

Sect

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The path to Heaven is long beyond measure, barred to all but the greatest of men. Countless Cultivators struggle through the eons, hoping to close just one inch of that gap, and countless more die in the struggles of the Immortals. Vast, unknowable beings swim the seas between the stars, and in every world, on every level, cruelty triumphs as the way of the world.

In one of these worlds, in a little known Sect known as the Zhen, a poisonous pit of unorthodox cultivators who eat their own, a little girl suffers as the latest of the sacrifices. In a place beyond names, the shade of a girl who was Hero, Villain, and so much beyond exists in a mockery of life.

Yet it's said that once, to save someone, Shakyamuni let down a spider's thread that fell all the way to Hell, a path up from the darkness.

This is the thread that binds Heaven and Hell, and this is the story of those who climb up its winding ways.

So take this 1000 CP (Cultivated Progress), for you're going to spend the next ten years in this world that seems to be caught in the fallout of the death of alien intelligences and the schemes of distant gods.

Origins

Any origin may be taken as a drop-in, representing someone who has no connection or history in this world, or any other that it touches. You start shortly before a nameless Sacrifice is caught trying to escape. She won't be nameless long.

Origins grant a 50% discount to perks and items associated with them. If the item or perk is discounted under 100 CP, it becomes free.

Parahuman

The world you came from was locked away from these strange realms. Lesser gravity, less energy, a closed jar that you have broken out of for the greater multiverse. Whether defined by conflict, or simply fleeing from it, the place you find yourself is outside the bound your betters set for you.

But then, your kind murdered those betters. It's wise to fear those who escaped their jar.

Itinerant Cultivator

In a conflict defined by what identity others perceive you as, the Itinerant Cultivator has always held an uncertain station. Who knows the character of their cultivation, cut off from the formalities of sect or government? A more important question might be why they are cut off, though.

An outsider everywhere, you may pay little heed to the distinctions between the orthodox and unorthodox, between accepted practice and those that earn the accusation of witchcraft and the demonic. You follow your own path in your journey to enlightenment. To you comes wisdom from beyond the horizon of their reality.

Orthodox Sect

You cleave to what a cultivator is supposed to be, at least on the surface. While some claim that no one follows all the rules, all the time, you follow the rules people expect you to follow, where they can see you.

More fundamentally, you are largely in line with the systems of power as they exist, and are an accepted and theoretically respected part of the 'legitimate' power bloc.

Unorthodox Sect

A rebel against the system, at least on the surface, you reject the ideas and ideals espoused by the 'mainstream' legitimate factions. While some claim that no one breaks all the rules, all the time, you are perceived as having broken those rules that would keep you in line with the public trust.

Which ironically enough, makes you a member of another group, one with its own acceptable and unacceptable codes of conduct.

Still, while there is a certain level of hypocrisy in the labeling of who is accepted and who is rejected, the demonic paths do wind their way through the unorthodox sects, so perhaps it isn't a completely empty label.

Merchant

Whether a traveling merchant, the head of house of some landed family, a traveling cultivator more in search of wealth than enlightenment, or a sect elder acting as an interface with the rest of the world, yours is often seen as a crass profession, but ultimately an essential one. You are the one who keeps the goods flowing. Five people like you coming together created the City of Rams, one of the great economic powerhouses for the entire Sacred Lotus Kingdom.

That isn't to say this is a safe profession. The Kingdom has certainly had a... checkered history with how it relates to its businesses and the people who own them, not to mention that this is a world deep in the hold of various monopolies. There's a reason only five immortals live in the City of Rams.

Censorate

As an honorable member of the Terrace of Imperial Scribes, you are granted about the same level of respect as the madam of the nearest brothel, only many Cultivators enjoy their visits to a brothel. Still, there are perks. You know exactly how fucked your nation is, and you can desperately scramble to keep everything from exploding before you're out of the way.

This dignified station comes with many perks as well, more money than you have a use for (no, really. What are you going to do with all of it? Many cultivator goods aren't sold for money), backup that's already been deployed somewhere else, and authority that is more seen as a threat than a merit by people perfectly capable of killing you, it's no wonder that so many Cultivators rush to join this prestigious organization.

Perks

General

A Physical Grounding - Free for everyone but Parahuman

While saying 'everyone has a body' might be a gross generalization, most do. And a body fit to live on a cultivation planet is one far harder than the common breed. Before cultivation, your basic physical parameters are already superhuman. Someone from Earth would struggle to even live upon one of the giant planets that support the path to immortality. You, almost by definition, thrived.

This isn't much, and your body reformation almost certainly will make this irrelevant, but even before Qi cultivation comes into the picture, you're a mildly superhuman heavy worlder, with better bones, muscles, blood, lungs, and more than any normal human could achieve.

Cultivation - Free

A common truth that almost any cultivator might tell you is, "Cultivation's origins are the same as that of Alchemy." Alchemy is the process of refining matter, as cultivation is the process of refining the body and the spirit.

From the lower Dantian, to the Crimson Palace, from the Crimson Palace, to the Muddy Pellet Palace, you construct your inner world, and through emptiness expand it beyond the bounds of self. With a soul that touches the nature of reality, you have found your way, faced tribulation, and stepped onto your own path as an Immortal.

In all likelihood, you're a Human Immortal, an immortal who exists in a state of balance between Heavenly Yang and Earthly Yin, but you may choose to follow an unbalanced path.

That of an Earth Immortal, imbalance towards Yang, a physical powerhouse, but your body consumes your own spirit, your powers leaning heavily towards the physical, oriented on your body. Alternatively, you can be a Ghost Immortal, imbalance toward Yin, a spiritual powerhouse, but your soul and its needs overpower your body, giving rise to a reputation for unsavory appetites that your fellows have.

No matter which of these you are, it places you within the top percentile of cultivators in this world. Your every action echoes on a stage where entire sects, cities and nations take notice. It's also the bare minimum you need in order to participate in the plot, lest you die in one of the missed attacks offscreen.

Martial Arts - Free

It's a depressing truth that it takes one person to start a fight. For all that there are cultivators who wish nothing more than to retreat from entanglement with the world and pursue enlightenment, those that do so, can only follow that path by being under the umbrella of more martial souls or sheltered by great powers willing to defend them. As such, the truism of "Hope for Peace, but Prepare for War" holds true among cultivators.

You are competently prepared as an immortal. You have decent martial talent (as judged by other immortals), are skilled with fist and foot, movement and positioning, maintaining situational awareness, and responding to surprise and violence. You are skilled with up to three weapons, which can be conventional or exotic, and at a level where other immortals will shrug and declare you... average.

It should be noted that an average immortal is probably terrifyingly talented by any lesser metric.

Oh, You're Done - 300 CP

Or maybe you are decidedly not average. When Six-Ears tells someone to just get more talented, you would nod along. After all, that's probably how you would solve your problems. It's easy, after all.

It's not just that things come more easily to you than they do to other people, but that they come more intuitively to you. You have a deep and profound sense of both yourself, your own energies, the world around you, the energies flowing through the world around you, and how all these things affect each other and play off each other.

While this makes you somewhat more sensitive to techniques and the like, that isn't really what this is about. Rather, this is about turning 'sense' into 'do.' You often figure out the metaphysical behavior of the world behind something before a lecture can even touch on the surface of the subject, and this understanding can and does translate into the rapid development, refinement, and implementation of techniques and abilities. You often find yourself developing the *skill* or *ability* to do something that you might be years or decades away from having the *power* to do traditionally or properly.

While you might find yourself cursing your deficit of power, your opponents will find themselves cursing the esoteric nature of the abilities you develop, the refined and perfected approach you execute your techniques with, or the obscure nature of the forces you wield that defy the understanding of not only your peers, but those who would usually be seen as your superiors.

For that matter, your friends might find it disturbingly humbling too.

The Real Power of Friendship -100 CP

The fact of the matter is that for reasons that could be cynical or idealistic, friends are a superpower. The cold-hearted might note that two hands usually fall to four, while a more hopeful soul might find that that friendship is more valuable than gold for its own sake.

Whichever camp you find yourself in, you usually have friends at your back. This is partly luck, leading you to people whose path borders your own and providing the opportunity to join those paths. This is partly skill, learned empathy, and observation. This is partly attitude, an inviting mien that draws people in and pulls them after your wake. And this is partly attribute, the sheer force of personality, charisma, and charm needed to forge bonds.

But perhaps just as important as luck bringing friends to you, fate will make sure your friends have an opportunity to play a part in helping you. While a true friendship might span the distance, it's usually nicer when their actions can span to something that regularly plays out in your favor.

Beyond the Likes of You - 100 CP

When you fight others, any major advantages you have over them seem to become firmer, harsher. A theoretical or technical weakness simply never comes into play, a clever stratagem against your strengths fails. It's seemingly impossible to negate or overcome your strengths. Peers and near peers can fight you, but it often feels like the efforts of those weaker than you add up to less than the sum of their parts.

At the same time, your own advantages become multiplied. If you're significantly stronger than the one you're fighting, your strength seems to crumble theirs, as if you had a type advantage against them and had narrowed in on the weakest link in their efforts and defenses.

This isn't restricted to a physical fight. Social, economic, intellectual... As long as you are dominating, then you will dominate.

Maybe few people will be impressed by how good you are at punching down, but you might be surprised how many of those people will one day fall to the efforts of those 'beneath' them.

Haven't you Realized? - 100 CP

That you're the only one still alive?

Sometimes, it's less about making friends, and more about not having enemies. It might be a depressing realization, but sometimes fear is the best teacher. While the knowledge might stain your soul with bitter cynicism, such truths are why such a teacher is on your payroll.

You are terrifying, not as an opponent is terrifying, but like a giant is terrifying. The more you expose yourself, the more people shy away from the very thought of facing you, such defiance feeling more like throwing sand into a storm and expecting it to blind the eye of a hurricane.

This comes with a mix of posture, attitude, self-control, and the ability to engage in casual brutality without flinching to sell your strengths and hide your weaknesses. It works better the stronger you can sell yourself relative to the people you're intimidating, though even those stronger than you will tend to have little nagging thoughts about the danger that pushes against thoughts of challenging you.

Still, remember that if you don't want people to be intimidated and super polite around you, maybe you shouldn't eat people's souls in front of them.

I'd Have Been Willing to Run With Your Gang - Free, if you want it.

The first bow is the friendship of those who understand the sound; those who already know what the other is trying to say, who can always listen.

The second bow is the friendship of those who would cut the throat; those who would carry the bramble and ask to be whipped with it before betraying their friends' trust, who would die for their friend.

The third bow is the friendship of a good meal, the promise to go the distance, to travel miles through hardship, simply to enjoy a good meal together with your friend.

The fourth bow is the friendship of sacrifice, the friendship of one who would give their friend the clothes off their back and the food from their pack, to die in the cold, so that their friend could make it out.

The fifth bow is the friendship of glue-and-lacquer, the friendship of those who stick together, who bring each other along and don't just support each other, but relish spending time together.

The sixth bow is the friendship of life and death, the friendship of those who seek to live and die together, to seek prosperity and disaster together.

The seventh bow is the bow of friendship for those who trust each other absolutely, those who keep reaching out, helping each other, believing in each other's good name and nature even through years of difficulty, failure, and reasons to give up on each other.

The eighth bow is for friendship across generations, the friendship that transcends barriers of class, age, knowledge, and experience, for those who hold each other true beyond such matters and unconsidered with such issues of propriety.

You have the ability to make eight-bow friends. The ability to find those whom you would be compatible with in such a manner, the circumstances that would forge that friendship, help the two of you build those unlikely bridges, and the shared wisdom to act on it, to solidify those bonds so that you have such a rare gift. The gift of true friendship.

To be clear, this perk won't *make* such a friendship from nothing, the possibility must exist. And it must be mutual. It will do nothing to help you manipulate someone, to forge a one sided bond of loyalty that would help you gain something or control someone. It makes no promise that you are the one who will benefit from it. Perhaps the friend it will lead you to will be the one in need.

But if you take this perk, you will have the opportunity to forge rare friendships with those both high and low, transcendent beyond your ability to comprehend, or perhaps the other way around, those who can't imagine your existence. Such a gift is priceless. And such a gift always has its price.

Take it at your own risk.

Parahuman

Complicated and Potentially Morally Questionable Lessons - 100 CP

There are lots of lessons that are useful, and life has taught them to you. Not merely how to deflect blame, but how to make sure it never falls on you in the first place. How to plan things out, two betrayals ahead, just in case. How to throw your enemies off balance such that they die before finding their feet, or how to recover your own balance in the middle of madness and pain so the same never happens to you.

This isn't merely the education and ability to fall into a practical mindset granted by exciting teenage years, nor the skills that millage would bring, but the promise that they will cleanly and usefully adapt to your changing circumstances. You will find that, for you, gang culture and cutthroat noble politicking are one and the same, that escaping gangsters on the street translates into escaping beasts in the wilderness, and vice versa. Your life might have been a rough road, but you're ready to share that with everyone else.

Breaking Apart or Going Mad - 100 CP

Both sound better than doing nothing

The Bodhisattva Guanyin ripped her head into eleven pieces, trying to hear the cries of everyone in pain, and tore her arms into a thousand pieces trying to reach back to all of them. This is why people have a limited will, a limited determination. Because if they didn't, if they kept pushing...

Well, that was the fate of a Bodhisattva. Imagine what it would do to you? Maybe you could find out, for you have a boundless will. In the end, 'will' is not a fungible resource, and so on some level, you can always choose to have more.

You have chosen to have all of it.

Sometimes... sometimes will and determination aren't enough. Sometimes bending is what keeps you from breaking, rather than helping you not break. Sometimes things are too much, and no amount of will can let you weather them, you need things beyond just will to do so. But maybe that's okay? It's better than doing nothing.

I'd Love Anything You Gave Me - 200 CP

Being someone's parent or guardian can be a hard task, and no one starts out ready for it. More than that, whatever you learn or prepare, it's never going to match what your child actually ends up needing. Not exactly, and often not even vaguely.

And that's not okay. That's why you know how to learn, adapt, and grow into the person your child needs. Whether they need someone patient who can listen to them cry, someone solid who can be a pillar of support, or someone dangerous who can protect them, you grow incredibly fast when it comes to becoming what your child needs. Not only do you make months of progress in days, but while developing the skills you need you're more receptive, attentive, and adaptable than normal. Not only this, but you can figure things out from first principles as if you were learning from an accredited course.

You also excel as a teacher. Any skills, mindsets, or learnable abilities become easily sharable when you teach. Notably, this explicitly includes this world's cultivation.

Maybe it's not enough. Maybe nothing is enough, when a situation is that fucked up. But you do what you can.

Notably, a Teacher is like a Mother or a Father, and an older sibling sometimes sets into a parental role. Likewise, this gift requires no blood relationship, merely that the one you're guarding is part of your found family, and that you hold a kind of parental role in that relationship.

So, In Exchange, Don't Disappear - 400 CP

It's not wrong to call the world a sea of bitterness, a series of compromises and sacrifices you make till you finally die. And then the real shit starts. And you've been dealing with that. You sacrifice your life, and then you sacrifice your death, and then you prepare to sacrifice your soul, and realize that it will only create even more bitterness, in a never-ending cycle.

Enough.

Maybe your life has been cruel, but there's a limit, and you've reached yours. Maybe it's a touch of enlightenment, good karma finally coming in, or an application of sheer bloody-minded rejection of being bound to such a dark story that reality itself has started to give way... but for you, enough has been enough, and now no more.

When you're involved, a narrow path through events becomes wider. A single thread holding everything together becomes a thick cable. A closed door is opened by kindness, sympathy, or

chance. A terrible sacrifice is diverted into an alternative that might not be painless, but is a way through. Costs are deflected, redeemed, or reduced, and a happy ending becomes possible, or if already possible, plausible.

Maybe it's a temporary island in the river of time, maybe it doesn't mean anything, that terrible things are still happening everywhere beyond your reach. But if you can be happy with just saving what is in reach, then you can be happy.

Itinerant

The Immortal of Cloudy Days - 100 CP

They might call you that. Or they might call you Heavenly Mafia Princess. After all, your ability to throw shade is glorious.

Whether you're trying to get under someone's skin, cut them down socially, or maintain your own bravado, you have a way with quips that serves you well, and with a minimum of actual dialogue for when you hate someone too much to want to engage in serious banter.

Not only that, but your inner narrative can help you keep focused or keep things in perspective. You have a sharp, direct way of thinking about things and people that cuts to the chase... and might be hilarious for anyone reading your thoughts.

Just don't expect to be able to use this talent while retaining politeness or decorum.

I Will Tell You What the World is Like - 100 CP

Because I'm the official exposition monkey for the party. And not just because my teacher is a Monkey of Havoc.

You have a strange talent for being well-informed about a huge number of topics that aren't secret... if your context is broad enough. You might know and understand a bit about the politics of higher realms, and know how secretive sects function.

Know about what's happening in other parts of the world, and generally have an almost impossibly broad view of the world. This doesn't come with any actually-secret knowledge, but it could be secret knowledge in the area you're in.

In each new jump, you'll get another download of knowledge. It doesn't update over the course of the jump, but you retain a blessing that means information continues to drift to you, even if that information has no place where you currently are.

Of course you get... - 200 CP

... more energy bringing things together than you do tearing them apart.

The sects, the government, the heaven... all have their ways of doing things. But in the end, all paths are one. Parahuman powers are cultivation. Physics is cultivation. Philosophy is cultivation.

You don't draw boundaries or lines, letting things join together into a new greater whole. You can use superpowers to perform fusion, fusion to fuel your personal pool of qi, and your personal pool of qi to empower your superpowers. To you, all your powers, abilities, forces you touch and command, wisdom, arts, and sciences... all of it is part of your path of cultivation. And your cultivation is all of those things.

And if you find something beyond the scope of any of those things, it is only a reframing away for you to understand that, no... this too is part of the Dao. This won't necessarily mean something is part of your Way, that has to do with your own understanding, life experiences, and how you've developed it. But your path can encompass all things.

Unpredictable, Calculated Recklessness - 400 CP

It's easy to talk about always trying things, always acting, so that you're never the one reacting. But the problem with that is simple, other people get a say. Adapt, reorient, redirect... all of that is time you aren't acting. And time you aren't acting is time for the world to remember it wants to hit you.

But that's rarely a problem for you. You have three strengths that make such failures rare.

First, you are hugely unpredictable. While all Ways are vast almost by definition, many cultivators rely on a carefully curated set of tricks and practiced techniques, as if they weren't enlightened beings twisting reality with their understanding of the transcendent. You never fail yourself in such a way. You naturally explore the breadth of the concept space your abilities grant you, intuitively understand the span of capabilities available. You never suffer from choice paralysis, and so never cripple yourself by limiting your choices as a way to simplify your options. And when it comes time, you naturally use that entire breadth instead of a limited portion of it. You become more skilled with the span, rather than some limited application of the span.

Second, your every action is naturally calculated. Every moment, it's like you had a couple moments to prepare and think things through so that, even in a split second of absolute surprise

you're reacting as if you had thought about that moment for three or four seconds beforehand. This isn't precognition, to be clear, more like backdated intelligence.

Lastly, you have mastered recklessness. You intuitively understand how to push moments towards order or chaos. You can instinctively and intuitively pick options that shut down chaos and the hand of chance or fate, and grind things towards the inevitable outcome, or you can push things towards chaos, throwing plans and preparations out the window and forcing everyone to adapt to an ever shifting set of changing circumstances that everyone has to constantly adapt to.

No one will ever claim you don't know how to try things.

Orthodox Sect

A Gentleman with a Sword - 100 CP

In poise, in attitude and presentation, you are the very image of a noble cultivator. You seem otherworldly, beyond the corruption and smallmindedness of the day to day world. In you, people find who they can trust, who feels like they're worthy of that trust.

Your indiscretions? How dare you? You've killed people over less. And no one even heard a rumor of it.

To be clear, this is skill, presentation, and a bit of luck. You can be found out, it just doesn't happen easily.

The Sage Puts His Own Person Last - 100 CP

Is it easy to betray yourself and your principles? Yes. You do it step by step, with each step seen as necessary from the last.

And so you reject that first step.

In you is the wisdom to see where a path might lead. You find it easy to draw boundaries and keep to them, and remember why you keep to them. To not be drawn into that first step, or tempted into the second, or excuse the third, but instead stay true.

Maybe no one will reward you for your stance, but you know how to stay true to yourself. Maybe that's enough?

Stagehand - 200 CP

It takes many people working together to put together a play.

Cooperation and coordination don't just happen on their own. It takes work for different immortals with different visions for how the world works, to join their effort into a unified whole that's greater than the sum of its parts. It can take months of work and practice.

When it's other people.

You can always work with others, your Way (or any other relevant power) naturally fitting to others' works, and in turn bringing them into harmony with your works. While this isn't an unlimited license to harness infinite effort, you can always work with at least three other sources, even if you've never practiced together. If the systems you're working with allow for joint effort, then you may consider this a training booster for such cooperative efforts, turning hours of practice into weeks of such.

Your 'partners' don't have to be people. Controlling formations or harnessing the might of a river is equally valid, provided whatever system you're using allows for such feats.

Measuring the Waters - 400 CP

The world doesn't inherently have order. There was a time of chaos, before the current era, when the sun would forget to rise. Yu the Great put things into order, and through just and righteous rule established the order of heaven. His stick, with which he measured the flood waters, is greater than some of the greatest weapons of heaven. His steps are the ones heaven follows, and by following in his steps you can match the pace of heaven and align yourself with its justice and judgment.

And what is the Justice of Heaven? It's the same as all justice, that which the strong impose upon the weak, just as injustice is something the strong impose upon the weak. So whatever you do? It is just.

So long as you're personally stronger than those you force it upon, your judgment, your actions, are just. The world goes along with you, People look away, excuse it, explain why it was right. People build philosophies, theologies, moralities to justify the order you impose. It's not impossible to defy it; your peers can do so, if they're willing to put out the effort, and those greater than you can brush it aside. But those weaker than you? It's a great weight upon them. The greater the difference, the greater the weight, until your word is as good as gravity.

This doesn't just affect people, but also the natural world. If you change the weather, then that's now seasonable weather for the region, at least until entropy slowly carves away your laws by nibbling at the edges.

If you don't wish for your actions to establish precedent, you may hold this back. Such is the mercy of your justice.

Unorthodox Sect

Little Devils and Big Devils - 100 CP

While some might mistakenly think that two heroes meeting are automatically friends, when two villains meet there is no automatic kinship. Still, there are smaller demons and larger ones, and from this comes a kind of brutal social order.

You find that, so long as you respect it, it's a surprisingly resilient one.

If you pay heed and give way to greater monsters, they will generally tolerate you. They might have wants or demands, but they won't be ones a monster would refuse, and they'll generally respect your bottom line so long as it isn't inherently at odds with their own.

Likewise, when you are strong, smaller demons might crowd about you, wanting to borrow a bit of your authority, and your very name will carry a weight and command to it that lends even an ad hoc faction backed by it real legitimacy.

Neither of these effects are absolute. A terrible enough monster might trample right over such understandings, and an unthinking engine of chaos can't be cowed by any implement of order, even the chaotic order of demons. If you wish such promises of certainty, seek orthodoxy. Still, it makes a surprisingly solid shield against the arrows of the day.

Arrangements With the Temple - 100 CP

The Zhen Sect, a sect that profaned the teachings of the Shaolin Temple, its techniques a blasphemy and perversion of the Shaolin Temple's own. It's no surprise that the Shaolin Temple... sat there and let them kidnap travelers, so long as they didn't poison and salt the field. Too close to the temple.

It's a sad truth, but many people are tolerant of evil. Maybe it's a familiar evil they've grown desensitized to. Maybe it's a distant evil they can't see affecting them. Maybe it's firmly rooted, and removing it feels dangerous. Whatever the reason, whatever excuse they make, there's many reasons to tolerate evil.

You find that you can easily slip into those cracks yourself. You can make connections that protect you, echo the familiar until you become it, keep your transgressions away from those with the strength to do something and ultimately become a, if not accepted, then tolerated renegade.

Insulting the Elder - 200

A surprising number of demonic techniques have their foundation in orthodoxy, for in the end, there's little ground unique to an unorthodox or demonic technique. Most forces and approaches have already been tread by the "righteous." What makes an unorthodox or demonic technique is a willingness to follow through to the end.

You find that you have a strange and profound intuition in how to transform and expand upon techniques in a way that can only be called reckless. Whether it be treating someone else's Qi as a poison and consuming it, unifying life till you condense its multitude into a Gu, or using alchemy to fill the air with energy, you find that you have a gift for finding paths forward with your techniques.

That this results in techniques that defy and defile, whether by hurting their user, driving men and spirits mad and damaging souls, or that all the paths forward this perk helps you find are filled with side-effects, costs, fallout, or curses...

Well, maybe those orthodox teachings never were as clean as those pretentious liars wanted to claim.

Landscaping - 400 CP

While some of the most powerful arts can let someone see the future, even make a path through it, life is always able to throw up new challenges. If the woman who walked upon the very path to victory as a champion stumbled, fell, and was destroyed, what chance do the rest of us have?

If it's you? A decent one. You understand the tools she never properly wielded. Not how to win, but how to see the future where you lose. Not how to gain, but how to strangle the future where you are denied. There is an art to it. It's not how you arrange things to achieve your ends, to cut a sharp path through fate, but the opposite. To head off the precursors of the precursors of the events that would frustrate you.

This is an art you know and understand. When you set about planning, you naturally trace the negative space of success, all those possibilities that are outside the bounds of success, and your planning and design naturally works to prune them, and on all levels. You harden the ground

so they can't seed, salt the earth so that they won't sprout, pull them up from the root before they grow deep, and purge the plots before they spread.

This natural pattern follows through in all of your planning, whether for a business, a schematic, or an event. You naturally divide your attention across all levels and scour it. That said, this perk works with what you have. If you're a shitty planner, it won't make you a good one, it will just mean your shitty plans operate on multiple levels and take into account the negative space of failure rather than being locked on achieving success.

Merchant

These Greedy Motherfuckers and Mama's Boys - 100

Every cultivator defies. It's part of the nature of the path. But sometimes direct rebellion leads to nothing but your own destruction. In such cases, you need the understanding to avoid immediate destruction, the patience to bide your time, the will to not crumble in the face of seeming inescapable doom, and the insight to seize the moment and use it to turn your situation around.

This is less about biding your time in a fight, and more about biding your time so that there never is a fight because you picked your right moment and used it properly. To the extent it helps at that final fallback, it's in the will to survive. Still, many would consider that a failure state. You do, probably.

The Way of Gossip - 100 CP

The trick isn't to know everyone worth knowing, it's to listen to everyone that everyone worth knowing talks to. And, after laundering that through a couple degrees of separation, that's 'anyone.'

You have mastered this art, the art of listening to *the right* thing, even in a sea of noise. You could be drinking cheap yellow wine, and learn hints about what a sect on the other side of the country is doing. This usually won't give you anything deep, and even if you're lucky and efficient it takes time, attention, and mental energy to gather and sort through everything, but you can almost passively learn a shocking amount.

But you aren't just a passive listener. You can pull people in, make connections with them so that you share with them, and they with you. These aren't necessarily deep connections, but they can be leveraged into contacts, business partners, reputation, and eventually a business that could stretch across a nation the size of China. At least, if you had anything to sell.

Brokerage Rights -200 CP

While the ideal might be for all business to happen quickly, widely, at low friction, the way to make money is to monopolize markets. The conflict between the Huiguan and Gongsuo brokerages is a conflict between maintaining local monopolies and expanding into wider trade networks. Such a matter...

Oh, you aren't falling asleep yet? Hmm, it seems you're a quick learner on matters of money.

This isn't limited to the conventional. When it comes to money, you develop and refine your powers and techniques more flexibly. Maybe your lie detecting powers are only so-so, but use them through a contract and you can make a contract that rips if signed under false pretense. Maybe your teleportation isn't that reliable, but you could set up a network for teleporting inanimate objects between fixed locations that works much better.

Essentially, everything becomes a little bit more flexible and you develop and learn faster when trying to turn your resources towards business.

You're on a list 400 CP

When you get right down to it, it often feels like the Sacred Lotus Kingdom spends more time and energy sabotaging its own merchants and keeping them in line than it does fighting the unorthodox sects that infest its territory. There's no accident there, either. In many ways the merchants are a bigger threat.

You naturally enjoy a kind of gravity of accumulation. Even when you have nothing, resources and opportunities gravitate towards you. If homeless on the street, you would fall into a nice and surprisingly decent place to camp, and find that the place you picked gave you opportunities for work, and those opportunities would quickly lead you off the street. But the more you have, the more this gravity increases. Any kind of work that itself works off accumulation will tend to have this supercharged.

This is a subtle effect, which means that you will eventually run into inefficiencies as your scale increases, till your outflow equals your inflow, but you'll still easily become larger than anyone is supposed to, and worse, that same gravity will have sabotaged those institutions that are intended to keep such unchained growth in check. You truly are a threat to any nation you inhabit as you twist its politics and economy to support your industry.

If you don't wish to become an economic neutron star, you may scale this down, allowing you to select how distortive an effect you have on the world.

While this perk does grant you luck, it's specifically luck around accumulation. That can be for tangible or intangible things, but probably doesn't help you put a sword through someone's guard even if that would earn you money. Though it might make it easier to *find* that fight in the first place.

Censorate

Shameless Bureaucratic Lying - 100

It's important that they never see you flinch. You may be terrified, scrambling to find your feet after learning a truth that could lead to your swift death, but no one needs to know that. When you speak, it's with the emotionless face of bureaucracy.

On a more basic level, you give nothing away outside of basic 'state' information. Your Qi flows through the world, barely present until it goes to work. Your face reveals no information but what you're actively presenting, and you make no unnecessary movement that would give away what you're about to do.

This doesn't help you create false information, or hide information that couldn't be hidden, but everything that could be hidden, is. If you wish to know more, file for an official release of information, because no one is getting more than that from you.

Temporarily Permanently Employed - 100 CP

One of the best ways of solving a problem is to get someone else to do it; something you are blessedly talented at. Whether it's getting the local sects to clean up a mess, hiring mercenaries, or talking a wandering hero into tackling a local threat, you are good at transforming 'your problem' into 'someone else's problem'.

This isn't magic or mind control, just a coincidental application of spontaneous leverage, common interest, or opportunistic bribery. The local sects might realize that they want less official attention, or you are gone, and it's the easiest way. The mercenaries are in need of the kind of policial cover you could hand out essentially for free, the hero was already inclined to help and you can smooth the way... And such temporary arrangements often have an easy time transforming into permanent ones.

This won't work miracles, but things line up for you to shove your problems onto others shockingly often.

The Flow of Qi - 200 CP

There is plenty to learn from how energy flows and moves. More than many realize, and even those who know what can be learned usually find it hard to turn theory into practice.

You have no problem with this. Qi reveals its secrets to your casual probes, and you learn much even when you aren't paying much attention. With your focused effort, you can gain the kind of effort that normally takes invasive and slow steps to achieve. More profoundly this enhances your passive information gathering. No one will notice your observations unless you feel the need to push past its boundaries into active techniques. The same extends to any other supernatural senses you have, as well.

This will somewhat alleviate the burden of profound senses, but it's more about doing more with less than expanding into such profound techniques.

When the Crooked Stay Alive - 400 CP

It is simply a matter of escaping through luck.

The Censorate and the Jinyiwei are tools of state power, and through them bring the body politic of the state in line with the dictates of the imperial throne. The body politic of the state are tools of state power, and through them bring the territory of the nation in line with the dictates of the imperial throne. And the weight of all of that? That becomes the tool of the state, to bring the sects, both the orthodox sects (through direct means and relationships), but also the unorthodox sects (through pressure, trade, and moving levels of tolerance, and strike forces) into line with what the state will tolerate.

Even in a world of cultivation, the state is a force of power and domination.

When acting with state power, you are strengthened. The larger the system behind you, the more that system reinforces you; almost as if state power itself was a formation that supported your Way (or whatever other power you are using).

But likewise, you support state power. When acting in your name, your power lends solidity and depth to those under you; a police officer pursuing a suspect you had sent him after might enjoy a kind of warding, and his attacks might cut through protections, as if supported by a great formation.

The bigger the state, the stronger you can become. The stronger you become, the more you can empower the state.

Items

A Merchant has devoted themselves to the material over the spiritual, and over their own advancement. They receive a 400 CP Stipend for this section.

Detritus of Life (Free, for everyone but Parahuman)

Everyone may start with a wealth of resources that an immortal could easily get. A nice home in almost any city, a stable of Thousand Li Horses, a gaggle of servants, Nascent Soul tier weapons, pills and alchemical goods you might gather on your path to immortal and never used....

All the detritus of a life well lived, and similar signs of wealth and luxury. Such things are not fiat backed and won't respawn, but can be used to fill out your background and establish your presence where you want it within the setting in a manner of the kind of wealth common to immortals.

You obviously don't need to take this if it doesn't match your character conception

A King's Ransom - 100 CP (Free Censorate)

...wouldn't be enough to get you to do this job, but it helps. You have a salary that is truly absurd, enough that the limits of what you can do and buy have more to do with economics and politics than what people normally think of as 'money.'

In many ways this is useful, but not as much as it sounds. Things an immortal really wants rapidly enter that realm where it's no longer about money. Not as most people think of it, at least.

Trade Goods and Commodities - 100 CP (Two Free for Merchant)

Bin Steel, Xirang, herbs and plants an alchemist might use, silk, cores, demon beast livestock... all the goods that a prosperous merchant might need to break into many different markets. the stuff that gets traded by cultivators and those connected with them.

Such items will always be a step down in 'quality' from what you could gather if you were actively working on it in an area where such things are available, but will be in abundant amounts. By default, it's in cultivation resources for this world, but if you have any perks that need other kinds of resources (cultivation perks from other jumps, crafting perks, and similar) you may divide your income among them.

If you buy this multiple times, you can choose to spend the extra purchases raising either the quality or quantity of goods.

Make Happy Those Who are Near. - 100 CP (One Free Merchant)

And those who are far will come

A perfect businessman is a quiet pillar of their community, relied on to be there and trusted as someone who belongs. They don't need to grease palms, because they're already greased. They don't need to scramble to hide indiscretions, because everyone is already friends here. They're the first to know what's happening in their community, because everyone already wants to talk to them. They can make things hard on others simply by holding their tongue; a lack of approval is almost the same as disapproval.

You might not be a perfect businessman, but you're a good one. You can reliably hit at least one of those goals, and have moderate success with the rest. For two purchases, you can raise that to three of those goals.

Forged Treasure - 100 CP

The names of the treasures of heaven are countless. It's no surprise that a people who can't believe in gods they couldn't kill, can't believe such treasures are beyond them. You have an artifact, a tool that operates on additional levels of some kind. It might support your techniques, leverage your power, or utilize your way in some useful manner. Whatever it is, it's also a tool at *your* level, no matter what your level is.

For +100 CP, your tool is part of a Shen you have, connected to a technique, or as a manifestation of your way. Either way, you can feely manifest and dismiss it, and it in some fashion manifests and extends your techniques and way in both power, breadth, and direction beyond what a Forged Treasure already does. If attached to a Shen, the Weapon operates based on your Shen's profundity if it's greater than your own.

A parahuman (someone who has taken one of the Markings of the Soul discounted for Parahumans) might choose to take this at the 200 CP level for free by making the tool central to their parahuman power in a way that limits that power in some fashion. This is not a drawback, and won't fall off at the end of the jump, though you might grow beyond that depending on how your power evolves. Such Tools have their functions fueled by your shard at least in part.

Any who take **Mysteries of Heaven** can take a Forged Tool at the 200 CP level for their heavenly patron for free.

Mythology As History - 200 CP

Why is it that cultivators speak Chinese and follow Chinese cultural customs despite China being a single country on a tiny world in a minuscule universe that most beings in the Second Order and First Order Worlds likely don't even know exists? Because you've got it the wrong way around.

It is the Third-Order Worlds, like pale shadows of the higher worlds, that are shaped by the transcendent reality above. Myths, legends, histories, concepts, all of these things leak down into the worlds below, more real than reality and shaping them to match.

Such as it is with you. Going forwards, you can choose to have your legends and your histories shape the worlds you travel to, appearing in their history books, altering their mythos, speaking your language and acting according to your customs.

Sect - 200 CP

You have your own sect; an organization that's able to bring in hopeful people and train them into cultivators. It teaches a set of techniques related to what you purchase in **All Roads, and One**, and in **Markings on the Soul**. These won't be the same as your way or Shen, just things that exist in the same concept space. That said, the more you spend in those two sections, the more advanced the techniques and teaching of the sect become.

By default, your Sect has you as its leader, ten subordinates one stage below yours, and anywhere from a dozen to a bit over a hundred people below that. The more people you have, the less talented and lower stage they will be on average.

With two purchases, you may have two people of your own level within the sect who respect you and will not challenge your leadership. With three purchases that grows to five, and there's an elder one stage above you who is no longer involved in running the sect, but may step in if there is an existential threat to it, and a wealth of disciples beneath your level. And at four purchases you have seven peers, three retired elders one stage above you, and one elder two stages above you, along with a truly impressively sized sect beneath you. Four purchases is the maximum amount.

In every jump, you will start with a new sect, calibrated to your current cultivation level. Alternatively, they may be practitioners of a different power system; any which *you* have. If you're only a novice with the system you choose, the sect will still be at a level where it's a major

force appropriate to the number of times you've bought this item. Come up with your own reasons why such a sect follows you as leader.

If You Want a Hundred Years of Prosperity... - 200 CP (One free Merchant)

... grow people. In many ways a business is similar to a sect, but where one focuses on personal spiritual power, the other focuses on temporal material accumulation. Each purchase of this acts like a 'stepped down' version of Sect, starting at five people a level below you in your company; these relationships might be familial, based on friendship, or professional. However, where a sect gives you people who focus on cultivation, and may very well drain your personal resources to fuel their ascension, your businesses will gather them.

Whatever the relationship, each member has the equivalent of **Detritus of Life** (being the storefronts, warehouses, licenses, and goods that make up their part of your financial empire) and **Trade Goods and Commodities** (for their own level) and one purchase of **Make happy those who are near, and those who are far will come** for the community they're inserted into. Note that you can't combine your subordinates' purchases of these with your own - they're beneath you, and loyal to you, but it represents their resources within your shared company.

Official Remit - 400 CP (Free Censorate)

Your footsteps echo like thunder in the minds of petty officials, city lords, and other parts of the bureaucracy. In you has been invested a broad remit to pursue the interests of the imperial court. Whether it be pursuing unorthodox cultivators, hunting foreign agents, or crushing rebellion, you have been empowered to act as judge and arbiter.

Generally speaking, so long as you don't turn against your nation and its leadership, your judgment on issues will be taken as the official stance of the government, and if something is too large even for your broad remit you will still be seen as one of the voices having a say in the final decision. You are allowed to command and draw upon national resources in pursuit of this remit.

A moderate level of bias and corruption will be tolerated as expected and just the way business is done, though don't push that too far.

This remit binds to a new nation at the start of each jump.

Nexus of Trade - 600

There are many sects dotting the landscape of this mystic realm, and more merchant houses. The treasure you hold here is one that can control the rise and fall of such things. A major trade city, a meaningful percent of the trade of the entire nation flows through its borders, and everything that flows through makes you richer. This is no longer money, this is being an economy in your own right, and with that consideration comes broad political power.

Whether a gateway between nations, a major internal distribution hub, or an industrial powerhouse... What you have is a muscle of the heart that pumps lifeblood through a nation. Even in a nation that distrusts merchants, and before an imperial court that dislikes you personally, you still command respect and deference simply from the raw power you wield as owner of this city. Better to look away or appease you, than have such a core system consumed in the fires of conflict.

All Roads, and One

Way - Free

There is a story about how a group of immortals all crossed the ocean, each in their own way, but all reached the same destination. Like them, you have a path you follow, one shaped by the life you've led and the perception it's forged in you. No one really chooses what path they have, and neither do you. But at the same time, everyone chooses where they take that path, through how they live their lives, what they practice, and the context they put it in.

This is yours.

Expressions of the Way

These branches of the Path can all be purchased multiple times, each time representing a different skill, approach, life experience, or whatever. Any expression you purchase will naturally evolve, grow, and integrate with however you develop your path, always being a strong element of it, wherever it eventually leads.

Practiced expression of the Skilled Way -100 CP (One Free for Merchant and two free Orthodox Sect)

Whether by practice, life experience, or insight, you have expanded your way to include the practice of a skill that wouldn't automatically be associated with it. Whether through accumulation, focused practice, or indirect association, this skill has become fundamental to your way, such that you can put the full force of it behind this skill, and the full deftness of this skill behind your way.

Esoteric expression of the Abstract Way -100 CP (One Free for Itinerant Cultivator)

Your life experience has shaped your way into something a lot less concrete and understandable than most. Whether by higher realm insight, or simply a path through life that has shaped you to a more obtuse perception of reality, philosophical musings, or simply dealing with weirdness, your way expresses an esoteric logic that tends towards a more meta approach to solving the game of conflict.

Transcendent expression of the Expansive Way -100 CP (One Free for Parahuman)

Your path has been one that has walked you hand in hand with a being whose scale transcends dimension, and this has not been without consequence. Insights that normally exclude those taking their first steps along their path have been made completely obvious to you. Your sense

for dimensionalism, possibility space, quantum or relativistic forces and such like... it operates on a level more intuitive than learned, and such insight has invaded and shaped your way. There is some aspect of this that has become fundamental to your way.

Solipsistic expression of the Inner Way -100 CP (Two Free for Unorthodox Sect)

Your path is that, yours. You see the world in terms of how you relate to it, and your way leverages that. Your way of Samsara might see other people's identities as masks that you can change till they're the ones you want, or perception might help you force your perception on others. While all ways are 'your' way, you take it to another level in some manner that helps you leverage your own wants against the world in the most blatant manner possible.

Worldly expression of the Elemental Way -100 CP (One Free for the Censurate)

The world is made up of things, and some expression of that is tied into how you've learned to approach the world. Whether an alchemist who has used fire so much that it feels like a friend, or a Poison Cultivator whose foundational techniques relied on toxins, some element has become so central to you that your way can always express it and be aided by it.

Discrete expression of the Relational Way -100 CP (One Free for Merchant)

Things matter due to their relationship to other things. Salt in the sea is poison, while salt in your wagon is wealth. Whether a merchant, alchemist, or lord, your way has incorporated elements that look at the world as a series of relationships, to consider things not as themselves, but as part of a larger web of things. These relationships might be based on ownership, value, place, or another factor, but treat things as part of a system, rather than as complete on their own.

Markings on the Souls

A given person can only have eleven Shen. One on their Nascent Soul, three divided across their three Higher Souls/Hun Souls. And seven divided across their Seven Spirits/P'o Souls. Each of these will grant talent, power of a sort, and help shape and expand your path and the toolkit you have to lean upon. They also aren't static things. From the moment you engrave your soul, you start changing it with your path, till the Shen you might one day hand down become something different from the one you took up. Some people would argue that the right Shen is better than a firm path, because it can lead you to such. Such people are fools. Still, the right Shen can offer a way forward when all roads seem blocked.

Parahumans have one reduced price Shen, representing their Shard. Such Shen will have a (p) to represent the discount. Further purchases don't have a reduced price. By default, all Scion

Shards bond to a Hun Soul, and all Eden shards bond to a P'o soul, but you can freely choose which soul slot it bonded to, simply saying that something unusual or broken happened during the bonding experience that changed the target.

All Parahuman Powers are assumed to have a deep well, enough to support heavy use of the base power for 300 years. If through your way/relationship with your shard you're able to expend power faster than this, it can become exhausted. On the flip side, if you find a way of feeding power to your shard, it may become able and willing to offer additional aid. This is refilled at the start of every jump.

Nascent Soul - Free

You have a Nascent Soul, marked with a path shaped by your life experienced before immortality. It's nothing special with just this. It's one virtue is this; it is compatible with your way on a basic, fundamental level. You never are going to need to work and expand or grow it to work with your Way.

You don't have to take this, though you do need a Nascent Soul to be an immortal. If you don't take this, and aren't using some drawback that makes it so you don't start at immortality, then you must buy a replacement (or use some out-of-jump resource that could reasonably be understood to be able to work as a replacement).

Minor Parahuman Power - 200/free^P

There are many minor parahumans. Perhaps your shard didn't expect much from you, and invested less, perhaps your trigger event pushed it to develop a power only barely in its domain, perhaps it's simply 'young', crippled, or weak. However you cut it, your power is C-tier. That doesn't mean you can't make something of yourself, Bitch would belong to this level. Just that, when they were handing out the keys to power, yours was a modest one.

Moderate Parahuman Power - 300/100^P

This is the tier for parahumans whose name might be known simply because the strength of their power gave them enough say to become mildly famous on the national stage. Even if they didn't have the luck, drive, or skill to become a name, they certainly have the power to be one of their cities' major movers and shakers. Whether it be through might like Kaiser or Oni Lee, depth of insight like Tattletale or Accord, or versatility like Citrine or Genesis, you have the kind of power heroes and villains are made of.

Major Parahuman Power - 500/200^P

Then, there are the monsters. A crippled but potent Shard like Queen Administrator or Broadcast could land you here, as could shards involved in some of the core projects of the entities of predicting and understanding, like the shards who empower Dinah or Dragon. Or perhaps you triggered one of the most esoteric powers that they can hand out, like Scapegoat. Whatever the case, you are likely to have been a mover and shaker on the national stage, and your power will certainly give you insight and add in developing your Cultivation.

Broken Parahuman Power - 800/300^P

Few Shards are intended to hand out such might, and those that do are almost always crippled or controlled in such cases. Glaistig Uaine is about as sane as such people are supposed to be. More likely, you were supposed to be an Ash Beast or similar living disaster or threat generator. Alternatively, you might be a Cauldron Cape, though the only success they had on your level is Eidolon. However it worked out, you can trust that the CP you paid for this broke whatever was supposed to break you, for you are fully functional and your shard has a living Well.

Unchained Parahuman Power - 1000/500^P

No parahuman is supposed to be gifted with what you are gifted with. Whether a Cauldron Cape, or a natural trigger than was utterly broken, the power you were given is both transformational and seemingly almighty within its niche. In the greater multiverse it might be a petty trick, but even on the scale of the entities, what you have is something that would give them pause, if only to figure out how to take it away from you. The only known cape on this tier is Contessa.

Teachings of the Father (100cp/1 free for both sect origins)

One of the most common paths people take - a bond from teacher to student. While not exclusively the territory of sects, such inheritance is the bread and butter of them, and part of the glue that holds them together.

A chain going from teacher to student, to their student in turn. This Shen will support something along the lines of your teacher's personal way and techniques, and in jump can represent a bond to a mentor able and willing to act to protect and guide their student.

Sect's Secrets (100cp/Three free for both sect origins)

Not all Shen are passed down, some are recreated again and again. Perhaps a martial technique or a sect secret, Shen is almost as much art as inheritance, a Shen you are suppose to carve into your own soul through (usually) a sects teachings. Usually less personal, less *living* than other Shen, that sometimes means it submits more easily to being adapted into what you need of it. During this jump, it can represent your membership and inclusion in a sect or other organization.

Great Beasts (100cp/ 1 free for Censurate)

Whether Spirit Beast, Demonic Beast, Dragon, Phoenix, or something stranger, this Shen came from something decidedly non-human. With it, came abilities humans don't normally have, talents and methods that few practiced techniques can compete with at your own level. Evolution is a harsh task-master, and it has refined what you took beyond the inheritance of a normal sects path.

Second Order Patronage (600cp, Discounted Itinerant Cultivator)

You are what some would call the people of the Blue Dragon Empire would call a shintai, someone touched by an inhabitant of a Second Order World and gifted a fragment of their power. Lacking the local power and firm foundation in Third Order Reality that a Parahuman technique might, and lacking the sheer profundity that a First World Shen would grant, it might seem that this kind of gift is the unwanted middle child of gifted power.

Such a viewpoint is dangerous. While these techniques aren't as profound as the inheritance of someone like The Sage equal to Heaven, they're grounded more closely to the reality of a third-order world, more adapted and relevant to the universe they operate in. While they lack the micro-refinements of an entities' pinnacle techniques, they bare insight no one who is stuck in the mire of a Third Order World could possess.

The figure who passed it down can be trusted to care about your best interests, and their advice can follow you through your chain if you wish. That said, a being on their level will have some trouble even understanding things happening on your scale.

Fear one who has a God-Body, because they make reality dance to their madness.

Mysteries of Heaven (800cp, Discount Itinerant Cultivator)

There are Shen, and then there are *Shen*. Even in the First World, getting access to the path offered by one of these would be a high accomplishment. The Sage Equal to Heaven, or one of

Household Gods, The Red Boy, or another frightening figure from the First World. The greatest issue you'll find here is that the truths you'll wield through this power are too deep, too complete to be leveraged with the power you possess, and they're optimized for gods living in a greater reality, not a mite from whoville.

By default, the Shen has made its way to the lower worlds through a winding path, and the God on the other end cares nothing for you and probably isn't currently paying attention; they simply aren't able to focus on you enough to meaningfully communicate.

For +200 CP, you have a patron who is rather good at perceiving the lower worlds (at least enough to be able to freely talk to you, if only because the Shen simplifies things) and is motivated to help you. This could be because they see you as their student, or friend, or they simply understand the opportunity watching your journey through the multiverse offers.

This does also have tangible effects, in that knowing someone quite so far beyond you leads to them doing you 'minor favors' that may very well change your entire world. Such as them teaching you what is to them basic life related knowledge, but which become world-shaking Liturgical powers to you, or introducing you to others on their levels who think nothing of tossing you their Shen too... played right, there's no telling where this can lead.

For a separate +200 CP, your Shen isn't from someone so modest. It might be from one of the Three Pure Ones, the Five Emperors, or a Bodhisattva on the same order, or another, similarly transcendent figure. Anyone less than The Buddha or the August Personage of Jade, or others of their 'level' you may imagine from different cultures.

For +400 CP, this becomes a care package from a previous life, people who loved and care about you from a previous incarnation of yours. It's no longer one Shen, but five; two first order and three second order Shen, with at least one of the first order Shen from someone able to talk to you.

Companions

Shard - Free, if you want it

If, at the end of the jump, you have built a strong relationship with your shard and wish to bring it with you, you can. It becomes a companion and continues to support you to the extent your relationship dictates.

Living Soul Structure - 100 CP

Your soul is alive. This might not sound like a surprising statement, so perhaps it should be expanded on. Your soul is alive, as an entity into and of itself, with its own internal soul structure. It may inherit perks and powers inherent in being part of you as appropriate, manage your resources for you, maintain your abilities and automate techniques and tasks for you.

By default, it will automatically remain one Stage beneath you, but doesn't start with a way or Shen of its own. You may buy things for it at a 1:2 rate. You may choose if it's one of your souls, or if it represents the overarching structure of your soul. If it's one of your souls, then the Shen upon that soul is effectively its Nascent Soul. If it's the overall structure of your soul (representing your inner world) then it might develop its own Nascent Soul (probably having to do with managing or controlling your souls' powers, but it doesn't *have* to).

Regardless, your Soul is on your side. More importantly, it will *always* be on your side. No force can turn it against you, whether through persuasion, coercion, trickery, or even your own maltreatment. You will always be loyal to yourself. At least this part of you will be.

It goes without saying, but your soul is freely imported in all future jumps. As your soul. If there is an origin that would make sense as 'an incarnation of my soul' you may import it as such, but you can't import it into any other kind of origin. You may still buy things for it in future jumps, but you don't get the 1:2 discount.

If the soul in question is the soul that bears a Parahuman Shen, or it's your overall soul structure, you may choose to say your shard budded and transferred itself to this structure. This may simply be flavor, but you can then choose to say that your shard is dead. For the duration of the jump, that means your parahuman power has no well and you must fuel everything yourself, but it will cut you off from shardspace and similar Parahuman issues, if you fear such.

If you achieve a living soul structure on your own, it still is a companion, and you can still buy perks for it in future jumps, but it doesn't come with the perfect safeties it would have if you created it this way.

A Sect of your own - Free

You may import up to eight companions, giving them an origin and freebies. You may companion anyone who agrees to leave with you.

For +50 CP, you can create a new Companion or import one with greater resources, granting them 200 CP. For +200 CP, you may create or import up to eight companions.

Parahuman Parent - 400 CP

While you may or may not have a good relationship with your biological parents, you do with the one in your head.

No, not an imaginary friend. The dead one.

Whether by divine intervention, or simply the play of chance, a Shard has broken through and triggered someone in this locked away world. You. You have a dead parahuman in your head, one who has taken on a parental role. They love you unconditionally. Truly unconditionally. If all of reality turns on you, they'll still be on your side.

They spend most of their time in your head, though they have some ability to visit appropriate afterlives, or retreat to your shard's space.

Your parent has the Parahuman Origin, along with a free Power, and about 500 CP to spend on perks. You can give them more at a 1:2 ratio. They can't take or buy items, and the only companions they can take are their [Shard] or a [Living Soul Structure]. If they take a shard, it will be the one you share.

They grant you the Parahuman discounts in the **All Roads, and One** section. Whatever level of Parahuman power they buy, you get at a discount, your powers coming from the same shard and probably sharing some thematic heritage.

If you have the Parahuman Origin yourself, this could represent some kind of Cluster shenanigans. Regardless, it does give you a second Parahuman Discount.

While the default relationship is Paternal/Maternal, you can fluff it in a different way if you wish. It doesn't make them any less devoted by default, however you play it. They are certainly

willing and happy to follow you across your future jumps, stay with you and remain your aid. (You may have a more distant relationship with them, if you want it for whatever reason).

Cultivator Child - 300 CP

No, Jumper, you are the Parent.

The flip side of the above option. Instead of being a native of Earth-Xian having a parahuman from Bet in your ear, you get to be a Parahuman who is connected to someone in Xian who got a link to your shard.

By default you'd have to be dead and living in your shard for this, but it's not a mandatory thing. The Child may have any origin other than Parahuman, but they do get a power for free and 800 CP to spend.

Drawbacks

Liberate Yourself +0 CP (Endjump Toggle)

You don't leave until you become a first order being. In return, you gain your Endspark once you do so.

By selecting this toggle, you can return to this jump even if you've done it before. However, if you use it in this manner, you take no origin, receive no perks or items or companions, Way Expressions, Shen, or anything else. You receive no points, and may take no drawbacks. You only have what you have already earned, and may not leave before earning your Endspark.

Mileage Lived +0 CP (Supplement Mode Toggle)

You may choose to supplement Sect with a Worm jump, whether a canon jump or something else. If you do so, you extend your Worm jump into the sect timeline, and make it so that at some point after the events of worm (or the story you picked), you wind up on Earth-Xian.

You start the Worm jump without any of the Sect perks, and Sect drawbacks will phase into effect in an organic manner. For example, if you take Butcher, then you'll die at some point (without it counting as a chain fail), such that you can end up in your new host's head as a ghost. Likewise, perks from sect will slowly come online as you interact with the setting, learn about cultivation, and develop yourself.

This normally locks you into the Parahuman Origin, and you *probably* should have to take your old parahuman power as your Parahuman Origin Shen. You may freely say that you're gaining Fiat support for your Parahuman Power, subsidizing it and your shard as is normal for doing the Worm jump if you do so. (Assuming you're using the normal Worm Jump). This means your shard probably has an easier time helping you, and is more willing to do so, with a growing well of power because powers grow stronger over time. But if you want to do something different and can justify it, that's fine (though you don't get the automatic clean integration then).

The Smiling, Proud Jumper +0 CP (Supplement Mode Toggle)

This is similar to the above, but for a theoretical Jin Yong novel jump. There currently is none, but the world of Sect strongly draws upon background and themes found in his works. The timeline of Sect is congruent with The Smiling, Proud Wanderer portion of the timeline.

While Worm is basically unchanged in the Sect-verse, Jin Yong's works are greatly changed. As such, there is no 'delay' as the Sectification comes in. You need to figure out how this will work

- will you stay for an extended period of time, going from your 'entry' Jin Yong work to the timeline of Sect, or are you just going to a "Sect" version of that Jin Yong jump.

Dreaming of Glory and Escape +0 (Supplement Mode Toggle)

The story of Sect is a meeting point between stories that, on their surface, are very different. You may explore that difference in a different light.

Using this, you may supplement the Worm half of the crossover with another Superhero setting with a Multiverse. If you do so, the events of Worm will be reenvisioned in such a way to make sense within the context of that superhero setting. Supplement the two jumps together. You keep all points separate. Drawbacks adapt so that they still make sense in the new combined setting.

Using this, you may supplement the Xianxia half of the crossover with Sect. If you do so, the cultivation worlds and higher worlds will be reinvisioned to bring in setting elements, people, places, and things, such that both exist within this crossover. You may decide which settings 'view' of the upper world dominates, as Sect posits a higher world that's hard to understand, which conflicts with how higher worlds are usually used in Xianxia.

Reincarnation - Free

You take the place of a canon character. You must buy their fundamental perks, items, companions, any Way or Shen they started the story with, and so on if you want the story to stay on track, though.

An Inch of Time +100 CP

Cannot be purchased for an inch of gold.

Cultivation requires time and commitment. Something you have just declared you have, for you are committed to your path in this world for longer than the minimum ten years.

Every time you take this drawback, you add thirty years to your stay. You can receive points for this a maximum of three times. If you do that, you may stay any length of time, though after a hundred years, you may end your stay here at any time.

Early bad start +100 CP

You start as a child in an abusive or dangerous situation. Worse, you are lacking the perks, way, Shen, and items you bought. You'll begin your story as a Mortal, and only by surviving or

escaping the dangers you start in will your perks come online (though once they do you'll rapidly advance, much like Xifeng passed from Qi Condensation to Immortal in a single night).

At the 100 CP level, your clan might have made the wrong enemies, and now you're scattered refugees, or perhaps you have no parents and are an orphan in one of the cities. Your situation sucks, but the people immediately around you aren't inherently hostile to you, though they also aren't offering you real safety at this time.

At the 200 level, you start with people who wish to use you and throw you away. They are an active threat to you, and will fight against you if you try to leave, intended to sacrifice you or in some other way use you up to death.

Enemy +100 CP

You have someone who means you ill - a theoretical peer, an immortal who has reason to hate you. They don't start the jump hunting you, and it will be unclear to you who they are at the start of the jump; a familiar if unwelcome face, but not one you're expecting to meet. But while friends are often parted, enemies can't stop running into each other. When you see them, you will recognize them, and a conflict will be inevitable.

For +100 CP you can make this a group of enemies. You won't run into them all at the same time, but much like Qing and the Songshan sect, once you meet you'll quickly find your path joined to that of your foes till this grudge plays itself out.

Dysphoria +100 CP

Your body doesn't... it doesn't *fit* you. There's someone wrong about it, or it puts you wrongfooted, or probably both. Becoming... you... it's something that is going to take a bit of work.

This can either be something that you go through from day one, and will be fixed with you achieving Body Reformation. Alternatively, something can deflect your natural body reformation such that *it* is what sets off your dysphoria. In such cases, it will last till Spirit Remormation.

Sea of Bitterness +200 CP

It might be true that so long as you remain part of the world you're doomed to experience suffering, but there's the rain that must fall into each life, and there's *this*.

The specifics of this are up to you, but your background includes events that go beyond merely scaring, and reach mind-twisting. Things that damage your very sense of reality, where getting better isn't going to be helped by perks and even time is an imperfect balm.

Start with Qing's backstory. That's the level of suffering and mindfuck you're putting into your past.

Sect Baby +200 CP

You are... High strung is probably the nicest way of putting it. You find yourself with no cool. Maybe you can present yourself as calm, but once that surface is broken you tend to snap towards the extreme, and if violence is an option, then violence has a siren's song for you that can't be denied.

This isn't exactly 'you are a terrible person.' But you probably are inclined to fit unkind Cultivator archetypes, and it's a personal struggle to keep things proportional.

Unrespected +200 C

Respect and face is a big part of cultivator culture, which makes it a shame that you seem eternally cursed to be given not nearly the respect you deserve. You could do two or three or four times the work in a fraction of the time anyone else does and barely get a scrap of acknowledgement. You could demonstrate your incredible skill and talent, only to have it set down to luck and happenstance.

Be it as a cultivator, a worker or an individual, you'll be afforded bare scraps of respect from even your fundamental lessers.

One Who Follows The Rules +300/400/500/600 CP

It was said that the difference between those who are Immortal and those who are not is the difference between those who make the rules and those who have no choice but to follow them. Unfortunately for you, you are one such person. Instead of an Immortal, you are a mere Nascent Soul cultivator. Or worse, a Core Formation, Foundation Establishment or Qi Condensation cultivator. Be very careful what you choose.

Nemesis +300

Where an enemy was someone who was generally hostile to you for reasons going to your shared past, your Nemesis is someone who opposes you now. Build them with 1000CP, design them to be a danger to you, give them an organization, sect, or similar power base for

free, and finally they either have Broken Parahuman Power or a Mysteries of Heaven at the 800 level.

They seek something that will doom you if you spend too long before you stop them, though the time-table isn't tight. Till then, they'll send agents after you, hounding your steps.

Well of power +300 CP (no First Steps)

It seems that a Shard is supporting all of your out of jump powers and systems. While perks that... well... seems like something a cultivator could have or develop can work off your personal energy or ability, anything Out-Of-Context or too profound to be wielded by a third order being on your scale are being fueled out of a well. A well that can support maybe ten years of 'Eidolon' level feats. Stay under that, and it could last the entire jump. Go over that, and you'll be running it down to nothing before you know it.

Overworked +300 CP

Whether or not you get some kind of huge paycheque or derive a deep personal fulfillment from your job, you might soon find your opinions shifting for the worse. Simply put, you're employed by some organization or individual suited to your background and they have no end of work for you to undergo, enough to bury even the hardest working employee up to their necks.

Maybe you're the kind of person who can function under such an incredible load, but all your diligent work will get you more work. After all, you've proven you can handle it, right? Of course, you could eventually reach the point where no new work can even be invented for you by your employers, at which point you're likely running the entire government or organization on your own.

Just be careful not to get a new job elsewhere, because your new employers will surely see in you the hardworking spirit that saw your previous employers driving you so hard. Unless you like that kind of thing, I guess?

Butcher +300 CP (requires Parahuman)

You're dead. Just thought you should know.

That said, it wasn't the end of your story. Your shard seems to have joined with someone. A child, a native of this new world you've found yourself in. Their circumstances... well, they triggered. That kind of says it, doesn't it?

While you might theoretically figure out some way to get yourself a new body, for now you're just part of them, a voice in their head. You must help them, protect them, guide them. Your chain is no longer attached to *your* fate. It's attached to theirs.

If a drawback wouldn't make sense applied to you in this state, it applies to your ward.

They will have a parahuman power of their own, attached to your shared shard. If they want, they can obviously become a companion post-jump. You may import a companion to take this role. This cannot be the same person as your **Cultivator Child**. Enjoy having *two* young parahumans to guide if you take both.

Good smell - +300 CP

Something about you smells... appetizing. Animals, demon and spirit beasts, and others... anyone who might go for some man meat finds your smell appetizing. It can draw hazards to you from far away.

And it's worth remembering that a surprisingly large number of cultivators like the other white meat, so long it gets processed right first. It's the best advancement resource you can find, after all..

First Steps + 400 CP

Everyone needs to start their journey from somewhere. You seem to be starting it from here. After all, you have no perks, no items, no power, no warehouse, nothing but what you take from this jump and your body-mod. Any companions you take are reduced to the same.

Interesting Times - +400 CP

Life... well the whole 'May you live in interesting times' thing *isn't* actually an ancient Chinese curse even though it's a truism repeated so often that most believe it. But your life is going to convince you it really should have been.

You're going to find yourself living the kind of life where, when you say "It's not the time, it's the mileage," Taylor will nod in sympathy. While you aren't going to be blasted with unending chaos and conflict every day, once it starts, it's going to escalate, and escalate and escalate and *escalate*. Till you will have a week where you've had more excitement than the average immortal gets in two decades. After that chaos, when the escalation ladder has played itself out and you've solved what was causing it, you might have downtime, or you might go right into a new series of escalating situations. You'll never know till you're on the other side.

Excitement, to be clear, is a dangerous thing. And you? You're going to have to either rise to the occasion, or break.

Then Why do I Keep Dragging Her Down? +600 CP

There are people you love. People more important to you than life itself, who you would dissolve your very soul to save. People who mean so much that you could set aside your own ideals and just... live. If it made them happy.

But it doesn't, because it seems as if your flaws, your ideals and hopes... they have taken them up, and brought them into the world. A world that seems dead set on *tearing all that shit down to Diyu*.

No matter what you do, the life lesson you've passed on seems to only help your loved one find more trouble. The Ideals they've learned from you lead them to fight after fight, and... it hurts.

Why do you just keep dragging them down?

Maybe... maybe you can fix it all, going out in a blaze of glory.

Finding your way past this spiral is possible, but not easy, and in some ways you are your own worst enemy. You'll need friends to save you, and see you through.

Notes

About Sect

Sect is a Worm Fanfiction set after Golden Morning, which explores the question of ‘What if the similarities between the Entities and Cultivation were more than just shared themes’, where the works of Jin Yong echoed reality, and where the divide between the Four Monkey’s of Havoc had repercussions to this day.

It’s the story of Zhen Xifeng, adopted daughter of Taylor Hebert, and the path she blazes trying to find a home to settle down in and finally live.

You can find it *here*.

[\[Worm/Xianxia\] Sect | SpaceBattles](#)

“Can I combine Sect and If you want 100 years of prosperity...?”

Sure. Sect represents an organization more focused on personal growth and cultivation. “If you want” is for an organization more grounded in material concerns and day to day affairs. A sufficiently large merchant group could effectively support a sect inside itself (though the Lotus Kingdom explicitly goes out of its way to keep such confluences of power from forming), and a large enough Sect might develop mature business interests.