

## ANTIGONE + MAUDE

#22

by Stanley Lieber

### LINEAGE

Plinth had quit smoking some time ago, and said so. Logan actually extinguished his cigar, out of respect. Esmé was baffled, humbled.

Occam brought out Plinth's sushi, covered the ashtrays.

"This man..." Plinth hesitated, gesturing towards Occam with his eyes closed. "...Is your great-grandson." Eyes snapped on the final beat.

Esmé stared at Occam's silver roots. Then at Logan's thick black sideburns and the carpet of fur covering the backs of his hands, leading a trail up into the sleeves of his flannel shirt.

"Makes sense," Logan said, without explaining.

Daisuke suddenly appeared and pulled up a chair, instantly engrossed in the developing family drama.

"Oh, it's you," Logan said, finishing up his *miso* and wiping his chin with his forearm. "They finally kick you out of Japan?"

Daisuke bowed his head, slightly.

"Let's talk business," Plinth said.

### NINGU OF THE KUNOICHI

"You see, I don't want her killed."

Plinth was referring to Europa, Phoenician princess, lately a regular at the mall. Only Logan (a Santana buff) recognized the name, but Daisuke understood instinctively that Plinth was talking about a Goddess. Naturally, he would do whatever he could to help.

"Elements within the U.S. government disagree. Over and above my objections, an operator has been dispatched to eliminate her, here, at the mall." Plinth leaned forward, smiled. "I've bought the place, so at least now we have the home court advantage.

Occam scoffed. "What do *you* care, bub?"

Plinth smiled again, and Logan winced visibly as his lips receded from view, exposing the copy and multipurpose paper white of his perfectly installed veneers.

Gleam.

"We have history."