



Book III
THE HOUSE OF ZHU

CHAPTER 3:
Power of a Memory

Feel the fire

The central graphic features a circular illustration of a wild boar in a natural setting. To the right, the text 'Book III' and 'THE HOUSE OF ZHU' is displayed in white and pink fonts. Below this, a large blue arrow points to the right, containing the text 'CHAPTER 3: Power of a Memory'. At the bottom of the arrow, the phrase 'Feel the fire' is written in a small, italicized font.

Once upon a time...

Falco and the other figure in a trench coat walk into a bar at the southern tip of the former Gou Community. It was surrounded by slums and close to Primeval's Eye. Falco said to the bar figure, "Give me your strongest drink."

The bar figure didn't ask for his identification. He poured Falco a stein of concentrated fountain of youth extract. Falco took a deep drink from the stein. Falco said to the hooded figure, "I thought Tsar Kresovy was the embodiment of a Ninja- now I realize you have been the embodiment of the Ninja this whole time."

A lady sat next to Falco. She was wearing a girdle and thin white chest coverings. She asked, "Not many people come in here dressed as finely as you. What are you in for?"

Falco took a big gulp. She asked, "What's your name, handsome?"

He replied, "Haven't invented one yet. I used to be Serpentes Falco."

She gasped, "The man who killed Tsar Kresovy with the Sword of Invincibility?"

When nobody was looking, she leaned in to his ear and whispered, "Thank you for coming."

Falco drank some more and said, "I could have ruled this whole damn world if I took the Pencil of Symbolism from him."

The lady asked, "Why didn't you?"

Falco angrily replied, "I was foolish. I was weak. I couldn't."

The lady asked, "By the way, I'm Ethica."

Falco raised a brow. Ethica then asked, "How did you get the most powerful blade in existence?"

Falco drunkenly murmured, "I was born the Elemental Master of Sound. A member of the Sensei's League wanted to form a Ninja Clan of Elemental Masters. He found me, and I joined the clan. We defeated the Fun Dasha House. Then we went our separate ways. I went to my hut in the Toxic Bogs and was tricked by a Charisma to believe in Tsar Kresovy. I meet with the Tsar and he told me how to open a portal to the Metaphysical realm. I tricked the Alliance into opening the portal, then Kresovy betrayed me. He uses the Pencil of Symbolism to make me believe he was God- but I killed him anyway. And that is how I killed Tsar Kresovy."

Falco tossed his finished stein against the brick wall; it shattered into pieces of glass which went flying over the bar. Falco requested, "Bar figure, another drink."

Ethica said, "I am Pevsner Ethica of Shee, Princess of the city-state of Shee. Tsar Kresovy was about to have all of us world leaders executed. Then the execution gets called off because Tsar Kresovy died. You are a great man, Mr. Serpentes. You just have forgotten the ending to your struggle. Everyday you embody what being a ninja is about. You question those who break from the path, you keep your ego in check, and now you are confronting what you have been afraid of this whole time. You saved me and all the Nihon Leaders. Follow me out, if you want to come see our city."

She grabbed his shirt and pulled him in for a kiss. Afterwards she picked up a pair of tantos from the stool next to her and left. Falco and the hooded figure put some money on the counter for their drinks and followed her out.

The bar figure was cleaning up shards of glass when he heard a crack behind him. He turned around to see a full stein on the counter with a split ice cube in it. Next to the stein was an empty stool where a great man once sat. To this day, in the bar, in the slums, near Primeval's Eye, an old bar figure still tells the story of the time he poured a glass of strong fountain of youth extract to Serpentes Falco.