

HERRON'S PRIDE

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Assignment Context - For this script, I was provided worldbuilding details around a fantasy location called Herron: an Asiatic inspired country where magic influences the local day/night cycle rather than the sun. There are time keepers who track the day/night shifts, and guides that lead others through the darkness, called the Unlight.

This assignment was about creating the atmosphere of Herron, as well as characters who could communicate to the audience what the location's culture was like, and to showcase or hint at the relevant worldbuilding and gameplay risks associated with Herron.

Scene Info - Lord Yuon and his son, Sen, travel down the streets of Regoshi as they prepare to send Sen out of the city in a "rite of passage" type ceremony. This is typically a time of celebration and encouragement for young lords like Sen.

EXT. REGOSHI STREETS - DUSK

FADE IN.

Light filters through the mountainous streets of Regoshi from the spherical crystal atop the Yuon Palace at the crest of the mountain behind.

LORD YUON, 37 in a regal dark blue robe with a washed pink trim, his long black hair falling loose past his shoulders and a SWORD at his hip, walks with his gaze fixed and staring ahead.

SEN, 15, Lord Yuon's son and spitting image, does his best to imitate his father while limping on a leg long-since healed, but not correctly.

Together, father and son walk down the streets of Regoshi past the open-front shops and houses blocked by the city's citizens come to watch the ceremony. Candles, banners, and paper lanterns line the streets with them.

The city is silent as a funeral procession.

Sen's crippled leg twists from under him, and he collapses to the ground.

Lord Yuon stops walking. He keeps his eyes fixed forward, toward the open front gate. His expression is tight, his emotions reigned.

ALABAST, 30, a time keeper wearing the traditional robe and sash of his profession, kneels next to Sen and takes his arm.

ALABAST

My lord. Let me help you.

SEN

No.

Sen pushes Alabast away. The time keeper's MEDALLION, a small crystal set into a golden frame, glistens as it sways, catching Lord Yuon's eye.

Sen looks up at his father.

SEN (CONT'D)

(to Alabast)

I will stand on my own, Alabast. I must.

Lord Yuon flicks his gaze forward, away from his son. Sen struggles as he pushes himself to his feet.

All around them the citizens watch on in frozen silence. Some tremble with quiet sobs, while others watch with clenched jaws like Lord Yuon's.

Finally, Sen finds his feet.

Without hesitation, Lord Yuon continues the walk down the slanted street until eventually they arrive at the open gate.

Beyond Regoshi's walls, the scarlet trees shed their leaves, sending them tumbling on an invisible breeze. The waning light from atop the palace gives the trees long shadows that paint the orange grass the same blue as Lord Yuon's robe.

Sen limps across the gate's threshold, then turns to face his father.

Lord Yuon stares forward, looking above his son despite Sen being almost his father's height. His words are tight and strained, and echo with recitation.

LORD YUON

Only the worthy can guide Regoshi
through the Unlight.

Sen stands tall and takes a step forward to meet his father's gaze.

SEN

House Yuon has that worth.

LORD YUON

Only the resolute can lead Herron
into eternal day.

SEN

House Yuon has that resolution.

LORD YUON

Only the-

Lord Yuon's voice breaks. His neck flexes as he pushes down his emotions. He squeezes his eyes shut and lets out a breath before opening them again to look at his son. Then, through him as his eyes grow unfocused and his voice returns.

LORD YUON (CONT'D)

Only the strong can bring Sel
peace.

Sen stands straighter, stretching against his limping leg and raising his chin high.

SEN

House Yuon has that strength.

Lord Yuon closes his eyes again. He breathes, his body shaking with each inhale. A BREEZE sends a chill through the crowd as it pushes out the gate.

Sen stands in front of his father. Determined. Never breaking his gaze.

ALABAST

Lord Yuon.

Lord Yuon turns to look at the time keeper, who holds up his medallion and taps the small crystal on its face. Darkness swirls against the light, nearly extinguishing it.

Down the street, Regoshi's citizens begin to stir in the waning light, igniting more lanterns and candles while some abandon the street altogether as they scurry indoors.

Lord Yuon looks up at the crystal above the palace at the top of the mountain, its own light nearly extinguished, a reflection of Alabast's medallion.

SEN

The Unlight is nearly upon us,
father.

Lord Yuon flips around and locks eyes with his son for the first time. They stare at each other, neither blinking. Sen out of determination. Lord Yuon out of fear.

Finally, Lord Yuon speaks. His voice, loud and near cracking, is meant for the gate keepers.

LORD YUON

Close the gate.

The large metal doors swing inward on mechanical hinges. Incremental locks CLICK closed with every inch, the sound growing like a marching drum as the gates separate Lord Yuon from his son.

LORD YUON (CONT'D)

Wait!

The gate keepers stop, the gates locked into place, partially closed. Through the gap, Lord Yuon looks at his son, who furrows his brow in the fleeing light. The shadows behind Sen nearly drown the scarlet in deep blue and violet.

Lord Yuon unfastens the belt of his sword and pulls it free from his waist. Sharp gasps wash through the crowd.

ALABAST

Lord Yuon, you can't-

Lord Yuon thrusts the sheathed sword through the gap between the gate, holding it upright, his hand shaking.

LORD YUON

(whispering)

Take it.

Sen looks between the sword and his father, and reaches up with a tentative hand, wavering as his fist opens and closes on the air.

LORD YUON (CONT'D)

Take it!

Finally, Sen locks eyes with his father, and smiles. He presses against his father's hand, pushing the sword back through the gate, away from him.

Lord Yuon opens his mouth to speak, but Sen shakes his head.

SEN

House Yuon has that strength.

Alabast places a hand on Lord Yuon's shoulder.

ALABAST

My Lord, we *must* close the gates.

Lord Yuon's breath quickens as he looks into his son's eyes.

ALABAST (CONT'D)

Lord Yuon?

Sen smiles, and offers his father a nod. Lord Yuon's words are soft and trembling.

LORD YUON

Close the gates.

The locks clink into place as the gates inch closed. The gap shrinks, and the last thing Lord Yuon sees is the smiling eye of his son as the Unlight swallows the day, and the gates crash shut.

In the eerie silence, Lord Yuon places a trembling hand on the metal gate. He slides down to his knees and bows his head.

ALABAST

It is well, Lord Yuon. The young
lord's testing aligned with a short
Unlight. Three hours, by our
estimate. At most.

Outside, the night stirs. A whooping bird's call pierces the
air, followed quickly by a groaning like stretching wood. The
snapping of branches, the exhale of spores. The sounds of the
forest coming to life.

LORD YUON

Three hours?

ALABAST

Only three, my Lord.

Lord Yuon straightens as he takes in a sharp breath through
his nose. He turns around and sits cross-legged, his back
against the metal gate, and places his sword across his lap.
He closes his eyes.

The streets are empty now, save for Lord Yuon and Alabast.
The citizens nowhere in sight, lanterns and candles the only
evidence they were ever there.

The strange sounds from outside the gate grow, and Alabast
stirs uncomfortably before setting his jaw.

ALABAST (CONT'D)

I must return to the palace, my
Lord. Our light must be kept.

Lord Yuon doesn't move. Doesn't open his eyes. Alabast turns
and walks quickly away from the gate and up the mountainous
street.

The noises of darkness grow to a crescendo and Lord Yuon
controls his breathing. Sounds of violent animals and
snarling plant life lie just on the other side of the gate.

A young boy's SCREAMS join the cacophony. The screams of
horror and fear, but not of pain. They do not relent, and
they do not cut off abruptly.

Tears fall from Lord Yuon's calm face. His muscles twitch,
begging to be used. To fight.

Lord Yuon takes a sharp breath.

THE END