



They sucked all the color out of the earth, so you have to find it elsewhere, you know?

Info

❖ **SL Name:** Shou (UltraUgo Resident)

❖ **Character Name:** Mò Zǔ Yì | 艺墨诘

❖ **Class:** Subdimensional

❖ **Tier:** 2

❖ **Race:** Human

❖ **Age:** 24

❖ **Place of Origin:**

TIĀNGŌNG-8, a Chinese state-owned satellite in low Earth orbit, in the year 2056.

❖ **Sphere of Influence:** TIANCHAO

❖ **Character Alignment:** Neutral Good

❖ **Intentions:** Mò Zǔ is an egoist by nature; rather than concern himself with whether people think he's "good" or "evil," he focuses on himself and his own ambitions. That said, he does feel partly responsible for protecting people in the void.

Appearance:

Mò Zǔ is a Chinese man in his early twenties. He's of average height and has a slender, straight build. He's got a soft, pretty face with narrow reddish-brown eyes and a pointed jaw. His facial expressions are usually pretty flat; one might assume that he's disinterested in most things. His silky black hair falls to his chin, and while he's working, he often pins it back from his face. There's hardly an inch of flesh that isn't decorated with ink; his skin's mapped with tattoos heavily featuring traditional Chinese imagery, such as dragons, the Eight Trigrams, peonies, and passages of text. He also has talismans of his own creation plastered up and down his arms.

STRENGTHS

- ❖ **Ingenuity:** Mò Zǔ's the type that thinks outside the box. His modernized form of traditional talismans is only one example of his ingenuity; he usually brings a fresh perspective and clever ideas to most problems he faces.
- ❖ **Hustle:** Mò Zǔ has the confidence, the ambition, and the determination to work hard and pursue his goal of self-sufficiency. Ambition isn't a very Daoist quality, but he considers those virtues to be more like guidelines anyway.
- ❖ **Creative:** Mò Zǔ values self-expression through art more than just about anything. He considers just about any form of artistic expression to be worth engaging in, but he has his favorites. He's a talented painter, calligrapher, and tattoo artist. He also loves making paper lanterns, and has quite a few of them around his tattoo studio.

WEAKNESSES

- ❖ **Awkward:** Mò Zǔ often has difficulty relating to and communicating with other people. Because of his flat facial expressions and tone of voice, as well as his bluntness, people tend to assume that he's ill-tempered and unsociable. He suffers a penalty of -2 to any charisma-related rolls.
- ❖ **Nobody, Nobody:** Mò Zǔ is fiercely self-sufficient; he insists that he doesn't need anyone for anything. It wouldn't be such a bad thing, if it weren't clearly covering up some abandonment issues.
- ❖ **Only Human:** Mò Zǔ might possess an incredible power, but he's only human. If he's lucky, he'll grow old and eventually die sixty or seventy years from now. But the void is a dangerous place, known for attracting all kinds of violent entities, and his defenses may not be perfect...
- ❖ **Support Class:** Mò Zǔ's not much of a fighter. He's got absolutely no combat experience and no fucking idea how to handle himself in a high risk situation. So, he sticks to his strengths: providing magical buffs and protections for the people that *can* do the fighting.
- ❖ **Gullible:** As skeptical as Mò Zǔ tries to be, he's gullible in nature. He'll readily believe any lies that are presented as common knowledge. Most of the time, he catches on quickly. Other times, he does not.

Skills & Magic

Stats

Subdimensional | Tier 2

0/20 points available

- ❖ **Charisma:** -2
- ❖ **Creation Magic:** +2 (BOON +2)
- ❖ **Creativity:** +5
- ❖ **Force Magic:** +1
- ❖ **Intuition:** +1
- ❖ **Alteration Magic:** +5
- ❖ **Soul Magic:** +4

Skills

❖ **Qìgōng:** Mò Zǔ is capable of cultivating and manipulating qi. Qi has a few general types:

- *Tiānqì* (天气) is qi derived from the heavens, personified by gods and celestials and made manifest by weather patterns. It is the most powerful type of qi.
- *Dìqì* (地气) is the qi of the earth, which exists in every river, every plant, and every animal. It is influenced by and seeks harmony with tiānqì.
- *Rénqì* (人气) is qi of the body, which can be further broken down by its sources, such as innate qi inherited from one's parents, or qi gained through eating food. It is influenced by both tiānqì and dìqì; disrupting this balance can result in physical or psychological illness.
- Spirits and demons possess their own qi, which can be cultivated and utilized for spellwork. Mò Zǔ uses this negative energy to produce the effects of curses, the effectiveness of which depends on the qi of the spirit or demon sealed within.

Through various forms of ritualistic practice— often involving coordinated movement and breathing, chanting, meditation, etc.— Mò Zǔ can cultivate qi for use in spellwork. This, however, takes time; he will *rarely* be able to instantaneously cast a spell.

❖ **Reality Artistry:** By using cultivated qi and sealing it within his art and writing (inside what is called a “qi bladder”), he is able to manipulate or capture the essence of reality. This is what gives his paintings their lifelike quality, what allows him to create animated ink drawings, and what empowers his talismans.

❖ **Tai Chi:** Used only in a non-combative context, for its health benefits, meditation, and cultivating qi.

Magic

The techniques that Mò Zǔ uses have been passed down for thousands of years. They have changed little by little with each culture, each geographical region, each philosophical and religious tradition that they have come into contact with. In the hands of a 21st century practitioner like Mò Zǔ, the rituals and tools have been redeveloped to reflect the altermodern counterculture of the era. You could say that Mò Zǔ's magic is paradoxically timeless and contemporary. Mò Zǔ's favorite technique is the crafting of talismans; he does this in the form of traditional

❖ **Talismans:** Mò Zǔ is capable of crafting talismans, usually in the form of traditional fú (spell tags), stickers, and tattoos. Please refer to [this document](#) for more information.

Abilities

❖ **Ink Manipulation:** An extension of Mò Zǔ's alteration magic. He can move and lift ink, change its properties, etc., regardless of the medium that takes the ink.

❖ **Prophecy:** The most potent application of Mò Zǔ's craft. The things that Mò Zǔ writes or draws have the potential to influence fate itself— he can, in essence, use this ability to *construct* reality by writing it down. Because this is such a highly coveted ability, he keeps it on the down low, and absolutely *refuses* to use it for any reason.

Background

CW: abuse, ableism

When the end of the world came, it wasn't some big, apocalyptic event like a nuclear war or the strike of a meteor. It was a creeping destruction that was about a few hundred years in the making. It came slowly at first. Then, by the time the first quarter of the twenty-first century had passed, the Earth was rapidly becoming inhospitable to the humans that populated it. With millions dying and millions more displaced, it became less about combating the climate crisis and more about *escaping it*. In 2029, the assembly of Tiāngōng-8, China's "arc," began in low Earth orbit. The satellite was designed to be a metropolitan space station, about the size of a dwarf planet when completed. It was intended to simulate urban life for the 60% of Chinese citizens displaced when the rising seas flooded coastal megacities.

By the early 2032, Tiāngōng-8 was ready for human occupancy. As part of a government program to populate the satellite, *hēiháizi* (黑孩子) or children that are not registered in the national household registration system, were given a path to legal citizenship through being rehomed with childless parents aboard the satellite. Mò Zǔ was only an infant when he was placed with the Yì family.

From an early age, Mò Zǔ was already showing signs of autism— lack of eye contact, missing certain developmental milestones like pointing, smiling, walking, talking. His symptoms only became more severe as he grew into a toddler. He wouldn't communicate with or listen to his parents, he had frequent meltdowns and outbursts, and his aggressive behavior was too much for his parents to cope with. It never amounted to physical abuse, but Mò Zǔ was badly maltreated by his parents. They left him alone most of the time. Much of that time in isolation was spent quietly, happily playing and painting with his ink brushes. He loved the feel of the soft bristles, loved the splash of the water, loved watching ink flow across and bleed into his paper. He amused himself with drawings that came to life on the page; he made fish that glided across paper and birds that took flight. He nurtured his gift for magic unwittingly, unsupervised. In spite of his efforts to show his parents what he could do, he could never quite catch their attention without screaming, crying, or hitting first.

It took *years* before Mò Zǔ's parents to learn about his gift. By eight years old, he was well beyond crudely-made paintings of fish and birds. Fearful of the potential of Mò Zǔ's gift, his parents sought to put an end to it by destroying his brushes, taking away his inks, and forbidding him from painting. For Mò Zǔ, it was a setback unlike any other. It was his way of communicating, his way of comforting himself when he was overwhelmed. His anger grew exponentially worse. At their wits' end, his parents made the decision to give up on their child.

Mò Zǔ was lucky that Zhāng Wén found him. Wén was a millennial, born during the revival of folk religious traditions around the turn of the twenty-first century. She became a practicing *wū*— a shaman— in addition to her career in horticulture. She tended Tiāngōng-8's magnificent gardens during her working hours, and in her spare time, she provided shamanistic services to the people in her residential module. Wén was everything that Mò Zǔ needed in a caretaker; firm and resolute, patient and kind. And to Wén, Mò Zǔ represented hope that, after her eventual passing, the traditions she upheld would live on. They lived together in a subdivided *sīhéyuàn*. She never once regarded him with fear, never made him feel like a freak for his abilities *or* his autism. She showed him how to hone his innate talent and create both beautiful works of art and potent charms and talismans that could be used to help people. And, with a little support, Mò Zǔ slowly came out of his shell and outgrew his nonverbal phase.

As Mò Zǔ grew into a jaded young adult, he became disillusioned with the traditional lifestyle he shared with Wén. Instead, he threw himself into the modern world. Technology on the satellite was developing rapidly. Automated industry, a satellite-wide surveillance web, phones that got smarter and smarter with each passing year. And then there were the *real* tech enthusiasts, the ones who were just beginning to experiment with cybernetic enhancements. Sure, it was cool for people who needed advanced prosthetics, but in Mò Zǔ's opinion, no one *really* needed an Internet connection in their brain. There were *endless* possibilities for technological growth. But, naturally, most of those possibilities were locked behind a paywall.

Those who didn't have the assets to join the rest of Tiāngōng-8 in the future wound up stuck in the past, in districts like Yānwù Qū. Life is rough in Yānwù Qū; it's well below the poverty line, it's overcrowded, and it's dominated by the local triads. Unfortunately, selling a couple pieces of art now and then just doesn't cut it. Not when you've got bills to pay, an empty stomach, and art supplies to buy. So, Mò Zǔ picked up work where he could. He didn't care how sketchy the job, so long as it put some money in his pocket.

- Gets picked up by his future ex boyfriend, who sort of takes him under his wing. Said guy ends up manipulating him, gaslighting him, etc. etc. etc. Takes advantage of his power.
- Qiáo Chén (陳喬)

Trivia

- ❖ *Likes*: drawing, painting, cities, people-watching, astronomy, bubble tea, drama, new strapons
- ❖ *Dislikes*: crowds, being touched, lazy people, racism, being criticized, being misgendered, authority figures

- ❖ *Favorite poem:* [Some Place](#) by Fang Qihua
- ❖ *Favorite artist:* [Xu Deqi](#)
- ❖ *Most embarrassing secret:* he wants to be validated very, very badly
- ❖ His favorite type of movies are comedy horrors, particularly jiangshi films (殭屍片; *jiāngshīpiàn*)
- ❖ He has a collection of stim toys
- ❖ Mò Zǔ practices a form of shamanistic folk religion influenced by Taoism
- ❖ He speaks English and Mandarin Chinese
- ❖ He mixes his own ink
- ❖ One of his greatest inspirations is [Joey Pang](#) of the Tattoo Temple, a Hong Kong-based tattoo artist that pioneered a style that resembled the brush strokes of Chinese calligraphy and ink wash painting before she disappeared in 2017, about 16 years before Mò Zǔ was born.

