the ritual was cast.

Kekkai

Kekkai barriers can cover the size of a small room (roughly 10 feet). The caster focuses their chi, reciting a chant before diffusing the area with their chi. The practitioner makes three Rouse checks as they channel chi throughout their body to be dispersed into the designated zone. The ward lasts for only 10 minutes unless the caster expends a Willpower while chanting, which allows the ward to last 1 hour. The practitioner may make a Rites roll test (+2 to normal Difficulty) and spend a week and a day suffusing the space with chi if the caster wishes to make it last a year and a day; otherwise, it dissipates at dawn.

A violator with Equipoise can dispel this ward by making one Rouse check and then win a contest of their Willpower vs the caster's number of success from casting the ritual. Otherwise, if a violator attempts to breach the barrier, roll a contest of Intelligence + Equipoise vs the violator's Willpower. If the kekkai fails, the violator successfully enters (or dispels) it. If the caster wins, the violator takes three points of Superficial Health damage (three points of Aggravated damage on a critical win) and cannot enter. The violator would need to spend a point of Willpower to attempt to enter the kekkai again.



Level 1

SHROUDED MOON

This rite expands upon the Master Flow power by allowing the user to cloud their presence and mute their auras.

- **Talismans:** A piece of jewelry with opal
- **Activation Cost:** One Rouse check and Exertion of Will
- **Dice Pools:** N/A
- **System:** The user can obstruct their presence from others, seeming to be hidden by the casual eye. While within an area that provides shadows or concealment, the user is effectively invisible and inaudible while remaining still or moving no faster than walking speed. Those that wield a greater sight (Auspex 2), your aura becomes befuddled and unrecognizable, granting you two dice to your dice pools to resist these powers.

EBON SPIDERWALK

The vampire gains the ability to cling to walls and ceiling like a monstrous insect or spider.

Talismans: A silk cloth with a spider shape drawn in blood

- **Activation Cost:** Standard
- **System:** A successful Rites roll yields the ability to cling to walls and ceilings for a scene, while a critical win extends the duration to the whole night. The practitioner must cling to the surface with both hands and feet; they move at approximately half their usual rate. While under this rite, the practitioner may spend one point of Willpower to move at their usual rate for the duration.

JADED FATE

This rite allows the Kuei-jin to cast their chi into the endless sea of quintessence, from which they may discern the fate of a single person.

- **Talismans:** A feng shui vision board
- **Activation Cost:** Standard
- **System:** You become the bridge between the chi of one person and the infinite tapestry of fate. A successful Rites roll grants the practitioner the insight of omens and visions that grants the target one die to a future dice pool roll for a scene, while a critical win grants the target two die to a future dice pool roll. Alternatively, the practitioner may curse the victim and decrease dice pools accordingly.

Level 2

BOUNLESS AS BAMBOO

The Kuei-Jin learn to manipulate the flow of chi throughout their bodies, granting them physical reach and extension where typical conventions say it's impossible.

- **Talisman:** A dried worm
- **Activation Cost:** Standard
- **System:** A successful Rites roll grants the user the ability to bend and twist their limbs and bodies to either reach around difficult angles or pass through narrow spaces for a scene, while a critical win extends the duration to the whole night. This also grants a one die bonus (two die bonus if the user scored a critical win on their Rites roll) to Dexterity + Brawl rolls while in combat.



COBRA IN SMOKE

A Kuei-jin manipulates the essence of smoke, color, and aroma to grant them greater allure.

■ **Talisman:** Some burning incense nearby
■ **Activation Cost:** One Rouse check
■ **Dice Pools:** Manipulation + Equipoise vs Composure + Intelligence
■ **System:** If the Rites roll is a win, the incense intensifies and creates a veil surrounding the practitioner. While the rite is active, the user can add their Equipoise rating to any Skill roll involving Persuasion or Subterfuge as well as any other Charisma-related rolls, at the Storyteller's discretion. Anyone aware that they're being affected can try to resist with a contest of Composure + Intelligence vs the practitioner's Manipulation + Equipoise. On a win, the target can resist the effects for one scene; a critical win makes the target immune for the entire night.

DUAL DEMON SOULS

A Kuei-jin learns to separate their entwined spirits. By doing so, the practitioner allows a part of their soul to animate and control the body, while the other exists as an ethereal spirit hovering nearby. Both souls act in tandem, allowing the user to exercise a variety of options. But while under this Rite, the Beast still remains malevolent, feral, and seeks to bring ruin and despair.

■ **Talismans:** A mirror
■ **Activation Cost:** Standard
■ **System:** If the practitioner wins the Rites roll, the separation of the soul begins. The user rolls a contest of Humanity vs Beast (Unfilled dots on the Humanity tracker). If Beast wins, the dual souls separate and the Beast has control for the body. If Humanity wins, the Kuei-jin remains in control of the body. In either case, the ejected spirit hovers nearby in the Mirror Realm, it may travel up to 500 feet from the body. While separated, the practitioner can act with both the body and displaced spirit. Each can take actions during the turn. Both souls retain a telepathic link, each aware of the other at all times. Both have access to their Disciplines and Willpower. The spirit in the Mirror Realm cannot affect beings in the material realm, but it can attack and defend itself against other spirits or scout ahead for trouble. The ejected spirit automatically sees its surroundings.

Level 3

DEAD BONE SONG

Through selective manipulation of chi, the Kuei-jin can cause their bone structure to calcify and grow like rock crystals.

■ **Talismans:** A charm carved out of bone or ivory

■ **Activation Cost:** Standard plus an Exertion of Will

■ **System:** When this rite is activated, the practitioner adds a +2 modifier to their Brawl damage, and causes Aggravated Health damage to mortals. Superficial damage inflicted from this rite cannot be halved. Additionally, by spending a point of Willpower, the practitioner subtracts any Superficial damage sustained equal to their Equipoise rating. This occurs before halving the damage, and cannot reduce the damage below one.

EARTH DRAGON'S GRACE

The practitioner attunes their chi with the spirits of earth, stone, and wood. By doing so, the Kuei-jin becomes a conduit of their good graces, allowing them to sink into the earth or walk through walls or similar implements.

■ **Talismans:** A piece of quartz or gold coin

■ **Activation Cost:** Standard plus an Exertion of Will

■ **System:** If the user wins the Rites roll, this rite functions identically to Earth Meld (Protean 3) power. Additionally, the user can place one hand on a barrier to be breached (like a wall, door, or floor) and spend one point of Willpower to pass through the barrier as if they were incorporeal. The barrier in question may not be more than one-foot thick.

KEKKAI NO RYU

The practitioner erects a kekkai barrier that connects that widens their third eye to manifest their chi.

■ **Talisman:** A white silk or satin ribbon

■ **Activation Cost:** This kekkai uses the standard rules for Chi Wards.

■ **System:** This rite functions like a normal kekkai. In addition, a violator that fails their rolls to enter becomes paralyzed as the chi manifests (usually in the shape of a dragon) from the kekkai to entangle the victim for a scene.

Level 4

COLD FIRE CLOTH

The practitioner ignites the chi in their body, creating a corona of flames. The flames are unlike normal fire, possessing the undead traits of its host and user. Such a display is terrifying as a demonic face stares beyond the cold flames.

■ **Talisman:** A candle with blood dripped over it

■ **Activation Cost:** See below

■ **System:** If the user wins the Rites roll, the user's body ignites with Chi-fire of a type depending on which energy they wish to power this rite for the duration of the scene.

Blood (Yang). The user makes a Rouse check and fuels their Chi-fire with vitae. The practitioner causes one point of Aggravated Health damage in addition to any Brawl or Melee damage inflicted normally. Anyone grappled by the vampire takes 2 points of Aggravated Health damage each turn they are grappled. This aura reduces Aggravated damage caused by fire equal to the user's Equipoise rating. However, while this fiery aura is active, the practitioner can easily ignite flammable materials and explosives.

Soul (Yin). The user performs an Exertion of Will (see above) and fuels their Chi-fire with spiritual essence. The practitioner inflicts one point of Aggravated Willpower damage with any Brawl or Melee attack. A vampire struck by this Chi-fire suffers an extra point of Aggravated Health damage from fire.

STORM KING'S DANCE

The practitioner gathers their chi to be dispersed into the atmosphere, granting them the ability to cause meteorological phenomena. Some have the capabilities to cause minor changes while others have the capacity to summon storms.

- **Talisman:** A metal rod or clear orb
- **Activation Cost:** One or more Rouse checks plus Rites roll
- **System:** The user must concentrate and continuously channel their chi to be dispersed. The effect on local weather takes three turns to manifest, though it can be sped up with additional Rouse checks. The extent the practitioner has on the weather depends on the number of successes achieved. A win on their Rites roll, grants the practitioner the ability to raise/lower temperatures up to ten degrees Fahrenheit; create/disperse clouds, light showers, or light snow within a 2-mile radius. On a critical win, the practitioner can raise/lower temperatures up to twenty degrees Fahrenheit and create/disperse powerful thunderstorms or blizzards within a 4-mile radius. The changes made to the weather naturally dissipate, which may take hours or days.



SMOKEWALKER

The Kuei-jin master the art of becoming a cloud of smoke, granting the user the ability to navigate through crevices, cracks, and other narrow passages. Strong winds may buffet the practitioner in this form, but no natural force can disperse this cloud.

- **Talisman:** Ash from a cremeated corpse
- **Activation Cost:** One Rouse check or Exertion of Will plus Rites Roll
- **Dice Pools:** Resolve + Equipoise vs Stamina + Composure or Composure + Resolve
- **System:** If the user wins the Rites roll, this functions identically like the Mistform (Protean 4) power. Additionally, while the user is a cloud of smoke, it can surround a victim to try and snuff the life (or chi) out of them. Depending on the nature of the smoke, the Kuei-jin can become a cloud of Yin-smoke or Yang-smoke.

Blood (Yang). The user rolls a contest of Resolve + Equipoise vs the victim's Stamina + Composure. If the user wins, the victim suffers one point of Superficial Health damage per turn as their lungs become filled with the malevolent smoke. If the user scores a critical win, the damage becomes two points of Superficial Health damage per turn.

Chi (Yin). The user rolls a contest of Resolve + Equipoise vs the victim's Composure + Resolve. If the user wins, the victim suffers one point of Superficial Willpower damage per turn as their mental and spiritual energies become erratic and muddled. If the user scores a critical win, the damage becomes two points of Superficial Willpower damage per turn.

Mortals suffer Aggravated Health damage from this rite.

Level 5

EMBODY THE JADE DRAGON

The user fully awakens their third eye, achieving clarity and insight that surpasses the barriers between realities and worlds. Kuei-jin who learn the Enlightened State power, typically train and meditate further to achieve this rite. Not only does the practitioner meld their material and spiritual selves, but truly see the world from an enlightened perspective.

- **Talisman:** A piece of jade shaped into a dragon
- **Activation Cost:** Standard plus Exertion of Will

- **System:** If the user wins the Rites roll, the Kuei-jin awakens their third eye for a period of time. The user adds their Equipoise rating to any Awareness or Insight rolls or Wits related rolls. Additionally, the practitioner may take a point of Superficial Willpower damage to end a mental effect placed upon them from a discipline (such as Dominate, Presence) while under the effect of this rite. If a supernatural creature has the ability to view into the spiritual plane (Auspex 3), they must roll a contest of the defender's Intelligence + Occult against the practitioner's Charisma + Equipoise. If the user wins, the victim suffers three Superficial Willpower damage and a -2 dice penalty to all Mental and Social rolls for the duration of the scene. If the user has a critical win, the victim suffers three Aggravated Willpower damage and a permanent -2 dice penalty to all Mental and Social rolls. The permanent penalties can only be lifted through spiritual enlightenment or a miracle experienced by the victim. Mortals always feel bewildered by the practitioner while this rite is in effect, suffering a -2 dice penalty to Social and Mental rolls while nearby the Kuei-jin.



MAW OF THE FALLEN KINGDOM

The Kuei-jin masters the ability to create rifts between the spiritual planes to ravage the physical one. This chaotic admixture causes devastating effects in the immediate area as the raw spiritual energies as a raging tempest of despair.

■ **Talismans:** A piece of quartz (earth), a burning candle (fire), a bird's feather (air), blood freshly harvested (water), and a gold coin (metal)

■ **Activation Cost:** Three Rouse checks, a Rites roll, and Exertion of Willpower

■ **Dice Pools:** Manipulation + Equipoise vs Willpower (see text)

■ **System:** The practitioner makes extended Rites rolls for a duration of five minutes, requiring 6 total successes. The practitioner may continue making tests to achieve successes beyond 6 if they so choose.

Upon successful completion of the ritual, the caster rends open a portal to the shadowlands, summoning a number of spirit thralls equal to the number of successful Rites rolls. The user may control a number of these spirits equal to their Equipoise rating. Other spirits act independently and may be quite vengeful for being pulled through the tear.

Additionally, any person moving within 15 feet of the tear makes a Dexterity + Athletics roll (Difficulty 6). If the defender fails, the victim suffers 3 points of Aggravated Health damage. A defender with Equipoise may resist this damage by subtracting the damage based on their Equipoise rating.

The rend howls and screams with the released spirits and those clamoring to break free on the other side.

SPIRIT THRALLS

Spirits Thralls are dead beings possessing vengeful fury, embodiments of anger and malice. Such beings tend to manifest with horrific visages, intent on causing suffering on the living.

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 1; Intelligence 1, Wits 3, Resolve 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 4

Skills: Awareness 3, Investigation 1, Occult 3; Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Stealth 3, Survival 1; Insight 2, Intimidation 4, Subterfuge 2

Disciplines: Auspex 3, Celerity 2, Potence 3, Presence 3

Special: Unlike normal spirits, these entities have a partial corporeal nature to them, they receive Aggravated Health damage against supernatural creatures (such as Vampires), along with magical sources such as silver, or fire. Otherwise, a successful hit against the thrall does one Superficial Health damage regardless of the margin of success. Dark magic, exorcism, or chi rites performed by a priest, inquisitor, or chi practitioner can banish, destroy, or enslave a spirit thrall with a contest of the user's Charisma + True Faith or Equipoise rating vs the Spirit Thrall's Willpower. While a non-spiritual creature can see or hear the spirit thrall, it imposes a horrifying visage similar to the Dread Gaze (Presence 3) power. Spirits use Dexterity + Brawl to hurl objects telekinetically.



In the saga of *A Chronicle of Thorns*, the flames of the Second Anarch Revolt loom over the horizon as World War 2 rages in the background.

Unlike the Cainites, the Kuei-jin bide their time, waiting to see which side remains once the dust settles. Ming Xiao, the Baron of Chinatown, has deep ambitions and lofty goals. Will it be the draconian Camarilla or the idealistic Anarchs that reign over Los Angeles, or is there another?