Sanction: Haunted Tales

A Cortex Prime Game based on *Jiangshi*

Jiangshi: Blood in the Banquet Hall is an innovative TTRPG centered around minority families in the United States and Canada confronting the twin challenges of the supernatural and racism, with the latter often being as threatening as the former if not more so depending on the scenario. While quite good on its own, I wanted to create an adaptation of it to Cortex Prime to allow for a greater variety of options.

The basic scenario of *Jiangshi* is a Cantonese family-run restaurant in 1920s San Francisco Chinatown, and in the *Haunted Tales* supplement it offers a variety of others such as a Pakistani Muslim family living in Toronto in the wake of 9/11, a Haitian-American family on the bicentennial of the Haitian Revolution, a Jewish/Chinese family in 1920s New York City, and even a biracial family of martial artists hunting monsters. In the Western World, immigrants and those descended from them often live liminal lives circumscribed by ethnocentrism, where they're treated as simultaneously exotically pleasing and undesirable, and the presence of the supernatural exists to lend contrast to that.

In *Sanction,* we propose a similar set up of a minority family set against the world on one side and the supernatural on the other. They may come from any time or place in contemporary society and may be a family restaurant, business, or simply a tight-knit community, but they will all experience something similar: the intrusion of the supernatural into their lives at a critical time.

Important Considerations

Sanction is a game of confronting difficult issues that exist in the real world.

Given its focus on minorities and minority pain, *Sanction* contains content that can be triggering and unpleasant. Playing through that darkness isn't for everyone, touching on assimilation, loss of identity, real-world racism, the abuse of authority, dark supernatural occurrences, ex work, gang violence, drug and alcohol abuse, and other very powerful and affecting issues.

It is encouraged to play this game with TTRPG safety tools. Implementing them is up to you; there are some good guides online.

Approach the material with respect.

Like *Jiangshi,* this game is intended to be played by potentially anyone, including white people, who are encouraged to portray individuals of a different race or gender from them. This is not only okay, it's expected. *This isn't a justification to behave in a racially insensitive manner, however*. Indeed, the purpose is to approach the prospect with curiosity and respect. *Jiangshi* has a very good essay on this topic starting on Page 19 with regards to playing individuals of a Chinese background (**A9. Playing a Chinese character**), but the general message is broadly applicable. Some notes to summarize:

- Don't try too hard; being respectful doesn't have to be stressful.
- **Do not** use an accent. Just speak or type in your normal tone and trust the others will be able to imagine it.
- Try to be aware of common stereotypes and avoid them. Take a moment to search online about common stereotypes of the chosen minority group.
    - This includes both *positive* and *negative* stereotypes. Is having integrity and caring about culture good? Yeah, but don't play a weird, honor-obsessed stereotype. Honor is a Value below, but it's not a replacement for a personality.
- Fortune cookies were brought to Chinese restaurants from Japanese ones because white people couldn't tell the difference. After WW2 and the internment of the Japanese, it became more common for Chinese restaurants to carry them.
    - This is just a minor example of how basic assumptions can often be so wrong.
- It's **okay to make mistakes.** Don't panic, and if corrected accept it gracefully. Everyone can have fun and learn. We all had to learn somewhere.
- If someone insists on being a jerk, don't let them get away with it.

Patriarchy

As has been pointed out by the writer Gatra Kilomba, "the Black woman is the other of the other." This applies to minority women of any stripe, of course, and for LGBT individuals even more so. The further back in time, with exceptions, the worse it gets.

Sanction does not believe these problems should be ignored anymore than ethnic ones. Playing a female character in any period, *including* the current day, should involve facing patriarchal forces at home and beyond.

Players may be uncomfortable with playing male or female characters who buy into sexism, and they should be allowed to be as broad-minded as they wish. If they want to explore how these attitudes are embedded and how to grow past them, they may if it's comfortable with everyone.

This is not a license to play an unrepentant sexist anymore than it is to play an unrepentant racist. Get out of here with that and don't allow it at your table.

On the Supernatural

Many of the above considerations should be taken into account when portraying minorities and culture count for the supernatural, itself a major facet of culture. It's fully possible to present unkind stereotypes in the portrayal of the supernatural if done poorly. The United States and Canada, in particular, are stolen land, and prioritizing foreign supernatural elements over the native ones deserves some examination.

As a rule, it's okay. Just as various peoples from across the world came to these places, it's reasonable to suggest that the supernatural did, too. Don't tie them into colonial action – ie, no "vampires were responsible for the conquest of the Americas" – but consider why they might be there. It's possible that they simply emigrated alongside their communities to prey on or protect them, that they came because of mysterious ties of love or fate or bargains, or perhaps they came seeking something of their own. Keep in mind that some supernatural entities and topics are taboo; if you have a strong Christian in your group, be cautious of portraying Judeo-Christian mythology in a certain way, and certain American Indian groups prohibit discussion of certain kinds of shapeshifters and view even mentioning them as taboo.

It's also acceptable for communities *not* associated with the culture the supernatural is most associated with to interact with them. As real-world practitioners will point out, sometimes the gods will choose someone outside of their traditional community, and no human has the right to object to that. Perhaps you're an immigrant family in Britain interacting with Celtic fairies, or maybe your community and theirs will mingle, or maybe some third party unrelated to either will get involved!

The supernatural is pre-industrial, pre-national, pre-colonial, and pre-racism.

Generally speaking, racism *as we understand it today* did not exist in pre-colonial times. There were certainly awkward racial attitudes and insensitivities, but ethnonationalism as a concept did not truly exist until colonialism created categories of Haves and Have Nots. The supernatural, which exists in a sense out of human time, will not carry the same attitudes as modern humans. This helps to set the contrast with "society", which is shaped by such forces. In the old days, it was fully possible for someone to wind up in another culture and simply become a member of that culture regardless of their skin color. There were dark-skinned African legionnaires settling in England during the Roman period, and this was barely worth remarking on.

Whether or not it's patriarchal, a much older evil, is another question. In general, we suggest that these problems be present at times but dampened or even nonexistent among the supernatural.

Sanction

The titular *Sanction* is the means by which one becomes exposed. Exactly how it manifests can change, but it relies on a simple principle: the more liminal one's experience is, the closer they are to the supernatural. Liminal is a word that means "between two states" and can refer to anything that blends categories. Humans have a natural tendency to sort experiences and things into clean labels, like a "room" vs. a "hallway," but there are spaces that blur lines and set off a strange sense of otherness within us.

For those who immigrate to a new society, there is often a period of such liminal experience, and in the United States this took on an interesting and sometimes disturbing turn when certain minorities – such as the Irish and Italian – were permitted to integrate fully into white society, but others – such as Black, Native, Roma, and various Asian peoples, among others – were not. There is an otherness to being a minority in the West, and this manifests in complex interactions with society. The police, for instance, will always treat people who look white better than those who do not; this is an irrefutable fact of life for many.

Surviving in capitalism places many people in another kind of liminal state: alienation. Having to fight to survive against big chains, against well-intentioned and intentional bigotry, and while maintaining a sense of self is hard. This is why we focus on family-run businesses and tight-knit communities, because they are caught in the process of fragmentation and uncertainty. They may have multiple generations living

under a single roof and a lot of stress to keep things together.

Into this mix, drawn by the feelings of estrangement and uncertainty, comes the supernatural. The members of the family are more exposed to things outside of the ken of normal people, perhaps things that – before industrialization and nationalism – were much more commonly experienced, with elder members of the family from "the old country" (whichever it was) having memories of such encounters when they were young. Once they've started interacting with the supernatural, it's let into their lives – they now have **sanction** to exist within and alongside it, and the gates fly open.

Here are some examples:

- After a rough patch that saw their fortunes fall, a Cantonese restaurant in 1920s San Francisco unknowingly hosts a disguised minor god. After tasting their food and experiencing the surroundings, they write a review to encourage other supernatural beings to attend what is seen as a safe and welcoming environment.
- A tight-knit community living in 2020s Toronto that immigrated from Jordan is visited by a jinni after a member of the family returns home with a souvenir taken from a trip back to the Middle East. After a few encounters, other beings local or otherwise start to visit the community to renew old ties.
- A Mexican-American family living in Los Angeles in the 1990s is haunted by a twisted spirit from the underworld in the wake of a tragedy. They must seek help from other supernatural beings to have a chance of surviving against her.

Once exposed to the supernatural, the family has a few options:

1. **Reject it.** Seek solidarity within themselves and society until the sanction wears off and they return to their normal lives. Perhaps this brings them together; perhaps it tears them apart as some members refuse to let go.
    a. This is a common response when the supernatural intrusion is actively harmful or dangerous, like the default *Jiangshi* scenarios from the book.
2. **Embrace it.** Draw closer to the supernatural and away from society. If taken far enough, the family – or members of it, at least – may even end up leaving the world entirely.
    a. While more common when their experience with the supernatural is positive, it doesn't have to be. Society is terrifying, especially when you aren't welcome in it. For all the challenges of the supernatural, at least racism and patriarchy don't exist there in the same ways.
3. **Find a balance.** For those for whom ties to the "natural" world are strong but

who do not wish to abandon the newfound wonder in their lives, it's possible to find a way to balance these intrusions in order to find relief from the dangers of society or turn to society when the supernatural becomes too much to deal with.

There are good reasons for any of these approaches, and it's possible for them to become entire family debates all by themselves, to initiate the atomization of the extended family, or to bring them together. This interplay of relationships is key to *Sanction*.

Character Creation

There are two aspects to character creation: the community and the characters.

The Community

Before coming up with characters, decide on the *Nature, Place, Time,* and *Notables* of the community. The GM may decide or the players might collectively decide with the GM. For good examples of these, review *Jiangshi: Haunted Tales* if you can get legitimate access to it. Here are some guidelines for how to make your own:

Nature

Obviously, you'll be playing members of a family, but what kind of community do you have together? Are you a family-run business like a club or store? A restaurant like in *Jiangshi?* Or are you part of a different kind of close-knit community, such as one centered around a mosque, synagogue, or traditional neighborhood?

Place

As a rule, these games should be taking place in the United States, Canada, or parts of Western Europe. These create the proper conditions necessary for the liminal state required for *Sanction*.

Jiangshi and its companion, *Haunted Tales,* have numerous recommended places to

set your game. It's suggested by me that you pick a major city or urban center preferentially rather than a rural one, but it's possible to make it work. The chaos and cultural collisions of a city help to set the mood and produce more conflicts.

Time

When will the game be set? It's important to consider exactly what themes and historical contingencies you will be looking at. For instance, a Chinese family in 1920s America are proximate to the Taiping and Boxer rebellions and many emigrated as a result of those, while a Muslim family living in the shadow of 9/11 will face more discrimination than virtually any other point. Chinese families living in the wake of COVID-19 will face racism from angry bigots convinced a government they may never have lived under released a virus onto the world, and other East Asian communities will catch similar flak. Virtually any time is a difficult period for Black and American Indian families.

When weighing this, consider the intensity with regards to your fellow players. It's perfectly okay to take a less immediately traumatic period.

It's recommended that the bound of available time periods be roughly between 1900 and whenever current day is.

Notables

These are NPCs who may be of the family or outside of it that are regular characters in their lives. In general, this should be used to flesh out the rest of the human cast and do not start with supernatural members, unless the premise is very odd indeed.

At least one should be a grandmother or grandfather who lives with the family, assuming no one takes such a role. Other options are children to fill things out at the bottom, an uncle or aunt or cousins.

At least a few should be outside the family, such as regulars, the grocer, a cop, a rival business owner, a delivery girl, a journalist, or the like.

Aim to have at least six such notables that are available for the **Relationship** stage of character creation. It's a good idea to include some potential romantic interests, too! Or maybe save that for the supernaturals.

Characters

Skills

All characters have different talents and learned abilities over their lives that contribute to running the business and dealing with the strange, supernatural creatures they confront.

This is one of the prime sets and will be included in every roll.

All skills begin with **D4** and gain **10 points** to raise them a step each.

Every skill you have at **D6** or higher gets a Trait Statement.

- **Athletics**: Running, jumping, and climbing.
- **Craft**: Crafting, fixing, or building things.
- **Composure**: Dealing with stressful customers, monsters, and the police requires maintaining a certain level of cool.
- **Cooking**: While one might think it's necessary to be able to cook to run a successful restaurant, it's surprisingly optional!
- **Drive**: Land and water vehicles.
- **Gambling**: There are a surprising number of old people and spirits who have a gambling problem, and this skill helps you in such contests.
- **Influence**: Convincing others to do what you want. This is an important skill when dealing with racists and monsters alike.
- **Intuition**: This skill represents being able to intuit supernatural phenomena.
- **Labor**: Manual labor, lifting, pulling, digging, and hauling.
- **Martial Arts**: Formal fighting styles or training in the police and military.
- **Medicine**: Taking care of people and treating injuries and illnesses.
- **Operate**: Dealing with computers, gadgets, and other devices.
- **Sneak**: Getting around unseen and unheard.
- **Survive**: Surviving in the outdoors.
- **Research**: Being able to study and research various things and creatures. You get a free specialty when you take this one.

Specialties

In addition, characters will take **3** specialties at **D6** which confer a bonus to any roll

that they might cover.

Distinctions

All characters receive three distinctions that give a clear picture of who they are and what they're best at or known for. Your distinctions should be varied and broad enough to apply to almost any roll, but it isn't guaranteed.

All distinctions are rated at **D8** and gain the following SFX:

- *Hinder:* Gain a PP when you switch this distinction's **D8** for a **D4**.

You also gain 2 locked SFX.

All of your distinctions get a Trait Statement.

Distinctions neither decrease nor increase in play in this game. However, you may change them under certain circumstances. Further, you may earn additional locked SFX on your distinctions that grant you additional abilities when using them.

Relationships

A relationship contributes its die rating to a dice pool when the test or contest involves the character the relationship is linked to, or when that character has influence over or inspires the PC. This makes them great to use in Cortex Prime games that center around emotional drama, large ensemble casts of characters, the dynamics of a prime time drama, or interconnected groups. Use relationships if the connections between characters are as significant to the outcome of a story as any other character trait.

Relationships are one of the prime traits and added to any roll you make.

Distribute one **D10,** four **D8s**, and five **D6s** to other PCs and to the list of significant NPCs at the start or an NPC you come up with. Anyone you don't have a rating with defaults to **D4.**

Every relationship you have at **D6** or higher gets a Trait Statement.

In play, you can introduce someone you're familiar with or develop a quick bond with someone for D6 using a plot point. These people stick around until after a session

or mission unless you elect to take them as a growth opportunity.

Values

Values represent how much specific things matter to the PCs and, in turn, how much they influence the outcome of tests and contests. They can embody such things as societal mores, cultural principles, or elements of a code of honor or behavior. As with relationships, a high rating in a value doesn't mean your character likes or stands out as a paragon of that value, but rather that they are more invested and concerned about that value than if they had it at a lower die rating.

You get one at **D10,** two at **D8,** two at **D6,** and one at **D4.**

All of your Values get a Trait Statement.

- **Family**: Supporting and bolstering family.
- **Love**: Romantic and platonic love for others.
- **Honor**: Upholding a sense of integrity.
- **Reason**: A refusal to give into dogma or untruth.
- **Faith**: Assurance in the righteousness of others and the universe itself.
- **Ambition**: Faith in oneself and in one's own vision.

Signature Assets

Throughout the game, players might get their hands on signature assets. These can be affiliations with different organizations, vehicles, or useful gear, some of which could be imbued with spiritual power. Players begin with two at **D6:**

- **Heirlooms**: An item that indicates a connection with your ancestors, those loved ones and figures of the past you admire. You can use it to connect with their spirits, whether you realize it consciously or not, and invoke it in supernatural events.
- **Trademark**: This is an item that is something people immediately associate with you. It's a mundane thing, like a car, a pocket knife, or somehow always having a bottle of alcohol. It can be used whenever you can invoke it.

Very Optional: Language Competency

If desired, you can represent varying competencies in languages in the following

fashion. Every player gets **13** points to distribute among the following competencies in English and their home or native language:

- ❖ Listening
- ❖ Speaking
- ❖ Reading
- ❖ Writing

Add **6** more points per other language if you'd like them to be meaningful additions.

Remember – **don't speak or type in an accent that isn't yours** if you use this mod. Just talk normally and narrate misunderstandings.

Level		Competence
None	0	You cannot communicate this way
Broken	1	Roll against a **D8** test *and* spend 1 **PP**
Acceptable	2	Roll against a **D8** test *or* spend 1 **PP**
Fluent	3	You understand this aspect fine

You may gain 1 point after a week in which you've received training or spend considerable time talking to someone.

Trait Statements

A statement is a sentence or phrase that clarifies or refines the trait that it's attached to. One or more trait sets may be assigned trait statements. They're especially useful when assigned to values, relationships, or attributes. They signify which trait sets you want at the center of your game's dramatic tension.

Challenging Statements

Trait statements are narratively similar to distinctions, but a statement is a truth about your character that you may challenge and then grow from. When you challenge a

trait with a statement attached to it, you act contrary to the statement and your trait die is tripled for that roll.

Once a trait statement is challenged, the trait it's attached to steps down by one. At the end of the session or whenever character growth is resolved, that statement must either be rewritten to reflect a new belief or truth and the die returns to its original rating, or the statement remains the same and the die remains stepped down. If the die rating is stepped down, it's likely that another trait must be stepped up to balance it out.

Goals (Altered)

This version of Goals (**Cortex Codex** p. 57) is a group activity rather than an individual one.

Setting Goals

Prior to the first session, and between each session, the GM can set new goals.

Goals are rated from **D6** to **D12.** The goal's die rating should be based on how difficult the goal is to achieve.

- **D6** Simple to achieve
- **D8** Challenging to achieve
- **D10** Hard to achieve
- **D12** Very hard to achieve

Achieved goals go into the Growth pool for all characters. Once a goal is achieved and after it's become part of Growth pools, it should be crossed off and a new one of that die level added. Goals that are rendered impossible should be removed without adding dice and replaced.

Growth

The best dramatic heroes grow with the story and are changed by the challenges they face. Indeed, to some, that's the very definition of a hero—or, at the very least, a protagonist. Even antagonists, if they're interesting, change over the arc of their story.

With this mod, PCs gain new traits and advance current traits through a mechanism called the growth pool, which is a pool of dice you build up over the course of the game. This method uses the Trait Statements mod.

You can get dice for the growth pool in two ways:

- Challenging a trait statement (grants a die equal to the trait)
- Successfully recovering stress or complications with someone else's help.
- Accomplishing a goal.

You can then use that growth pool to add new traits or improve existing ones at the end of the session in a special kind of scene called a tag scene.

Tag Scenes

At the end of every session you have the opportunity to do a special kind of scene called a tag scene, where you can try to improve your character's traits.

Tag scenes shouldn't be very long—just enough narration for everyone to get an idea of how you want your PC to change. After that, you get to do two things: rewrite statements and step up traits.

Rewriting Statements

For every trait statement you've challenged in the session, you get to make a choice: did your PC change perspectives? If so, you can rewrite your statement to reflect your new belief about the trait and put it back to its original die rating. *Jason would never let me down* ***D8,*** might become *Jason isn't the friend I thought he was* ***D8,*** or *Jason will answer to me* ***D8.***

If your PC didn't change perspectives, you can keep the statement the same, but the trait it's attached to must stay at the reduced die rating. For values or other traits that share a fixed number of steps, pick another value or values to increase by that same amount, so your total number of die steps remains the same. So, if you stepped down Love from **D10** to **D6** (two steps) during a session and decide to stay there, you'd pick one value to step up by two, or two values to step up by one.

For relationships or other traits that aren't governed by a fixed number of steps, if you stay at the lowered die rating, add another die to your growth pool equal to the new

die rating. So, if you stepped down Jason from **D8** to **D4,** you'd add a **D4** to growth in addition to the **D8** you added when you originally challenged it.

Stepping Up Traits

You may select one trait to step up or pick a new one to add. New traits begin at **D4.** You can't step a trait up higher than **D12.**

To raise the trait, you must succeed at a test. You roll your growth pool plus the highest stress or complication you had during the session, even if it was recovered. The GM sets the difficulty at one die equal to the trait level you want to step up to and a second die based on what kind of trait it is:

- Skill, new locked SFX, or Value **D8**
- Relationship, unlock SFX, or Signature Asset **D6**

Unlike other tests, you can't use **PP** to affect the outcome of this one. Ignore all hitches. If you win, you get to step up your trait or add a new one and the dice in the growth pool are used up. If you lose or tie, you can do it anyway, but you have to step something else down to compensate; the dice in the growth pool stick around for the next session.

Rules

Time

Each calendar is divided into Day and Night portions, with Day being divided into Early Morning and Afternoon and Night divided into Evening and the Dead of Night.

- **Early Morning**: Daily tasks are distributed here and Neglect assessed.
- **Afternoon**: Also encompassing the latter part of the morning, this is when the restaurant opens for service and the lunch rush comes in.
- **Evening**: The busiest time of service and the highest stakes.

- **Dead of Night**: After the restaurant is closed. Stress and Neglect complications may be recovered from. There is a chance for dreams and nightmares that can inflict mental stress.

During each of these, events and scenes might play out that will require tests and contests.

Night is also the time when the supernatural is at its greatest power, so be careful!

Stress

Characters have two kinds of stress: **Mental** and **Physical.** They take damage to these during high stakes events or in response to certain events. See page 39 for additional rules.

Owing to how busy the day is, characters can only attempt to recover stress after the restaurant closes at the Dead of Night. This is taken in lieu of an attempt to recover from Neglect.

You cannot recover Stress on your own. You'll have to rely on another player to help you do it. This is a great opportunity for a trait statement.

Family SFX

So long as the restaurant is in good standing, characters benefit from certain bonus effects. These are degraded by Neglect – you can only make use of them if your total Neglect is under their number.

1: Once per day, a PC can add 1 **D8** stunt to any roll.

2: Once per morning, a PC may reduce a stress value by 1.

3: Once per day, a PC may reroll any roll

4: Once per day, a PC may ignore hitches for any roll

Daily Tasks

Every morning, the GM will hand out two tasks to every PC. These are tasks that must be performed in order to keep the restaurant smoothly and represent problems or

other issues that crop up randomly. These will either be 1, 2, or 3-hour tasks. These require a test to complete, and players may attempt a task so long as they have the hours to do it, though as noted previously only one person can do it and they need sufficient time to do so.

Every PC has **6 hours** they can distribute between tasks, but this is reduced according to the step value of the highest stress they've received.

PCs may trade tasks, but the eldest has final say over distribution.

NPCs do not receive tasks and cannot take them on (though they may be used as the Relationship die or as an asset!) It's assumed they have tasks of their own to do but are doing them without direct narrative attention.

You can use this to simulate card draw if you are playing online:

Task Assignment

I've taken the liberty of including some alternative restaurant cards for different groups. The lists may be updated for sensitivity or accuracy.

Downtime

If you're skipping some time, maintain the status of existing Neglect and Stress with the assumption that, after the time skip, the situation will be roughly the same as before. You might change out some of the complications if you want to mix things up.

Neglect

Any failed tasks become **Neglect,** which reflects deterioration. The restaurant can take up to 8 types of Neglect before it fails entirely. The first four points of Neglect negatively affect your Family SFX – remove them in order until the Neglect is recovered. Each Neglect is represented as a complication of **D6** for 1-hour tasks, **D8** for 2-hour tasks, and **D10** for 3-hour tasks.

To recover a Neglect die, players may attempt a single task each as a recovery action during the Dead of Night.

Dreams and Nightmares

Come night, there is a possibility that people involved with the supernatural may be beset with powerful dreams. This is a matter of discretion in restaurant-based games to amp up the pressure when things are going too smoothly, to add a wrinkle, or to progress the story. This may apply to everyone after a bad event, to one specific person, or to a few people, and it isn't necessary at all.

When you decide that players will have a chance of having a nightmare, have them roll **D4.** On a hitch, they suffer a nightmare and take 1 mental stress and 1 **PP.** It's also possible to receive positive and negative dreams that provide some hint of the future. This is solely at the discretion of the GM. Negative prophetic dreams will still inflict stress.

You can either tell the players what the dream was generally about or use a prompt generator, such as these:

		D4			
	#	1	2	3	4
D8	1	I felt a presence behind me...	I suddenly found myself falling...	I was in an unfamiliar environment...	I turned a corner and everything disappeared...
	2	The light suddenly went out...	I found myself running from something...	I was stuck in a thick, viscous substance...	I felt something slimy and disgusting...
	3	The temperature rose dramatically...	The rain was coming down in sheets...	I shrank down to a tiny size...	I grew to an enormous height...
	4	I felt something cold and clammy...	I was encased in ice...	I suddenly collided with a solid object...	I drank something that made me feel sick...
	5	The sky was filled with lightning...	I was swimming in open water...	I heard a growling noise in the distance...	I was lost in a dense forest...
	6	I was trapped in a confusing maze...	I couldn't find my way in a crowded area...	I saw mysterious lights in the distance...	A dense fog obscured my vision...
	7	I heard a blood-curdling scream...	Everything around me crumbled and fell apart...	I felt exhausted and drained...	I was about to be hit by a moving object...
	8	I saw a shooting star streak across the sky...	Something dripped onto me from above...	I felt a touch on my shoulder...	I couldn't speak even though I tried...

	#	1	2	3	4
D8	1	...and then I realized I wasn't alone...	...and then everything went black...	...and then I saw a bright light...	...and then I woke up...
	2	...and then the ground disappeared beneath me...	...and then I heard a voice whispering my name...	...and then I found a hidden door...	...and then I saw my reflection, but it wasn't me...
	3	...and then everything started to spin...	...and then I felt a sudden burst of energy...	...and then I saw a creature unlike anything I'd ever seen before...	...and then I realized I was dreaming...
	4	...and then I felt an intense pressure on my chest...	...and then I heard a loud buzzing noise...	...and then I found a mysterious object...	...and then I realized I had wings...
	5	...and then I felt a strong wind blowing...	...and then I saw a shadowy figure in the distance...	...and then I found myself in a different time period...	...and then I felt myself falling again...
	6	...and then I heard a loud, piercing scream...	...and then I felt an overwhelming sense of dread...	...and then I found a hidden passage...	...and then I realized I was wearing a strange outfit...
	7	...and then everything started to shake...	...and then I felt a sharp pain in my side...	...and then I found myself in a different country...	...and then I saw a familiar face, but they were different somehow...
	8	...and then I heard a strange whispering in my ear...	...and then I felt a sudden sense of urgency...	...and then I found a key that unlocked everything...	...and then I realized I was in a completely different world...

		D4			
	#	1	2	3	4
D8	1	...and I couldn't shake the feeling that something was watching me.	...and I realized I had been holding my breath the entire time.	...and I knew I had to follow it.	...and I couldn't wait to see what the next night would bring.
	2	...and I woke up, wondering if it had all been real.	...and I knew I had to face my fears.	...and I felt a surge of excitement at the possibilities.	...and I wondered if I would ever be the same again.

	3	...and I felt a sense of relief wash over me.	...and I knew I had to keep going.	...and I felt like I had uncovered a secret no one else knew.	...and I wondered if I would ever return to that place.
	4	...and I realized that anything was possible in my dreams.	...and I felt a newfound sense of freedom.	...and I knew I had a purpose.	...and I couldn't wait to explore this new world further.
	5	...and I felt a sense of awe at the beauty of the world around me.	...and I knew I had to fight to survive.	...and I wondered if I would ever find my way back home.	...and I couldn't wait to see where my dreams would take me next.
	6	...and I felt a sense of triumph at solving the puzzle.	...and I knew I had to find a way out.	...and I felt like I had stumbled upon a hidden treasure.	...and I wondered if I would ever find peace in my dreams.
	7	...and I felt a sense of dread at what was to come.	...and I knew I had to face my past.	...and I wondered if I would ever find my way back to reality.	...and I couldn't wait to see what other adventures awaited me.
	8	...and I felt a sense of wonder at the magic of my dreams.	...and I knew I had to embrace the unknown.	...and I felt like I had been given a second chance.	...and I wondered if I would ever find my way back to the real world.

Non-Restaurant Games

Since the tasks of running a restaurant aren't present, it's necessary to make some minor alterations to preserve the sense of pressure.

In place of handing out Tasks in the Early Morning, have each player take a chance for nightmares twice in the Dead of Night by flipping two coins. On each result of tails, they suffer a nightmare.

Characters in non-restaurant games have **6 hours** each to resolve a nightmare, and each one takes **3 hours** to resolve. If they fail, they become 1 mental stress and Neglect; do not reward **PP** unless you inflict it without a choice.

Neglect here works exactly as it does for restaurants, reducing Family SFX and accumulating to a fail state. It represents, in this case, fractures in the family and community that must be resolved before they become trauma.

Supernatural Characters

Under certain circumstances – for instance, a family of supernatural monster-hunters – you may already be familiar with the supernatural, and it's not impossible to have a supernatural member among the cast. It's also possible for a non-supernatural family to become more supernatural over the course of the game.

If this is at creation, all players gain access to the following options:

- **Supernatural**: Gain 3 Abilities (p. 194) at **D6.**
- **Mundane**: Gain 5 additional points to spend on Skills, Signature Assets, and/or Relationships.

If this happens in play, it should be a matter of Growth. Add the following line to the growth chart:

- Supernatural Ability: **D10**

Scenes During Service

Local family restaurants tend to be hubs of activities, with everything from local businessmen to revolutionaries to criminals coming in to have meetings or throw their weight around. Usually, this will be 1-3 scenes or maybe even a full Crisis Pool (which could be a goal by itself.)

These may help come up with some ideas for customers:

- A group of factory workers come in right before closing at the end of their 11 am-8 pm shift
- A member of the local Chinese Benevolence Society brings you news from afar
- A newly immigrated family knocks on your door, looking for work
- A neighboring storekeeper comes in, asking to borrow money until the end of the month
- A jazz band seeks a rehearsal space but no one in town will rent to them
- A wife of a prominent businessman in Chinatown comes in to pay off a Mahjong debt
- A photographer wants to document the history of Chinatown, including your restaurant
- A local couple that wants to "experience" Chinatown, exoticizing the people they speak with
- A cop expecting "customary" free meals, demanding to see proper identification

- A notorious Tong member bringing their whole entourage, demanding the best service
- A rival from another restaurant suggesting a business proposition that smells like trouble
- A supplier for your restaurant comes in, complaining about a gang at the docks or rail yard