

Chapter 1: Introduction

The System

This system is based on the world of the xianxia novel Reverend Insanity (aka Master of Gu) by Gu Zhen Ren. In short, it is a high-magic system where most characters and all players are spellcasters called Gu Masters. Spells are contained within creatures called Gu, which can be stored inside a Gu Master's body. Each Gu has a specific function, and the way your character will play is going to constantly change as your personal collection of Gu changes. If you specialize in fire path and later decide you'd rather beat your enemies to death with strength path, you can sell your Gu and buy, find, or create new ones to fulfill that purpose, or dual cultivate the paths for a unique playstyle.

The Aperture

The aperture is a sort of extra-dimensional space located in a Gu Master's stomach. Around the age of puberty, people can awaken their aperture by coming into contact with Hope Gu. Not everyone is lucky enough to be able to awaken their aperture, but those that do are henceforth called Gu Masters. People without an awakened aperture are called mortals, and are just regular people.

The aperture is a simple sphere bounded by walls and filled with a sea of primeval essence, a resource used to activate Gu as well as to cultivate. Cultivation consists of attacking your aperture walls with this primeval essence, eventually breaking them and moving on to a new realm. Gu Masters begin at rank 1 and can cultivate to rank 5. Each rank is considered a large realm, and are subdivided into 4 small realms: initial stage, middle stage, upper stage, and peak stage. After rank 5, there are still ranks 6 through 9, but that is the realm of Gu Immortals and the rules change massively. In this system, the maximum rank attainable is rank 5 peak stage.

You can store Gu in your aperture no matter their size, and there is no limit to the number of Gu that can be stored in your aperture.

Primeval Essence

Primeval essence is the main resource used by Gu masters to activate and refine Gu as well as cultivate to increase their strength. The representation of primeval essence you see here is an approximation, as the resource quickly becomes quite complex when factoring in the rank and realm of the user alongside the rank of the Gu.

A Gu Master's aperture has a maximum amount of primeval essence, determined by their aptitude. At the initial stage of each rank, a Gu Master has a number of portions of primeval essence equal to their aptitude. A Gu Master at rank 2 initial stage with a 30% aptitude (D-Grade) has a maximum of 30 portions of primeval essence.

When out of combat, the recovery rate is 10% of the Gu Master's maximum primeval essence every hour. Each small realm above initial stage doubles the maximum number of portions available.

At higher ranks, your primeval essence is significantly more potent than even peak stage of the rank below you. For simplicity, activating any Gu of a rank below your own costs a single portion of primeval essence.

As a bonus action, you may leak the aura of your primeval essence. Any creature within 10 meters of you can sense this aura and immediately identify the rank and stage of your primeval essence.

Primeval Stones



Small, smooth stones naturally formed from primeval essence, primeval stones are the main currency in the Gu world. On your turn, you can absorb the essence of a number of primeval stones equal to the amount of hands you have as a **Combat Action**. You must have one hand free for each stone being absorbed.

For each primeval stone being absorbed, you gain 5 portions of primeval essence, and the stone is destroyed in the process, crumbling into dust.

Refinement

Gu can be created out of materials and other Gu in a process called refinement. See the *Gu* chapter for more details.

The World

The Gu world is a massive, flat disc, consisting of 5 regions. The source material is pretty inconsistent with size, but it is safe to say each region is at least 6 or 7 times the surface area of the Earth. The 5 regions are as follows:

- Northern Plains: Flat grassland dotted with nomadic tribes of various sizes. Conflict is commonplace and the Gu Masters here are the most adept at fighting.
- Western Desert: A dry wasteland with cities gathered around its oases. Lone cultivators are very uncommon.
- Southern Border: An uneven, mountainous region with familial clans settling on mountainsides. The setting of this system.
- Eastern Sea: Vast ocean dotted with archipelagos. Conflict is less common due to difficulty in reaching other settlements, allowing its inhabitants to focus on cultivation and gaining wealth. Many lone cultivators.
- Central Continent: The most powerful of the five regions and home to the Heavenly Court. Has a mix of the other four regions' geography (i.e. a normal continent).

Since the world is a disc, Southern Border does not border Northern Plains, but it does border the other regions. The same goes for the other outer regions, with only Central Continent connecting to all of them.

Mortals

People without an awakened aperture cannot use Gu. Their status is very low, and in most places a Gu Master can outright kill any mortals that disrespect them. Despite that, mortals do a great deal of work to provide food and resources to the clan, and cannot be wantonly murdered without reproach from righteous path forces.

Righteous and Demonic

Gu Masters identify as part of either the demonic path or righteous path. Demonic does not necessarily mean evil, just that the Gu Master does not follow the rigid systems of community. Of course, many demonic path Gu Masters ARE evil and more than willing to hurt the innocent to further their own goals. Similarly, righteous path Gu Masters are not necessarily good, they just follow the rules of society. While many have ideals of justice and virtue, the more powerful righteous path Gu Masters exploit this societal responsibility for their own gain, and are often willing to commit evil deeds to further their goals, just in more subtle ways than the demonic path.

Setting

Given the size of the world and the fact that each region has its own local gu, flora, and fauna, I've chosen to localize this system to the Southern Border. You can certainly design a campaign in one of the other regions using this system as a framework, but there might be a great deal of work involved. If you're familiar with Reverend Insanity, this system is set during Fang Yuan's first life so as to give myself the most source material to work with for the setting. I suppose if you play for 500 in-game years the timeline would reset, but you can always just ignore that and pretend Fang Yuan died before going back in time.

The next chapter is dedicated to Southern Border, its clans, and geography. It is heavily recommended for the Game Master to read it.

The Dice Mechanic

Skill Tests

Skill tests are rolled when a character would like to do an action that: - has a chance of failure - has a chance of success

The GM should be able to determine if an action is possible for your character to do, as well as if the action should be an automatic success.

Dice

Dice are notated d[sides]; a d4 is a four sided die. The td10 is a 10 sided die where each value is a tens place (10, 20, 30, etc). If instead of the number of dice, the die is annotated with an R (Rd12), then the number of dice is equal to the rank of the Gu. This system uses d4, d6, d8, d10, td10, d12, and d20.

The d100 Skill tests are rolled on a d100; to roll a d100, roll a d10 and a td10. The td10 represents the tens place while the d10 represents the ones place. So if you roll an 80 and a 5, your roll is 85. Rolling a 10 on the d10 is just a zero, so rolling 90 and 10 would just be 90. Finally, rolling 00 on the td10 and a 10 on the d10 is 100. If you roll 99 or 100 on a skill test, it automatically fails and is considered a fumble.

Penalties and Bonuses

Penalties and bonuses are a number added or subtracted from the number you roll on the die during a skill test. The GM can add either to represent the difficulty of the check, using the table below as a guideline. Penalties and bonuses do not have to be round multiples of 10, but they typically are.

Penalty/Bonus	Difficulty
+80	Nearly Impossible (Traveling against the Reverse Flow River)
+60	Extreme Difficulty (Refining an Immortal Gu)
+40	High Difficulty (Convincing a Wisdom Path master to change their plans)
+20	Difficult (Cultivating with minor distractions)
0	Challenging (Cultivating in a secret room)
-20	Small Challenge (Refining a common Gu)
-40	Simple (Identifying poisonous plants around your clan's walls)
-60	Trivial (Haggling a merchant to take a few primeval stones off a large price)

Advantage

There is no disadvantage in this system, but many Gu will grant advantage on certain checks. If you have advantage, roll an additional td10 and take the lower of the two. You can stack advantages as long as they come from different sources.

Degrees of Success/Failure

For every 10 you roll above/below your skill value, you gain a degree of failure/success, respectively. Some skill tests, such as an opposed Deception/Insight roll, do not take degrees of success into account; they're either deceived or they aren't. Many tests, however, will have different effects based on the degrees of success or failure. You take more damage from refinement backlash the worse your failure is, and your attacks deal more damage the more degrees of success you have.

Critical

When you roll at or under 1/10 of your skill's value (rounded down) on the die, you've landed a critical. Criticals are automatic successes, though degrees of success are still calculated like normal. Some skills have a critical success effect built into them, though the GM can always add a special additional success to any test you critically succeed.

Fumble

Fumbles occur when 99-100 is rolled on the die for a skill test. If your skill value is above 99, you only fumble on a roll of 100 for that skill. Fumbles are an automatic failure, though degrees of failure are still calculated like normal.

Opposed Tests

When competing with your skills against another creature, the two of you may be called to make an Opposed Test. You both roll a skill test, which can be for the same or different skills, and compare results. Critical successes beat any non-critical roll, and fumbles lose to any non-fumble roll. Then, the player with the most degrees of success or least degrees of failure wins. If they're tied for degrees of success/failure, then the lower number on the die wins. If they're still tied, the Opposed Test ends in a tie if possible. If the Opposed Test can't be tied, then the involved parties make the test again until they do not tie.

Running the Game

“Today I step on grass; later I shall step on mountains and rivers!”

Materials

To run the game, you will need a full set of dice including a d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20. Additionally, each player will need a character sheet and something to write with. This game is intended to be played with miniatures on a grid.

The Game Master

Your role as GM is difficult, but ultimately rewarding. Your most important job is making sure everyone at the table is having fun, but that includes yourself. Come to an agreement with your players before running the game to see what you and them want to get out of the game. Also, remember that it is not you against the players. You’re playing the antagonists and will certainly try to kill them. But you’re also creating a challenge for the players to surmount, and you have the right to be excited when they do.

You will be switching quickly between the roles of storyteller, roleplayer, and rulemaker.

Storyteller

You are the story. If your players are staying in the clan’s walls and quietly cultivating, it’s your fault if they grow bored and don’t know what to do. Maybe an overbearing elder puts his hand on the scale, improving one player’s cultivation and suppressing another’s. A beast tide could put their cultivation on hold as they struggle to defend the clan and gain battle merits. And it’s worth knowing where each event fits into your larger campaign. The Gu World is massive and dangerous, so what are the villains doing in the meantime?

Rulemaker

There are lots of edge cases where a rule just doesn’t work. When that happens, you make a ruling on how it should work. Listen to your player’s input if they don’t agree, but you have the final say as GM.

Awarding Experience

There are two avenues of progression in this game: Experience and cultivation.

Experience is used to purchase talents and increase attributes, while cultivation improves a player’s raw power by increasing their pool of primeval essence and allowing the use of higher rank Gu. Experience is awarded for overcoming challenges such as by fighting beasts and other Gu Masters, but can also be awarded for engaging in intrigue. The amount of experience awarded should be reflective of the overall difficulty of the encounter.

Encounter Difficulty

Combat encounters can be judged by the **Challenge Rating** (CR) of all creatures in the encounter. The lowest CR a creature can have is 0, representing mortal threats like common wolves and humans without any Gu. CR then jumps to 1. The first digit represents the rank of the threat, and the 2nd

digit represents the estimated strength of the threat from 1-5. 1 represents initial stage, 2 middle stage, 3 upper stage, and 4 peak stage. A 5 means the threat is especially strong for its rank and may even be able to challenge weaker threats in the rank above it. CR caps at 54, for no mortal Gu Master could ever pose a threat to a Gu Immortal.

Character Creation

In this game, you will create and play a Gu Master. Gu Masters are human beings who have awakened their aperture, a kind of extradimensional space within the stomach that can contain Gu and primeval essence. The first thing you ought to mark down is your starting rank. For first-time players, it is recommended to start at rank 1 initial stage. You, your group, and the game master should also determine if you want to follow the righteous path, living and working with a clan, or if you'd like to tread the demonic path, living free in the world with no masters. Your path can always be changed later on, as demonic Gu Masters seek safety and resources, and righteous Gu Masters grow disillusioned and yearn for freedom.

Experience

You start with 100 experience. Experience can be spent to increase your Attributes and Skills (to a maximum of 100), as well as to purchase Talents.

- 1 point in any attribute costs 10 experience to increase up to 50, and 15 experience thereafter.
- 1 point in any skill (except Knowledge) costs 2 experience to increase.
- 5 points in Strength or any single Knowledge skill costs 4 experience.

Attributes

Attributes are a generalized measure of your body and mind. The starting scores of each of your skills are derived from these attributes. All Attribute scores start at 20 before you spend any experience to improve them.

Agility - Agility is used to dodge attacks, attack in close quarters, and to maneuver in the air. **Fortitude** - Fortitude determines your Hit Points, Perseverance, and Strength. **Cognition** - Your intelligence and reasoning skills. Used to create refinement recipes, remember information, and to fight in both close and ranged combat. **Wisdom** - Wisdom increases your speed of cultivation, how often you succeed when refining Gu, and awareness of your surroundings. **Attitude** - Attitude represents your understanding of human nature, relationships, and emotions. A higher attitude makes it easier to deceive and persuade others, and to know when others are deceiving you. It also is a minor factor in your Perseverance.

Secondary Attributes

Health

You have a pool of Hit Points equal to your Fortitude. You can read about how damage, dying, and injury works in the combat chapter.

Movement

Your Movement is the number of meters you can move in a turn. Your Movement is 6 meters.

Strength

Your body's physical power. Strength is often overlooked by Gu Masters, as even rank 1 Gu can overpower the strongest of mortals. But battles are unpredictable, and when primeval essence runs dry

Gu Masters may resort to a fistfight. Though this statistic is more relevant at rank 1, some Gu Masters choose to use Gu to enhance their strength and rely on their own muscles to pound their enemies into meat paste. Your Strength score begins equal to $1/2$ your Fortitude, rounded down, and affects the amount of damage you deal with attacks where your physical strength is a factor. You cannot use experience to increase your Strength score to a number exceeding your Fortitude. Spending experience to increase your Fortitude does not increase your Strength after character creation.

Perseverance

Your Perseverance is your ability to endure great pain and stress, and is equal to the sum of your Fortitude and $1/2$ of your Attitude, rounded down. Perseverance is rolled when you hit 0 Hit Points.

Soul

Your Soul score is a literal representation of the strength of your soul. Your starting Soul value is 10. Refining Gu, cultivating, and controlling beast groups all drain the strength of your soul, while sleeping restores it. Many soul-path Gu also use the strength of your soul to determine their strength when activated. If your current soul ever hits 0 points, you die. When you sleep, your soul recovers 10% of its maximum (rounded down) for every hour spent sleeping. Sleeping for at least 10 hours fully rejuvenates your soul, regardless of rounding.

Your soul begins at 10, the single-man soul. Many soul-path Gu can strengthen your soul and increase this value. Whenever your soul takes $1/2$ or more of its maximum value in soul damage on a single turn, roll 1d10 and reduce the maximum value of your soul by that amount.

When your soul reaches strength 100, you have the ten-man soul. It has the proper strength to sustain damage; you no longer lose maximum soul when you take more than $1/2$ of your souls maximum in soul damage.

When your soul reaches strength 1,000, you have the hundred-man soul. If you have not refined your soul using Gu, this is the maximum strength achievable. If your soul increases in strength above 1009 without being refined, your soul explodes and you die, with resurrection being impossible. The hundred-man soul is the minimum strength needed for many soul-mutation Gu, such as Wolf Soul Gu.

When your soul reaches strength 10,000, you have the thousand-man soul. This is the limit for mortal Gu Masters and cannot be raised higher.

Luck

Without the aid of luck-path Gu, players begin each session with 1 luck point. Luck can be spent to force you or another creature to reroll a skill test after the roll, or to add a -50 bonus to a roll you're making, before the roll.

Activations

On your turn, you can activate a number of Gu equal to your Activations. You have a number of Activations equal to 5% of your Wisdom plus 5% of your Cognition, rounding both down to a minimum of 1. To make this calculation easier, consider that for every 20 score you have in either attribute, this number will increase by 1, with a minimum of 2. *Shang Liu has a Cognition of 45 and a Wisdom of 32. Every 20 score in either attribute gives one Activation, bringing his total Activations to 3.*

Aptitude

Your Gu Master's aptitude is incredibly important to their cultivation and battle strength. A higher aptitude means greater primeval essence, meaning your Gu Master can fight for longer and cultivate quicker. Aptitude is mostly immutable, but some Gu exist to raise or even lower a Gu Master's aptitude.

Choosing your Gu Master's aptitude is a decision that will significantly shape their journey. Higher aptitudes offer undeniable advantages in cultivation speed, primeval essence, and clan support, but

they come with the heavy burdens of increased clan expectations, heightened scrutiny, and potential danger. Lower aptitudes, while slower in cultivation, afford your Gu Master greater freedom, fewer obligations, and opportunities to forge their own path.

It is also worth considering the other players in your group. If one player is an A-grade aptitude and another is D-grade, your ranks will most likely diverge dramatically in the early to mid stages. This difference is not insurmountable, but it may not be enjoyable for the weaker Gu Master. It's recommended for the group to decide on 2 adjacent grades and have each player pick one of the two.

Aptitude is just an arbitrary grading of the amount of primeval essence a Gu Master's aperture can store. After choosing your aptitude, roll a d20, subtract 1 from the result, and add it to the minimum essence percentage of your grade to determine your personal maximum primeval essence.

For example, Shang Liu chooses A-grade aptitude and rolls a 4 on his d20. Subtract 1 to get 3 and add that to the minimum of 80%. Shang Liu therefore has 83% as his maximum.

Grade - A: 80%-99% **Grade - B:** 60%-79% **Grade - C:** 40%-59% **Grade - D:** 20%-39%

Attainment

Attainment is your understanding of the different Gu paths. That includes your knowledge of refining, using, and identifying Gu of the same path. You can find the different attainments in the Talents chapter, and your character begins the game with *Fundamental* attainment in a single path.

Starting Items

All characters start with a Gu Master robe, a Vital Gu of rank 1, and 25 primeval stones.

Skills

Your character's Skills represent their learned abilities and proficiencies, whether that be in combat, dialogue, or cultivation. The base value of the skill is dependent on what attribute(s) it is derived from, shown in the parenthesis. Remember to increase your skill values whenever you purchase points in the corresponding attribute.

Close Combat (1/2 Agi + 1/2 Cog) - Close Combat does not only include fighting hand-to-hand, it relates to any fighting that occurs within 2 meters of you. Many attack Gu can be used at range or in close combat, and this skill represents your ability to make attacks at a close range. Melee attacks are always made with your close combat skill. **Ranged Combat (Cog)** - If an enemy is further than 2 meters from you, your non-melee attacks will be made with the Ranged Combat skill. **Athletics (1/2 Str + 1/2 Agi)** - Athletics is used for strength related actions such as pushing a boulder, climbing a steep cliff, or swimming.

Dodge (Agi) - Dodge is used as a reaction to avoid attacks made against you, either melee or ranged.

When you succeed a Dodge test, you **MUST** move at least 1 meter and at most 1/2 your movement (rounded down) in any direction.

Flying (Agi) - A Gu Master may live his entire life without taking to the skies, but to those that do, this skill is a necessity. Without a decent flying skill, a Gu Master can be easier to hit in the air than they would be on the ground.

The source of your flight tells you how many meters you can move per turn. When flying, unless otherwise stated by the flight source, you

Refinement (Wis)

Even with a complete recipe, refining Gu is an arduous process, requiring precision and constant vigilance. When refinement fails it triggers a backlash which can hurt or even kill you and your Gu. Your refinement skill determines how complex of recipes you can follow, and how often your refinement fails.

Deduction (Cog)

Deduction is used to create and refine Gu recipes as well as to develop killer moves; the combination of multiple Gu used simultaneously to deliver a very potent effect. It can also be used to investigate your surroundings for clues.

Some Gu have the [**Deductive**] keyword. When activated, these Gu unlock a special **Deduction** action. To take it, you must spend an hour deducing a specific subject and make a **Deduction** test. Penalties and Bonuses are determined by the amount of supporting information available to you. The subject can be something that occurred in the past, such as who might have committed a murder, or something happening in the present or future, like why a rival clan purchased a huge amount of an unusual refinement material. Deductions cannot create information out of thin air, and a success does not necessarily mean your deduction is correct if you lack a key piece of evidence. For every degree of success on the check, however, you gain one additional conclusion about the subject.

Persuasion (Att)

Deception (Att)

Your ability to manipulate and deceive others.

Intimidation (Att)

Haggle (Att)

Insight (Wis)

Awareness (Wis)

Cultivation (Wis)

Knowledge (Cog)

Knowledge is separated into a few categories: - Gu - There are an uncountable number of different Gu in the world, and this skill helps to identify them. In a fight, it can mean life or death. - Southern Border - Your understanding of the geography, flora, and fauna of Southern Border. It can be assumed that all characters will have knowledge of the areas surrounding their clan, but when journeying beyond familiarity this skill can be used to identify beasts, plants, and natural formations. - Clans - Small, medium, large, and super-sized clans dot the mountains and valleys of Southern Border. This skill represents your knowledge of their names, power structures, specialties, and commerce.

Chapter 2: Progression

Cultivating

The process of increases your rank in small and large realms is called cultivating. To cultivate, you must meditate and will the primeval essence in your aperture to attack and weaken the aperture walls. To do so, first figure out how many portions of primeval essence will be required to break through the realm. For small realms, the amount is given by the table below. For large realms, the amount is (1000 * target rank) portions.

Target Stage	Health
Middle	250
Upper	500
Peak	1000

When you're attempting to break through a small realm, the walls retain any damage done by your primeval essence, thus you can slowly break through over time. If you spend an hour cultivating, you can expend as much primeval essence as you want to, permanently reducing the health of your aperture walls by the number of portions expended.

Large realms, on the other hand, are not so easy. When you're trying to break through from peak stage of a rank to the next rank, first take your primeval essence recovery rate, add the recovery from any primeval stones you're consuming, and subtract (16 * target rank) to represent the natural recovery rate of your aperture walls.

If the number you calculated is positive, you can move on to the next step. If it is negative, you'll have to increase your recovery rate via consuming primeval stones or use a Gu that assists in cultivation to break through to the next stage.

Now, subtract however much essence you have in your aperture from the total number of portions required to break through. Divide that number by the recovery number you calculated in the previous step. This is how many hours straight you will need to cultivate to break through to the next realm. You can round this number up to the nearest hour.

For each hour spent cultivating, whether breaking through a small or large realm, make a **Cultivation** test with a bonus according to the table below. If you fail, your soul takes damage equal to the degrees of failure (minimum of 1).

Target Rank ¹	Bonus
1	-50
2	-40
3	-20
4	-10
5	none

Consuming Primeval Stones

You can expend primeval stones while cultivating to make up for not having a high enough recovery rate, and you may do so to assist in breaking through both small and large realms. You may expend up to 10 primeval stones per hour spent cultivating, increasing your recovery rate for that hour by 5 for each stone consumed when breaking through large realms, or dealing 5 damage to the aperture walls for each stone consumed when breaking through small realms.

Talents

Combat Absorption

Cost: 40 experience You can multitask on absorbing primeval stones in the heat of combat. Absorbing the essence of primeval stones now takes up your bonus action instead of a combat action.

Flying Master

Cost: 25 experience Taking flight no longer expends one of your maneuvers per turn. You immediately gain 40 experience that can only be used to improve your **Flying** skill.

Multitasker

Cost: 20 experience *Can be purchased multiple times* You can sustain an additional Gu every turn without incurring damage to your soul.

Multi-Weapon Fighting

Cost: 20 experience You can make a number of melee attacks as part of a melee attack combat action as you have wielded weapons, with a +10 penalty to each attack. When wielding only 2 weapons, this penalty is removed.

Tough

Cost: 40 experience Your base hit points are equal to twice your Fortitude.

Reactive Flight

Cost: 15 experience As a reaction to being sent *airborne*, you can activate a [**Flying**] Gu and immediately execute a maneuver.

Weapon Training

Cost: 10 experience *Can be purchased multiple times* When you purchase this talent, pick a class of mundane weapons (swords, spears, bows) or a single Gu.

You gain a -10 bonus on close combat and ranged attack rolls made with the chosen weapon for each time you've purchased this talent and selected that weapon. If a Gu is very close in form to the chosen weapon, you still get this bonus. This usually includes higher ranked versions of the same Gu.

Path Attainments

It's difficult to use Gu of a path you aren't familiar with. Every character starts with *Fundamental* attainment in a single path. Oftentimes, a Gu Master that achieves master level attainment in any path gains great fame for their accomplishment, and may be contacted by other forces to refine Gu or complete difficult tasks related to the path.

You cannot purchase a path attainment unless you have purchased all previous attainments in the same path. So you cannot purchase master attainment in a path unless you also have purchased fundamental and intermediate attainment.

□ Path Attainment

Fundamental *Cost:* 30 experience You gain an additional bonus action that can only be used to activate a single □ path Gu on your turn.

Intermediate *Cost:* 50 experience Your understanding of □ path has reached a qualitative change, and you gain the following benefits:

- You gain a -20 bonus to all **Refinement** and **Knowledge (Gu)** tests to refine or identify □ path Gu.
- **Deduction** tests made to develop killer moves gain a -10 bonus for each □ path Gu in its core.

Master *Cost:* 100 experience Your understanding of □ path reaches the apex of mortal comprehension. You gain the following benefits:

- You automatically succeed all **Refinement** and **Deduction** tests to refine or improve the recipe of □ path Gu, so long as the Gu is of a lower rank than you. You still have to roll the failure die after a successful refinement.
- You gain a -30 bonus to all **Refinement** and **Knowledge (Gu)** tests to refine or identify □ path Gu.
- You gain a -30 bonus to **Deduction** tests made to improve or create refinement recipes for □ path Gu.

Gu

Shaun Fajfer

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Humans are the spirit of all living beings and Gu are the essence of heaven and earth. Mortal Gu represent fragments of the great Dao, or laws of Heaven, and are ranked from 1 to 5, just like mortal Gu Masters. Gu come in many different forms, with bugs being a common motif, but there are just as many that take the forms of beasts and objects. Gu can be either wild or refined; wild Gu usually refers to those birthed from natural primeval essence. These can come into being in any manner of places as long as the conditions are right. Sometimes they are carried by beasts, or roaming the earth alone, or staying sedentary in the place they were born. Refined Gu are those under the direct control of a Gu Master. They obey the user's commands without fail, even destroying themselves with a single thought. The Gu Master can acquire refined Gu either by refining wild Gu or by creating them themselves using their Refinement skill and the necessary materials. Refined Gu may become wild Gu if their master is killed, but this process takes some time.

Gu are separated into different categories based on the effect created when they are activated. These categories have minimal mechanical importance but give a good idea of the Gu's purpose.

Attack - Shooting a blade, controlling someone's mind, or softening a person's bones are all attacks. If the primary use of the Gu is to kill or apply negative effects to a person against their will, it is an attack.

Manifestation - Creates an object, such as a beast, house, or even wings under the user's control. Can be permanent or temporary.

Guard - Forms a defensive barrier with the primary focus being blocking attacks.

Celerity - Enhances speed or maneuverability.

Divination - Gathers information, whether from a short distance or across the continent. Investigative Gu that increase a user's perception are included, as well as those that surveil areas or probe into people's minds.

Concealment - Hides the user's presence in any number of ways.

Tonic - Gu with a restorative effect. There exist tonic Gu for humans, beasts, and even other Gu.

Container - If objects can be placed inside, the Gu is typically a container. They can store objects, gu, and sometimes even people. Convenient for storing items and resources safely within your aperture.

Catalyst - A catch-all category for Gu that can be used to supplement other Gu and actions. Gu that increase the likelihood of refinement success, improve cultivation speed, or amplify the effects of other Gu are all catalysts.

Carver - Carves dao semi-permanently into the recipient. The most common carvers belong to strength and information path, used to increase a user's strength and create binding agreements, respectively.

Below is a sample statblock for the rank 1 *Moonblade Gu*. This is the signature Gu of the Gu Yue clan, and cannot be found anywhere else in Southern Border.

Moonlight Gu *Rank 1 Attack (This signifies that the Gu is of Rank 1, and is an Attack-type Gu)*

Cost: 5 portions (*This Gu costs 5 portions to activate for a rank 1 Gu Master. Rank 2 and above Gu Masters instead only spend 1 portion*)

Range: 10 meters

Health: 10 (*This Gu has 10 health. If it hits 0, it dies*)

Food: Moon orchid petals (3 primeval stones) (*This gu eats moon orchid petals. Since it is a rank 1 Gu, it eats every 3 days. When you have access to a market, you can substitute the materials with 3 primeval stones.*)

Effect: You hurl a flat, crescent-shaped beam of light. Roll an attack with a -10 bonus. On a hit, deal 1d10 slashing damage.

Vital Gu

The first Gu you refine is your Vital Gu. Yours and your Vital Gu's lifeforces are intertwined, and if either of you should die, so would the other. The Vital Gu has a major advantage, however; It cannot die due to backlash during refinement, instead dropping to 1 hp. This makes your Vital Gu a very important choice for progression, as you can attempt to refine it to a higher rank many times without worrying about its death.

To change your Vital Gu, you must spend a day in closed cultivation with the new Gu. When you change your Vital Gu, your current hit points are reduced to 1 as you suffer backlash. Your Vital Gu can be of any rank.

Rank

Mortal Gu have a rank of 1-5. Some Gu exist only at a single rank, others are found at several ranks, and others can only be raised in rank through refinement. For example, the rank 1 Dog Enslavement Gu can enslave a single dog. Rank 2 dog enslavement Gu can enslave a Hundred Beast King dog, rank 3 can enslave a Thousand Beast King dog, and so on, with each being found on increasingly strong dogs. The higher the rank of the Gu, the rarer it is, and their strength increases exponentially.

Gu above rank 5 are called Immortal Gu. Most can only be activated with Immortal Essence, though a few have other costs that can be paid by mortals. Forgetting mortal Gu Masters, even Rank 6 Gu Masters may live their entire life without owning an Immortal Gu. Each one is unique, and for however long it exists in the world, nobody else can refine a copy. When one appears, many Gu Immortals will fight to the death to get their hands on it, and when they fight, many tens of thousands of mortals can and do die in the crossfire.

Series

Some Gu belong to a series that spans multiple ranks. Some have additional effects based on their rank and will be listed separately. Others just scale up in numbers and will be under the same listing. If several values are inside curly braces, they represent the value at different ranks. If a Gu exists at ranks 3-5 and creates {1, 10, 100} fireballs, then it creates 1 fireball at rank 3, 10 at rank 4, and 100 at rank 5.

Price

Price is largely dependent on the rank of the Gu in question, but the market also needs to be considered. Relic Gu, for example, are quite rare and of an enormous help to a Gu Master's cultivation, which makes them significantly more expensive than other Gu of the same rank. Smelly Fart Gu, on the other hand, is practically worthless except as a refinement material, and thus would be cheaper than other Gu of the same rank. Use the prices below as a starting point.

Rank	Price
1	500
2	2,000
3	10,000

Rank	Price
4	100,000
5	250,000+

Rank 4 and rank 5 Gu are significantly rarer than Gu of rank 1 to 3. It may be difficult to find a seller, and you may even encounter schemes and resistances from your opposition when trying to buy them.

Primeval Essence Costs

Gu statblocks will have a number of portions it costs to activate. This assumes you are of the same rank as the Gu. If your rank is lower than the Gu, your primeval essence is too weak, and the Gu costs 4 times as many portions to activate for every rank above you the Gu is. If you are Rank 2 and try to activate a Rank 4 Gu that costs 10 portions, instead it will cost you 160 portions. If the Gu is below your rank, it only costs a single portion of your primeval essence to activate.

Refining Gu

Refining Gu can refer to two processes; the first is turning a wild Gu or a Gu refined by someone else into your own. The second is the act of following a recipe to create a new Gu. You cannot activate a Gu that is wild or belongs to someone else, unless the owner is willing.

Refining Existing Gu

When refining a wild Gu, the Gu must be subdued first. For smaller Gu this usually just involves catching it, but larger or more aggressive Gu may require you to weaken it in battle or through other means. If the Gu is owned by someone else, they can weaken their will to allow you to refine the Gu for free. Otherwise, your will is pit against theirs. Make an opposed Wisdom test against the owner of the Gu, with the higher ranked Gu Master gaining a -30 bonus for each rank they are above their opponent. If you win the test, the owner's will is driven out and you gain ownership of the Gu. If you lose, they retain control of the Gu, you take 1d4 damage to your soul, and you gain a stacking -10 bonus on subsequent rolls made to refine the Gu.

Once a wild Gu is subdued, you must be touching it to refine it into your own. To do so, you must spend a number of portions of primeval essence equal to the Gu's current Hit Points. If the Gu is of a higher rank than you, it costs 4 * the number of ranks above you more portions to refine.

If the Gu is below your rank, it costs a single portion of primeval essence to refine.

If you do not have enough primeval essence to do so in one sitting, you may have to refine the Gu for a longer period, using your natural recovery and/or primeval stones to supply the rest of the required portions. Taking a break from the refinement causes it to fail, and the primeval essence used in the process is lost.

Following a Recipe

Refinement recipes will have many required materials. Common materials are included in the recipe's primeval stone cost, assuming you have access to a market to purchase the materials. Rarer materials will be specified, and you may have to seek out a seller or go find these materials yourself. Some recipes will also have an associated ritual which will have to be completed for the refinement to succeed.

To begin refinement, you must have all the necessary materials on hand. Make a **Refinement** test with a penalty or bonus according to the recipe's difficulty. If you've already successfully refined the Gu before, you gain a -20 bonus on the test. On a success, roll the failure die. If the number rolled is anything except a 1, you have succeeded in creating the Gu. If you do roll a 1, the refinement fails, representing the flat chance of failure all refinement recipes have. If you succeeded, however, cut the duration in half for every degree of success on the refinement test (barring any rituals involved that take a set amount of time).

On a failure, you and all Gu being used in the refinement process take a backlash. If you failed the roll by less than 10, or if the failure was caused by a 1 on the failure die, the backlash is negated. Otherwise, you take damage to your soul equal to the degrees of failure multiplied by the rank of the Gu you're attempting to refine. Every Gu being used in the refinement takes the same amount of damage to their health. If your Vital Gu would be killed in this manner, instead it drops to 1 hit point.

For every 8 hours you spend refining Gu without a rest, take 1d6 damage to your soul.

Sample Recipe: Four Flavors Liquor Worm *Four Flavors Liquor Worm*

Rank: 2

Cost: 25 primeval stones, 2 Rank 1 Liquor Worm Gu, Spicy wine, sweet wine, bitter wine, sour wine

Additional Gu: none

Duration: 4 hours

Difficulty: -10 bonus

Failure Die: d10

Market Value: 20,000 primeval stones

Improving a Recipe

You can leverage your **Deduction** skill to reduce the cost, duration, difficulty, or failure rate of any Gu recipe. To do so, you must have a **Refinement** skill of (15 * recipe rank) as well as *intermediate* attainment in the path of the Gu in question to attempt the refinement. If you do, start by paying 4 times the total cost of the recipe, to represent the materials needed to practice and attempt to improve the recipe. You must also spend an amount of time equal to 4 times the duration of the recipe in refinement. This time does not need to be sequential, and you can break as long as you need and however often you need. Then, make a **Deduction** test with a +10 penalty per rank of the Gu recipe. On a fumble, you do not succeed in improving the recipe and take damage to your soul equal to the degrees of failure multiplied by the rank of the recipe. On a failure, you do not succeed in improving the recipe, but don't face a backlash. On a success, you make a breakthrough and gain a new recipe for the Gu, with one of the following improvements:

- The failure die is increased by one step; d2 -> d4 -> d6 -> d8 -> d10 -> d12 -> d20 -> d100
- The difficulty is reduced by 10
- The primeval stone cost is reduced by 25% OR remove one additional cost (you cannot remove a Gu from the cost if the recipe is to advance that Gu up a rank)
- The duration is reduced by 50%

The recipe you've created is different from the previous one, and both can still be used and sold. The market value of the new recipe is worth double that of the original. You can improve a recipe a number of times equal to 10% of your refinement skill, rounded down.

Creating a Recipe

Feeding Gu

Gu are living beings and need to be fed. What they eat is determined by the Gu, while how often they eat is determined by the rank. Some Gu will have a number of primeval stones in parenthesis next to their food. If you have access to a market, you can spend that number of primeval stones for a feeding. Gu also cannot be fed during combat.

Rank	Interval
1	3 days
2	7 days

Rank	Interval
3	30 days
4	250 days
5	10 years

If the food does not have a primeval stone cost next to it, that does not mean it is impossible to purchase, just that it is a rarer material. You can find your own out in the Southern Border, or seek out a seller of rare items.

To track food, mark the Gu's feeding interval in days inside the "Days Until Feeding" column on your Gu sheet. Every time a day passes in game, subtract 1 from the number. When the Gu eats, set it back to the original feeding interval. If it hits -1, the Gu starves to death. You can feed a Gu outside of combat whenever you wish as long as you have the materials.

Detonating Gu

As a reaction or at any time during their turn, a Gu Master can self-detonate any Gu owned and refined by them with a single thought. The Gu Master must be conscious to do so, and can detonate as many or as few Gu as they want, from any distance. If the Gu is being suppressed, for example by the land spirit of a blessed land, the Gu Master cannot self-detonate it. Otherwise, the chosen Gu instantly die, with no other effects. If the Gu has a self-detonation ability, it does not trigger, since the Gu was not activated.

Healing Gu

Gu have a pool of hit points, and thus need to be healed when damaged. Most Gu heal back to full health when they are fed. Some Gu can only be healed by other Gu or an obscure process.

Gu against Gu

Sometimes the effects of Gu will be pit against one another. In most circumstances, the higher rank Gu's effect takes precedence. If both are the same rank, the defending Gu should block the effect. For example, if a Gu Master is attacked by Rank 2 Vein Burst Gu, but has strengthened his blood vessels with Rank 2 Iron Artery Gu, then he would be unaffected, despite neither Gu explicitly mentioning the interaction. Concealments are considered the defender when pit against Divinations.

The Gu system has a lot of moving parts, and it would be unfun and tedious if every effect listed every possible counter and use case. When there's uncertainty about whether a Gu would affect a target, use common sense, and if that fails the GM will have to make a ruling. For example, if a Gu Master activates the same rank 2 Vein Burst Gu against a beast made of stone, it can't have any effect because the target has no blood vessels.

If a Gu would negate the damage of a Gu of higher rank (like a guard Gu that negates damage of a certain type), instead it reduces it to 1/2 (rounded down).

Gu Keywords

Deductive

When activated, [**Deductive**] Gu unlock a special *Deduction* action. To take it, you must spend an hour deducing a specific subject and make a **Deduction** test. Penalties and Bonuses are determined by the amount of supporting information available to you. The subject can be something that occurred in the past, such as who might have committed a murder, or something happening in the present or future, like why a rival clan may have purchased a huge amount of an unusual refinement material. Deductions cannot create information out of thin air, and a success does not necessarily mean your deduction is

correct if you lack a key piece of evidence. For every degree of success on the check, however, you gain one additional conclusion about the subject.

Dao

Gu with the **[Dao]** keyword contain much higher traces of dao than most mortal Gu. Dao of different paths naturally conflict, and a Gu Master cannot be affected by a **[Dao]** Gu if they are already under the effect of a **[Dao]** Gu of a different path.

Defensive

[Defensive] Gu can be activated as a reaction to being hit by or affected by another Gu or attack.

Direct

[Direct] attacks bypass physical shields, including those projected by Gu such as Jade Skin Gu.

Expendable X

[Expendable] Gu are destroyed after X uses. If there is no number, the Gu can only be used a single time before it is destroyed.

Low Vitality

[Low Vitality] Gu do not regenerate hit points when they are fed. Most will clarify the necessary Gu or process used to recover their health instead.

Piercing

[Piercing] Gu can pierce through any material that lacks dao. The only barriers with dao would be either refinement materials or barriers created by Gu. Mundane armor worn by a creature struck by a **[Piercing]** attack does not reduce the damage of the attack, and the armor takes damage equal to the damage of the attack to its hit points.

Shield

When you take damage, it is first dealt to any active **[Shield]** Gu, so long as the Gu can block that damage type. If you use a **[Shield]** Gu to reduce damage, the Gu takes that damage to its hitpoints. If a **[Shield]** Gu would die from sustaining an attack while active, you may use a reaction to deactivate the Gu at 1 hit point, taking the remaining damage to your hit points or another **[Shield]** Gu.

If you have multiple **[Shield]** Gu active, you choose in what order they absorb damage and can split incoming damage between any number of active **[Shield]** Gu. This way, if you have a shield that negates fire damage and another that negates rending damage, you could split all rending and fire damage in a way that negates all of the incoming damage.

Size

If size is not listed, the Gu is the most common size, that of an insect. If the Gu is **[Small]** it is the size of a child, and **[Medium]** is the size of a man. **[Large]** Gu take up 4 squares when outside of your aperture, and **[Huge]** Gu take up any area greater than 9 squares.

Steed

A **[Steed]** Gu can be ridden while outside your aperture. While mounted, your movement is replaced with the **[Steed]** Gu's movement statistics.

Supplementary

Supplementary Gu can change the properties of your subsequent activations. When used outside of killer moves, [Supplementary] Gu have no effect on Gu of a higher rank than itself. When used as supplementary Gu in a killer move, you will require a number of the same [Supplementary] Gu to properly apply the effect equal to $2^{(\text{killer move rank} - [\text{Supplementary}] \text{ Gu rank})}$.

Sustained

You must pay the cost of [Sustained] Gu at the start of each of your turns as long as you keep the effect active. Paying the cost does not use one of your activations. While a Gu is being sustained, it cannot be activated (because it is already active). If you are sustaining more than 1 Gu at the same time, take 1 damage to your soul for every Gu being sustained above your **Activations** attribute at the start of each of your turns.

You may stop sustaining a Gu at any time, whether or not it is your turn. If you fall unconscious or are *stunned*, you automatically stop sustaining all Gu.

Unreactable

Attacks made with [Unreactable] Gu are too fast for the defending Gu master to use a reaction in response to being hit or affected by it.

Creating Unique Gu

While I've made an expansive list of many of the Gu paths, in reality there is a basically unlimited number of Gu. Once you're more familiar with the system and balance, you're encouraged to make your own Gu. Here are some guidelines;

- Rank is important: Rank 5 Gu are at the peak of the mortal realm, and have the power to clear sections of a battlefield single handedly. Rank 1 Gu are sometimes strong enough to kill a person. Keep in mind that a Gu of higher rank should usually have an advantage over lower ranked Gu.
- Single effect: Gu can have as many uses as you wish, but they should only have one activation effect. Vajra Thought Gu, for example, has the effect of creating Vajra thoughts. These Vajra thoughts can be used to think or as projectiles, but the effect of the Gu is just to make them.
- Costs are not related to rank: The rules already account for the differing primeval essence quality between ranks. Costs are proportional to the power of the Gu within its rank. A rank 1 Gu with a high cost can be similar in strength to a rank 2 Gu with low cost.

Most importantly, be creative! There is a Gu for any purpose you can think of. There are Gu suited to cure any affliction, make any attack, cause any event that you can think of. Some Gu might seem practically useless, but they can always be used to improve some killer move or refine a new Gu.

Enslavement Path

Enslavement path Gu Masters are a huge asset to a clan. In battle, a single enslavement path Gu Master can be worth many other Gu Masters of the same rank, as they use Enslavement Gu to dominate the minds of beasts and even other Gu Masters to be used as a personal army. Enslavement path is an uncommon one to follow, however, as it costs a great deal of resources to maintain an army of beasts.

The unorthodox nature of enslavement path requires its own section in this book; this section will cover using Enslavement Gu, maintaining an army, and directing them on the battlefield. To follow the enslavement path, a Gu Master must have a strong soul foundation or else their results will be very limited.

Enslavement Gu

There are two different Enslavement Gu: - [Beast] Enslavement Gu exist for pretty much all wild beasts; in the Southern Border, wolves and boars are a common target, but some Gu Masters create armies of horses, monkeys, goats, and even birds. [Beast] Enslavement Gu usually cover a specific animal type; Wolf Enslavement Gu can enslave wolves, vermillion flame wolves, shark fin wolves, etc., but they cannot enslave dogs, which are of course enslaved with a Dog Enslavement Gu. - Slavery Gu is used to enslave other humans and variant-humans.

Gu Description [Beast] Enslavement Gu *Rank 1-5 Carver*

Cost: (Rank * 20) portions

Range: 20 meters

Health: (Rank * 5)

Food: [Beast] Flesh

Keywords: [Expendable]

Effect: Target a [Beast] that you can see within range. This Gu flies from your aperture in a straight line towards the target. This action is reactable and the Enslavement Gu can be hit with attacks while en route, and of course cannot dodge them. If the Enslavement Gu successfully reaches its target, you attempt to dominate its mind, as long as the target's beast classification is at or below the rank of the Enslavement Gu:

- Rank 1: Ordinary Beast
- Rank 2: Hundred Beast King
- Rank 3: Thousand Beast King
- Rank 4: Myriad Beast King / Mutated Beasts
- Rank 5: Beast Emperor / Mutated Beast King

You and the target have a battle of souls. If your current soul value is greater than the beast's, subtract the beast's current soul value from your own and you successfully enslave it. You can now control it with your mind from a distance of up to (Maximum Soul) meters.

If your current soul value is less than or equal to the beast's, you fail to enslave it, the beast's current soul value is reduced by your current soul value, and then your current soul value is reduced to 1.

Slavery Gu *Rank 1-5 Carver*

Cost: (Rank * 40) portions

Range: 20 meters

Health: (Rank * 5)

Food: [Beast] Flesh

Keywords: [**Expendable**]

Effect:

Controlling Your Army

Individuals Commanding individual beasts is tedious and quickly drains the soul. When you individually control a beast, you take its turn for it, and take 1d4 damage to your soul at the end of its turn. You can choose to individually control any beast that is not part of a horde (beast kings must be individually controlled while part of a horde). If you do not take an enslaved creature's turn, it acts like a wild beast and is under the GM's command, but will usually follow what the horde is doing and never attack friendly creatures.

Hordes If you have at least 100 beasts under your control, they must be separated into *Hordes*. A Horde of beasts has no minimum amount, but each must be led by the proper beast king, enslaved by you. The beast king leading the horde is the *Commander*. The maximum number of ordinary beasts in a horde is listed below:

Hundred Beast King: 100 Thousand Beast King: 1,000 Myriad Beast King: 10,000 Beast Emperor: 100,000 Mutated Beast King: 100 Mutated Beasts of the same type as the *Commander*

- Beast kings of a lower classification can be included in the horde of a greater beast king, but can only be controlled individually.
- Beasts that aren't part of a horde can only be controlled individually.
- In combat, creatures enslaved by you act directly after your turn.

As long as you have at least one beast or Gu Master under your control and within control range, you gain access to the *Direct Combat Action*. ### Direct (*Combat Action*) You give up to one order to each of your hordes. At the end of your turn, you take 1d8 damage to your soul for every order given this way.

Orders

Defend

Attack

The horde

Killer Moves

When multiple Gu are combined into a single effect it is colloquially known as a killer move. Killer moves have a core of 1 or more same-ranked Gu as well as any number of supplemental Gu of lower ranks.

Blood Vision *Rank 4 Divination Killer Move* Core Gu: Rank 4 Blood Sense Gu, Rank 4 Blood Brother Gu
Supplementary Gu: Rank 3 Hundred Meter Gu x 2, Total Activations: 4 Activation Cost: 49
portions Keywords: **[Sustained]**

Effect: Any creatures within 100 meters have their blood tainted with yours. For 24 hours, these creatures are considered your siblings by blood path methods. While this killer move is sustained, you can sense the exact location of any of your blood relatives within 100 meters.

Components of a Killer Move

Core Gu

Core Gu are the most important part of a killer move, and determine the main paths, rank, and general effect of the killer move. Looking at the Rank 4 killer move Blood Vision, shown above, It uses Rank 4 Blood Sense Gu and Rank 4 Blood Brother Gu as its core. Blood Brother Gu can turn a creature into your blood relative, and Blood Sense Gu senses the location of blood relatives nearby, so a natural effect would be to both transmute the blood of and sense nearby creatures. These are also both Blood Path Gu, and thus the killer move belongs to Blood Path as well. Finally, the Rank of the killer move is equal to the highest ranked Gu among the killer move's core.

Supplementary Gu

Supplementary Gu are used to amplify or mutate the effects of the core Gu. Supplementary Gu can be of a different path and even a higher rank than the core Gu, but do not change the overall rank of the killer move. A Gu with the **[Supplementary]** keyword has a specific effect when used as a supplementary Gu for a killer move. That being said, any Gu can be used as a supplementary Gu as long as you can justify its use and detail its effect on the killer move.

Activations

The activations stat is simply the number of Gu in the Killer Move. More complicated killer moves use many Gu and are more taxing on the user's soul. For each Gu over your Activations attribute, your soul takes 1 damage upon activation, or at the start of each of your turns when you choose to sustain a **[Sustained]** killer move.

Activation Cost

The combined primeval essence cost of all Gu in the recipe. This number assumes the user is of the same rank as the killer move. If the user is of a higher or lower rank, adjust the cost accordingly.

Deducing a Killer Move

To deduce a killer move, you must have the *Fundamental [Path] Attainment* talent in the paths of all Core Gu. You should prepare the killer move with the gamemaster first, making sure both of you agree

on the Gu used and the final effect. Once you have the killer move prepared, your character has to then spend time experimenting to create the killer move. This takes a

Activating a Killer Move

Killer moves can be activated with the **Activate a Killer Move** combat action, but can be quite taxing on the soul depending on their complexity.

Chapter 4: Combat

Initiative

At the beginning of combat, an initiative is rolled. If an enemy is within 2 meters of you, roll **Close Combat**. If not, roll **Ranged Combat**. The player with the most degrees of success goes first. In the case of ties, the lower number on the die goes first. Continue this process for the rest of the combatants.

The Turn

One turn lasts 10 seconds. Gu Masters recover primeval essence at the beginning of each of their turns.

Start and End of Turn Effects

If you have multiple start or end of turn effects, you choose in what order they resolve.

Action Economy

Gu Masters can take a **Combat Action**, two **Reactions**, a bonus action, and a movement on each of their turns.

Movement

You can move a number of meters on your turn equal to your movement. 1 meter of movement corresponds to moving 1 adjacent square, including corners. If you have a flying speed, you may forego this movement to execute a number of *Maneuvers* dependent on the flying Gu being used.

Jumping

Jumping costs half of your movement in meters rounded up.

Standing Jump From rest, you can jump a maximum of 10% of your athletics skill (rounded down to a minimum of 1) in meters upwards or forwards.

Long Jump If you move at least 1 meter in the direction of your jump before jumping, your forward jumping distance is tripled.

Maneuvers

You may only execute a Maneuver if you have a flying speed. With the exception of *Take Flight*, you must be *airborne* to execute a maneuver. While *airborne*, you make **Dodge** skill tests with your **Flying** skill until you return to the ground, and use your flying speed when dodging.

Take Flight Taking flight can only be done when on the ground. You rise a number of meters into the air equal to half your flying speed, rounded down, and are now *airborne*.

Fly You move a number of meters equal to your flying speed in a straight line in any direction.

Dive Make a **Flying** test. On a success, you dive down a distance of up to triple your flying speed, and can move up to your flying speed in meters forward. Then, you can either try to execute a *Land* maneuver or else rise 1 meter directly upward at the end of the maneuver.

If you fail the test, you dive directly downward a number of meters equal to your flying speed before regaining control. If this would cause you to hit the ground, you do so, are no longer *airborne*, and take 1d4 force damage for every meter you dove.

Evade Make a **Flying** test. On a success, all skill tests made to hit you with an attack are made with a penalty equal to +(your flying skill, rounded down to the nearest ten) until the start of your next turn.

Land You land on solid ground. If executed at the end of a dive or atop *Uneven Terrain*, you must succeed a **Flying** test or else land *Prone*.

Climbing

When climbing a surface, your movement becomes 1 meter. If the surface does not have easy handholds such as a ladder the GM may call you to make an **Athletics** test.

Combat Actions

Use Activations

Your Activations can be used to activate Gu as well as to utilize the lingering effects of many Gu, such as directing manifestations. You may activate a number of Gu equal to your **Activations** attribute. You may activate each at any time during your turn, including in the middle of movement, but you cannot activate a Gu when it is not your turn. You may activate the same Gu multiple times, unless you are sustaining it. Using up your activations does not prevent you from activating Gu using one of your reactions.

Activate a Killer Move

Pick a killer move for which you have all the Gu and enough primeval essence for all activations. For every activation in the killer move over your **Activations** attribute, take 1 damage to your soul. The killer move activates, applying its effect. If the killer move has the [**Sustained**] keyword, you take 1 damage to your soul any time you activate a Gu while also sustaining the killer move.

Melee Attack

Roll a **Close Combat** skill test against an enemy within your melee range. On a hit, deal the damage of the weapon, +1 damage for every 10 points you have in Strength. Fists deal 1 damage.

Grapple

Select an enemy in an adjacent square. Roll an opposed **Athletics** test against them. If you win, The creature is *restrained* and now occupies the same square as you while *restrained* in this way. Whenever you move, make an **Athletics** test with a +10 penalty for every 50 kilograms the grappled target weighs. On a success, you can move half your movement (rounded down). Most movement Gu can be used to bypass this test, at the GM's discretion.

Multi-Weapon Fighting When wielding more than 1 weapon, you can make a number of melee attacks equal to the number of wielded weapons instead of just 1. If you elect to do so, all melee attacks made have a penalty equal to +(number of attacks * 10). You cannot wield more weapons than you have arms and hands.

Absorb Primeval Stones

On your turn, you can absorb the essence of a number of primeval stones equal to the number of hands you have. You must have one hand free for each stone being absorbed.

For each primeval stone being absorbed, you gain 5 portions of primeval essence, and the stone is destroyed in the process, crumbling into dust.

Hold an Action

You can choose to hold your Combat Action, specifying an action and a trigger for it to occur. When the trigger happens, you may use a reaction to take that Combat Action. If you are reacting to an opponent's actions, you must make an opposed skill test to see whose action occurs first, with the skill in question being **Close Combat** if within 3 meters of each other, or **Ranged Combat** if not. If you hold the **Use Activations** action, you may only specify a single activation.

Sprint

Taking the sprint action triples your non-flying movement until the end of your turn.

Reactions

You can react to most actions around you at any time other than during your turn. An exception is that you cannot react to someone activating a Gu, but you can react to them making a ranged attack with one, manifesting an object with it, or applying any other effect. If a Gu has the **[Unreactable]** keyword, you cannot use a reaction in response to its effect. You cannot use multiple reactions to the same trigger, for example, dodging and activating a shield Gu when an attack hits you.

Activate a Shield Gu

Unless specified otherwise by the Gu, shield Gu can be activated as a reaction, including after its determined an attack has hit you, but only before the damage has been rolled.

Dodge

The dodge reaction can only be taken when its determined an attack has hit you and before the damage has been rolled. Make a **Dodge** test opposing the opponent's attack roll. If you win, you successfully dodge the attack and take no damage. If you lose, you are hit and take the full damage of the attack.

When you succeed a Dodge test, you **MUST** move at least 1 meter and at most $\frac{1}{2}$ your movement (rounded down) in any direction. If you are unable to move, you are also unable to take the dodge reaction. If $\frac{1}{2}$ of your movement is insufficient to escape an area of effect attack, you are struck by the attack regardless.

Parry

The parry reaction can only be taken when its determined a melee attack has hit you and before the damage has been rolled. Make a **Close Combat** test with a +10 penalty, opposing the opponent's attack roll. If you win, you take no damage from the attack and can make your own melee attack against the opponent in turn as long as they are within your melee range. You can parry attacks made as part of the parry reaction.

Trigger a Held Action

Detonate Gu Worms

As a reaction or at any time during their turn, a Gu Master can self-detonate any Gu owned and refined by them with a single thought. The Gu Master must be conscious to do so, and can detonate as many or as few Gu as they want, from any distance. If the Gu is being suppressed, for example

by the land spirit of a blessed land, the Gu Master cannot self-detonate it. Otherwise, the chosen Gu instantly die, with no other effects. If the Gu has a self-detonation ability, it does not trigger, since the Gu was not activated.

Bonus Actions

Bonus actions are generally fast and low-effort, such as stowing/taking a Gu from your aperture, opening an unlocked door, or pulling a lever.

Surprise

Surprised creatures have a +20 penalty to their initiative roll and cannot take reactions until the start of their first turn.

Stealth

There is no stealth skill in the game. Many Gu render your personal sneaking skills worthless, and so most Gu Masters that wish to walk unobserved will use concealment Gu to do so. In the case either party is not using these Gu, the creature you are trying to sneak past makes an awareness check with a penalty or bonus determined by the GM for the circumstance, including the stealthing party's measures to hide themselves.

Damage

When you take damage, subtract that amount from your current Hit Points, to a minimum of 0. When you hit 0 Hit Points, make a **Perseverance** test. On a failure, you are *Dying*. On a success, you enter *Final Stand*.

- Force: Being struck with an object or force, such as Qi; piercing attacks are included but generally have the **[Piercing]** keyword
- Rending: Being cut or slashed. If a creature takes rending damage to their hit points, they gain *Bleeding 1*. If the source already applies *Bleeding*, this rule is ignored.
- Cold: Low temperature attacks
- Heat: Fire and heat
- Mental: Damage taken to your mind, different from your soul
- Poison: Damage taken as long as you are *poisoned* by a source; typically reduced by your Fortitude
- Shock: Electricity
- Sonic: Sound-based attacks that bypass many shield Gu but are quite rare and typically weak
- Unspecified: Some damage will not have a specified damage type, typically when it directly damages a creature's hit points. Unspecified damage does not have a critical effect.

If a source says you take damage to your soul, that number is subtracted from your current soul value; you take no damage to your hit points.

Instant Death

If you take an amount of damage equal to double your maximum Hit Points from a single source, you instantly die, and do not get to roll to see if you enter *Final Stand*.

Final Stand

While in *Final Stand*, you cannot move or take combat actions or reactions other than to activate Gu or hold your action to do so. If you take any amount of damage to your hit points while in *Final Stand*, you enter the *Dying* state and fall unconscious. If you gain any Hit Points while in *Final Stand*, you are no longer in *Final Stand* and can act as normal.

Dying

If you are *Dying*, you are unconscious. At the end of each of your turns, roll a **Perseverance** test. On a success, you gain a **Perseverance Token**. On a failure, you gain a **Predicament Token**. Critical successes and fumbles grant 2 of the respective token. When you have 3 **Perseverance Tokens**, you are no longer *Dying* and instead enter *Final Stand*, and your **Perseverance** token count resets to 0. When you have 3 **Predicament Tokens**, you die.

Injury

When a creature takes damage to their hit points greater than or equal to half their maximum (rounded down), they roll a d10 and gain one of the following injuries. If a rolled injury doesn't make sense given the attack suffered, the GM may select one that is. If an injury does not say it is permanent, it goes away once you are healed to your maximum hit points.

Force (d6) | Roll | Effect | | — | — | | 1 | Concussion | | 2 | Broken Arm | | 3 | Broken Leg | | 4 | Internal Bleeding - *Bleeding* | | 5 | | | 6 | | |

Rending (d6) | Roll | Effect | | — | — | | 1 | | | 2 | | | 3 | | | 4 | | | 5 | | | 6 | Nicked Artery - *Bleeding* |

Cold (d4) | Roll | Effect | | — | — | | 1 | | | 2 | | | 3 | | | 4 | |

Heat (d6) | Roll | Effect | | — | — | | 1 | Disfiguration | | 2 | | | 3 | | | 4 | | | 5 | | | 6 | |

Mental (d6) | Roll | Effect | | — | — | | 1 | | | 2 | | | 3 | | | 4 | | | 5 | | | 6 | |

Poison (d4) | Roll | Effect | | — | — | | 1 | | | 2 | | | 3 | | | 4 | |

Shock (d4) | Roll | Effect | | — | — | | 1 | | | 2 | | | 3 | | | 4 | |

Sonic (d4) | Roll | Effect | | — | — | | 1 | | | 2 | | | 3 | | | 4 | |

Natural Recovery

When you sleep, you regain 1 hit point for every hour spent sleeping.

Status Effects

Bleeding X

Bleeding creatures take 1 damage directly to their hit points at the start of each of their turns for every stack of *bleeding*. Levels of *bleeding* can stack additively from the same or different sources. Remove 1 *bleeding* stack for every hitpoint you restore.

Burning

Burning creatures take 4 damage directly to their hit points at the start of each of their turns. Being submerged in water usually removes the *burning* condition. A creature can use their combat action to roll around on the ground, removing the *burning* condition.

Restrained

A *restrained* creature's movement is 0. A *restrained* creature automatically fails all **Dodge** and **Flying** tests.

Stunned

A *stunned* creature cannot move or take any actions or reactions.

Chapter 5: Southern Border

Culture

Geography

Notable Mountains

Wan Cheng Peak Wan Cheng Peak is less than 10 kilometers from Tie Clan, and atop it is built the Demon Suppression Tower. Demon Suppression Tower is a prison hundreds of meters tall and houses thousands of demonic path Gu Masters. It has metal path Gu formations protecting it from attacks. Most prisoners are subdued with the rank 3 Aperture Lock Gu, but rank 4 and even rank 5 Gu Masters are suppressed through an assortment of different methods.

The Three Rivers

Super Clans

Ba Clan

Chi Clan

Fei Clan

Shang Clan

Tie Clan

“Our Tie clan, since it was established, had been world-renowned for our bravery, unswerving determination and our iron-cold justice. For many generations, Tie clansmen had been upholding justice and striking down on criminals, in this course, countless people have shed blood and sacrificed their lives. The youths that have died here won’t be the first and also won’t be the last.” - Tie Mu Bai, Ch. 370

Tie Clan stands as a central pillar to the Southern Border righteous path. Their investigators are deployed to solve crimes across the entire continent, and thousands of demonic path Gu Masters guilty of vicious crimes are locked up in Tie Clan’s **Demon Suppression Tower** atop Wan Cheng Peak.

Goods

Beasts

There are an uncountable number of different beast species across Southern Border. Some of the more common ones are listed below. Beast statblocks are somewhat different than Gu Master statblocks. Beasts are missing several skills and attributes that they are incapable of using. As they do not have a Perseverance, when beasts reach 0 hit points they immediately die. They also do not have luck points, nor an aperture, and as such cannot activate Gu. Stronger beasts will have wild Gu worms living on or inside of them, however, and these Gu act independently, usually to assist the beast they live within. When the beast is in dire straits, however, most wild Gu will simply leave and try to escape.

Lightning Wolf

Attributes	
Health	50
Soul	2
Movement	8
Strength	20
Agility	55
Fortitude	35
Cognition	5
Wisdom	30
Attitude	5

Skills	
Close Combat	45
Ranged Combat	10
Athletics	44
Dodge	55
Awareness	30

Combat Actions |

Bite. *Melee Attack, 1 meter* The lightning wolf bites a target. On a hit, deal 4 rending damage.

Hundred Beast King Lightning Wolf

Attributes	
Health	50
Soul	9
Movement	10
Strength	35
Agility	65
Fortitude	50
Cognition	5
Wisdom	30
Attitude	5

Skills	
Close Combat	45
Ranged Combat	10
Athletics	44
Dodge	55
Awareness	30

Combat Actions

- **Bite.** *Melee Attack, 1 meter* The lightning wolf bites a target. On a hit, deal 4 rending damage.

Wild Gu Roll 1d4 1 - No wild Gu 2 - 3 - 4 -

Gear

Armor

Armor is seldom seen in the Gu world, except when used by mortals. Armor is heavy and lacks the defensive strength of even some Rank 1 Gu, and thus has little demand. Still, some Gu Masters will use the effects of Gu to augment their armor for better effect.

When wearing armor, you gain a penalty to your **Dodge** rolls, but can soak up a bit more damage. Armor has a damage threshold and health statistic. Any force or rending damage dealt to you is reduced by the armor's damage threshold. Any force or rending damage dealt in excess of the damage threshold is dealt both to your hit points and to the armor's hit points. If the armor reaches 0 hit points, it breaks and becomes unusable.

	DT	HP	Dodge Penalty	Movement Penalty
Leather Armor	4	20	+10	–
Iron Armor	8	32	+30	-1

Gu Index

Gu are listed alphabetically by the path they belong to.

Blood Path

Blood path Gu often cost little to feed and are easy to refine, though many recipes require slaughter at huge scales. Hundreds of thousands of inheritances were left by a Rank 7 Gu Immortal, Blood Sea Ancestor, all over the Gu world. The righteous path shuns the evil and demonic methods of blood path, and many practitioners live imprisoned in Tie clan's demon suppression tower.

It's worth noting that an ordinary human has about 5 liters of blood in their body.

Blood Battle Gu

Rank 5 Attack

Cost: 50 portions

Range: 100 meters

Health: 48

Food: A 100,000 liter pond of human blood in a hole dug in Hemorrhage Soil

Effect: You rupture the hearts of all *bleeding* creatures within range. They have a chance to react before they instantly die. Immediately following, make 3 attack rolls for each creature affected. The range of these attacks is 15 meters, measured from the original target or the square they were in when they died. On a hit, deal 50 rending damage. If damage is dealt to a creature's hit points in this way, they gain *bleeding 5*. If the damage kills the target, you may make an additional 3 attack rolls with the same properties and measured from the square the target was in when they died.

One of the lesser inheritances of the Blood Sea Ancestor contains Blood Battle Gu. Repeated use can cull a whole battlefield.

Blood Blade Gu

Rank 3 Attack

Cost: 2 portions

Range: 3 meters

Health: 22

Food: 3 liters of blood

Effect: Your body shudders as a hundred wounds appear all over it. You take 2d6 rending damage, bypassing defensive Gu, and your blood streaks out like swords; all creatures within range must attempt a *Dodge* test. They take 80 rending damage on a failure, and 40 on a success. If damage is dealt to a creature's hit points in this way, they gain *bleeding 2*.

Blood Brother Gu

Rank 3 Carver

Cost: 35 portions

Range: 1 meter

Health: 13

Food: 1 liter of mixed blood either from siblings or a parent and their child

Effect: Select a creature within range. As long as both you and them have an open wound, your blood twists and mingles in the air before shooting into eachothers veins. You and the target are now permanently considered siblings by blood path methods.

Blood Demon Flower Gu

Rank 4 Carver

Cost: 35 portions

Range: Self

Health: 21

Food: 50 liters of blood Keywords: [Sustained], [Dao]

Effect: The roots of the blood demon flower pierce your flesh and wind around your limbs, and a great red flower sprouts from your head. Your flesh wrinkles and clings to your bones.

While in this state, increase your maximum and current hit points by 100. Your primeval essence recovery speed is halved (rounding down) and your movement is reduced by 4 meters, to a minimum of 1 meter.

As a bonus action, you can burrow your roots into a corpse and consume its blood to regain 30 hit points.

When you use a combat action to make an unarmed melee attack, instead of striking with your fists you may extend your roots and attack up to 5 times. Your root attack range is 5 meters, and your root attacks deal 50 rending damage. If damage is dealt to a creature's hit points in this way, they gain the *bleeding 3*.

At the end of each of your turns, make a *Perseverance* test. On a failure, you gain a **Blood Demon Flower Token** and your body becomes corrupted. If you ever have 10 **Blood Demon Flower Tokens**, your body is permanently transfigured into this state, no longer requiring you to activate Blood Demon Flower Gu to gain its effects.

As long as you have 9 or fewer **Blood Demon Flower Tokens**, every month you go without activating Blood Demon Flower Gu reduces the number of **Blood Demon Flower Tokens** you have by 1.

Blood Handprint Gu

Rank 5 Manifestation

Cost: 80 portions

Range: 50 meters

Health: 18

Food: 120 severed hands soaked in the blood of a hundred beast king Keywords: [Sustained]

Effect: You manifest a [Large] 2 meter tall hand made of blood mist at an unoccupied space within range. As a bonus action, you may move the hand up to 10 meters through occupied or unoccupied

spaces. Any creatures in the space moved through by the hand take 200 force damage. If this damage is dealt to their hit points and they have blood in their body, they turn into a puddle of blood and die.

Blood Pouch Gu

Rank 1-5 Container

Cost: 1 portion

Range: Touch

Health: 12

Food: {1, 4, 9, 16, 25} liters of blood

Effect: Activating this Gu while it is in a pool of blood causes the blood to be sucked inside the Gu, up to {10, 20, 100, 500, 50,000} liters. Otherwise, you can activate it to pour out any amount of blood. If blood from multiple creatures is contained inside Blood Pouch Gu, it gets mixed and loses properties such as blood relation.

Blood Qi Gu

Rank 1-3 Tonic

Cost: 25 portions

Range: Touch

Health: 10

Food: 1 liter of blood each from 3 unrelated humans

Effect: The target of this effect must have an open wound. You pour blood infused with qi into the wound, restoring {6, 15, 45} hit points to the target and restoring their blood.

Blood Rain Gu

Rank 3 Manifestation

Cost: 15 portions

Range: 1 kilometer

Health: 24

Food: 1 still beating heart

Keywords: [**Sustained**]

Effect: Dense red clouds manifest high above you in the sky. Blood pours from them in a thick and warm hurricane, covering the ground with a total of 1,000,000

Blood Sense Gu

Rank 2-5 Divination

Cost: 12 portions

Range: {10, 20, 100, 1,000} meters

Health: 14

Food: {4, 9, 16, 25} liters of blood

Effect: You immediately sense the exact location of any creatures related to you by blood within range. You do not gain any information other than where they are.

Blood Skull Gu

Rank 4-5 Carver

Cost: 90 portions

Range: 100 meters

Health: 34

Food: 10 liters of blood

Effect: You immediately absorb the blood of any dead creatures related to you by blood within range. For every {100, 10} corpses drained in this way, you gain 1% aptitude, up to a maximum of 99%. The corpses must have been dead for less than 24 hours.

Blood Steps Gu

A dark crimson cicada with no legs. When active, Blood Steps Gu burrows into the leg muscles.

Rank 3 Celerity

Cost: 9 portions

Range: Self

Health: 12

Food: 3 liters of blood Keywords: [**Sustained**]

Effect: Your movement becomes 10 meters. Any squares you walk through while this Gu is active become bloody puddles and are *Difficult Terrain*. You also now stand and walk on blood as if it were solid ground, and can walk through bloody puddles created by Blood Steps Gu as if they were normal terrain.

Blood Substitution Gu

Rank 2 Manifestation

Cost: 15 portions

Range: Self

Health: 7

Food: 100 grams of dried blood

Effect: You create 10 liters of black blood around your feet that can be manipulated as if it were real blood by other Gu.

[**Upgrade Path: Bloodstained Robe Gu**]

Bloody Fabric Gu

Rank 3 Container

Cost: 10 portions

Range: 6 meters

Health: 13

Food:

Effect: Up to 50 liters of blood within range is pulled in a vortex towards you. It condenses into a tattered bloody robe around your body. Activate this Gu again to destroy the robe, releasing the stored blood all around you.

If a *bleeding* creature is within range when you activate this Gu, it takes 25 rending damage and you drain 100 milliliters of their blood for every level of *bleeding* they have.

If an ordinary human loses 2 liters of blood, they fall unconscious and are dying.

Bloody Visage Gu

Rank 4 Guard

Cost: 30 portions

Range: 10 meters

Health: 13

Food:

Effect: Up to 50 liters of blood within range is pulled in a vortex towards you. It condenses into a bloody robe around your body that defends you from attacks. For every non-mental damage you take, the robe expends 100 milliliters of blood and you instead take no damage. If you activate the Gu while already wearing a robe created by Bloody Visage Gu, it can only pull in enough blood to restore itself to the maximum of 50 liters.

If a *bleeding* creature is within range when you activate this Gu, it takes 25 rending damage and Bloody Visage Gu drains 200 milliliters of their blood for every level of *bleeding* they have.

If an ordinary human loses 2 liters of blood, they fall unconscious and are dying.

Bloodstained Robe Gu

Rank 5 Guard

Cost: 8 portions

Range: 25 meters

Health: 13

Food:

Keywords: [Sustained]

Effect: Up to 100 liters of blood within range is pulled in a vortex towards you. It condenses into a magnificent bloody robe around your body that defends you from attacks. Whenever you take non-mental damage, if the damage is less than 10 it is instead reduced to 0. For every 10 non-mental damage you take, the robe expends 1 liter of blood and you instead take no damage. While sustained, this Gu pulls blood within range as soon as it becomes available.

If a *bleeding* creature is within range when you activate this Gu and at the beginning of every turn while you sustain it, that creature takes 25 rending damage and you drain 500 milliliters of their blood for every level of *bleeding* they have.

When you stop sustaining this Gu, the robe remains on your body and still defends you from attacks, but no longer pulls nearby blood into itself.

If an ordinary human loses 2 liters of blood, they fall unconscious and are dying.

[End]

Drain Blood Gu

Rank 1-3 Attack

Cost: portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Effect: Target a creature with the *Bleeding* status effect within range.

Bloody Veil Gu

Rank 1-4 Concealment

Cost: 45 portions

Range: 1 meter

Health: 18

Food: {4, 9, 16, 25} liters of blood from widowed women

Effect: A 1 meter radius sphere of rotating blood surrounds you. For 10 minutes, all creatures inside the sphere become undetectable to **Divination** Gu of rank {2, 3, 4, 5} or less. They are still visible, but make no sound.

Staunch Bleeding Gu

Rank 1 Tonic

Cost: 12 portions

Range: Touch

Health: 9

Food: 5 cubic centimeters of skin

Effect: Touch a creature. For 1 hour, they are immune to the *bleeding* status effect and cannot bleed.

Vein Burst Gu

Rank 2 Attack

Cost: 16 portions

Range: 2 meters

Health: 9

Food:

Keywords: [**Direct**]

Effect: Target creature within range has some of their blood vessels burst, taking 10 rending damage.

A large quantity of Vein Burst Gu are required to refine the legendary Blood Battle Gu.

Dark Path

Skulk Gu

Rank 1 Concealment

Cost: 1 portion

Range: Self

Health: 9

Food: 2 eyeballs from any creature (1/4 primeval stone)

Keywords: [**Sustained**]

Effect: As long as you are not in direct light, you are invisible and cannot be visibly detected by Gu of rank 2 or lower while sustaining this Gu.

Breath Concealment Gu

Rank 3-5 Concealment

Cost: None

Range: Self

Health: 11

Food:

Keywords: [**Sustained**]

Effect: If your current rank is equal to or below the rank of Breath Concealment Gu, the aura of your primeval essence is suppressed to a rank and stage of your choosing, as long as the target cultivation is below your own. Your primeval essence's outward appearance remains as it was, however, so effects that glimpse inside your aperture will see your true cultivation.

Earth Path

Stealth Rock Gu

Rank 1 Concealment

Cost: 1 portion

Range: Self

Health: 18

Food: 100 grams of hard stone (1/4 primeval stone)

Keywords: [**Sustained**]

Effect: While sustained, your body is invisible, but anything you are wearing or carrying remains visible.

Stone Aperture Gu

Rank 1-3 Catalyst

Cost: 1 portion

Range: Self

Health: 16

Food: 20 grams of talc

Effect: As long as your aperture is of the same rank as the Stone Aperture Gu, your aperture walls shatter and are replaced with an unbreakable stone wall. Your cultivation immediately rises to peak stage, but you can no longer raise your rank through cultivation.

Thousand-Li Earthwolf Spider Gu

Rank 5 Manifestation

Cost: 2 portions

Range: Self

Health: 500

Food: 1000 kg of ordinary soil

Keywords: [**Large**] [**Steed**] [**Sustained**]

Effect: Thousand-Li Earthwolf Spider Gu has a base movement of 10 meters and can climb on walls and ceilings without making an **Athletics** test. Additionally, Thousand-Li Earthwolf Spider Gu has a digging speed of 3 meters in stone or soil. While sustained, Thousand-Li Earthwolf Spider Gu's movement becomes 50 meters and its digging speed becomes 15 meters.

Enslavement Path

Fire Path

Fire Spark Gu

Rank 1 Attack

Cost: 2 portions

Range: 10 meters

Health: 7

Food:

Effect: You shoot a small spark of fire at a target within range. Make an attack roll; on a hit, deal 10 heat damage.

Ember Burst Gu

Rank 1 Attack

Cost: 4 portions

Range: 5 meters

Health: 8

Food:

Effect: You lob a burst of embers at a square within range. All creatures in or adjacent to that square take 8 heat damage

Flame Veil Gu

Rank 1 Guard

Cost: 1 portion

Range: Self

Health: 10

Food:

Keywords: [**Sustained**]

Effect: A thin veil of flame surrounds you. Negate all heat damage dealt to your hit points while sustained.

Fire Step Gu

Rank 1 Celerity

Cost: 5 portions

Range: Self

Health: 9

Food:

Keywords: [**Sustained**]

Effect: While sustained, your movement becomes 8 meters and you leave scorched earth in your wake. Every square you pass through while this Gu is active becomes covered in flames until the start of your next turn, causing any creature that starts their turn in or passes through an affected square to take 5 heat damage and gain the *burning* condition.

Scorch Palm Gu

Rank 2 Attack

Cost: 8 portions

Range: Touch

Health: 12

Food:

Effect: Your palm ignites with intense heat. Make an attack roll against a creature within range; on a hit, deal 30 heat damage.

Fire Arrow Gu

Rank 2 Attack

Cost: 6 portions

Range: 12 meters

Health: 11

Food:

Keywords: [**Piercing**]

Effect: Shoot a flaming arrow at a target within range. Make an attack roll; on a hit, deal 15 heat damage and 15 force damage.

Blazing Shield Gu

Rank 2 Manifestation

Cost: 7 portions

Range: Self

Health: 14

Food:

Keywords: [**Sustained**], [**Medium**]

Effect: While sustained, a shield of obsidian and magma appears in a square adjacent to you. If an attack passes through the shield's square, the shield negates the attack entirely, taking the damage of the attack to its hit points (if the attack deals damage). The shield has 20 hit points and is immune to heat damage.

Fire Pulse Gu

Rank 2 Attack

Cost: 10 portions

Range: 8 meters

Health: 13

Food:

Effect: Release a pulse of fire in a straight line. All creatures in a 1 meter wide, 8 meter long line take 20 heat damage.

Smoldering Cloak Gu

Rank 1 Guard

Cost: 6 portions

Range: Self

Health: 20

Food:

Keywords: [Defensive], [Sustained], [Shield]

Effect: A cloak of smoldering embers surrounds you. Any creature that hits you with a melee attack takes 8 heat damage and gains the *burning* condition. This Gu cannot block mental, sonic, or poison damage.

Firebrand Gu

Rank 2 Carver

Cost: 9 portions

Range: Touch

Health: 10

Food:

Effect: Carve fire path dao into a weapon or creature. The weapon (or the creature's fists) catches fire and deals an additional 10 heat damage on a melee attack as well as inflicting the *burning* condition.

Flame Tongue Gu

Rank 3 Attack

Cost: 12 portions

Range: 10 meters

Health: 15

Food:

Effect: You lash out with a tongue of flame. Make an attack roll; on a hit, deal 30 heat damage and the target gains the *burning* condition.

Fireball Gu

Rank 2 Attack

Cost: 15 portions

Range: 5 meters

Health: 18

Food:

Effect: A sphere with a 4 meter radius blossoms into a roiling fireball. All creatures in the sphere take 8d6 heat damage.

Fire Lance Gu

Rank 2 Attack

Cost: 13 portions

Range: 15 meters

Health: 16

Food:

Keywords: [**Piercing**]

Effect: Launch a lance of fire at a target. Make an attack roll; on a hit, deal 15 heat damage. If the target is *burning*, deal an additional 20 heat damage.

Pyre Wall Gu

Rank 2 Manifestation

Cost: 10 portions

Range: 8 meters

Health: 20

Food:

Keywords: [**Sustained**]

Effect: Manifest a wall of fire up to 8 meters long and 2 meters high. Creatures starting their turn in or passing through the fire take 25 heat damage and gain the *burning* condition.

Fire Discharge Gu

Rank 1-2 Celerity

Cost: 20 portions

Range: Self

Health: 8

Food: {1, 5} liters of pitch ({1, 5} primeval stones)

Effect: An explosion thrusts you {5, 20} meters in a straight line in a direction of your choice. If a creature is in the space directly opposite the line when you activate this Gu, that creature takes {10, 30} heat damage. **Dodge** tests made to avoid this attack are made with a +10 penalty.

If you collide with a creature during this movement, you stop at the square before theirs and you both take {5, 10} force damage. As a reaction to colliding with a creature, you may make a melee attack against that creature or activate a Gu with a range of touch, targeting that creature.

Eight Burning Eyes Gu

Rank 1-3 Divination

Cost: 8 portions

Range: 20 meters

Health: 12

Food:

Keywords: [**Sustained**]

Effect: Six white orbs appear on your face in a spider-eye pattern. While sustained, you can sense all heat signatures within range, even through barriers.

Ember Armor Gu

Rank 3 Guard

Cost: 11 portions

Range: Self

Health: 150

Food:

Keywords: [**Defensive**], [**Sustained**], [**Shield**]

Effect: Armor of embers covers your body. Fire and rending damage dealt to Ember Armor Gu is reduced by 30. This Gu cannot block mental, sonic, or poison damage.

Flame Whip Gu

Rank 2 Attack

Cost: 7 portions

Range: 4 meters

Health: 10

Food:

Effect: You attack with a whip of fire. Make an attack roll; on a hit, deal 16 heat damage and the target gains the *burning* and *restrained* conditions. As a bonus action on their turn, the affected creature can make an **Athletics** test with a -10 bonus. On a success, they lose both conditions applied by this Gu.

Firefly Swarm Gu

Rank 1 Manifestation

Cost: 1 portion

Range: 25 meters

Health: 8

Food:

Keywords: [**Sustained**]

Effect: Manifest a swarm of fiery fireflies in a square within range while sustained. The swarm gives off bright light for 25 meters. You can move the swarm up to 10 meters to a point within range as a bonus action on your turn.

Food Path?

Heaven Path

Lifespan Gu

Lifespan Gu are extremely rare, produced by Heaven's Will according to the current deficits and surpluses in the world. Lifespan Gu are impossible to refine, and even a rank 1 Lifespan Gu is worth great fights between mortals and immortals alike.

Rank 1-5 Catalyst

Cost: 3 portions

Range: Self

Health: 8

Food: Naturally occurring Heaven Qi (does not need fed)

Keywords: [Expendable]

Effect: Your lifespan is increased by {50, 100, 300, 500, 1000} years.

Human Path

Relic Gu

A star shaped polyhedron that glints in the light. The color of Relic Gu corresponds to the color of primeval essence of the same rank: Green copper, red steel, white silver, yellow gold, and purple crystal

Rank 1-5 Catalyst

Cost: 5 portions

Range: Self

Health: (Rank * 5)

Food: (Rank) portions of primeval essence

Keywords: [Expendable]

Effect: If your rank is the same as the rank of this Gu, and you are currently at initial, middle, or upper stage, your aperture walls immediately shatter as your cultivation rises by one small realm. If not, there is no effect.

Ice Path

Hibernation Gu

Hibernation Gu is a 1 foot tall bear. If it is sleeping, that means someone is under its effects.

Rank 3 Tonic

Cost: portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Keywords: [Small]

Effect: You touch a creature and their body chills to subzero temperatures. They fall *unconscious* and Hibernation Gu curls up and goes to sleep. After a day, the creature in hibernation fully restores its hit points. After a week, all the target's ailments caused by Gu of rank 3 or lower are cleansed as well.

You may reactivate this Gu at any time to awaken the target. If you are the target, the only action you may take while unconscious is to activate Hibernation Gu and wake yourself up. A target under the effects of Hibernation Gu remains loosely aware of their surroundings. If Hibernation Gu dies, the target awakens immediately.

Information Path

Bright Pearl Gu

Rank 1-3 Container

Cost: 8 portions

Range: Touch

Health: 8

Food:

Effect: Bright Pearl Gu flies around a Gu of rank {1, 2, 3} or lower that you touch, sealing it. While sealed by Bright Pearl Gu, the Gu's feeding threshold does not tick down. If the seal is attacked, the Gu inside is destroyed. Any Gu Master can infuse 1 portion of primeval essence into the seal to deactivate it. The Bright Pearl Gu remains under the original Gu Master's ownership.

Little Light Gu

Rank

Cost: portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Effect:

Shimmer Gu

Rank 2 Concealment

Cost: 3 portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Keywords: [Sustained]

Effect: Light bends around your body, making you invisible.

Lightning Path

Thunderdome Gu

Rank 4 Manifestation

Cost: 10 portions

Range: 20 meters

Health: 18

Food:

Keywords: [Sustained]

Effect: A sphere of electricity is formed in a 20 meter radius centered on you. Creatures inside remain trapped while you sustain Thunderdome Gu. Creatures trapped inside can still act as normal, but the effects of Gu of equal or lesser rank cannot permeate outside the barrier. A creature that touches the sides takes 250 shock damage and can leave the sphere.

Lightning Eye Gu

Rank 3 Diviner

Cost: 1 portion

Range: 1 kilometer

Health: 14

Food:

Keywords: [Sustained]

Effect: To activate Lightning Eye Gu, the user must remove their eye and place Lightning Eye Gu in the socket. Upon activation, Lightning Eye Gu replaces the lost eye permanently, and you can see out of it with perfect vision whether or not it is activated.

While you sustain Lightning Eye Gu, your lightning eye can see through obscuring effects such as smoke and illusions produced by Gu of the same or lower rank, and can see any object within 150 meters in fine detail. Your lightning eye becomes immune to the *blinded* condition, and you can react to [Unreactable] attacks so long as they are visible and within your line of sight.

Luck Path

Luck path was created by Giant Sun Immortal Venerable, and exploits a profound "Luck", a formless component of Human Qi that defies the influence of Fate Gu.

luck path idea; some gu roll dx, some gu change x

Extend Luck Gu

Rank 2 Catalyst

Cost: portions

Range: Self

Health:

Food:

Effect: Whenever you succeed a skill test after expending a Luck Point to reroll it, you may activate this Gu as a reaction. If you do so, you may reroll your next failed skill test before the end of your next turn.

Luck Cauldron Gu

Rank 2 Carver

Cost:

Range: Self

Health:

Food:

Keywords: [**Dao**]

Effect: Your luck point maximum is increased by 1.

Steal Luck Gu

Rank 1 attack

Cost:

Range:

Health:

Food:

Keywords:

Effect: Choose a target you can see within range. If the target currently has a luck point and your luck points are below their maximum, you steal 1 luck point from the target.

Metal Path

Chainsaw Golden Centipede Gu

Rank 3 Attack

Cost: 3 portions

Range: Self

Health: 24

Food: A handful of sharpened iron shards

Keywords: [**Sustained**], [**Large**]

Effect: Your arm goes down the Chainsaw Golden Centipede Gu's throat, turning your arm into a spinning blade. While sustained, you may use this Gu to make melee attacks with a range of 3 meters, dealing 100 rending damage on a hit. If Chainsaw Golden Centipede Gu has less than 13 hit points, it instead deals 40 rending damage on a hit.

Ground Gu

Rank 1-3 Guard

Cost: portions

Range: {Self, 1 meter, 3 meters}

Health: 12

Food: 1 kilogram of dirt

Keywords: [**Defensive**], [**Sustained**]

Effect: While sustained and standing on solid ground, negate shock damage dealt to any creature within range.

Heatsink Gu

Rank 1 Guard

Cost: portions

Range: Self

Health: 10

Food:

Keywords: [Defensive], [Sustained]

Effect: Negate all heat damage dealt to you. While sustained, this Gu stores all damage negated by it, to a maximum of 30. As a combat action, you can make a melee attack with range equal to your touch range against a target. On a hit, deal heat damage equal to the damage stored inside Heatsink Gu to the target. When you stop sustaining Heatsink Gu, its stored damage reverts to 0.

Iron Needle Gu

Rank 1 Attack

Cost: 9 portions

Range: 6 meters

Health: 21

Food: 200 grams of needles (1 primeval stone)

Keywords: [Piercing]

Effect: A cloud of needles bursts from your hand towards a creature within range. Make an attack roll. On a hit, deal 12 force damage.

Metal Skin Gu

Rank 1-3 Carver

Cost: 14 portions

Range: Self

Health: 16

Food: 10 grams of {iron, steel, titanium} soaked in blood

Effect: You are assailed with a horrendous pain for 1 hour while your skin molts and is replaced with {iron, steel, titanium}. You are incapable of taking any actions except to speak for the entire duration. When the process is complete, your skin is permanently transmuted into a flexible membrane as strong as the respective metal. Whenever you take damage to your hit points besides mental, poison, shock, or sonic, reduce it by {10, 20, 40}. Whenever you take shock damage to your hit points, multiply it by 2.

Silver Lining Gu

Rank 1 Tonic

Cost: 5 portions

Range: Self

Health: 16

Food: 5 grams of silver and a tear (1 primeval stone)

Effect: Can only be activated as a reaction to taking damage or failing an attack roll against another creature. Regain 4 hit points.

Transmute Tungsten Gu

Rank 1 Attack

Cost: 25 portions

Range: Touch

Health: 7

Food: 1 cubic centimeter of tungsten (2 primeval stones)

Effect: Transmute an object you touch into tungsten. The object must fit within a cube 1 meter on each side. Tungsten is incredibly dense, so this may cause less sturdy surfaces to collapse. When attempting to transmute an object another creature is holding or wearing, you must make an attack roll. Transmuted clothes become armor for the target with the following stats:

| DT | HP | Dodge Penalty | Movement Penalty |

Tungsten Armor | 8 | 10 | +40 | -4 |

A creature can expend its combat action to doff the armor.

Poison Path

Gu

Rank

Cost: portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Effect:

Qi Path

Gu

Rank

Cost: portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Effect:

Refinement Path

[Path] Refinement Gu

Rank 1-5 Catalyst

Cost: 4 portions

Range: Self

Health: 8

Food: 1 m³ of plant matter belonging to [Path]

Keywords: [**Expendable**]

Effect: When following a Gu refinement recipe for a Gu of [Path], activate this Gu to gain a -(Rank * 10) bonus to the Refinement test.

Rule Path

Millimeter Gu

Rank 1 Catalyst

Cost: portions

Range:

Health:

Food: 1 cubic millimeter of gold

Keywords: [Supplementary]

Effect: Change the range of your next Gu activation to a millimeter. Has no effect on Gu with a range of *self*.

Meter Gu

Rank 2 Catalyst

Cost: portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Keywords: [Supplementary]

Effect: Change the range of your next Gu activation to a meter. Has no effect on Gu with a range of *self*.

Hundred Meter Gu

Rank 3 Catalyst

Cost: portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Keywords: [Supplementary]

Effect: Change the range of your next Gu activation to 100 meters. Has no effect on Gu with a range of *self*.

Gu

Rank

Cost: portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Effect:

Soul Path

Burial Soul Toad Gu

Rank 3-4 Container

Cost: 30 portions

Range: 3 meters

Health: 50

Food: {1, 5} human souls

Keywords: [Large]

Effect: Burial Soul Toad Gu must be removed from your aperture to be activated. When activated, Burial Soul Toad Gu draws in the souls of all dead creatures within range that have been dead for less than an hour. Absorbed souls burst through the skin on Burial Soul Toad Gu's back, appearing as smooth white eggs 5cm in diameter. Soul eggs can be plucked from Burial Soul Toad Gu's back, but once separated any amount of damage will break the soul egg and release the soul within. Burial Soul Toad Gu can hold up to {100, 1000} souls at a time, not counting any souls removed from its back.

Beast Soul Gu

Rank 3 Carver

Cost: 3 portions

Range: Self

Health: 12

Food: 1 pound of the respective beast's flesh

Effect: Variants exist for most types of beasts; Wolf Soul Gu, Bear Soul Gu, etc. Your soul requires 1 day between activations. When activated, slightly refines the soul and transforms it into a beast soul. After 15 activations, you have the beast soul, and henceforth take only half the regular damage to your soul when enslaving beasts of the same type as your soul. Additionally, you may now safely increase your soul's maximum hit points beyond 1,000.

Sound Path

Space Path

Dimensional Lock Gu

Rank 4-5

Cost: 120 portions

Range: Self

Health: A lock and matching key, carved out of emptiness iron

Food:

Effect: For {1 hour, 1 day}, a {20, 50} meter cube, centered on the square you activated this Gu on, becomes dimensionally locked. Creatures cannot teleport to any space inside the cube from outside of it. Creatures inside the cube cannot teleport at all. The cube is barely visible, and awareness checks made to see its edges have a +40 penalty.

One of the signature methods of space path, the Dimensional Lock Gu is very effective at preventing escapes and attacks. No teleportation Gu below rank 6 can pierce its effects. It appears as a floating glass box containing within the starry sky of black heaven.

Strength Path

[Beast] Strength Gu

Rank 1 Carver

Cost: 5 portions

Range: Self

Health: 9

Food: 10 kilograms of [Beast] flesh

Keywords: [Dao]

Effect: Your strength attribute increases by 5. For 24 hours, you cannot gain strength from [Beast] Strength Gu. Once you've gained 50 strength from [Beast] Strength Gu, activating [Beast] Strength Gu further has no effect on you.

For Rank 1 [Beast] Strength Gu, the beast in question will be an ordinary one such as a wolf or boar. If you have [Beast] Strength Gu of several different beasts, they can be used in conjunction without the 24 hour restriction, and for each beast you must keep a separate count of how much strength you've gained from each.

Sword Path

Pioneered by the legendary pseudo-venerable Bo Qing, sword path boasts some of the strongest attacks in the Gu world. Sword path's defensive methods are by comparison very weak.

Aegis Gu

Rank 2-3 Guard

Cost: 22 portions

Range: Self

Health: {20, 50}

Food:

Keywords: [Defensive], [Sustained], [Shield]

Effect: While sustained, a spectral sword and shield manifest in front of you. Whenever a creature makes a **Close Combat** roll against you, you may use a reaction to attack them with the sword, dealing {12, 40} rending damage on a hit. Rending damage dealt to Aegis Gu's hitpoints are negated. This Gu cannot block mental, sonic, or poison damage.

Flash Sword Gu

Rank 4 Celerity

Cost: 18 portions

Range: Self

Health: 11

Food:

Keywords: [Sustained]

Effect: Your movement becomes 15 meters and you gain a -40 bonus to Dodge tests. You may forego your movement to instead fly in a straight line of up to 30 meters. If you move through an occupied square, that creature must succeed a Dodge test with a +40 penalty or else take 120 rending damage.

Pierce Gu

Rank 1-3 Attack

Cost: 8 portions

Range: {5, 10} meters

Health: 6

Food:

Keywords: [**Piercing**], [**Direct**]

Effect: A piercing light shoots from your finger at a target within range. Make an attack roll; on a hit deal {4, 15, 40} force damage.

Separate Gu

Rank 1 Attack

Cost: portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Effect: Splits an inanimate object of up to 1 cubic meter in volume perfectly in half. You can pick what direction it splits as long as splitting it that way would create 2 halves of equal volume.

Sole Sword Gu

Rank 4-5 Carver

Cost: 4 portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Effect: Carves sword dao into a weapon or Gu that deals rending damage. If an attack made with the weapon or Gu is blocked by a Gu of rank {2, 3, 4, 5} or less with the [**Shield**] Keyword, the defending [**Shield**] Gu takes rending damage equal to its hit points before the damage of the attack goes through. After 24 hours, the weapon or Gu affected by Sole Sword Gu crumbles into dust.

[Upgrade Path: Split Mountain Gu]

Cut Gu

Rank 1 Attack

Cost: 2 portions

Range: 3 meters

Health: 2

Food: A handful of ordinary grass

Keywords: [**Unreactable**]

Effect: You throw an invisible and sharp crescent at an enemy within range. Make an attack roll. On a hit, deal 15 rending damage.

Slash Gu

Rank 2 Attack

Cost: 5 portions

Range: 8 meters

Health: 5

Food: 1 kg of shattered glass (1/4 primeval stone)

Effect: You throw a 1 meter wide curved blade in an 8 meter long line. All creatures in the area take 20 rending damage.

Rend Gu

Rank 3 attack

Cost: 9 portions

Range: 20 meters

Health: 7

Food: 1 kg of sharpened blades of any size (1/2 primeval stone)

Effect: You throw a 2 meter wide curved blade in a 20 meter long line. All creatures in the area take 60 rending damage. Dodge tests to avoid this attack are made with a +10 penalty.

Split Hill Gu

Rank 4 Attack

Cost: 9 portions

Range: 100 meters

Health: 9

Food: 10 Slash Gu

Effect: You throw a 5 meter wide blade of supercondensed sword qi in a 100 meter long line. All creatures in the area take 200 rending damage. Dodge tests to avoid this attack are made with a +20 penalty.

Split Mountain Gu

Rank 5 Attack

Cost: 10 portions

Range: 500 meters

Health: 11

Food: 50 Rend Gu

Effect: You launch an enormous burst of sword qi; select an area 10 meters wide, 10 meters tall, and 500 meters long. All creatures in the area take 800 rending damage. Dodge tests to avoid this attack are made with a +40 penalty.

Discovered by Lord of Swords Jin Chang, Split Mountain Gu is named for his sundering of Mount Cao. To this day, a great ravine splits the mountain in two, with the Jin and Cao clans living on either side.

[END]

Sharpen Gu

Rank 2-5 Carver

Cost: 24 portions

Range: Touch

Health: 11

Food:

Keywords: [Expendable]

Effect: Carves sword dao into a weapon or Gu that deals rending damage. If an attack made with the weapon or Gu is blocked by a Gu of rank {2, 3, 4, 5} or less with the [Shield] Keyword, the defending [Shield] Gu takes rending damage equal to its hit points before the damage of the attack goes through. If this Gu is used on a weapon, the effect is permanent. If used on a Gu, the effect lasts until the next time you activate the Gu.

Sword Sheath Gu

Rank 2-4 Guard

Cost: 8 portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Whenever you are targeted by an attack from a sword-path Gu or a physical weapon within range, you may activate this Gu as a reaction to cover the Gu or weapon in a formless sheath, negating the triggering attack. The Gu or weapon cannot be forced out or used and the sheath has {10, 30, 120} hit points. It remains sheathed until the sheath is broken.

Theft Path

Theft path was invented by Thieving Heaven Demon Venerable, and contains great profundities of heaven. Mortal theft-path methods are dangerous and hard to counter, but in return theft path has poor offensive capabilities.

Gu

Rank

Cost: portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Effect:

Time Path

Gu

Rank

Cost: portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Effect:

Transformation Path

Jade Skin Gu

Rank 1-5 Guard

Cost: 6 portions

Range: Self

Health: {30, 60, 120, 300, 1000}

Food: {1, 4, 9, 16, 25} jade stones

Keywords: [**Sustained**], [**Defensive**], [**Shield**]

Effect: Your body is shrouded in jade. Foreign objects are blocked from entering as well. This Gu cannot block mental, sonic, or poison damage.

Longarm Gu

Rank 1 Carver

Cost: 3 portions

Range: Self

Health: 8

Food: 5 kg of monkey flesh (1 primeval stone)

Keywords: [**Sustained**]

Effect: Your arms grow dramatically in length, increasing the range of all your melee attacks by 1 meter. Your touch range also increases by 1 meter.

Water Path

Jelly Bubble Gu

Rank 2 Guard

Cost: 3 portions

Range: Self

Health: 100

Food:

Keywords: [**Sustained**], [**Defensive**], [**Shield**]

Effect: While sustained, you're surrounded by a bubble of viscous jelly that shields you from outside attacks. You cannot move or dodge while in the bubble. Force damage dealt to Jelly Bubble Gu is negated.

Gu

Rank

Cost: portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Effect:

Wind Path

Gu

Rank

Cost: portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Effect:

Wisdom Path

Invented millions of years ago by Star Constellation Immortal Venerable, wisdom path is scarce in the modern Gu world. Inheritances are few in number and kept out of reach, for the strength of Wisdom path is to subdue your enemy without them knowing you even made a move.

Awake Gu

Rank 1-3 Catalyst

Cost: 6 portions

Range: 3 meters

Health: 7

Food: Consumes dreams when the owner sleeps

Effect: Awaken a sleeping target. Can be activated as a reaction to you or a creature within range falling to 0 hit points to give them a -{20, 40, 60} bonus to their Perseverance test

Awaken Cloud Gu

Rank 4 Catalyst

Cost: 40 portions

Range: Self

Health: 15

Food: 1 liter of pure water

Keywords: [**Deductive**]

Effect: A cloud of thoughts rumbles above your head, granting you Advantage on a Deduction skill test.

Battle Will Gu

Rank 3 Divination

Cost: 15 portions

Range: 5 meters

Health: 8

Food: Battle Thoughts (Gu master must think about fighting for 1 hour)

Effect: All creatures within range, including yourself, become agitated and more prone to violence, and gain a -30 bonus to Perseverance tests for 10 minutes.

Brain Explosion Gu

Rank 4 Attack

Cost: 25 portions

Range: 10 meters

Health: 12

Food: 1 Human Brain

Effect: Brain Explosion Gu flies towards a creature within range. This can be reacted to and attacked, with attack rolls against it being made with a +30 penalty. If the Brain Explosion Gu successfully reaches the target, it burrows into their mind and becomes dormant, no longer requiring food to sustain itself. If the creature makes a Deduction, Knowledge, or Refinement test, the Brain Explosion Gu detonates, instantly killing them. If the creature is forced by some other effect to make one of these tests, they may elect to automatically fumble it and not detonate the Brain Explosion Gu.

Careful Gu

Rank 3 Catalyst

Cost: portions

Range:

Health: 7

Food:

Keywords: [Expendable]

Effect: Activate before rolling the failure die of a refinement recipe. Increase the die by one stage (d2 -> d4 -> d6 -> d8 -> d10 -> d12 -> d20 -> d100) to a maximum of a d100.

Enamor Gu

Rank

Cost: 15 portions

Range: Touch

Health:

Food:

Effect: Make an attack roll against a creature within range. On a hit, the creature feels a strong bond of love between themselves and you. The affected creature cannot make any attacks against you, and will try its best to protect you, even risking its own life. If you are being attacked by the creature's

allies, the creature will try to protect you without harming either side. At the end of each of its turns, the affected creature can make an **Insight** test, ending the effect on a success.

Flash of Inspiration Gu

Rank 3 Divination

Cost: 15 portions

Range: Self

Health: 10

Food: A handful of fine shattered glass (4 primeval stones)

Keywords: [**Deductive**], [**Expendable**]

Effect: You instantly perform a deduction with a -50 bonus.

Human Secret Gu

The mortal variant of Heavenly Secret Immortal Gu, Human Secret Gu resembles a roiling purple cloud.

Rank 3-5 Divination

Cost: 40 portions

Range: {1, 4, 20} meters

Health: 9

Food: 10 grams of clear minded jade (150 primeval stones)

Effect: If activated during a deduction, your deduction benefits from the combined knowledge of all humans and variant humans within range instead of just information available to you personally. Can also be used outside of deductions to read the thoughts of all humans and variant humans within range until the start of your next turn. While active, you may react to other creature's thoughts, including the activation of Gu, even if they are [**Unreactable**]. Additionally, you gain a -50 bonus to all parry, dodge, and attack rolls.

Inscription Blade Gu

Rank 1 Manifestation

Cost: portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Effect: Carves a message or image into a surface, up to a square meter in area. Can be used on living beings to inflict great pain and scar the image into tissue. The image can be of anything you've seen or imagined, but will have less detail if you do not remember the scene perfectly.

Little Will Gu

Rank 1-3 Catalyst

Cost: 3 portions

Range: Self

Health: 6

Food:

Keywords [**Expendable**]

Effect: You take {1, 2, 6} damage to your soul and create {2, 8, 30} Little Wills. Little Wills are linked to you psychically and can help you multitask. When you take the Use Activations combat action, you may consume any number of Little Wills to gain 1 Activation per Little Will consumed in this way.

When you activate or sustain a Gu with with [**Sustained**] keyword, you may expend a Little Will. The Gu will remain sustained until the start of your next turn and does not count towards your current number of sustained Gu.

Little Wills can also be left pretty much anywhere along with a Gu. When a condition, set by you when you leave the Little Will, is fulfilled, the Will consumes itself to activate the Gu in a manner of your choosing.

Little Wills can exist for up to 6 months before vanishing.

Mind Fortress Gu

Rank 1-5 Guard

Cost: 45 portions

Range: Self

Health: {15, 30, 90, 250, 1000}

Food: 1 hour of intense thinking; the thoughts are consumed and cannot be used for deductions.

Keywords: [**Defensive**], [**Shield**], [**Sustained**]

Effect: While sustained, if an effect would manipulate your thoughts, emotions, or will, and originates from a source of equal or lower rank than this Gu, it is negated on you. When used as a [**Shield**], can only block mental damage.

One Mind Gu

Rank 2 Catalyst

Cost: 2X portions

Range: Self

Health: 12

Food: Keywords:

Effect: You gain X activations until the end of your turn. Once you use an activation on your turn, your subsequent activations must be used for the same effect, i.e. activating the same Gu.

Sharp Intent Gu

Rank 3-4 Manifestation

Cost: 20 portions

Range: 3 meters

Health: 10

Food: {3, 15} blades of Cutting-Edge Grass

Effect: You condense your will into swords, taking {3, 10} damage to your soul and manifesting {1, 5} Intent Blades. As an Activation, you can make an attack roll against a target within range with an Intent Blade, dealing {35, 100} rending damage on a hit. Each Intent Blade can only be used for one attack every turn. They may also be wielded as a melee weapon with a range of 1 meter, dealing {35, 100} rending damage on a successful melee attack. Intent Blades vanish after 1 minute.

Whenever you make an attack roll from a Gu effect, you may consume an Intent Blade to gain a -30 bonus to that attack roll.

The main recipe for Rank 3 Sharp Intent Gu combines Rank 2 Sabre Gu with many Rank 1 Little Will Gu

Space Thought Gu

Rank 1-5 Catalyst

Cost: 30 portions

Range: Self

Health: 12

Food: {1, 4, 9, 16, 25} cubic meters of Phantom Soil

Keywords: [Deductive]

Effect: Your thoughts appear as bubbles above your head, and you gain a -(Rank * 10) bonus Deduction tests made to create a refinement recipe, so long as you have access to the Gu whose recipe you're attempting to deduce. You also gain a -(Rank * 10) bonus on Knowledge (Gu) tests made to identify a Gu. Space thoughts vanish after 1 hour.

Vajra Thought Gu

Rank 1-5 Manifestation

Cost: 12 portions

Range: 25 meters

Health: 8

Food: {1, 4, 9, 16, 25} liters of Monkey Leaf Tea

Keywords: [Deductive]

Effect: Manifest {3, 6, 20, 50, 100} Vajra Thoughts. Vajra Thoughts appear as shining golden spheres, and can be manifested inside your mind or outside your body. Any number of Vajra thoughts can be transferred between your mind and outside your body as a bonus action.

When making the Deduction action, you may consume a number of Vajra thoughts up to your Cognition attribute to gain a bonus equal to -(thoughts consumed) on your Deduction test. The thoughts consumed must be inside your mind.

As an Activation, you can shoot a Vajra thought at any target within range. You may only shoot Vajra thoughts that exist outside your body in this way. On a hit, each Vajra thought deals 10 Force Damage.

Vajra thoughts vanish after 1 hour.

Wood Path

Wood path was discovered by Genesis Lotus Immortal Venerable. It generally encompasses methods involving plants, and excels at support and healing, having marginal defense and lower attack power than other paths.

Bark Skin Gu

Rank 1 Guard

Cost: portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Effect: Your skin grows a thick bark as strong as stone. When you take rending or force damage to your hit points, reduce the amount of damage taken by 6, to a minimum of 0.

[Upgrade Path: Burning Canopy Blessing Gu]

Photosynthesis Gu

Rank 2 Tonic

Cost: 14 portions

Range: Self

Health: 7

Food: 1 kg of green plants

Effect: Can only be activated while in direct sunlight. At the end of each of your turns, you regain 12 hit points. This effect only ends if you take damage to your hit points or leave direct sunlight. Photosynthesizing for 1 hour a day replaces your need to eat.

Chlorophyll Armor Gu

Rank 3 Tonic

Cost: 6 portions

Range: Self

Health: 8

Food:

Keywords: [Sustained]

Effect: A scaly green armor covers your body. While sustained, you regain 15 hit points at the end of each of your turns as long as you're in direct sunlight. Force and rending damage are dealt to the armor instead of your hit points. The armor has 80 hit points, and once it is broken, the effect ends.

Phoenix Mantle Gu

Rank 4 Tonic

Cost: 3 portions

Range: Self

Health: 9

Food: Ancestral Phoenix feathers

Keywords: [Sustained]

Effect: A shawl of light wraps around your head, shedding sunlight in a 30 foot radius. While sustained, if you would hit 0 hit points, instead the shawl bursts into flames and your hit points are restored to their maximum. Phoenix Mantle Gu takes 8 damage and becomes unusable for 24 hours.

Burning Canopy Blessing Gu

Rank 5 Tonic

Cost: 11 portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Keywords: [**Sustained**]

Effect: A miniature sun manifests 5 meters above your head, illuminating a 250 kilometer sphere around it. The light does not pierce objects, but it is extremely bright. All creatures (including you) within 10 meters of the sun are *blinded*. All creatures within 1 kilometer of the sun are *blinded* while it is within their line of sight.

While sustained, you return to your maximum hit points, heal all diseases, and regenerate all missing body parts at the end of each of your turns. You are also immune to rending and force damage.

[END]

Creamy Sap Gu

Rank 1 Tonic

Cost: 3 portions

Range: Touch

Health:

Food:

Effect: A creamy orange sap is secreted by your fingertips. You can rub it into a creature's wounds as a bonus action. Doing so heals them 6 hit points and cures them of the *bleeding* condition.

Dark Moss Gu

Rank 1 Concealment

Cost: portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Effect: Your body sprouts a thick moss that blends in with forestry. While hiding in a wooded or grassy area, **Awareness** tests made to see you suffer a +40 penalty.

Earth Communication Ear Grass Gu

Rank 1 Divination

Cost: 2 portions

Range: 20 meters

Health: 8

Food: 1 kilogram of grass and 1 kilogram of soil

Keywords: [**Sustained**]

Effect: Before being activated, the user of Earth Communication Ear Grass Gu must cut off one of their ears and allow Earth Communication Ear Grass Gu to take its place. While sustained, roots extend from the replaced ear and allow you to hear all noises, big or small, made within range. If you put the ear to the ground, the roots connect to it and extend the range to 100 meters, with the caveat that you can only hear things on top of or in the earth.

A large ear with roots growing from the eardrum. After a Gu Master replaces one of their ears with it, Earth Communication Ear Grass Gu slowly shrinks to fit their face and become more unassuming.

Fragrant Daisy Gu

Rank 3 Concealment

Cost: portions

Range: Touch

Health:

Food:

Effect: A large daisy grow out of a chunk of soil or stone that you touch, emitting a powerful fragrance in a 1 km circle centered on the daisy. All **Awareness** tests and investigative Gu that rely on smelling automatically fail if used within the area. Nothing inside the area can be located by scent either, except for the daisy emitting the fragrance. The daisy has a 20 hit points, and if it is killed or uprooted the effect ends. The fragrance does not cling to creatures that leave the area.

Heavenly Essence Treasure Lotus Gu

Rank 3

Cost: portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Effect:

Regrowth Gu

Rank 1-2 Tonic

Cost: 25 portions

Range: 3 meters

Health: 11

Food:

Effect: Choose a creature within range. That creature regrows a single severed limb {over 1 hour, instantly}.

Rot Gu

Rank 2 Catalyst

Cost: portions

Range: 3 meters

Health:

Food:

Keywords: [**Direct**]

Effect: Target a corpse or undead creature within range. If it is a corpse, it quickly spoils and rots before the skin and flesh sloughs off the bones and the skeleton disintegrates. If an undead creature is targeted, it rots at a slower rate, and takes 1/3 of its hit points (rounded up) in damage directly to its hit points. While sustained, the target takes another 1/3 of its hit points (rounded up) at the start of your turn.

Stranglewood Gu

Rank 2 Attack

Cost: 14 portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Effect: Select a 2 meter radius circle within range. Roots and vines burst forth from the ground, and creatures in the area must succeed an **Athletics** test with a +20 penalty or else be *restrained* for 1 minute. A *restrained* creature can remake the test as a *Combat Action* on its turn to free itself.

Thorn Burst Gu

Rank

Cost: portions

Range:

Health:

Food:

Effect:

Wood Charm Gu

Rank 3 Carver

Cost: 2 portions

Range: Self

Health:

Food:

Keywords: [**Dao**]

Effect: Your skin becomes bark as you transform into a tree spirit and gain the ability to absorb primeval essence from the surroundings. At the start of each of your turns, you regain 10 portions of primeval essence.

At the end of each of your turns, make a *Perseverance* test. On a failure, you gain a **Wood Charm Token** and your body becomes corrupted. If you ever have 10 **Wood Charm Tokens**, your body is permanently transfigured into a small tree and you die.

As long as you have 9 or fewer **Wood Charm Tokens**, every month you go without activating Wood Charm Gu reduces the number of **Wood Charm Tokens** you have by 1.

Wood Origin Gu

Rank 4 Carver

Cost: 25 portions

Range: Self

Health:

Food:

Keywords: [Dao], [Expendable]

Effect: You carve wood path dao into your body, gaining a **Wood Dao Token**. For every **Wood Dao Token** you have, you gain a -5 bonus to **Refinement** tests made to follow or improve wood path Gu recipes and reduce the amount of primeval essence used to activate wood path Gu by 1 portion (to a minimum of 1). Additionally, each **Wood Dao Token** you have reduces your base movement by 1 as your skin and flesh hardens into bark and wood. You cannot have more than 5 **Wood Dao Tokens**.