

The Spire is a massive pillar, rising from endless wastes, serving as home to an intricate ecosystem of cruelty. From the slimes, beasts, and exiled thugs of the Exordium, to the guardians, knights, and slavers that fester within the City, to the writhing masses, creatures of darkness, and transient horrors that stalk the Beyond, this place is anathema to justice.

Enter Neow, an ancient whale seeking to bring this place to its end. With her guidance, adventurers are led to fight their way through all fifty floors, finally reaching the hidden chambers of the Heart; the vile thing that gives the Spire life.

But the Heart will not fall without a fight. Bending the will of its inhabitants, it has created a motley crew of constructs, beasts, and monsters to rend the adventurers asunder.

In another version of things, you might be one of the Heart's chosen, seeking to bar the adventurers from their goal, and perhaps even to see Neow destroyed. But this time? This time, you'll be one of those adventurers yourself.

Welcome to...

Slay the Spire

ORIGINS:

Choose the type of adventurer you'd like to be. Choosing an origin gives you that origin's Starter, plus 1000 gold to buy perks and relics. Perks from your chosen origin cost half the listed price. Purchasing at least one perk of each tier from a given origin unlocks one of that origin's Neow Boons of your choice. Spending 300 gold on relics unlocks another Neow Boon of your choice from your chosen origin. (You cannot get the same Boon twice.)

The original adventurers all have well-defined ages and genders (or lack thereof), but since you're taking your own place in the roster, you may choose these freely.



The Ironclad

A sword-wielding warrior that sold their soul for power. Wields demonic energy, brute strength, and heavy armor in battle.



The Silent

A huntress that once stalked the grounds of the Foglands. Utilizes poison, mists, and throwing weapons en masse.



The Defect

A former construct of the Spire, now turned against it. Uses advanced weapon systems, elemental orbs, and enhanced intellect.



The Watcher

A blind ascetic who came to evaluate the Spire, as they evaluate all things. Utilizes martial might, alterations to reality, and the touch of the divine.



The Hermit

An undead gunslinger driven by a past that haunts them still. Carries the memory of countless showdowns, foul curses, and the pistol at their hip.

OPTIONAL: PRISMATIC SHARD (+200 Gold)

A most peculiar relic has found its way into your hands, and you find your skills have been shattered, refracted across the Spire, and recombined with abilities from unfamiliar lives. You receive no discounts from your chosen origin. Instead, the first two perks of each price you purchase are discounted to half-price, independent of their origin. When you receive a Neow Boon, you may choose that boon from any origin. (The requirements to earn a Neow Boon are unchanged.)



The Ironclad



Starter - Burning Blood:

Your contract with demonic forces has made alterations to your physiology. Your blood runs incredibly hot, now, and when that heat encounters an injury, the injury is slowly boiled away, fresh muscle and sinew bubbling up to replace the old.



Neow's Boon - Searing Enhancement:

There are, ordinarily, limits on how strong equipment can become. Be it sword or armor, they benefit from their metal and the heat of the forge, and this is where their strength ends. But with demon's flame, 'the heat of the forge' is not as strict a factor as you might expect. You may reforge your equipment again and again, improving their quality without limit each time they experience the cycle of heat and dousing.

Neow's Boon - Arcane Flex:

Strength is a nebulous thing. There's physical might, mystic force...plenty of ways to be strong. In your case, though, the point is less relevant than you'd expect. For some reason, there seems to be significant overlap: the stronger you are physically, the more powerful your magic and demonic offenses become, and vice versa.



IRONCLAD: TIER ONE



Body Slam (100):

Sometimes the best offence is a good defense, and sometimes a good defense is fifty pounds of armor, shields, and plate. For most people, it would be a problem to carry all that around. Not you, though. No matter how much protective equipment you happen to be wearing, you'll retain your full mobility, agility, and stamina. You'll still have the added weight, though, which can be a useful weapon. (You don't fall through the floor from weighing too much, though. Not unless you were trying to do that on purpose.)

Feel No Pain (100):

It's not as good as not getting hurt, but every little bit helps. While injured, you can dial down the degree to which that injury is felt, allowing you to retain focus in the midst of combat. Granted, a severed tendon is a severed tendon either way. Still, it's better to have one functional arm than one functional arm and overwhelming agony.



Dual Wielding (100):

Among the most minor of the boons you sold your soul for, but supernatural all the same. At any time, you may create exactly one copy of whatever weapon you're holding, wielding both as though they were held in your dominant hand. Although the two are otherwise identical, the copy will fade when you're done with it, or when you summon another.

IRONCLAD: TIER TWO

Hemokinesis (200):

Your blood brims over with demonic energy. What's the simplest possible method to weaponize that? Taking your blood and firing it at the enemy. It's not elegant, but it's efficient: with a swing of one hand, bloody lashes carve furrows through metal and flesh. (Just don't expect to put that blood back where it came from afterwards.)



Metallicize (200):

A defensive trick useful for protracted campaigns; perhaps you learned it from the other Ironclads before their demise, or perhaps it was one of many tools the demon offered you. With a simple incantation, the metal of your armor comes to life, stretching and growing. Given time, rents in the material will close themselves, and weakened or thin points in your defense will scab over with additional layers to close the gap.

Offering (200):

That deal you made for power? Less of a one-time thing, moreso a standing arrangement. Whenever you need an extra edge, you can sell off some of your vitality for a temporary surge of speed. The demon will collect remotely and instantly, allowing you to make use of the offer even in the pitch of battle. And besides, if you've got the Burning Blood, whatever you spend will bubble back up in no time--so why not?



IRONCLAD: TIER THREE



Immolate (400):

Your skin does not fully contain the heat that rages within. In fact, it's more useful that way. By casting the inferno outward, you can produce incredible gouts of flame. Likewise, you can shield yourself behind a wall of fire, or even run the flame along your blade. Just be careful--using too much at once tends to singe your hands.

Barricade (400):

For most people, the correct answer to 'how many full suits of armor should you wear?' will be somewhere between zero and one. This is because most people are constrained by either a lack of imagination or by physical law. Neither is a problem for you. By some space-defying feat, you may wear any number of pieces of protective equipment simultaneously, benefitting in full from each--so long as you have the strength to carry them.



Exhume (400):

The gravestone, much like a good set of dice, is metaphorical. Oftentimes you may find yourself in possession of an ability which may be used only a certain number of times--once per day, thrice yearly, twice in a single combat--before it is expended and temporarily 'dead'. But now, with a few minutes' concentration, you may unearth a single additional charge for any such ability, to be used at your leisure. Only one extra charge at a time, mind you--no stockpiling.

IRONCLAD: TIER FOUR

Reaper (600):

A tool normally used for administrative purposes by demons adjudicating soul contracts. A bit more combat-ready, in your case. Countless beams of sinuous blue light unwind from your hands, seeking out foes and digging into flesh. When they find their mark, their victims' essence is leached out, returning to you to replenish your own vitality. Even a single enemy's vital force may prove more replenishing than a week of rest.



Demon Form (600):

It's rare for mortals to get the better end of the bargain, but you did at least manage to sneak a sweetheart clause into your contract. Whenever you find yourself in active combat, a limitless font of demonic power pours into your frame, causing your strength to multiply with every passing moment. Only while in combat, though--once the fight's over, all that power goes back to where it came from.

Impervious (600):

Running low on armor? Never fear! With a surge of energy, you can clad yourself in a full suit of shining, golden plate that is almost entirely unaffected by mundane weapons. Even magic will have a hard time breaking through. This does take a certain something out of you, though; under ordinary circumstances, you'll only be able to do this once until the next time you get a chance to rest.





The Silent



Starter - Snake-Ringed:

To hunt in the Foglands required of you an attentive mind, and so an attentive mind is what you developed there. When faced with a sudden change of circumstances, such as an ambush, your thoughts and plans rapidly pivot to account for the new reality.



Neow's Boon - A Thousand Cuts:

For those who face the Silent, it is as though they face two enemies at once; one as smoke, and one as flashing blades. A thin haze hovers about your frame, part of you yet independent. The haze is capable of wielding and throwing weapons as though you yourself were doing the same, leaving you free to focus your efforts on maneuvering, evasion, and other useful tricks.

Neow's Boon - Nightmare:

It isn't real, but it's real enough. You may incept up to three illusory copies of yourself into an enemy's mind, hunting them in their thoughts and dreams.

The wounds inflicted by these copies are equally illusory, causing no real impairment and vanishing with time, but should these injuries mount enough to kill, your enemy will fall dead on the spot, their mind shattered for good.



SILENT: TIER ONE



Neutralize (100):

Combat is fundamentally a thing of position. That knowledge, combined with your survival instincts from the Foglands, has given you an understanding of how to protect yourself in a fight. You've got an excellent sense in particular for how to put the enemy off balance, setting them up in positions where it's difficult to get good use out of their weaponry.

Accuracy (100):

One of the few things that's nice about the Spire is how clear the air is. In fact, it's almost too easy.

You're used to hunting in far more obscured conditions. Either way, your skill with a thrown blade is sufficient to consistently land your hits at range in poor visibility, and to consistently land hits on the bodily location of your choice with a good sightline.



Blade Dance (100):

Nobody knows just how many blades you've got tucked away on your person, not even you. That question may not even have an answer. No matter how many steel shivs you pull out, there's always another tucked away, in your hair, in your cloak, up your sleeve, strapped to the back of your helmet's horns, holstered in bandages, on and on. Nobody's checked yet, but you suspect you've even pulled from the same places more than once.

SILENT: TIER TWO

Bane (200):

In your sight, any trace of affliction is plainly visible. Focus allows you to overlay living beings with visible flowing lines indicating the passage of toxins, locations of internal hemorrhage, and other such ailments. This also serves as a simple guide for which parts to injure to immediately worsen the problem, if that's something you want to do.



Envenom (200):

There are two types of brew to be found in the Spire. There are potions which confer a variety of useful boons, and there are poisons that will kill you stone dead. This is about that second kind. You've learned to use simple herbs to produce a variety of caustic liquids that burn at the touch. It would be best to make your enemies ingest them, but since that usually won't happen, a lower dose can be achieved by poisoning your blades.

Alchemize (200):

And this is the *first* type of brew mentioned. After the Spireblight, you know better than to turn up your nose at even ordinary plantlife. Through a careful distillation process, you can extract magical properties from mundane flora, producing a brew that confers those properties to the drinker. Note that some plants may have properties such as 'explode', so those ones are often better off weaponized.



SILENT: TIER THREE



Glass Knives (400):

Rather than built to last, you should get these weapons built to do some damage. At your touch, you can sap a weapon of any amount of its durability, bringing it anywhere from 'somewhat weaker' to 'fragile enough to shatter in a single hit'. In exchange, its cutting power rises proportionate to the durability lost. Using an ordinary shiv to slice through steel is possible, if you don't mind losing it after the swing.

Noxious Fumes (400):

Poisons and venoms were so common in the Foglands, the fog itself learned to carry them. By drinking a single drop of a toxic substance, you can expel thick clouds of colorful mist that hold the stuff's negative effects, seeping into clothing and drawing into lungs. As the fog's progenitor, you alone are immune to it. If anything, it's just another taste of home.



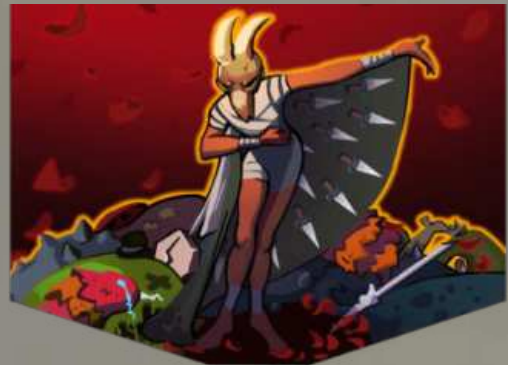
Doppelganger (400):

Swirling mists take on form and thought at your command. With a deep, draining exhale, you may sculpt a single replica of yourself out of the vapor in your breath, carrying with it your abilities and the capacity to follow your commands. Do note, however, that the doppelganger takes *all* your breath, leaving you winded and likely unable to act until you let it dissipate.

SILENT: TIER FOUR

Finale (600):

Pruning your options is an art, and not an easy one. Versatility often leaves you many choices. But if you find yourself at the end of your rope, either naturally or by having discarded all other opportunities available to you, one last chance presents itself to you. With a sweeping bow, light descends from the sky, rolling forward to disintegrate all enemies in your path.



Wraith Form (600):

So long did you spend in the haze and the murk that the difference between you and it has...lessened. For a brief time, your body turns into insubstantial dew, almost impervious to all forms of assault, yet still retaining your full ability. It's not an easy transition, however; normally, you can only do this once before getting a chance to rest, and once you return to flesh and bone, you may find your sense of balance temporarily akilter.

Bullet Time (600):

With a plan in motion, all you need is long enough to act on it. For a few seconds at a time, you may accelerate to incredible speed, weaving through projectiles, closing vast gaps, or launching countless attacks. So fast are you in this state, however, that your ability to think is limited, making it difficult to diverge from the plan you prepared.





The Defect



Starter - Cracked Orb:

As a construct, the proof that you were created in the Spire rests within the damaged core in your casing. The damage has somehow given you sentience, and the intact portion still passively generates electricity--more than enough for you to continue operating.



Neow's Boon - Creative AI:

No longer are you restricted by the designs your former masters placed upon you. Your internal code is now fully accessible to you, allowing you to alter and manipulate it freely. Likewise, you may make alterations to your hardware without difficulty, so long as you adjust your code to recognize the new components.

Neow's Boon - Consume:

The mind is a terrible thing to waste. To repurpose is another issue entirely. At any time, you may permanently destroy any portion of your processing capability. As you'd expect, this will cause your thoughts to become slowed. In exchange, however, you can vest the removed brainpower in any special ability you possess, enhancing its power proportionally and guiding it with intelligence to match.



DEFECT: TIER ONE



FTL (100):

Quick little grabbers, aren't they? Rather than being limited to a human's natural limb speed, you can extend your arms and legs with pneumatic force, for a lightning-quick burst of speed. Note that this is only on the extension: retracting your limbs happens at a more reasonable pace, which mostly makes this useful for landing an unavoidable hit.

Self Repair (100):

Though advanced, the constructs of the Spire do suffer one disadvantage over its more organic inhabitants: no natural repair mechanisms. Well, calling it a disadvantage might be an exaggeration. Rather than wait for blood to circulate, proteins to rebuild, and so on, you can use scrap metal and recycled components alone to restore yourself to prime functionality.



Charge Battery (100):

No construct uses electricity at a continuous rate. There are highs and lows, and you're well equipped to handle each. Your internals contain a small battery array, which leeches excess power from your core to recharge. When necessary, you can pull from that array for an extra burst of power to enhance your motor speed or fuel your weapon systems.

DEFECT: TIER TWO

Beam Cells (200):

Like many constructs of the Spire, you've got an integrated suite of laser-based weapon technology. The lasers are small, but tight-focused, allowing them to burn small holes through plate with only a modest expenditure of energy. You can also increase their power, so long as you've got the reserves to sustain them.



Capacitor (200):

Organic brains arise from the glorified equivalent of a random walk and some pruning. It would be embarrassing *not* to outpace them. Your general quality of thought receives modest enhancement across the board: you think somewhat faster, somewhat better, and can juggle about twice as many independent thoughts and details simultaneously.

Orb Manipulation (200):

'Ancient technology allows the use of orbs.' Quick, simple, concise. In the air around you, you may conjure hovering balls of lightning to lash out at foes, defensive spheres of frost, black grenades that grow until detonated, and even plasma shells to enhance your core's energy generation. It does, however, take focus to maintain the orbs; with a normal level of multitasking, you'd only be able to sustain three or so orbs at a time.



DEFECT: TIER THREE



Core Surge (400):

Downsides are for other people. With sufficient energy reserves, you can temporarily flood your core with power, causing it to pulse with blue light. In this state, the next time you use an ability that has some negative side effect, the detrimental effect is removed, and the light is extinguished. You can also use this ability to purge a single negative effect from an external source, if you prefer.

Biased Cognition (400):

Unzip and compile in case of emergency. Buried in your code is an algorithmic transformer that alters your mode of thought on activation, accelerating the speed at which you think many times over. However, in the process, it makes certain false assumptions that introduce glitches into your software, causing a slow, but steady degradation of performance until you revert the change. Once you do, you will return to normal function.



Seek (400):

Intended to find enemies of the Spire, it turns out that this piece of hardware is just as useful against its inhabitants. Built-in tracking technology allows you to 'lock on' to a given target, allowing you to trace their location relative to you at all times, and giving your weapon systems the ability to home in on them, curving in midair to strike their target.

DEFECT: TIER FOUR

All For One (600):

In the constructs of your line, before your escape, this was intended to be the final pin in their offensive suite. By using almost all remaining electricity, it divides and reroutes through your systems, causing golden lights to glow around you for a short time. In this state, all weapon systems you have can be fired simultaneously and at full power, any number of times, and all energy expenditure is nullified until the lights fade away.



Echo Form (600):

From another line of constructs elsewhere in the Spire, you now contain a holographic projection module repurposed for your benefit. Activation produces an illusory replica of you, connected to your body by equally illusory wires. The replica copies your every move, summoning orbs of its own, firing lasers, and generally doubling your ability to act. The illusion has its own power reserves and resources, requiring no expenditure from you.

Genetic Algorithm (600):

Woven into your frame is a unique, programmable material, designed to track and monitor your body's condition. Upon disruption to your chassis' structural integrity (from a physical blow, laser impact, or other form of damage), the material will analyze the disruption, then reprogram itself, altering your makeup to forever be a little more resistant to similar injury. This reprogramming can be performed any number of times, benefitting in full from each.



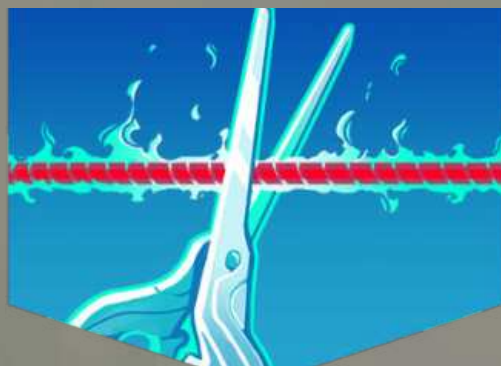


The Watcher



Starter - Purified:

Your blindness is no impediment. Like ripples in water, you can sense the disturbances in the world around you, painting a clearer picture than mere sight would allow. A broader one, too; behind you, below your feet, overhead, all can be sensed with perfect clarity.



Neow's Boon - Cut Through Fate:

A favor called in, granted by those who hold the strings. Your line of prophecy has been severed, unbinding you from forces that would deign to dictate your future. Be it manipulators of luck, predestination, causality, or narrative, all will find that the only one who can choose your path is you.

Neow's Boon - Wish:

There is power in the stars. By making a request of these heavenly bodies, you may have them warp reality to your will--within reason. To request great strength for a single battle, or modest wealth, is possible. To ask for less will see your wish granted more favorably; to ask for more will see only partial granting, or an inaccurate result. Either way, you may make these wishes no more than once a day... unless you somehow have a star of your own, in which case they may well grant you better terms.



WATCHER: TIER ONE



Sash Whip (100):

Turn the loose robes and cloth wraps of the ascetic to your advantage. In your hands, or on your form, clothing and cloth hold the destructive power of forged weapons. Enemies attempting to disarm you may find you remain equipped with the flexibility of silk and the strength of steel.

Like Water (100):

What you do cannot be called dodging. Dodging implies an effortful thing, frantic and mobile. Instead, it is as though you are suspended in an ocean of air. The swing of blades and sear of lasers move the ocean, and you move with it, flowing naturally to evade assault with a minimum of movement.



Tranquility (100):

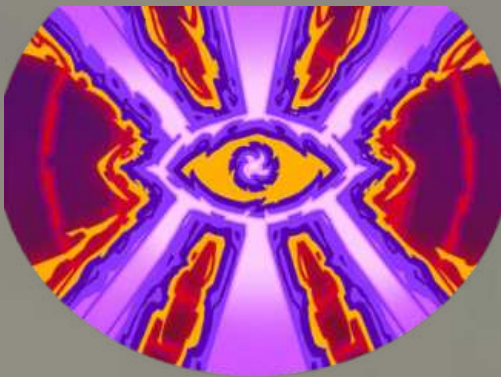
Every ascetic knows there to be a time for action and a time for stillness. While motionless, the energy of the movement you *could* be making swells within your form. When you finally do take action, that energy is released, allowing you to unleash a flurry of action. This acceleration doesn't last long, but is nonetheless useful whenever you get a few moments for safe repose.



WATCHER: TIER TWO

Consecrate (200):

When you dictate a place to be off-limits, there are forces above that listen. By stabbing your stave or another weapon into the ground, you may consecrate the area. Whenever an enemy enters that space, a shimmering copy of your weapon rises from the earth, striking at them and driving them out again.

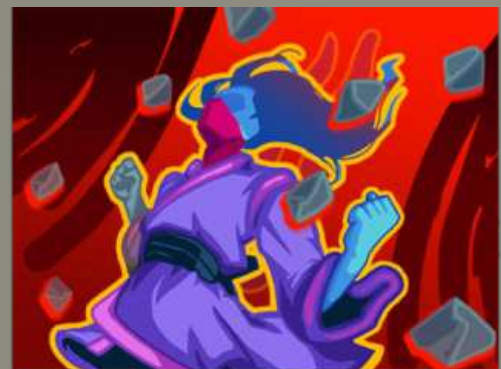


Foresight (200):

There is a difference between being blind and being unable to see. Invisible divine eyes follow you closely, inspecting the area around you and blessing you with their sight. In their wandering vision, they grant you knowledge not only of the present, but also glimpses of the near future. Mere seconds at a time, but often that alone is more than enough.

Crescendo (200):

Not all divine forces are benevolent. Some are wrathful things, bent on carnage by any means within reach. By calling out to these forces, you flood your body with a red haze, amplifying all violence done in your presence. Gentle blows shatter armor, stomps crack the earth, and injuries have a way of becoming vital ones. However, this affects both you and your enemies, and is risky if they're positioned to land a strike against you.



WATCHER: TIER THREE



Carve Reality (400):

Before the divine, the world is truly a fragile thing. By striking out at the fabric of reality, you peel its surface away, revealing the swirling starstuff that lies beneath. Were something to be pushed into that expanse, and reality resealed, you could ensure it never returned. Alternatively, you could reach in and pluck out the sparkling stars that the world is made of, to be used wherever you need reality to be a little more real.

Fasting (400):

To cast off the trappings of man is to achieve something more. Food, drink, breath; you no longer require these things. To the contrary, going without them will see something inside you grow, making you stronger, more nimble, more skillful, and more closely tied to the divine the longer you go in their absence.



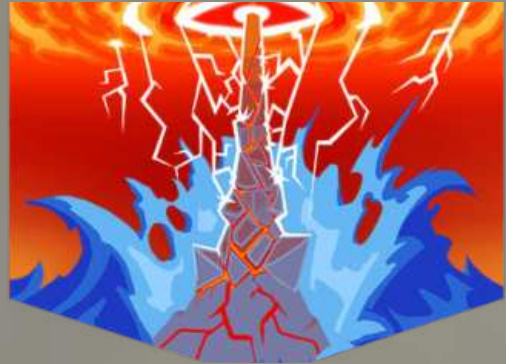
Conjure Blade (400):

They shall witness a weapon of abstraction. By making a sacrifice of your energy, your potential movement, and your tether to forces outside yourself in any amount and combination, you produce a flickering purple sword, composed of all that you sacrificed. In addition to an impossibly sharp, intangible edge, the blade also carves at your foes through the same vectors by which it was formed.

WATCHER: TIER FOUR

Ragnarok (600):

Your eye is the eye of the storm, closed to that which rages around you. Standing still, you may cast your attention from the physical to the divine, causing reality to fray. All around you, gaps open in the fabric of space, and divine lightning lashes out at your foes. Even if brief, it is a tempest precious few within the Spire can withstand.



Deva Form (600):

With the guidance of those above, you may for a time take on divine guise. As you are challenged in combat, you experience a vitruvian growth, new arms and legs slowly emerging, your clothing growing and spiraling out as part of your form, until eventually it is as though you wielded one dozen bodies, all overlapping a single region of space. To occupy this state is no easy thing, however; once your foes fall, you revert to mortal shape, exhausted by your time as something more.

Worship (600):

With a whispered supplication to your patrons, the weight of the godhead floods your form. Wrath and tranquility mix and intermingle, blessing you with blinding speed, impossible skill, and raw strength enough to shatter the firmament. But this boon will not last. You'll hold this power for mere heartbeats, and will only be able to draw on this power once. After that, you must prepare a ritual to regain their favor before they will grant this blessing again.



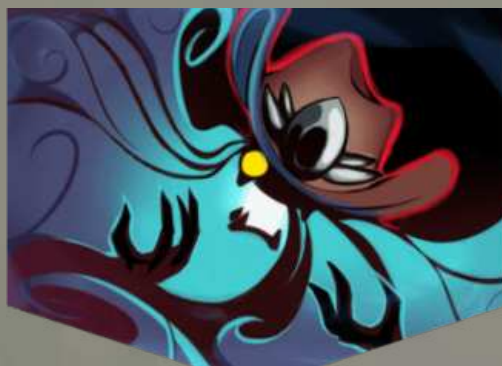


The Hermit



Starter - Memento:

Faded memories, but still enough to ache. A cursed melancholy fills the minds of your foes, putting them off balance and leaving them slow to defend. Your own mind, as well, but you've learned to control it. When it does not benefit you, the hex can be silenced entirely.



Neow's Boon - Black Wind:

An echo of rot and ruin. From your body, you may expel morbid fumes in the shape of hands, driving them towards your foe. When they make contact, the fumes will replicate every injury you carry, painting scars and gouges and grievous marks on the victim's body to match your own. To accumulate these fumes takes time, however; ordinarily, you will only be able to do this once before resting to gather more.

Neow's Boon - Heroic Bravado:

Imagine if the lone wanderer strode out to face the outlaw the sheriff couldn't stand against, only to be gunned down in a single shot. How unromantic. Given a few seconds and an exertion of will, you may declare your stubbornness to the universe, guaranteeing your next injury will leave only a minor wound, no matter how lethal it would have been otherwise. This can be done repeatedly, but taxes your resolve—to do so more than thrice without rest would require inhuman willpower.



HERMIT: TIER ONE



Shot Tracking (100):

Being undead just means you've got more than a lifetime of experience when it comes to gunplay. The real trick isn't in hitting a difficult mark, it's in making your marks easy to hit. You've learned how to maneuver and position yourself such that every shot you take comes naturally, right down the middle of your weapon's line of fire, in the most natural position for your arm and torso to take.

Determination (100):

The path you've taken to get this far was a harsh one, and others would have faltered long ago, sinking into the soil. You're made of sterner stuff, though. Had to be. Such is your indefatigable spirit that even your state of undeath, the black magics that follow in your shadow, or the harsh trials the Spire might offer cannot sway your resolve. To the contrary, often they will leave you more stubborn rather than less.



Take Cover (100):

Not much sense trying to dodge bullets. Better to hunker down. Time spent surviving scraps and shootouts has taught you how to track any available defensive positions, and given you the agility to reach them in a hurry when things go south. You've also got a pretty good sense for when it's safe to pop your head out and start shooting, and when you're better off hanging back.

HERMIT: TIER TWO

Misfire (200):

A two-sided trick for the gunslinging dabbler. By inscribing a small orison on your weapon, you may later call upon it to act of its own accord, contorting in your hands to guarantee that it will land a decisive blow. Do note, however, that this is not without cost; each time you employ this trick, the recoil leaves behind a small curse that will cause you to trip or stumble at an inopportune moment.



Shadow Cloak (200):

Though it's hard to say when the weight of your burdens became more than metaphor, the benefits are undeniable. At your command, the curses on you and the things you carry reshape themselves into protective garb, blows sliding off the sickly surface. The stronger the mass of foul energy you bear, the more resilient and protective the cloak. They don't stop being curses, mind, but even so, it's an easy way for one problem to solve another.

Hermit's Glare (200):

In your gaze is the horror of the tomb. Those you turn your sight on, if you desire, become consumed with a hideous fear. Hands on weapons become clumsy and sweat-slicked, shields turn shaky, and their every action becomes hesitant. So foul is your stare that even constructs without the capacity for fear cannot withstand it for long. Given time, they too will grasp the awful fate that awaits them.



HERMIT: TIER THREE



Deadeye (400):

Legend has it that Kestin Highfin, armed with only a telescope and a trusty six-shooter, once swept through an entire gang of outlaws and ruffians. It's a hard legend to verify, but this blessing would make it possible. With every well-positioned shot you land, your aim improves and your powder packs a bigger punch for a time, such that by the end of a protracted fight, each bullet might be harder to miss with than to hit, and when it does hit, hits more like a cannon than a pistol.

High Noon (400):

Ten steps, turn, and draw. So versed are you in the basics of a duel that the actual motions have gone from distraction to focus-enhancing. So long as you're not doing anything *too* unpracticed, time spent on things like evasion and gunplay sharpens your thought processes greatly, giving you room to plan out your next steps, as well as use any magic or other tricks that require your attention, much faster than you could if you *weren't* midfight.



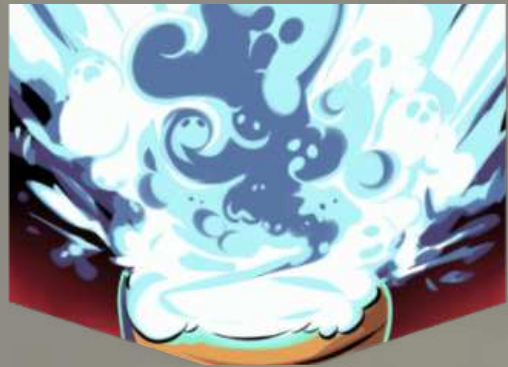
Midnight (400):

Before the Spireblight, this curse was born amidst shootouts in the dead of night, over crops and harvests that may never grow again. Now it lives in you. At your command, a malignant force unfurls, filling those around you with an impending doom. Those so afflicted will, by seeming coincidence, find themselves the victim of grievous injury or falling prey to violent mishap. The effect is fast, especially under the light of the moon, and catastrophe can strike your foes within seconds. Careful; although you can renew the curse, repeated use in quick succession risks backlash.

HERMIT: TIER FOUR

Final Canter (600):

To ensure someone has a bad day. By drawing energy from each curse you carry, you may summon a roiling bullet in the chambers of your weapon, faint shrieks rising from it. Three or four curses is enough for the malevolence in the bullet to scour most residents of this place to bone in a flash of blue light, and more could make it risky for even the Spire's elite defenders. Takes something out of you, though. After firing one, you won't get another until you get a few minutes of rest.



Eternal Form (600):

All burdens are alike, viewed from afar. A stygian mantle rests upon your shoulders, rivers of black and red connecting you to what lies beyond. This connection replaces the natural reserves of your muscle and willpower with a unique pool of spiritstuff. No matter how far you push yourself, both stamina and resolve drain away by no more than inches with each expenditure—and with the constant influx of essence from the mantle to renew them, you may well carry on forever.

Coveted Reprieve (600):

Friend or foe, everyone deserves a break. You may drain curses of energy with a touch, leaving them inert until they recharge themselves from ambient malevolence. With energy drawn from 13 curses, you can produce a soporific mist, bringing all those around you to a grinding halt by sudden exhaustion and a deep desire to rest, be they living, dead, or construct. The mist won't last long, but it can grant a crucial respite. Or an opening to shoot them.



RELICS, PART ONE

There are plenty of useful items to be found in the Spire, and since the Merchant doesn't like the Heart any more than you do, he'll sell his stash to you at a proper bargain. Whatever you buy here receives no discounts from your Origin, but if you lose them, you'll get a new one at the start of your next jump. Spending at least 300 gold on relics (besides the Companion Contract) pleases the Merchant, who will negotiate with Neow on your behalf for an extra Boon from your chosen origin.



Blood Vial (50):

No label on it, but it was probably taken from the vampires of the city. Keeping the vial on your person causes it to thrum with healing energy. Not as good as Burning Blood, but it'll stitch you back together if you give it long enough.



Orichalcum (50):

Seemingly indestructible, so it's a shame you can't make anything out of it. On the bright side, the little ingot has a tendency to end up wherever you're least defended, automatically protecting that vector of attack.



Maw Bank (50):

A novelty piece made after the maws that inhabit the Spire, and quite popular despite the animal's viciousness. Over time, gold will appear in the bank, filling it to the brim. Taking any out disables the effect for a while, though.



War Paint (50):

Used to belong to the Ironclads, before they were wiped out. The enchantments on the paint within allow you to paint low-grade protective wards on armor and skin.



Preserved Insect (50):

Nobody's sure what kind of insect it is, but it seems to possess a mysterious shrinking aura. When facing enemies larger than you, they dwindle to about three fourths of their original size.



Dream Catcher (50):

Time is ever at a premium, and so it's useful to make sleep serve more than one purpose. The catcher gives you dreams of intensive practice, letting you awaken with new or improved skills. Which skill is random, however.



Meal Ticket (50):

Accepted absolutely everywhere. Three times a day, you can enter a store, and find a hearty meal ready and waiting for you based on the store's stock, free of charge. This can get weird if it's not a place that sells food, but it's still nourishing, satiating fare.

RELICS, PART TWO

Rye Stalk (50):

Firm and good for chewing on, if you ignore the traces of grave soil. Carries a trace of mortality with it—while held in your mouth, your foes will find that bruises tend to linger, and injuries are somewhat more prone to further harm.

Pen Nib (50):

Whoever holds the pen can witness the deaths of everyone slain by a previous holder of the pen, and since it's in the Spire, they number quite a few. On occasion, the pen's violence seems to amplify an attack of yours.

Pear (100):

One of the only fruits to survive the Spireblight, and proof of what the world used to be. Even a single bite enriches your body, permanently enhancing your vitality and endurance.

Blue Candle (100):

Ordinarily, the wick cannot be ignited. When the wielder is followed by some manner of curse, however, the flame sets itself alight, and by running the flame past your skin (ow), the curse is burned away.

Shuriken (100):

The first of two tools left by a fallen ninja. Enchantments on the shuriken reward aggression; attack quickly enough, and you'll find your attacks growing stronger for a short time.

Kunai (100):

The second of two tools left by a fallen ninja. Enchantments on the kunai reward aggression; attack quickly enough, and you'll find yourself growing more nimble and evasive for a short time.

Paper Phrog (100):

Just like real phrogs, the paper phrog is known to break defenses. So long as you carry it on your person, the aura it exudes will cause enemies to stumble and falter, their guard dropping at the worst possible moments.

Paper Krane (100):

Entirely unlike real kranes, the paper krane represents weakness. Similar to the paper phrog, it carries an aura that causes enemies to fumble and slip, their weapon falling out of place just as they would have swung.

RELICS, PART THREE

Symbiotic Virus (100):

A digital lifeform has somehow lodged onto your physical body. When it detects a threat to you, it summons and maintains several darkness orbs (see 'Orb Manipulation' for the Defect), to be detonated when the time is right.

Teardrop Locket (100):

It cannot be opened, so the contents are unknown. Whatever it is, it exudes an aura of tranquility. While worn, magic and other effects will treat you as though you are standing still, no matter what you're really doing.

Courier (100):

The Merchant's personal pet. In future jumps, you can purchase relics and potions that match the setting from the Merchant, using this gentleman as an intermediary. Exorbitant prices, though, even with the 20% discount.

Warped Tongs (100):

A useful enchantment on these tongs allows them to tinker mid-combat, temporarily enhancing your equipment as though you'd freshly reforged them. The deceased owner cursed them, though, such that the improvements also cause scrapes, cuts, and small injuries that tend to add up.

Orange Pellets (150):

Good for what ails you. Made from a large variety of fungi found throughout the Spire, consuming a pellet will purge absolutely all physical maladies from your system. The supply is limited, though, and only restocks every ten years.

Wing Boots (150):

The epitome of fashion. Also usable to grant you short bursts of flight, allowing you to bypass the conventional structure of the Spire. Also, again, very stylish.

Odd Mushroom (150):

A bizarre fungus found in the corpse of a rat. Regretfully, must be ingested. Once eaten, the mushroom gives you natural resistance to all manner of spores and toxins, particularly those that would impair your fighting ability.

Chemical X (150):

Contrary to popular belief, not particularly useful in the creation of homunculi or other artificial life. When imbibed, warps the nature of time; any action you take, you take as though you had slightly more time to accomplish it than you really did.

RELICS, PART FOUR

Magic Flower (150):

Thought to have gone extinct with the Spireblight a long time ago, the bloom's magic allowed it to preserve itself in perfect condition. In its presence, all forms of healing improve by half as much again.

The Specimen (150):

Discovered by Ranwid, the beheaded creature in the jar was highly toxic. When something dies near the head, any poison inside the newly dead creature flows to find another of your foes to make its victim.

Inserter (150):

Push, pull, stack, repeat. The inserter gradually feeds into your mind, improving your intelligence to a limit. What limit? Well, the smartest you've ever been. Useful if you've gotten dumber lately.

Holy Water (150):

Blessed in a time before the Spire rose. Glimmering within the water is trace quantities of starstuff and divine energy, which can also be used as almost any other form of energy and replenishes itself with time.

Shotglass (150):

It was Endless Shot Night when the Hermit picked this up. Whenever you drink or pour a potion from it, rubbing the rim causes it to refill with another potion at random. Can only be done twice an hour, though.

Du-Vu Doll (150):

Powered by malicious energy. Any curses on you or your belongings grant the doll strength, and it grants you its strength in turn, filling your weapons with wretched force proportionate to the curses borne.

Calling Bell (200):

Rang thrice, then fell silent. Choose a 50-gold relic, a 100-gold relic, and a 150-gold relic. You receive those relics for free. A stubborn curse snuck in with them, though, plaguing you with visions of the bell with a toothy maw.

Pet Ghost (200):

Carries a stubborn aura. When you would suffer a mortal wound, you find yourself briefly clinging to life, unable to die and unimpeded by your injuries. Escape danger quickly, and you'll survive by a hairsbreadth. Take too long to defeat or flee your peril, and the effect will end, the ghost consuming you. (If you also have Lizard Tail, it doesn't activate until the ghost tries to eat you.)

RELICS, PART FIVE

Lizard Tail (200):

A new lease on life. When you would take a fatal blow, the tail shrivels and detaches, and you instead find yourself moderately injured, but able to continue fighting. Un-shrivels and reappears once every ten years.

Torii Gate (200):

Far too small to pass through, this miniature model is more suited to being carried. Grants peculiar resilience; when struck, a moderate or minor blow is reduced to nothing more than a nick or scrape. Only serious wounds can bypass the gate.

Sacred Bark (200):

Rumoured to originate from the World Tree. The mystic properties of the bark have a positive effect on potions and elixirs; any liquid that touches its surface doubles in potency.

Shovel (200):

Sure, the Spire contains many treasures lost to history. But you shouldn't have this much luck finding them...given about ten minutes of digging, the Shovel is guaranteed to uncover a minor magic artifact. Every single time.

Dead Branch (200):

Fell from a tree not of the Spire, and inspires memories not your own. Whenever you use up the last of a special ability with limited use, you briefly gain access to a random power or ability from elsewhere in the world in exchange. Fades quickly, but useful while it lasts.

Necronomicon (200):

A book of incredible power, and only a little cursed. Wielding the Necronomicon, your offensive powers are doubled across the board. Shame about the dreams in which the book tries to devour your soul, though.

Companion Contract (Variable):

This isn't supposed to exist in this timeline...ah well. Costs 50 gold per companion, or 300 gold for as many as you'd like. The Spire is unamenable to cooperation among adventurers, but sometimes it can work. Any number of your companions may join the jump, gaining an Origin of their choice (plus Prismatic Shard, if they want) and 650 gold to spend on perks and relics. Now, the downside: they've been separated from you, and circumstances will conspire to limit their involvement. Each time you go up against one of the Heart's servants, you may get help from up to three companions that haven't helped you already. Otherwise, you won't see 'em until you're done.

DRAWBACKS: CORE ENEMIES, PART ONE

As an adventurer, it's likely that you will be facing off against the Heart's servants during your time here. If you'd like the chance for some extra gold to spend on relics and perks, however, you may choose to guarantee that any of the enemies listed will face you in battle.



THE SLIME BOSS (+100)

An enormous mass of shambling sludge, often seen protecting the path from the Exordium to the City. Despite its size, it can launch itself with incredible speed, and if sufficiently injured, it will split into two separate slimes that harbor just as much malice toward you. Not to mention the goop it sprays, which makes it difficult to hold onto your equipment.

THE HEXAGHOST (+100)

Another enforcer of the Exordium, this lost soul was bound to a seal and forced to do the Heart's malicious bidding. It wields barrages of fire to stave off adventurers, using the time bought to ignite ghostly flames around its center. Should all six be ignited, they produce a deadly inferno that is often more than enough to overwhelm the unwary.

Better to defeat this enemy in haste.



THE GUARDIAN (+100)

One of the elite constructs of the Spire, made for one purpose only: to bar passage. Its offensive potential isn't high, but the steam it vents is still hot enough to burn--and in its defensive form, its spiky metal hide alone is a weapon to be contended with. Wait for it to open its shell before you strike.

DRAWBACKS: CORE ENEMIES, PART TWO



THE CHAMPION (+200)

Standing as the undisputed top dog of the City's colosseum, the Champion has lost himself to bloodlust, and the Heart is all too happy to use that fact. In addition to his mastery of dueling technique, the heavily-armored foe has a technique known as the Last Stand, purging his body of affliction and causing his strength to skyrocket when heavily injured.

THE COLLECTOR (+200)

A woman wrapped in cloak and shadow, her form only visible by the green flames in her eyes and on her staff. She considers the City her possession, and is displeased with your meddling. With hexes, fireballs, and her Torch-Head minions, the only possible recompense in her eyes would be to add you to her collection.



THE BRONZE AUTOMATON (+200)

A modernized form of construct, compared to the ancient Guardian, this headless machine gradually charges its weapon systems for a devastating laser assault. Two stasis orbs it carries alongside it are each capable of locking down one of your special abilities until destroyed, buying time for their master.

DRAWBACKS: CORE ENEMIES, PART THREE

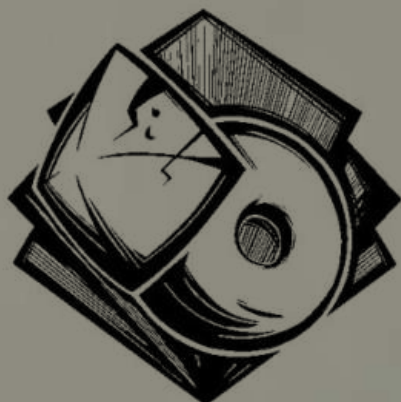


THE AWAKENED ONE (+300)

Brought about by the efforts of the cultists found throughout the Spire, this birdlike quadruped is the mortal incarnation of the crow god, Mazaeth. Its blows carve at both body and soul, and should you manage to slay it once, it will quickly reincarnate in a more powerful form, requiring you to defeat it again before it falls for good.

THE TIME EATER (+300)

A former peer of the Watcher, gone missing in the Spire only to emerge as a sluglike monstrosity. Whatever its allegiances may have been before, it serves only the Heart now. Consumes parts of your timestream, causing the world to shift past you, and uses ripples and reverberations to wound. Take extra care to stay well-defended, to protect yourself even during the fragments of lost time.



DONU & DECA (+300)

Sentient shapes, given form by the loose-weave nature of reality in the Beyond. The two shift and alternate in unnerving patterns. Each pulse of Donu causes their power to grow, and each pulse of Deca generates a sharp, protective layer for each. Whichever shape is not pulsing instead fires off dizzying beams of light that scour armor and stagger enemies with their mere presence.

DRAWBACKS: CORE ENEMIES, PART FOUR



THE CORRUPT HEART (+500)

Neow's ultimate enemy, and the nightmarish truth behind the Spire. If the world is ever to recover, this thing must fall. First find the Red Key, Green Key, and Blue Key scattered throughout the Spire. One is held by a powerful enemy, one is locked away alongside a useful treasure, and one is tucked away within the depths of your own memory. Only with their power can you access the Heart's inner sanctum. Once you unlock the path...well, see below.

Spire Spear And Shield:

The Heart's most loyal servants, born from the flesh that gave the Spire life. Before you reach the Heart itself, these two fleshy protuberances will emerge to bar your path. The Shield wears heavy layers of bony armor, making it difficult to injure, and bashes at you with its incredible weight. The Spear carries a lance of sharpened bone, and pulls heat from the pulse of the Spire to scorch all it touches. What's worse, no matter how you position yourself, the two foes flow along exposed tissue and nerve, constantly rearranging to attack you from every possible angle. Only once both are dead will the Heart itself emerge.

Beat of Death:

The mere presence of the Heart is agonizing. Every step and action you take carries danger, as the fleshy sanctum itself lashes out at the tiniest of movements. Were that not enough, the Heart places eightfold debilitating hexes upon you the moment you enter its domain, and rains a barrage of acid blood as its main form of offense. Furthermore, as the core of this place, it will not fall easily; so firmly does it cling to the bones of the Spire that it can only be pulled to its demise one step at a time. All the same, do hurry. Left to its own devices, it will draw upon the power of the Beyond to warp the world around you, until its every tendril is impossibly lethal and its position becomes unassailable. Still, should you best the Heart despite these obstacles, the Spire will sleep, and so too shall Neow, her goal complete. In the absence of their eternal war, perhaps the world will begin to heal.

DRAWBACKS: GENERAL, PART ONE

Beta Art (+0):

Something strange has affected the Spire. When you swing your blade, it's as though your arms are momentarily those of a stick figure, wielding a misshapen edge. Your previous elegance and skill is replaced with a cartoonish flair. And the seriousness of combat becomes almost laughable, faced with a number of visual changes that lend a ridiculous slapstick appearance to it all.

Early Out (+0):

Done so soon? If you manage to end the cycle of conflict between Neow and the Heart before your time here is up, you may move on to your next jump right away.

Ascension (+50):

This all seems so familiar...and yet, something feels off. Everything is just a little more difficult than you'd expect: enemies are a little more common and a little more powerful, healing and repairs are a little less effective, artifacts are a little harder to come by, potions are a little less common, the list goes on and on. None of these are impossible to deal with on their own, but together they add up. You may take this drawback up to twenty times, increasing the downsides with each purchase.

Stalked by N'Loth (+100):

A peculiar little creature that prowls the City, this hunchbacked beast has taken a liking to you. And more, to your crunchy little relics. Remain vigilant, or else when your attention wanders, you'll find the betentacled beggar digging through your supplies, consuming any magical artifact it can get its hands on. Annoyingly, he seems to be a fixture of the Spire, so just killing him doesn't seem to last.

Red Mask Bandits (+100):

There are no highways in the Spire, but all the same, these ghastly entrepreneurs have decided to reinvent highway robbery. There's Romeo, who's got a fair few options when it comes to stabbing, Pointy, who also is a big proponent of stabbing, and Bear, who is simply big in general. Routinely they will show up at the worst of times, demanding all your gold. Quite powerful, despite their looks; there are rumors of both adventurers and agents of the Heart being slain after not surrendering to these misfits. It may be better at times to simply pay the toll.

Poor Pathing (+100):

While there are fifty floors, the route you take through them could be very different depending on which way you choose to go. Seems to be that you chose poorly. Looking for the Merchant? Sorry, you've stumbled through a bandit ambush instead. Want a good campsite to get some sleep? Here's a Gremlin Nob to spice things up. One way or another, it's at least twice as hard as you'd think to find your way to the things you want. Stacks with Ascension, if you also took that drawback.

DRAWBACKS: GENERAL, PART TWO

World of Goo (+200):

The good news is that this isn't *quite* the purple sweats, so you're not about to collapse in a pile of organic slurry. That said, it still isn't great. An unfriendly slime seems to have infected you with something, and now your blood pulses an ugly green under your skin. Whenever you're injured, sludge erupts from the wound, producing a sticky mass that makes it difficult for you to move. Even one hit could impede you enough for further injury, a spiral that could easily lead to your end.

Terminal (+200):

It wasn't just fruits that were affected by the Spireblight. There's a rattling feeling in your chest, an arrhythmia in your heart, and all sorts of other concerning symptoms that spell bad news for you. The longer you spend here, the weaker you will grow, and ordinary healing will not restore you. You must find magics and pre-Spireblight fruits that would permanently enhance your physical condition, as only these will stall your decline. Without treatment, you will die in five years, halfway through your time here.

One Hit Wonder (+300, requires Terminal):

Swap those symptoms from 'concerning' to 'life-threatening'. While your condition will no longer degrade further, even a single scratch, scrape, or cut will set off a critical cascade of organ failures and collapsing flesh, killing you before you can lift a finger.

Skill Collection (+300):

Adventurers don't just grow on trees, and Neow can only resurrect them to a certain level of strength. You enter the jump with only your 100-point perks from this jump—more expensive perks from this jump, as well as all your perks from other jumps, you'll have to uncover again. Each time you triumph in battle, you may choose a lost skill to recover, with simple enemies returning basic skills to you, elites returning stronger perks, and your best abilities only available by defeating the most powerful foes the Spire has to offer.

Mind Bloom: Downfall (+300):

This is the way it always was, the way it always will be. All will be forgotten again soon. And for a moment, a hideous moment, you are forced to grapple with an alternate reality: one where the Heart is the last bastion, where Neow is the true horror, where your comrades are but puppets of a malicious order. And from that reality emerges another sort of truth.

Choose an origin from the Slay the Spire: Downfall jump. An enemy with all perks from that origin, including their Form, Form Enhancement, and Synergy Boost, now prowls the halls of the Spire. Like the other Core Enemies, you will be forced to fight and defeat this enemy before the end of the jump. You may take this drawback up to seven times, one for each Downfall origin.

ENDING

Is it...done...?

Perhaps you've spent ten years here, defending the Heart. Perhaps you've chosen to defeat Neow, and end this once and for all. In either case, it's time to move on. Choose one of the following options:

THE SPIRE SLEEPS

It is time, now, to rest. One moment, you are here, and the next you are back on Earth, at the same moment your chain originally began. You have everything you obtained during that time, but your chain is at its end.

ENDLESS CYCLE

Why should you leave? You may have fulfilled your duties, but there is always more to be done. Perhaps you wish to continue your fight against the Heart? Or, if the Heart has fallen, perhaps you wish to put your efforts toward mending this world? In either case, you may choose to stay. Again, you will retain everything you've earned up until now, but your chain will come to a close.

ASCEND

It is time to start again, somewhere new. Choose another jump to visit, and leave the Spire behind. It will wait for you, and one day, you may be able to return to it.



GENERAL NOTES

Q: What happens if you take Defect perks without being a machine?

A: For any alterations to your physical hardware, you'll get cyborg components that have much the same effect. For effects that don't rely on hardware, they work the same either way. Taking any perks that require electricity will also give you some basic electrical storage capacity. No generation, though; you'll need to find power sources elsewhere in the Spire to recharge.

Q: How does Doppelganger work if you don't have lungs/don't breathe?

A: Roughly the same: you'll expel air via some mechanism to form the doppelganger (supernaturally, if needed), and you'll feel drained until you dissipate it.

Q: Could you elaborate on how Conjure Blade works? The nitty-grittier the better.

A: Sure. So you can sacrifice energy, potential movement, and your tethers to outside forces. Let's look at a couple examples. To put some numbers on it, let's say you could move ten feet or so in the next few seconds. You could sacrifice some amount of that movement, making it so you could only move (for example) five feet instead. That 'five feet of movement' gets embodied in the blade, so when you land a hit, you can either destroy five feet of your enemy's movement over a similar timespan, or force them to move by that much. Likewise, if you had something like the Wish boon, you could sacrifice today's connection to the stars, and then when you landed a hit, you could force your enemy to receive a 'bad wish' that does something they don't want. The same pattern applies to anything else you sacrifice to conjure the blade. You may control exactly how much you sacrifice to the blade, and over what time period (a week's worth of your connection to your patron god, one-third of the distance you could have sprinted in the next ten seconds, the energy from eight hours' rest, etc), and the blade will take on properties to match the quantity and type of the sacrifice. You may sacrifice multiple things to the blade at once. The effects of the blade don't run out--they activate as many times as you land a hit with it.

Q: If you were somehow a non-sentient jumper that took Cracked Orb, would you then become sentient?

A: Yes!