

Hartley Aucune

Age: late 20s-early 30s

Gender Presentation: femme, they/them pronouns, androgynous presentation

Spoken Language(s): English, French, French-English patois derivative

Accent: proper French

Voice Notes: While Hartley's words can rough and gruff, her cadence and pronunciations are always proper and refined as a reflection of her upbringing.

Short Description

Hot-headed, eager for any fight, sarcastic, blunt, brash, resentful.

There's little difference between Hartley when working as a private investigator and Hartley as a private citizen of SouMet, the city of "undesirables" hidden beneath the city of Metropolis. Their gruffness might be a put-upon way to try to shove down their literal top-of-the-clouds upbringing, but they refuse to do it by halves. They will fight anyone in their way, sometimes antagonizing them purely with stony-face sarcasm and a curt manner of speaking.

Detailed Description

Hartley Aucune was born at the very top of the upper echelons of the Metropolis elite, something they still resent and rebel against to this day. They spit and curse and get tattoos and do all the things a vaunted denizen of the cloudy heights of the near-future cyberpunk mega-city should not as a matter of course. The center of that stubborn rebellion is their work as a *cherch-merc*, a private investigator who digs into rumors about people and corporations to prove it true so that a client can use the leverage. It's considered a lowly job, akin to being a janitor in an office building: essential work but no one really wants to do it.

Hartley took to it like a natural-born SouMet citizen rather than an expatriate from the city above. They use their deep knowledge of the social infrastructures of Metropolis and its aristocracy in tandem with their privilege and access to get to information no one else can ever hope to touch. Those advantages catapulted Hartley and their partner Garou into the position of the best in the business.

Many assume that Hartley, even with their body covered in ink, piercings, and other modifications, to be the talker of the pair. They should be a natural at it if they're truly from the peaks of the city where such things must be as natural as breathing. Those people would be wrong. They are the one left cleaning off their bloody knuckles at the end of a night and grumpily filing damage reports at the end of a case. They detest the work they do and how it is used, but much less than they detest the people they do it for. Maybe the knowledge that those people are still human in every grubby way is enough to take the money and put it back into the people of SouMet who need it most.

While Hartley believes they are doing the right (or, at least, most currently ethical) thing, they rarely if ever take the time to step back and examine their choices unless specifically called out to by those they trust. Acceptance is grudging but they always make attempts to be better. After all, they are not from SouMet; they grew up with the promise of controlling untold lives as the head of a corporation as a matter of course. Some amends have to be made for that.

Line Examples

The following examples are pieces of sample potential script with lines that reflect the character, with context for the generalized scenes they could be said within.

INT. DESTROYED OFFICE – NIGHT

After winning a messy fight, HARTLEY rolls their shoulders and stretches. They're clearly ready for the next one and even more ready to gloat about it.

HARTLEY AUCUNE
(cocky, sarcastic)

I wouldn't worry about the office. Just...
say you're redecorating.

INT. AGENCY HEADQUARTERS, CHIEF'S OFFICE – MIDDAY

HARTLEY is lounging carelessly through a case brief, only half listening to the information. This is the first thing they've said since walking in and greeting their boss.

HARTLEY AUCUNE
(bored, apathetic)

Yeah, sure, we can take the case. It's
just basic mud running, yes?

EXT. SOUMET STREETS, OUTSIDE DERNIÈRE CHANSON CABARET – NIGHT

After a hard-won victory, HARTLEY is trying desperately to catch their breath as they and GAROU survey the scene around them. They hadn't expected anything like what transpired here.

HARTLEY AUCUNE
(harried, breathless)

I admit it, I was very wrong about this
one. *Désolé*, shame on me. Now, can we
please, please, get out of here?!

INT. STAR ROBOTICS LABS R&D – NIGHT

HARTLEY and GAROU try to take the vastness of pristine laboratory around them, the robotic PROTOTYPES being built and tested autonomously even at this late hour. Some are

preparing meals, other dancing, and a few simply watching the pair curiously but not openly. All the prototypes have the same blank face mask but wildly different personalities.

HARTLEY AUCUNE

(awed, fearful)

This is... very much not the case we were told it would be.

EXT. METROPOLIS ROOFTOP GARDEN – DAY

HARTLEY and GAROU are waiting to meet with a potential client to pass along the details of what they've found so far in their investigations. The extreme amount of time that's passed has given them enough time to take in the panoramic views and look over the gorgeous sculptures and gardens and then some. This is a power move on the client's part.

HARTLEY AUCUNE

(disaffected)

Nothing I love more than being made to wait by someone who can't tell a true Rodin from a copy. Not even a student of Rodin's either.