Romance

Of The

Three Kingdoms



So sung:
O so vast, O so mighty,
The Great River rolls to sea,
Flowers do waves thrash,
Heroes do sands smash,
When all the dreams drain,
Some are lost and gained.
Green mountains remain,
As sunsets ingrain,
Hoary fishers and woodcutters,
And some small rafts and calm waters,
In autumn moon, in spring winds,
By the wine jars, by porcelains,
Discuss talk and tale,
Only laugh and gale.

The Han Dynasty of China has seen better days. The eunuchs have consolidated power within the court, forming their own influential clique within the Emperor's palace, and through successive child emperors and furious politicking, essentially control the government. The Yellow Turban Rebellion will arise from this situation, aiming to depose the Emperor and bring succour to the masses of peasants that form the common peoples of China. Many great generals will arise and make a name for themselves to quell the rebellion, from Liu Bei, Guan Yu, to even Cao Cao and Dong Zhuo. Later, Dong Zhuo would take control over the imperial court, reigning in tyranny until a coup left him burning in the streets for days.

The resulting 80 years of war are filled with scheming, betrayal, corruption, and of great heroes performing great deeds and the empires they built up collapsing under the same problems that plagued the Chinese Dynasties of old. There will be myriad opportunities to carve your name in the history books in this world, and legends walk the battlefields of this era. You will begin in 184 AD, the year where the Yellow Turban Rebellion arises for the first time, and will be staying for 80 years in this world, ending in 264 AD, enough to live from the fall of the Han Dynasty to the establishment of the Jin Dynasty once the hostilities cool down.

+1000cp

Such is your budget to build your fate with. Good luck and may Heaven smile upon you.

Origins

With either choice, you may be a Drop-In if you wish. Choose your age and gender however you like, within reason, although it is recommended to not be too old to begin with. While you'll be guaranteed to not succumb to age or illness to ensure you live to the end of the jump, being past your prime during war is a dangerous thing.

Scholar

You're not one of the big leaders of China. After all, every ruler needs a good advisor. You are a scholar, one of those who provide politicians and warlords with a second opinion on things, you are quite learned in nearly any normal subject you might expect to exist as of the third century AD in China. You may not be one of the greats like Zhuge Liang, but one doesn't need to be the best to provide a great help to their allies. Who will you be aiding in the coming war?

Politician

You don't truly battle yourself. For the most part, at least. Your combat is that of charisma, your weapons are witty words and flowery letters. Your skills lie in intrigue, and while you may not be too experienced at such, you will have plenty of time to learn. Perhaps one day, should you work hard enough and prove to be wise and intelligent, your name will be sung across history and your works will be remembered. Do not forget that those who work with paper are just as important in war as those who work with soldiers, if not more so.

Warlord

Do you seek glory? Do you fight with honor and valor, or do you trick and cheat your enemies? However it is that you perform your work, you are a great warlord now, a commander of armies and butcher of men. In peaceful times, you cannot truly exert your true skills, but China is sinking into war and it is the perfect opportunity to make your name echo into the far future. Should you be of strong arm and clever strategy you might take a place in the history books among the likes of Cao Cao and Liu Bei. Even if you cannot reach such heights, there are still plenty of legendary warriors that will make a name for themselves, so even if you can't be one of the greats you can still be remembered.

Perks

Perks within an origin's section are discounted to that origin. Discounts are half off.

General Perks

Advancing In The Opposite Direction -100cp

You can't become a truly legendary warlord if you don't survive, you know? Like a certain Cao Cao, you have a particular skill that might be seen as shameful for the honorable. Running away, that is. You're quite good at fleeing, whether by abusing your environment with serpentine paths or by simple luck, it'd be incredibly difficult to catch you when fleeing. Be careful of ambushes and those clever enough to predict where you are fleeing to. Make sure to have a good alibi when you get back to safety, your soldiers might not appreciate having a coward for a commander.

Scholar Perks

Calligraphy -100cp

What do scholars do? They study, and they write. The former mostly relies on your own motivation but you can definitely live up to the latter. Your calligraphy is pretty good, flawless even, and while you may not be able to fake the handwriting of others your own writing style is quite distinctive. Additionally, any letters you send are very likely to reach their destination, even in the middle of war. It would take someone who knew that you were writing letters, and knew exactly where you are and where you are sending said letters, for someone to get a chance to intercept your messages. Quite handy for sharing information with allies, hopefully they'll listen.

Poetry -100cp

Poetry is a fairly important thing in Chinese culture. Simultaneously a way to show your intellect and a flowery way of describing events or simply the world itself, it's quite the developed and respected art. You're no slouch at it, now. On top of being quite good at composing all manner of poems, you're also quite decent at improvising a poem at the drop of a hat, perhaps for monologuing on the distress you feel at a terrible situation that you've found yourself in. It may not be enough to make you famous on poetry alone, but it's largely treated as a hobby either way, so you won't have many issues with it.

Earthly Wisdom -200cp

A nation doesn't consist of just the nobility and the military. The peasants make up a vast majority of China, and when they arise in rebellion, they are quite hard to truly root out. Thankfully you wouldn't have to worry about that, as you are now quite good at dealing with the masses. From lowering taxes to knowing how to manage the logistics of disaster relief efforts, you know a myriad of methods of gaining the favour of the common man and becoming well known as benevolent. Whether or not you do this out of good intentions is entirely up in the air, but surely a man this good at appeasing the masses could be nothing but virtuous?

Annals of History -200cp

Being a legend is all well and good, but what's the point if your name isn't immortalized in the history books? Someone has to keep track of events and note down everything. And that someone is you. You have an excellent memory, especially when it comes to remembering the hour of the day, as well as the day, month, and year that any specific event happens. You're also very good at explaining things in a clear manner too, for writing history books yourself. Now go out and witness.

The Way Of Peace -400cp

The leader of the Yellow Turban Rebellion, Zhang Jue, was inspired by an encounter with a mysterious Taoist who handed him a book. He learned some magical techniques from said book, and went on to use his sorcery to build up a following. Perhaps you've learned from the same book. Controlling the weather to call up rain on a clear day would be completely doable for you, and you could conjure a south wind with a little bit of work. Aside from manipulating the skies, you are also knowledgeable in medicine, and can cure nearly any mortal disease without much difficulty. Lastly, you're quite good at teaching these techniques to others, should you wish to delegate some miracle making to trusted subordinates. Are you going to start a cult as well, or perhaps oppose the Yellow Turbans for rebelling against the Emperor?

Intellectual Community -400cp

Scholars aren't isolationists, you know. The community of intellectuals in China is quite large, and most major figures know each other by name. Apart from already being known within most scholarly circles, and perhaps even well respected should you be exceptional, you tend to come across individuals of comparable mental acumen to your own. Even the most intelligent person in China would meet those who could match their wit and knowledge, providing a worthy conversation partner to debate with. Should you be indisposed to help someone, you'll likely know a few people that may provide aid in your stead. Someone as smart as you surely knows which scholars are worth adding to the cause, right?

He Who Wins Last -600cp

War is a messy affair. It strains friendships, breaks alliances, ruins nations, and generally trods on common decency and compassion. And even at the end, the righteous might not even obtain what they deserve. Well, regardless of whose side you are on, you find yourself lucky enough to at least survive. As long as you don't recklessly charge into danger and keep your wits about you, you're almost guaranteed survival through even the most gruelling wars, although those aiming specifically for you will be able to get past this luck.

Aside from this, you are also quite good at claiming the prize, so to speak, after a war boils over. Perhaps you'll want to claim the Imperial Jade Seal from the weak Wei Emperor once all of the legendary warriors and warlords have died, in order to instate your own Dynasty? Somehow, whenever you swoop in at the last minute to steal everything that people on all sides fought so hard for, things just go smoothly with you, letting you, for example, begin the next Dynasty with your family as the royal bloodline without as much internal issue as you might expect. Watch out for Sima Yi, they plan to do exactly this.

Crouching Dragon -600cp

Despite all the experienced commanders and politicians to be found, methods are often surprisingly simple. Fight soldiers with soldiers, make offers and declare war if they are refused, and so on. A clever man can manipulate the battlefield with unorthodox resources and unprecedented plays. And just like a certain Zhuge Liang, you could truly be called a rising dragon. From taunting poetry, to witty diplomacy, to enlightened strategy, you could manipulate an entire war by yourself, provided some measure of power and reliable information.

Zhuge Liang fended off an old veteran commander by tricking him into thinking he'd be walking straight into an ambush despite only having scant thousand soldiers left, subtly manipulated his enemy's five generals into stopping completely thus halting the march of the enemy army without a single drop of blood being shed, and now you are his equal. What kind of unorthodox strategies will you implement to defeat your enemies? Whatever you do, it's certain that you'll become an important figure in the wars to come. And although he died in the middle of a campaign, perhaps if you take better care of yourself you'll be able to prove the worth of your crafty mind all throughout the conflict.

Politician Perks

Tongue of Blarney -100cp

One of the most important parts of politics, while simultaneously being one of the most basic, is charisma. Being able to not only talk well, but knowing how to present your contribution to your peers and superiors to avoid offending anyone. You won't have to worry about this too much, as now you're plenty charismatic. You're not going to be turning the tides of battle by raising your subordinates' morale with a rousing speech, but your manners won't be out of place in the imperial court.

Secret Edicts -100cp

Cao Cao will manage to get a hold of the young emperor in the earlier years of the coming war, and force them to give out orders to the various warlords with the royal authority of the Emperor. However, even prepubescent the Emperor was no doormat. Like them, you are very good at hiding your actions, especially if you're hiding from someone with control over you. From secret edicts delivered from the insides of belts, to knowing just who is loyal enough to carry out your will without revealing anything, even being incarcerated your power wouldn't diminish as much as your captors would want.

Professional Forgery -200cp

How did the eunuchs manage to obtain such power over the court? Surely the other officials would submit reports to the Emperor about their corruption? Well, it turns out that the eunuchs made an art of forgery. Handwriting, grammar, prose, you are an expert in forgery, specifically forgery of letters, reports, and all kinds of official documents. You could offer your service to the eunuchs so that they keep fooling the Emperor, or perhaps work against them and forge false letters between the eunuchs incriminating them for all they've done?

Imperial Loyalty -200cp

From the start of China, loyalty to one's superior was and still is considered one of the greatest virtues. Even when the Emperor turns corrupt and pays no attention to matters of the state, their ministers mostly remain loyal and attempt to bring the Emperor back to their senses. Now, you'll be able to benefit from such loyal subordinates yourself, as something about you makes you out to be a reliable superior, or perhaps simply one that has gone astray and must be brought back to their senses (non-violently, of course). This doesn't help you buy people's loyalty, but those who are already loyal to you will only grow more loyal over time, despite any misdeeds you perform in your foolishness.

Eunuch Intrigue -400cp

You can't take over a court with a small group of allies without a lot of skill to make up for your lack of numbers, you know? Thankfully, you've learned plenty about intrigue. On any matters related to bureaucracy, from the legitimate to the shady, you are an old and experienced hand at. Bribery, delegation, knowing which of your subordinates is corrupt and which are not, knowing which matters you can safely bring to your superior's attention and which would be better left unmentioned to pursue your own agendas, even how to tickle the vices of those above you in just such a way as to gain immense amounts of favour, you'd be a terrifying force in any court, and a very dangerous element for any government you wish to sabotage from the inside out. Be careful to not get caught. All the political acumen in the world will not help you against a sharp blade aimed for your neck.

Methods of Tyranny -400cp

Cao Cao was a tyrant. Dong Zhuo was an outright bandit. And yet, both of them remained in power for quite some time. Just like these two and a few more dangerous people you might meet, you are very good at being a tyrant. But not just any tyrant, a competent one. What does this mean? It means that your tyranny does not get in the way of your ruling. Killing subordinates for the slightest mistakes won't see as much quiet dissent as you might normally expect, and your subordinates will even actually learn from the example! You might not be well liked at all, but while you are present even the bravest heroes won't be able to rouse up the masses against you. They'd have to organize an army to fight against yours beyond your own territory. Perhaps you just really want to become a famous legend. Monsters become famous far more easily than heroes, after all.

Fully Equal To The Task Of Ruling -600cp

Politics, intrigue, tyranny or benevolence, ruling is quite the multifaceted skill. And yet, it can all come crumbling down if you don't know what you're doing. However it is that you act like as a leader of men, you are among the best at it. Why, you could remove all crime within a province in a mere month of being assigned the position of governor. Logistics, delegation, ascertaining which subordinates are trustworthy and which should be removed from your court, and even diplomacy with external powers, you could truly be called equal to the task of ruling, and a golden age for your subjects is surely an inevitability with you at the helm to direct your subordinates. Or perhaps you do not wish for a golden age, for whatever reason? It is within your skill to determine the future of your nation on your judgement alone.

The Question Of Legitimacy -600cp

One of the biggest problems of the Three Kingdoms was legitimacy. The royal bloodline of the Han died during the war, and all three kingdoms claimed an Emperor. Wei was a meritocracy that favored independence and individual competence, the Shu favored loyalty and aimed to restore the Dynasty of the Han, and the Wu placed heavy emphasis on filial piety, to one's family and to one's state. And yet, which was truly the Dynasty that would inherit China? With this purchase, you do not need to stress over the answer, as clearly you are the legitimate heir to the Imperial throne. You share a direct descent with the Emperors of the Han Dynasty, and this is known to all.

Not only do you possess a legitimate right to the throne of China by bloodright, but this also attracts competent and loyal subordinates. There will be those who seek to use you as a puppet ruler for their own ends, but even when all seems lost you will somehow retain a small following of truly loyal retainers and subordinates, eager to carry out your will and remove any would-be "regents" vying to become the power behind the throne. Be careful of your life, as most of the warlords which will arise in the coming conflict want the throne for their own bloodline. In future jumps, your royal bloodline will be evident to all that meet you, and while you may not be a true ruler without a territory to call your own, your legitimacy as the Emperor of China (and any obviously Chinese nations you come across) will stand unchallengeable by those loyal to the throne.

Warlord Perks

On The March -100cp

China is well acquainted with war. Every period of peace is preceded and followed by a period of war. Understandably, Chinese soldiers tend to be used to perpetual, endless conflict. And it wouldn't do for you to break down while leading your armies, would it? PTSD is a thing that happens to other people, as you can fight for your whole life without your spirit breaking from all the violence and killing. You can still lose your morale if you're not making much progress, of course, but the so-called "horrors of war" do not harm your mind.

Of Great Renown -100cp

What do you fight for, but for glory and wealth, and for your name to be sung for as long as the Chinese Empire continues forwards? Well, go ride out into the battlefields and make sure to perform great deeds, as your reputation now spreads like wildfire pushed by southern winds. Even if there's not a single witness around, legends of your deeds will spring up in civilizations you live within, somehow, and most enemies you meet will likely already know of you and your deeds. This can be an edged sword, of course, as a known enemy is one that can be prepared against, so if you do not wish for some of your actions to be known, you can simply turn off this effect. Even doing this won't help against more mundane causes of obtaining a reputation, though, so keep watch on those around you.

Like Falling Waves And Dissolving Storms -200cp

The warlords of this day and age are powerful. Able to wade through seas of men as they carve through armies, it's as if every named individual is an army in and of themselves. You might even question if armies are needed at all. Just like these legends, your method of combat is a little particular in some ways. If you can overwhelm someone in a duel, no amount of them will be able to overwhelm you. You could cut through squads of men as if a whirlwind of death, and normal men won't be able to stop you even when numbering in the tens of thousands. There is a bit of a limit to this, of course. If someone would be able to give you a good fight, you could perhaps deal with a handful of them before they become too much for you, and this won't help you against peers at all. You carve through those inferior to you, not those who truly approach you in combat prowess.

Bu Hoo -200cp

You would think Lu Bu would find it impossible to be accepted as a subordinate after his first betrayal, but he kept being hired only for him to keep betraying his masters. Like him, people are oddly trustworthy of you. Even if you've literally betrayed every single master you've been hired by, any prospective master will actually seriously consider hiring you at least, perhaps thinking that this time you'll remain loyal. They'll never even prepare against your betrayal, somehow unable to anticipate that perhaps you'll live up to your reputation. This doesn't work quite as well on advisors, however, so watch out for those that have the ear of their prospective masters, or you might meet your end.

Lord of War -400cp

War never changes, and yet it is a perpetually mercurial stage where both the big picture and the little battles may change from month to month. Most warlords could be called incompetent, doing little more than marching their army to their enemies' footsteps and clashing their men against their enemy's. You, however, stand above that. While you may not match true geniuses like Zhuge Liang, you cannot be called inexperienced when it comes to matters of warfare.

You could competently manage the logistics of keeping your army well equipped and well fed, and should you wish you could prove a likeable and charismatic commander for your troops, able to keep morale up even if your army faces a terrible situation. You could take out armies thrice the size of yours, by exploiting clever strategies and the environment of the battlefield, but you are only mortal, and trying to fight against an army one or two orders of magnitude larger than yours may prove to be beyond you. Lastly, you would not disappoint in duels, being just as legendary in individual fights as you are in grand battles. You have everything you need to make a true change in the course of the future. Who will you aid, and who will you crush?

Hold My Wine -400cp

Skill is merely half of what makes a legendary commander. The other half is will, the fortitude to stare death at the face and spit on its eye. One cannot obtain true rewards without true risks, after all. Your willpower is exceptional even among the legends of the coming war. A duel against a legendary commander would not even shake you, and while skill is another matter, when it comes to a contest of mental strength you are far above the masses. Additionally, you can show your resolve to all around by roaring with all the force of your lungs. Being faced with such determination in such a direct manner, your allies will be invigorated and your enemies momentarily stunned. Let all know that no force on Earth will break you.

AMONG MEN -600cp

Lu Bu was a legend among legends. Nigh-unstoppable in battle, even when fighting against three other legendary commanders he was not defeated, although fatigue crept into his arms. And now, you are his equal. A massive man standing head and shoulders above most and with arms thicker than most men's torsos, your skill in battle, with both blade and bow, might make people think you are a demon in disguise. Your prowess in the strategies in warfare might leave something to be desired, but you are the most useful pawn a warlord could ever possibly need if you are not an utterly terrifying warlord yourself.

Moreover, it seems as if your strength has a supernatural air about it, letting you perform feats normally impossible to lesser men, not only letting you imitate meteors by simply charging though small armies at once but also almost reaching the level of Immortals, matching dozens of men at once, and almost looking like a wrathful meteor as you swim through armies like a boat might swim on water. Lu Bu was only killed when he was deprived of his weapons and jailed in Cao Cao's territory, but perhaps you could show this strength to the entire conflict, even beyond Lu Bu's death.

Luck of the Cao -600cp

Do not underestimate the influence that luck has on the tides of war. No man is able to control the entire world, and as such there will always be variables outside of the control of any one warlord. You won't need to worry about such things, now, as you've become incredibly lucky when it comes to the grand stage of war. Just like Cao Cao, you could ignore one of your big rivals to go assault a minor but frustratingly effective enemy with your main army, and for some reason you wouldn't suffer the obvious consequences of such a decision. During war, you and your faction will gain victory after victory, and even when fighting armies unrelated to you your enemies would find it difficult to remain powerful.

That all said, never forget that this is luck. And as anyone can tell you, luck is notoriously fickle. Your luck also only applies to the grander strategy of war, not to individual battles or duels. Still, as long as you keep your wits about you, and unlike Cao Cao avoid becoming arrogant with your constant victories and unexpected boons, you will doubtlessly be almost unstoppable when leading armies against your foes.

Items

Items within an origin's section are discounted, half off, to that origin. Items with no price tag are free.

General Items

Well-Trained Horse

All notable individuals have a horse. Most commanders have a horse, most politicians that actually get out of the palace have a horse. Really, horses are a bit ubiquitous in this era. And of course, it wouldn't do for you to not have one for yourself. Unremarkable but acceptable, this horse will serve you well in battle, but they are a normal horse at the end of the day. You will be given tutoring on how to care for a horse, how to feed them and how to push them to their limits without killing them. If you treat it well, it'll take you to the ends of the earth.

Scholar Items

Writing Implements -100cp

How can you ply your trade with improper tools? Like any self-respecting scholar, you have a bunch of high quality paper and an endless pot of ink to write with, complete with a writing pen, of course. The paper from this will never tear by accident, and you won't need to worry about unintended ink splotches when writing with this. Handy, but ultimately minor tools. The real power of paper can be brought out only with your own wisdom.

Letter of Recommendation -200cp

The land might be ravaged by war, but courtly affairs still have to be performed properly lest all sense is lost. What you have now is a glowing letter of recommendation, expounding on all of your skills and deeds in quite impressive prose. Presenting this to someone you wish to work under will obviously make them seriously consider hiring you if they weren't already, and if you're competent enough might guarantee you getting accepted as an advisor for a warlord. The only choice left is who to work for. There's quite a lot of good options.

Taoist Manual -400cp

Would-be Taoists don't just learn from nothing, you know. Sadly, there's no available mentors nearby, but you can have this handy little book. This book expounds at length on Taoism philosophy and techniques, letting a mortal obtain some decent magical (or spiritual?) powers with a few years of study, such as changing the weather and curing nearly any disease. It doesn't explain the method to become a Xian, and Immortal, sadly, but among mortals any amount of supernatural ability can be quite significant. In future jumps the techniques this book teaches somehow still work, allowing even completely mundane mortals to learn the magic within. Do be careful with it.

Array of Traps -600cp

Manipulating the natural world is not all that can be done with Taoism, of course. There are also the arrays, large formations that provide effects over a whole area. You now possess a few of these arrays. They might not be very useful in direct battle, but they are meant for strategic use, whether holding down whole armies in place for prolonged periods of time or trapping them in an illusory maze for the better part of a day while their enemies flee from their reach. You also get a manual on them, in case you wish to make more, or do not have the manpower at your command to move the ones you already have. Used well, this can completely change the course of a battle and significantly influence the flow of war. Be careful that your tricks aren't learned.

Politician Items

The Oldest Trick In The Book -100cp

Given how common of a tactic it is, it's a little weird how poison remains an effective strategy. Or perhaps it is so common because even when everyone knows about it it's hard to defend against? That aside, you now have a supply of poison. Enough to poison a few dozen people if administered through food, it's odourless and tasteless. Your stock refreshes to full every month too. Actually delivering the poison is up to you, maybe you'll bring a few servants into your scheming, but you won't really need to worry about obtaining it in the first place.

Corrupted Wealth -200cp

If you aren't wealthy as a politician, what are you even doing? Appropriate to your position, you have quite a large amount of wealth at your disposal, and also have a decently high salary to obtain more wealth in case you don't feel like hoarding it all and avoiding spending a single cent. It's not too remarkable compared to the wealth of, say, the Emperor, but you won't really need to worry about money even when living a luxurious lifestyle. Additionally, the money you obtain from this is oddly useful when bribing others. Perhaps your gold shines a little prettier than usual, or maybe your gems are unusually entrancing, whatever it is, it makes the process of bribery much smoother.

Courtly Hands and Ears -400cp

Without influence and minions to do most of the dirty work for you, you'd be pretty crippled as a politician, wouldn't you? Well, here's a solution. You have a conspiracy that works under you, from menial workers and servants to government ministers that follow your orders, as long as a position doesn't have more authority than you, you probably have one or two hidden agents loyal only to you planted there, if not many.

If you use them with wisdom and precision you could do many things, and although manipulating the entire imperial court is beyond your network, you can slowly grow it to attain greater influence, not to mention getting promoted yourself would open up some opportunities. In future jumps, you can begin with a conspiracy that obeys you within any organization you have power in, or one that has infiltrated any public faction to a far lesser level if you haven't thrown your lot in with anyone.

Cracked Jade Seal -600cp

Oh, look at that. You've come across a fancy little object, made of jade and carved in the likeness of a dragon. What this is is the Heirloom Seal of the Realm, also known as the Imperial Jade Seal. Lost during the downfall of the Han, it was originally found by Sun Jian, but now it has fallen into your hands. This little object grants true legitimacy to anyone who holds it, allowing them to establish their own Dynasty as the ruling power of China. There's no guarantee that the various warlords vying for the throne will like that, of course.

Revealing you possess this seal will see you under a lot of attention as every commander aims to become the next Emperor. In future jumps, by brandishing this seal you may gain a stake in any contested position. Nobody will be able to argue that you can potentially gain whatever position it is that's being contested, but again, there's no guarantee anyone will just let you have said position without any resistance. Still, simply having this will give you a lot of leeway when it comes to official actions. Take care, and watch out for those who wish to steal from you.

Warlord Items

Attire Of War -100cp

Warlords and soldiers must have appropriate implements of war, obviously. You now own a set of sturdy armor and a sharp weapon. These may be whatever style you choose, but a breastplate and spear are common combinations. You also get a bunch of equipment to maintain your tools and gear in perfect condition, and an easy to understand manual on how to maintain your equipment if you forget about the procedure for whatever reason. An interesting little trait of this gear is that it can be as unreasonably fancy as you want to make them, and this won't get in the way of their practicality somehow. Have golden armor and weapons if you wish, or make every square inch of your breastplate heavily decorated with mythical carvings.

Army of Men -200cp

What is a warlord without an army? A disgraced man, that's what. At your command you have 20 thousand men, well trained, well equipped, and ready for war. Taking care of the logistics of training, equipping, and feeding these soldiers and any others you add to your army will be up to you, but delegating that task to one of the many competent generals under your command wouldn't be a bad idea. The army is large but not overwhelming by the standards of the time, and to form a fearsome army you'll have to join with other warlords or conquer them and their men. A good start, but it is just that, a start. Do not believe you'll be able to coast on just this amount for the whole war. This army will follow you in future jumps, and if you officially add someone to the army they'll be brought along too. Additionally, giving them better equipment will be up to you, but they'll thankfully retain it. Perhaps you'll recruit legendary figures in every world you go to?

AMONG HORSES -400cp

Horses are not all equal. Just like there's the common man, trained soldiers, and legendary commanders, there's normal horses, trained horses, and the level of horse that you now have come to own. Equal to Red Hare, this horse that considers you as its master is incredibly quick and strong, almost able to fight soldiers on its own. It may have whatever coloration you want it to have, even wildy unnatural ones such as red skin and yellow hair, and sometimes it doesn't seem like a normal horse at all. Even decapitated its head will keep fighting, biting off the faces of any poor soldier you throw it at. Of course, it'll be back in your stables or wherever it is you let it rest the week after its death. Perhaps you could use such a fact to spook your enemies into compliance?

Treasures Of War -600cp

A steel weapon is all well and good, but sometimes you really want to make sure you can carve through men with the same ease that rock breaks crashing waves. You now possess a supernaturally sharp weapon, perhaps a sword or a spear, that can cut essentially any normal material as swiftly and smoothly as it does flesh, and whose edge never dulls. Maybe you have a replica of the Seven Star Sword, or perhaps you'd like a design of your own making, no mortal armor will be able to stop the cleave of its edge. Either way this weapon will likely become a legend in its own right if you brandish it well in battle. Perhaps if you build up your reputation enough, the mere sight of this weapon might make your enemies flee in fear of death?

Companions

8 Jumper Generals -100/200/400cp

Do you have Companions you wish to bring into this world? If so, this option is for you. As is standard for my jumps, 100cp for 2 Companions, 200cp for 4, and 400cp for 8. All Companions gain 600cp and may pick Drawbacks to obtain a larger budget with. Alternatively, you can create new Companions with this choice, if no canon character satisfies you.

Vows of Brotherhood

Have you gotten attached to someone in this world? Performed a vow of eternal brotherhood perhaps? If so, you may bring them along with you as Companions. You simply need to convince them to come with you, and even if they've died before the jump is over, you'll find them by your side in the next jump. Turns out they'll have been watching you from the Underworld as a bit of kindness from the Ten Kings. Who will you bring with you to future conquests?

Brave General -100cp

Sun Zhinuan, or Sun Zhi for short, is not a relative of the Sun family of Wu, but a wandering mercenary with no ties to any particular kingdom. He found his way to your side and found something appealing about you. He is a highly competent warrior, and while he can't be compared to true legends like Zhang Fei or Guan Yu, he still has plenty of room to grow into a truly extraordinary general. He is quite clever, above the more common warlords you might find around, and possesses a surprising amount of common sense. Perhaps he's read Sun Tzu's Art of War. He might not be even remotely comparable to the likes of Zhuge Liang, or Sima Yi, but he's quite eager to learn. An odd quirk of his is that he's oddly knowledgeable about the legendary figures and events that will come to pass in the future. Listen to his advice, and he'll serve you well.

Unorthodox Poet Advisor -100cp

Scholars are generally fond of poetry and music, but this one is quite the bizarre one. They are a competent strategist, of course, always providing some valuable advice, but their taste in music is quite unique. Utilizing a mixture of trained young women and interesting instruments of their own design, they've somehow managed to replicate a style of music you might recognize as modern Japanese pop. Fortunately they keep their bizarre music hobby out of military meetings, but to really get along with them you'll have to enjoy some of their music. It's not bad, of course, it's just not exactly appropriate to the era you find yourself in. Who knows how they ended up stumbling into this kind of music.

MAKE WAY FOR JUMPER -100cp

How boisterous, how loud, truly the greatest hype man a lord could want. This young lad is surprisingly competent at all kinds of PR work, and while young and inexperienced they have a seemingly endless font of passion for painting you in the best possible light and presenting your goals as righteous and just. Even outside of working to improve your image they're actually pretty good at raising morale and inspiring everyone around (including you) despite any difficult situations you might find yourself in. Do make sure to not make the job too hard on them, they might be talented but they're a normal human and there's only so much they can do to present your cause in a positive light.

Drawbacks

Cycles of the World +0cp

Have you been here before? To mystical China, and its world? If you have, you may revisit it, through this option. Whatever changes you might have brought to the world, the current Dynasty of China will fall to eunuch politicking, and all the familiar heroes will rise up in the ensuing conflict. Beyond that it's a wild guess on how things will have changed, should you have made enough of an impact in this world. Perhaps you'll be a known legend by this time?

Collaborative Storytelling +0cp

As a myth, Romance of the Three Kingdoms has been told and retold many times across history. There are plenty of adaptations with their own takes on the stories of the warlords and sages of this era, and with this option, you may opt to go to one of those instead of the original book. From the 2010 live action show to the animated hype train that is Souten Kouro, you're free to go to a different version of these events. Additionally, you can also use this to change up the story with your own spin on things. As long as the level of power and the context of the conflict remains relatively recognizable, you're free to be as creative as you'd like. Those who create different plotlines for the events that occur in this conflict certainly add quite a few odd elements, after all.

Lawful Magistrate +100cp

Being loyal to the throne is one thing. Being zealously law-abiding is quite another. While it might give you a shining reputation among your fellows, your simple refusal to break Chinese law will be a large hindrance in the coming war. You'll be able to deal with warlords aiming for the throne just fine, of course, but you refuse to use violence to deal with corrupt ministers, and refuse to accept or offer bribes no matter how much coercion you are put through. Watch out for schemers, and try to focus on dealing with violent rebels.

Burned For Days +100cp

What a rotund character you are. Large in a very much unflattering way, you are a bit too heavy for your size. Perhaps you've eaten a bit too much, but only Dong Zhuo rivals you in sheer size. You might still be perfectly capable of fighting despite the layers of fat on your entire body, but the extra weight isn't going to do you any favors. Even worse, you can't make up for this with a pretty face, as you don't have one. You'll look like an evil tyrant no matter how you try to conceal yourself, and while there's nothing stopping you from being a benevolent person, don't expect people to think you are one when meeting you for the first time.

A Noble At Heart +100cp

And this is not a good thing. You've been raised in the luxury of nobility and refuse a lesser lifestyle. Your dietary requirements are expensive and likely exotic, demanding only the highest quality food to enter your mouth and be digested in your belly. You would really just starve to death before ever subsisting on something as beneath you as basic soldier rations. This might not bring you much trouble for the most part, but you are going to be at war in the future, so you are going to suffer quite a bit as the conditions that armies face in war deny you the luxury you are so used to.

Betray Before Being Betrayed +200cp

Perhaps you simply weren't raised properly by your parents. Like a certain warlord, you are now not exactly a reasonable person. Aggressive at even the smallest slights, violent against anyone who stands against you, even if your enemies have legitimate reasons to oppose you, and really just impulsive in general. You're not going to be a great leader, and you'll gather quite the horrible reputation simply with how you act. Maybe it'd be better if you resigned yourself to the battlefield, but even there your poor self control is bound to get you into trouble a few times. Your skill in warfare, should you have it, isn't gone, but don't expect to make many friends during your time here.

Unqualified +200cp

The coming conflict will be filled with legendary warriors and clever politicians, but sadly you won't be among them. Rather than your skill in warfare or politics, it's just that you're not good at leading people. You aren't a very charismatic warlord, as a politician you're better relegated to dealing with paperwork or more shady dealings, and as a scholar you're likely a hermit and will remain such. You can forget about aiming for the throne, for should you somehow manage to ascend you won't last very long there, perhaps too taken with beautiful concubines to pay attention to courtly matters, or perhaps simply too incompetent to lead your subordinates to victory and prosperity. You would be better served not leading the armies that will clash in the war, that way at least you'll be able to focus on what skills you do possess.

Indecisive +200cp

Most warlords pick a side and stay with it, even until death. It's part of the virtue of filial piety, after all, remaining loyal to your lord. Unfortunately, you didn't seem to get the memo. For whatever reason, you're kinda unsure on who to support and will spend at least half of the coming war regularly switching sides. After the three kingdoms are established there's going to be few enough options for you to finally settle for serving some particular faction, but before that you'll likely switch sides at least twice, probably a few more times. Needless to say this won't help your reputation at all. Perhaps you should work on your skills more. Even if you're notorious for not being very loyal, nearly no warlords will pass up the chance to obtain a powerful subordinate.

Amusement of the Vicious +400cp

Corrupted officials have an odd tendency to be very cruel in general. The subordinates of the Ten Eunuchs of the last days of the Han Dynasty particularly liked to make a sport out of hunting helpless peasants. You would fit right in with such people, as your sadism has reached quite the dangerous height. Not only hunting peasants, but also inflicting terrible tortures and generally ruining the lives of innocent people for fun, if you're allowed to run free during the coming war you might end up tarnishing your name forever as a cruel and vicious monster, and even exaggerated stories about you eating men outright and forcing your prisoners to eat their own subordinates wouldn't be as inaccurate as you might think. Be wary of the righteous, for they will not leave you alone.

More Valor Than Wit +400cp

Being brave is all well and good, but without a sharp mind you're not going to get very far. Unfortunately, you now suffer from this flaw, and you're not exactly the sharpest tool in the shed. Tactics are an arcane but vaguely understandable thing, but grand strategy is completely beyond you, and unless you're actively serving a warlord that is better at thinking than you, you're unlikely to really accomplish much beyond battles and duels. Of course, even just being competent in battle could serve you well, but you're not going to be leading any campaigns yourself.

The Empire, Long United, Must Divide +400cp

Sadly, no empire lasts forever. And war, as glorious as it might be for some, is sometimes simply too destructive for the combatants to pick up the ashes and build something new. Unfortunately, you'll now have to suffer this fact. You might fight long and hard to support one of the three kingdoms, but regardless of what you do, in the end they'll collapse. Building your own Dynasty up will lead to you personally seeing it crumbling down as circumstances outside of your control depressingly line up just right for everything you've worked for to degrade into a husk of itself then be wiped away by the next generation.

Even before this, you'll feel the weight of time start to drag you down earlier than most. Luck will turn against you and support your enemies, old age or perhaps honest mistakes will cost you far greater losses than they should be, and overall you will suffer greatly in war for little gain or progress. Perhaps it'd be better to give up and leave China to the fate that Heaven has set for it, but even then danger will seek you out, and no faction will leave such a valuable asset as you alone. By the end of your stay you might just be miserable, but thankfully you'll finally be free after this jump ends.

1000 Li +600cp

Oh no. Like Guan Yu will find out some time during the coming war, all of your allies have been scattered across China, or perhaps further. They're all lost and won't be able to find their way back to you for whatever reason, and you will need to travel a long and perilous journey to gather all of them back with you if you want them to be able to continue with you on your journey. As a normal human of course you'll just have to run around a good chunk of China while hounded by your enemies every step of the way, but the farther you can travel, the farther you'll have to travel.

Perhaps if you can jump to the end of the world in minutes you'll have to go beyond? Likewise will the dangers you encounter on the way will always be dangerous to you in some way, even if you start coming across demons instead of enemy warlords. Thankfully, it's not going to be quite so difficult that you'll be unable to finish the journey if you focus on it, but it might take you most of the 80 years of the jump if you are powerful enough.

Warring Legends +600cp

It wouldn't do for you to trivialize this whole conflict and unify China in days, would it? This option has two effects. First, of course, is that the legends of this world will be empowered to provide you with real danger. You are no longer surrounded by mere mortals, but with true peers. Both in combat and diplomacy, the conflict will be truly dangerous to you, as much as the conflict would normally be for a mortal man. You might even attract the attention of the supernatural side of the world, and get Immortals involved in the whole debacle as they were involved with the fall of the Shang Dynasty.

Second, you won't be able to get away. Circumstances will twist to place you right at the center of this conflict. You will be directly involved with the warring between the Wei, Shu, and Wu Dynasties, and will be a direct and major figure in the entire war, whether or not you wish to be one. You're free to decide how you participate in the conflict, but running away and waiting it out is no longer an option. May Heaven have mercy on you.

Scenario

Romance of the Four Kingdoms

The Empire, Long Divided, Must Unite

The Romance of the Three Kingdoms is named after the three kingdoms of Wei, Shu, and Wu. After the Han Dynasty truly collapsed, they each declared they had the true Emperor of China, and they warred for decades until the three kingdoms degraded into husks of themselves and were conquered by the new Jin Dynasty. Perhaps this doesn't satisfy you. This scenario's objective is simple; unify China under your own rule, instating your own Dynasty as the royal bloodline and entitled to the throne of China by birthright.

You'll have to defeat all other Warlords in China, as few will agree to join your banner, and either conquer and recruit their men, or somehow aid your own budding nation prevail over the opposition. You may use supernatural powers to accomplish this, but anything beyond subtle workings will begin attracting the attention of Immortals. You didn't think they'd turn a blind eye to such a large conflict, did you? If you wield too much supernatural influence to make China bend to your own will, you'll find Heaven itself contesting your own power.

However, if you manage to prevail, you'll get your own Empire of China, and will have to surpass a final challenge; your own Empire's values will be subverted and turned into negative parodies of themselves. Meritocracy would become vicious backstabbing to pull down rivals, righteousness would become blind faith leading zealots to their doom, and filial piety would become fierce infighting between those who have contradictory ideas of how to best serve the Empire. It won't be impossible to prevail, of course, but it will be a difficult affair, with malicious and ambitious individuals popping up seemingly everywhere in an attempt to obtain greater power for themselves at the expense of the Empire that they live in.

Should you manage to quell the dissidents and prevent the decay that humans thought inevitable in any empire, your reward shall be a simple if perhaps worthy one. China itself, that is. You'll get to bring along your Empire with you into future jumps, and if you expand and conquer, the newly conquered land will come along with you as well, given that it has become part of China. Long live the Emperor.

Notes

On AMONG HORSES

The bit about the decapitated head is from an adaptation, Souten Kouro specifically, although as I didn't consider it too outrageous in the general context of the book I decided to include it. Feel free to ignore it if you don't want a badass horse that somehow keeps fighting after it dies.

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