



Nezumi

ACES OF TRESSO

An OWbN Hengeyokai Packet



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OVERVIEW

The purpose of this packet is to provide players a resource that expands their understanding of how the Nezumi Plague differs from their western counterparts. This encompasses both the cultural and mechanical differences that this branch has which separates it from the Ratkin.

The authors of this packet are westerners and have a limited understanding of the multitude of eastern cultures which comprise the Hengeyokai. This packet has been constructed with as much due diligence and respect as possible.

LITANY OF SURVIVAL

In addition to the Way of Emerald Virtue the Nezumi still have to follow the Litany of Survival

- **The Creed of Obligation**

- *I shall preserve the Veil, which ensures our survival.*
- *I will build, steal and suborn to strengthen my breeding grounds.*
- *I shall nurture, instruct and aid the young.*
- *I will trust my own kind before I trust outsiders.*
- *When someone is responsible for injustice, I will make sure someone pays.*

- **The Creed of Infamy**

- *I will defend our breeding grounds against all threats, physical and spiritual.*
- *I shall seek revenge against those who prey upon my kind.*
- *I must shred the tentacles of the Wyrms whenever they constrict us.*
- *I must sever the Weaver's webs wherever they calcify chaos.*

- **The Creed of Cunning**

- *I will survive so that I may breed.*
- *I must respect strength and exploit weakness.*
- *I shall grow stronger through conflict.*
- *I will learn from the mysteries of the spirit world.*
- *I will revel in the visions the spirits grant me*

THE NEZUMI

The Japanese tell a tale of two rats who seek a suitable match for their beautiful and charming daughter: The Rat Princess. First, they seek to marry her to the Sun; the Sun in his wisdom says that he is honored but though he is mighty, the Cloud is stronger than he – for the Cloud can block even his rays. So, they take their leave and approach the Cloud and make the same offer. The Cloud responds that though he is flattered the Wind may move him about as he chooses, so even his might is nothing in comparison. As a result, they seek out the Wind with the same offer; the Wind says that he is strong, but his strength is broken by the Wall. So at last they come to the Wall and as they are about to make the offer, the Rat Princess cries out that she was willing to marry the Sun, the Cloud, and the Wind out of duty to her family but she could not bear to marry the Wall that lives so close to the Rat that she loves. The Wall, though insulted, in his magnanimity responds that his power is real but the one with real strength is the Rat - for the Rat can break him down with his mere teeth. Thus, the Rat Princess is able to marry the Rat she loves.

The Nezumi are the Rat in the story - others see themselves as strong and powerful but, although meek and from the stock of the least of society, the Nezumi have the power to topple kingdoms and emperors from their throne. They are consummate professionals who eliminate as few targets on their own as they can, seeking to create the most effect with the least action. A path they call Gokudo.

Gone are the ages when Ratkin could act openly to cull the growing numbers of humanity. The Impergium put an end to the bulk of such actions. However, the necessity of such work has not become any less vital; at least, as far as the Nezumi are concerned.

From their places of concealment, amongst the lowest classes of humanity, the Nezumi excel in low war; striking unseen against an unsuspecting opponent with only a single goal in mind: victory at all costs. This may entail assassination, espionage, disease, famine, or a vast number of other “underhanded” tactics. Unlike the rest of the Hengeyokai, they embody the Yang principle of change and chaos. They are responsible for outbreaks of violence and disease in recent nights. Their actions demonstrate their complete disregard for human lives or laws.

Unlike their western cousins, they are multiplying quickly and operate more openly than the Ratkin. Indeed, only a few Hengeyokai realize exactly how many Nezumi dwell in the cities of Asia; rats reproduce exponentially, and the numbers of Nezumi dwelling amongst their rodent kinfolk far outnumber their human counterparts. However, the Birthing Plague takes the lives of many rats before adulthood. Those that do survive the diseases, fighting, and other threats to existence are a particularly hardy breed, able to do what is necessary to survive.

The Children of Rat see little difference between their eastern and western components; wherever they go, they quickly learn names and identities, and feel a kinship that is not common for the other breeds of the Hengeyokai in interacting with their western cousins. Rat names exist in three parts: a court name, a gang name, and a human name. How the Nezumi differ from the other Ratkin is in their approach; they see unnecessary casualties as sloppy work. Mass-casualties are harder to cover up and, when done right, the humans do that work for them.

Every Nest of the Nezumi regards their eldest surviving member as their leader: their Sensei. From this elder, the young learn the ways of the Nezumi, their Litany of Survival, and the art of low war. Sensei is a largely informal title - the only benefit being the ability to represent your Breed to the Court at large. All Nezumi respect the ceremonial power of the Sensei, however, and try to present a united front in all dealings with others.

CORE

The Nezumi are secretive and jealous of their place in the Hengeyokai. They guard the knowledge of how they operate more out of politeness and respect for the sake of the scruples of other Changing Breeds than out of genuine shame. Those who have earned the trust of an individual Nezumi may be granted leave to know but not share. Information provided below are the recommendations for non-Nezumi; Nezumi PCs may treat the information as being one level lower.

Level 1	At this level you know basic strategies, tactics and weaknesses of the Nezumi. The Eldest of Eldest is known to you as well as general details on aspects as well as the names of most Silvers as well as the current Ambassador. Tenets of the Litany of Survival.
Level 2	General knowledge of the Schools and how they fit into the Breed. Knowledge of the heads of each School. Specifics on aspects, and general knowledge of powerful regional Nezumi.
Level 3	In depth knowledge of the Schools and their work. Knowledge of most local members of them as well. Names of pretty much all the movers and shakers of the breed.
Level 4	Secrets of a few of the schools as well as the ability to recognize the signs of a recent well-executed operation.
Level 5	Near encyclopedic knowledge of the Nezumi and their practices.
Level 6	You can separate what is truth and what is fiction from pretty much any source on the Nezumi.

SCHOOLS

The Nezumi, having very little of the struggle for survival that was so common in the West, have a unique perspective. Not only were they allowed to continue with their duty as given to them by Gaia, but they were also allowed the freedom to try new ideas. These new ideas manifest as Schools which are one-part political party, one-part philosophical movement, and one-part practical application. Schools teach various members methodology, patterns of attack, and various strategy to carry out their sacred duty - no one School is at all like any others.

Joining a School is both complicated and time consuming. The techniques, Gifts, and Rites taught by Schools are intrinsic to their entire philosophy. While it is possible to change Schools, those who do are treated with suspicion by the School which they left. If caught using techniques of another School, the individual who is caught is seen as a betrayer of the new School and is often punished by exile from their current School, leaving the individual with two burned bridges instead of one.

SCHOOL OF DEFILEMENT

Census: 85% Plague Lords, the remaining 15% come be from the other aspects. Individuals of this School are called Kegare.

The School of Defilement is, according to Nezumi legend, the origin of all Nezumi Schools. It is certainly the oldest School still in operation. All other Schools still in operation do seem to stem from this one. This School is the source of some of the largest wholesale slaughter of humanity; their diseases and various poisons cause unprecedented amounts of death when turned loose on unsuspecting populations.

Not one of the Nezumi doubt that the School of Defilement was dominant from pre-history until around the time of the rise of the Mongols. They sowed famine, nurtured disease, and fouled water supplies - all in the name of their sacred duty given to them from Gaia. When their focus changed, they used their talents to introduced new ideas on how to use their old weapons. The crowning achievement of the Plague Lords and indeed the School itself, the Black Death, caused the death of close to a half of the population of China and sowed the end of the Yuan Dynasty. They were creative in its spread as it was the most genetically diverse disease in history. It was agents of this School who suggested that the Golden Horde catapult plague victims into the city of Kaffa, before the Italians fled - taking the disease with them. This practice then saw widespread use in the west - decimating populations. The School of Defilement continued their work, occasionally trying to find some more effective disease, such as Cholera, but have not been as truly successful since the Third Plague Pandemic. Today, the School hasn't changed much: while they hold little political power, it is they who cry out for a return to the "old ways."

Advantage: Each member of the School of Defilement can smell the diseases or poisons that inflict a target. While they cannot instinctively identify the disease or type of poison, their keen noses can not only tell that the target is diseased or poisoned, they can differentiate between sickness and toxin.

Disadvantage: As a part of their training, each member of the School of Defilement is ravaged by a wasting disease. This disease, over its course, reduces the capabilities of its victim – leaving them slightly less than they were before. Mechanically, this is reflected by a lowered Trait cap (1 in each category).

GIFTS

BASIC

TRAIL OF PAIN

Retest: Empathy

Cost: 1 Gnosis

Taught By: Disease Spirits

This Gift enables a Nezumi to detect and track those who are suffering. Some use the Gift to find and keep track of test subjects, while others use it to run a wounded enemy to ground. Spend 1 turn without taking any action, then spend 1 Gnosis Trait and make a Mental Challenge with a difficulty 7 + 1 for every wound level the Nezumi currently suffers. If successful, the Gift will point out the closest suffering person within 50 yards.

INTERMEDIATE

INFEST

As the Bone Gnawer Gift (Laws of the Wild page 136).

SCHOOL OF SHADOWS

Census: Common mostly among Warriors and Knife Skulkers but has members from any Aspect. Individuals of this School are called Kage.

The School of Shadows has devoted itself to the elimination of specific targets. While they may only seek to eliminate one individual, that individual is chosen with great care. A well-chosen victim will cause a great deal of chaos, famine, disease, etc. with their death. In other words, this School uses a single death to cause many more through the fallout of that death.

Oddly enough, the School which is largely synonymous with the Nezumi came about by accident - or at least that is the way the story goes. In the early thirteenth century, there was a blown operation in the city of Otrar in the Nation of Khwarezmia and, in the ensuing cover up, Ambassadors from a then fledgling empire of Mongolia happened to be massacred. For whatever reason, both the Governor and Shah claimed responsibility and sent the only remains left back to Genghis Kahn. Genghis, being furious, took his Horde to war. The ensuing conflict caused nearly two million casualties on only a single side and the utter destruction of the Nation of Khwarezmia, along with the absorption of its territory into Mongolia. Watching the devastation which this act wrought, the Nezumi had an epiphany: why go to all the trouble of nurturing plagues or poisoning wells when you could just get your target to do it for you? This idea caught like a wildfire and spread through the Eastern Ratkin; they formed training complexes for how to best go about similar operations. This eventually found its home in the Iga and Koga prefectures of feudal Japan where mortal imitators and kinfolk created the ninja. In the interim years, they moved the School and centralized the Breed's hierarchical authority in Asia.

This School helped engineer the circumstances that caused the Sengoku Period and did everything they could to prolong it - typically using agents to keep smaller lords alive and executing bigger ones. This practice contributed until the end of the conflict by repeatedly keeping Tokugowa Ieyasu alive long enough to gain the Shogunate. This glaring oversight ended their unquestioned political authority within the Breed. Regardless, this School shaped the Nezumi within the Hengeyokai as well as their approach to their duty. The disparate chaotic Breed transformed into consummate professionals. Today, they operate much as they did in the sixteenth century - working in small cells to eliminate targets designated by the local Court or Sensei. Some techniques have evolved, but for the most part they see themselves as timeless.

Advantage: Members of the School of Shadows may treat any improvised weapon as having a minimum of 2 Traits and 1 damage. This may be increased with appropriate items or powers, based on Storyteller discretion.

Disadvantage: Due to their conditioning to work in small "cells," the members of this school suffer a 2 Trait penalty when acting alone. They need not be with other members of this school, or even other Nezumi – Sentais of mixed breeds work just fine – they simply do not operate well by themselves.

GIFTS

INTERMEDIATE

OPEN WOUNDS

As the Shadow Lord Gift (Laws of the Wild page 144).

TALENS

SMOKE PELLETT

Sometimes it is better to readjust strategy and come again another day. This Talen was used to escape when spotted and cornered by guards or others while on mission. By activating and smashing this glass marble, the Nezumi creates a flash of light and an obscuring fog which fills the area - allowing the Nezumi to use stealth Gifts or enter the Umbra to escape.

SCHOOL OF ASSASSINATION

Census: Very common for Knife Skulkers and Yurei Asaka but has a fair number of Shadow Seers and Tunnel Runners. Individuals of this School are called Ichi.

The School of Assassination was the source of the courtesans and geisha of feudal Japan rumored to be Kunoichi. In modern nights, this school operates as a variety of finishing schools as well as brothels, etc. They use their social graces in order to gain access to a target person or location, execute their contract, and then vanish before their deeds are discovered.

The Story goes that during the late Sengoku period, Takeda Shingen tasked his vassal and niece by marriage, Mochizuki Chiyome, with creating a specialized group of female spies in order to create a vast information network out of orphaned girls. Historians say that the woman never existed and that the girls were never spies. The real story that it is based on is that an unnamed member of the School of Shadows decided to adapt tactics in the transitional period from war to peace. She trained her followers in several different art forms, such as poetry, dance, and music - all to get their targets to relax and let their guard down. Her members could hide in plain sight for days or months or even years before carrying out their plans. Unlike their School of Shadows counterparts, they were not necessarily tied down to one location. They could, and often did, travel and work for hire for anyone that needed or wanted their particular brand of service.

Originally, the School of Assassination was an all-female school whose membership was pulled from war orphans, trained in the arts of Geisha, courtesans and Shrine Maidens. Eventually, however, they grew large enough to incorporate others and repertoires were expanded to include musicians and actors. In modern nights, they operate much as they did during the shogunate: they still train their people to fit a multitude of roles - customizing their performances to the target's particular tastes and proclivities.

Advantage: If a member of the School of Assassination has had opportunity to observe a group in a social setting, they may ply their graces to mislead targets. With a successful Social Challenge (retest Etiquette), they may direct the attention of their opponent to a target (individual, object, or space) of their choosing, allowing them to slip past or disappear without notice.

Disadvantage: Members of this school find themselves needing to wear many masks in the execution of their duties. As a result, they find it exceedingly difficult to allow others to get close to them. Each member of the School of Assassination gains the Negative Mental Trait: *Deceitful*, which may not be bought off and grants no experience.

GIFTS

BASIC

BROTHER'S SCENT

Retest: Empathy

Cost: 1 Gnosis

Taught By: Ancestor Spirits

Drawing upon the universal brotherhood of all creatures of Gaia, the Ratkin seems to fit in wherever he goes. Those given no reason to suspect the rat's presence simply overlook her. The player spends a Gnosis Trait and makes a Static Social Challenge against 10 Traits. All individuals not specifically on guard against intruders overlook any incongruity in the Nezumi's appearance. The Nezumi isn't invisible, he just doesn't stand out when he otherwise should, and his appearance is considered unremarkable even when he's interacted with. If the werewolf's actions alone would draw attention to himself (shouting, starting a fight, attempting to kick down a locked door, etc.) the Gift's illusion is immediately broken. Those specifically on the lookout for individuals who don't belong (security guards at a private facility, for example) don't succumb to this Gift unless their Willpower is lower than that Nezumi's Rank.

OPEN SEAL

As the Ragabash gift. Laws of the Wild page 124.

RITES

TODOME NO KISU (INTERMEDIATE MYSTIC RITE)

The Kiss of Death the of this school Nezumi take each life they take very seriously. In days of the past they would bless combs and pins with the lethal power of this Rite. The Nezumi performs the Ritual around a small, sharp object with concealability no larger than "pocket." When this Rite is successful, it converts the damage on the next strike to 9 levels of Lethal damage. The effects end immediately following that strike, regardless of whether the Nezumi hit or missed. The School guards this Rite jealously and will often take the law into their own hands if an individual is caught using it without belonging to their number.

SCHOOL OF CHAOS

Census: Most populated school. Popular among Shadow Seer's and Tunnel Runners. Individuals of this School are called Bokuto.

The School of Chaos is exploitative of the often-symbiotic relationship that the Japanese crime world shares with authorities. By placing themselves into key positions in criminal organizations, government, and pseudo-legal groupings, this school operates primarily behind closed doors – be that gangs, organized crime, or board rooms.

Born out of the Burakumin of the Edo period, after a series of laws made them official outcasts and exiled them from society at large, a several groups banded together to survive and form family-like organizations which began selling stolen good and running gambling dens. These businesses evolved to incorporate other business operations like extortion rings, protection rackets, and smuggling. The Ratkin, having always come from this class of people, were involved in these affairs from the very beginning. These organizations allowed them to grow within society, and to network and exploit loopholes within that framework. They operated within their niche with little to no interference from anyone before the rise of authoritarianism in the early 20th century, when they suffered a decline as a result of a government crackdown on such operations. After World War Two, with the governmental collapse, the School moved into the resultant power vacuum and has never left. Around that time, they became the most prominent faction.

The School of Chaos remained a largely criminal organization until the 1980's, when they diversified into real estate and businesses. Today, you are just as likely to find a member within a business or the government as you are within a criminal organization. Abroad, they can be among Triads or other similar gangs as well. The schools most fervent belief is in adapting to the modern world and using the weaknesses within the system to their best advantage.

Advantage: The members of the School of Chaos adapt themselves easily to blend into human society, thereby gaining access to the tools of society – all the better to turn them against the very society that created them. Members of this school may purchase Influence without actions required to build it.

Disadvantage: All members of this school share a killer instinct. As a result, they must expend a Willpower Trait not to take advantage of a weakened opponent. This may manifest in a boardroom as easily in a battlefield; the instinct is to destroy an opponent who has left an opening – even if that opening is clearly a trap.

GIFTS

BASIC

BUDGET APPROVAL PROCESS

As the Glass Walker Gift (Glass Walker Tribe Book, Revised page 77).

INTERMEDIATE

FAMILIAL BONDS

Retest: Leadership

Cost: 1 Willpower, 1-5 Social Traits

Taught By: Rat King

When joining the School of Chaos, you are joining a family and while you have obligation to them, they also have an obligation to you. Spend 1 Gnosis and 1 Willpower and make a Social Challenge (retest with Leadership) against 10 Traits. Upon success, you summon local rats to your presence and may expend a number of Social Traits (maximum of 5) to have them grant you armor levels for aid in combat. When each level is damaged a rat dies, sacrificing itself for you. These rats remain with you for a scene.

SCHOOL OF DIVINE WINDS (DEFUNCT)

Census: Non-existent

The School of Divine Winds was home to the suicidal agents of ancient Japan, and to the kamikaze pilots of World War II. However, this was not a branch suitable for the long-term survival of the Breed, and the Nezumi have since abandoned this path. As the culture of Japan moved away from supporting this sort of mentality, so too did the wererats place their emphasis on more long-term survivability.

Suicide attacks were never much of a mainstay of the Nezumi - they preferred to let others either take the fall or create opportunities to exploit other weaknesses. However, there were always those willing to sacrifice themselves rather than face interrogation or crucifixion. Those operatives were often trained to take on only the most extreme mission and they would employ a pyrrhic strategy to ensure success but only after it was clear that they couldn't avoid capture. They were always one of the smaller Schools; recruits were hard to find which fit the right qualifications and retention was never a strong suit. They found their heights among times of the greatest desperation, but those times weren't frequently common. The most notable time was in the 1940's as the war machine became more and more desperate. With the result of the war being lost and the efficacy of the unit in question, they lost enough favor that the School and its traditions finally collapsed under its own weight.

The School of Divine Winds no longer exists.

This School is not suitable for PCs, as they devoted their entire lives to preparing and training for a single momentous sacrifice.

ASPECTS

Aspects are a very personal choice for a Nezumi. While the Schools are more about Nezumi society, Aspects are what a Nezumi feels is how they themselves may best serve the Nezumi. If an individual survives the Birthing Plague, they are introduced to the local Nest; it is there that they are introduced to and wooed by representatives of the various Aspects. Once everyone has been given a chance to speak with them, the newly changed Rat makes a decision that cannot be altered once made. They will then be given to a more experienced member of the Aspect as a Sensei. They will train under them for a year and a day before undergoing their Rite of Passage and fully introduced into Nezumi society. The differences between East and West for most aspects are miniscule enough that they aren't mentioned in this packet. What is included is how those aspects fit into Hengeyokai society as a whole.

Each Eastern Aspect has a different feel to those of their Western cousins. As a result, each one has an advantage which is different from the ones that are in MET Changing Breeds 3. This advantage is intended to replace one of the two in the aforementioned book at Storyteller discretion.

SEERS

Starting Rage: 1

Nezumi who follow this Aspect become mystics - teachers of Rites to Rat's children. Seers preside over the ceremonies which produce the Birthing Plague, share knowledge of new Sacred Plagues, and create openings to new realms. In ages past, they were priests and monks of the Buddha, or a Shinto deity of the downtrodden. Not much has changed over the centuries; the inherent spirituality in their cultures always put someone whom the spirits talk to in demand, especially for the downtrodden. When Shadow Seers rise to prominence, they most often become a Seer, or Historian for the local Nest. The roles of General and Regent often divide their focus too much to be appealing to this Aspect. They like to fill the roles of teachers and spiritual guides, so they often find themselves in the roles of Mirror, Pillar, or Lantern when they choose to join the ranks of a Sentai.

Advantage: *Wisdom in the Whispers*- As shamans and teachers among the Nezumi, they find new information fascinating and many in the past have made deals with spirits to share knowledge that they would not otherwise have obtained. A Shadow Seer may buy the first level of any generalized Lore (Baring sub-group specifics. I.e., they may purchase "Garou Lore" or "Kindred Lore" but not "Silver Fang Lore" or "Tremere Lore".) This replaces **Spirits Speak to Me** (Spirit Speech may be purchased as an Aspect Gift instead).

TUNNEL RUNNERS

Starting Rage: 2

Tunnel Runners act as messengers and scouts; traveling the mazes of tunnels and alleys linking the nests of the Nezumi in the urban centers of the Middle Kingdom. Possessing a secret language consisting of rattling and scratching noises, Tunnel Runners can communicate with one another without fear of being overheard by anyone outside their Aspect. Sometimes, they tap on lead pipes when further underground. Legends claim that they know the way to ancient bolt-holes leading to the spirit realm.

When Runners choose to join Sentai they often find the roles of Leaf or Lantern ideal. Most Runners chafe under the thought of being tied down to a single place, so they often elect not to serve as Gai'nan. But when they do, they most often serve as effective Historians or Generals. By and large, though they are content to serve Nests or the Hengeyokai as ambassadors, as they have a knack for understanding cultural norms not native to them.

Advantage: *Street Code*- Eastern Tunnel Runners have a code-like language they teach to every member of the Aspect. They can carry out entire conversations by simply making a series of scratching and tapping noises. This can be done close together in public or over long distances provided they have a means of transmitting a message. This feature replaces **Wanderlust Visions**.

KNIFE SKULKERS

Starting Rage: 3

Experts in covert warfare, Nezumi who belong to this Aspect resemble nothing less than the ninja of Japan's feudal age - possessing an unusual degree of stealth. Nezumi Skulkers most often have the survival skills that enable them to rise to the position of Sensei of their nest. The members of this Aspect are most commonly Homid-born.

For the Hengeyokai to function, the Skulkers extend their propensity towards low justice to the other Breeds: acquisition of property, and punishments of dull repetitive tasks are the most frequent. As with the Western Ratkin high justice can only be suspended by the Regent, or in the case of a Skulker being the Regent, a deciding vote of the other Gai'nan; justice only truly being just if it isn't abused. They also do not often hire themselves out as assassins, unless they belong to a certain political faction, believing such things cheapen their true role as the arbiters of justice for their people.

The Skulkers' quick thinking and martial talents make them ideal candidates for Lanterns and Fists, when they feel it is necessary to join a Sentai. When serving as one of the Gai'nan, they most often find Regent or General a good fit.

Advantage: *Know Your Enemy*- the Skulker may take an action to study his opponent. If he does so, he may then make a Simple Test at the end of the round. If successful, he gains a number of Retests equal to his rank against the opponent. Only one such Retest may be used per challenge. This benefit may be used only once per night. This replaces **Contracts and Contacts**.

WARRIORS

Starting Rage: 4

Nezumi Warriors learn low war tactics common to their Breed. Homid Warriors excel in combat above ground, where their breed form allows them to disappear in a crowd. They prefer to work in small groups of two or three Warriors and usually attack from the shadows, which they vanish back into once their job is done. Metis-born Warriors grow impatient for the time when they can assume their birth-form and attack with their full powers. These Nezumi favor frontal assault and maximum force when they battle. Because of their impatience and full-frontal assaults, Metis Warriors suffer a two-Trait penalty to their Rage challenges. Rodens Warriors operate best underground, lending their support skills to their fellow Homid and Metis Nezumi. Working in swarms that sometimes include their rat Kinfolk, these Warriors can serve as a literal second wave to overwhelm foes.

The Warriors of the East focus less on their relationships with their weapons. Though they still are the only ones with the secret of making Pain Daggers, they see dependency on any weapon as a weakness; they prefer to learn multiple fighting styles in order to stay adaptable. They still favor one over the other and, when they travel, they tend to challenge the leader of a local “dojo” to nonlethal single combat for the honor of the victory. Such practices are viewed as exercises which strengthen both parties for their duties, as well as establishing the capabilities of one another for upcoming struggles. When they lose such events, Warriors often petition to learn from the individual that bested them and often keep such relationships alive and well long after they have stopped learning. When members of a Sentai, Warriors are stereotypically Fists, but many among them buck tradition and take the path of a Pillar. When seeking the membership in the Gai’nan most are covetous of the position of General.

Advantage: *One of Many-* Warriors often know that when they strike, they aren’t alone. They train extensively to have the ability to compartmentalize and execute plans as members of a cell. Because of this training, they are up 2 Traits on all attacks against an opponent another of their group has successfully attacked within the round. This replaces **Blade Slaves**.

YUREI ASAKA

Starting Rage: 4

A story comes out of the Edo period of an actor whose only talent is to play the restless dead and is murdered by his wife's lover. The actor rises from the swamp in which he is murdered as a vengeful spirit that torments both his wife and her lover until they both commit suicide. Right around the time this story was gaining popularity, a small group of Ratkin appeared out of Asaka Swamp in Modern Day Fukushima. Many among them are not sure if the story was of a Yurei who inspired them or if they inspired the story.

Either way, the efficacy of these individuals is without question. They have an uncanny ability to go unnoticed, as well as the wherewithal to drive a target to the brink of paranoid collapse. In the late Edo period, they could most often be found amongst kabuki players, geisha, or musicians - picking targets and acting like avenging spirits meting out what they considered justice. The rest of the Ratkin found it entertaining. Moving into the modern nights, they have become masters of setting up patsies and fall guys - falsifying evidence and tormenting individuals to the brink of instability so that when it is time for the axe to come down, the humans have someone convenient to blame. These days, they are just as likely to be found among security personnel, janitors, and maids as they are actors and musicians.

In larger society, when they join Sentai they feel most at home in the position of Leaf but can take Pillar or Mirror if the mood strikes. When serving their Dragon Nest, they usually take the role of Historian but often serve as Seers.

Advantage: *Forgettable*- The Yurei Asaka have the unusual talent of being around but not really noticed they move through society as ghosts. Once done interacting with someone, the character may make a Simple Test. On a win, the person they just got done interacting with forgets they were even there, or anything associated with the interaction. If they tie, the target remember that they interacted with someone, but they don't remember specifics.

Advantage: Talented at half-truths and falsities, each Yurei Asaka begins play with Subterfuge x3.

Disadvantage: The Yurei Asaka love driving others to madness so much because they themselves suffer from it. All Yurei Asaka begin play with one of the following derangements *Paranoia*, *Delusions of Persecution*, *Schizophrenia*, or *Overcompensation*.

Author's note: *So Why no Munchmaussen?* – Well as much as I personally enjoy them, the feel that generally comes from the Freak Aspect is a very western-style character. That isn't to say that certain concepts couldn't fit but, for the most part, they don't. The Aspect itself is based on Raspe's Baron Munchausen's Narrative of his Marvelous Travels and Campaigns in Russia which was based on a veteran from the Russo-Austro-Turkish war penchant for telling fantastic stories. And, while nice, it felt too western-centric for the Nezumi. So, after doing a great deal of research for folk tales that would fit the overall feel of the Nezumi better, but that could still incorporate most of the same Gifts, we found the legend of Kohada Koheiji a famous Kabuki actor of the Edo Period that whose talents were only in playing the restless dead who was murdered and came back as a Spirit himself.

PLAGUE LORDS

Starting Rage: 3

Ratkin have always had reputations as masters of disease, and indeed all Ratkin Elders have the potential to learn to harness such a weapon. One has to wonder, though, whether they have this reputation thanks to the tormented creatures that call themselves the Plague Lords. Unlike their Western cousins, this Aspect never left the East - the deals their Breed had made there left them safe to ply their trade. Once, hundreds of years ago, during a particularly dark period of human history, they put their skills to use on the world, creating the Black Plague and nurtured its distribution along the Silk Road until it reached the West. Many of the Western Changing Breeds were convinced that this Plague heralded the Apocalypse, which caused the cousins of the Plague Lords in those regions to flee to the Umbra.

Without such a necessity befalling the Plague Lords of the East, they have evolved within the Nezumi society rather than away from it. As a result, they have developed many new viruses and diseases for them to study, master and use, and they enjoy seeking out dark powers for tutelage in such arts. When they feel called to serve a Sentai they like the roles of Lantern or Mirror. The role of Seer is most often sought within the Gai'nan.

Advantage: *Corruption Immunity*- The Spirit that resides within Plague Lords bulwarks them against sources outside of itself that would otherwise harm it. After one cycle of the moon, the Plague Lord will be purged of any taint of the Wyrms and any influence that may have come over them, able to return to Ratkin society to play their part in the war effort once again. Plague Lords seem to be unique in this regard, as no other creature known is so resistant to Wyrms-taint. This replaces **Medical Genius**.

ENGINEERS

Starting Rage: 2

The Engineers have only relatively recently come to Japan. These are Nezumi who embrace the trappings of bygone eras in order to merge into counter and fringe cultures amongst humanity. They run auto-mechanic shops and chop-shops that make custom motorcycles and cars. Most notably, they have found a home among the Rockabillys of Japan in recent nights. These Nezumi have devoted themselves to forcing Weaver Spirits into submission.

Oddly enough, despite being in the land of cutting-edge tech, they focus more on older technology. They prefer vintage and will work on making those things run better than when they were new. They, much like their ancestors, keep a watchful eye on technology - keeping an eye on what they deem more dangerous and destroying it. They sabotage anything which they deem too dangerous and often take shifts as “test subjects” to observe and keep tabs on such projects.

When joining Sentai, they often find themselves fulfilled by working as a Leaf or a Fist but they also can find Mirror to their liking. When assuming leadership in the Gai’nan, they often choose to become Seers but can make effective (if unconventional) Generals.

Advantage: *Try It Non-* Like their western cousins they have a proficiency with forcing Weaver Spirits to do their bidding. This means that a member of this Aspect may physically strike a non-functioning (or malfunctioning) object, forcing the spirit inside to work properly. Any item which is still at least mostly intact may be forced to function for a scene in this manner. This feature replaces **Jury Rig**.

GIFTS

Lists all Gifts available for **Nezumi** those within a LARP book are given page references. W20 gifts are given suggested conversions.

GENERAL GIFTS

BASIC GIFTS

CLOAK OF SHADOWS

As Changing Breeds 3 page 165.

CLOAK OF DARKEST NIGHT

As Hengeyokai MET Revised page 86

CRAWLING CHAOS

As Changing Breeds 3 page 165.

CITY RUNNING

Retest: Athletics

Cost: 1 Rage

Taught By: City Spirit

By spending a Rage, you may climb at your normal movement and you are up one trait on all Athletics challenges involving navigating a city. (running down cluttered alleys, climbing the side of buildings, leaping from rooftop to rooftop)

DARKSIGHT

As Changing Breeds 3 page 165.

DEEP POCKETS

As Changing Breeds 3 page 166.

HUNTER IN THE CROWDS

As Hengeyokai MET Revised page 86.

RAIDING THE UMBRAL HORDE

As Hengeyokai MET Revised page 86.

RESIST TOXIN

As the Bone Gnawer Gift. Laws of the Wild page 135.

SECRET OF THE TUNNELS

As the Bone Gnawer Gift Attunement. Laws of the Wild page 135

SHADOW THROW

As Changing Breeds 3 page 166.

SMELL POISON

As Changing Breeds 3 page 166.

SNITCH

As Changing Breeds 3 page 166.

STASH CACHE

As Changing Breeds 3 page 166.

INTERMEDIATE GIFTS

BACKBITE

As Changing Breeds 3 page 168.

BOCT!

As Changing Breeds 3 page 168.

GNAW

As the Lupus Gift. Laws of the Wild page 123.

KEEPING OF THE SWARM

As Hengeyokai MET Revised page 86.

MIND OF THE TUNNELS

As Changing Breeds 3 page 168.

SHADOW OF THE RAT

Retest: Occult

Cost: 1 Gnosis (+ Variable Mental traits, optional)

Taught By: Rat Spirit

The Nezumi utters a plague-curse on a victim that has earned their ire. Thereafter when they are alone rats shall steal food disrupt sleep and make their life a living hell often scratching and biting them. The player spends a Gnosis and engages in a mental challenge with the target (retest with occult) the curse last for one day plus an additional day per mental trait spent. During this time the target is tormented in a manner of the storyteller's choice. When the effect ends the player makes a willpower challenge, if successful the target gains a derangement to the effect that the curse is still ongoing.

SQUEEZE

As Changing Breeds 3 page 168.

ADVANCED GIFTS

PERFECT POISON

As Changing Breeds 3 page 169.

PLAGUE BITE

As Changing Breeds 3 page 169.

RIOT

As the Bone Gnawer Gift Laws of the Wild page 136

SNAKE BITES ITSELF

As Hengeyokai MET Revised page 86.

HOMID GIFTS

BASIC GIFTS

COOKING

As the Bone Gnawer gift. Laws of the Wild page 135.

EAU DE RAT

As Changing Breeds 3 page 169.

INSTINCT

As Changing Breeds 3 page 170.

PERSUASION

As Changing Breeds 3 page 170.

STICKY FINGERS

As Changing Breeds 3 page 170.

INTERMEDIATE GIFTS

BODY WRACK

As the Black Fury Gift. Laws of the Wild page 134.

OF RAT AND MAN

As Changing Breeds 3 page 170.

RESHAPE OBJECT

As Laws of the Wild page 119.

BLINK

Retest: Stealth

Cost: 1 Gnosis

Taught By: Rat Spirits

The Nezumi can duck into a shaded area (an open dumpster, a dark alley, beneath a parked car, etc.) and pop out in another shaded area some distance away. The player spends one Gnosis Trait and makes a Static Social Challenge against 6 Traits. Success allows them to reappear in any shaded area within the scene.

ADVANCED GIFTS
UGLY TRUTH

As Changing Breeds 3 page 171.

METIS GIFTS

BASIC GIFTS

CLOAK OF SHADOWS

As Changing Breeds 3 page 165.

RAT MOTHERS TOUCH

As Changing Breeds 3 page 171.

SENSE WYRM

As Laws of the Wild page 121.

SPIRIT OF THE SPINY RAT

As Changing Breeds 3 page 171.

STINK

As Changing Breeds 3 page 171.

INTERMEDIATE GIFTS

RATKIN CULLABY

As Changing Breeds 3 page 172.

RAT THING

As Changing Breeds 3 page 172.

SLIVER TOOTH

As Changing Breeds 3 page 172.

RATTLEBITE

Retest: N/A

Cost: 1 Rage

Taught By: Snake Spirits

The Metis's eyeteeth lengthen, and she can inject a deadly poison with her bite. The player spends a Rage Trait when attempting to bite an opponent. If successful, she inflicts one extra level of damage.

WHELP BODY

As the Ragabash Gift. Laws of the Wild page 125.

ADVANCED GIFTS

WAR OF VENGEANCE

As Changing Breeds 3 page 172.

RODENTS GIFTS

BASIC GIFTS

ABSOLUTE BALANCE

As Changing Breeds 3 page 173.

DEVOUR THE DEAD

As Changing Breeds 3 page 173.

LEAP OF THE KANGAROO RAT

As Changing Breeds 3 page 173.

SCAMPER

As Changing Breeds 3 page 173.

SURVIVAL

As Changing Breeds 3 page 174.

INTERMEDIATE GIFTS

COMMAND METIS

As Changing Breeds 3 page 174.

ITCHY

As Changing Breeds 3 page 174.

MIND OF THE SWARM

As Changing Breeds 3 page 174.

SLIVER TOOTH

As Changing Breeds 3 page 172.

RAT EMPEROR'S WISDOM

As the Lupus Gift Beast Life. Laws of the Wild page 123.

ADVANCED GIFTS

FERAL LOBOTOMY

As the Theurge Gift. Laws of the Wild page 127

FURTIVE GATHERING

As Changing Breeds 3 page 175.

SEER GIFTS

BASIC GIFTS

NAME THE SPIRIT

As the Lupus gift. Laws of the Wild page 123.

PROTECT THE SWARM

As Changing Breeds 3 page 178.

RAT MOTHERS TOUCH

As Changing Breeds 3 page 171.

SENSE WEAVER

As Changing Breeds 3 page 178.

SENSE WYRM

As Laws of the Wild page 121.

SPIRIT SPEECH

As the Theurge gift. Laws of the Wild page 126.

SUMMON ENGLING

As Changing Breeds 3 page 178.

SPIRIT SNARE

Retest: Occult

Cost: 1 Gnosis

Taught By: Rat Spirit

The Seer casts out an invisible, mystic net which entangles hostile spirits, confounding them with a mixture of magical force and long-broken but still potent Gaian law. The player spends one Gnosis point and makes a Mental Challenge as an attack directed at a spirit within 30 feet, which can be defended against normally. Rather than inflicting damage, this attack reduces the spirit's effective Willpower by two for the purpose of all combat actions for the rest of the scene. Multiple applications of this Gift don't stack.

TOUCH THE SPIRITS

As Changing Breeds 3 page 178.

INTERMEDIATE GIFTS

COMMAND THE SPIRIT

As the Theurge Gift. Laws of the Wild page 288.

DISCARDED DREAM

As Changing Breeds 3 page 179.

EXORCISM

As the Theurge Gift. Laws of the Wild page 127.

FEAST OF THE DEAD

As Changing Breeds 3 page 179. This gift grants only Basic or Intermediate gifts.

PULSE OF THE INVISIBLE

As the Theurge Gift. Laws of the Wild page 127

ADVANCED GIFTS

ELEGY

As Changing Breeds 3 page 179.

TUNNEL RUNNER GIFTS

BASIC GIFTS

DANGER SENSE

As Changing Breeds 3 page 175.

HOTWIRE

As Changing Breeds 3 page 176.

SCENT OF THE TRUE FORM

As the Philodox Gift. Laws of the Wild page 128.

SIGIL

As Changing Breeds 3 page 176.

SILENT RUNNING

As Changing Breeds 3 page 176.

URBAN CAMOUFLAGE

As Changing Breeds 3 page 176.

INTERMEDIATE GIFTS

BOLT!

As Changing Breeds 3 page 168.

EVASION

As Changing Breeds 3 page 177.

SECOND SIGHT

As Changing Breeds 3 page 177.

SPEAK IN TONGUES

As Changing Breeds 3 page 177.

TUNNEL ECHOES

As Changing Breeds 3 page 177.

ADVANCED GIFTS

CHEESE IT!

As Changing Breeds 3 page 177.

KNIFE SKULKER GIFTS

BASIC GIFTS

CHITTER

As the Get of Fenris gift Snarl of the Predator. Laws of the Wild page 139.

DEATH MARK

As Changing Breeds 3 page 180.

MOTHER'S TRUTH

As Changing Breeds 3 page 180.

RAT'S JUDGEMENT

Retest: N/A

Cost: 1 Willpower

Taught By: Ancestor Spirits

It falls upon the Skulker to levy not only judgement but also punishment against those who have fallen from their proper stations. This Gift, taught by an ancestor-spirit, causes the Ratkin's claws and fangs to burn with the righteous power of law. The player spends one Willpower point. For the remainder of the scene, all of the Ratkins's natural weaponry attacks do 1 extra level of damage to all beings who have fallen from their original purpose to the service of the Wyrms (such as Black Spiral Dancers, formori, and corrupted nature spirits; Banes which came into existence as agents of the Wyrms are, regrettably, exempt from this Gift's sanction), as well as any Human with any amount of Wyrms-taint.

STACK

As the Ragabash gift Sense of the Prey. Laws of the Wild page 124.

STICKY PAWS

As Changing Breeds 3 page 180.

TRUTH OF GAIA

As the Philodox gift. Laws of the Wild page 128

INTERMEDIATE GIFTS

DOPPELGÄNGER

As the Glass Walker gift. Laws of the Wild page 141.

OPEN WOUNDS

As the Shadow Lord Gift. Laws of the Wild page 144.

PARALYZING STARE

As the Shadow Lord gift. Laws of the Wild page 144.

WEAK ARM

As the Philodox gift. Laws of the Wild page 129.

WITHER LIMB

As the Metis gift. Laws of the Wild page 121.

ADVANCED GIFTS

GEAS

As Changing Breeds 3 page 181.

WARRIOR GIFTS

BASIC GIFTS

CURSE OF HATRED

As the Metis gift. Laws of the Wild page 120.

FATAL FLAW

As the Shadow Lord gift. Laws of the Wild page 143.

RAT'S TEETH

As Changing Breeds 3 page 181.

RESIST PAIN

As the Philodox gift. Laws of the Wild page 128.

SLICING TEETH

As Changing Breeds 3 page 181.

SPIRIT OF THE FRAY

As the Ahroun gift. Laws of the Wild page 132.

STICKY PAWS

As Changing Breeds 3 page 180.

INTERMEDIATE GIFTS

BOLT!

As Changing Breeds 3 page 168.

IMPROVISATION

As Changing Breeds 3 page 181.

PERSECUTION COMPLEX

As Changing Breeds 3 page 182.

TREPPELCANCER

As Changing Breeds 3 page 182.

ADVANCED GIFTS

BLESSED FRENZY

As the Stargazer Gift; Hengeyokai MET Revised page 99.

PACK ATTACK

As Changing Breeds 3 page 183.

YUREI ASAKA GIFTS

BASIC GIFTS

NAME THE SPIRIT

As the Lupus gift. Laws of the Wild page 123.

PERSUASION

As Changing Breeds 3 page 170.

SPECTRAL STEP

Retest: Subterfuge

Cost: 1 Gnosis

Taught By: Ancestor Spirit

As Rapier Wit Changing Breeds 3 page 187. Except while in the heat of combat the enemy appears to strike the Ratkin cutting off pieces of them only to discover that they had stuck only air and a knife in the back. the Ratkin must remain completely silent while this gift is in effect. If struck the must make a simple willpower test on a failure the gifts effects end.

SPIRIT SPEECH

As the Theurge gift. Laws of the Wild page 126.

TALE SPINNING

Retest: Subterfuge

Cost: 1 Gnosis

Taught By: Tanuki or Fox Spirits

As Changing Breeds 3 page 187. Stories tend to be less elaborate and more grounded into the physical or spiritual. Vengeful spirits, jealous lovers, the disenfranchised had an outburst are all more likely to be told than space aliens.

UMBRAL CAMOUFLAGE

Retest: N/A

Cost: 1 Gnosis

Taught By: Wind Spirits

Although perfectly visible to all others, this Gift renders the Nezumi undetectable to spirits. The player spends one Gnosis point, and for the remainder of the scene, she is completely invisible to spiritual senses. She may move about as normal but cannot make any attack actions without disrupting the Gift.

INTERMEDIATE GIFTS

ADVERSITY

As Changing Breeds 3 page 188.

IMPROVISATION

As Changing Breeds 3 page 181.

TASTE OF MADNESS

As Changing Breeds 3 page 188.

WHISPERED DREAM

As Changing Breeds 3 page 188.

ADVANCED GIFTS HYPERATTENUATION

As Changing Breeds 3 page 188.

PLAGUE LORD GIFTS

BASIC GIFTS

BLUR OF THE WEEPING EYES

As Changing Breeds 3 page 185.

DREDGE OF THE SPIRIT WORLD

As Changing Breeds 3 page 185.

POISON FOOD

As Changing Breeds 3 page 185.

SMIFFLE

As Changing Breeds 3 page 185.

STINK

As the Bone Gnawer gift Odious Aroma. Laws of the Wild page 135.

VIRULENT CURSE OF HATRED

As Changing Breeds 3 page 186.

INTERMEDIATE GIFTS

CATCUT

As Changing Breeds 3 page 186.

(**Authors Note:** This gift has high potential for P.V.P. between the Nezumi and different changing breeds.

As such we **Strongly** recommend that it not be allowed for PCs. We instead recommend replacing it with the Get of Fenris gift Troll Skin. Get of Fenris Tribebook revised page 76.)

INFLECT PAIN

As Changing Breeds 3 page 186.

LESIONS

As Changing Breeds 3 page 186.

VENOM BLOOD

As the Get of Fenris gift. Laws of the Wild page 140.

ADVANCED GIFTS

EPIDEMIC CONTAGION

As Changing Breeds 3 page 186.

ENGINEER GIFTS

BASIC GIFTS

CONTROL SIMPLE MACHINE

As the Glass Walker gift. Laws of the Wild page 140.

HOTWIRE

As Changing Breeds 3 page 176.

MOUSETRAP

As Changing Breeds 3 page 183.

OPEN SEAL

As the Ragabash gift. Laws of the Wild page 124.

SCROUNGE

As Changing Breeds 3 page 183.

POWER SURGE

As the Glass Walker gift. Laws of the Wild 141.

INTERMEDIATE GIFTS

BATTERY

As Changing Breeds 3 page 184

CONTROL COMPLEX MACHINE

As the Glass Walker gift. Laws of the Wild page 141.

ELECTROSHOCK

As the Glass Walker gift. Glass Walker Tribe Book Revised page 75.

SUMMON ELECTRICITY

As Changing Breeds 3 page 184.

ADVANCED GIFTS

DEATH RAY

As Changing Breeds 3 page 184.

RITES

Unless otherwise noted, Nezumi utilize the same Rites as their Western counterparts (see Changing Breeds 3 starting on page 191). Any changes to their execution of these Rites, or the effects, have been included below.

MINOR RITES

SAN-SAN-KUDO

Nine Sips. When becoming a Nezumi you are leaving one life for another and leaving one family for a greater one. This change is not undertaken without sacrifice or observance. When the Rite of the Opened Way is complete, the Nezumi gather together and place three flat cups stacked on top of each other filled with sake the initiate and the Sensei each take three sips from each cup. Once completed the Nezumi is welcomed into the Nest and the family as an equal by the others. This Ritual is often used for inducting into other things as well; the School of Chaos uses it to welcome new members, and some individuals will not see you as a member of their Aspect unless you have undergone this Ritual.

BASIC RITES

DEDICATION RITE

As Changing Breeds 3 page 192. This Rite is often used to form temporary Nezumi Cells in order to eliminate targets marked for death. Once all objectives are completed the cell will dissolve allowing the Nezumi to be free to pursue other opportunities.

RITE OF THE CARDBOARD PALACE

As the Bone Gnawer Rite. See Bone Gnawer Tribebook Revised page 74.

INTERMEDIATE RITES

RITE OF THE PLAGUE GENESIS

See MET Hengeyokai Page 87.

YOBITSUME (PUNISHMENT RITE)

Mistakes can cost others their lives, and the aftermath can cause resources that were to be used for improvement to instead be utilized to ensure that your failings aren't catastrophic. When a Nezumi commits a serious offense which does not warrant the use of High Justice, they are instead expected to perform this Ritual. The Skulker overseeing the punishment lays a clean white cloth and a sharp knife before the offender. The offender takes the knife and severs a joint of his left little finger (right if he has none left) and offers it to the Skulker as payment for his transgression. The offender forever afterwards suffers a 1 Trait Penalty to all melee attacks they make from that point on. This Rite is not undertaken lightly and can only be performed on a single individual four times (the penalty is cumulative based on how many times it has been undergone). If an individual somehow makes it to a fifth time, High Justice is authorized instead.

TOTEMS

The Nezumi, much like their western cousins, will follow the Totem that suits them best for the task they have at hand. When joining a Sentai they will push for one that is more balanced to their approach to life and methods. If a Nezumi isn't part of a Sentai, they are assumed to have the benefits and Ban of the Mother of Rats even if they have no investment in the Totem background.

Authors Note: the Hengeyokai book state that they may not select Allies, Pure Breed, or Totem as backgrounds. For the sake of being part of a Sentai they may buy Totem but only after Character Creation.

The totems below are the Nezumi versions of totems they are an option for any Sentai that contains at least one Nezumi. There are other Totems Such as City Father/Mother that have a different write up you must select which write up you are using when selecting that totem as the Garou option is also available provided the Sentai has one. These totems are the only one you can use when you use the Dedication Rite.

CITY FATHER/MOTHER

Cost: 7

Description: Each city has a personification that is a representation of that city throughout history. This patron grants urban Sentais the ability to operate more easily within its boundaries it and allows the Nezumi more able to survive. Each City is different and has different needs and feels to each for instance Tokyo is a beautiful maiden wearing a silk kimono decorated with triple hollyhocks and two swords at her hips she has the eyes of a dragon and a demeanor a cool and hard as steel.

Benefits:

- + 3 Willpower per Story
- Ability: Area Knowledge x3
- The ability to take on the appearance of an archetypal denizen of the City. As if using the Rat Mask Fetish.

Ban: Should the Sentai leave the City for any reason the bonds of the Sentai are immediately Broken. The Sentai must perform a quest for their patron should they seek to renew the bond.

Court: The Court of this particular spirit changes based on the state of the city and the culture it represents. The one in Beijing resembles for the Forbidden City at the height of its functionality, whereas Jakarta resembles the palaces and trade embassies of the great Majapahit, Tokyo's domain is a strange blend of the glass edifices and the palatial chambers of the Tokugowa.

MOTHER OF RATS

Cost: 5

Description: She has many names the Rat Goddess, Mother Rat, She Who Unleashed the Birthing Plague upon the World. Whatever she is called she is revered as their progenitor; she is a nurturing and protecting force of the downtrodden. She prefers Sentais who wish to do the same and have the determination to

survive even in the harshest settings. She appears as a matronly woman with kind eyes and a humble disposition.

Benefits:

- +5 Willpower per Story.
- Ability: Survival x2
- +1 Temp Wisdom renown.

Ban: The Mother asks that her servants do not kill or harm mundane rats. She would also ask that that her servants do something to aid the homeless and downtrodden once a day as long as they are able. If the Sentai is off on an umbral quest and cannot aid them the Mother Forgives as long as the Sentai seeks to make up for lost time.

Court: The Court of the Mother Rat resemble a small rundown feudal Japanese village at overlooking a massive opulent city. The humble edifices swarm with rats of all shapes and sizes that serve a matronly woman who thanks each one and caresses each as if they are her own.

NARUKAMI, LORD OF THUNDER

Cost: 7

Description: Known to Western Shadow Lords as Grandfather Thunder, Narukami invokes as much fear as respect from those who honor him. He excels in patience and subtlety, though when necessary, he can unleash his tremendous anger on friend and foe alike. Narukami prefers to send his stormcrow servants as messengers to Sentai which honor him. He delights in the Nezumi's ruthlessness and professionalism. He sometimes asks them to act as agents of low war where his other servants cannot.

Benefits:

- +5 Willpower Traits per Story (for the Sentai as a whole)
- Trait: *Intimidating* x2, when the Sentai invokes Narukami by name
- +1 Honor Renown
- Ability: Etiquette x2
- Hakken find Sentai which honor Narukami interesting and keep an eye on them for potential alliances

Ban: Children of Narukami need only be truthful to those who they respect, i.e., those who they cannot intimidate or dominate.

Court: The Court of Narukami is located atop a mountain, the peak of which has been fashioned into a mighty fortress. From this nigh-unassailable location, Narukami may govern his realm and send his agents (stormcrows) out to be his eyes, ears, and mouthpieces wherever he may require them. As may be expected, the sky here is filled by a constant storm with rain, lightning, and billowing winds, making an approach (or retreat) by air particularly dangerous.

TESSO, THE IRON RAT

Cost: 6

Description: In Hein-period Japan the Emperor Shirakawa was desperate for an heir. In his desperation he turned to the Abbot of Mii-dera Temple: Raigo. Raigo agreed to attempt to intercede spiritually, provided he would be able to receive the funds to build an ordainment platform for his temple. Raigo worked tirelessly

and, sure enough, was successful in his endeavor. However, when it came time for the Emperor to hold up his end of the agreement, the monks of the rival Sanmon Monastery interfered. Infuriated by the denial of his just reward Raigo went on a hunger strike and died cursing the Emperor and his rival monks with his final breath. Within a few nights later a figure appeared above the new Prince's cradle, the infant soon took ill and died. Raigo, it seemed, had used black magic to transform himself into a large rat man with its fur and teeth imbued with the strength of iron. He and a swarm of rats descended on the Sanmon Monastery, destroying and despoiling the temple's scripture texts and statues. The Iron Rat's reign of terror ended when the Emperor had the ordainment platform constructed as well as a shrine, thus appeasing Raigo. Tesso, as he would later be known, is a spirit of justice as well as vengeance and he prefer that his followers to care about that as well. He lends them the resilience he is famous for, as well as tools that would allow them to see whatever is deemed necessary to ensure justice.

Benefits:

- The Gift: Iron Fur. As the Iron Rider gift Laws of the Wyld West page 159.
- The Gift: Sense of the Prey. As the Ragabash gift Laws of the Wild page 124.
- Ability: Survival x3

Ban: An oath given to Tesso in good faith was broken by jealousy and political maneuvering of his rivals. The breaking of such an oath created him as he was. Therefore, Tesso asks of the Sentai's that follow him only take oaths that they know they can fulfill and to never break them. He also asks that they seek out oath breakers and mete out justice.

Court: Tesso's court mimics one of the largest temples of all Japan except it is an idealized version of the temple at the foot of Mount Hiei - the one he wanted to build up. His temple is filled with Nezumi ancestors studying the sacred texts which they took from the Sanmon. The walls are adorned with paintings of his exploits as well as those of worship. Tesso and the spirits run their rituals daily, contemplating the Buddha and seeking to further their own enlightenment.

PLACES OF NOTE

HARAJUKU DISTRICT

Shibuya Ward, Tokyo, Japan.

Harajuku has been tangentially home to the Nezumi since Tokugawa Ieyasu granted the area to the Iga Clan for their services in 1590. Life was hard for the in the feudal area as the land was nutrient depleted and had trouble getting crops to grow. Today the District is the center for youth culture and fashion with its many retail shops and parks; one of which is Yoyogi park - the center of Japan's rockabilly culture which the Engineers are so fond of. This location also had the misfortune of being the starting place of a Dengue Fever outbreak in 2014. The District also contains the Headquarters of the Miyazaki-gumo and therefore the center of Nezumi politics in the current day and age. The large amount of street traffic and tourists allow the Nezumi to blend in more readily making it ideal for shadow deals and meetings.

MII-DERA TEMPLE

Base of Mount Hiei Otsu City, Shiga Prefecture, Japan.

Mii-dera is one of the four largest temples in Japan. The temple itself has been destroyed and rebuilt numerous times the last being destroyed by Oda Nobunaga in his conflict with the warrior monks. The temple grounds have several different buildings and shrines dedicated to various legends and functions within the temple. The most important (at least as far as the Nezumi are concerned) is the shrine to rat. It appeased Tesso's fury and shares a connection to his court making it easier for Sentai's seeking his favor to get to him.

KOKA

Small city in Shiga Prefecture, Japan

Koka is the current home of the School of Shadows having moved several times over the centuries. Koka also called Koga was famous for its ninja in the sengoku period and has several tourist traps and museums claiming such hoping to cash in on the cult of personality. The School of Shadows blends in here intermingling as people who teach tourists a small number of skills that they use hoping to scout out the talented and wanting to recruit those show promise in such skills. Beyond this practice the nest houses traditions that spans centuries and its customs that shaped the Nezumi into what they are today, and most members see this as a great honor and responsibility. The walls of the monastery like structure are decorated with maxims and philosophies that they feel every member of the breed should hold dear.

JAKARTA

Capital City, Indonesia

Jakarta has always been an important city and a hub for trade Its name has changed five times over the centuries. But what hasn't changed is its strategic viability as a trade hub, it is currently an alpha world city a global lynch pin in the world economy. This as it always has makes it a focus for the Nezumi's interests it can be used to spread diseases and faulty equipment as well as agents without arousing suspicion. This also makes the city itself house one of the largest populations of Nezumi on earth.

HONG KONG

City and Special Region of the Peoples Republic of China.

For the most part Hong Kong was a nothing island it was a temporary refuge for the Song when the Mongols were taking all of China. But it didn't really get going until after the English started one of many drug wars and forced the Empire to rewrite its entire trade policy. With the influx of westerners of course came other

Garou. Nowadays they call themselves the Boli Zouhisze, they say that they were always here, but they aren't in the Courts and that puts a weird diplomatic spin on things. Years of a shadow war profited neither side so eventually an accord was made. We don't just force them out or hunt them down, and they stay in Hong Kong. We keep emissaries on hand and the uneasy truce has held fast for a while. The City itself has grown from the island to the mainland and it contains a large number of skyscrapers and one of the largest and busiest ports on earth being the ninth largest importer and the tenth largest exporter. Its cultural heritage is a unique blend of East-west and is a distinct factor in everyday life. This of course presents unique problems that the Nezumi must be aware of, the truce is sacred to them having the breeds collective honor sworn on it. Any rat found taking liberties that they shouldn't are handled in a particular draconian fashion.

PEOPLE OF NOTE

MIYAZAKI KATSU

Jade Courtier, Regent and Sensei of the Harajuku Nest, Seer, Eldest of Eldest of the Nezumi, Oyabun of the Miyazaki-gumo, Head of the School of Chaos.

Born the illegitimate son of an American soldier and a Japanese national Miyazaki grew up in an orphanage before joining the Yakuza and being recruited by his Sempai in the organization. Cold intelligent and ruthless Miyazaki rocketed up the ranks of the Nezumi often making prudent and split-second decisions that end up being beneficial for everyone involved. He made Silver at the tender age of 35 and by that point had the reputation of an individual who prefers to negotiate and never asks for more than is unfair. In the 90's he diversified his gangs holdings into more legitimate businesses and currently holds a deeply compartmentalized organization balanced in a way that few, but he understands how it functions. He uses the wealth he has accrued to fund larger operations by the Nezumi and bribe corporate and government officials to see things his way. In 2005 he was named Jade and within the last ten years has made Eldest of Eldest. Under his leadership he has secured and organized the Nezumi so completely that the word expansion is on everyone's lips.

HICASHI AOI

Gold Courtier, Seer of the Harajuku Nest, Yurei Asaka and Head of the School of Assassination.

Aoi's life before becoming a member of the School of Assassination is shrouded in mystery. A mystery she says is uninteresting and simple. She doesn't think it important. What she does think is important is the skills her charges learn, and the changes in the world those skills could enact. The Mission is all, she doesn't take sides or show remorse. She like the original scions of the school is trained as a Geisha taking pride in the tradition and excellence that comes with it. She goes about her tasks with a zeal often rarely seen and believes that one kill can change the world.

HASHIMOTO TAKAI

Steel Courtier of the Harajuku Nest, Ichi.

Takai first became noticed by others when her Sentai ran afoul of members of Strike Force Zero in her original home in the Ginza Sewers. Losing two of the more Senior members she rallied the remaining and managed to lead them to safety as well as away from the home Nest. For a time, she meted out justice there and for a time was able through her efforts able to keep her Nest safe from intruders. Unfortunately, once SF0 found them there, they didn't stop until they had found all of them the nest was thoroughly scoured of its inhabitants and left to fall dormant hopefully unnoticed by the others. The few who had escaped regrouped in Harajuku, Takai among them. She has since led several raids against SF0 making sure they know her rage. Her activities are getting reckless of late and it is only a matter of time before the other Nezumi reign her in or she dies exposed before her enemies.

NOBU

Silver, Courtier, Knife Skulker Sensei and Regent of the Koka-Ryu Nest, Head of the School of Shadows.

The studious traditionalist head of the Shadows was born a simple rat and raised in the traditions of the Koka. He is studious acting only when he certain of the outcome accepting nothing but victory. He can be overbearing and imperious. When talking about the current state of the Nezumi he is of the opinion that the Chaos and Assassination are too tied to humanity to be objective and calls back to a time where they didn't have to be among humanity to cull them.

BOCAN WABAN

Silver Courtier, Plague Lord, Sensei of the Old Town Dragon's Nest, Head of the School of Defilement.

The Son of Epidemics is true believer in the original purpose of the Ratkin that he has inherited. Born in the largest trade hub in Indonesia, the Metis adapted quickly to the life he was born into. The Plague Lord is viewed as anachronistic and heavy handed but effective. His plagues and those of his School have caused many governments to adjust tactics in their wake. His fervent attitude is engaging and takes in many new recruits. He uses his status and position to push for a call back to the original cause of the Ratkin a cry that has been getting louder and more popular in recent nights.

BRIAN "EARS OF THE RAT" ANG

Steel Northern Wood Leaf of the Preventative Action Sentai under Mongoose, Bokuto.

Brian Started out as any Rodens in the bustling Mongkok neighborhood of Hong Kong. He survived the birthing plague during one of many recruitment drives he became a Tunnel Runners and a acolyte of the School of Chaos in quick succession. He ran messages for various movers and shakers of Hong Kong and made contacts with various non-Changing Breed supernaturals. One of which he is rumored to be close friends with. He finds his new duties in the Sentai a suitable balm for his need to keep busy.

LUCKY FANG

Gold Courtier, Warrior, Shifu of Mongkok, Hong Kong, Red Pole of the Sun Yee On and Bokuto.

Zhao Fang earned his nickname for surviving two assassination attempts on his life before becoming a Nezumi and five more afterward. His cleverness and intelligence created inroads that the Nezumi coveted. As a warrior he is unusually calm his rage more a cold thing than a hot raging fire. He currently has the unenviable position of makes sure that the Boli Zouhisze stick to their treaty with the Nezumi. Him being a member of the Triad gives him common ground and while he doesn't like being an ambassador, he does believe in the work and hopes that all the trouble he goes through is worth it. He is a cold calculating ruthless man and his transformation has done little to make him any better.

CURIOUS MIN

Steel Courtier, Instructor for the Ambassadors, Tunnel Runner.

Native to China Min has a wander lust that can't be stated enjoying traveling to new places and meeting interesting people. She is all about learning new customs and languages. Her attitude and willingness to teach as much as learn has made her a natural choice for an instructor for the Ambassadors. She promotes the Nezumi's philosophies by living them rather than proselytize allowing others to approach her and ask questions about their beliefs. She takes her role as Shifu very seriously weeding out the greedy and the violent. She believes that her sole duty is to incorporate good solid professionals and to get rid of any psychopaths that want to just learn eastern tricks.

LEXICON

Nezumi: Plague of Ratkin in the East.

Homid: Human born Shapeshifter.

Metis: Offspring of two shapeshifters of the same type (rat and rat or werewolf and werewolf, not rat and werewolf) deformed, carries a social stigma for most breeds.

Rodens: Rat born shapeshifter.

High War: Honorable face to face combat, formal courtly way of engaging their enemies.

Low War: Less honorable tactics, Sabotage, assassination, etc. Seen as the Nezumi's job within the courts.

Court: A formal gathering of Shapeshifters often of many different types.

Dragon's Nest: the Hengeyokai equivalent of a Caern most often a gathering place for a Court

Gai'nan: (Magistrate) Courtier leadership of a Court

Regent: Highest ranking elder within a Court

General: A Court's war master oversees defense and coordinates the Sentai's pledged to it.

Seer: Keeper of Rites responsible for the spiritual health of a Court.

Historian: Keeper of knowledge for a Court often groomed for it their whole lives.

Sentai: (Military Unit) A group of five shapeshifters sworn to defend a Court. Wave Sentai's are temporary Mountain Sentai's are more permanent.

Leaf: a member of a Sentai fulfilling the role of a scout.

Lantern: a member of a Sentai fulfilling the role of guide

Mirror: a member of a Sentai that provides Spiritual support

Pillar: a member of a Sentai that acts as support

Fist: a member of a Sentai that acts as the Combat expert

Courtier: sometimes called "the sixth auspice," these are individuals who dedicate their lives to the day-to-day activities of maintaining a Dragon's Nest

School: Political factions among the Nezumi

Garou: formal term for Werewolf

Haken: Garou Samurai followers of Narukami, (Eastern Shadow Lords)

Sensei: Title of the Eldest Nezumi in a Dragons Nest or area, Responsible for education and representation of the Breed to the nest. Chinese Nezumi use the title Shifu instead.

Kegare: (The Unclean), Member of the School of Defilement.

Kage: (Shadow), Member of the School of Shadows.

Ichii: (One), Member of the School of Assassination.

Bokuto: (Gambler), Member of the School of Chaos.

Kamikaze: (Divine Wind), Member of the Defunct School. Used derogatorily for individuals who are unprofessional or reckless.

Gokudo: (The Extreme Path), Used to refer to the Nezumi's Philosophy

Elvis: Derogatory term for an engineer.