

Eska of the Seven Blades

Hunter of Heroes

Background: Born amid the far-Eastern Jaru tribes' endemic warfare, Eska grew up surrounded by violence. She made it her tool, defeating peers in contests of might and skill, and leading raids against neighboring tribes to plunder and count coup. Through bravery and strength, she could accomplish anything.

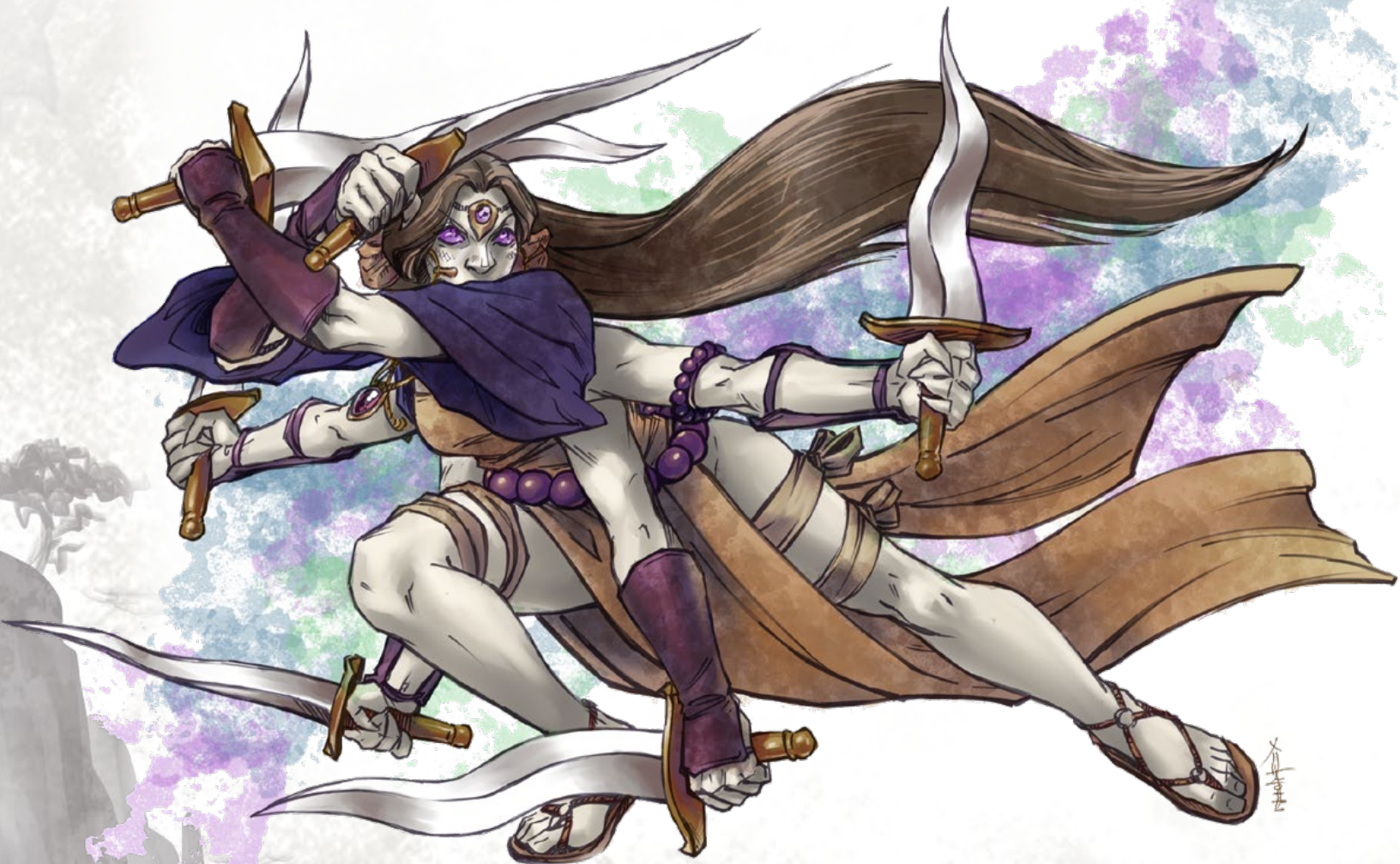
When a neighboring Jaru tribe butchered Eska's people, the survivors scattered. Bereaved, humiliated, and enraged, Eska sought revenge, hunting those who killed her kin. In a running battle with enemy warriors, she Exalted.

Eventually a Lunar elder, Sublime Danger of the Thousand Daiklave Wings, took her in. Eska's sworn herself to her mentor's service, and often performs various errands — redirecting travelers, stealing artifacts, maiming or slaying perilous foes — occasionally accompanied by another of Sublime Danger's students. But mostly, her time is her own. To ensure that she's never vulnerable again, she seeks strength through constant conflict.

Image: A sharp-featured young woman, pale due to being sheltered from the sun by the forest canopy. Her expressive face is quick to exhibit glee, surprise, and rage. Her battle-form has six arms but appears otherwise human. Her totemic anima displays a violet-and-silver wolf spider whose legs terminate in blades.

Intimacies: *Defining:* "Battling mighty foes makes me stronger."; *Major:* Sublime Danger (Reverence); Fellow student (Rivalry); *Minor:* "Battle isn't a game."; "My foes will yield to me in the end."; Fellow student's reborn Solar mate (Jealous Desire)

Secrets: Eska keeps tabs on heroes and champions betwixt the Scavenger Lands and the Dreaming Sea, tracking their movements and patterns so she can catch them alone. She's privy to some, though not all, of her mentor's schemes.



Equipment: Moonsilver short daiklaves (Eska's Fangs, below), purple jewelry and leather vambraces matching her eyes

Roleplaying Hints: Eska tests herself against anyone she sees as a rival (such as a player character who's defeated her in battle or who also studies under Sublime Danger) or who she believes will give her a good fight. She employs disguises, lies, and stealth to catch an opponent alone long enough to defeat him. Eska flees if dealt a crippling wound or brought down to her -4 health levels, or if significant foes rally to defend her prey. Her interest wanes if a foe seems beneath her or a more enticing target appears. Those who slay Eska face the wrath of her mentor and fellow students.

Caste: Full Moon

Tell: Slitted violet eyes

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4; Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2; Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Essence: 2

Willpower: 6

Join Battle: 8 dice

Personal Notes: 17

Peripheral Notes: 37/42 (5m committed to Eska's Fangs)

Health Levels: -0/-1x2/-2x4/-4x7/Incap.

Abilities: Athletics 4, Awareness 4, Brawl 3, Dodge 5, Melee 4, Integrity 1, Larceny 1, Lore 1, Occult 1, Presence 3, Resistance 3, Socialize 1, Stealth 1, Survival 3

Merits: Ambidextrous 1, Artifact 3, Language (Forest-tongue, Riverspeak, Local Tongues), Mentor 3 (Sublime Danger of the Thousand Daiklave Wings)

Attack (Eska's Fangs/short daiklave): 13 dice (Damage 14/4); Tags: Lethal, Melee

Attack (Eska's Fangs/dagger): 12 dice (Damage 11); Tags: Lethal, Melee, Thrown (Short) (see Fang-Concealing Method)

Attack (Unarmed): 11 dice (Damage 11); Tags: Bashing, Brawl, Grappling, Natural

Attack (Grapple): 11 dice (7 dice to control)

Combat: Soak 4, Hardness 0; Parry 4 (Melee); Evasion 5; Rush 8 dice; Disengage 9 dice

Social: Resolve 3, Guile 2

Eska's Fangs (Moonsilver Short Daiklaves, Artifact •••)

A recent gift from Sublime Danger after a Solar Exalt shattered Eska's mundane blades, these six swords partake of Eska's zeal and duplicity.

EVOCATIONS OF ESKA'S FANGS

Passive: While wielding all six swords, Eska's dual wielding bonus to clash attacks increases to +4.

Fang-Concealing Method (—; Reflexive; Indefinite): Diminish any number of Eska's Fangs to the size and semblance of ordinary daggers.

Shapeshifting

Eska pays four motes to assume any human or animal form she knows as a miscellaneous action. Returning to her natural human shape is free and reflexive. In animal form, she uses the animal's dice pools; where this increases her dice pool, treat the extra dice as dice added by Charms.

Eska's spirit shape is a wolf spider. She favors innocuous human forms, like a lost child or traveling merchant, to lure in an opponent or put him at ease. In battle, she immediately activates Deadly Beastman Transformation (see below). For travel and escape, she favors winged forms such as a raiton (**Exalted**, p. 570).

Charms

EXCELLENCIES

Eska can add up to (Attribute) dice to a Dexterity, Stamina, Charisma, or Wits roll for one mote per die. She may increase this limit by adding a second Attribute, with an appropriate stunt. Additionally, she may increase her soak by up to (Stamina/2) points, or (Stamina + [Attribute]/2) with an appropriate stunt, for one mote per point.

OFFENSIVE CHARMS

Octopus and Spider Barrage (8m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Decisive-only): Make up to three **decisive** attacks against one or more enemies; these need not use the same weapon or Ability. Divide Initiative evenly among attacks, rounding up. Only reset to base Initiative if at least one attack hits, and only after all attacks are completed. Only lose Initiative for missed attacks if all attacks miss. In animal shapes with more than four limbs, each successful attack adds one

cumulative die to subsequent attacks' damage.

Sinuous Striking Grace (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): Add four to Initiative to determine when to act this round. If Eska uses her action to attack someone who hasn't acted yet this round, convert one die on the attack roll to a non-Charm success.

DEFENSIVE CHARMS

Coiled Serpent Strikes (2m, 2i; Reflexive; Instant; Counterattack, Decisive-only): Upon successfully defending against an attack, make a **decisive** counterattack; Eska may reflexively ready a weapon to attack with.

Gleaming Crescent Block (4m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform): Up to two 1s on an attacker's attack roll subtract successes from the roll. Waive the Initiative cost of counterattacking with Coiled Serpent Strikes if Eska's parry succeeds.

MOBILITY CHARMS

Instinct-Driven Beast Movement (3m; Supplemental; Instant): Add an automatic success to one movement action or one roll of a speed-based extended action. Upon succeeding at an opposed supplemented roll, gain one Initiative; in animal forms with a Speed Bonus, the opponent loses an Initiative also.

SOCIAL CHARMS

Dream-Weaving Voice (3m; Simple; Instant): Eska's words paint a vivid picture in a listener's mind, allowing him to clearly visualize the tale. Double 9s on a single inspire roll.

MISCELLANEOUS CHARMS

Deadly Beastman Transformation (1m, 1wp; Simple; One scene; Withering-only): While Hybrid Body Transformation is active, add four dice to **withering** damage rolls, feats of strength, and movement actions. Gain +4 natural soak. Eska can attempt Strength 5+ feats of strength. Suffer an unavoidable -1 Defense penalty. She may reflexively activate this Charm while activating Hybrid Body Transformation.

Hybrid Body Transformation (4m; Simple; Instant): Shift into a hybrid form with six arms and slit-pupiled eyes, gaining the Enhanced Sense (Vision) and Extra Limbs Merits. This doesn't count as an animal form for Charm purposes.

Silken Grasp (1m; Reflexive; Instant): Unreeling a sticky silken thread from her palm, Eska pulls to her hand a small or light object within short range. This is only usable once per hand per round.