Black Butler

England, 1888. A stone's throw from London sits the Phantomhive Earldom. For generations, the Phantomhive family has served as the Queen's Guard Dogs, villainous nobles, the guardians of the underworld. Not that they profit from crime, but they do ruthlessly crush anyone who operates without their blessing and within their limits. They also run the Funtom toy company.

The Phantomhive family is gone now. Slain in a fire. But several months later, their young child, Ciel, emerges from hiding to claim the title of Earl Phantomhive, becoming the most powerful boy in England. Alive, vengeful, and accompanied by a butler dressed all in black. Sebastian Michaelis is one hell of a butler... literally. He's a demon who formed a pact with the young lord, who will defend and serve him as he seeks revenge on his family's killers - and devour Ciel the moment he either attains or gives up on his vengeance.



In the meantime, they solve mysteries. Often with a supernatural bent. The Empire won't stand on its own, you know, they've always needed the Phantomhives.

Have **1,000 customs points** (cp) to get started. Mind your manners, and don't go walking alone at night.

Location

Start in 1888 England. Past that, whether you'd prefer to start in the Midlands, Ireland, Wales, London or the Phantomhive Estate is up to you.

Age, Race & Sex

None of us terribly care, alter or keep these as you prefer.
Victorian England is seldom kind to children, the very elderly, obvious foreigners or women. If you reasonably suspect your selections might cause you significant inconvenience, please take a one-time +100 cp as compensation for your troubles.

Species

Human - Some say you're a perfect being, created in God's image. Some say a clever and lucky monkey shaped by the eons into something maybe a bit more thoughtful. Some say you're the place where the falling angel meets the rising ape. Others, a miserable pile of secrets. Whatever the truth, you're a hairless, mostly harmless biped and need to keep your limitations in mind. You're only human, after all.

Demon - The most wretched and untrustworthy of beings, devoid of love or faith or loyalty. Demons live to devour souls, mostly through contracts. Deceiving their prey with pretty words before dragging them into the darkness. The more steeped in suffering a soul, whether the victim or the cause, the better the feast. Still, there are two rules a demon never breaks, the exact terms of their contract, and within those bounds, they consider their master's wishes absolute.

Shinigami - Divine servants, the Shinigami pursue people on the To-Die List, the sick and dying, and review their lives via their Cinematic Record power to decide their fate. Shinigami are the souls of people who committed suicide, double-checking every death as part of their penance for throwing away the priceless gift of life. Those who are wicked or for whom death would be a mercy are slain, those chosen few who were to die in error the Shinigami spare, & recover. Of course, the deathly ill and dying are not in short supply, and the Shinigami are constantly behind on their workload.

Ghost - A shade, a sad pale remnant of a once vital person, bursting with life. Now you cower from the daylight and watch as the world steadily moves on, all your triumphs and sorrows forgotten.

Bizarre Doll - Doll... sort of. A better description might be 'soul-devouring zombie.' You are a corpse animated by having extra footage added to your Cinematic Record. It's rough, but they are sapient now, and you can pass for human as long as no one who knows what the scar on your forehead means sees it.

(Fallen?) Angel - A divine messenger, in theory. But horseshoe theory is in full effect and the blinding perfection of pure good is not so terribly dissimilar to evil from a mortal perspective.

Origin

Lord
Born to lead, you enjoy a life of wealth, prestige and privilege, but also at least theoretically one of duty.

Servant
Someone has to do all the cooking and cleaning and errands and so on.

Detective
Despite its ancient history, London has only had a professional police force for maybe sixty years now.

Criminal
You break the law to survive, and why not when the law privileges those who are already rich?

Perks

Sign of the Times (free all)
You are fluent in period English, as well as the five most common tongues of the world. Literate as well. You are immune to local diseases and will not spread alien/future ones. You will suffer no particular ill-effects from the soot, smog, near constant cloud of tobacco smoke or chilly conditions most Londoners at the time deal with.

Dangerous (-100 cp)
There's a reason the Phantomhive staff are all so incompetent. Anticipating the dangers Ciel would face in restoring the Phantomhive estate and pursuing his enemies, Sebastian hired: the deadliest sniper in the British Empire, the most decorated combat veteran in the British Empire, and the strongest man in the British Empire, then expected them to just figure out cleaning, cooking and gardening all on their own. For 100 cp apiece, you can have either Mey-Rin's amazing vision and aim, Baldroy's experience and combat instincts, Tanaka's

mastery of Jiu-jitsu, Lizzie's swordsmanship, or Finney's amazing inhuman strength. In any case, you should be able to handle a squad of goons effortlessly, and a whole platoon if you fight smart, keep mobile and don't let them organize properly.
This may be taken multiple times, to diversify your skillset.



Looker (-100 cp)
It's said the Phantomhives have an ethereal, untouchable beauty, like the moon. Certainly Ciel seems to attract no small number of predatory adults. You can choose to have the kind of beauty that drives people wild, with all the perks and problems that causes.

One Foot in the Grave (-100 cp)
Generally, normal people can only see Shinigami if they're actively dying. Not so much yourself, though. You can see all the hidden supernatural beings and recognize them on sight for what they are.

Right Hand of A Goddess (-100 cp)
You have a touch of the divine about you, specifically, one hand. Its reflexes are superhuman and always react correctly, it can seize the perfect ingredient and sift through things jaw-droppingly fast finding the correct choice by grace, and, rather situationally, it can count as a holy weapon for harming creatures of supernatural evil.

Spark of Genius (-400 cp)
You, like Sieglinde Sullivan, are an era-defining genius. Clever enough to teach yourself a whole language overnight. Good enough with chemistry and engineering to fill in the gaps and 'invent' 20th-21st Century technology from half-remembered grade school explanations of what things are and how they work. With the resources of a nation-state behind you, you could put someone on the moon before 1900.

Only Human (-100 cp, free Human)
You're only human, you couldn't possibly have sprinted across London and set multiple fires in the few minutes you were using the water closet. You're only human, you can't possibly hope to match a demon in combat, right? People keep insisting you're only human, dismissing you as a suspect or a threat because of your all-too-human frailty. Until and unless you prove to them there's more to you, they'll find ways to rationalize away any

incredible feats. You must have gotten lucky, or it's a magic trick, yeah. Makes sense, after all, you're only human.

Friend to Animals (-200 cp, free Human)
Pick a single suborder or family of vertebrae animals, like serpentes (snakes) feliforms (cats) canidae (dogs) or corvids (crows & ravens). You are the world's greatest expert in the handling and care of these creatures, sensitive to their moods and body language, and can even converse with them, both understanding and being understood. They will not harm you unless provoked and are inclined to do you small favors or services - for what they understand as small services.

Faith (-300 cp, free Human)
According to Abberline, faith in the future is what moves humans along. The ability to strive and never give up hope. It's not something that really appeals to Ciel, but you find an inexhaustible will to keep moving forwards, keep improving.

Silver Tongue (-100 cp, free Demon)
Demons are masters of persuasion and seduction, knowing the best sorts of lies to tell desperate people, how to spot a mark and tailor their approach with literally eons of experience in fooling the credulous. And how to seduce practically anyone. You are as skilled as Sebastian in this area.

Strong Arm (-200 cp, free Demon)
In many ways, a demon makes an ideal servant. They have no need for mortal food or drink, no need to sleep, and are immensely superhuman in their speed, strength and skill, able to shatter stone walls with one blow and sprint across London in moments. All these boons are yours.

Contract (-300 cp, free Demon)
The primary means by which demons feed. You can form a contract with someone, placing your mark upon their body. Thereafter, you must obey your marked master until the contract is fulfilled, but will gain many boons. You will always know the precise direction and distance to your master, & hear their commands at any distance. You can perform absolutely miraculous feats in service to your master, like rebuilding Phantomhive manor from charred ruins in a couple hours, or conjuring a scrumptious feast from nothing. In service, you wield vast powers.

Connoisseur of Death (-100 cp, free Shinigami)
After enough time spent around, or making, corpses, you've lost any squeamishness about handling dead bodies. Considering forensic medicine is in its infancy, you can also lay better claim than anyone to understanding how wounds were made, what that says about an attacker, and the age of bodies.

Unpaid Overtime (-200 cp, free Shinigami)
There really aren't enough hours in a day to check up on everyone on the To-Die List. But it seems you can somehow cram twelve hours or more of productivity into an eight-hour workday. Don't think you're getting paid more though.

Cinematic Record (-300 cp, free Shinigami)
The main power of the Shinigami, usually wielded through their Death Scythes. By touching (or wounding) a person, you can cause a film reel to appear out of their body and display their life story in film format. Normally, humans cannot see a Cinematic Record, but Shinigami, Demons and Angels can. You can then choose to snuff out their life or heal them, record the Record in a book, or even make crude edits, though the most likely outcome is a soul-devouring zombie, or Bizarre Doll.

Spooky (-100 cp, free Ghost)
Ghosts are terribly dramatic and good at intimidating people. A good thing, as they tend to have little real power over the living. You can be truly terrifying when you want to be, in ways even a demon would struggle to match.

Memories (-200 cp, free Ghost)
Clinging desperately to what's gone forever is kind of what ghosts are all about. You will never forget anything that happens to you or around you.

Let It Go (-300 cp, free Ghost)
You cannot change the past, and some things, once lost, can never be regained. But life, or afterlife, goes on. Whatever you lose; your wealth, your status, name, senses, limbs or life itself. You will be able to pick yourself up and move on. You are good at convincing others to keep on moving, in much the same way.

Soul Sight (-100 cp, free Bizarre Doll)
Most dolls can't actually see or hear, making them difficult to distract. What they do have is the ability to sense a soul, the one thing they lack. You can now sense souls in the same way.

Soulless Husk (-200 cp, free Bizarre Doll)
A Bizarre Doll has their cinematic record replaced with some footage of their maker messing around. Being technically soulless does carry some advantages, in that no one can find or damage or drain your soul without the connection of a pact. Also, any attempts to study you supernaturally will show your modified Cinematic Record - a loon dancing around and making funny faces.

Resilience (-300 cp, free Bizarre Doll)

Stabbing a Doll in the heart doesn't kill them, it doesn't even slow them down. Neither does emptying a revolver into their chest. Only pulping or removing the head can stop them. A very handy benefit, in a dangerous world, and one you share in.

Grace (-100 cp, free Angel)
Those pitiful creatures, chained to the ground, can scarcely comprehend, let alone hope to match, the grace of an angel. Not only can you soar above the clouds, you're nimble enough to evade most attacks, and even catch a collapsing tower of wineglasses without spilling a drop.

Fear Not (-200 cp, free Angel)
Angelic presence causes a euphoric effect in humans. This makes it easier for them to do obviously supernatural things without inspiring a panic, and has therapeutic uses. You can't change what happened, but you can change how people feel about it. All but the most stubborn or degraded of souls can be saved by you.
You can also change from a male to female form, so as to not discomfort others. This can make for a surprisingly effective disguise.

Angelic Seals (-300 cp, free Angel)
Angels wield strange powers through sigils and invocations. You can teleport anywhere in the world, and in adjacent worlds such as the Shinigami library, and block others from crossing such dimensional barriers. You can bring down a building with a single piercing cry, summon the light and heat of a small sun, and heal others.



Gamer (-100 cp, free Lord)
You know all kinds of period games and how to play them excellently. You aren't the reincarnation of an ancient Pharoah or anything, but may as well be.

Gentry (-200 cp, discount Lord)
You have received an enviable education in all the things a young noble should know. Finance, politics, math, literature, philosophy, hunting, dancing, music and horseback riding. This schooling updates in future Jumps to local standards.
More than this, you are marked out with a certain *je ne se quois* that marks a nobleman. People see you as somebody *important* and extend all sorts of courtesies and considerations towards you. If you go to war, your enemies will attempt to capture and ransom you if possible. If arrested, you will enjoy a presumption of innocence and a comfortable cell.

Griefer (-400 cp, discount Lord)
You have a good sense for people's weaknesses, and how to throw a monkey wrench into their carefully crafted schemes.

Spider (-600 cp, discount Lord)
Countless plots abound as every businessman, noble and criminal maneuvers for advantage. Luckily, you're usually three steps ahead. You are among the very best intriguers in the world, a match for Herr Von Bismarck. You can usually predict roughly what someone wants and how they'll go about getting it, and how to provoke precisely the reactions you need from them. Your intricate plans usually work, no matter how many requirements or desperate improvisations you need to add.

Servile (-100 cp, free Servant)
You possess the basic knowledge to be a servant in Victorian England. How to cook, clean, garden, iron clothes, make and serve tea and so on.

Discretion (-200 cp, discount Servant)
A servant must be skilled, diligent, and *invisible.* You have a great skill for blending into the background, looking like you belong. You are also very good at keeping secrets, and will get a mental notice if you're about to blab something you shouldn't.

And Everything In Its Place (-400 cp, discount Servant)
A Butler is more than a mere servant, he is an organizer of a vast staff and his master's schedule. You have top-notch organizational, management, and communications skills, able to convey a depth of possible meanings with a simple 'yes/no milord.' You can find a job for even the most dysfunctional of servants, and get any staff working together like a well-oiled machine. You can also tell when any small detail needs attention or is out of place, whether a missing spoon from the silverware drawer or the glint of a marksman' glass way out in the foliage.

If I Couldn't Do A Simple Thing Like That... (-600 cp, discount Servant)
What kind of a butler would you be? You seem able to pull out any kind of esoteric feat your master may need, from ice sculpting to making curry, fixing an automobile or fending off attackers. The secret is simple, at any time you may designate a single mortal skill or profession, and become the greatest, most knowledgeable and skilled practitioner of it in the world. At least until you decide you need a different skill.

Beat Copper (-100 cp, free Detective)
A proper copper stays on his feet all day, moving to and fro, ready for trouble at any time. You have solid physical conditioning and remarkable endurance and spatial awareness, making any serious pursuit almost a foregone conclusion. You also don't hesitate when trouble strikes, but react immediately and appropriately.

Upbeat (-200 cp, discount Detective)
It's easy for a Peeler to get cynical, having to pick up the pieces so often from murders to domestic abuse, rapine and theft and a thousand other hurts. Not so much you, though. The grisliest murder won't make you lose your lunch, or your faith in humanity. You can still smile for a child and enjoy a beautiful sunset.

Peel's Policing (-400 cp, discount Detective)
The policeman is a representative of the community, and their ability to function depends on the trust and respect of said community. Fortunately, you are very friendly and charming, and find it easy to build a large network of informal informants, friends, and stool pigeons willing to provide information. Give it a week or two and you'll be fully tapped into the local grapevine.

Elementary (-600 cp, discount Detective)
Well, Sir. Arthur Conan Doyle *is* a guest star in a murder mystery mansion arc. You have incredibly keen senses and the ability to pay attention to all manner of details most people overlook, relying on lazy mental patterns. The smallest whiff of the sea can tell you a victim has freshly arrived, the smudge of ink on a sleeve reveals a writer. You have a brilliant mind for logical deductions, letting you discard the extraneous and assemble a remarkably complete picture from these minor clues. This isn't magic, however, but you could convincingly fake it if you liked.
Relatedly, you are remarkably good at cold-reading, spotting the tiniest tells that scream to you of a guilty conscience or that your speculation has hit the mark.

With Catlike Tread (-100 cp, free Criminal)
A handy skill or a footpad, you can walk and climb in total silence. Or, if you prefer, let your footsteps echo ominously over improbable distances.

Nimble (-200 cp, discount Criminal)
You have the skills to be an acrobat in a circus, or a fine cat burglar. You can climb, swing and tumble with the very best of them, wield knives with deadly efficiency as both melee weapons or thrown.
You can also function perfectly well in pitch darkness, having trained yourself to do without sight.

Be a Good Boy (-400 cp, discount Criminal)
You have a sublime talent for talking people into doing things against their own inclinations or best interests. You can leverage any form of favor or blackmail extremely effectively, making people far more loyal to you than they reasonably should be for the incentives or threats offered.

When Fate Knocks (-600 cp, discount Criminal)
Some opportunities come only once in a lifetime. You can't be caught dreaming. You have a sense for chances to make money, improve your status, and realize your dreams. The things or people you will need to help you… and the obstacles you must deal with. This cannot guarantee victory, but at least you will know when it's possible to get ahead and not let chances slip by unnoticed.

Items

Monochrome Kiss (free)
You have access to the rather excellent soundtrack of the various anime adaptations and the musical. You can play them on any available device, or choose to hear the music and if anyone else can.

Endless Cutlery (-100 cp)
It wouldn't be anime without some odd choices in weaponry. Sebastian prefers to use the young master's good silverware as throwing weapons. You can always produce forks, knives and spoons from your sleeves.

Flamethrower (-100 cp)
A handy tool for clearing out brush, or warcrimes both in and outside the kitchen.

Necrosis (-100 cp)
A drug from the movie, which generally has very little to do with the franchise. Once ingested or injected, the victims have five minutes before death, where they instantly dry out and mummify, to convince you to administer the antidote that also comes with this item, and recipes for both.

Money (-100/200/300 cp)
Silver makes the world go round. For 100 cp, get a trust fund paying out enough local money to not have to worry about employment as long as you're frugal. For 200 cp, you're upper middle class, or *petit bourgeois*. For 300 cp, you own lands equivalent to an earldom, with many sources of income that allow you to live it large without fear of financial ruin, as long as you don't take u gambling as a hobby or go around buying ships.

Home Sweet Home (-100/200/300 cp)
Someplace to hang up your hat. For 100 cp, a simple cottage or workman's residence. For 200, something like the Phantomhive's London townhouse. Put in 300, and get a grand manor house equal to that of the Phantomhives or Tracys. Naturally, all taxes, utilities, deed and title etc. are taken care of.

Death Scythe (-200 cp)
Disguised as a humble gardening/agricultural tool, these weapons and tools of the Shinigami can cut anything but another Death Scythe, slay even beings like demons, and be used by Shinigami to access the Cinematic Records of people more easily,should you have the ability. If you do this, you can also undo the damage of your attack should you decide to spare the victim.

Demon Sword (-200 cp)
A rare weapon, this ornate and faintly eldritch sword inflicts wounds that do not heal, and can kill even 'immortal' beings like Demons, Angels and Shinigami. It can be concealed inside a human being who swallows it, and retrieved harmlessly, though the process is a bit awkward.

Forbidden Spice (-200 cp)
An evil, evil spice. Those who consume it, after a short interval, are overcome with rage and go berserk. Kind of limited utility. It can be countered by eating food cooked with love.

Corporation (-300 cp) You own a controlling interest in a corporation equal in wealth and scale to the Funtom Company, the largest toy and candy-makers in the world with factories on three continents. This gives you the ability to make tons of money, but also can give surprising influence.

Friends

Old Comrades - Import any number of friends from previous adventures and worlds to share in this one. Each Companion receives 800 cp of their own to spend, Companions cannot take drawbacks for more points.



Ciel, Earl of Phantomhive - A traumatized ten-year-old boy, pretending to be his twin brother so he can be Earl and pursue his family's killers. Ciel is clever, ruthless, competitive and prideful, but also physically frail, easily tired and afflicted with asthma. He is very cynical and lies easily, but there's a good person deep down inside him. Very deep. Exceptionally deep.

Sebastian Michaelis - The butler of the Phantomhive estate. Unquestionably talented and well-behaved, Sebastian is also arrogant, pedantic, an elitist snob, and utterly lacking in morals or shame. Oh, and he's also a demon here to groom a child into ever greater damnation before consuming the lad's soul, so that's a bit of a negative as well. He is always entertaining, however.

Finney - Born Subject S-012, part of a secret lab trial in developing super-strength. Finney was their greatest success until he was rescued by Sebastian and Ciel, given a name and a home and a job. He's a really sweet boy considering his atrocious childhood, and fiercely protective of his home and friends. Not a very good gardener though, he never laid eyes on plants until recently.

Bardroy - An Army veteran with an instinct for ambush that was much ignored by his superiors, Baldroy has survived many pitched battles led by fools who make the Charge of the Light Brigade seem reasonable, so he was happy to take the job as a cook.

Mey-Rin - A sniper once tried to kill Ciel, and after Sebastian captured her and had a brief interview, was hired on the spot as a maid. Mey-Rin tends to be clumsy, a result of being insanely farsighted, and easily flustered when not engaged in killing. She is fiercely loyal to people who appreciate her for who she is. Besides, her last job never let her wear skirts. Mey-Rin has an unrequited crush on Sebastian.

Grelle Sutcliffe - A transwoman Shinigami, first introduced as the struggling butler of Ciel's aunt with a deathwish. Grelle is obsessively infatuated with Sebastian and loves combat and killing, having previously been (half of) Jack the Ripper.

Pluto - A demon hound, larger than a small house, fire-breathing and able to turn into a human when excited. Pluto doesn't really get speech or pants.

Snake - A carnival freak who can talk to snakes, with pale white hair and somewhat scaly skin. Snake is a considerate person with a strong moral compass, but not always the brightest person, letting Ciel manipulate him into joining the team after killing off all his friends.

Sieglinde Sullivan - Easily the brightest mind of her generation, Sieglinde was betrayed by her own mother and grew up, her feet bound in the CHinese style, in a mock-up village with a fake history, all to convince her to develop chemical weapons, believing she was helping people. She is incredibly precious and so very alone. Protect her smile.

New Faces - If you want to recruit Soma, or Lizzie, or any random person you happen to meet during your stay, well go right ahead!

Drawbacks

Abridged Super Series (+0 cp)
Oh my, it appears you won't be visiting the world of Black Butler after all, but that of the Abridged Series. It's mostly the same sort of thing happening, but with a better soundtrack, a sitcom laugh track at inappropriate moments, and a lot more sass.

Tales Retold (+0 cp)
The story of Ciel Phantomhive and his remarkable butler has already been adapted and altered multiple times. Should you wish the continuity of the manga, one of the anime, the movies, the live-action movie, a fanfiction or, Heaven help you, the musical theater version, well feel free. Should you wish to blend such events and plot elements, you may.

Asthma (+100 cp)
A mysterious condition that causes breathing troubles from time to time. Mostly only an issue if you're really stressed and/or cold. Still, it's never fun to be gasping for air, and a severe enough attack could be quite dangerous, so do bundle up in the winter and try not to exert yourself.

Atrocious Manners (+100 cp)
Your table manners are as awful as Sieglinde Sullivan's. You gulp down food as fast as you can, slurp your soup, and talk while chewing. You can overcome this with focus and a singular will, until you get distracted.

Chunni (+100 cp)
You can be a tad overdramatic, by which I mean "as much as Ciel or Alois." Every insult is unforgivable, every sorrow the worst thing to ever happen. You spend a lot of time brooding.

Pirate (+100 cp)
Ciel may only be covering up his contract mark, but you're actually down an eye. Hope you can rock the eyepatch look, and don't need binocular vision for, say, precisely estimating distances.

Marked (+100 cp)
Like Ciel (twice over, really) you have obviously occult markings on your body, someplace not easily hidden. Could be scarred, tattooed, or branded. In any case, you aren't getting rid of them, and people who seem them will have questions you may not wish to answer.

Near-sighted (+100 cp)
Turns out, Shinigami are more than half-blind without their spectacles. You might have been the exception, but not if you take this. The good news is, with a strong prescription you'll be able to function fine, less some irritation and occasional headaches.

Seasick (+100 cp)
A British Tar you are certainly not --you could get seasick in Spithead. Any water voyage is sure to be extremely uncomfortable for you.

Easily Flustered (+200 cp)

It's not right, it isn't. But you tend to get frozen, or distracted very easily. This can make it difficult to attend to your duties, and even more should a seductive demon take an interest.

Framed (+200 cp)
It seems you are wanted for an infamous crime, not just the Yard but every extraordinary resource the British government can muster against you. Possibly even the Earl of Phantomhive and his remarkable butler.

Rude (+200 cp)
You are brusque, sarcastic, and generally reflexively rude to everyone you meet. Don't expect to make a lot of friends; most people in this series will look the other way for murder before letting an insult go unanswered.

Small (+200 cp)
You're a child, and like Ciel, not a particularly tall one. Expect troubles being taken seriously, and a suitable debuff to any physical abilities.

Camilla (+300 cp)
You require regular blood transfusions to survive, every couple of days. Besides being tedious to sit through, sourcing donors could be challenging, and you may open yourself to infection with a poor choice.

Debts (+300 cp)
You owe a considerable fortune to some bad people. More than you have, whatever your sources of wealth. Best either secure a lot of funds quickly, or consider how else you might make repayments, such as through particularly dangerous missions.

Heart On Your Sleeve (+300 cp)
Like Finney, Bardroy, Mey-Rin and Prince Soma, you can't contain your honest feelings. You have a terrible poker face and aren't very good at keeping secrets.

Impoverished (+300 cp)
Your warehouse is barred to you, and all monies, properties and possessions acquired in previous Jumps. Most particularly any Items you might have found useful.

Crippled (+400 cp)
What a cruel thing to do. Like Sullivan, you have been subjected to foot-binding, where the feet are wrapped tightly while developing so they grow into hideous, useless and sensitive stumps. You can maybe grit your teeth and totter a short distance with crutches or other aides like Sullivan's hexballoons, but should probably get used to being carried or dealing with a very non-wheelchair-accessible world.

Lost (+400 cp)

You will forget all you know of Black Butler, and believe you have dropped into a mundane Victorian setting, or possibly something like HG Wells or Dracula with a tiny deviation from the world and history you knew. Any perks or nature that would contradict that, like being an angel, you will forget and have to discover on your own.

Woof (+400 cp)
Much as Ciel is the Queen's Guard Dog, much as Diedrich is reluctantly beholden to him, you have a master you are obliged to obey. Could be a ruler, a prince, even Ciel. You must protect your master and their interests and they will have many difficult, embarrassing and dangerous tasks for you.

No Such Thing (+600 cp)
Really, who believes in magic and superpowers and dimensional travelers in this modern age? It's the 19th Century! Any powers or perks from previous Jumps will not serve you here, though you retain the boons of skills, knowledge and experience.

Trauma-Rama (+600 cp)
Ciel is a profoundly damaged child, and far from the only one here. You have the memories, or literal experiences, or something as world-devastatingly awful as the losses and abuses suffered by Ciel in a year of captivity after watching his parents die by fire. Expect a lot of nightmares and PTSD flashbacks, but with time and a lot of effort you may just claw your way back to being a halfways functional human being.

We Are Phoenixes! (+600 cp)
The Aurora Society, and most particularly their backer the Undertaker, see you as an obstacle to be removed. The Undertaker is a legendary retired Shinigami who can slice a cruise liner in two with ease, and has spent decades assembling contacts and resources to outstrip those of the Phantomhives.

Fin

Notes:

Black Butler -
*"You see... I am simply - one **hell** of a butler."*
We meet Sebastian, Ciel and their staff on a relatively routine day, there is a great fuss to entertain a business partner, Chlaus, with continuous problems. Finney the cheerful and strong but dumb gardener destroys the gardens, so Sebastian improvises a meditation rock garden. Baldroy the cook tries to roast a turkey with a flamethrower, so Sebastian serves up Donburi (raw beef, traditional Japanese style) for dinner. The clumsy maid Mey-Rin pours half a bottle of wine onto the tablecloth, but Sebastian whisks it away before their guest even notices. The dinner and business deal are a great success.

Ciel and Sebastian pick up a new cane for the boy earl, and are surprised when Ciel's fiance, Lizzie, has taken over and redecorated the manor. Ciel declines to dance (he doesn't know how) and Lizzie smashes his family ring, which he throws away but Sebastian recovers and repairs it.

Ciel is then kidnapped by an Italian mobster and drug-dealer, Azzurro Vanel of the Ferro crime family. Azzurro's businesses suffer because the underworld is so terrified of the queen's guard dog, Ciel. He attempts to force and bully Ciel into working for him instead, but Ciel is unimpressed, the snipers sent to attack the Phantomhive manor come to a bad end at Sebastian's hand, and the Butler soon rescues Ciel, revealing his demonic nature to Vanel. After all, dead men tell no tales.

Red Butler -

"Ah, It's so nice to see you in my true form! I admit, I was very surprised when I first saw you. I've never seen a demon playing a butler."

It is social season in London and Queen Victoria requests the intervention of her guard dog in the case of a notorious serial killer the press has dubbed 'Jack the Ripper.' Ciel and Sebastian arrive at the Phantomhive's London townhouse and are greeted by his maternal aunt Angelina Dalle (whom Ciel calls 'Madame Red') her incompetent new butler, Grelle Sutcliff, and Lau, an impish Chinese gentleman who runs a trading company, multiple opium dens, the Chinese Quarter and the entire East End and docks under Ciel's supervision and as one of his primary underworld informants.

None of them know anything, so Ciel visits the Undertaker, a mysterious funeral director and expert in death, whose consistent price for information is 'make me laugh.' Undertaker says all the victims had their uterus removed, and he suspects a surgeon from the skill with which it was done.

On the return trip, Sebastian leaps from a moving carriage to begin assembling and cross-referencing a suspect list, and is waiting by the time they arrive at the townhouse. Of all the people with medical degrees in London or reasonable traveling distance, exactly one has no alibi for even one of the murders - Aleister Chamber the Viscount Druitt, who is rumored to lead a secretive occult society and is holding a grand fête this evening.

The party attends, with Ciel disguised as a girl and Madame Red's niece. Disaster nearly strikes when Lizzie is present and nearly recognizes her fiancee. Ciel is able to flirt clumsily with Druitt, who lures him into a back room and drugs him. Ciel wakes up, blindfolded, in a gilded cage in a basement, where Druitt is auctioning off people. Sebastian rescues him, and the two flee the scene just before the police arrive to arrest everyone present, feeling pretty good about themselves.

The next morning, the headlines scream that the Ripper has struck again. Ciel tells Sebastian to review and triple check his suspect list, then spends the day repeatedly trouncing his aunt at chess while she tries to talk him out of his vengeful path.

That night, after hearing Sebastian's findings, Ciel stakes out the next prospective victim. When the woman dies and they find Grelle Sutcliff standing over the body with a bloody chainsaw, Ciel lays out how he knew. All the victims had previously gotten abortions from his aunt, and while no human could have sprinted across London, killed a woman and returned, Grelle is a Shinigami, the two of them together are Jack the Ripper. Madame Red appears as Grelle and Sebastian break into a duel, but Grelle kills her when she hesitates to stab Ciel.

Sebastian regretfully unleashes a secret technique - sacrificing a perfectly good tailcoat to foul Grelle's chainsaw. Before he can deliver the final blow, Grelle's Shinigami supervisor, Will, appears and drags the serial killer off by the scruff of the neck to face judgement.

While Ciel is wrestling with the emotional damage, the manor is visited by Lizzie's overbearing mother, Marchioness Francis Midford, who is outraged by Ciel's indolence and Sebastian's sass. She winds up challenging Ciel to a hunting contest and the two are tied at fifteen kills apiece when a bear appears to menace Lizzie. Lady Francis gets the kill shot, but is impressed at Ciel shielding Lizzie with his tiny frail body, conceding maybe he's a worthwhile match after all.

When they return to the manor, the servants have a cake. Francis admits she and Lizzie came to wish Ciel a happy thirteenth birthday, which he'd completely forgotten about.

(Anime Only) Houndsworth -

Ciel, Sebastian, and the servants all travel to the remote Scottish village of Houndsworth, a clannish community with a dark history of bear-baiting and dog fights, to scout the location of a resort the Queen plans to build.

The village mayor, Henry Barrymore, runs the village as a tyrant and a cult leader. The people are all terrified of a demon dog that comes in the night to tear apart anyone who has been a 'bad dog.' After the murder of a man named James, Sebastian reveals how Barrymore has faked a demon hound of the Baskervilles with projections, a fanged mouth tool and phosphorescent paint. He and Ciel are plenty surprised, then, when a real demon dog drags Barrymore from prison and kills him.

The real demon hound is a two–stories tall white wolf that breathes fire. His name is Pluto, and he can turn into a human form sometimes, but still acts like a dog. Sebastian is able to beat him into submission, and the mayor's maid, Angela Blanc, begs them to take Pluto with them and train him. Sebastian also uncovers a natural hot-spring and they open a Japanese onsen to be the centerpiece of the Queen's planned resort.

(Anime Only) Shards of Hope -

"London Bridge is falling down, falling down..."

The River Thames freezes over for the first time in decades, and people hold a fair on the ice. Lizzie is looking for a gift for Ciel, who is intrigued when he sees Scotland Yard present.

Turns out, a body was found in the ice, after its owner was part of stealing a small piece of the Hope Diamond.

The fragment, in a ring, has been made a part of an ice sculpture, but it's meant as a prize for the winner of an ice-sculpting contest, so Ciel orders Sebastian to win, which he does with a rendition of Noah's Ark where the house splits open to reveal many pairs of animal sculptures. However, the dead man's gang appears to demand the ring. Sebastian duels them while figure-skating and with all their dynamite and gunplay, they send themselves, and the ice sculpture, through the ice to the depths.

Later, Lizzie gives Ciel a replica of a Phantomhive Noah's Ark toy they used to play with. He derides it as a cheap imitation and she leaves the manor, crushed. She then encounters a toystore run by an odd man named Drossel, who takes her away and begins the process of turning her into a doll. Ciel learns of her disappearance, and those of several others with hope diamond fragments, and searches with Pluto, encountering Grell who helps him, and eventually rescued by Sebastian. Drossel turns out to be a puppet, as is his master, though the audience gets to see the chain extends up to Angela Blanc.

<u>Indian Butler</u> -

A series of *nouveau* rich Englishmen who made their fortunes in India are turning up beaten and dangling by their feet from ropes, with taunting notes attached. Eager to wrap this nuisance case quickly, Ciel takes Sebastian to the Indian quarter, where he bumps a man who screams his rib was cracked and a platoon of thugs turn out to demand compensation. Just as Sebastian is about to flatten them, a pair of richly dressed Indian gents show up, Prince Soma Asman Kadar of Bengal and his *khansama*, or butler, Agni. The two initially side with their countrymen and Agni becomes the first - and to date only - human to fight Sebastian to a draw, something he attributes to having the 'right hand of a goddess.' Mid-battle, Ciel explains they were being robbed, and Soma and Agni switch sides, easily dispatching the ruffians.

Later, Soma and Agni turn up at Ciel's townhouse, claiming hospitality because they aided him, and being nuisance houseguests. Soma is looking for a girl, Mina, a servant at his palace stolen away by a wealthy English gentleman. He challenges Ciel to fencing, but Agnit leaps to his master's defense reflexively, injuring Ciel's arm. Sebastian taps in, but Agni is able to duel him to a draw.

At night, the Indians go out. Concerned they may be connected with the attacks, Ciel and Sebastian tail them, but they really are just showing a crude drawing of Mina around and asking questions. However, after Soma goes to bed, Agni goes out again. Ciel and Sebastian, and Lau and Soma, follow him to the house of Harold West Jeb, owner of an Indian restaurant chain and husband to Mina. On his order, Agni attacks Soma, and Sebastian barely gets him out without being recognized.

Ciel reasons that Jeb is after a Royal Warrant - a contract to provide food (or other goods and services) for the Royal Family, with considerable bragging rights - which is up for grabs in a curry cook-off in two weeks. He's been having Agni eliminate the competition. A Royal Warrant is *very* good for business. Ciel concludes that his position as the Queen's unofficial underworld enforcer gives him zero jurisdiction here, but as the head of the Funtom company he may as well throw his hat in the ring, and orders Sebastian to come up with the best possible curry. He also gives Soma a harsh, but much needed, reality check.

On the day of the cook-off, Soma sees Mina in the crowd. She tells him she left because a rich man's wife is a huge upgrade from a low-caste servant. Agni wanted to first buy her freedom from Jeb, then to shelter Soma from just how much the closest thing he had to a present mother resented him.

Agni has amazing prowess for curry, and even breaks out a rare blue lobster. Sebastian puts chocolate in his and bakes it inside a bun. For some reason, the Viscount Druitt is one of the judges. Queen Victoria makes a surprise appearance and gives a tiebreaker vote awarding the Royal Warrant to Ciel's company. The Queen also slips something into Ciel's pocket, two tickets for the circus.

(In the anime, Angela gives one contestant a 'forbidden spice' that causes people who ate the curry to go berserk, including Mina. Ciel realizes everyone who ate both the tainted curry and Sebastian's curry buns didn't, and that the curry buns cure the rage. Soma and Agni ascribe this to Sebastian's curry being made with love, which Ciel thinks is a bad joke.)

The next evening, Ciel has several Scotland Yard inspectors over for dinner. Agni keeps trying to confess to his crimes, but Sebastian keeps interrupting him. Soma and Ciel forbid him from 'fessing up. Soma decides he'd like to stay, to learn to be a good man from Ciel. Ciel decides they can stay in his London townhouse as long as they keep the place up.

(Anime Only) Haunted Castle -

Renovations to Ludlow Castle are woefully behind schedule, the workers claim the place is haunted. Ciel arrives to disperse the rumors, but it turns out the castle really is haunted, by the ghost of young King Edvard V and his brother Richard, the Princes in the Tower.

Ciel wagers his butler against the boys leaving his construction crews alone in a game of chess, then loses as Richard warps his knight into a queen and declares it not cheating by royal fiat. Sebastian gets close to the Princes and learns Edward is staying only to help his little brother move on, and Richard has tricked his brother to keep him from ever going. Eventually the two brothers talk it out and fade away.

(Anime Only) Book of Doomsday -

Ciel is sent to investigate a cult that supposedly has knowledge of the future. It turns out, as they witness a 'purging' ceremony, they have special books that, like a Shinigami's Death Scythe, can display a Cinematic Record of a person's life.

Ciel is chosen by the cult leader, whose touch reminds him of his father's. He immediately summons Sebastian to kill the patchwork puppet-man. Angela Blanc then appears and abducts Ciel to the Shinigami's library of Cinematic Records, in another world.

Under the influence of the angel's euphoric aura, Ciel experiences a hallucination of his parents urging him to forgive and let go of his guilt. Though he wavers, he ultimately refuses, telling his parents that his vengeance isn't for them, it's for him. Angela freaks out, but Sebastian has accessed the library with help from Grelle and defends his master. Angela returns to the cult to kill them all, sealing travel between worlds with her angelic magic, but the Undertaker, a retired legendary Shinigami (a reveal the manga wouldn't make for several years) is able to improvise a workaround. Sebastian, Grelle and Grelle's supervisor William Spears attack Angela and pin her to a wall, but she screams and causes the building to implode on them. The supernatural beings merely dust themselves off, but the (fallen?) angel is gone.

(Anime Only) Conspiracy and Murder -

A new drug is hitting the streets, the 'white lady.' Curiously, in Funtom candy wrappers. Ciel is on his way to investigate when he's arrested - ordering Sebastian not to resist - by Scotland Yard who have already raided his candy factory and found the drugs.

Ciel escapes, with the superfluous help of Inspector Abberline. Investigation traces the frame-up to Lau, who says he was always curious if he could measure up and be a real player. Though Lau also claims Queen Victoria is behind the drug, planning to flood Europe with it much the way the British used opium to conquer China, and that the Queen is arming up for a war like none seen before, a 'world war' if you will. There's a punchy conclusion and Lau is killed, but not before Abberline sacrifices himself, throwing his body between Ciel and the man's sword, his dying words being to urge Ciel to have faith.

Shaken by Lau's words, Ciel then attends the opening of the *Exposition Universelle de 1889* in Paris, hoping for an audience with the Queen. He is separated from Sebastian when an 'angel' (a stuffed monkey with wings sewn on) comes to life and makes trouble, but finds himself in the lift up Alexandre Eiffel's new tower, along with Queen Victoria.

Beneath the veil she still wears in mourning for Prince Albert, the Queen has been restored to a youthful state… and fused with the decaying body of her late husband, both miracles she attributes to her angelic butler Ash Landers (Angela Blanc, swapping sexes in a surprisingly effective disguise). She claims in one breath to have purged the Phantomhives as unclean and unworthy of the dawning brilliance of the new century, and to have shown them kindness by joining their bodies to be together forever as with her Albert. Sebastian shows and engages the angel, but their battle damages the tower and draws a crowd of onlookers, and Ciel chooses to disengage, over Sebastian's objections.

In the morning, Sebastian has vanished. Ciel is forced to make his own way back to London, being exploited and abused on the way, losing all his money and ultimately stowing

aboard a ship at Calais. He returns to find London aflame, Ash/Angela having triggered Pluto to burn it all down. Ciel finally trades away his family ring for a rowboat to go ashore. Ciel goes to confront the Queen, finds her already dead at the angel's hands, just in time to get caught by her security, but Sebastian saves him. After ordering the staff to kill Pluto, the two confront Angela at London Bridge where she's siphoning the souls of the dead for some huge working, slowed drastically by the Shinigami. Sebastian asks Ciel to close his eyes for thirty seconds, to not see his true form as he kills the angel.

The next day, the chief inspector of Scotland Yard watches the Queen's body double give a post-fire speech, scoffing that a lie repeated enough becomes the truth. Sebastian takes Ciel to a ruined abbey on a lonely island to eat his soul for a cliffhanger.

(Anime Only) Trancy Arc -

We meet another traumatized child Earl with a demon butler, Alois Trancy, the Queen's Spider. Where Ciel is sober and reserved, Alois is cheery, creepily sensual for a child, but also sadistic. As seen when he deliberately spills his drink, then gouges out his maid Hannah's eye for daring to look at him. After a brief window into his life, Sebastian appears with Ciel in a suitcase and steals a tin of tea from the Trancy basement.

It seems just before Sebastian could eat Ciel's soul, Alois' butler Claude nicked it, sticking it in the tea tin. Even with the soul restored though, Ciel recalls nothing since the series began, not his aunt's fate and certainly not actually attaining his revenge, spoiling Sebastian's feast for a time.

For a whole season the rivalry between the boys and 'my butler can beat up your butler' is teased. Alois also almost kills a bunch of people at a masquerade party by having Hannah play a cursed glass armonica that drives the guests berserk, but Sebastian is able to counter with dozens of wine glasses. Alois blames Sebastian, under a previous master, for killing his brother and village (Alois' real name is Jim Macken, he was an orphan taken as a sex slave by the perverted old Earl, before forming a pact with Claude, killing the SOB and presenting himself as the old Trancy's long-lost son) and so wants to take away Ciel, the one thing Sebastian wants. Sebastian and Claude form a pact to frame Alois for the murder of the Phantomhives and fight over Ciel's soul once it is again ripe with vengeance fulfilled.

Ciel wounds Alois in a sword duel, who only after gets the idea of actually talking things out. Too late now, Alois is murdered by Claude and his soul bound to the Trancy family ring.

Claude then stages a series of eye-gouging attacks across London, framing Ciel for both the attacks, and being Alois. He is committed to a sanatorium where, using the Alois ring to muddle his identity and torture, is able to confuse the two boys' identities enough that Ciel panics at the first sight of Sebastian and orders him from his sight.

The butlers do wind up fighting, out of Ciel's sight, but it turns out Hannah the maid is a demon herself and helps Alois take over Ciel's body. The mad lad climbs a tower and makes the two butlers run a hedge maze with questions about his past. This is buying time, as it

turns out Hannah is the demon who destroyed Jim's village, at the behest of his kid brother, and took his soul. She loves Alois, in a twisted way, and wants to reunite the brothers inside her. Sebastian and Claude are delayed enough for a new pact to be formed. The two duel to the death and Sebastian handily wins. Hannah throws herself off a cliff with Ciel's body, revealing what Alois sold his soul for. Ciel will be reborn as a demon, with no soul to take.

So it is. Afterwards, Ciel gets his affairs in order, finally has the dance with Lizzie he feared all this time, and fakes his death. Because Ciel ordered Sebastian that 'until you claim my soul, you are still my butler!' during the hedge maze, Sebastian is forever bound to a master he cannot devour, and the two wander the world together.

Obviously this doesn't work with any of their ongoing adventures, but it's such a perfectly messed up ending, I kinda hope the manga circles back to it someday.

Circus -

The tickets Queen Victoria gave Ciel (end of Indian butler) have a note. It seems at least six children are missing, the only commonality between them being they vanished while the Noah's Ark Traveling Circus was in town. The Queen kindly asks Ciel to investigate.

Attending the circus, Sebastian volunteers for the tiger-taming act, but his handling of the cat gets it to bite him, and he is hauled away to the doctor's tent. There he learns most of the core cast have anachronistically-advanced prosthetics. He also impresses with his toughness and agility and claims to be looking for a way out of the butler life, along with his nephew whom he takes to audition for the circus. With some thrown pebbles from Sebastian, Ciel is able to ace the knife-throwing act and stay up on the tightrope. Sebastian is given the stage name Black and Ciel becomes Smile.

They search the camp and can find no trace of the missing children. However, the private tents of the core cast are guarded by the venomous serpents of the snake charmer, Snake. They are also surprised to see a Shinigami, William Spears, here doing a tightrope act, but the two parties agree to keep out of each others' way. Also, Ciel is made to room with a cheerful boy named Freckles.

Ciel comes up with a plan to search the private tents while the performers are busy with a show. Sebastian gets tapped when Doll, the tightrope mistress, sprains an ankle but is able to tie all the snakes in knots for Ciel first. They learn the core cast were all in a workhouse together, run by the philanthropist Earl Kelvin, and they have a list of names including Ciel's, but Ciel has an asthma attack and is forced to spend a day resting in bed before they can confront Earl Kelvin.

At Kelvin's estate, Ciel and Sebastian watch children die attempting dangerous circus acts, while Joker (the ringmaster) looks on uncomfortably. It seems Kelvin was obsessed with the Phantomhives, underwent extensive plastic surgery to be pretty and 'worthy' of them and has recreated the hall where Ciel was tortured, violated, and formed his pact with

Sebastian. Because Kelvin is upset he wasn't there. The circus performers provide children, out of gratitude for Kelvin's saving their lives and fear his withdrawing support would kill all the other children at the workhouse.

There's a brief scuffle, Kelvin is killed and Joker fatally wounded after pulling a trick blade from his prosthetic arm. The doctor arrives and explains that the secret ingredient in his prostheses is the bones of children. Ciel has Sebastian burn the Kelvin estate to the ground, including the children still in cages. Later, he justifies this by saying that the kids could never recover and lead normal lives, they don't have demon butlers to draw strength from as he did. They kill Doll who confronts them outside.

While this was going on, the rest of the circus performers (minus Snake, who was never part of the workhouse or kidnapping scheme) were storming Phantomhive Manor to kidnap Ciel and getting butchered by his staff/security.

As a final close to this, Ciel visits the workhouse, saying the clean-up is also part of his duty and he may be able to arrange a new patron, only to find the place a long-abandoned ruin, the children likely long-since rendered down for bones. Ciel can't help but break down laughing at the absurd plight of the circus, which he likens to the human condition - we all lie and cheat, steal and kill to protect our own, and it's always for nothing in the end.

<u>The Phantomhive Murders</u> -

"Herein I shall recount . . . all I can about the incidents that I encountered at the Phantomhive Manor—the grisly events, which came to pass on that dark and stormy night—"

The Queen's butlers, the Double Charles, deliver orders for Ciel to host a wealthy German banker and industrialist, and distant cousin to the queen, Georg von Siemens, in two weeks. They warn her majesty is quite upset over the children and that this is a good chance to redeem himself to her. Ciel summons a number of guests to a soiree in Siemens' honor: Lau & Ran Mao, Patrick Phelps the son of a shipping magnate, a diamond dealer named Karl Woodley, Irene Diaz the famous opera singer and her promoter and lover Mr. Grimsby Keane, finally a burgeoning young writer, Arthur Conan Doyle who has just published the first of his Sherlock Holmes stories. Also present is one of the Charles, Charles Grey.

A storm closes in, and the Phantomhive Manor is quite cut off from the rest of the world.

At the party, Georg quickly becomes drunk and gets handsy with the staff and Irene, prompting a fight with Grimsby only barely defused. The guest of honor is taken to bed, and Ciel turns in early as well, and so becomes the sole person without an alibi hours later, when the body of Georg Von Siemens is found.

As the prime suspect, Ciel agrees to be chained to Arthur for the rest of the night, during which Sebastian is 'murdered' with a fire poker and Mr. Phelps via some kind of poison injected into his neck. In the morning, Arthur begins an investigation, searching the quarters of all the guests and staff. Sebastian's key is missing, and Mey-Rin finds a bottle of red stuff in Irene's luggage, making her suspect the woman is a vampire.

Arthur cannot figure out how any one person could have committed all three murders. Everyone has an alibi for the first except for Ciel, and he and Ciel are the only ones with a rock solid alibi for the other two. Unless there's a third party, a thirteenth man?!?

The staff then say they caught someone suspicious. Ciel identifies the extra man lurking about as Vicar Jeremy Rathbone (really, Sebastian in disguise) who proves his bona fides with a carrier owl sent by Sebastian, and his alibi with a theater ticket from London last night. Jeremy then examines all the corpses before proclaiming there are multiple killers and he will need to wait until nightfall, and Ciel's cooperation, to catch them.

That night, Ran Mao lays in Ciel's bed, in his clothes, and is attacked by a snake which Jeremy easily captures. This, he explains, is the killer of Patrick Phelps who last stayed in this room, an attack meant for Ciel. And that this particular snake, a black mamba from Africa, casts a shadow of guilt over Mr. Woodley who has a variety of grey and illegal interests in that continent. He explains that Georg Von Siemens was drugged to appear dead, probably talked into it as a prank, he *was* rather drunk, and then stabbed later. Specifically so his killer would have an alibi. Sebastian was killed to prevent his finding glass shards in a fireplace, the remnants of the drug ampule, which they now discover in Woodley's room. Ciel provides motive, Funtom has developed a new technology with mining applications and gone into business with a rival company, until the CEO of that company was mysteriously murdered a short while ago. Charles Grey arrests Woodley.

All seems wrapped up, the storm breaks and everyone goes their separate ways… but Arthur Conan Doyle suddenly changes his mind and returns to the Phantomhive Estate, feeling everything wrapped a little *too* neatly.

Ciel and Sebastian have a rather frank discussion with Arthur. They knew going in that Georg Von Siemens had been marked for death - the queen sent Charles to do the deed because Siemens was a key player in Germany's industry, finances and military build-up. And framed Ciel as a scold for 'some mischief I recently got up to' and as a test of both his ability and loyalty. Karl Woodley was invited to be their Judas Goat, don't worry, he's done plenty of murders himself. Once Sebastian was 'dead' he was scrambling behind the scenes to set everything up for his return as Jeremy Rathbone. Sebastian intimidates Arthur into silence, but admits he hoped to inspire the man to continue writing about his detective that so delighted the young master.

Ciel asks about the snake, which turns out to have been sent by… Snake. Ciel tells a highly edited version of what happened, in which the Circus performers vanished and are on the run, and convinced Snake to help him look for them, saying his talents might be useful.

There is still the matter that the whole staff knows Sebastian was impaled with a fire poker. However, they fix it by burying him and having him ring one of those bells for premature burial. Everyone is so delighted to have him back, they don't question the absence of wounds.

Luxury Liner -

"They called it the Ship of Dreams..."

Here come *all* of the Titanic references. Lau comes to Ciel with word of human experiments performed at Karnstein Hospital in London's East End, to raise the dead. A quick infiltration by Sebastian reveals the work is being done by the Aurora Society, and they are having a grand gathering on the luxury cruise liner Campania, bound to America starting April 17th, from Southampton. A cruise Ciel's fiance Lizzy and her family were already planning to take.

Naturally, Ciel goes, along with Sebastian and Snake. Sebastian is able to provide the recognition signs needed a couple days into the voyage. To signal the meeting, a waiter circulates through the grand hall with a tray of empty glasses, the members take one and absent themselves discreetly. Besides the empty glass, members greet each other with their motto - "the fire within can be hidden, but never extinguished. Through it all, we are phoenixes!" - with an awkward bird pose. They recognize the undertaker, and Druitt, among the guests.

The leader of the Society, a Dr. Rian Stoker introduces himself and the society's goal, the absolute salvation of mankind through medicine. He proclaims a grand breakthrough and brings in the corpse of one Margaret Connor to demonstrate, hooking it up to some electrical apparatus he does indeed bring Margaret back to life, but as a ravenous zombie. There's a general stampede for the exit as the few armed men empty guns uselessly into her, until a Shinigami, Ronald Knox, pops up to take off her head with his lawnmower death scythe and tell them they need headshots.

Ciel catches up with Lizzie and Snake in a small hold where they barely fend off a small horde long enough for Sebastian to come and save them. They capture Stoker, who claims there are ten times as many zombies in another hold, one for each man, woman and child on the ship. He claims to have a device to stop them, in his quarters. Ciel sends Sebastian to evacuate Lizzie's family to safety as a zombie horde starts nomming down on passengers and crew.

Oh, and the ship is heading straight for an iceberg. The wheelhouse isn't answering the lookouts' increasingly frantic calls, because everyone was eaten by zombies. Grelle is on the iceberg.

After the impact, Sebastian runs to the wheelhouse and starts sealing off flooding compartments, while Grelle tries being king of the world before declaring there's just no spark with Knox. Lizzie is trapped in a flooding boiler compartment but Ciel goes back for her and they both escape through the vents. However, in the confusion, Rian Stoker is able to escape from Snake.

Ciel and Lizzie catch up with Sebastian, just as the two Shinigami arrive and attack them. Ciel hurts his leg with a group of zombies closing in. Lizzie apologizes, having always wanted to be cute and sweet for Ciel, and knowing he once expressed a fear of scary women,

before drawing twin sabers and murderblendering the small horde, being also a swordfighting prodigy from a family a little obsessed with being knights. The Shinigami leave once hearing Stoker is the key to this whole mess.

With Sebastian carrying Ciel, they find Druitt with the device. He grandly proclaims himself emperor of a new age and agrees to turn it on, but only if they show allegiance with another phoenix pose, which they do. Stoker's machine does... absolutely nothing.

Grelle goes to kill the upstart, but he's protected by the Undertaker, the true master of the Aurora Society, now revealed as a retired legendary Shinigami himself. Undertake explains he made the zombies, which he calls Bizarre Dolls, by splicing extra footage into their Cinematic Records after the end of life. True, they don't do much but hone in on the nearest souls and tear their bodies apart, but they also don't get tired, pained or scared and there's military uses for that, making this ship a proof-of-concept. He considers them very much works in progress anyways. Undertaker is easily able to 1-v-3 the other Shinigami and Sebastian, and even slices the ship in half.

He also tags Sebastian, revealing some details about his early days as Ciel's butler. Sebastian does get a chain of mourning lockets off him, which he declares Ciel can keep for now.

The ship truly sinks. Sebastian, heavily wounded, gets Ciel into a lifeboat, but they are now being swarmed by Dolls unable to drown. Unwilling to risk the other survivors, Ciel orders Sebastian to kill them all. It takes all night, but he finishes just in time for dawn and the arrival of a rescue ship.

<u>Public School</u> -

The Queen asks Ciel to investigate a distant relative, Derrick Arden, who has gone silent and not returned home from public school (a posh private school, think Eton or Hogwarts) at Weston College, and four other boys. To penetrate the layers of tradition and privilege, Ciel goes undercover by enrolling in the school. This will be the arc of Ciel trying and failing to pretend to be a normal rich kid.

There are four houses, determined by the mysterious headmaster. Ciel is in Sapphire Owl house (nerds) but there's also Green Lion (jocks) Scarlet Fox (really rich kids) and Violet Wolf (goths, artists, and theater kids). Derrick and the other boys were in Scarlet Fox, but were abruptly transferred mid-year to Violet Wolf and haven't been seen in public since. Very unusual, but everyone Ciel asks about it clams up in a hurry.

Sebastian also got a job as housemaster.

Ciel fixates on asking the headmaster about the boys, but the headmaster isn't available to most students. Outside a couple official functions, the only times students can speak with the headmaster are at his midnight tea party, attended by the four prefects (one for each house) their drudges - junior students who do their scutwork, and one chosen player from the annual cricket tournament, either MVP or one who showed exceptional sportsmanship.

Ciel's efforts to curry favor with the prefects get the skids temporarily placed on it by one of their drudges, Marcus Cole, a conniving social climber and bully. Ciel carries out the most ridiculously petty vendetta against the boy, even convincing Prince Soma to enroll as his spy in the Scarlet Fox house, and culminating in getting the kid to try and cover up his crimes in a secret meeting with tin-can telephones to let the prefects listen in. Ciel is then made drudge to one of the prefect's drudges.

Frustrated with the slow progress of the investigation, Ciel sets fire to the Violet Wolf dorms. Derrick and the missing boys fail to evacuate, yet the roll-call shows no one missing.

Ciel refocuses on becoming the MVP of the cricket tournament. Unfortunately, he is not athletic and his team are sad nerds who have only missed out on last place once in centuries - the year Ciel's father was prefect and team captain. Ciel introduces the team to concepts like bunting, swinging on a sound cue, hiring girls to flash the other team, spiking the half-time tea party food with laxatives, and similar examples of gentlemanly conduct. All to get into position where he can win the game by letting a batter crack him on the head and getting to and throwing the ball first when the other guy tries to offer aid.

At the Midnight Tea Party, Ciel learns that the headmaster is the Undertaker, and Derrick Arden attends, but tries to take a bite from the Green Lion prefect, Greenhill's shoulder. He is a Bizarre Doll, albeit one that can speak and at least pass for human, for a little while, at a distance. Undertaker says he filled out the missing footage with 'episodes' from the Cinematic Record, 'what if?' scenarios. It's a huge improvement, but the number and quality of episodes varies wildly between subjects. Derrick and his friends were cheating and bullying younger students, the prefects caught him but he was able to use his connections and wealth to beat the rap, with help from lower master (deputy headmaster) Angares, a drunk. So Greenhill beat the five boys and Angares to death with a cricket bat. Then they called in some contacts with the Aurora Society to try and make the problem go away.

Undertaker escapes by loosing the other Dolls on the students, forcing Sebastian to defend instead of pursue. In the end, the four prefects are expelled, officially for covering up the deaths of five students in a boating accident.

<u>Emerald Witch</u> -

The Queen asks Ciel to look into a few mysterious deaths in Germany. Men who trespass in the Werewolves' Forest come back covering in burns and boils and raving, before death. Ciel spends most of the journey studying German and wondering at Her Majesty's motives, and is distressed that the people of East Franconia speak a regional dialect that is just as impenetrable to him as when he started, but Sebastian and Finney (the whole staff came) are both fluent.

No one will take them into the forest, so they buy a couple carts. Ciel openly scoffs at talk of werewolves and curses, because that's the line of things we don't believe in?

The group find their way through the forest to the isolated, almost medieval, village of Wolfsschulucht (wolf valley) a village with a pile of torture devices in the square, populated entirely by women who form an angry mob to drive out the outsiders, but are called off by their leader, an 11-year-old girl. *Lensherrin* Sieglinde Sullivan, the Emerald Witch. A girl carried by the sole man, her butler Wolfram, because she has been subjected to foot-binding.

Sullivan declares the forest too dangerous at night and offers the hospitality of her castle, but they must leave in the morning. After dinner, she sneaks to Ciel's room (she can get by inside on crutches and with a belt of balloons) and attempts to seduce him with the earnest clumsiness of someone who has read too many trashy novels. Once they get past the awkwardness to actually bond, she relates the history of this place, how witches fled the witch hunts here, and the first Emerald Witch offered up her legs in a pact to the werewolf who protects the village, and her feet were bound and made useless in honor of this pact.

After Sullivan falls asleep, Ciel and Sebastian sneak out to see *Herr* Werewolf for themselves. They do spot a werewolf in the distance, but are forced to retreat as Ciel starts weeping and agonizing burns appear all over his flesh. Sebastian too, and he is surprised to see tears for the first time in his very long life. They ask Sullivan, who has medical training for help and she manages to save Ciel's life.

However, the boy is still covered in painful burns, blind, and fearful, cowering from all touch but Finney's and screaming when conversation is attempted.

While his master recovers and insists Sebastian stay far away, Sebastian offers his services to Sullivan to buy them more time. He also secures samples of every plant around the area of their attack, and Sullivan's medicine, and sends them to the British government for chemical analysis.

Sullivan has apparently taught herself fluent English overnight with the sole book they brought, a medical textbook. She concludes that Ciel's eyes are undamaged and his blindness is hysterical or related to shock. She also goes to a hidden ritual chamber, followed by one of Snake's pets, where she begs half a dozen werewolves for a little more patience while she finishes 'the Ultimate Spell.'

Inside two days, as the villagers are getting restless and following a werewolf breaking into Ciel's room and almost getting pasted by Finney before retreating, a letter arrives from Queen Victoria, carried by her personal stablemaster, John Grey, with the chemical analysis and a request that Ciel bring the little witch to tea at Buckingham.

Sebastian brings the letter to Ciel and, when he refuses to leave his bed or hear his queen's orders, declares Ciel in breach of their contract and attempts to eat him, albeit slowly. I think this is tough love? Ciel has a breakthrough in his mindscape when he admits (much like the Doomsday Book arc) that his drive for vengeance isn't really about his family, it's all for him. He orders Sebastian to stand down and calls the staff in for orders. Good thing, since they've been ordered to leave before sundown.

Sullivan finishes the Ultimate Spell, and asks Wolfram if they can explore the outside world now her generational charge to save the village is complete, but he insists that is impossible. As she sleeps, Sebastian and Ciel break into her room and offer to show her the outside world. When she agrees, they instead lead her to the ritual chamber. Sullivan explains the harmful miasma that follows the werewolves is as essential to them and other magical creatures as oxygen for humans, and is dwindling, which she believes is the cause for magic vanishing from the world. Part of the pact between the Emerald Witches and the werewolves is their work on the Ultimate Spell, a way to create more miasma. Ciel asks if that's really what they told her.

Sebastian moves the central plinth, revealing a lever that opens a hidden door leading to an elevator. Following that leads them to a very modern control center monitoring the location of everyone in the village via their anti-werewolf talismans. Probing deeper, they find a factory producing mustard gas (the 'miasma') and full of werewolves who turn out to be men in fancy hazmat suits/gas masks with a wolf-like outer appearance.

The village crone is addressing the werewolves, crowing about the success of their project, and Sullivan totters out to confront them and demand what the hell? The crone is Sullivan's mother, as she explains, and was part of the Prussian government's chemical weapons program, as was her father, who discovered a safe way to mass produce mustard gas, then died to a leak which also disfigured the mother. When Sullivan was three and had self-taught herself to read and advanced chemistry, her mother realized she had a once-in-forever genius on her hands and sold the government on the Emerald Witch project.

Wolfsschulucht was created as a close high-security science project, like the Manhattan project, with a research staff of one. Everyone there is security, from the army. The lore of the Emerald Witch was created to give Sullivan a duty to fulfil and ensure she'd never wish to leave, the footbinding, extra security against her running away. The werewolves too, if Scooby-Doo scaring people off didn't work, they got the mustard gas. All so she could create the most powerful chemical weapon known without understanding what she was doing. The crone names it SuLin (possibly sarin?).

Ciel takes Sullivan to the exit, covered by Sebastian who isn't terribly bothered by the gas now he knows what he's facing, and is given secondary orders, to destroy the completed sample of SuLin and all Sullivan's research notes.

Most of the rest of the arc is an extended chase scene as Ciel and staff evacuate Sullivan to England. Ciel, I think trying tough love again, offers to kill Sulivan immediately and end her pain, but thinks she could do a lot of good in the world. Wolfram catches up, agonizes about killing Sullivan for a bit, and ultimately almost dies shielding her with his body. Good thing she's already an expert doctor.

In England, Ciel strongly recommends that Sullivan take the secrets of SuLin to the grave, but gives up the lesser secrets of mustard gas. Sullivan is shocked, because many people stand to suffer and die. Ciel tells her that her genius will let her dictate terms to

governments and use *them* to achieve *her* ends, but first she has to show she can deliver results. He says as her friend, he'll support her if she wants to become a village doctor somewhere, but he thinks she'll want to keep learning, keep exploring and to do that on the scale she can, she'll need national level resources, like she unknowingly had in Wolfsschulucht. Ultimately, Sullivan decides to give the British government chemical weapons.

Blue Cult -

The expelled prefects of Weston College reach out to Lizzie's brother, Edward Midford, about a regular meeting at the Sphere Music Hall, Saturdays at eight. He brings Lizzie who gets her fortune told by some weird mystic, Blavat Sky.

Shortly after, just as the Queen asks Ciel to look into the Sphere Hall gatherings, where people of all classes mingle, Edward shows up to announce Lizzie is missing.

Investigating the gatherings, Blavat immediately clocks Sebastian as inhuman and demands he leave. The former Weston prefects, now a band called the Starlight Four, give a performance. There is an inner circle who attend meetings where they are drugged and some of their blood taken (Blavat asks a drop of blood for his fortunes, in reality he's typing them.)

Ciel starts a rival music hall across the street, convincing the current Weston prefects (formerly the drudges) and Soma to form a boy band, the Phantom Five. Sullivan invents special effects, a flying rig and glowsticks for the audience.

Eventually, it is revealed that the four leaders of the cult- Lords Sirius, Canopus, Vega & Polaris - are fully sapient Bizarre Dolls who require regular blood transfusions. Sirius in particular is revealed to be the true Ciel Phantomhive! Our Ciel stole his dead twin brother's identity. Ciel's fraud is exposed and he and the staff are forced to go on the run while still investigating the cult. Lizzie in particular is devastated, staying with her revived, actual fiancee.

The end to these events is not yet published.