

# ***Bark at the Moon - 07/17/09***



## **This Week's Recap**

The defeated city of Resplendent Peak has two large and unruly tribes of barbarians outside its gates, and over fifty people of the air circling it.

Their preparations complete, the band of Lunars, snakemen refugees, greater minions of the Eyeless Face, and one Fair Folk climb aboard Brug's tornado and rocket into the city. They land near the sewers where the rebels were seen to have fled just in time to be set upon by the people of the air and their bows.

One group of the winged people flies in close, taunting Brug into calling for a change of formation for melee, but luckily for him they react too slowly, and the feint does not leave him in tight quarters beneath a hail of arrows.

In the streets nearest the barbarians Tse and Ming stand with several of the minions prepared to hold off the encroaching horde. Ming waves his men back and forth across the less disciplined opposition and kills or drives away half of them in with his first command. Tse's Moonsilver weapon dances from javelin to Goremaul and

kills their commander, forcing the rest to flee.

Meanwhile, Brug and his minions trade arrows with the people of the air, each one giving as good as they get. But when the last arrow is shot from the sky the people of the air take off to get more from their base and Tse joins them in the sky, killing them mercilessly.

The city now temporarily free of occupying forces, they take the time to join together and move about looking for survivors. Ming comes across the rebels when one of them crawls from a sewer grate to apologize for missing the excitement. It seems they use the sewers for travel and cover, and never used the same exit twice, so were nowhere near the planned battle.

But all is still well, and Brug sets his minions to forging more armor and spears.

A week later he leads many of the refugees from Resplendent Peak and the surrounding forest to the Palace of Sajaukts.

During the “manly time” Lily wanders the area around Sajaukts’ lair, being sure to stay hidden in case of any elementals or small gods who may wish to do a Raksha harm. She avoids any trouble, and finds a rating 3 Air Demesnes in the tops of a large pine forest. It is difficult to reach, but she manages, and spends her time weaving together gossamer from the pooled up essence of the place.

Brug’s prayers at the manse are spectacular, and a pleased Sajaukts comes out to speak with him. Sajaukts examines Brug’s aura and his tattoos, then proclaims him a true reincarnation of Moon-Faced River Dancer, the manse’s former owner. Brug reverently enters and attunes himself, then invites his friends to do likewise.

They all return to Black Branches to prepare for the journey to the Elemental Pole of Wood and Kotomaro the Hidden Lightning, a dragon who has gone bad and been left to its own devices for too long. It has been almost two years since they met the elementals fleeing Kotomaro’s unjust reign, and if she has spent that time dealing with Abyssals, there is no telling what damage may have been caused.

Unfortunately, they realize they are neither prepared to fight spirits nor survive the elemental pole long enough to make sure the dragon knows they exist. And so they spend the next three years building their forces and honing their bodies and minds.

Lily spends her time doing what she does best: forging creatures, things, and hearts. She picks out a likely spot for her and her husband’s [new kingdom \(top right, inside the "l" in "Halta"\)](#) and then spreads word that it will be a rebirth of The Wyld, that portion of Chanta that had been given over to the Free Fair Folk when the treaties were still in

effect. But this time it would be free of its predecessor’s predatory nature.

She then takes a trip to the middle marches and forges [minions](#) to act as her lord’s retributive arm, and defend the area should Minerva from the southern forests of Halta take umbrage at the alliance. These large lizard men are well muscled and well trained, drilled daily by common Raksha she creates and barter for their heart graces. Their shimmering gossamer armor, shields, and tiger claws make them a fine addition to Ming’s implements of war.

With that underway, Lily graciously and somewhat sheepishly visits Brug with a request. She has heard stories of demons known as the makers of flesh, who can take the body and spirit of two creatures and forge them into one. Before she approaches Ming with the idea of a child, she wants to know if Brug would summon one of the demons for them to use. Though her body is incredibly feminine, it is not female. She purposefully left those parts off when crafting it to avoid the trials of pregnancy.



Within months Kro-tan aura, a demon-forged hermaphroditic Lunar Half-Caste and pseudo Fae-Blood is “born.” Before he is old enough to speak the child has a full complement of Graces, and the Staff has been opened for feeding. The child suckles milk from human nursemaids, and conviction from them as well, for Lily only hires women strong enough of spirit and in dire enough straits that they would open themselves completely to the babe to be rid of their troubles.

In keeping with her husband’s morals, she does not let Kro-tan Aura suckle to

long or too deep, lest the new Enshrined Confederacy be as littered with the husks of the enchanted as the former Raksha kingdom in Halta was.

Kro-tan Aura is taught that there is a Destiny to be filled, uniting the Wyld and Creation for all time, and that it is this child of Luna and Chaos who is to fulfill it. Armed with knowledge, treasures, and the ways of the Wyld, young Kro-tan Aura grows rapidly, and by the time the band is ready to leave could be mistaken for a sixteen year old in mind, body, and temperament.

With an alliance forged with Halta, and an exchange of oaths with Sluluru, Lord of the Lower Branches of the Haltan forest, Lily is ready to show her Creation-Born compatriots the ways of her homeland Rakshastan.

Brug takes the time to familiarize himself more with his summoned creatures, enough so that he feels confident in hunting one on its home turf. On the first day of Calibration he heads into the desert of Cecelyne and into the outer rim of Malfeas.

There he tracks and slays a beautiful wasp, setting aside his heart in order to drink the Agatae's heart's blood and take a bit of its winged beauty into himself. Strengthened by the hunt, he then takes on one of the many demon spiders living in the steel forests of the realm. Finally, he tracks down and dances death with a tomescu, the arsenal clouds of Octavian. The last fight is over before it began, but not without work as Brug sends the thing dancing in and out of melee range with his defensive arc of sorcerous flame.

Returning to his new manse, he digs through ancient treasures his past life stored within. He finds a [Barless Cage](#), perfect for his minions, and a large sum

of antique golden treasures, enough to leave him set for life.

Meditation within the depths of the Easter forests teach him mastery of their dangers, and he is ready to go.

Ming prepares himself with a possible battle with a dragon by first honing his martial skills even further. He hones his strength such that his wounds become unstoppable, and becomes in tune with his essence so that he can regain motes by crushing his foes.

Lily forges for him a Ring grace, and then forges that grace into a pair of deadly tiger claws, each with a hearthstone setting. She teaches him the ways of Shaping environments and waypoints in his dreams, then takes him to the bordermarches where he learns to slide waypoints along the edge of Creation.

He then sets to making sure that his kingdom is worthy of the name



Enshrined Confederacy. Deep in the heart of the demesnes where they build their earthen castle he begins crafting laws and a societal structure designed to make sure each type of being in the

kingdom knows of the other's needs and dangers. A public school system is formed to change the way children think about the Fae (they don't all want to eat you), and how the Fae think about children (they're not food).

Lily also crafts him gossamer armor, and though he cannot summon or banish it as a true Raksha could, he wears it to state functions, which are thankfully few

and far between. Blazoned across the armor's chest is the symbol of the Enshrined Confederacy: a red-scaled and clawed hand outstretched and holding a white lily in its palm.

He spends much of his time teaching the rapidly growing Kro-tan Aura about Lunar society, Solars, dragon-blooded, and Creation. He strives constantly to reinforce the desire to end the eternal war between Creation and The Wyld.

One night Lily notices Night's Silent Mask creeping about the palace. He disappears as soon as their eyes meet, but she tells Ming about it the next day. Ming goes to ask the Lunar what he was doing there.

Night's Silent Mask is, as he always does, watching out for the pack. He's been keeping an eye on both Ming and the powerful Fair folk noble he invited into their midst (he refuses to call her "Lily"). He has been making sure she means what she says, and if she doesn't, that he'll be there when it becomes known. He's also been watching Ming, making sure he hasn't been glamoured. He says that Ming has an unhealthy craving for the woman's presence, but after the rest of his opinions about her it's hard to take the man seriously. Though perhaps that's Ming's Wyld Addiction making excuses.

Tse searches the depths of Mount Metagalapa and finds an ancient manse. He drives away its guardian and takes the cold iron bauble it produces for his own.

He then returns to Black Branches, and with the assistance of artisans of the Eyeless Face, crafts a hearthstone amulet to carry his gem of adamant skin in, as his weapon now bears the bauble. Using his own blood and the Moonsilver remains of the alchemical they killed to get the jade obelisk.

He studies the occult with Darik so that he can one day create his own artifacts, but most of his time is spent hardening his flesh and protecting it from the destructive side of the Eastern forests, so that he can survive their stay inside the elemental pole.

Finally, though Lily is unhappy to see him return, he travels to the Scavenger Lands and barter with the merchants of Harborhead, securing large quantities of iron weapons to bring with them into the Wyld.

Their preparations as complete as they believe they have time for given the threat, they head out into the Wyld with Lily leading them straight towards the Elemental Pole of Wood.

## Journeying to the Pole of Wood

Finding an elemental pole is easy. One simply heads into the Wyld, seeks the center of the direction, and then follows the trails that most exemplify the element being sought. This is quick going at first, but as one reaches the Deep Wyld haste becomes impossible, because the trails can change as quickly as they are found.

As Lily explains, their first stop almost has to be at the [Opal Court](#). Though unrelated to the pole, it is the closest Fair Folk court to their home. Bypassing it would be considered a grave insult to Lord Japhthia and the rest of the Valor-obsessed nobles who make it their home; an insult that may be taken out on the people of the Enshrined Confederacy if the nobles cannot catch the Lunars. While there she fully expects everyone of importance in their party to be challenged to a semi-friendly duel, but luckily the fashion of late is for competition, not true dueling.

From there they head poleward, always following the path with the most life, especially plant life. What dangers await them once they reach the Deep Wyld is impossible to say, but out there is where the stuff of Legend goes to die, and sometimes those death throes can take whole waypoints spiraling into Oblivion with them. Unshaped Raksha are among the most dangerous threats, ranging from hate-filled entities whose bodies were destroyed in the Crusade, to the truly alien Primordials who never took part in Creation's birth or the wars it drove, but who swim in the pure chaos at its edge like massive predators.

Even the Fair Folk do not venture this deep often, and never for longer than it takes to quest against an Unshaped, risking eternal enslavement for the promise of powerful artifacts if they succeed.

## **Kotomaro, the Hidden Lightning**

[Some info on Kotomaro and the Elemental Pole of Wood](#)

### **OOO Status**

#### **Ming:**

Lily's hold over Ming has solidified, and he is now addicted to her beauty. After a month of being apart, he must roll Willpower difficulty 4 or want to return to her. He can spend 1 Willpower and get a point of Limit to resist for another month, and after 3 points are spent he is cured, at least until she turns into the hottest thing he's ever seen again.

He is also addicted to the powers she bestows upon him. This uses the rules for Wyld addiction (core page 288), but he doesn't have to seek out the Wyld: Lily's boons suffice. The boons she is granting him are:

- 1 mote: get a 2-die bonus on any action that fosters camaraderie between Creation and the Wyld
- 5 motes: give a -(Essence) penalty to someone's action if you can explain how a feeling of camaraderie between Creation and the Wyld would interfere.

He got himself a Ring Grace that looks like a fancy pair of artifact tiger claws. Details on sword and ring shaping can be found [here](#).

#### **Ming, Brug, and Lily:**

The oath is still going strong at rating 5 (5-die Oathsworn pool, perfect detection to 50 yards, and a difficulty 5 Conviction test to break it temporarily).

### **Rules of the Game (house rules introduced, rules questions raised and answered, etc.)**

#### **Regaining Willpower:**

Exalts roll their highest virtue every day in order to regain Willpower, instead of always rolling Conviction.

**Mass Combat:**

Unless one side is immune to fatigue, we're ignoring the extra rolls created by the fatigue rules in mass combat.

**Gem of Adamant Skin:**

In accord with the flavor text, this only protects from wounds. Damage taken from poison or other non-external sources is not reduced.

**Creature Stats:**

Creatures from the core book are not in line with those from the setting books in terms of stats, so are not allowed. Creatures from other books are available, and can be re-skinned as desired.

**Attack Speed:**

Attack speed has a minimum of 3.

**Combos:**

Adding a charm to a combo d require relearning it, just paying the difference in cost between the two.

**High Dice Pools:**

If a pool goes over 10, extra dice can be divided by 2 instead of rolled, leaving just 10 or 11 dice to roll. If it's a damage pool, divide by 3 instead.

**Craft:**

For Exalted (and some supernatural creatures), combine all elemental crafts into a single skill.