

SHISHIBUKIAN CONSECUTION

Suima | Aizo | Orensakino | Gisetno

By Dustin Harthorn

1.31.99. is a setting that has been in development since 2013.

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTIONS / External Lore of Harthorn's Universe:

Gyro-Varse and the Libramenescense Theories

History of 897

Shinmanaokimagi, Understanding

The Life of 897

Table of Contents

Suima's Tiger

? *Information: Shishibuki & The Lanai Initiates*

Arc 01: The Rabbit

- ? Prologue
- ? Lanai's Anniversary Celebration
- ? The Road to Caipat
- ? Bunker-City: Caipat
- ? The Rabbit Test
- ? The First Mission
- ? The Second Mission
- ? The Third Mission

Arc 02: The Koi

- ? The Fourth Mission
- ? Home Return
- ? The Koi Test

Arc 03: The Past

- ? The Fifth Mission
- ? Past: Kazemaru
- ? The Sixth Missions
- ? Past: Kuremu

Arc 04: The Snake

- ? The Seventh Mission
- ? The Eighth Mission
- ? Home Return 2
- ? The Ninth Mission

Arc 05: The Anken

- ? Anken: Invitation

? Anken: Trials

? Anken: Finals

Arc 06: The Rabbit

? The Day After

? Home Return 3

? The Return

Arc 07: The Rabbit

? The Chase

? The Reunion

? The Meeting

Arc 08: The Rabbit

? The Recruitment

? The Betrayal

? The Decision

? The Inescapable

Arc 09: The Rabbit

? Chained

? Rebels

? Civil War

? Past: Ara

? A Lost Clan

Arc 10: The Rabbit

? Released

? The Eleventh Mission

? The Hero

? The Villain

? Leave

Table of Contents

Suima's Lion

Arc 01: The Turtle

- I Homecoming
- II The Paths
- III The Twelfth Mission
- IV The Thirteenth Mission
- V The Turtle Test

Arc 02: Tsumi

- ? Senbō
- ? Namakemono
- ? Ōkui
- Yokubō
- Hokori

Arc 03: Toshimoro's Rise

- ? ???
- ? ???
- ? ???
- ? ???
- ? ???

Arc 04: A Dark Presence

- ? Ryuu's Bite
- ? Yugiri's Needle
- ? A Snake's Entanglement
- ? Shiraga's Agreement
- Juuzou's Word

Arc 05: Meian

- ? Taiyō
- ? Don'yoku

? Tsuki

Arc 06: Senoō

? Tasatsu

? Ikari

? Home Return 4

Arc 07: The Jigoku: Ends

? Friends

? Allies

? Nigh Peace

? A Hero's End

Arc 08: Death of the Last

? Hachiman

? Kouta's Truth

? Jigoku's Truth

? Shee

? Takemikazuchi

Arc 09: Toshimoro's Demise

? Twenty to Eight

? Eight to Five

? Five to Four

? Four to Three

? Three to Two

Arc 10: The Phoenix

? Home Return 5

? The Party

? The Goodbye

? Hyobe's Stand

? The Final

Table of Contents

Suima's Dragon

Arc 01: The Final Mission

- I Tanaka's Wealth
- II Kazemaru's Promise
- III A Warning
- IV The Snake & The Rat
- V Conclusion

Arc 02: The Inevitable

- ? The Past
- ? The Present
- ? The Future

Arc 03: Friends and Enemies

- ? Enemies
- ? Friends
- ? Frenemies

Arc 04: Nyx

- ? Naoya
- ? Kidnapped
- ? Old Friends
- ? Escape

Arc 05: Suima's Fourth Stage

- ? Suima's Fourth Stage?
- ? Akane

Arc 06: Truth

- ? A New Life
- ? The First MISSION
- ? The Snake

? The Memory

Arc 07: Kichirou's Intentions

? ???

? ???

? ???

? ???

? ???

Arc 08: A Snake's Bite

? ???

? ???

? ???

? ???

? ???

Arc 09: The Crossroads

? ???

? ???

? Justice

? Friends & Love

? Happy Ending

Arc 10: A Watery Grave

? Hard Rain

? The Rat & The Snake

? Til Death

? Orochi

? Sad Ending

Table of Contents

Aizo's Wake

I ?

Aizo's Repose

I ?

Aizo's Sovereignty

I ?

Focusing on the life of Wakio Ebon. The name of the series means Love Hate; also meaning mixed feelings, which is the goal of the story, to give the reader mixed feelings on the characters, story, and world.

Differences from Sumia;

Wakio is a 'chosen one', while Kuremu was a random in the universe, only holding relevance from his high skill, and brother's actions.

Wakio starts off much happier but ends much darker than Kuremu's personality. With the two having a kind of swap of personalities.

Wakio has family both at the beginning and end of the series where as Kuremu doesn't gain a family until the end of the first part.

One of Wakio's friends is Watatsumi Kichirou.

Table of Contents

Orensakino's ???

I ?

Orensakino's ???

I ?

Orensakino's ???

I ?

Shows life inside the society Wakio Ebon created.

Table of Contents

Gisetno's ???

I ?

Gisetno's ???

I ?

Gisetno's ???

I ?

Shows the fall of the society created by Wakio Ebon.

Table of Contents

External Lore of Harthorn's Universe:

Languages of 897

MAPS

Official Works within the Universe-1.31.99:2-897.

INTRODUCTIONS

External Lore of Harthorn's Universe

Gyro-Varse and the Libramenescence Theories

Gyro-Varse Theory; Archeologist and astronomer **Dr.Sam Grant** published his theory of the *Gyro-Varse* in 1989, which theorized that the universe is broken into four distinct parts, something like a machine, and further explained these parts as similar to that of a Gyroscope, giving his theory it's name. When explaining his theory, he stated that there is no greater or further universe which holds a collection of smaller universes, but instead a singular universe that held an uncountable number of what he'd call Varses, with each differing either slightly or greatly from one another. In the center of the universe, rests a ball, which he dubbed the Prime. It's considered the heart of the Universe, which holds the most stable reality, which he believed was too pure to be the world he had grown up in, and felt it'd be too egotistical to consider his Varse the center of the universe, instead he believed that his Varse was one of the various rings that surround the Prime. This thought however was argued by many and was ultimately discarded when people wrote about his theory in the years to come, with several people even thinking that he believed the opposite due to the writings of adversaries and cynics.

Past the Prime was three sets of Rings, ever rotating and spinning around the ball, these were dubbed the Inner, Mid and Outer rings, with each set holding a different level of attachment. The inner rings were so small that sixty to ninety percent of their body would be attached to the ball at all times, while the mid rings were slightly larger, holding an attachment of thirty to sixty percent of their body. The third and final set, the Outer Ringers, were by far the largest and would hold an attachment percentage of zero to thirty percent to the prime. These varying degrees of touch would affect the rings in significant ways, including changing their laws of nature, or in the case of the inner rings, the various divergent histories from the Prime.

For the sake of those less understanding, one of his assistants helped explain the rings as the 'Parallel, Alternate, and Other'. The Inner Rings would represent the Parallel, containing similar, almost identical settings with slight differences, which could range from divergent historical events to not so notable changes in a single person's actions. The Mid Rings, representing the Alternate, contain similar but notably different settings, with major differences ranging from major historical events to entire changes in the natural laws of the Varse. Finally, the Other, represented by the Outer Rings, was by

far the most different, with nearly nothing recognizable to the Prime, and including mostly different natural laws of the Varse.

Grant would include one of his assistant's theories of a wall that separated the various Varses, making sure they weren't constantly colliding and allowing them to slide past and through each other, which he would, an avid fan of boating and the seas, name the **Bulwark**. He would later include in his theory that there were possible events that could occur, tears in the Bulwark that would allow the Rings to meet and interact. These events would be called *Fetterings*. Fetterings would be the collision of rings.

Universal Properties or ***Libramenescence Theory***; In 1997, Astrophysicist and fantasy writer, **Dr. Baldur Fleischhacker** published an extension on Grant's Gyro-Varse theory, which he titled the *Universal Properties* theory. This introduced that each Varse holds layers which make up its spine, Dimensions and Planes which hold numerous laws and realities. Apart from this, he proposed that a Varse was made up of an unknown amount of planes, which he dubbed existences, and that these planes were only created through the collection of realms, dubbed realities. A realm, or reality, was what he considered to be the collective consciousness of an entity, which he and his team generally agreed to be life, in other words stating that reality is the willed creation of life. This theory, as well as Grant's Gyro-Varse theory, however didn't gain any form of public attention until 2006, when it found a revival and cult-following. Fleischhacker scholars would later retitle his ideas the *Libramenescence Theory* as the term Universal Properties would more appropriately apply to other theories.

The notion of the Bulwark and its tears were further expanded upon in the mid 2010s, after an event known as '*Prin-ess Rosim | BLACK*'. It is now an accepted theory that the Bulwark not only separates the Varses, but the different Dimensions and Planes in each Varse as well. Sometimes the Bulwark can tear open, allowing rings to collide; these collisions have multiple names, with each being used to define a different level of tear. The various levels have been described as such:

Grapnel: the mixing of two Planes, also referred to as *Broad Grapnel* when it's more than two.

Anchor; the mixing of two Dimensions, also referred to as a *Broad Anchor* when it's more than two Dimensions, a *High Anchor* when it's two Dimensions and a Grapnel, and a *High Broad Anchor* when it's more than two Dimensions and a Broad Grapnel.

Berth; the mixing of two or more Varses, also referred to as a *Wide Berth* when more than two Varses of the same ring set, and a *Broad Berth* when more than two Varses of different ring sets. *Broad Wide Berth* if it consists of two of the same set rings, and one of another.

Ring Fettering: Is when two or more rings weld together, causing a normally temporary collision to become permanent.

INTRODUCTIONS

External Lore of Harthorn's Universe

History of 897

On *November 1st, 2030* at 1500 hours, an event known as the '*Final Moments Speech*' was given by investor, entrepreneur, media proprietor, and philanthropist, **Zeke Zephyr Zerdin**; during which he would publicly reveal the existence of monsters and magic. This speech was mocked and questioned, however due to the world shaking events caused by the '*FiG Incidents*' that occurred through out the same year, as well as the succeeding, as well as the multi-governmental attempt to censor him; it became widely accepted to be reality; quickly causing a global panic.

To combat these monsters and the natural magics of the world, Zerdin had been secretly committing several heinous crimes, many of which included involuntary human testing, which would eventually result in many gaining unique super-natural abilities, which would gain several names, however according to Zerdin, their official title was *Eaftousia*.

These revelations would lead into several wars and within seventy years; the Third World War, which would lead to near complete destruction of a majority of the world. Fortunately, in the early 2010s, the U.S. and Shimafukian governments came together and created what is known as S.M.I.L.E. Industries who would immediately begin building large underground facilities that were originally meant to hold information in case of EMPs, however after the Final Moments Speech, they began to be advertised as protective areas from these super-natural things.

In 2070, S.M.I.L.E. systems were brought online, and a few had began to shift to being advertised as defensive resorts for the super-rich. In the middle of the 2080s, the first Artificial Intelligence Revolution, or *A.I.R.* occurred; while only lasting three years, it's effects were felt world wide as a massive global technological set back. Whip lashing the world to the early 2010s, and causing many families to move into the bunkers, where many would stay until March 2nd, 2090; when World War 3 would officially be recognized as started.

Lasting exactly nine years and costing an estimated 8 billion deaths, the bunkers would shut and lock themselves, saving and imprisoning humanity.

Life in the bunkers would constantly shift and adapt over the next five centuries, infighting began almost immediately in some, while a couple began to build their own governments. The S.M.I.L.E. systems set up an entire new world, including a new calendar which used the A.C.E. calendar, or After Current Era.

Eight decades after the bunkers came online, sixty years post war and bunker lock down, a man from one of the eastern U.S. bunkers, would rise up and begin bringing everyone together, either peacefully or by force. **Don Himagi**, who would go on to create one of the major new world governments; the Shin Sekai Federation, or S.S.F., which would hold several bunkers under it's power and protection, is now heralded as a type of savior. He would end the second A.I.R. and would lead to some of the first people to escape the bunkers and create a manageable and secure body outside of the bunker's safety.

During these five centuries, the entities that would survive the destruction of W.W.3 would evolve and adapt to their new chaotic surroundings, forming the life of the extremely hazardous *Precipices* of the U.S. and the *Mori-Seitoshi* of the Shimafukian archipelago.

INTRODUCTIONS

External Lore of Harthorn's Universe

Shinmanaokimagi, Understanding

Shinmanaokimagi (Shin-man-a-o-kim-agi), often shorted to Shin or Magi and alternatively called *Kioap* (Ki-o-ap) (which roughly translates to “Place” in Mandiac), is a form of energy that rests in the **Trencouption** (Tren-coupen-tion) (A fiber that ties all life to the **Trencverse** (Tren-co-verse), and acts as a highway, moving the Soul to and from the Trencverse)

It is often mistaken for the center of life, or the soul itself, this however is only partially true, as the Shin is more of a protective layer of the soul, keeping it nourished and from withering. This layer covers everything that holds some form of life from animals to plants. It has a mutualistic symbiotic relationship with *Wuyfreg* (Wu-ee-freg), in which Wuyfreg feed on it and it absorbs the ones that are close to death. A secondary part of this relationship is that not only does Wuyfreg eat the Shinmanaokimagi, but it also helps keep it in place instead of wandering apart.

Everyone has a different Shinmanaokimagi, however sometimes a single soul will gain two or more Shinmanaokimagi, if these two or more Shinmanaokimagi manage to properly merge, they will manifest in the physical world the soul is tied to, and be controlled by the soul. If they do not, however, properly merge, the soul will be devoured by them and killed. A large portion of the non-merged souls end up in Thiel, where they become a form of Echoes.

The manifestations of a properly merged Shinmanaokimagi with another, ha been broken into two trees; **Hoan** (Ho-an), and **Dlua** (D-lua). Hoan is often depicted as the positive, or lighter version compared to it's Dlua counterpart, due to one of it's forms manifests into a gold and white orb and the other manifesting into a purple and black goo.

Hoian is the pure manifestation of one's Hoan, also referred to as *Snoe*, is the manipulation of a mysterious mostly ethereal matter that can only form when someone manifests it into one of the five states of matter; Liquid, Solid, Gas, Plasma.

Dluan is the pure manifestation of one's Dlua, also referred to as *Haichi*. It allows for the manipulation of already established materials, altering their state of matter into one another, or more specifically change it's matter's phase of transition by effecting the pressure of the user's surroundings, as well as the temperature of an inorganic object.

Eaftousia (Eaft-ous-ee-a); came about from *Pneumaetic* (New-matic) manipulation, a mostly forgotten science from the mid two thousands. Becoming apart of a person's Pneumaetic makeup, Eaftousian users have gained types of natural super-powers, giving them a wide variety of effects and abilities. This has also become apart of a majority of the human genetics, and is therefore hereditary, passing from generation to generation. It was originally thought that Eaftousia fell more in line with the Hoan tree, however this has been proven false, and has since become apart of a third category which is outside the two trees.

Umbranguis; A unique form of Dlua manifestation which can only be inherited through a willing 'gifter' or parents as similar to it's Eaftousian cousin, it has become hereditary. It physically alters it's users, turning them into one of three species, depending on which 'infected' them; *Máncátír*, *Báaturíí*, *Runca*, each possessing their own unique properties and all kept secret.

Pneumaology is the study of the vital spirit, otherwise known as a soul, that resides within all things, from animals to plants to minerals. According to the current knowledge of Pneuma, there is a place either outside of the universe, or perhaps what is the universe's Prime, titled the **Trencoverse**, which all souls are attached to through a type of ethereal fiber which acts as a type of highway, moving the soul to and from the Trencoverse, named the Trencoupenion.

INTRODUCTIONS

External Lore of Harthorn's Universe

The Life of 897

Among the hundreds of thousands of classifications, the major populous agrees to the unscientific categories for life that started with the internet rumors and theories of the 2030s. Of the categories, there were; Cerynizn, Hathan, Astralic, and Artificial. Below is a brief summary of the most common forms of life;

Cerynizn: Is used to refer to all entities that originated from Ceryniotsklesu (Earth), however the below descriptions are only meant for the current races of human.

Deuman: Now a rare specimen, the title 'Deuman' (Do-man) appeared just pre-WW3 as a slur for non-powered (eaftousia) humans. Now synonymous with the title man, person, or human, as long as they don't hold any Eaftousia. They are average humans who hold no genetic or shinmanaokimagi mutations or unnatural alterations.

Further information: Through science, evidence emerged in 2024, showing that there were two different species that evolved into the humans we have today, with *almost* identical make ups. One making up the northern races of the world, and the other making up the southern races. When this was first discovered and publicized, it sparked outrage in a form that had rarely been rivaled within the genetics communities, with a couple of governments even censoring the publications. While occasionally talked about today, much of the conversation regarding this topic has died down, with most people generally not caring, denying, or simply forgetting it. It began being taught in schools in Euboris, however is rarely seen in any of the other continents. The two sub-species were; Vurlix, and Vurbris.

Neuman: Also known as human, or Neumen, Neuman (New-man) are humans who have shinmanaokimagi and sometimes genetic mutations. Originating from illegal human experimentation and then black market drugs before becoming legal operations pre-WW3, Neuman refer to entities, usually human, who specifically have Eaftousia. Post-WW3 however, as most facilities that had created the special conditions for which entities gained Eaftousia, they were passed down as a form of hereditary feature, most often from the mother, which gave evidence that the mother's

Shinmanaokimagi, at least a portion of it is lent to the child when it is born, presumably to protect it until it's own can fully manifest.

Further information: Since their publication, Neuman have been falsely placed into four sub-species; *Cryotic*, who contain powers over their body, such as Enhancement, Biokinesis, and Morphing; *Diaotic*, who contain power relating to their minds, such as Communication, Cognition, and Physical Effect; *Aemable*, who contain power over a specific element, due to this being so widely applicable, they are further classified as 1st Elements (Pyrokinesis), 2nd Elements (Agrokinesis), 3rd Element (Sonokinesis) and 4th Elements (Mercury Manipulation). And finally, the most uncommon of the four forms of Neuman, *Bolabel*, who contain power over Space, Time, or Concept.

Meuman: Also known as Freaks and Mutants, Meuman (Mew-man) are entities who have been mutated due to the apocalyptic elements that now make up the world. Despite holding a different name and being considered outcasts by most of society, they are identical in most ways to Deuman. It isn't entirely known how they've come to be, nor is it known why, however it is understood that it's a general side-effect of being born in the wilds outside the bunkers and major settlements.

Umbrian: Umbras, formerly known by their nick name, Kelta, are supernatural entities that have sparked terror and nightmares for centuries. A race of humans who've been inflicted with one of three strains of a unique ancient disease, they look and often behave much like normal humans of the other races, the only real tell-tale signs of an Umbrian is they often have pointed ears. Before WW3, Umbrians held a land, which they had bought from Caidanadi, where they position their Orbis Sanguis Terrarum government and called it Lumea Sangelui. Unfortunately most of their history, sociology, science, and immense knowledge on Shin-magi was destroyed along with their home during WW3.

Runca: Formerly the entities that made up the high government of Lumea Sangelui, Umbra-Runca (Um-bra-Run-ca) hold by far the best relationship with humans, although only a few are known to be alive today, spread through the S.S.F. Particularly susceptible to weight gain compared to their cousins, *Runca* were able to produce a variety of magics, through the use of special instruments. They have also been referred to as Sorcerers and Magicians.

Báaturíí: Formerly entities of Lumea Sangelui, Umbra-Báaturíí (Um-bra-Bat-ur-e), more commonly known as Vampires, are entities whose soul, specifically

the Dlua half, literally devours itself, causing a survival reaction from the body, giving enhanced senses and physical abilities for extended periods of time. Due to their Dlua constantly eating itself, an Umbra-Báaturíí is forced to find a substitute or replacement in order to survive, this causes the drinking of blood as it's a direct tap into an entity's life-force. As their Dlua decays, so does their sanity, which has caused different forms of Báaturíí to spawn. Due to a Báaturíí constantly ingesting new Dlua, they are technically immortal, as their body's survival reaction causes accelerated healing, and the new Dlua causes a type of reversed aging in the body, making them slightly younger with each new intake.

Máncátír: Formerly entities of Lumea Sangelui, Umbra-Máncátír (Um-bra-Man-cate-er), also known as Shifters, are humanoid beings that have the ability to shift into other forms, taking on certain animalistic traits, depending on their Dlua, leading to tales of Werewolves, Lycanthropes, and Wendigos. While they don't require another's dlua to live, their bodies are set on cycles, they are unable to control themselves during certain parts of these cycles and go into a frenzy, attacking any thing they see that hasn't proven dominance, typically this is against non-Máncátírs. This is because unlike their Báaturíí cousins, their Dlua doesn't slowly decay but instead engages a type of lock, which slowly instead activates and unactivates depending on their Dlua cycle. Due to their Dlua forming this lock which releases in types of bursts, Máncátír age at a slower rate than the average human, however do age and will eventually die.

Háthín: Hathan (Hay-thin), plural Háthón, are entities that come from the same varse, dimension, and plane as humans.

Myah-Zeitzho: Also known as Greys/Grays, Myah-Zeitzho are the most common Hathan to be found on Earth. Originally coming to earth in the 1920s when their planet began to die, a series of agreements were created between their people and the U.N. of the time to allow them to slowly ship their people into the states, however when rumors and stories began to run rampant in the 1980s, certain parts were changed, but still they were allowed to come. It is believed their people were housed in secret facilities across the world, and apart of the agreement was for them to bring pieces of their world, from soil, to plants, to animals, with them. Unfortunately when the 1990s came and video became a house hold ability, this agreement was once again changed, instead of just a bit of an alteration, it was fully canceled this time, as the leaders of the U.N. didn't believe the world was ready to learn the secrets of space. While it is unknown what exactly happened to their home and those who couldn't get off the dying

world, the Myag-Zeitzho who stayed here went through several horrible events, ranging from experimentation to torture, to even living a life of luxury as an assistant to the Emperor of Caidanadi. It wasn't until the 2030s, when Zeke Zerdin made his infamous 'Final Moments' speech, that alien life was truly accepted by the world. It was during this time that the million and a half Zeits were allowed to leave, and even then wasn't until the 2080s before they were allowed full freedom from governments, unfortunately this was short lived as the world went into a war during it's next decade. Now only a couple thousand still survive, however thankfully due to the many experiments done to their initial people, cross breeding between them and humans have become possible, as well as the creation of clones using the machines found in the S.M.I.L.E. bunkers.

Miel: Typically shorter, standing at an average of 4'8", the Miel Myah-Zeitzho have no noses, no noticeable outer ears, and only have a small orifice for a mouth with teeth somewhat similar to ours but coming to more of a point. They have no hair, elongated bodies with small chests, and lack almost all muscular definition with a visible skeletal structure. Their legs are shorter and jointed differently from humans, and their arms are longer. In proportion to their body, their heads are unusually large, and hold a very round shape, and their skin has an almost latex, silk like smoothness. Another thing different about them from humans is that they wield only three fingers. The Miel are unusually nice and often try to make friends with everyone and everything, but don't let that lead you to thinking they won't get angry, as when they get offended, they have been known to leave a fairly vicious bite.

Kauh: Very similar in appearance to their Miel cousins, the Kauh Myah-Zeitzho have a more triangular shaped head, and average a taller height of 5'1", with more proportionate legs to their bodies. Their skin is typically more loose and wrinkled. Unlike the Miel, they have five fingers. Almost all Kauh seem to have a love for squash, and give off a much ruder attitude than the Miel.

Branmik: One of the species brought by the Myah-Zeitzho as part of their agreement, the Branmik is a domestic fairy like creatures, and was the most common pet among the Myah-Zeitzho people on their home. Like their owners, there is a significant less amount of them still around, however the ones that remain are usually seen as a family pet of a Myah-Zeitzho family. Not much is actually known of their origin, nor what the species has been through since coming to earth, as they can't speak. They do however have face muscles which is how they tend to communicate, along with a series of high pitched grunts, chimes, and chirps, the chirps are similar to crickets, even going through a similar process to cause the sound.

Further Information: With a group of eight wings, Branmiks, also known as Brans and Miks, have humanoid figures, with bulging white eyes, green, almost stem like skin, feet that come to a point, no toes, and three fingers on wrist-less hands. Zigzagging mouths which hold a unique organ, replacing a tongue, this organ acts as a sucker that they use to suck up Algae, which is their primary food source. They hold no sexual organs, reproducing by budding seeds which are distributed by the mouth into a batch of algae. The seeds have a particular sent which are picked up by other Branmiks, telling them to stay away from that batch of algae. While first growing, Branmiks require a lot of food to grow, however once reaching maturity, they can go a full four days without any nutrients. Branmiks stand at an average size of 9-12 inches, and have a usual weight of 6-9 pounds. Their wings are long enough to wrap around their body, and commonly due when sleeping, acting as a type of sleeping bag.

Dirolt: A snake like jet black creature with a triangular head, the Dirolt is an extremely dangerous creature. One of the larger entities from the Myah-Zeitzho's home, it can grow up to be 10 feet long, and weigh up to 500 pounds. These creatures have dagger like fangs which, similar to the snake, are used to inject a venom which causes intense pain, usually causing the body to go into shock after an excruciating amount of time. The Dirolt has life stages, each possessing different forms of danger, however all just as lethal.

Astralic: Astralics, formerly Astrals, contain any entity from a different plane, dimension, or varse. This means there are theoretically an infinite amount of Astralics in existence. Below are the most commonly known Astralics.

Birlid: A giant crow/hawk like predator, Birlids are the one of the only known predators to Avecs and Retrics, aside from each other. With a length of 4'3", a wingspan of 7.9 feet, and an average weight of 16 pounds, they have 5 inch, razor talons, and a beak that can snap bone, little is above this creature on the food chain. Luckily, they appear to leave humans alone for the most part, however have grown a fondness for the meats of the Mumistian and Avecs. Aside from humans, Retrics appear to be the only thing that attempts to hunt Birlids.

Mumistian: One of four forms of anthropomorphic Astralics that appeared in the mid 2030s. They are a mammal-like race, who almost instantly made friends with the humans upon appearing this world, assimilating the culture very quickly, Mumistians come in all shapes and sizes, with an incredible amount of verity, so much so that a saying has been created; 'No three Mumistians are identical.'

Retric: Retric are one of four forms of anthropomorphic Astralics that appeared in the mid 2030s. They are reptile-like people who have found homes in the destroyed, radiated lands of the Precipices. Not much recorded information was saved in the bunkers of them pre-war aside from the fact that they existed, and therefore the first time humans met them in recent years was when the S.S.F. began venturing back outside. During the time of almost absolute death between the great war and the reopening of the bunkers, the Retric seem to have gained an intense rivalry with one of the other Astralic races that appeared with them, the Avec. Despite their cold blooded natures, and the first ten years of venturing out into the world again, humans seem to have gained a good relationship with several of the Retric tribes that now surround the cities, living in and outside the Outer City sections of the twin cities, with some even working in the sewage of the 'brown rivers' section.

Avec: Avec are one of four forms of anthropomorphic Astralics that appeared in the mid 2030s. They are bird-like people who have been almost entirely wiped out for various reasons, one of which was the dangers they posed to people. With massive bodies and even larger wings, the Avec were considered the most dangerous of the four, and often found homes around smaller to mid sized towns, picking off people in small groups. Due to their rarity and lack of recorded information of them, little is known of them today, however some have been seen on the roads between the cities.

Artificial: Artificially or non-naturally created entities which can serve a variety of purposes and performances.

Clone: While the first recorded human clone was in 2004, it was far from perfect, having a life span of a month and the intelligence of an eight year old, cloning has always been a risky and morally arguable subject however in 2012, an illegal scientist that worked for the slave trade in the black market created the first complete clone, due to it's amazing success, it caught the eye of philanthropist Zeke Zerdin who then brought the scientist on one of his teams. Cloning has been practiced through out history, both publicly and privately, although the first completely correct copy wasn't created until 2004.

Further Information: One of the artificially created species, with a population that was quickly rivaling humans. Clones are sterile human imitations with accelerated aging. Formerly only created in specific facilities along the coasts of a handful of countries, referred to as 'Islands', S.M.I.L.E. included a single cloning machine in every bunker, which unlike the official facilities, offers limited options, including the ability to change their aging rate. Apart of the process to create a fully

functioning clone, after being 'birthed', for the first ten years of their lives they must live in a specially designed area, with frequent interaction, where a brainwashing program occurs. This program continues until they are considered fit to leave, usually not until they're fully mature, which typically takes 10 years. Due to their accelerated aging, a Clone's life span is usually only 40 years, with it's first 10 being considered adolescent. Rarely are clones born and raised with the thought of letting them freely do their things in the world, they are usually birthed and raised for particular jobs, often these jobs include what are considered 'dirty' jobs, including personal servants, prostitutes, and janitors. One of the rules of the program states that clones, until fully mature, may only wear white, black, and grey. Another rule of the program is taking away all individuality and implanting no sense of division, unless their profession requires them to know of it. (i.e. Unless a clone is meant for sexual activities, they are not made aware of the differences between the two sexes) The official facilities were called Paradise. On paradise, the staff's clothing was color coded to indicate their profession, with Blue being engineers, Orange being doctors, Red being security, Green being evaluators, and a final color that is unfortunately missing from the data banks. Just before the war, Paradise facilities had just become self-sustaining, using clones as a source of bio-energy.

Robot: Robots have been a things since before the 1900s, however it wasn't until the 1920s before the term was coined, and since then they have only advanced and evolved. A long and complicated history comes with this territory, but we'll skip to today's situations involving these mechanical entities.

Ty: Also known as Tyler, Ties, Hitcher, Chained, and Tethered, are self-operating mechanical human imitations which bypass the Auton laws by requiring a series of wires to be connected to an 'outlet', computer terminals that are made specifically for the Ty attached to them. These outlets are used to turn on and program Tys.

Auton: Short for Automaton, are self-operating mechanical human imitations. Created for several purposes and perfected for war, these robots are typically only seen destroying, leading to fear and hate for them, along with their illegal status.

Android: The line between legal and illegal blurs with Androids, being the most human in appearance and having the most intelligence to operate as intended, their A.I.s often require check ups with special parameters being created to make sure they don't act abnormally. As well as this, A.I. placed in Androids are legally blocked from connecting to any form of internet, with their access being as available as

a non-cy-implanted person (Natural Human, without cybernetic implants). A primary place Androids find use is as service bots, being given to those with disabilities and in therapy.

SUIMA

INFORMATION: SHISHIBUKI & THE LANAI INITIATES

One of the newest settlements officially recognized outside of the S.M.I.L.E. bunkers in the Shimafukian archipelago; Lanai is located within the Tibo prefecture of the Iomoyos island. Founded in 433 A.C.E. by **Hibiki Toshimoro**, a legendary warrior who would pass it's responsibilities to his nephews; **Morimoto** (Lives with Forest) and **Getsueikirite** (Moonlight Cutter) **Entenryu**, it is on it's 60th foundance-day that the story begins.

Suima follows what is known as the *Lanai Initiates*, a group of twenty students, apart of the fourth generation of Lanai's residence who've been raised specifically to join the **Shishibuki**; a group of mercenaries who specialize in Matter Arrangement, or more specifically *Haichi* and *Hoian* powers, who hold relevance throughout most of Shimafuki's ancient history. Named after the final words of Shimafuki's greatest warrior; **Hirano Yoichi**; "*Shì shì bùkě*" which roughly translated to "I can not be everything.", they were once thought of as evil, and looked down upon, however after their revival, they are heralded as one of the few pieces of Shimafukian history to be kept intact, and therefore are held in high regard.

Having taken an oath to exclusively use their training and abilities for the good of their people, the Shishibuki are one of the four military factions in the *Mori-Seitoshi* of the Shimafukian archipelago, the other three being the; **Yakuza**, **Rōnin**, and **Yoioishi**.

Hibiki, to form Lanai, brought together four clans who had formed in the underlayers of Caipat; the *Ichihara*, for their swiftness, natural speed, and navigational abilities, whom he made the mailmen and watchers of the borders; the *Hosoda*, for their strength and highest standards of loyalty and will for doing what they thought best for their people, making them the settlements guards; the *Sakatani* for their natural affinity to the overly toxic waters, being capable of cleaning and manipulating the water of the land to make a habitable settlement; and finally the *Yoshisawa*, for their love and

knowledge of animals and beasts, making up the animal farmers and trainers of the settlement. Hibiki, knew of the dangers that the wild, as well as rival settlements and therefore devised a plan to put their settlement on the map permanently, making it one of the first major non-bunker settlements. Unfortunately it'd take too long to accomplish and therefore put his nephews in control on his deathbed, Morimoto would watch after the civilians and residence of the settlement, while his brother, Getsueikirite would lead the military and raise several generations of warriors who would become unbeatable.

With each doing their job, now exactly sixty years after it's initial founding, Lanai is booming under Morimoto's eye, however it is time for the finaly portion of Hibiki's plan that'll place it on the map. Getsueikirite has developed a unique military school, with the Yakuza taking control over the bunker-cities, and Rōnin wandering between settlements; the Shishibuki were reestablished in 212 A.C.E. to regain and hold some of the Shimafukian tradition, without having to be dragged into the political squabble of the Yakuza.

Getsueikirite's school has trained it's students to become Shishibuki, to counter the Yakuza from taking control over their settlement, as well as stand against any Rōnin or bastards that dare attack their home. It wasn't until after the plan was created that the Yoioshi began to become a thing, which has caused an upset within the Shishibuki ranks, as they view the Yoioshi as another possible rival, however have yet to have much in the way of issues out of them, most staying in or around the S.S.F. borders.

SUIMA

THE TIGER

ARC 01 - THE RABBIT

PROLOGUE

“Before recorded history; a woman from Purpong discovered she could alter the snow that made up the land around her. Not it’s color, but it’s shape. She was killed just shortly after for her unique gift, with people believing her to be possessed. After which many people began to develop this same ability and was initially believed to be a curse, given by the women with her dying breath. The west would dub this ability ‘Snoe’ due to this story, however the story they would share excluded many details. In truth, the story explains the discovery of Haichi while teaching children the importance of secrets, honesty, and trust. The west’s Snoe is the *creation* of a state using a unique, mostly mysterious form of matter that seems to be ethereal, or incorporeal, until formed into one of the five states, where as Haichi is the ability to *manipulate* already created materials, altering their state from one to another, or more specifically their state of transition.”

Finishing up, Kakkonosu; a teenage boy with long, thick, shiny hair; looked to his tall, slender teacher who gave him a nod of satisfaction before questioning in a deep voice,

“Better than your last one, Kaminaga, but what’s the title of those capable of using Haichi?”

“*Hatsudō*.” Kakkonosu snaps back quickly yet lazily. “Hatsudō are the users of Haichi, however there are specific Hatsudō who specialize and focus in their Haichi development. Using it for more than just occasional aid, they make a living off of their abilities; titled the *Shishibuki*. Not so unlike the S.S.F.’s Yoioishi with their Eaftousia. They are also sometimes mistaken for Haichibuki, an off-shoot of the Shishibuki who work within the S.S.F.’s military, using their Shishibuki training, however holding and representing none of their disciplines or ideals.”

With a slow, almost unintentional nod, Kakkonosu escaped the podium and returned to his seat; the teacher offering him a small applause before replacing him in front of the class.

“As you are all aware; today is the final day of class. Many of you, who have been deemed ready, by either myself or one of the appropriate officers, will be leaving the settlement in just a few days.” The teacher takes a pause, his lips forcing a small tremble before he clasps them. “A dangerous journey is ahead of you, and I’ve done all I can to ensure you’re ready for what may occur... However, if any of you don’t make it... I want to let you all know... These past five years of teaching has been an honor for me. You are all good young men and women and my final piece of advice for you; *take nothing for granted, and keep your senses about you; no one is to be trusted, and nothing is to be doubted, fore the moment you do either, you’ll die. Each betrayal, begins with trust.*”

Taking a moment for dramatic effect, followed by a deep breath, he finished off the day. “Tomorrow is the sixtieth anniversary celebration of Lanai’s founding. Make sure to dress nicely because there is going to be a dance for those of you who’re supposed to leave... Grab a partner and have a good time, because afterwards is when they’ll be announcing who all got passed and are supposed to leave.”

“Excuse me!” One of the students questioned, raising a hand. “When are we supposed to be leaving?”

Ignoring the students disregard of the rules, already knowing they didn’t pass, the teacher gave a nod to them. “That’s up to you all. The moment you learn rather or not you passed, you become an adult... Actually, starting now, you’re your own person. As soon as you pass through these doors, you can leave.”

Pressing a button on his phone-like device, the digital board behind the teacher turns off; dismissing class for the day. Giving a respectful bow to each of his students as

they pass, misty eyed as he was aware many weren't yet ready, however he had been forced to

“Hah! *I told you!* Everyone doubted me!” An exciting yell slips from Seiki's throat as he kicks a rock out of his way. A fist bump that nearly pummels his peer strikes the air as he throws his bag to the ground before pointing to the tallest building in the settlement; the prison which was strangely built in a vertical spiral as opposed to the traditional holes for the region, to which he continues, “But look at here! My future is smelling just fine, isn't it!? ‘*You're a bunch of bakers*’ they said, ‘*you'll just get yourself hurt before you even start for the shishi*’ they said. Well I'll come back only when I'm head of the shishibuki, and that's what *I said!*” Pointing to one of his passing peers, he gave a series of air strikes accompanied by silent “Yeah!”s, causing a few to raise their brow, and a couple to laugh at his silly behavior.

A sharp pain causes Seiki to quickly wince and grab the back of his head. Glancing back to find another boy walking his way, tossing a pebble around in his hand, who lets out in a higher, almost nagging voice, “Stop shouting, *Sicky*, you're annoying everyone.”

“Seiki.” is said under his breath, correcting the newcomer before he gives a brighter look to the rude sourpuss. “Sabani! How're you doing!?”

“Better than you.” The well kept ruffian replies, with his chin held high, some small twig sticking out of his mouth as he teethed it. A high collared jacket, with wide sleeves that end just after the elbow cover another piece of clothing, which is evident by it's sleeves, which road down to Sabani's wrists. His pale complexion indicates he keeps to the shade, and hinting to his life in a bunker before his family entered the settlement.

“No thanks to you.”

“I was hoping that trash Yujinko would be with you.” Sabani explains, ignoring Seiki's words and giving a sigh as Seiki, who had stopped to let him catch up, turns and begins walking alongside him. “Which is the only reason I speak to you now. You usually know where *it* is.”

“Nomi? Nope.” adding in whisper “both of you skipped the last day.” Causing Sabani to let out another sigh and tilt his head to watch the sky, saying in an annoyed tone and giving a stretch to his toes, noticed due to chosen footwear; sandals.

“Figured you’d know as you two are friends.”

“Doesn’t mean I’ll know where they are all the time.”

“Well *think*, Kaorai. Because while I have no want to speak with either of you, I was put in charge of giving everyone a message, and you’re the last two.”

“What message?”

“Nu-uh. I’ve already told this thing to seven people, don’t feel like saying it two more times, so if it’s all the same, *and it is*, I’ll refrain from passing it until I have both of you in front of me.”

Seiki scoffs before taking a moment to examine one of his female classmates, saying just as she escapes his vision, “They’re probably home, can’t think of them doing much outside of taking a day to rest.”

“Home? Thought *it* lived with the-.. No.”

“With the Yoshisawa’s.” Seiki said before letting out a grunt as he ran into Sabani, who had stopped and eyed him; his outfit made up of some of the thinnest materials, with most of his clothing being semi-transparent, the exception of the headband that covered his forehead, helping prop up his hair, keeping it in the spiky fohawk style it seems to naturally grow in, and a kind of skirt that is worn under his garb. “Why’d you stop?”

“Because Yoshisawa’s is the other way, Kaorai.”

“Oh.. Yeah” Turning around, Seiki begins walking towards the Yoshisawa residence, Sabani followed just behind, the pebble still being tossed in his hand.

“How about Kuremu?”

“What about Kuremu?”

“Know where he is?”

“Kuremu?”

Sabani paused, unsure of how he should respond before just nodding with an annoyance and a groan, stating “... Yes.”

“I don’t know, heard he was going to be training with that one weirdo.”

“*Ryama?*”

“Yeah, that was his name... Wait, how did you know Haidoshu was the one I was referring to?”

“Because he’s the only kid in class that’s weirder and more of a loser than you.”

“Wha- I take *mighty* offense to that.”

“Good, maybe it’ll get you to hurry up and lead me to my target so I can return to not acknowledging your existence.”

“You’re literally the least liked guy in school. You hold no friends, if there is anyone that can be considered a loser, it’d be you.”

“And yet I top most of you in all our tests.”

“Completely false.”

“Would you shut up and tell me where they might be?”

“If he’s with Haidoshu, he’s probably somewhere around Yoshisawa’s too.”

“What? Why would they be there?”

Seiki loses himself in thought, completely forgetting to respond to Sabani, who after a few steps, turns to bark at him for not responding but notices Airakase Sanjou just a few meters behind them as she turns a corner, his thoughts clouding with her silk blonde hair, causing him to instead settle with the quiet threat of “Better respond to my next question, paper boy.” as he didn’t want to get her attention.

Some time goes by as Sabani has been occasionally letting out mumbles to himself, folding his arms behind his head as they walk while Seiki leads the way, his thoughts clouding his ears to his rude companion’s occasional hostile slip of the tongue. Eventually stepping off the main road and entering a sect of walled in land which is further divided by several sets of fences.

“God, I hate walking by here.” Sabani bellows, grasping his face to try and cover the stench that doesn’t appear to bother Seiki, if he even notices it.

“And I hate knowing that I have to deal with people like you.” A higher, boyish voice states from the side, causing the two to peer over, where they find a classmate of theirs; Dobutsumé Yoshisawa, a young woman of their age with a mostly androgynous appearance, sporting short, jaw length orange hair that’s kept down by a dark beanie. A

short-sleeved hide vest buries the rips in her elbow length dirty shirt that reveals her chores for this day had been mostly yard work. “But that doesn’t cause me to go to your place and insult it.”

“Maybe if you kept your *pets* clean, I could walk by without feeling like I’m in the sewage rooms.”

“I’d prefer smelling the fresh air and residue of life everyday than spending a few days within the death trap and degenerative compass that are those bunkers you drone on about.”

“Only because you were raised with these animals.” Sabani barks before Seiki steps up, cutting the squabble short.

“Sumé, we’re looking for Nomi and Kuremu, are they here?”

A moment of silence is held as Dobutsumé stares at Sabani with a bit of disdain, causing an awkward tension that is cut by a nearby animal giving off a coo before continuing it’s grazing. “Kuremu, huh?”

“You deaf and daft? Yes, the Kichirou. Black hair, slanted eyes, looks too much like a majority of the people in this awful village but holds less blood with them than I do.”

She gives a snarl to Sabani before waving towards a direction opposite of them. “Nomi is over there, with the Pidjits.”

Giving a bow of the head, Seiki thanks Dobutsumé and turns to find Nomi, leaving Sabani who hesitates to reiterate his second target, but decides against it, following Seiki.

“Nomi!” Seiki called, getting close to the Pidjit pin, a multi-horned woolen creature whose back reached just past the average human’s head. It’s mouth revealed it to be a herbivore, however the large helmet-like exoskeleton that sat on it’s head hinted the creature could likely break the stone walls that kept all animals within the borders of the Yoshisawa land, it’s height and size certainly proved it could escape the small fence that held it’s territory. Though this was simply the alpha, the rest of the pack was slightly smaller, still nothing a man could throw, with a less exposed skull, and smaller horns.

“Nomi?!” A faint voice questioned before a cloaked silhouette appeared atop of one of the Pidjit.

“Why’d you skip class?”

“Class? Thought that was tomorrow?”

“No, today was the last day!”

“Oh, nooo!!” Jumping from their steed, a face with both feminine and masculine features stumbled closer to them, questioning “I thought today was a free day, like a.. ‘*Congrats, you passed, here is some rest*’ type of thing.”

“That is the dumbest excuse you could have made.” Sabani chimes in.

“It’s no excuse, people get rest days all the time.”

“From school? From work? Those are called weekends, idiot, plus it’s the last day, why would they give you a rest day just before the last day?”

“Well why weren’t you in class?” Seiki questioned

“Because I can’t stand that retard of a teacher you guys have. He knows nothing of the world outside of his home.”

“Shoko?” Nomi piped “Wasn’t he in that last major war?”

“Ignore him, he’s just being him.” Seiki stated, causing Sabani to give him a double take before he paused and said “Actually, we’re here because he has something to say.”

“God, you’re so fucking stupid, like incredibly so. I’m sure it’d be interesting to some dumb professor to research you, that’s how fucking retarded you are.”

“If he’s a professor, I don’t think you can call him dumb.” Nomi let out.

“No, not his intelligence, his field of study, is on dumb shits like you two.”

“You could have worded that better.” Seiki says, leading to Sabani to clench his fist and think about swinging at his former guide.

“Calm down, we’re almost done.” Sabani says to himself, quietly, causing Seiki and Nomi to question what he was doing, which he ignored and let out the message he was sent to give. “Sakatani and Kaminaga had a discussion with some of the other guys, and decided it’d be best to split into two groups. One leading each.”

“Oh, that’s interesting, wonder why not one big one, it’d be safer.” Nomi let out, cutting Sabani off unintentionally.

“We’re heading out the day after the festival. And it’ll be less attention drawing. Less noise.”

“But there’ll be less of us to defend each other. What if something happens to Kubo and I’m not there.”

“Thanks, Nomi. But I’m sure we’ll be on the same... Team?” Seiki chimes in

“Group, and actually no, you won’t. Nomi goes with Sakatani, Seiki, you’re with Kaminaga.”

“Wha- Nooowa.” Nomi lets out with saddened eyes as Seiki gives a “Hmph”.

“That’s if either of you were chosen to be ready, which if I were a betting man, and I am, you aren’t. So... No need to go crying over each other about being split apart, you’ll stay here with the rest of the losers, while the rest of us go and do something in the world.”

“Gambling is bad for you.” Nomi brings up a Seiki waves his hands nonchalantly in an attempt to just let it pass.

“Welp, that’s my job done. Now, know where is Kuremu?”

“Kuremu?” Nomi questioned

“Why is everyone questioning his fucking name? Does he have any others?”

“No, I just.. You don’t... *Ever* talk to or about him.”

“Yeah, why are you looking for him, anyways? Got a message for him too?” Seiki questioned

“Something like that, now do you know where he is or not?”

“Well, he sometimes trains over in the Jepnic area, but.. I haven’t seen him around in a few days.”

With a shrug, Sabani turns and lets out a scoff “Fine, whatever, I tried.”

“Maybe we can give him the message next time we see him.” Nomi offered

“Nope, don’t bother yourselves. Just go back to playing in your filth.”

“Wait a second..” Seiki brought up, sprinting towards Sabani who had began to walk away some time before, questioning as he got closer. “You skipped today.”

“Already went over this.”

“How did you know what Tensakami and Kakkonosu had came up with?”

“Because they made it a few days ago.”

“Oh.. Then do you know of the dance?”

Letting out a sigh, Sabani continued to walk, questioning “What dance?”

“Before they announce who all passed, during the celebration, there is going to be a dance.”

“Oh, goody, permission to take Nomi?”

“N-nomi? ... I mean, I didn't know you liked them.”

“Figures you wouldn't get sarcasm.”

“I mean, if you want, I won't stop you.”

“It was sarcasm.”

“But they're not a very good dancer.”

“Shut up!” Sabani snaps, “Just stop talking!”

“Not a very nice way to treat your friends.” Dobutsumé adds from near by, wiping the sweat from her forehead as she stood from her squatted position.

“*Friends? Who on earth would consider me friends with them?*”

“I couldn't see you friends with anyone, but Kubo is nice enough to you.”

“Ah, thanks, Sumé!” Seiki mentioned with a smile.

“No, we're not friends, we're not even associates.”

“Well we're associating.” Seiki stated, looking between the two.

“I can not explain to you, just how much I dislike you.”

“Funny, I can say the same to you.” Dobutsumé says, her hand having raised since her last words, with a large arachnid-like creature crawling along it, causing Seiki's eyes to widen as he looked over and Sabani to growl with annoyance before rolling his eyes and leaving the scene, Seiki attempting to give a wave but finding it difficult to look away from the arachnid.

SUIMA

THE TIGER

ARC 01 - THE RABBIT

CHAPTER 01: LANAI'S ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

A C sharp minor, D minor, followed by an E minor rings from a scratched, beaten up light gray electric guitar as it's owner calls into the microphone from a hoisted stage that can only be accessed through the prison it's attached to. The musician's strums officially beginning the 60th anniversary celebration as night begins to fall on the ever lively settlement of Lanai.

Stalls make up the main street of the large community, vendors selling foods, trinkets, offering entertainment and quick games, causing people, both residence and those passing through, to wonder; packing the small city streets.

Colorful lights, from red to blue, green to orange, yellow to purple give vision as the sun sets. Children running around with their families and couples hold hands as their pictures are taken. Everyone dressed in their nice, ceremonial attire with the exception of those passing through, who instead opt for one of the ceremonial masks that're sold through out the festival. The music of the stage, echoes through the city streets, as even the prisoners occasionally give dances and are offered food from the stalls by their guards.

A loud, abrupt sneeze breaks the silence that had developed between Urasadi and Hotonashi as she; a young woman who is currently dressed in a light colored tsukesage; a type of formal-wear kimono that holds motifs across the back-right shoulder and back-right sleeve, in this case a red forest; along it's front-left shoulder and front-left sleeve, and symmetrically along it's hem is a rather pretty depiction of a dark smoke-like therianthrope which represents the kami of mystery; sometimes also believed to be the kami of romance, and it's followers; gave her friend a prayer, to which he thanked her.

Urasadi, a young man who is so dark skinned for the region that he is often questioned if he's actually from the S.S.F.; a country of mixed culture and people; raises his hand, causing his formalwear's sleeve to slide back, revealing a series of tribal-esque tattoos that are also unique to him for the region, as well as hinting to his punk-like history. Bringing it back down, holding a large stick of food, reminiscent to a cob of corn with some form of brown, honey-like condiment covering it.

Stepping away from the stand, Urasadi wrapped an arm around Hotonashi's shoulders and took a big bite from his food stick, before questioning with a mouth full.

"This guy is pretty good, but from what my brother said, Rib-ter and" pausing for a moment to swallow, Urasadi continues "And Vos-Taurtul are supposed to play tonight."

"Taurtul? Really?" Hotonashi questioned as a child split them apart, running between them

"Yep, though I think I heard Incubation left a few months ago, so we'll see how the new basis is.. Still can't wait to see them in person!"

As they come back together, continuing their conversation of music, they pass another, much smaller stage than the musician's, who features a group of interpretative dancers, who're playing in line with the music, forming a type of silent play, which has caught the attention of Chikai Bunkara; one of their peers who has kept mostly to himself over the years.

Watching the dancers intently, a smile creeps across his face as he wipes his longer hair across his head, getting it out of his face. A small scar marks the bottom half of his chin, his formal guard consisting of an oddly chosen mix of maroon and gray, with no specific designs, but still seems to fit him, if no one else.

Just a bit further down the street is a stand that holds a water gun festival game, where the one who hits the target the longest wins. Among the twelve contestants for this round are Naruhatsu; who wore a short skirted, long sleeved, white kimono a red cloud crest, which was kept shut with a red waist sash, and a red and yellow stole, which contrasted with her unmistakably natural long blue hair that she usually wore down, and paler than usual skin, which bordering being whiter than a ghost; and Richaku, who was only there from being dragged to it by Naruhatsu, who had forced him to come along to the festival.

His facial expression showing he was as bored as ever, choosing not to participate in the ceremonial dresswear, he instead spouted a pair of shin-high gray pants with a faded green vest that covered a light gray t-shirt with a large collar.

While Richaku would have been perfectly content laying on his bed, eating a normal bag of crunchion-sticks (a type of chip-like snack sticks), reading through the various books that he had, he looked over to Naruhatsu as the game vender gave a ring to signal them to be ready, to see her grow a smirk, orange eyeliner colored her unusually pale face, as he realized she was about to cheat, controlling the heat and pressure of the gas in the gun she held, she was able to produce a perfect balance that allowed her to stay on target while one of the other contestants; a small child whose parent had looked away for a brief moment was tossed back just enough by the normal power of the water gun to cause him to fall from the stool that held him and crash into the ground.

As the child gave out a cry, more from the sudden shock of the fall than any actual pain, Naruhatsu looked over, worrying, causing her to miss the target just long enough for another contestant to win.

“Uh-oh.” Dobutsumé says as she hears the whines of the child in the next street over, her acute hearing capable of even faintly picking up the parents dismissing one of the passbyers, claiming the child to be okay and simply over reacting.

“What?” Kanako, Dobutsumé’s mother; a beast of a woman with broad, muscular shoulders, and notably toned arms questioned, however was interrupted before an

explanation could be given as a customer stopped by their stall, asking for one of their specially made biscuits, which would be given to the customer's pet, a small, four armed lemur like creature with a pronounced snout and eyes that rested on antenna; a Kiarui.

Just a bit away from the Yoshisawa stall was Sabani, who held his hands clasped in front of him, standing before one of the shrines that were scattered through the city, he gave a bow and whispered a prayer for his ancestors to rest, but guide him if he veered off his destined path.

After a moment of whispers, he straightened himself and blew out the candle, finishing the prayer, it's smoke slithered through the air, revealing a masked man standing just a couple of meters behind the shrine, watching Sabani, who stared back at him for a moment, giving an expression of annoyance at the stranger's lack of respect before scoffing and walking away. Shouldering a few of the passing tourists, he raises a stick of meat that he had picked from one of the stands and takes a large bite out of it as the music takes a sudden tonal shift, beginning a more hard rock/grunge band.

Giving a bob to the beat of the drums, Sabani chuckled to himself as a familiar voice shouted to be apart of the Yuwa-Kenka; a style of sparring that involved removing your opponent from a ring, not so different from Sumo Wrestling, however meant for lighter participants.

Maneuvering himself through the lightly growing crowd to get a closer view, he watched as Nomi; now wearing a mask that only covered the top half of their face, with an afro wig, and a white cloak with sharp, black patterns that falls to their ankles. Raising their hands that shifts the cloak to their back, revealing their completely clothed body, hiding all skin with the exception of their lower face and light brown eyes, they call out to their *fans* in a borderline offensive accent, attempting to imitate one of the Timitian historical figures they had watched just a few nights prior.

“Don't worry, Lanai! I'll stop these... These *villains* from harming our reputation, and our beautiful home, for I am... Dramatic pause... *Mi-gea Abund-ance-Oh*”

This sparks Sabani to laugh harder than the crowd can clap, however after a moment, he calms down just enough to see Nomi's opponent step into the ring, wearing more typical Yuwa-Kenka attire of tight shirts and shorts. Taking a quick drink from their bottle, this unfamiliar newcomer gave a relaxed wave to the crowd.

The referee for this event smacked his hands, signaling the start as Nomi ran for their opponent and jumped at the last second, sending their knees into the tourist's chest and bouncing back into a handspring before landing back on their feet, sending the onlookers in an uproar as the opponent fell from the lifted ring onto the cushions that surrounded it.

“Mi-gea Abund-ance-Oh!” the crowd exclaimed, cheering the short, but fun spectacle as Nomi gave them a bow.

“Whoa, that was fast!” The referee iterated. “I hope the rest of the matches tonight don't go by that fast, otherwise I spent more time setting up than *actually showing*.” However the joke falls flat as the crowd deadpans him.

Looking around, Sabani took another bite from his stick as the next opponent climbed onto the ring and raised a flag showing himself proudly to be from another settlement, causing the crowd to boo, as Nomi expressed intense disdain on his masked face.

“I'll snatch that flag and cover it with dirt before I *really* start giving you trouble!” Nomi barked, still in the questionable accent, pointing to the newcomer who peered at them and said with a sneer.

“Do you really think you could defeat me, Mi-gea!?” The opponent putting on a more believable accent that caused Nomi to rear and gasp. “Fore when I; the Great and Powerfuru Okatara-Mun!” As he says this, he rips off the mask that hid his true identity to the crowd, unveiling that he wasn't a normal human as he was masquerading, but instead; the famous Mumistian Yuwa-Kenka participant; Okatara-Mun, a mumistian of canine-like features, his fur a nice mix of black and white, and his clothing a scheme of orange, gray, and red.

“O-okatara.... *Mun!*?” Nomi questioned, shaking as they had no clue such an opponent would appear.

“You did good against that no-name, background character, however could such a neophyte as yourself give me a *real* fight?” Okatara-Mun questioned, pronouncing real so that it rhymed with neo before he let the flag fly into the crowd as all the true fans of the sport were now locked onto the two.

“W-wh-well-why, y-yes... Yes, yes, I can... A-and I will! As a matter of a fact, it's I that should be questioning you, Okatara, should I go all out, or hold back, as I did with the last one I cast from my territory?”

Missing the referee's clap to start the match, Nomi is shocked by Okatara-Mun's speed as he flies across the ring and bites onto Nomi's cloak before twisting around and slamming Nomi into the center of the ring, where he says just loud enough for Nomi to hear in a broken accent "You forgot the Mun."

Letting out wheeze, Nomi finds themselves being tossed from the ring, past the protective cushions and into the crowd. Their mind racing, causing them to flail in slow motion, giving them enough time to questioning the series of events that happened before looking down to see Okatara-Mun standing from their all fours position, their paws just visible through their gloves as they pushed off the ground to become a biped once again.

"Ah-hahaha! Okatara-Mun, the Great and Powerfuru wins another match! Is there not any others who can challenge me-uah!"

Sabani lets out another loud laugh at the quick failure of the *Hero of Lanai*, as they landed into some of the audience, this time however, it was accompanied by another, higher-pitched, laugh, which caused him to look for a source, curious as who held a similar humor as him. Airakase, another peer of theirs who donned an attire eerily similar to Sabani's; a red kimono with a small, repeating pink floral pattern with gray highlights was just across the crowd from him, her bright blonde hair hung past her waist as she bellowed a deep hearty laugh that was rare from her.

Offended by her laughs, Kaorai, who rushed to Nomi's side when they were thrown, rolled his eyes and clinched his friend's hand, who looked to him and asked

"Go.. And avenge.. Mi-gea, Kubo." Letting go, Nomi dramatically acts out a death scene, causing Kaorai to look to the sky and give out a cry.

Sabani, seeing his crush, lowers his head and quiets himself, clearing his throat before taking another bite from his stick.

Climbing onto the ring, Kaorai says a few things to the referee who in-turn questions Okatara-Mun who nods in agreement to something the crowd was unable to hear. Sliding to Mi-gea's starting position and even getting in his pose, Kaorai puts on Nomi's mask, which he had taken after their 'death'.

"Oh-ho-ho-oh!?" Okatara-Mun laughed questioningly. "Are you, too, Mi-gea?"

"Something you obviously haven't figured out during your short stay here, Okatara-Mun... Is that we are *all* Mi-gea! Because we all hold the *Abund-ance* inside of us, **OH!**" Kaorai says, attempting to copy the awful accent that Nomi had put on.

“Oh-ho-ho-oh, no.” Okatara-Mun says to himself as the referee claps. “Since your previous version was so easy to throw out, I’ll give you a free moment to start.”

Taking Okatara-Mun’s offer, Kaorai crouches before jumping into the air and bringing down an elbow onto Okatara-Mun’s shoulder, which doesn’t seem to do much before the dog-faced opponent raised their paw and gave out a bark before quickly turning and lowering their body, sweeping Kaorai’s feet and sending him tumbling into the ring, where he felt a hard *Dog-Kicku*, Okatara-Mun’s signature, sending Kaorai sliding to the edge of the ring, however strangely enough not off of it as expected. The crowd let out a gasp before giving a bunch of cheers.

Just a foot of the edge had seemingly lifted from the ring just enough to stop Kaorai from falling off, however causing him to be disqualified as the use of anything aside from physical limbs was against the rules. Even still, his point was proven, Mi-gea, and by extension; Lanai, could take on, maybe not yet win, but at least stand up to what the outside has to offer, and would put up a fight if need be.

Okatara-Mun gave Kaorai a smile and nod of respect, watching him roll off the ring and onto the cushions in pain from both the kick and the small bit of rock that he had slammed against.

Almost three hours into the festival, just after Vos-Taurtul finished, the dance that had been announced before their show, commenced. The song that gave the mood was portrayed by Kanane and Kotaru, two more students, who sang and played bass respectably, Kotaru occasionally offering a soft, deeper backing vocals.

Among the crowd was Hayashi, Kanane’s cousin who gave a smile for his kin’s performance, even though he had no one to accompany the dance with, not that he had attempted to get anyone, or even wanted to. Dancing, any form, wasn’t much his thing, he instead preferred his meditations, which he had been doing prior to the announcement of the dance. At the nearby lake, which provided the settlement’s freshwater, where he had been interrupted by Kowasuki, Kakkonosu, and Tenaskami who floated past him in a boat lit up with decorations for the festival, and leading a large group of tourists and out-of-towners, who frequently came by to participate in lake events, as it was a clean, fresh, healthy and safe lake was more than rare to hear about, much more see and swim in.

However the interruption wasn't enough to annoy him, as he had expected something of the like to occur, especially due to the festival. What he didn't expect however was for his cousin to bring out a pair of small drums, which seemed to go oddly well along with her singing and Kotaru's bass; which was almost a solid black, with red cracks for a pattern.

As usual, Hayashi said nothing, nor did he particularly look at any of the people that passed, he simply leaned against a light pole and watched the stage.

A half face respirator lets out a rattling noise as Gaidoshu; dressed in a white hazmat jumpsuit with only a few hand-drawn colorful cartoon characters making up his festive design.

"This isn't so bad." Kuremu, another student who stands just beside a hunched Gaidoshu, says with a small smile as he watches Kowasuki; dressed in a red and black kimono with purple and navy blue firefly patterns occasionally marking it, which match her heavy dark blue hair, dance with Kakkonosu; whose attire strangely matches hers, with a dark faded blue and black coloring most of it, and a light blue and white pattern reminiscent of grasshoppers.

"Should... have asked her." Gaidoshu states after a few seconds as Kuremu gives an awkward laugh in response.

"No, I.. You think?" Questioning for a second, he shakes his head, continuing as his thoughts begin to bring him down "No, I.. They look much better, I mean, I.. I didn't even hardly dress for the occasion. Plus I don't really know how to.. Dance, just kind of.. Waddle back and forth."

Looking over to his friend, Gaidoshu's seemingly always wet, short wavy hair splits as he stares, knowing more was about to come.

"And you know, they're a lot closer, I get along with 'Suki, but her and 'Konosu are always together, it would have been strange to walk up and have him just kind of watching while I got rejected, you know?.. No, this.. This isn't so bad."

"You already... Said that."

"Did I?... Well.. Just reiterating it, I guess. It isn't. Nice food, fun games. Music's been pretty good, really cool seeing a bunch of bands live, we've never seen that in

person.. And look, I won this little thing.” Raising up a transparent plastic lidded cup, Kuremu shows a small idiosyncratic creature that contains an elongated, worm-like rounded torso and a strong, thick tail, an elevated head on a thick, long neck, with a set of round eyes that stare ahead of it’s body, which coils around a stick, a pair of ape-like arms hold onto the stick, keeping it from falling as it turns to stare at Gaidoshu, a flick of a forked tongue leads it to take a defensive posture. “Huh, guess it doesn’t care for you?”

“It’s.. Like a... Reptile?” Gaidoshu questions, his respirator letting out more rattles as he takes heavy breaths between every couple of words. Unsure of how to classify it, however recognizing it’s neon-blue stripped pattern on the black and red background of extremely keeled dorsal scales, giving it a bristly appearance, is a sign of toxicity.

“No idea, I’ll have to ask Yoshisawa later, for now all I know is it’s really cool, and I’ve never seen anything like it. The guy that I won it from told me it eats most of any living thing, from insects to mammals. Said it was a curious little bastard that can be fairly destructive if left unattended and something about it being as easy as it is difficult to befriend.” Looking at the creature through the cup, Kuremu gives it a smile, saying “I don’t know, I think it’s kind of cute.”

Finishing up their act, Kanane and Kotaru leave the stage, being replaced by Getsueikiritel; the head of the military as well as the school that has been training a portion of the Lanai children to join the Shishibuki. His voice through the speakers that line the streets causes a strike of depression to Sabani as he had finally worked up the courage to ask Airakase to dance, however was too late to get to her.

“First of all, on behalf of myself and my brother; thank you all for participating in Lanai’s sixtieth foundance-day.” A small croak escaped his throat as his rough, hoarse toneless speech paused. “For the guests and migrants, I am Getsuikiritel Entenryu, the brother of who you all know as the settlements leader. Normally, he is the one who deals with these, but... He’s *busy*.” With an emphasis on ‘busy’, Getsuikiritel continues, explaining that he shall be taking a moment to name the students that passed.

Most of the festivities halt, out of respect for not only one of the twin leaders of their settlement, but for the first generation of Lanai Shishibuki Initiates, who’ve spent the last five years of their lives, training harder than anyone to be sure they were prepared for the outside.

“Bunkara, Chikai.” Getsuikiritel starts off with, causing Chikai, who had been in a conversation with one of the dancers he had been watching looked over with a smile, not only proud of passing as he had been certain he wouldn’t, but feeling especially good to have been the first one called.

“Histori, Urasadi.” caused an abrupt laughter by both Sabani and Airakase that was ignored by Urasadi, who, without warning, hoisted Hotonashi into the air and spun around, letting out an excited victory yell.

“Hosoda, Kotaru.” Caused a death scream from inside the prison, where Kotaru had last been seen, leaving the stage.

Hayashi lowers his head and turns to walk home as he hears his name called, however he gives a smile when he hears his cousin, who shares the same last name of Ishihara, Kanane get called out as well.

Raising his hands and putting on a face of pride and fake humblity, Sabani lets out a few “Calm down, yes, I’m Sabani Jaidai, but calm down now.”, leading to the small crowd of people surrounding him to give an applause, which Airakase joins in on.

“Kaminaga, Kakkonosu.” comes to no surprise to anyone as he had held some of the top scores through the academy. Wrapping his arm around Kowasuki as the crowd claps around him, he gives them all a forced, but convincing smile, however holds no pleasure in passing, as he knows his parents aren’t there to hear it with him.

Hearing his name next, Kuremu Kichirou gives a clap with everyone else as Gaidoshu places a hand on his shoulder as congratulations, with only Kowasuki looking his way from the crowd, offering him a soft smile, which causes his face to redden as he gives a nod of appreciation.

The next name Getsuikiritel calls out; Makita, Richaku, forces a scream of excitement from Naruhatsu who had been worried his lack of interest and laziness would have too lowly affected his scores for him to pass, before she jumped into a hug with him.

“Mashimo, Kowasuki.” causes the loudest applause, mainly due to the fact that Kowasuki was the younger sister to Goushida Karakai-Hōdan, considered the war hero of Lanai, as well as it’s most famous resident. Letting out a breath of relief that she had been holding for weeks, a wide, colorful smile ran across her face as Kakkonosu embraced her in a hug, her eyes becoming misty from joy.

“Royama, Gaidoshu” is called out, but mostly overshadowed by the applause that’s still being carried for Kowasuki, as only Kuremu glances over and offers him a high-five, which he recuperates with a hidden smile.

After a moment, the claps and whistles begin to calm just to raise once again as Tensakami Sakatani’s name is called. While the applause is loud, it comes to surprise no one as Tensakami was considered by most in the settlement that knew him and the academy to be the best of his peers, surpassing everyone generally and only being rivaled by few in their specific fields.

Similar to Gaidoshu’s name, Naruhatsu Sakurai’s name is overshadowed by the expression of respect for Tensakami, with even Richaku looking away at the crowd around, ignorant to her name being called.

“Sanjo, Hotonashi.” Once again lifted in the air by Urasadi who celebrates his friend’s passing more than her, Hotonashi gives a thumbs up to the crowd around them. However immediately flips moods as “Sanjou, Airakase” is called. Sabani, however, lets out a fist pump and a toothy smile before freezing as he turns to see her laughing at his expression.

Suddenly, however, as his face grows red, Sabani too embarrassed to hear “Seiki, Kaorai” called out, feels as bits of pie fly up his nose, unaware of Kaorai preparing to throw a pie at him, knowing his name was coming up. Shaking and wiping the baked pastry from his face and giving a hard blow of his nose, looks to Kaorai who celebrates by pointing at him and calling out-

“If you were a betting man, eh, Sab? Well looks like you lost!”

A gasp comes from the crowd who all quiets down with the exception of Airakase who laughs even harder, leading to Sabani to rush for Kaorai who takes off running, starting a small scene that is ignored by most outside of the immediate vicinity.

Still giving an applause, albeit lighter, when the name “Yoe, Ara.” is called, many openly question who it was, only Richaku noticing her standing on the balcony of her apartment. He seemed to be one of the only in the settlement of Lanai who bothered to try and know her, as she purposefully kept to herself and made it clear during their first year that she wanted to be left alone after class.

The Yoshisawa stall explodes in cheers as Dobutsumé’s name is called, her parents squeezing her in a hug as her mother takes a moment to say in a warm, heartfelt embrace, “I’m so proud of you, Sumé!”

With only the name “Yujinko” leaving Getsueikirite’s lips before Kaorai pointed and laughed at Sabanai again, as the announcer finished “Nomi.”

“That’s two for two, if I was a casino, I’d kneecap you right now for losing and being in so much debt!”

Gritting his teeth by Kaorai’s joyful taunt, Sabani rolls his eyes, expressing “Whatever” before walking away, done with giving Kaorai the fun he was looking for.

A lot of the other students in their academy gave expressions of disappointment and sadness, however they were met by Getsueikirite stating “I see a lot of sad students in the crowd, as you realize I’ve finished off the list of passed students. To you who failed... Classes resume in two months, do better.”

Stopping himself, he lets the crowd finish their celebration for those who passed before explaining

“While his scores weren’t good enough to pass... I personally am going to pass just *one* more student.” The crowd growing silent, several of the failed students lifting their heads, hoping for it to be them. “Gakizuka, Shisei.” is a name that no one, especially the trainers of the academy expected as not only gasps escape the crowd but a few of the failed students cries as they run home.

An applause does not accompany this name, but instead questioning, not just of the decision but of the military leader himself, *Shisei*, the crowd is astonished. Even Urasadi and Hotonashi who spend almost everyday with Shisei pause out of surprise.

“That ends my part of this stage. Next up is Missing-Trees.” Getsueikirite states, before turning and leaving the stage, and leaving the crowd silent, which is only broken as Kuremu offers a few claps, unsure of if he should, as it’d bring attention to him, and sure enough it did. Slowing down for a second, as he grew nervous from the on-looking eyes, he swallowed his anxiety and gave a few more harder claps, before Kowasuki began to clap with him, quickly leading to Kakkonosu, with more and more of the crowd slowly growing to give a couple of soft claps, but not nearly as much as they had for everyone else. A few last minute cries as some of the failed students couldn’t believe they had been out shined by *Shisei*.

“Hey.. Where is Shisei anyways?” Hotonashi questioned as Urasadi shrugged.

“Probably at the gym.”

The night ran on, most of everyone, even the failed students continued to have a good time, Missing-Trees, an alternate rock band from one of the Western-most bunkers lifting the crowd's spirits.

The next day, a yawn seeped from Kuremu as he lifted from his table-turned-bed, giving a couple of stretches shortly after standing before shutting and locking the bed against the wall, where it hung.

Peering over towards his desk which was stationed alongside the left side of his room, just past where the foot of his bed had been before being lifted, where he grabs a couple of items and stuffs them into a satchel that had been lazily left in the floor.

"Kuremu, Kuremu!" A soft, higher voice called from just down the stairs, followed by a succession of footsteps running up them appeared, causing Kuremu, who hadn't even dressed yet, to let out an irritated sigh.

"What do you want, Suzu?" He questioned just in time for his little brother, Suzuki, who held a striking resemblance to him, just with wilder, longer hair, to open the door and call out.

"You made it!?"

"Yeah, I passed." He responded, not yet ready nor wanting to deal with this conversation.

"That's great, I'm glad for you!"

"Thanks." He dismissed, not noticing his brother fighting off tears as he asked

"What are you.. When are you leaving?"

"When everyone's ready, I have to meet up with them later, around noon."

"Oh.. Alright." Giving a wipe to his face to clear his emotions, Suzuki continued to stand in the doorway for a moment as Kuremu continued to get dressed, eventually being questioned as he was beginning to weird Kuremu out. "Oh, I just.. Nothing, can I maybe come with you? Not like.. When you leave, but just.. Hang out before then?"

"No, I have get back to training." The older brother responds, tying his red sash that holds together a dark tabard which covers most of his body, a dark blue loose shirt with sleeves cut at the bicep clothed his torso.

“But.. You’re always training!” Suzuki barks, angrily, sparking Kuremu to snap back to him, noticing his brother’s fists clenching and his breathing heavy.

“Don’t take that tone with me.” He let out, sternly. “I passed the academy because I’m always working my ass off, and what do you do? Run around and play with your friends! Well go back to doing that while I actually do something for us!”

“Like you’d know what I do, you never hang out with me, you never even talk to me unless I start the conversation, even then you’re always short and mean!”

“You don’t understand, you’re too young.”

“No.. You’re the one who doesn’t understand.” With that, Suzuki slams the door and rushes down the stairs, leaving Kuremu to grow in irritation at his brother’s lack of emotional maturity.

Giving the stick-bug that crawled along the arch entrance to the Yoshisawa farmland a couple of rubs along its back, Hayashi continued to walk down the dirt paths that made up their grounds, eventually entering the main building, which held even more creatures, which he made sure to get a good look at as he passed them, eventually coming to the main counter, where he noticed a stranger to the settlement purchasing one of the caged creatures that resided in the house.

Letting the customer finish their business, he walked up to the counter, where Dobutsumé sat, twirling a pen in her hand.

“What’s up, Ichihara?”

With a warm welcome, Hayashi offered a nod, making awkward movements as he usually did while standing in place. “Just wanted to check on my fish.”

“Fish?” Dobutsumé questioned with a rather inquiring expression, causing Hayashi to pause and stare at her through his round, green goggles. A similarly colored poncho keeping his arm positions secret.

“M-my.. My fish.”

With a light chuckle, she tosses the blazer that just barely covered her shoulders back onto the chair and shifted to get up. “Don’t worry, I’m just messing with you.”

With a skip of the heart, Hayashi relieved a sigh, migrating with the farm-girl through the house, eventually reaching some of the back rooms, where another boy was grabbing up a few small fish which the three would watch be thrown into a large tank with small eel-shark-esque creatures that quickly gobbled them up.

“Here you are.” Dobutsumé claimed as they walked up to a tank with the label [Ichihara, H. - Nawaki & Katsumi]

Bringing his hand from his cloak and pressing it against the glass, Hayashi let out a smile as the two large fish swam up to his hand and stared at it. Giving them a few whispers, he turns back to the young Yoshisawa and gave her a bow, explaining he was thankful for her time and that he was finished.

“Don’t worry, my mother said she’d personally check on them every other day.” Dobutsumé stated as they arrived back to the front desk, where they found Kuremu waiting, the plastic cup with his animate prize resting on the counter. “It’s not even noon and we’ve had eight people pass through, busy day.”

Hayashi gives Kuremu a nod but the two exchange no words, instead he engages conversations with Dobutsumé, replying “Oh? Well, hopefully I won’t take too much more of your time than necessary.”

Scooting herself back in her seat, her gloves warm her wrists from the cold counter as she rested her hands just beside the keyboard to the computer before her. “What’s that?” she questioned, nodding towards the cup.

“That is what I’m hear to ask you. I won it during a bet last night, figured I’d come by and ask you what it is?”

“What happened to ‘only people like *Sanabi* gamble’?”

“Not a gamble when you know you’re going to win.”

With a smirk, Dobutsumé picks up the cup and twirls it around, getting a closer look at it. “Hmm.. Well, it’s not something I immediately recognize, so nothing common to our area, who did you get it from?”

With a shrug and a scratch of his nose, Kuremu explains “Some stranger, wanted to be all mysterious, I thought it was just apart of a gimmick so I went along with it. He looked like he was from one of the southern islands, spook in a weird accent, just gave the name ‘Hansha’, but I think it was fake, like his dyed hair. Blonde. And while he looked our age, he was really tall, like six foot.”

“Kuro?”

“Hmm?” Kuremu stops and looks to the clerk

“Just want to know about this little guy.” Dobutsumé says, tapping the pinky of the hand that held it against it’s cup.

“Oh, right.. He said it was a rare specimen, but didn’t tell me anything about it besides it’ll eat any living thing, mammal or insect.”

Pendulating the cup back and forth in her hand, Dobutsumé stares at Kuremu through it’s plastic, questioning “Aposematism, but it doesn’t appear overly aggressive in nature.” The creature rests softly on it’s stick, watching Dobutsumé as she brings her face closer to it, sniffing the cup. “Nor does it have a foul taste or smell. The dorsal scales are likely sharp, but I doubt enough to cause it’s coloring, so it’s likely toxic or venomous, which may go in line with the notion that it’ll eat anything, though mammals are usually too big for something of this size.... Did he say if it’s water needed to be clean or wild?”

“Uh..” Raising his hands with a shrug, Kuremu shakes his head.

“Have you attempted to feed it?”

With another shake of the head, Dobutsumé places the cup on the counter and walks past a door behind her, leaving Kuremu standing in place for a few moments before she returns with a thumb-sized insectoid creature that is typically used for feeding small animal feeding and fishing, held within a hand sized plastic container.

“Think it’s a reptile?”

“At first glance you would probably think it reptile, but I can’t think of many with arms like the ones it’s using to hold onto a stick with.”

“Huh..” As Dobutsumé places the cup inside the box, he warns her “Be careful, he said that it was a curious creature and could be really destructive when it grew bored.”

“Oh I am, while it’s never good to be bit by something toxic or venomous, it’s especially not when you don’t know what it is.” Covering the box with a lid to make sure the insect doesn’t escape, she types a few things on her computer before looking to Kuremu and saying “And now, we wait.”

“Wait for what?”

“My mom. She shouldn’t be long.”

“She’s going to open the cup?”

“Oh no, she’ll probably have me do that, she gets real freaked out with the reptiles, or in this case reptile-like, so I handle them. I just want a second opinion.”

With a nod, the two wait for several minutes as the creature’s head eventually lifts from it’s perch and looks to Kuremu before shifting it’s gaze for the insect.

“Hungry little guy?” He asks, as he flicks it’s tongue to him, but he thinks nothing of it, responding as if it did “Don’t worry, you can eat in just a few more minutes.” With another flick of it’s tongue, it rests it’s head back on the stick.

Kanako, having taken her time, walks up behind Kuremu, questioning “What’re you doing here? Shouldn’t you be spending your last day with your brother and Kouta?”

“Oh, I.. I’ve already said my goodbyes, I’m just kind of waiting for everyone else, Mrs. Kanako.”

“Alright, if you say so... I can’t complain much, I have Dobutsumé working until she leaves.” Looking to her daughter, who explains the mystery creature, she is asked to give it a look over before they attempt to open it’s cup. “Well... On first glance, it looks kind of reptilian, so more your area, Sumé.”

“You don’t have any idea either?”

“No, it’s diffidently not something that passes through here often.”

“Huh..” Unsure of what to make of it, Kuremu crosses his arms and looks at the creature.

“How much do you want for it?” Kanako asks, taking out a bag from her satchel.

“W-what?”

“I can’t go any price, but I’m sure we can find a mutually happy medium.”

“No, I’m not going to sell it.. At least, I don’t plan to.”

“Can you say that with an offer like... Five Os?”

“Five Os?... *Five Os?!*” Kuremu jumped, not expecting such a high starting price.

“Five.”

“Well, that’s..” Clearing his throat for a moment, he looked to the small, hand-sized creature as it rested on it’s stick. “That’s a lot...”

“Is a lot enough?”

Thinking for a minute, Kuremu, shook his head. “I... I don’t know...”

“Tell you what? We’ll open it’s lid and let it eat. Depending on how it acts, I might lower... Or raise my price. And you can get a better idea if you want it.” With a nod from Kuremu, Dobutsumé goes to open the lid but is stopped by her mother who waves towards Kuremu “Normally, I insist we deal with new animals. But since we’re negotiating rather or not you really want it, why don’t you?... You can’t be scared of it if you want to keep it anyways.”

Another nod from Kuremu as Dobutsumé begins to argue but is stopped by her mother. Steadily grabbing hold of the cup, he gently un-tightens the lid to it’s cup causing it to raise it’s head, gaining it’s defensive posture as it had done previously with Gaidoshu. Retracting his hand from the box, he holds the lid to the cup, opening it to let the creature escape, which after just a few seconds of watching the three humans, it does.

On either side of it, long tendrils separate from the main body that stretch nearly it’s full length, enough to raise past the edge of the cup where the bottom of the top of the tendrils opens a single eye on each which holds vertical pupils. With another flick of it’s tongue, the two tendril eyes lock onto the insectoid as it’s main body begins to be lifted from the stick, it’s arms, revealing to hold three digits on either hand, lift it to the edge of the cup which begins to tilt from it’s weight. Before it does, the creature lowers the tendrils and uses the rough, scaled back of them to propel itself off the edge of the cup and onto the insect, where two pairs of small arms open from the lower half of it’s face, revealing it’s mouth to allow it to bite into and grab hold of the insect, which it coils itself around and begins to squeeze.

“Fascinating little guy.” Dobutsumé exclaims as Kuremu jumps when it did, not expecting it’s swiftness.

“Six Os.” Kanako says, unable to take her eyes off the creature as Kuremu glances to her for a moment before looking back to his pet.

“Did you see the two pairs appendages, just outside it’s mouth? They were similar to the pedipalp of chelicerates, but they were used to cover it’s mouth... And the way it’s... Constricting, it’s likely holding onto the bottom of the insect with those arms.. And the way it used those... Tentacles? To jump from the lid. “ Dobutsumé begins mumbling on about her interest in the creature, giving a play by play of what she just saw.

Hesitating to respond, Kuremu eventually states “I think I’m going to keep it.”

“Good. I’m happy you made up your mind, but if you ever want to let it go, be sure to bring it back here... I’m sure we’ll find a proper, more stationary, home for it.”

With a nod, Kuremu questions if they had learned anymore about the creature’s species.

“Sorry, but I don’t have an answer for you.” Dobutsumé responds with a lowered tone.

“Ah..” Kuremu let out, a bit defeated, but gave a smile after a moment to staring at the creature “Well, thank anyways.. Any warnings or tips?”

“If it’s a reptile, make sure it stays warm, they’re usually cold-blooded, so it won’t be able to regulate it’s temperate. It’ll need to bask, but besides that.. You’ll just have to watch it’s habits and learn to read what means when and when means what.”

With a nod and a couple words of gratitude, Kuremu is given the box for the creature to have more room, before being asked.

“I guess the only thing left now... What’s it’s name?”

After a moment of thought, staring at the creature in contemplation, he says with a smile. “Akane.”

“Pretty name, but why that one?”

“In my mother’s journal, she had wrote a poem.”

Finally, noon had set as the sun high into the grayish sky, it’s beams occasionally stretching through the clouds that littered the heavens.

“Thought the caravans only came during Friday?” Kaorai questioned, looking around the group as they waited for their last member to show up.

“They do.” Kakkonosu replied dryly.

“Then.. Why are we leaving today?”

“Because.” Dobutsumé, joined “This is the first task as Shishibuki. Make it there on foot.”

“Wh-.. What?!” Kaorai hollered, surprised and fearful as to the dangerous venture he wasn’t prepared for.

“Will you pipe down before I pipe *you* down!” Kotaru, a dark, spiky haired peer of theirs with specifically toned arms shouted to Kaorai’s shocking revelation, causing him to pause for a moment before he looked to him from the side and said with a flick of his wrist.

“I don’t think that came out how you meant it.”

“The point was made.” Kotaru let out through his teeth.

“Who the hell are we waiting on anyways?” Sabani questioned, pushing himself from the building he had been leaning against.

“Bunkara.” Kakkonosu stated, ignoring the squabble Kotaru and Kaorai was making.

“Bunkara? You mean that guy with the big ass sword?”

“Yeah.”

“Ah, damn it.. He’s always so fuckin’ gloomy.”

“And you’re usually annoying, but we’re managing to deal with it.” Dobutsumé quipped.

“Alright, d-don’t go starting with me, I’m just wandering why we had to get stuck with him and not someone else.”

“Like Airakase?”

“What?! N-no!” Sabanai quickly retaliated, pausing after realizing his panicked response gave away his thoughts. “I just mean that we could have gotten.. Someone a little more pleasant.”

“We have Kaorai.” Kuremu sparked, causing a bellow from Sabani.

“Hey, I’m cheerful.” Kaorai whispered, a bit hurt by Sabani’s laughter.

“I meant pleasant for us to be around, someone a little more.. Nice looking.”

“I.. *Can* be nice looking... Just prefer to do so for occasions.”

“A little more...” Motion his hands below his chest, Sabani’s thoughts are translated by Kotaru who calls out.

“He means a girl.”

“But.. We have Dobutsumé?” Kaorai questions, unsure why this even mattered as Kotaru battered.

“Sumé? Shisei is more feminine than her. Hell, you’re more girlish than her.”

“Ah, well, that is just.. Biologically inaccurate, and you know it.”

As the three lock into a badinage, time passes slowly for the rest of the group until Sabani breaks the conversation by raising his arms and calling out.

“Finally! Now can we get on the road!?” Looking over, the group finds Chikai walking towards them, Suzuki at his side as they approach.

“Suzu?” Kuremu questioned as Chikai, a sword just as big as him resting on his back at an angle, turns towards the child and rested his hand on his shoulder, whispering something to him before the two met in a hug and Suzuki runs off.

“Haven’t done anything but stand here and my feet are already hurting.” Sabani continued his small rant as Chikai entered the circle of the group.

“Sorry I’m late, I had some last minute things to do.”

“What’d my brother want?” Kuremu questioned, unsure why Chikai was with him.

“Suzuki? He’s a good kid, he was just saying goodbye.”

“To you?”

“No matter.” Kakkonosu interrupted “We’re already an hour late, we need to get going, talk if you wish, but remember that three miles is our border, past that, until we arrive to the walls of the city, we’re in Mori-Seitoshi. Keep your senses open, and if anything feels off, signal me.”

SUIMA

THE TIGER

ARC 01 - THE RABBIT

CHAPTER 02: THE ROAD TO CAIPAT

The group of teenagers make their way across Mori-Seitoshi, the dangerous wilderness that separates the settlements. The end of the second day of walking comes to an end as Kakkonosu raises a hand and motions a circle, indicating for the group to start setting up camp.

“Fuckin’ finally!” Sabani calls out before dropping to his knees, heavy breaths shifting his chest.

“How out of shape are you?” Kotaru questions, giving a disappointed expression as he leans against a tree.

Kakkonosu tosses his bag to the foot of another tree and gives a nod, causing Gaidoshu to vanish behind some of the bushes that make up the lush island forests. Looking around at the group, he offers a statement of warning.

“Make sure not to stay up talking all night this time, Sabani. Tomorrow morning we’ll meet the coast and get on the ferry.”

“The ferry?” Kaorai questions, a stressed appearance accompanying his words.

“You didn’t think that we were going to be crossing the sea by swimming, did you?” Dobutsumé mocks, placing a hand on her hip as she examines one of the trees.

Kuremu raises a hand to cover his view of Kotaru as he takes his junk out and begins relieving himself on a bush, questioning his lack of respect, however only receiving a middle finger in response.

“

SUIMA

THE TIGER

ARC 01 - THE RABBIT

CHAPTER 03: BUNKER-CITY: CAIPAT

SUIMA

THE TIGER

ARC 01 - THE RABBIT

CHAPTER 04: THE RABBIT TEST

The overseer of the Shishibuki recruitment and training depot is an old man named **Masaaki Takaoka**. The Samurai under him is **Kazuya Sato**, and his right hand is **Toshiyuki Koyama**, his former right hand was **Ikusa Sosuke**.

SUIMA

THE TIGER

ARC 01 - THE RABBIT

CHAPTER 05: THE FIRST MISSION

—

Akane's mouth doesn't have teeth, but instead a set of five blades set at an angle to each other which are used to slice it's victim into smaller, more manageable pieces which are then swallowed, it's saliva contains contains numbing agent that it can spit through a tongue like appendage that usually rests on the bottom of it's mouth.

SUIMA

THE TIGER

ARC 01 - THE RABBIT

CHAPTER 06: THE SECOND MISSION

SUIMA

THE TIGER

ARC 01 - THE RABBIT

CHAPTER 07: THE THIRD MISSION

SUIMA

THE TIGER

ARC 02 - THE KOI

CHAPTER 08: THE FOURTH MISSION

SUIMA

THE TIGER

ARC 02 - THE KOI

CHAPTER 09: HOME RETURN

SUIMA

THE TIGER

ARC 02 - THE KOI

CHAPTER 10: THE KOI TEST

APPENDICES

External Lore of Harthorn's Universe

Languages of 897

Herish; An amalgamation of former languages, Herish is the most common language through out Ceryniotsklesu, named after it's continent of origin: Hera.

Mandiac; One of the oldest languages in the world, often thought to be forgotten, from the old-world Mandiash, taught at Umbrian colleges pre-war, it is considered to be the language of the dead as it's primarily spoken by the Umbrians.

Eisinian;

Shinese; The language of the Shimafukians, it has been watered down highly from it's pre-war variant.

Adarian; Adarid

APPENDICES

External Lore of Harthorn's Universe

MAPS

Map of the Cherinoski Solar System:

Noski is the star.

Kloanial is a Chthonian type.

Bima is _

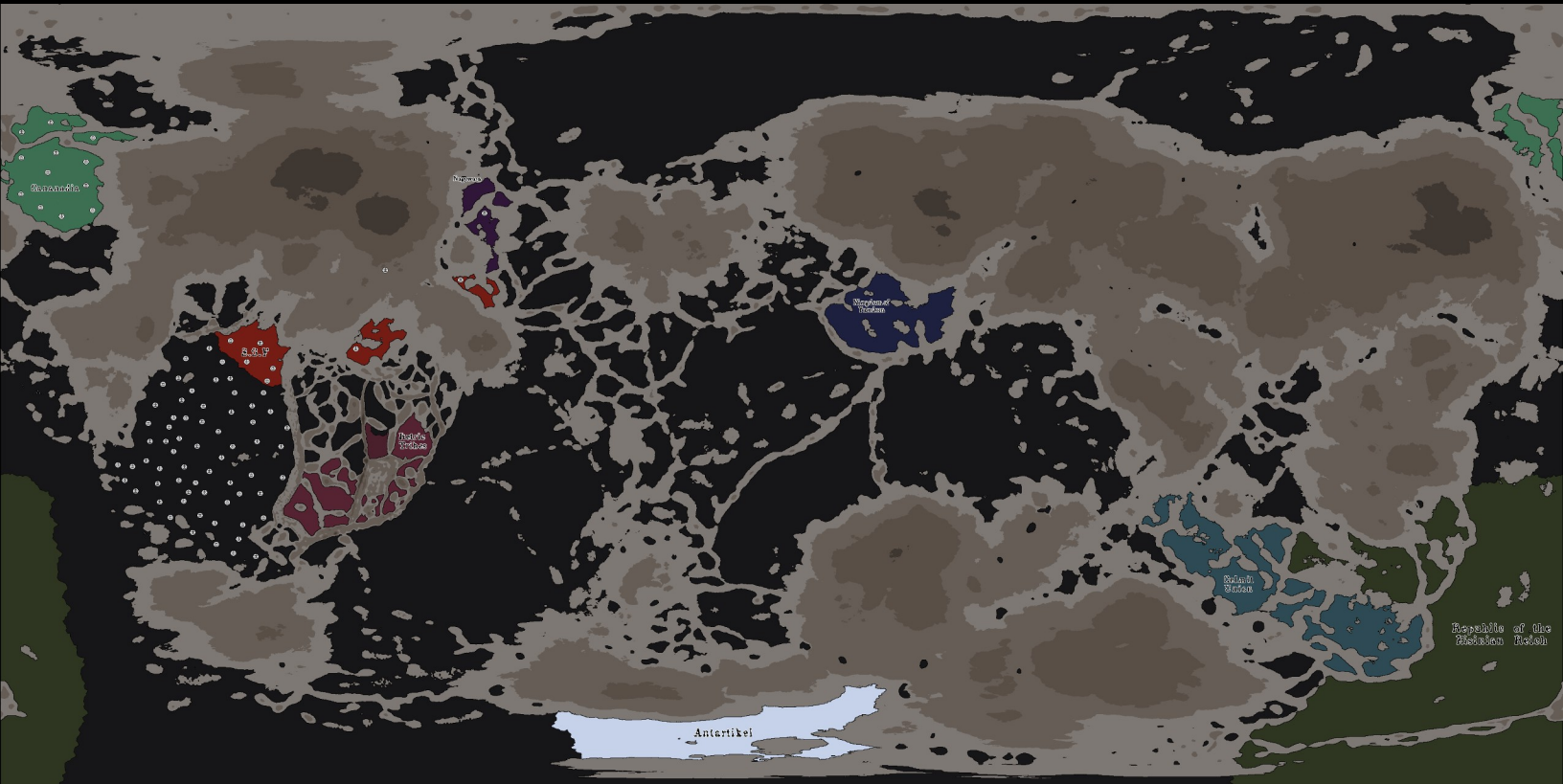
Ceryniotsklesu, also referred to as earth, is a terrestrial planet with the satellite, Selinik. It is the origin of Human life and contains a great amount of history.

Rubrum Luto, a terrestrial red giant far away from earth, it's a rock ball.

Siltist is the largest planet in the solar system, the blue ice titan.

Gorn, a green and red gas giant full of dangers.

Color-coded map of Ceryniotsklesu's nations:



Those who managed to survive

APPENDICES

External Lore of Harthorn's Universe

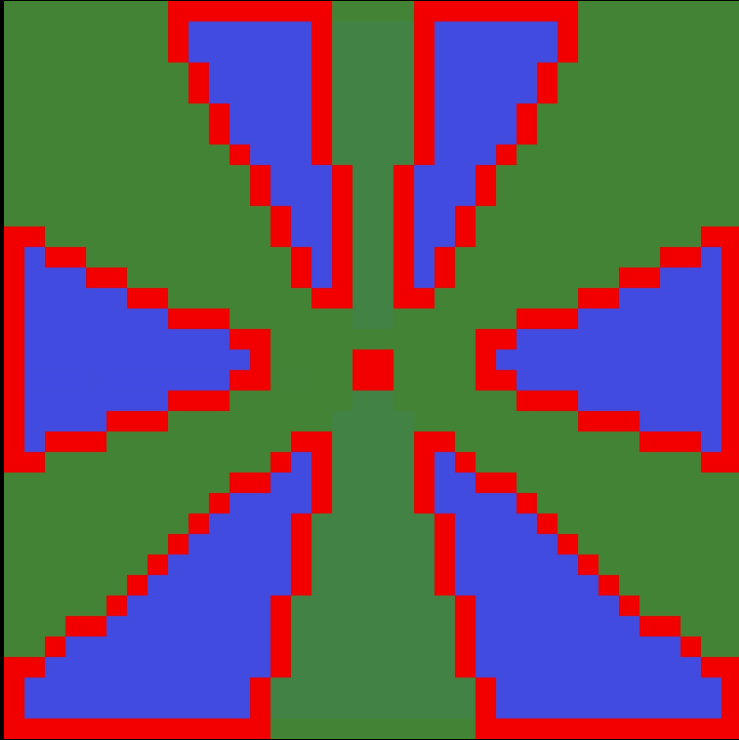
Nations

The terms *First World*, *Second World*, and *Third World* were originally used to divide the world's nations into three categories. The complete overthrow of the post-World War II status quo, known as the Cold War, left two superpowers vying for ultimate global supremacy. They created two camps, known as blocs. These blocs formed the basis of the concepts of the First and Second Worlds. The terms would later be referring to developed and developing countries, before once again gaining a political definition during the Eaftousian military conversation, pre-World War III.

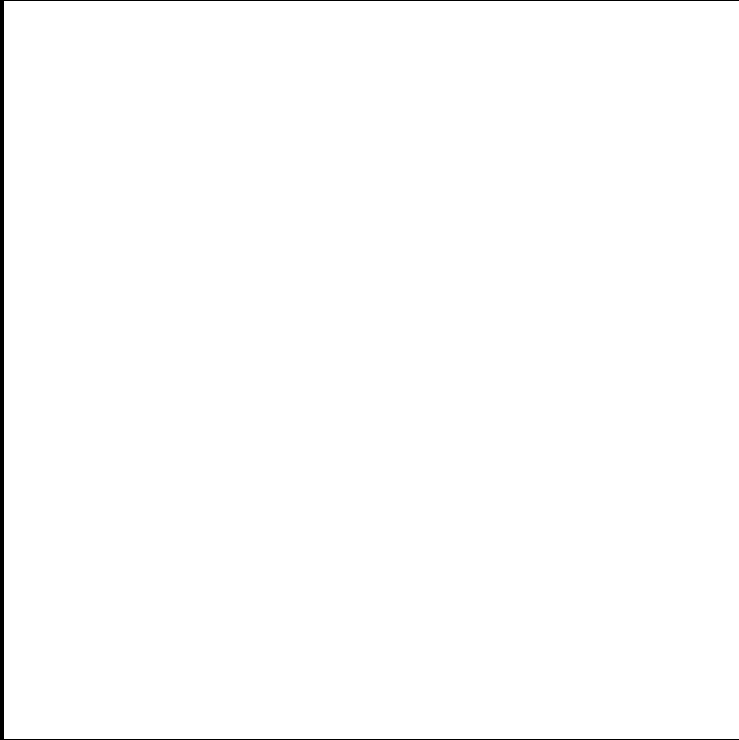
Post WW3, it reverted to having an economic meaning, and gained another world. The need for the *Fourth World* term has been argued since it's conception, however it is often used in First and Third world nations nonetheless, defining the area officially known as the Precipices.



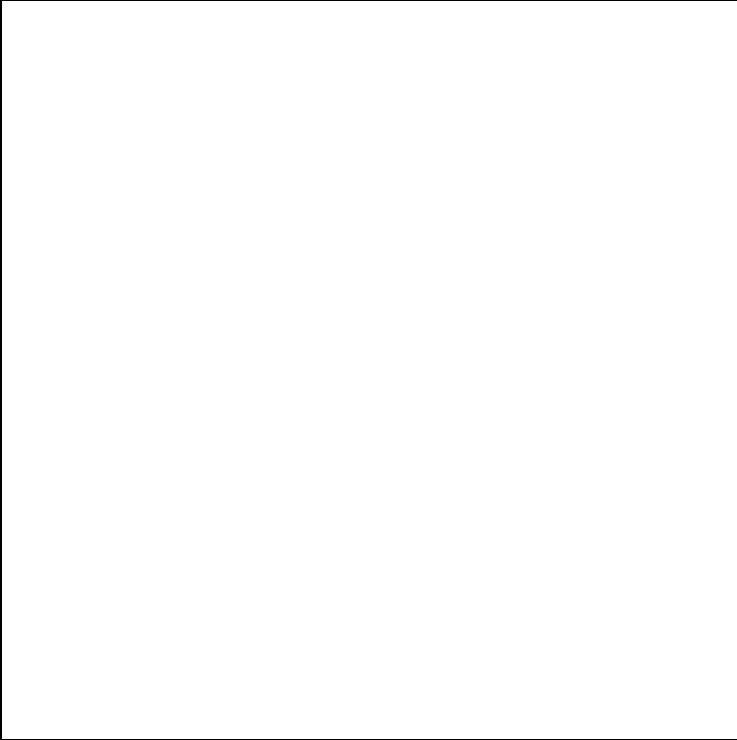
Antartikel: _



Cananadia: _

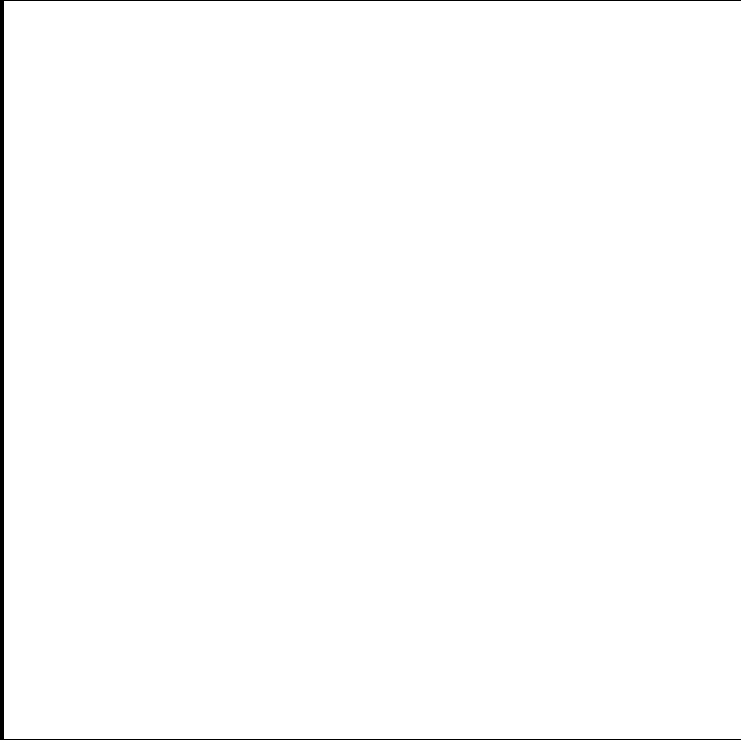


Celmit Union: _

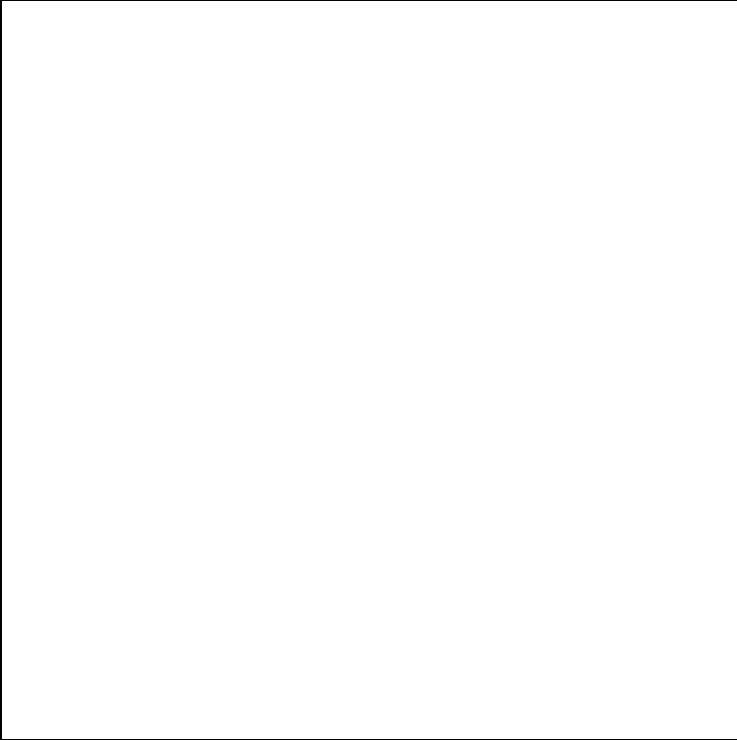


Kingdom of Yondom: _

Republic of the Eisinian
Reich: _



Shin Sekai Federation: The Shin Sekai Federation, also known as New World Federation, and Shin Sekai Renmei, is the __. Considered the most advanced country among the S.M.I.L.E. bunkers, it consists of several forms of government, with the state being placed into five parts; Head, Body, Limb, Child, and Wing.



Nagowara: _

APPENDICES

External Lore of Harthorn's Universe

Official Works in Universe-1.31.99:2-897

Discreet Arrangement

The Sleeping House

3rd Stage

Home's Despise

Veronica: The Calm Voice

The Shotgun

The Artist

Lumea Sangelui Advent

Niastones: Goverara

Our Wauter Bloodline

Rats, Bats, and Gnats

Umbrian College: First Year

Umbrian College: Second Year

Umbrian College: Third Year

The Mortal Conduit: Elan's Necrosis

B-19: The Blood Chronicles

Adrestia

Happy Nights

?

?

?

Azunaru's Assault

The Krelmic Skein

Genesis

Primer

Electris

Trizul Cielima

Rezra

Serenity

Tranquility

Astral

Aithereal

Empyream

Lapoc

Yoiooshi Gradation

Chikara-koko Yukojiin

Empires Fall

Anew World

Yarn

Theos' Rule

Daren's Secret

Chase the Ace

Long Arm of Juan Racimo

Shishibuki Consecution

Suima's Tiger

Suima's Lion

Suima's Dragon

Aizo's Wake

Aizo's Repose

Aizo's Sovereignty

Orenaskino's ???

Orenaskino's ???

Orenaskino's ???

Gisetno's ???

Gisetno's ???

Gisetno's ???

Galactis Sakti

Earth Angel

Blue Glow

Project Soar

Rubrum Luto

A New Color

Stellar Ambitions