

Chuu-bilis

Combining Nobilis and Chuubo's

The basic idea is to use the Nobilis rules for task resolution and Chuubo's rules for Quests and XP. Your genre is probably Epic Fantasy, but I suppose it doesn't *have* to be. I can certainly imagine a Techno Nobilis game.

Specifics follow:

Character Creation

Character Creation follows normal Nobilis rules, with some exceptions:

You can have a Bond or Affliction based on an Issue instead of having a fixed rating. **This costs 2 Bond/Affliction points.**

You start with two free Connection Skills

Connection: (Imperator) *and*

Connection: (Chancel)

Decide their rating as part of character creation, picking (with HG approval) whatever number feels right to you, including 0 or negative numbers. These are *not* Perks and do not take Perk slots, but are permanent, innate parts of your character sheet. Even a rating of 0 is worth noting, because it actually *is* quite notable for a Noble to have only Connection 0 to their Imperator or Chancel!

Optional: You also start with Connection: Lands Beyond Creation -2. It might come up.

During Avatar Creation, if you are using the rules for Quest Miracles - see below - you should, during the portion of your Lifepath where you consider your character's Origins and Legacy, also think about what Arcs they've been on until now - the default number of starting Arcs is 3.

During the Contacts phase of character creation, you pick up 2 **Connection Perks**, one for each contact (if you lived an Extraordinary Life, pick only two). If they are 3+ Connections, you can use it to Anchor a Contact instead of a Bond- see below.

You can start with a free level 1 Connection Perk to another PC, with their player's consent

Finally, Lifepath generation has an optional - optional mostly because I am not 100% confident in it - extra step:

Is your character on...

Acacia (III) Aconite (V)	a Bindings Arc?
Gorse (VIII) Hollyhock (XII)	a Knight Arc?
Wild Rose (XI) Water Lily (XIV)	an Otherworldly Arc?
Lotus Flower (I) Chamomile (X)	a Storyteller Arc?
Vervain (II) Mimulus (XIII)	an Aspect Arc?
Oak (XV) Alyssum (XVI)	a Shepherd Arc?
Wild Oats (VI) Honeysuckle (IX)	an Emptiness Arc?
Clematis (IV) Star of Bethlehem (VII)	a Mystic Arc?

Recovering Will and MP

The following rules **replace** the relevant rules in Nobilis:

At the beginning of every Chapter, you drop all Intentions and your Will returns to full.

At the beginning of every Chapter, you regain a *Breath* of MP - 1 MP of each type

At the beginning of every Book, regain all your MP up to your maximum. Wherever the Nobilis rules mention “Story”, read “Book”

Any other effect that lets you regain MP - e.g, Issues, Bonds, Afflictions, honoring Estate Properties - give you MP of any type you want.

Recharge Tokens restore your Will and MP back to full.

Connections and Treasure:

Instead of a Bond, you can also Anchor something if you have a 3+ Connection to it.

Quests and Quest Rewards

Quests can and should be used like Projects to affect the world. That is, if you want to change the world in some way, start a Quest for it, and talk with your HG about how long the Quest needs to be. If it's a really *big* project consider splitting it into stages and making each stage a separate Quest. Completing the Quest causes that thing to happen, and that's in *addition* to the Perk you get. That's not a modification to Chuubo's in any way! But it's worth mentioning, because it's the kind of thing you do more often in Epic Fantasy than in other genres.

Completing your Basic Quest gives you a Recharge Token, as in Chuubo's.

When picking your Quest rewards, the guidelines for Miraculous Perks in Chuubo's still apply, You should up the power level a little, but the guidelines about what *kind* of Perks to pick up still work. When picking Perks from the Chuubo core, read "Power" as "Gift" and "Accessory" as "Focus".

There are several kinds of Perks:

Gift Perks are the most common. They are, well, Gifts. Longer Quests typically lead to more powerful Gifts, which is not *quite* synonymous with but typically amounts to "worth more CP".

Focus Perks are a specific type of Gift Perk.

Bond and **Affliction** Perks give you Bonds and Afflictions, respectively (who would have guessed?)

Health Perks give you a Divine Health Level by default, though you can choose to get a Tough or Normal Health Level if you really want to.

MP Perks give you MP *of each type* just like spending CP on MP does. You also immediately get that amount of MP

Power Up Perks might improve a Gift, make an Imperial Miracle more flexible, or increase one of your Attributes by +1, or similar things, but only as long as you keep the Perk

Lower level Perks are still available if you want them. E.g.:

Superior Skill Perks are slightly sub-par, but still useful because they increase the range of things you can do with Aspect.

Magical Skill Perks are also sub-par, but Magic is still useful at the Nobilis level for utility stuff and can be dangerous in concert with the Auctoritas Magister.

And so on. Use your common sense.

Optional: If using the wish rules below, there is an additional type of Perk, **Imperial Miracle**, which lets you use a specific Imperial Miracle that is either always on or invocable either 1/Chapter or 1/Book.

Completing Arcs

Completing an Arc gives you:

- 3 permanent CP to spend on improving your character
- You can move a point from one Attribute to another
- You gain 2 innate points to spend on Bonds and Afflictions (and can rearrange them as you like, as with the end of a Book)
- An opportunity to rearrange your mundane Skills

Bleak Rules and Wish Rules

The Bleak Rules are ignored, because Nobilis have quite enough firepower to battle the Excrucians with, with one exception: *A stalemate can be broken*. You can invoke the Bleak Rules to break a stalemated flurry.

The Wish Rules are also ignored - again, except for stalemates.

If you use the optional variant below, however, you do use the Wish rules, and also the Bleak rules in certain circumstances:

Replacing Nobilis-Style Imperial Miracles with Chuubo-Style ones.

In which case the Wish Rules are of course essential, and in fact **replace** Nobilis rules for Imperial Miracles wherever relevant..

Also, certain Imperial Miracles or wish-level effects may then be resisted using the Bleak Rules, if the HG deems it appropriate. This is because Chuubo-style Imperial Miracles are more powerful in many ways than Nobilis Style ones, so I think it is sometimes necessary to get the extra chance to resist. You still cannot use the bleak rules to defend against any Excrucian attack, only Imperial Miracles.

Treasure 9 miracles also change to work like **Sentimental's** Wish ability, most notably including the "at most once per Chapter" clause.

Finally, this does result in some changes to the setting. Instead of needing time to speak Imperial Miracles, Imperators can speak them more or less instantly once in a... while (that is, 1/Chapter). This does make them somewhat more scary.

Imperators as PCs

This change also opens up the possibility of PC Imperators. Keep in mind that the following rules are *very* rough - use at your own risk!

Imperators as PCs would look like this:

- 9 CP
- Aspect, Domain, Persona and Treasure (max 3). Imperators start with Domain and Persona 0 in all their Estates, designating 1 as primary and the others as secondary
- Active Immortality
- 3 Normal, 1 Tough, and 3 Divine Health Levels
- The ability to speak an Imperial Miracle 1/Chapter. Their Wishing Map is built Chuubo-style, starting with 2 phrases based on Imperator type and each of the players contributes a phrase. It can be expanded by spending Recharge Tokens
- 8 points of Mortal Abilities
- 13 points of Bonds and Afflictions.

Quest Imperial Miracles

Being a Noble grants one a limited ability to change the world directly - to speak Imperial Miracles onto the world with Chibi-Quests. With a 15-XP, or occasionally somewhat longer, Quest, PCs can speak an Imperial Miracle onto the world. This has three variants depending on what rules you're using.

Option 1: Generic Imperial Miracles

If you are *not* using Chuubo-style wishes but just using Nobilis-style Imperial Miracles, then Nobilis can speak any sort of Imperial Miracle with a 15-XP quest. They will still, after all, have to take action to fulfill the Imperial Miracle afterwards.

Option 2: Wishing Map

With this variant, Avatars can make a Chuubo-style wish with a 15-XP quest, but their Avatar Diagram is their Wishing Map. Wishes that flow from it will go well; ones that don't are likely to go badly. You can expand your map in play by spending recharge tokens.

Option 3: Arc Levels

The third variant is that PCs can speak certain Imperial Miracles based on the Arcs they have been on. If you are using this variant PCs should start the game having already completed some number of Arcs - typically 3.

Arc Levels are generally not otherwise relevant.

These are Imperial Miracles usable through Chibi-Quests with the color and flavor of their Arcs. Their effects hang around as long as you maintain the Quest.

Quest Imperial Miracles for Bindings Arcs:

Bindings Arcs are about sealing and binding dangerous forces, and developing a faculty for containment and targeted use of such things. They are weakly associated with Treasure.

Bindings Quest Imperial Miracles are usually **Paradigmatic** Anytime Quests.

Arc 0-1

At this level, you can imbue some of yourself into a person, place, or thing, giving you a temporary level 2 Bond with it, that lasts as long as you keep the Quest. You can then use that Bond to Anchor that thing. If it's an Ordinary or Wondrous Anchor, it's usually that simple.

Miraculous Anchors are another story - you might have to Defeat whatever you're binding before you can Anchor it - the only thing this Quest gives you is the Bond.

Alternatively, you can draw out the power of a thing as a temporary Focus - typically not worth more than 1 CP - instead. It lasts as long as you keep the Quest.

Arc 2

At this level you can open up a larger power from something you have bound, awaken a thing's true potential, or construct an entirely new wonder of magic or science. By extending the Quest, you could gain the resultant Bond or Focus as a Perk instead of a temporary bonus.

As a general rule, henceforth a 45-XP Quest is sufficient to both create a Miraculous Anchor from scratch and/or bind it to you, Anchoring it, with either an inherent 2 point Bond or a **Focus** Perk.

Arc 3-5

The guidelines from the Chuubo corebook still hold for these levels - just up the scale a bit, maybe think of them as wishes instead of regular miracles, and you're golden.

That includes the Arc 5 Quest Imperial Miracles typically costing 35 or more XP and being vulnerable to HG's choices about what to allow, but they are wishes that can conceivably alter *all of Creation* so they're still pretty awesome.

Quest Imperial Miracles for Knight Arcs:

Knight Arcs usually feature a **Truth**, a **Failing** and a **Role**. That last is often (though not always) a formal role in Noble Society, and it is through these Quest Miracles and Perks picked up along the appropriate Arcs that Ravens and the Curators and the Functionaries Magister assert their perquisites and powers. These are usually **Struggles**.

Arc 0-1

This Quest typically involving trying to be or become something, and is usually **Fake it till you Make it**.

At the end you get your choice of:

- You gain insight into how to become the thing you want to become - what you need to *do* in order to be a honest person or become a Raven or whatever. Typically, this gives you whatever information the HG thinks may be relevant to competently pursuing that aim, and it is a continuous power: you keep getting insight until either you stop sustaining the Quest *or* there is some sort of substantive narrative payoff (in which case the HG is within their rights to ask you to drop the Quest).
- You assume the mantle of your Truth, Failing or Role, making it obvious in you and forcing the world to recognize it. This causes those you interact with - be they mortals, Nobles, Imperators or even Excrucians - to react to you as they *would* to someone with that Truth, Role or Failing - to whatever extent is reasonable given their characters.

In addition, if you are a signatory to the Accords of Babylon, you may use such a Quest Miracle - probably **Agony** because the process can be difficult - to create a *res* and formalize contracts amongst the Nobilis. If you reach a Knight Arc of 2 or more with a Role in Noble Society, or have a Bond tying you to it, you need no Quest to do so.

Arc 2-5

Again, the guidelines in the corebook should work, if you think of them as wishes rather than regular miracles.

Quest Imperial Miracles for Otherworldly Arcs:

Otherworldly Arcs are typically for those Powers with a strong connection to their Estate, such that they dream of it, move it it, command it less like the king commands his subjects and more like the moon commands the tides. They are strongly associated with Domain.

Quest Imperial Miracles of this color focus on using your Estate to affect the world in the same way you can use Domain to affect your Estate. It is, I suppose, within the realms of possibility that there is a Power with this level of connection to an Estate other than their own, but it seems extraordinarily unlikely. They are typically generic **Lurid** Quests.

Arc 0-1

At this level, your abilities are divinatory. This is a power similar to a Major Divination but functions as a wish instead:

"I wish my Estate would tell me about [[whatever]]"

And the HG will give you whatever information - including secret, hidden or future information - they see fit to give you in furtherance of that wish. This information must be useful but need not be the whole story, and once you get into secret information this becomes a Bleak effect and is resistible as such.

This is a continuous effect - the HG is obliged to keep giving you insight insight until either you stop sustaining the Quest *or* there is some sort of substantive narrative payoff (in which case the HG is within their rights to ask you to drop the Quest).

Arc 2

At this level, you can make a wish that is protective, stabilizing, strengthening or preserving. You protect against Excrucian or Actual incursions and heal spiritual wounds. Your Estate must be somehow involved.

For instance, perhaps you are the Power of the Sun. You might make a wish like:

"I wish the Sun would keep you safe."

And similar things.

Arc 3

Quest Wishes at this level are *creative* or *constructive* - they are about building things or making gross changes to the world. For instance, if your Estate is Hope, you might wish:

"I wish Hope would inspire people to build a city here."

And so it would be.

Arc 4

Quest Wishes at this level are destructive - they are about tearing down boundaries and weakening things. They are thus often Bleak, and resistible as such.

Arc 5

Quest Wishes at this level are about movement or, more broadly, *change*. Practically speaking - you can make any sort of wish at all, as long as your Estate is involved somehow and you can come up with a plausible story for how it accomplishes your chosen effect.

Quest Imperial Miracles for Storyteller Arcs:

Storyteller Quest Miracles focus on blurring the boundaries between truth and fiction. They are usually generic **Melodramatic** Quests.

Arc 0

You're *stylized*. There's something about you that's a little unreal, a little overly dramatic.

Perhaps you can, whenever you wish, always be lit up by a spotlight or a streetlamp or a suspiciously located sunbeam. You have the right to demand dramatic lighting from the world.

Or, you have a certain iconic *look*, such that even if you've spend hours trudging through a muddy bog, a shake of your head and *bam!* your hair is perfect.

Or maybe every time you accomplish something particularly cool (by your standards), you are accompanied by an inexplicable but badass guitar solo.

You get the idea.

These powers are intended to be cosmetic rather than useful, but they can be pretty cool. It functions as an always-on Imperial miracle and is, to a certain extent, limited by reason. If someone is actively *denying* you lighting, specifically targeting your clothes, destroying anything in your area that vaguely resembles a musical instrument, and so on, this power is of no help. It is possible to prevent the effect from happening, with effort. However, as soon as no one is actively doing anything to change the situation, things go back to normal.

Arc 1

If you've got this level in a storyteller Arc, then there's some way in which you're mysterious, magical, or special. You've got *plot hooks*.

At this level a Chibi-Quest usually fits you with an extra power - typically either an always on Imperial Miracle or one invocable 1/Chapter, but it might instead be a bonus or upgrade to a power you already have - that fits with whatever you've got going on already and is useful to the current story. Perhaps you will have the power to appear whenever it is dramatically appropriate (whatever that means for your character) or some other similar power. Or something else entirely.

Arc 2

You can *fit* yourself somewhere, manifesting into a story where you weren't before, integrating with a person, place or thing. Your coming is presaged with signs or portents, and then there you are, equipped with a level 4 Connection to that thing (if is a person, it gains an equivalent Connection to you) and with a relevant and fully provided backstory (or mysterious lack thereof, if such is more suiting to your character). Your presence goes unquestioned by your target or the people around it, and you are a natural part of that thing's story for as long as you sustain the miracle. Since this provides you with a 3+ Connection, you can Anchor it as well. This is the magic of guardian angels, fairy godmothers, and that little shop which wasn't there yesterday. It is *also* the magic of fairy-tale monsters and changelings - if you wish, you can use this to wound your target in some desired fashion, though if you do this becomes a Bleak effect.

Arc 3

You can use Quest Imperial Miracles at this level to transform the lives of others, in a way appropriate to your character. You can inspire people to greater heights, or give people peace, or make them other than they were before. For random NPCs, this usually just *works*, more or less instantly.

For Main Characters - PCs and major NPCs - this functions as a wish instead: a wish to transform their lives or their selves.

Arc 4-5

Again, use the guidelines in Chuubo's, but think of them as wishes rather than miracles.

Quest Imperial Miracles for **Aspect** Arcs:

The nature of a Power is eccentric; so therefore are their means of self-development. Sandra Erskine developed her legendary shapeshifting skill through rudimentary gene-therapy injections of the DNA of hundreds of species. Laurence Kimaiyo, on the other hand, spent endless hours in front of a mirror honing the skill of looking like something else, until finally he succeeded.

—from On Serving the Nobilis, by Luc Ginneis

Aspect Arcs are about improving and perfecting yourself, or develop powers. They are strongly but not uniquely associated with the Aspect stat.

Quest Imperial Miracles of this color usually equip you with temporary but powerful special abilities that you can use as long as you sustain the Quest.

These are usually generic **Exciting** Quests

Arc 0-1

At this level, the ability you pick up typically manifests as something like a level 3 Superior Skill, or a 1 CP Gift (such as Wings, Natural Weapon, Fire-breathing or similar) - Automatic level 3 Wondrous Foci are typical. If you mainly plan on wielding this ability with Aspect (the stat), the differences between these two options are almost non-existent. Nevertheless, "a level 3 Superior Skill" is the guideline for the *kinds* of abilities you can gain.

Arc 2

At this level, the abilities you gain are along the lines of a level 4-5 Superior Skill or a level 5-6 Automatic Focus. In the latter case, the core power of the Focus is usually giving you the *ability* to do something rather than doing something *per se* - that is, for all but the most basic effects you would wield the Focus with mundane or Aspect actions to actually use it. And again, in either case a level 4-5 Superior Skill is the guideline for the kind of powers you might gain.

Arc 3

Quest Imperial Miracles at this level manifest spiritual auras around you that have strong effects - usually some sort of Automatic Miraculous Focus, or other Gift, mechanically. You can typically direct these effects with your mundane or Aspect-enhanced actions, but they are also, unlike with earlier levels, usually miraculous in themselves.

Alternately, you can gain basically any kind of ability you can think of. In this case, this functions as a wish:

*"I wish I could do **that**."*

If you choose to use this Quest to make that wish, keep in mind that in that case the specific mechanical details of the ability you gain will be largely up to the HG and that unlocking the ability you gain typically requires an act of Epic Fantasy (*a daring heart may unlock its hidden treasures*).

Arc 4-5

At this level the ability is *itself* a wish-level effect - some kind of Plot Device or Deus Ex Machina. Reality Warping, or the ability to copy others' powers, or something similarly overpowered and hax. However, you must pick one of these

- The wish activates at most 1/Chapter automatically whenever some sort of trigger is met. For instance, you might stop time when it's useful in fighting [some particular enemy], or gain something like the **Defensive Shield** ability: a point defense wish that activates when you get attacked.

OR

- Using or wielding this power requires mundane or Aspect actions, meaning that the *effectiveness* of your (say) Reality Warping is mostly dependent on your Intention/Miracle level and someone who beats that can theoretically avoid your wish-level effect without having to take two Deadly Wounds.

Starting at Arc 5, or Arc 4 if you're willing to put in a little extra XP, you can also take something you could normally do with an Aspect 7-8 miracle and scale it up to a wish level effect.

Quest Imperial Miracles for Shepherd Arcs:

Shepherd Arcs are about guiding, guarding, and waking power in things. They are strongly associated with Treasure.

Shepherd Quest Imperial Miracles are about connecting with things - particularly your Anchors - or shaping or changing the world. They are typically generic **Pastoral** Quests.

Arc 0

At this level, you can use an Imperial Miracle to connect with something. Completing this Quest gives you a temporary level 3 Connection with that person, place or thing. This usually lasts until at least the end of the Book.

For a Ordinary or Wondrous Anchor, this is typically enough to Anchor it as well.

For a Miraculous Anchor it might not be! Miraculous Anchors can usually take Wounds to resist the anchoring miracle, so you might need to convince or Defeat them first. The only thing this Quest Imperial Miracle guarantees you is the Connection itself.

If you extend this Quest you can keep the Connection around as a Perk instead.

Arc 1

At this level, you can use quests to awaken powers from things with your Craft - that is, create entirely new Anchors as you desire. By extending this Quest you might gain an inherent Connection to the Anchor instead of a temporary one or a Perk.

As a general rule, from this point forward a 45-XP Quest is sufficient to create a wonder at the Miraculous level and Anchor it, which either manifests as an inherent level 3+ Connection or a **Focus** Perk.

Arc 2

Quest Imperial Miracles at this level are about bringing about a good closure to things - about making things end well. This usually functions as a wish -

"I wish for a happy ending"

- a wish that declares that the stuff you've been doing *will* lead to positive outcome. If you're facing opposing wishes (or extremely determined opposition exploiting the wish rules) the standard failure mode is that the ending will be happy only in a bittersweet or ironic sense. That's a *failure* mode, however - if you are not facing or have successfully trumped over any such opposition or Auctorita, an entirely genuine happy ending is guaranteed.

Arc 3

Quest Imperial Miracles at this level are about evoking great and epic power from things, even mundane things. Game mechanically -

While the Quest is active you can evoke wishes from - and more generally, use Treasure 6+ miracles with - an Ordinary or Mundane Anchor of your choosing without any fear of doing it harm, and without losing the ability to use Treasure 3-5 miracles with it. If you wish, you can instead use a Quest to evoke a wish from any sort of Anchor *in lieu* of using a Treasure 9

miracle (and thus without needing to spend MP or take a Deadly Wound from a Word of Command.)

If you have both Treasure 5 *and* all your Anchors are Miraculous, Quest Imperial Miracles of this level are probably almost useless to you. In which case, um, sorry?

Arc 4-5

Quest Imperial Miracles at this level are creative, and are usually about creating something that acts as a concretized Affliction or Bond for all in the vicinity for as long as the object lasts, even past the end of the Book. A stone, say, that grants wishes or brings hope. Alternately, they are permanent changes to an area, such as an Imperial Miracle that adds or alters the Region Properties of a Chancel or similarly sized region, or adds a permanent Affliction affecting all those therein.

More generally, you can make wishes that create wonders or ones that alter the local rules in a Chancel-sized region directly and permanently.

Quest Imperial Miracles for Emptiness Arcs:

Those on Emptiness Arcs are usually wrestling with some sort of corruption or failing, something horrible, bleak or twisted. This is the Arc's **Curse**.

Quest Imperial Miracles for Emptiness are usually generic **Setting** Questions.

Arc 0-1

At this level you can manifest minions from parts of your heart or psyche. They are usually 1 CP Foci or Anchored by a 2-point Bond, and can be used for a variety of useful tasks, like any Anchor. You can also:

- Kill them to purify something in your heart, or use them as a sympathetic link to a part of yourself.
- Use them to siphon MP from someone who - knowingly or not - keeps the *shikigami* close by. The amount of MP siphoned depends on how long and close the minion is to the target, but is typically around 2-4 MP. Later you can wring out the MP and use it again.

Once you are no longer sustaining the Quest, it remains a mostly loyal minion but is no longer Anchored to you (although if you have spare Bond points you may Anchor it normally).

Arc 2-5

Again, use the guidelines from the corebook, thinking of them as wishes rather than miracles.

For Arc 5 your new identity is usually as powerful as a 9 CP character with only one stat, or thereabouts, or roughly as powerful as a Deceiver Shard.

Quest Imperial Miracles for **Mystic Arcs**:

Mystic Arcs are about taking up a high and holy cause - this is typically your Estate if your Estate is something like Freedom or Justice, or something it represents - e.g. Hope if your Estate is the Sun. Alternately, it may be an Affiliation - the Code of Heaven, say, or the Dark. Either way, it's your **Principle**.

These Quests are usually generic **Symbolic** Quests.

Arc 0-1

At this level, Quest Imperial Miracles usually equip you with useful abilities - typically worth about 1 CP - that are an extension of your normal thematics and relevant to a current problem you are facing.

Arc 2

Quest Imperial Miracles at this level are about dissociating you from yourself, giving yourself over to the hand of the divine, and gaining new powers thereby. There's thus a tradeoff between control and power here - if you let the HG have total control, this is a wish level effect that promotes your Principle and is appropriate to your Arc - including, e.g, replicating **Evocative Transformation** - whereas if you insist on total control of what you get its about as powerful as a 2-3 CP Gift, or so. And somewhere in between for in-betweens.

Arc 3-5

If you guessed "as Chuubo's core, but wishes instead of miracles", congrats, you are a mindreader.

For level 5, this is about making the kinds of wishes someone who is an avatar - or Imperator - of your Principle can make.